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# Developing Culturally Responsive Preservice Teacher Candidates: Implications For Teacher Education Programs

Rose Gilmore Skepple  
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DEVELOPING CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE PRESERVICE TEACHER  
CANDIDATES: IMPLICATIONS FOR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAMS

By

Rose Gilmore- Skepple

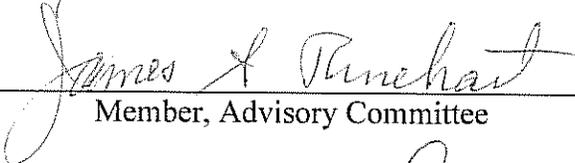
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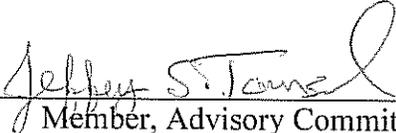
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A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Gary Goble", written over a horizontal line.

Date

May 7, 2011

DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION  
in  
EDUCATIONAL LEADERSHIP AND POLICY STUDIES

By  
Rose Gilmore-Skepple  
Doctorate of Education  
Eastern Kentucky University  
Richmond, Kentucky  
2011

Submitted to the Faculty of the Graduate School of  
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in partial fulfillment of the requirements  
for the degree of  
DOCTORATE OF EDUCATION  
May, 2011

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## DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my grandparents the late Milton and Lillie Gilmore, Louise Brockington, my husband, my children, grandchildren and great-grandchildren.

“If you have no confidence in self, you are twice defeated in the race of life. With confidence, you have won even before you have started” ~Marcus Garvey.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

Phillipians 4:13 states “I can do all things through Christ that strengths me.” To my wonderful husband, thank you for believing in me. To my children, Junior and Eunique thank you for your unconditional love during this journey. I would like to thank members of my family: Janice Gilmore (aunt), Angela Gilmore (sister), Judy Gilmore-Nuss (mother), and Rycky Hollimon (brother –in- law) for your many phone calls of support and encouragement.

I also would like to thank my committee for their support and guidance over the past three years. Your encouragement to present the preliminary findings of my research at local, regional and nationally conferences kept me focus. In addition, I would like to thank Cathy Barnes my administrative assistant... you were a God sent. Last but certainly not least, thanks Eastern Kentucky University faculty, staff, and students for your inspiration and support while I pursued my doctorate degree.

## ABSTRACT

This study was designed to examine how the teacher education program impacts preservice teacher candidates' knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in their classroom. For the purposes of this study, a sequential explanatory mixed methods approach was utilized to collect and analyze data through semi-structured interviews, focus groups and surveys. The participants in this study were (n=82) elementary preservice teachers and (n=11) teacher educators who taught a professional education course or supervised field or clinical experiences. This mixed method study was fourfold. First, this study sought to examine preservice teacher candidates' perceptions of the teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers. Second, it sought to examine if preservice teacher candidates' perceptions about culturally responsive teaching change as a result of their student teaching experiences. Third, it was designed to examine how teacher educators prepare preservice teachers to teach culturally diverse student populations? Finally, how are teacher educators preparing elementary preservice teacher candidates to work in urban educational settings?

The study revealed several key findings: (a) preservice teacher candidates' professional preparation has an effect on their preparedness to teach culturally diverse student populations; (b) preservice teachers believed that more diverse field experiences is one factor that has the potential to increase participant preparedness to teach in a diverse educational setting; (c) teacher educators prepared teacher candidates to differentiate instruction for diverse learners; and (d) teacher educators preparation of

preservice teacher candidates to teach in a diverse educational setting is limited because of the locale of the university.

Keywords: preservice teacher candidate, culturally responsive teaching, diversity, multicultural education, critical race theory

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# CHAPTER I

## INTRODUCTION

### **Background of the Study**

Maya Angelo (n.d.) states “We all should know that diversity makes for a rich tapestry, and we must understand that all the threads of the tapestry are equal in value no matter what their color, gender, religion, ability or sexual orientation.” The United States is a nation built from the richness of many cultures, languages, traditions and beliefs. This unique mixture has encouraged circumstances where awareness, tolerance and appreciation are necessary for the purposes of strengthening and unifying the nation (Valentin, 2006). Schools across the United States are a reflection of the multiculturalism of our society. One major challenge facing the nation is providing high-quality schooling for all students, particularly students of color, low-income students, English-language learners, and students in rural and urban settings.

Trends vary by region and by subgroups, but one generalization is that students are an increasingly diverse group. Between 2000-01 and 2007-08, the percentage of White students enrolled in public schools decreased from 61 to 56 percent (NCES 2010-15). During the same time period, Black and American Indian/Alaskan Native student enrollment remain unchanged (17% and 1%, respectively). Yet Hispanic enrollment increased from 17 to 21 percent and Asian/Pacific Islander enrollment increased from four to five percent (NCES 2010-15). A recent report by the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES 2010-15) indicates that the 20 largest public school districts

in the nation enroll 11 percent of all public school students or over five million students. Of the 20 school districts, 18 consisted of less than 50 percent of students who were White (NCES 2010-15). In 2009, 48 percent of public school fourth graders were eligible for free or reduced-price lunches (NCES 2010-15). The ethnicity of these students consisted of 77 percent Hispanic, 74 percent Black, 68 percent American Indian/Alaskan Native, 34 percent Asian/Pacific Islander and 29 percent White (NCES 2010-15).

According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES 2010-15), of the nation's 13,900 school districts, approximately 49 million students attended K-12 schools in the United States in 2007. Sixty-nine percent of Hispanic students and sixty-four percent of Asian elementary/secondary school students spoke a language at home other than English (NCES 2010-15). Some demographers predict that students of color will constitute the statistical majority of the student population by 2035 and account for 57 percent by 2050 (U.S. Department of Commerce, 1996, as cited in Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Milner, Flowers, Moore, Moore and Flowers (2003) describe the demographics of schooling as dramatically changing as students are becoming more diverse. The racial, ethnic, socio-economic, cultural, and linguistic orientations of students are becoming more varied in the Twenty-First Century. Banks and Banks (2004) indicate that even though our nation's student population is more diverse, over 80 percent of the teaching force are represented by White middle class females. Clearly, the demographic makeup of the K-12 profession does not reflect the pluralism of the students they serve. This cultural mismatch between the increased diversity in student populations and teacher

backgrounds, perspectives, and cultural understandings can significantly impact student achievement (Au, 1993). This reality implies a need for teacher education programs to alter the prevailing traditional modernist model ethos and consider a new paradigm for teacher training.

In higher education, the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) requires that teacher education programs' conceptual framework clearly articulate its professional commitment to prepare candidates to support learning for all students and provide a conceptual understanding how knowledge, dispositions, and skills related to diversity are integrated across the curriculum, instruction, field experience, clinical practice, assessments, and evaluations (NCATE, 2008). Hence, the teacher education program's conceptual framework should reflect a commitment for diversity by preparing culturally responsive teachers to support learning for all students.

Why do teacher educators face challenging responsibilities to prepare preservice teachers to work with diverse students? Scholars assert that most preservice teachers are European American middle-class females who speak one language and come from monocultural backgrounds with limited or no experiences with minorities (Florio-Ruane, 1994; Grant-Secada, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Zimpher & Ashburn, 1989). These preservice teacher candidates have unpleasant expectations regarding working with students from diverse cultures and ethnic groups (Aaronson, Carter & Howell, 1995; Habermant & Rickards, 1990).

While preparing preservice teachers to work in a multicultural society is important, most teacher education programs use a monocultural approach in their teacher

preparation courses (Hinchman & LaLick, 2000; Lewis, 2001). Swartz (2003) addresses the reality of how institutions have been producing generations of White teachers who typically use styles of pedagogy that fit with social dominance. These coercive teaching practices rely on transmission pedagogy (Delpit, 1992; Wink, 2005), rote learning and behavior modification to control and track students as a precondition for teaching students of color (Darling-Hammond, 1997; Delpit, 1992; Ewing, 2001; Kohn, 1996, 1999; Oakes & Lipton, 1999). Several researchers have provided evidence to explore, expand and inform the knowledge base of preservice teachers in working with diverse populations while addressing the cultural discontinuity that exists between culturally diverse students and their White teachers (Banks, 2006; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Although many factors influence educational outcomes in schools serving diverse student populations, there is increasing agreement among members of the educational community that teacher quality is a major factor. Wenglinsky (2000) concluded that “one aspect of schools, the quality of their teaching force, does have a major impact on student test scores- indeed an impact that is comparable in size to that of socioeconomic status”(p.31). Some researchers argue that teacher quality is the single most important influence on school success and student achievement, surpassing socioeconomic status, class size, family background, school context, and all other factors that influence achievement (Sanders & Horn, 1998).

Many researchers have acknowledged racial and cultural differences as major stumbling blocks for White teachers in their efforts to effectively serve students from

diverse populations (Cochran-Smith, 1995a, 1995b; Delpit, 1988, 1995; Fordham & Ogbu, 1986; King, 1991; King & Ladson- Billings, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1995; McIntosh, 1989). Studies have examined the practices of effective African American and White teachers who teach African American students (Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1994). Other studies have analyzed the components of teacher education programs in which preservice teacher candidates reflect on their attitudes and beliefs of race as well as unintentional biases that affect teaching practices (Cochran-Smith, 1995a, 1995b; Sleeter, 1993).

These challenges faced by White preservice teacher candidates inevitably affect the teaching and learning for diverse student populations. However, the challenges to White teachers of such reform efforts are considerable given that many of them are often not prepared professionally to effectively work with culturally diverse populations (Delpit, 1995; Fuller, 1994; Obidah & Teel, 2001; Reed, 1996; Valli, 1995).

Critics from both inside and outside teacher education have suggested that traditional preservice teacher education programs have done an inadequate job preparing preservice teacher candidates to teach diverse populations (Ladson-Billings, 1999; Zeichner & Hoefft, 1996). According to Guyton and Wesche (2005) teacher preparation programs' main focus is to prepare culturally competent practitioners who are ready to serve diverse student populations. Over the last decade, teacher preparation programs at colleges and universities have attempted to respond to these challenges by altering courses, curriculum, field experiences, and other policies addressing diversity and multicultural education. That is, diversity has been addressed in optional or add-on

“diversity” or “multicultural” courses (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Zeichner & Hoeft, 1996), whereas the rest of the teacher education curriculum has remained unchanged (Gollnick, 1992; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This suggests that teacher preparation programs can positively or negatively influence the preparedness of preservice teachers to teach in diverse settings.

### **Critical Race Theory in Education**

Critical race theory is a movement by legal scholars of color seeking to address issues of race, racism, and power in the traditional legal system (Harris, 1993; Matsuda, Lawrence, Delgado, & Crenshaw, 1993). According to Delgado (1995b), critical race theory emerged in the mid-1970s with the early work of Derrick Bell and Alan Freeman, both of whom were distressed over the slow pace of civil rights reform in the United States.

In the pursuit of civil rights interests, legal scholars, such as Patricia Williams and Derrick Bell, were among the earliest critical race theorists whose compelling stories into which they embedded legal issues reached the general public (Banks & Banks, 1995). They argued that the traditional approaches to filing amicus briefs, conducting protests and marches, and appealing to the moral sensibilities of decent citizens produced smaller and fewer gains than in previous times. Before long, Bell and Freeman were joined by other legal scholars who shared their frustrations with traditional civil rights strategies (Banks & Banks, 1995).

In fact, most people in the U.S. learned of critical race theory when Lani Guinier, presidential civil rights nominee, first proposed minority votes to count more than their

actual numbers in electoral situations to give minority groups an equitable political representation. That is, radical critical legal studies theoretical arguments were seen as a challenge to legal system. Guiner could not be confirmed, and President Clinton did nothing to support her nomination.

Consequently, critical legal studies, a leftist legal movement, challenged the traditional legal scholars. They focused on doctrinal and policy analyses of law that gave a voice to individuals and groups in social and cultural contexts (Gordon, 1990). Critical legal studies scholars also challenged the notion that the civil rights struggle represented a long steady march toward social transformation (Crenshaw, 1988). Moreover, leading critical race theorists have argued that marginalization of race and racism is embedded into the framework of the United States legal system (Bell, 1992; Delgado, 1995b).

Critical Race Theory departs from mainstream legal scholarship by sometimes employing storytelling to analyze the myths, presuppositions, and wisdoms that make up the common culture about race and that invariably render blacks and other minorities “one down” (Delgado, 1995b). The use of voice is a way that critical race theory scholars communicate the experience and realities of the oppressed in scholarship. Critical Race Theory scholars use parables, stories, and narratives to illustrate their contention that civil rights laws continue to serve the interests of European Americans. That is, critical race theorists are attempting to interject minority cultural viewpoints, derived from a common history of oppression, into their efforts to reconstruct a society burden of racial hegemony (Barnes, 1990).

Several legal scholars, such as Patricia Williams and Derrick Bell, were among the early critical race theorists who departed from the conventional law review style, favoring instead a storytelling method discourse in many of their publications regarding civil rights matters. This use of story is of particular interest to educators because of the growing popularity of narrative inquiry in the study of teaching (Carter, 1993; Connelly & Clandinin, 1990).

The inclusion of a critical race theory framework in education is essential to address the underachievement of African American, Latin, Native American, and certain Asian American students (NCES, 2007). As a result critical race theory scholars seek to give attention to the impact of race in educational research, scholarship and practice (Dixson & Rousseau, 2006; Ladson-Billings, 2000; Soloranzo, 1998; Soloranzo & Yosso, 2001). As Critical Race Theory emerges in the field of education, it has moved the dialogue about race and racism from experiential to ideological (Ladson-Billings, 2000; Lynn, 1999; Parker & Lynn, 2002; Tate, 1997; Taylor, Gillborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Critical Race Theory challenges European American privilege and claims the current educational curricula silences, ignores and distorts epistemologies of ethnic groups (Delgado Bernal, 1998; Ladson-Billings, 2000). Critical race scholars claim dominant ideologies promote the self-interest, power, and privilege of Whites over people of color in U.S. society (Bell, 1987; Calmore, 1992; Freire, 1990; Soloranzo, 1997). In education, critical race theory is an evolving methodological, conceptual, and theoretical construct that attempts to dismantle racism in education (Solorazano, 1998).

## **Culturally Responsive Teaching in Education**

Research on the topics of race, racism, and power, has led me to explore culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in teacher education programs. Cultural responsive teaching (CRT) is a conceptual framework that can be utilized in all subject areas with culturally diverse students. Diamond and Moore (1995) have organized culturally responsive teachers' roles and responsibilities into three major categories: cultural organizers, cultural mediators, and orchestrators of social contexts of learning.

As cultural organizers, teacher educators must understand that inclusion of students' cultural experiences during instruction facilitate high academic achievement for all students. These accommodations must actively engage preservice teachers and help them construct knowledge through inquiry and knowledge through dialogue (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

As cultural mediators, teacher educators must provide opportunities for preservice teachers to engage in critical dialogue about diversity. Hence, teacher educators must cultivate a classroom community of learners, a classroom that embraces and affirms diversity (Ladson-Billings, 2001; Nieto, 2000).

As orchestrators of social contexts for learning, teacher educators must recognize the influence culture has on learning and make pedagogy compatible with the sociocultural contexts of ethnically diverse populations. These sociocultural contexts help preservice teachers translate their students' cultural competencies into school learning resources. That is, the classroom must be based on the vision of pluralism, relationships,

and relevancy where students make correlations with their own personal experiences and histories (Barton & Levstik, 2004). Are teacher educators open to culturally responsive teaching theory and practice? If so, what evidence supports this belief in the teacher education programs' curriculum, instruction and pedagogy?

Many researchers have explored pedagogical approaches to integrating cultural heritage and prior experiences of minority students into the classroom (Darling-Hammond & Youngs, 2002; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Gay (2010) defines culturally responsive teaching as a multifaceted approach to teaching and learning and defines six components:

- Validating
- Comprehensive
- Multidimensional
- Empowering
- Transformative
- Emancipatory

The first component of CRT is “validating”. This component communicates the importance of the cultural heritage of different ethnic groups. It acknowledges that students have a natural desire to connect meaningful bridges between home, community and school experiences. The “validating” component of CRT incorporates a wide variety of instructional strategies that are related to differentiated instruction. Finally, the “validating” component incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all subject areas taught in schools (Gay, 2010).

CRT is also “comprehensive”. Ladson-Billings (1992) explains the range of learning (intellectual, social, emotional, and political) by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills and attitudes. In the elementary classrooms she studied, Ladson-Billings (1994) observed a commitment to high quality education for ethnically diverse students. She saw expectations and skills taught; and witnessed interpersonal relations where students were part of a collective effort to promote academic and cultural excellence. This approach to learning is dedicated to helping students of color preserve their cultural identity; maintain connections with their ethnic background and communities through social consciousness. There is a strong belief that all students are called to be part of a supportive group of high achievers (Foster, 1995,1997; Irvine & Foster, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Lipman, 1995) and low teacher expectations are unacceptable.

CRT as a “multidimensional” approach to instruction encourages curricular alignment across disciplines. Teachers of language arts, social studies, math, science and other areas may collaborate to teach a particular concept from their respective discipline. Additionally, teachers can collectively decide how performance assessments will be assessed. This form of teaching requires teachers to use a wide range cultural knowledge, experiences, perspectives and contributions.

The empowering aspect of CRT enables students to develop personal integrity and academic success. Students who are empowered are confident, competent and courageous. They are risk takers willing to pursue success toward educational mastery. This aspect of CRT requires teachers to provide planned structures of support that

scaffolds students toward high levels of academic achievement. According to Mehan, Hubbard, Villanueva and Lintz (1996), a “social scaffolding” system offers low-achieving ethnically diverse students who were encouraged to enroll in advanced placement courses social and personal supports that fostered high-level academic skills. Shor (1992) describes the effect of empowering education as a critical democratic pedagogy for self and social change. He asserts, “The goals of this pedagogy are to relate personal growth to public life, to develop strong skills, academic knowledge, habits to inquiry, and critical curiosity about society, power, inequality and change...” (p.15-16).

Shor (1992) states how students are the primary source and center, subjects and outcomes, consumers and producers of knowledge. This component of culturally responsive instruction clearly places the student at the center of active learning. Students are encouraged to find their own voice and make knowledge learning personal and relevant.

Gay (2000) asserts that culturally responsive teaching is “transformative” in that it helps “students develop the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become social critics who can make reflective decisions and implement their decisions in effective personal, social, political and economic action” (p. 131). The transformative agenda is two-fold: it confronts the traditional view of teaching and learning and it develops a social consciousness in students so that they can combat various forms of oppressions, such as prejudices and racism. Students are encouraged to transform classroom inequities toward marginalized groups and motivated to search for tangible solutions to address societal issues.

Finally, CRT is “emancipatory”. This instructional component liberates students from the constraints of schooling hegemonism ways of teaching and learning (Asante, 1991, 1992; Au, 1993; Erickson, 1987; Gordon, 1993; Lipman, 1995; Pewewardy, 1994; Philips, 1983). In classrooms, the “emancipatory” component infuses authentic knowledge into the learning environment that is applicable to students’ own cultural and societal experiences. These learning engagements encourage and enable students to find their own voice, to contextualize issues in multiple cultural perspectives, to engage in more ways of knowing and thinking, and to become more active participants in shaping their own learning (Crichlow, Goodwin, Shakes, & Swartz, 1990; King & Wilson, 1990; Ladson-Billings & Henry, 1990). In other words, the veil of authority is lifted and students are taught how to apply knowledge to their analyses of social histories, issues, problems and experiences.

Overall, these components of culturally responsive teaching validate, facilitate, liberate, and empower ethnically diverse students by cultivating their cultural affirmation, social consciousness, and academic success. The body of literature suggests a critical need for an effective teacher preparation model that will educate culturally responsive teachers to address the diverse issues affecting ethnically diverse students of the 21st century (Cruz, Bonissone, & Baff, 1995; Irwin, 1997; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

### **Statement of the Problem**

A critical question we must ask ourselves is: what educational practices and strategies are in place to prepare preservice teachers to effectively teach culturally diverse students in the new millennium? Moreover, what organizational policies have been put in

place by teacher education programs to facilitate courageous conversations about developing culturally responsive preservice teacher candidates? Unless preservice teachers' have attended an ethnically diverse elementary or secondary school, or completed coursework at the college level that critically examined their beliefs and expectations of diversity, these teacher candidates may enter the classroom without culturally responsive teaching skills, knowledge or experiences needed to effectively teach culturally diverse students and work in an urban educational settings.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study is to examine how the teacher preparation program impacts preservice teacher candidates' knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in their classrooms.

### **Research Questions**

Answers to the following research questions will add to the current research and body of literature which explores the impact that culturally responsive teaching practices have on the performance of culturally and linguistically diverse student populations:

1. What are preservice teacher candidates' perceptions of their teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers?
2. How do preservice teacher candidates' perceptions about culturally responsive teaching change as a result of their student teaching experiences?
3. How do teacher educators prepare elementary preservice teachers to instruct culturally diverse student populations?
4. How are teacher educators preparing elementary preservice teachers to work in urban educational settings?

### **Significance of the Study**

By 2050, the U.S. population is projected to be more than 30 percent Hispanic, 15 percent Black, 9.6 percent Asian, and 2 percent Native American (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). As a result of this increasing diversity, ethnic and racial minorities will become the “new majority” by the middle of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. As the United States continues to become increasingly varied culturally, there are implications for teacher education programs to develop culturally responsive preservice teachers.

According to the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), teacher education programs’ conceptual framework should clearly articulate its professional commitment to prepare teacher candidates to support learning for all students and provide a conceptual understanding of how knowledge, dispositions, and skills related to diversity are integrated across the curriculum, instruction, field experience, clinical practice, assessments, and evaluations (NCATE, 2008). Gay (1994) suggests that comparability in culturally relevant learning experiences for ethnically diverse students is essential to achieving educational equality and high level achievement for them. This study can help teacher education programs determine the impact of their preparation courses in preparing preservice teacher candidates to teach culturally diverse students and work in diverse settings.

### **Definition of Terms**

The terms defined below provide the reader with the contextual knowledge needed to understand, evaluate and analyze this research.

1. Culture- The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. These patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community, or population (Gay, 2010).
2. Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) - Culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and learning styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning personally meaningful and effective for them (Gay, 2010).
3. Diversity - “Differences among groups of people and individuals based on ethnicity, race, socioeconomic status, gender, exceptionalities, language, religion, sexual orientations and geographical area and types of diversity necessary for addressing the effects of candidate’s interactions with diverse faculty, candidates, and P-12 students” (NCATE, 2008).
4. Ethnicity - A group of people sharing a common and distinctive racial, national, religious, linguistic, or cultural heritage (Banks, 1994).
5. Multiculturalism - A social or educational theory that encourages interest in many cultures within a society rather than in the mainstream culture (Banks, 1994).
6. Preservice Teacher Candidate- College student who is participating in a teacher education program. The student is not yet certified to teach.

## **CHAPTER II**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

This chapter presents a comprehensive review of related literature. These topics are included in the review of literature: changing demographics in education, multicultural teacher education curricula, culturally responsive teaching, and diversity assessment instruments.

#### **Changing Demographics in Education**

The trend highlighting the increase of culturally and linguistically diverse students has been well documented (Avery & Walker, 1993; Cabello & Burstein, 1995; Causey, Thomas & Armento, 2000; McCall, 1995; Ross & Smith, 1992; Taylor & Sobel, 2001; Torok & Aguilar, 2000). Statistics show that by the year 2010, about 40 percent of the school age population in the United States will be students of color (Gay, 1993; Gollnick & Chinn, 1998; McIntyre, 1993). According to the Census Bureau report (2005), elementary and high schools in today's public schools are more diverse by race and Hispanic origin than students of the baby boom generation. Using 2005 figures, the Population Reference Bureau estimates about forty-five percent of children younger than five are minorities. Although trends are somewhat different from region to region and state to state, the national projections indicate that school aged children six to seventeen will become increasingly diverse in future years (Census Bureau, 2006). It has been well documented that minority enrollment continues to grow in all regions of the country, primarily California, Florida, New York and Texas due to growth in the Hispanic enrollment (Howley, 2007). These same four states also represent the "browning" of our

country in terms of ethnic diversity. In contrast, current indicators suggest that 80 percent of tomorrow's teachers will be predominately from European-American, middle class backgrounds (Barrett, 1993; Burnstein & Cabello, 1989; Grant & Sleeter, 1989).

The aforementioned statistics suggest incongruence between students' and teachers' racial, cultural and linguistic backgrounds may contribute to the differences in school success (Au & Mason, 1981; Erickson, 1987; Ogbu, 1987; Taylor & Sobel, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). According to Ogbu (1987), the cultural mismatch factor most negatively impacts the academic performance of African -American and Hispanic students who are the largest minority groups in public schools. Thus, an increase number of students from culturally diverse and ethnic minority backgrounds stand at the forefront of educational, social, and political policies across many societies (Banks & Banks, 2003).

While society has changed drastically over the past four decades, many teacher education programs and K-12 school districts continued to frame and carry out their daily ritual within the traditional modernist model (Darling-Hammond, 2005). This current American system of education does not appear to be a viable option for educating cultural and linguistic diverse students. Several researchers believe that failure to acknowledge the role of culture in the teaching and learning process may explain why students from culturally diverse backgrounds do poorly in school (Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Proponents of a cultural mismatch perspective contend that students from diverse cultural backgrounds bring to school a set of cultural practices, norms, and preferences that are not valued, reinforced, or affirmed at school (Irvine, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997).

The dramatic shift in demographic landscape of the United States is more pronounced in public schools than anywhere else. The startling changes in student population have challenged schools and educators to find creative ways to work with culturally diverse students to ensure educational quality and equity for all.

A rising tide of studies with statistical descriptions has inundated the multicultural literature by scholars in the past two decades. One wave of study strongly calls for the restructuring of teacher preparation programs to address the increasing cultural and ethnic diversity of public school student populations (Hodgkinson, 1996).

Several other studies point out the disparity between a homogenous teaching population and increasing heterogeneity of racial, ethnic, cultural and social class of school student populations (Bennett, 1999; Gomez, 1996). In many schools across the nation, racial and language minorities, African Americans and Latinos usually attend schools with large concentrations of economically disadvantaged and/or low-achieving students (Foster, 1989).

Ladson-Billings (1994) suggests that most teachers have concerns about working with diverse student populations and need to examine their beliefs, expand their knowledge, and develop abilities related to students from diverse backgrounds. Research studies suggest that teachers treat racial and language minority students different from non-minority students and have lower expectations for them (Patton, 2002). The reality is that demographic differences between teachers and their students are increasing in America's classrooms.

## **Multicultural Teacher Education Curricula**

While the National Council Accreditation of Teacher Education requires some form of teacher training in multicultural education be incorporated in preservice teacher preparation programs, an ongoing debate is how much multicultural education should be taught in order to produce competent practitioners who are capable of meeting the needs of diverse student populations (Phillion & He, 2004). In short, multicultural education has become the common term used to describe the type of pluralist education that its advocates are seeking for all children receiving education.

Multicultural education emerged out of the struggle to sustain people of color beliefs of freedom, justice and liberty for all. It has emerged from its early focus on Black studies, ethnic studies and finally to multicultural education. Supporters of multicultural education (e.g. Banks, 2004; Sleeter & Grant, 1998, 2003) claim that, at the societal level, its major goals are to reduce prejudice and discrimination against oppressed groups, to work toward equal opportunity and social justice for all groups, and to effect an equitable distribution of power among members of different cultural groups (Sleeter, 1996).

Multiculturalism, an established discipline in the field of education, manifests a body of knowledge, text, and curricula (Banks, 1995; Bennett, 1999; Gay, 1994; Giroux, 1983). Within the field of education, Banks (1993) views the primary goal of multicultural education as transforming schools so that all students will acquire the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to function in an ethnically and racially diverse nation and world. Thus, multicultural education acknowledges that schools are essential

to laying the foundation for transforming society and eliminating oppression and injustice.

Banks (1989) described a hierarchy of four curricular models to integrate multiculturalism into the curriculum. Banks' (1989) model includes four approaches: contributions, additive, transformative, and social action. The contribution and additive approaches, focused on heroes, holidays and discrete cultural elements added to the curriculum without changing its structure. Banks asserts these approaches as superficial add-ons to the Eurocentric school curricula. Whereas, with the transformative and social action approaches, the structure of the curriculum is changed to enable students to make decisions on important social issues and take action to help solve them. Banks (2001) model provides a framework for examining how multicultural education can be implemented into the curricula by educators.

Sleeter and Grant (1993) argue that there are five approaches to best teach the concept of multicultural education to preservice teachers. Their first method, "business-as-usual approach", advocates not doing anything around diversity and the continuation of "best practices" that remove students of color and low income students from accessing a strong academic curriculum. The "teaching-the-culturally-different" approach focuses on providing a dominant traditional education for students of color by building bridges between the home culture and the mainstream culture for the purpose of moving the students of color into the mainstream. The "human relations" approach emphasizes curricula revisions that promote social contributions of ethnically diverse groups within the classroom to enhance student achievement and reduce racial stereotypes. The "single-

group-study” approach provides a curriculum specifically directed to a cultural group. The “multicultural education” approach focuses on large scale change in the school targeting diversity in the curriculum, instruction, staffing, and policies.

Multiculturalists argue that multicultural education has implications for decision making that can affect the operations at all levels, including: instruction, administration, governance, counseling, program planning, performance appraisal, and school climate.

Sonia Nieto (2000) suggested that:

Multicultural education is a process of comprehensive school reform and basic education for all students. It challenges and rejects racism and other forms of discrimination in schools and society and accepts and affirms the pluralism (ethnic, racial, linguistic, religious, economic, and gender among others) that students, their communities, and teachers reflect. Multicultural education permeates the schools’ curriculum and instructional strategies, as well as the interactions among teachers, students and families, and the very way that schools conceptualize the nature of teaching and learning. Because it uses critical pedagogy as its underlying philosophy and focuses on knowledge, reflection, and action as the basis for social change, multicultural education promotes democratic principles of social justice (p.305).

Multicultural education courses across the United States are used in teacher preparation programs. However, for many preservice teacher candidates, the information provided in these courses, typically has not been discussed in general education courses or teacher preparation courses. In my opinion, background knowledge in multiculturalism

is important for teachers to understand rights and responsibilities of students, as well as parents.

### **Teacher Education Programs**

Beginning in the 1970s, universities and colleges seeking accreditation of their professional programs had to demonstrate that their curricula addressed multiculturalism by educating teacher candidates to work with students from ethnically and culturally diverse background (Goodwin, 1997). Despite the existence of this requirement, the concept of multicultural teacher education has made little progress. In an investigation of 59 institutions, Gollnick (1992) found that only 56 percent of the professional education curricula sufficiently addressed cultural diversity by adequately preparing teacher candidates to work with culturally diverse students.

The field of teacher education, in general, has been slow in advancing and imaging teacher education in both theory and practice within an existing paradigm (Banks, 1996). Thus, criticism of the traditional university curriculum is not new, but never before has there been such debate on the content of what is being taught in colleges and universities. The national standards movement provides teacher educators with a vision and a challenge that could strengthen their effort to prepare candidates to teach from multicultural and global perspectives that draw on the histories, experiences, and diverse cultural backgrounds of all people (NCATE, 2008). With an emphasis on cultural diversity perspectives, higher education institutions are faced with the challenge to find creative ways to prepare preservice teacher candidates to instruct culturally and linguistically diverse students.

In most colleges and universities, teacher preparation programs have responded to cultural differences studies and demographic imperatives in a variety of ways. For example, in many teacher education programs they have added multicultural education courses and provisions for cross cultural teacher candidates' field experiences. How effective are multicultural education courses in teacher education programs?

According to Phuntsog (1999), a multicultural education course offered in teacher preparation programs is an attempt to provide preservice teachers with knowledge and skills to address the achievement gap between students of color and white students. This single dose approach barely addresses deeply rooted cultural beliefs teacher candidates share about school teaching and the learning of students of color. Another related concern is that such holistic strategies and approaches don't necessarily work with all teacher candidates.

Researchers (Banks & Banks, 1989; Bennett, 1999; Coballes-Vegas, 1992; Sleeter & Grant, 1988) recommend that the following strategies should be included in teacher education curriculum:

- At least one course in multicultural education that takes into consideration the needs of all students.
- Information about 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 student from limited English proficient (LEP) backgrounds.

- Field experiences and student teaching opportunities with students from varying backgrounds.

### **Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Within the last three decades, a group of scholars and researchers have been concerned about the serious academic achievement gap among low- income students and students of color (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Erickson, 1987; Gay, 2002; Jordan, 1985; Ladson-Billings, 1990). For more than a decade, these scholars and others have examined ways that teaching can better match the home and community cultures of students of color who have previously not had academic success in schools. Various scholars have constructed theoretical underpinnings for culturally relevant teaching, also called culturally responsive teaching.

Culturally relevant teaching has been used interchangeable with several terms such as cultural appropriate instruction (Au & Jordan, 1981), culturally congruent instruction (Mohatt & Erickson, 1981), culturally compatible instruction (Jordan, 1985; Vogt, Jordon & Tharp, 1987), and culturally relevant teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1990).

Au and Jordan (1981) termed “culturally appropriate” the pedagogy of teachers in a Hawaiian school who incorporated aspects of students’ cultural background into their reading instruction. By permitting students to use talk-story, a language interaction style common among Native Hawaiian children, teachers were able to help students achieve at higher than predicted levels on standardized reading tests.

Mohatt and Erickson (1981) conducted a similar study with Native American students in the classroom. These researchers observed teachers who used language

interaction patterns associated with students' home culture were more successful in improving students' academic performance. Odawa teachers' were able to increase teacher-student interactions and participation by using a combination of Native American and Anglo language interaction patterns in their instructional conversation. They coined this language interaction style as "culturally congruent".

Vogt et al. (1987) began using the term "culturally compatible" to explain the success of classroom teachers with Hawaiian children. By observing the students in their home/community environment, teachers were able to include aspects of the students' cultural environment in the organization and instruction of the classroom. Jordan (1985) discussed cultural compatibility in this way:

Educational practices must match with the children's culture in ways which ensure the generation of academically important behaviors. It does not mean that all school practices need be completely congruent with cultural experiences, in the sense of exactly or even closely matching or agreeing with them. The point of cultural compatibility is that diverse students cultures are used as a guide in the selection of educational program elements so that academically desired behaviors are produced and undesired behaviors are avoided (p.10).

Culturally relevant teaching is a term created by Gloria Ladson-Billings (1992) to describe a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes. She argues that it urges collective action grounded in cultural understandings, experiences, and ways of knowing the world.

Ladson-Billings (1994) identifies three components of culturally relevant teaching: (a) the teachers' conceptions of themselves and others, (b) the manner in which classroom social interactions are structured, and (c) teachers' conception of knowledge. Specifically, addressing the needs of African American students, she states that the primary aim of culturally relevant teaching is to assist in the development of a relevant "Black" personality that allows African American students to choose academic excellence yet still identify with Africana and African American culture. As this description implies, culturally relevant teachers must be observant and alert to the classroom behaviors and communications, verbal and nonverbal, of students. There is no "one-size-fits all" approach to culturally relevant teaching. Every student must be studied individually and stereotypes about a particular group discarded. Culturally relevant teaching occurs only when teachers are sensitive to cultural differences and when culture is naturally integrated into the curriculum, into instructional and assessment practices, and into classroom management. That is, culturally responsive teaching is based on the idea that culture is central to student learning.

In the 1980s and early 1990s interest in culturally responsive teaching grew as a result of concern over the lack of success of many ethnic/ racial minority students despite years of education reform. Gay (2002) defines culturally responsive teaching as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and performance styles of diverse students to make learning more appropriate and effective for them. That is, culturally responsive teaching teaches to and through the strengths of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Gay (2010) reported that part of the responsibility of teacher preparation

programs is to prepare preservice teachers to work effectively with students from cultural and linguistically diverse (CLD) backgrounds.

Gay (2010) identifies five important areas that need to be addressed when educating culturally responsive preservice teachers to work effectively with CLD students: (a) develop a culturally diverse knowledge base, (b) design culturally relevant curricula, (c) demonstrate cultural caring and building a learning community, and (d) build effective cross-cultural communications, and deliver culturally responsive instruction. Gay (2002) asserts that culturally relevant teaching uses “the cultural characteristics, experiences, and perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (p.106). This sociocultural approach to teaching, based on the work of Russian psychologist Lev Vygotsky, provides instructional scaffolding that encourages students to learn by building on the experiences, knowledge, and skills they bring to the classroom. To do this effectively, teachers need to be open to learning about the cultural particularities of the ethnic groups within their classrooms and transform that sensitivity into effective classroom practice (McIntyre, Rosebery, & Gonzalez, 2001).

Villegas and Lucas (2002) identified six traits that are integral to becoming a culturally responsive teacher expanding the works of Ladson-Billings (2001) and Gay (2002). The authors describe culturally responsive teachers as those who:

- are socioculturally conscious;
- are favorably disposed to diversity;
- see themselves as cultural brokers in educational institutions;

- understand and embrace constructivist views of knowledge, teaching and learning;
- know about the lives of their students; and
- design instruction to draw on students strengths and addressing their needs (p. 121).

Most scholars agree that culturally responsive teachers who draw on students' cultural heritage in the classroom affect students' dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning.

### **Developing Culturally Responsive Preservice Teachers**

Studies have shown that the majority of teacher candidates who enter certification programs have little knowledge about diverse groups in the United States (Cochran-Smith, 1991; Evertson, 1990; Goodwin, 1997; Melnick & Zeichner, 1997). Overall, teacher candidates and beginning teachers know little about the histories and cultures of culturally diverse populations. Thus, in preparing teacher candidates to effectively teach diverse student population, teacher education programs must (1) transform preservice teacher candidates multicultural attitudes (Cabello & Burnstein, 1995; Gay, 2010; Pang & Sablan, 1998; Phuntsog, 2001; Ponterotto, Baluch, Greig, & Rivera, 1998; Shade et al., 1997; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), (2) increase their culturally diverse knowledge base (Avery & Walker, 1993; Barry & Lechner, 1995; Guillaume, Zuniga-Hill, & Yee, 1995; Hilliard, 1998), and (3) equip them with the skills needed to effectively teach culturally diverse students (Leavell, Cowart, & Wilhelm, 1999).

Researchers believe that teacher education programs must assist preservice teacher candidates to critically examine their beliefs about diversity (Tatto & Coupland, 2003), expectations of diversity (Gay, 2010; Hilliard, 1998) and teaching in diverse educational settings (Cabello & Burnstein, 1995), and being responsive to student differences (Pang & Sablan, 1998; Phuntsog, 2001). Gay (2010), Shade et al. (1997), and Villegas and Lucas (2002) contend that tomorrow's teachers must develop an affirming attitude towards all students that is underscored by the belief that all students can learn. According to Weinstein, Curran, and Tomlinson-Clarke (2003), counterproductive beliefs held by teachers must be transformed before culturally responsive teaching can be implemented successfully. This is an important step as preservice teacher candidates begin to develop a culturally diverse knowledge base. Failure to transform counterproductive beliefs may contribute to teachers viewing culturally diverse differences through the lens of a counter deficit perspective. Gay (2000) perhaps best summarizes this perspective by stating that it focuses on what "students do not have and cannot do" (p.12).

Another component in the teacher education curriculum should assist students in developing a culturally diverse knowledge base (Avery & Walker, 1993; Barry & Lechner, 1995; Guillaume et al., 1995). The cultural content contained in this knowledge base includes but is not limited to the following: (a) communication preferences, (b) social interaction preferences, (c) response preferences, (d) linguistic preferences, (e) values, (f) tradition, (g) experiences, and (h) their students' cultural contributions' to civilization, history, science, math, literature, arts, and technology (Au & Kawakami,

1994; Hilliard, 1998; Irvine & Armento, 2001; King, 1994; Kunjufu, 2002; Shade, 1994; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Developing this knowledge base is important because, according to Sleeter (2001), many preservice teacher candidates foresee working with culturally and linguistically diverse students but possess little knowledge about the cultural background of their potential students.

Developing culturally responsive teachers involves assisting them in the ability to use their culturally diverse knowledge base to design culturally relevant curricula, instructional activities (Kunjufu, 2002), and culturally compatible learning environments (Brown, 2003; Curran, 2003, Weinstein et al., 2003). As cited in Siwatu (2007), many scholars describe culturally responsive curriculum as the processes in which teachers: (a) connect classroom activities to students' cultural and home experiences (Chion-Kenney, 1994; Dickerson, 1993) (b) modify instruction to maximize student learning (Hilliard, 1992; Villegas, 1991), (c) design culturally relevant curricula and instructional activities (Banks, 2001; Scherer, 1992; Spears, Oliver & Maes, 1990) and (d) design instruction that is developmentally appropriate and meets students' affective, cognitive, and educational needs (Gay, 2010). Thus, preparing culturally responsive teachers involves equipping tomorrow's teachers with the necessary skills to use a variety of assessment procedures that provide students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned (Irvine & Armento, 2002; Shade et al., 1997; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

The primary goal of this section was to review the educational research pertaining to culturally responsive teaching for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

However, research indicated that there was one issue or problem with culturally

responsive teaching. My findings showed considerable educational literature addressing culturally responsive teaching for students of color, but few discussing culturally responsive teaching for Mixed-Racial/Multi-Ethnic students.

### **Diversity Assessment Instruments**

Larke (1990) examined preservice teachers' awareness of cultural differences after completion of a required multicultural education course. Two research questions guided the study: (1) How culturally sensitive are preservice teachers? (2) Are preservice teachers more culturally sensitive in some areas than in others? The participants included 51 female elementary preservice teachers including 46 White and five Mexican Americans from a middle to upper socioeconomic status background. All participants were administered the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI), a self-administered questionnaire designed to measure an individual's attitudes, beliefs and behavior towards children of culturally diverse backgrounds. The results of this study indicate the following themes: (a) many preservice teachers believed that they could teach children who did not share their cultural background, (b) preservice teachers believed that they would feel uncomfortable working with individuals who had different values than their own, and (c) preservice teachers felt that they would more than likely refer students for testing if they perceived learning difficulties based on cultural or a language barrier. The author concluded that preservice teachers had not developed the necessary skills to be sensitive to cultural differences.

Milner et al. (2003) also examined preservice teachers' awareness of cultural differences after the completion of a required multicultural education course. Data from

99 preservice teachers who completed the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI) revealed that attitudes about cultural diversity improved. The authors concluded that preservice teachers and teacher education programs were more likely to agree with cultural inclusion and respect for diversity in the classroom. However, preservice teacher candidates were not quite sure about integrating their learning environment with the curricula, assessments, and multicultural inclusion in the classroom.

In a replicated study, Dalhouse and Dalhouse (2006) administered a modified CDAI, self-administered questionnaire designed to assess beliefs, attitudes, and behaviors toward children from culturally diverse backgrounds. The CDAI was administered to 92 preservice teachers as a pretest at the beginning of the semester and a posttest at the end of the semester. The authors indicated that preservice teachers appeared less inclined, after their practicum and seminar experience, to refer students for testing based on ethnicity and culture, and were less likely to accept the use of ethnic jokes and phrases in their classrooms. Preservice teachers revealed that students should be identified by ethnic groups and that teachers should work with parents and families from different cultures.

Lenski, Crawford, Crumple and Stallworth (2005) studied effective ways to address culture and cultural differences in the preparation of preservice teachers. Participants in the study were enrolled in an elementary education program at a large Midwestern university. The group included 28 preservice teachers, 26 females and two males. Before and during the ethnography the preservice teachers were given the steps in the ethnographic process including learning about ethnography, conducting participation observation, making descriptive observation, analyzing the data, and writing the report.

The data indicated that using ethnography as an observational tool helps preservice teachers become more aware of cultural differences.

Sleeter (2001) reviewed research based data studies on preservice teacher preparation for multicultural schools, particularly underserved communities. The author surveyed 80 studies regarding the effects of various preservice teacher education strategies, including recruiting and selecting students, cross- cultural immersion experiences, multicultural education coursework, and program restructuring. The researcher suggested that community- based cross cultural immersion experiences are more powerful than stand-alone multicultural education courses.

Stanley (1996) used the Pluralism and Diversity Attitude Assessment (PDAA) instrument to assist in the assessment of 215 preservice teachers in physical education who were enrolled in the final two years of their program at 11 selected universities. The PDAA instrument uses four sub scales: (a) Appreciate Cultural Pluralism, (b) Value Cultural Pluralism, (c) Implement Cultural Pluralism, and (d) Uncomfortable with Cultural Diversity to measure respondents attitudes toward cultural pluralism and diversity. Results from this study showed that the concept of cultural diversity is complex and that further study is needed to develop an instrument that measure attitudes toward individual components of diversity such as gender, race and ethnicity.

Dee and Henkin (2002) used the Pluralism and Diversity Attitude Assessment (PDAA) instrument to assist in their assessment of 150 preservice teacher's attitudes toward cultural diversity. These preservice teachers were enrolled in an urban university's teacher education program prior to taking a required course in multicultural

education. Results of their study showed strong support for presenting cultural diversity issues in their future classrooms. Respondents indicated strong support for implementing their beliefs about equity and social values associated with diversity in the classroom.

In a replicated study, Adams, Sewell and Hall (2004) used the PDAA instrument to investigate family and consumer sciences teachers' attitudes toward issues related to multicultural education. The authors used the PDAA four subscales to describe respondents' attitudes toward cultural pluralism and diversity. Results from this study indicated that family and consumer sciences teachers believed (a) all students should be provided equal opportunities for educational success, (b) educational systems tend to reflect positive attitudes about the issues examined, (c) diverse cultures make positive contributions in our society, (d) students should feel pride in their culture, and (e) students should learn to respect themselves and others. The authors recommend that teacher educators should emphasize multicultural education in their teacher education preparation programs, increasing educational focus on the multicultural knowledge, and diverse pedagogical skills necessary to teach in a diverse setting.

Brown (2004) examined the influence of instructional methodology on the cultural diversity awareness of all White preservice teachers in 4 sections of a cultural diversity course. The first ten weeks concentrated on the diversity of learners (race, ethnicity, culture, class, gender, and religion) and the final six weeks focused on the exceptional student (physical, mental, and behavioral). The author used the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI) as a pretest and posttest empirical measure, reflective journals, field experiences reports, and research projects were examined to

investigate incremental changes. The results indicated that the message can precipitate some change in cultural diversity sensitivity, but the methodology used to reduce resistance, nurture and reinforce the message has a greater influence.

The purpose of the above review of literature was fourfold. First, this review presents an overview of the changing demographics in education and how this impacts the academic performance of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Second, how teacher educators use multicultural teacher education curricula in teacher preparation programs. Third, the review presents what culturally responsive teaching is and how teachers who include this instructional and assessment practice in their classrooms make learning more appropriate and effective for culturally diverse learners. Fourth, this review identifies several instruments that examine potential factors that influence preservice teacher candidates' attitudes and beliefs about diversity. The findings from this review suggest that universities and colleges seeking accreditation of their professional programs must demonstrate that their curricula is adequately preparing preservice teacher candidates to teach culturally diverse students.

## **CHAPTER III**

### **METHODOLOGY**

This study is designed to examine how the teacher education program impacts elementary preservice teacher candidates' knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in their classrooms. This chapter is divided into two sections. Section one provides an overview of research methodologies; and section two gives a detailed description of the research design, research site, participants, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analyses, and trustworthiness of data.

#### **Overview of Research Methodologies**

##### **Rationale for Quantitative Research**

Quantitative purists articulate assumptions that are consistent with what is commonly referred to as the philosophy of positivism (Ayer, 1959; Maxwell & Delany, 2004; Popper, 1959; Schrag, 1992). Positivism (also known as logical positivism) has origins dating back to nineteenth-century French philosopher August Comte. Positivism bases knowledge on observable facts and rejects speculations about ultimate origins. Quantitative purists believe that the social world can be studied in much the same way that physical scientists treat physical phenomena. Lincoln and Guba (1985) describe several generally accepted truths about positivism:

- Ontology (nature of reality): Positivists believe that there is a single reality.
- Epistemology (the relationship of the knower to the known): Positivists believe that the knower and the known are independent.

- Axiology (role of values in inquiry): Positivists believe that inquiry is value free.
- Generalizations: Positivists believe that time and context-free generalizations are possible.
- Casual linkages: Positivists believe that there are real causes that are temporally precedent to or simultaneous with effects.

Quantitative research focuses on a set of narrowly defined research methodologies (Ary, Jacobs, & Razavieh, 2006). The tools and techniques used to gather and analyze data are well established and the validity and reliability of a study depend on the researcher's adherence to pre-existing methodologies (Patton, 2002). The wide range of available statistical methods (Creswell, 2009) allows researchers to develop explanatory models that can account for phenomena occurring in similar settings. Table 1 summarizes characteristics of some aspects of quantitative research. These models, which allow for the development of cause and effect theories, can have significant predictive power in classroom settings (Creswell, 2009).

Table 1

Characteristics of Some Aspects of Quantitative Research

Objective/Purpose	(a) Quantify data and generalize results from a sample of the population of interest (b) Based on theory or hypothesis
Sample	(a) Usually a large number of participants representing the population of interest (b) Many cases, subjects
Data Collection	(a) Surveys or questionnaires (b) Experiment (c) Content analysis (d) Existing statistics such as census data, reports

Table 1 (continued)

Data Analysis	(a) Researcher is detached (b) Statistical analysis, data is usually tabulated (c) Findings are conclusive and descriptive
Validity/Reliability	(a) Highly controlled variables established statistically (b) Limited training required
Outcome	(a) Results from a variety of settings or individuals can be used to develop a single explanatory model (b) Used to recommend a final course of action
Limitations	(a) Individuals may be forced into categories based on established standardized methods (b) During the interpretation stage, the context collected may be lost (c) Establishing validity and reliability is time consuming

Sources: Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Libarkin, J.C., & Kurdziel, J. P. (2002). Research methodologies in science education: Qualitative data. *Journal of Geoscience Education*, 50(2), 195-200.

Most researchers would agree that no data even from the most controlled experimental study are purely quantitative especially since the interpretation is often subjective (Libarkin & Kurdziel, 2002; Lincoln & Guba, 1985; Creswell, 2009). Additionally, because most data analysis is governed by statistics, the personal beliefs of the researcher will have minimal impact on study findings (Ary et al., 2006). That is, the context in which data was originally collected may be lost beneath the layers of statistical analysis inherent to quantitative research (Patton, 2002).

### **Rationale for Qualitative Research**

Qualitative purists (also called constructivists and interpretivists) reject what they call positivism. They argue for the superiority of constructivism, idealism, relativism, humanism, hermeneutics, and, sometimes postmodernism (Guba & Lincoln, 1989; Lincoln & Guba, 2010; Schwandt, 2000; Smith, 1983, 1984). These purists contend that multiple- constructed realities abound, that time and context-free generalizations are

neither desirable nor possible, that research is value-bound, that it is impossible to differentiate fully causes and effects, that logic flows from specific to general, and that knower and known cannot be separated because the subjective knower is the only source of reality (Guba, 1990). Guba (1990), a leading qualitative purist, contends that “accommodation between paradigms is impossible... we are led to vastly diverse, disparate, and totally antithetical ends” (p.81).

Qualitative research is an unconstrained approach to studying phenomena. A number of standard approaches to collecting and interpreting qualitative data exists (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). Qualitative studies seek to recreate the contextual setting as a framework. By necessity, the researcher determines the type of data gathered and the methods used to analyze those data. For the purpose of understanding the relationship within a setting, qualitative researchers’ data often consists of detailed field notes, observations, interviews, written documents, tape and video transcripts. Table 2 summarizes characteristics of some aspects of qualitative research.

Table 2

Characteristics of Some Aspects of Qualitative Research

Objective/Purpose	(a) Gain an understanding of underlying reasons and motivations based on perceptions and experiences (b) Provide insight into the problem (c) Become familiar with basic facts, setting and concerns
Sample	(a) Usually a sample population of the participants selected (b) Few cases, subjects
Data Collection Methods	(a) Researcher is primary instrument (b) Unstructured or semi-structured techniques could include observations, individual interviews, questionnaires, and focus groups (c) Historical – comparative research

Table 2 (continued)

Data Analysis	(a) Idiographic interpretation (concentrating unique traits of Individuals (b) Thematic analysis (relating to theme) (c) Manipulation of raw data is tied to data source
Validity/Reliability	(a) Based on trustworthiness (b) Verification (c) Established through logical reasoning and consensus (d) Statistics not required
Outcome	(a) Exploratory and/or investigative (b) Findings are not conclusive (c) Issues can be studied in detail
Limitations	(a) Results may be applicable to only a narrow range of settings and individuals (b) Often no connection to causes (c) Beliefs of researcher may influence the data interpretation (d) Training and skill of practitioner may bias results

Sources: Creswell, J. (2009). *Research design: Qualitative, quantitative, and mixed methods approaches* (3<sup>rd</sup> ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage Publications. Libarkin, J.C., & Kurdziel, J. P. (2002). Research methodologies in science education: Qualitative data. *Journal of Geoscience Education*, 50(2), 195-200.

Qualitative data is usually rich in details and context; interpretations are tied directly to the data source, and research validity and reliability are based upon the logic of the study's interpretations, rather than statistical tests (Libarkin & Kurdziel, 2002; Patton, 2002). For instance, many qualitative researchers believe that the best way to understand any phenomenon is to view it in its context. They see all quantification as limited in nature, losing the importance of the whole phenomenon.

For some qualitative researchers, the best way to understand what is going on is to immerse yourself into the culture or organizations you are studying. As a result, the training and the beliefs of the qualitative researcher may shape the findings and research structure. Qualitative research involves broadly stated questions about human experiences and realities, studied through sustained contact with people in their natural environments,

generating rich, descriptive data that helps us to understand their experiences and attitudes (Dingwall, Murphy, Watson, Greatbach, & Parker 1998; Rees, 1996). Rees (1996) asserts that rather than presenting the results in the form of statistics, qualitative research produces words in the form of comments and statements. Its aim is to find out people's feelings and experiences from their own point of view rather than from that of the researcher.

Qualitative research focuses on the context of a phenomenon, while quantitative research seeks to develop phenomenological generalizations that can be applied to a range of contexts (Libarkin & Kurdziel, 2002). Qualitative studies, therefore provide a window into contextual setting, and a logical picture of events within that setting (Patton, 2002). However, the attention to detail central to qualitative analysis typically means that the study conclusions will apply only to a very narrow range of circumstances.

### **Rationale for Mixed Methods**

The concept of mixed methods originated in 1959 when Campbell and Fisk used multiple methods to study the validity of psychological traits. They encouraged others to employ the concept of mixing field methods such as observations and interviews with traditional surveys (Sieber, 1973).

The mixed methods approach has emerged as a third research movement that moves past the quantitative and qualitative paradigm wars by offering a logical and practical alternative. A mixed methods design allows the researcher to mix or combine both quantitative and qualitative research techniques, methods, approaches, concepts or language into a single study (Onweugbuzie & Johnson, 2004).

Both sets of purists view their paradigm as the ideal for research, and they advocate the incompatibility thesis which posits that qualitative and quantitative research paradigms cannot and should not be mixed (Howe, 1988). Indeed, the two dominant research paradigms have resulted in two research cultures, “one professing the superiority of deep, rich observational data and the other the virtues of hard, generalizable... data” (Sieber, 1973, p. 1335). Although there are many important paradigmatic differences between qualitative and quantitative research, there are some similarities between the various approaches that are sometimes overlooked. For example, both quantitative and qualitative researchers “describe their data, construct explanatory arguments from their data, and speculate about why the outcomes they observed happened as they did” (Sechrest & Sidani, 1995, p. 78).

Although some researchers choose one research design over the other, there are some similarities between the various approaches. For example, both quantitative and qualitative researchers use empirical observations to address research questions. Additionally, both sets of researchers incorporate safeguards into their inquiries in order to minimize biases, trustworthiness and validity that exist in every research. All research in the social and behavior sciences represents an attempt to provide warranted assertions about human beings and the environment in which they live and evolve (Biesta & Burbles, 2003).

Many mixed methods purists believe that linking paradigms serves as an adequate foundation for concurrent or parallel types of designs, while paradigms may shift from a postpositivist perspective (quantitative) toward a constructivist (qualitative) worldview

(Creswell & Plano, 2007). Although not always possible to blend the two paradigms, qualitative analysis provides the context lacking in quantitative research, and quantitative analyses broaden the implications of a qualitative study (Libarkin & Kurdziel, 2001).

Onwuegbuzie and Johnson (2004), state the goal of mixed methods research is not to replace either of these traditional approaches but rather to draw from the strengths and minimize the weaknesses of both in single research studies and across studies.

Although some researchers choose one research paradigm over the other, the combination of statistical analysis with contextual data can incorporate the strengths of both methodologies (Sechrest & Sidana, 1995). During mixed methods, researchers collect multiple data using different methods, strategies and approaches in ways that the resulting mixture or combination is likely to result in complementary strengths and no overlapping weaknesses (Brewer & Hunter, 1989). Johnson and Turner (2003) contend that this is the fundamental principle of mixed methods. Rangin (1994) explained one way each style complements each other:

The key features common to all qualitative methods can be seen when they are contrasted with quantitative methods. Most quantitative data techniques are data condensers. They condense data in order to see the big picture. By contrast, qualitative methods are data enhancer. When data are enhanced, cases are seen more clearly (p. 92).

As an example, in a mixed methods research study, the researcher would qualitatively observe and interview, but supplement this with a closed-ended instrument to systemically measure certain factors considered important in the relevant research

literature. One of the goals of using mixed methods research is to draw from the strengths of both while minimizing their respective weaknesses. In this study, adding qualitative interviews as a manipulation check is a way to discuss directly the social justice issues under investigation and tap into individual perspectives. Both of these approaches would increase advocacy for marginalized groups, such as women, minorities, members of gay and lesbian groups and people with disability, and those who are poor (Mertens, 2003). In many cases the goal of mixing is not to search for corroboration but rather to expand ones' understanding (Onweugbuzie & Leech, 2004).

The mixed methods approach was the best choice to examine the teacher education program's commitment to addressing diversity but equally important commitment to developing culturally responsive preservice teachers an ideal that has some support in the literature but requires further empirical validation. The researcher followed the guidelines of a sequential explanatory mixed methods design. The implementation was QUANTITATIVE → qualitative in this two-phase study. Phase one was a quantitative study that looked at elementary preservice teacher candidates' perceptions of their teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers. The researcher deemed a survey to be appropriate for investigation of preservice teacher candidates' perceptions in the areas of culturally responsive teaching after experiencing diversity interventions. In the second phase, the researcher employed follow-up qualitative interviews to help define and give meaning to the quantitative data collected from the pre-survey and post-survey given to the elementary preservice teacher candidates. To assist the researcher to better understand what current culturally responsive teaching

practices are occurring in the teacher educator's classroom. The researcher interviewed teacher educators to triangulate the initial findings.

This mixed methods approach provided the researcher with in-depth answers to the research questions, going beyond the limitations of a single approach. For example, the quantitative results indicated that preservice teacher candidates believed they were professional prepared to address diversity and obtain knowledge of culturally responsive teaching practices through professional development. Whereas, the qualitative interviews allowed the researcher to examine how the professional preparation program develop culturally responsive teacher candidates to teach culturally diverse learners in the classroom. The mixing of the two types of data occurs at all three phases: the data collection, the data analyses, findings and conclusions. Using mixed methods, the researcher sought to quantify and qualitatively describe preservice teacher candidates' professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse students. The researcher proposes that these findings can guide important decisions about specific professional preparation classroom practices, pedagogy and policies related to curriculum.

### **Purpose of the Study**

The purpose of this study was to examine how the teacher preparation program impacts preservice teacher candidates' knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in their classrooms. The specific research questions are: (1) What are preservice teacher candidates' perceptions of their teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers?; (2) How do preservice teacher candidates' perceptions about culturally responsive teaching change as a result of their

student teaching experiences?; (3) How do teacher educators prepare elementary preservice teachers to instruct culturally diverse student populations?; and (4) How are teacher educators preparing elementary preservice teachers to work in urban educational settings? The following section gives detailed descriptions of the research design, research site, context of the study, participants, instrumentation, data collection procedures, data analyses and trustworthiness of the data.

### **Research Design**

The research design, according to Ary et al. (1996) is “a description of the procedures to be followed” (p.116) for answering research questions.

The current study utilizes a two-phase, sequential explanatory mixed methods design to collect and analyze data that will assist professional education programs in developing culturally responsive teachers. In the first phase, the role of the quantitative design in this research study was to explore preservice teacher candidates’ perceptions concerning their professional preparation to implement culturally responsive teaching practices in their classrooms. Information from this first phase was explored further in a second qualitative phase. In the second phase, the qualitative component of the design (i.e., focus groups) was used to build on the results of the initial quantitative results. The mixed methods design allows the researcher to combine the strengths of quantitative and qualitative methods of inquiry while simultaneously compensating for the known weaknesses of each approach (Punch, 1998). The following section describes the methodology for each phase of the study.

### **Research Site**

The study was conducted at a state regional university located in rural South Central Appalachia Kentucky. According to the institution's website, in fall 2009, the university enrolled 13,991 undergraduates and 2,277 graduates for a total of 16,268 students. For this study, the focus was on undergraduate students. The undergraduate enrollment by gender was 42.8 percent men and 57.2 percent women. The total ethnicity makeup was 89.8 percent White, non-Hispanic; 5.3 percent Black, non-Hispanic; 1.1 percent Hispanic; 1.2 percent Asian or Pacific Islander; 0.3 percent American Indian or Alaskan Native; 1.7 percent Race-Ethnicity Unknown; and 0.6 percent Non-Resident Alien. The ethnicity makeup of the rural town where the university is located is 93 percent White (including Hispanic), 5.96 percent African American, 1.1 percent Asian or Pacific Islander, 0.7 percent American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 0.6 percent Other (NCES, 2009).

### **Context of the Study**

A state regional university located in rural South Central Appalachia Kentucky was selected as the site for this study because of its strong, well-respected undergraduate professional education program. For admission to the professional education program, candidates must complete 60 hours of credit (excluding developmental level courses); passing score on one of the following tests: American College Test (ACT), PRAXIS I (PPST), Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT), Graduate Record Exam (GRE) or Miller Analogies Test (MAT); an overall 2.75 grade point average on undergraduate

coursework; satisfactory grade in EDF 103; and a grade of “C” or higher in EDF 203, MAT 105 or above, CSC 104 or CIS 212, CMS 100 or CMS 210, and ENG 101 and 102.

All teacher candidates in the professional education program are required to complete a set of common core courses including EDF 103, Introduction to Education; EDF 203, Schooling and Society; EDF 319, Human Development and Learning; EDF 413, Assessment in Education; and SED 410, Exceptional Learners in Inclusive Classrooms. Upon successful completion of the common core courses, candidates are given an overview of the professional qualities and expectation of a teacher educator. For this study, the focus was on undergraduate candidates in the elementary program.

During the freshman year, elementary candidates are advised to enroll in EDF 103, Introduction to Education. This course includes five hours of field experiences at a professional laboratory school setting located on the college campus. Candidates are required to observe elementary, middle, and high school students and teachers in a classroom setting. After each observation, candidates are required to complete a written field experience reflection based on the Kentucky Teacher Standards.

During the sophomore year, candidates enroll in EDF 203, Schooling and Society. In this course, candidates are required to complete 15 hours of field experiences that include mentoring and tutoring individual or small groups of students from diverse backgrounds at local sites that include both schools and community agencies. Later in the program, candidates are required to take EDF 319, Human Development and Learning. This course requires candidates to complete 15 hours of field laboratory experiences observing individual students’ human development and learning characteristics and

instructional practices as applied to the classroom setting. In SED 401, Exceptional Learners in Inclusive Classrooms, candidates are required to complete ten hours of field/clinical experiences in a classroom setting that serves students with learning and behavior disabilities. This course provides candidates with instructional modifications and management principles to accommodate exceptional learners in educational settings.

EDF 413, Assessment in Education, taught at the junior year, provides candidates with the skills, knowledge and dispositions to assess student learning. During the assessment course, candidates must demonstrate the ability to read school reports to determine the strengths and weaknesses of individuals and identified populations.

During the senior year, candidates are required to complete their methods block courses and student teaching. The methods block consists of four subject areas: math, science, social studies, and language arts. In methods, candidates learn practical application of theory, methods, and lesson planning. At the elementary level, candidates are required to complete 12 days in a practicum experience. During these placements, they must develop and teach lesson plans for math, science, social studies and language arts. Candidates teach these lessons to individual students, small groups and entire classes in a classroom setting under the supervision of a cooperating teacher. In addition, elementary education candidates spend two diversity outreach days presenting math and science concepts in area schools (urban and rural settings).

Prior to admission for student teaching, candidates must satisfactorily complete an online student teaching application, presentation portfolio, and disposition assessment form. Course syllabi and a student teaching handbook indicate that elementary education

preservice teacher candidates must satisfactorily complete 16 weeks of student teaching, eight weeks each in two different levels.

During student teaching, candidates must attend two diversity workshops presented by national and/or state experts in the area of cultural competence [diversity] and are given resources to use throughout their student teaching experience. The diversity seminars topics focus on differentiated instruction, diversity awareness, and culturally responsive teaching strategies and implementation of these practices in the classroom. All elementary candidates seeking initial certification must meet the requirements for admission to the professional education program, complete an approved teacher curriculum, and pass the required PRAXIS tests, PLT exam, or Kentucky test as determined by the major and/or minor.

## **Participants**

### **Preservice Teacher Candidates**

The participants for this study consisted of 82 elementary preservice teacher candidates enrolled in two professional education courses: a science, math, language arts and social studies methods block course and student teaching, consecutively.

Undergraduate and graduate students enrolled in other teacher education programs were excluded in the study.

### **Teacher Educators**

The teacher educators identified to participate in the study met the following criteria: (a) in good standing with the university, (b) an assistant professor or higher, (c) full-time faculty member working at the university, (d) having either taught a

professional education course or supervised field or clinical experiences required for preservice teacher candidates, and (e) willing to participate in a semi-structure interview or focus group.

### **Data Collection Procedures**

Six data instruments were used in this study: Demographic Background Questionnaire, Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale, Developing Culturally Responsive Teachers Questionnaire, Addressing Cultural Diversity Preparedness Survey, interviews and focus groups. Informed consent forms were administered to all participants. Information about each instrument and details on how they were developed is presented below:

Research Question 1: What are preservice teacher candidates' perceptions of their teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers? The data collection instruments were the demographic background questionnaire and Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale. The demographic questionnaire was developed by the researcher to examine the personal factors that influence PTCs knowledge of culturally responsive teaching. Included in the questionnaire are items eliciting information from PTCs pertaining to gender, ethnicity, cultural background, educational and community makeup.

The Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale (CRTPS) developed by the researcher was designed to measure participants' perceptions concerning their professional preparedness to implement culturally responsive teaching practices (Appendix C). The creation of this scale was guided by the work of Thompson and Cuseo

(2009), Villegas and Lucas (2002) and ongoing dialogues with preservice teachers and teacher educators who advocate culturally responsive teaching. The Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale identifies characteristics that define culturally responsive teachers: (a) sociocultural consciousness, (b) design culturally relevant curricula, (c) build effective cross-cultural communications, and (d) willing to engage in critical dialogue about diversity. These subscales were derived from the theoretical discussions, quantitative and qualitative studies in the following areas of research: culturally responsive pedagogy (Foster, 2001; Gay, 2010; Herrera, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995b; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), differentiated instructions (Gregory, 2003; Sprenger, 2003; Tomlinson, 1999), and effective teaching (Foster, 1994; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1994). The CRTPS was constructed specifically for this study. A copy of the CRTPS was sent to ten current or former professors who were selected because of their knowledge and expertise regarding cultural competence. They were asked to review the proposed instrument for clarity of instructions, preference for design, face validity, and other constructive suggestions to improve the survey design. The suggestions gathered from this process were considered in the final design decision. Checks on validity and reliability were limited to the responses from the expert panel and feedback from the pilot study sample. The scale, consisting of 21- items on a 10 point Likert type scale with a range of 0 (Not at all) to 10 (Exemplary). This instrument measured participants' perceptions concerning their professional preparedness to implement culturally responsive teaching practices (i.e., the teacher education program has prepared me to teach a diverse group of students, particularly of color).

Prior to data collection, participants were given a survey packet that contained the informed consent letter (Appendix A), the demographic background questionnaire (Appendix B) and the Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale (Appendix C). The researcher informed the elementary preservice teacher candidates that their participation in the study was voluntary, anonymous and that no adverse effects will result from their decision not to participate. A prepared statement, which explained the nature and purpose of the study, was read aloud to the participants. All participants willing to participate in the study read and signed the informed consent letter. Participants took approximately 20-25 minutes to complete the demographic questionnaire and the Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale. Upon completion of the questionnaires, participants returned the packet to the researcher following the class session.

Of the total sample (n=82), 74 (90.2 percent) were female and eight (9.8 percent) were male. Participants were asked to indicate their race/ethnicity: 80 (98 percent) indicated that they were White, non-Hispanic, one (1 percent) Black non-Hispanic and one (1 percent) other. The sample of elementary preservice teachers identified their hometown as: 44 (53.7 percent) were from a rural locale; eight (9.8 percent) were from an urban locale and 30 (36.6 percent) were from a suburban locale. When asked if their community was ethnically diverse, 60 (73.2 percent) said no and 22 (26.8 percent) said yes. When asked if the high school they attended was considered ethnically diverse, 73 (89 percent) said no and nine (11 percent) said yes. When asked if the teaching staff was considered ethnically diverse, 73 (89 percent) said no and nine (11 percent) said yes.

Table 3 summarizes the demographic and community background data of the elementary preservice teacher candidate participants in this study.

Table 3

Demographic Background Characteristics as a Percentage of the Sample

Characteristics	Elementary Preservice Teachers (n=82)
<b>Race/Ethnicity</b>	
White, non-Hispanic	97.6
Black, non-Hispanic	1.2
Other	1.2
<b>Gender</b>	
Female	90.2
Male	9.8
<b>Languages Spoken in Home</b>	
One	96.3
Two	3.7
<b>Community Locale</b>	
Rural (population less than 25,000)	53.7
Urban (population more than 50,000)	9.8
Suburban (larger than rural area, smaller than urban area)	36.6
<b>Diverse Community</b>	
Yes	24.4
No	75.6
<b>Diverse High School Population</b>	
Yes	26.8
No	73.2
<b>Diverse High School Staff</b>	
Yes	11.0
No	89.0

The first phase of the data analysis furnished descriptive statistics of preservice teacher candidates' responses to each statement on the CRTPS. The survey (CRTPS) was administered to the same group of elementary preservice teachers on two occasions, at the beginning of their methods block and at the end of their student teaching experiences.

Participants' responses to the CRTPS pre-survey and post-survey means were analyzed using the SPSS Statistics 18.0 Paired Samples t-Test to determine changes in gain scores between pre-survey and the post-survey; gain scores, sometimes identified as change scores, are the difference between pretest and posttest scores (Ary, et.al., 1996; Newman & Newman, 1994).

During the fall of 2009, preservice teacher candidates enrolled in the elementary methods block received coursework related to diversity, differentiated instructional strategies, practicum experiences, and participated in two diversity outreach days at a rural and urban educational setting. In the spring of 2010, candidates enrolled in ELE 499, student teaching, attended two diversity seminars while completing their student teaching experiences. The diversity seminars were given by national and/or state experts in the area of cultural competence [diversity] and given resources to use throughout their student teaching experiences. The diversity seminars focused on differentiated instruction, knowledge of culturally responsive teaching strategies and implementation of these practices in the classroom.

During the second phase of the CRTPS survey, participants were given two open response questions eliciting their cultural diversity experiences prior to the methods block and after student teaching while in the professional education program. The researcher used the Cycle of Diversity Appreciation holistic model adopted by the teacher education program to analyze participants' awareness level of cultural diversity (Thompson & Cuseo, 2009). The diversity appreciation process is a cycle comprising of four stages:

1. Awareness Stage: Candidates will become knowledgeable of concepts such as race, racism, discrimination and stereotyping... etc.
2. Acknowledgement Stage: Candidates will understand their role in assisting their students [particular students of color] to reach their full potential.
3. Acceptance Stage: Candidates will understand that teaching is both a personal and professional achievement and use that knowledge to educate all students in an equitable fashion.
4. Action Stage: Candidates will become cultural brokers for culturally responsive curriculum and instruction, classroom management practices, student assessment and professional development.

Research Question 2: How do preservice teacher candidates' perceptions about culturally responsive teaching change as a result of their student teaching experiences?

The data collection instrument consisted of a focus group interview. A focus group is a group interview (Fontana & Frey, 2000; Morgan, 1997). According to Patton (1990), "The focus group interview is, indeed an interview. It is not a discussion. It is not a problem-solving session. It is not a decision making group. It is an interview" (p.335). Fontana and Frey (2000) wrote: "The group interview is essentially a qualitative data gathering technique that relies upon the systematic questioning of several individuals simultaneously in a formal or informal setting" (p.651). Group interviews were selected for the purpose of triangulation and the addition of "depth, detail and meaning" (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005; Patton, 1990). Focus groups may be structured or semi-structured. A

semi- structured focus group with a predetermined set of questions guided by facilitators was used in this study (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The focus group questions were derived from the CRTPS items showing the greatest change between the pre-survey and the post-survey.

A purposive sampling (Creswell, 2009) of elementary preservice teacher candidates were selected to participate in the focus group. Of the original 82 elementary preservice teacher candidates that attended the diversity workshops, eight (seven females and one male) met the following criteria: (a) completed the pre- and post- survey (b) good academic standing, (c) student teaching in an urban educational setting, (d) currently teaching culturally diverse students, and (e) willing to participate in a follow-up focus group. Prior to the focus group session, the researcher met with the facilitator to go over the semi-structured interview protocol. The interview protocol was given and discussed with the facilitator prior to the group interview (see Appendix G). The facilitator was given a brief description of the purpose of the study, the methodology, and expectations. The three main themes of the focus group interview protocol instrument were: (a) preservice teacher candidates perceptions concerning their professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse students before student teaching; (b) preservice teacher candidates perceptions concerning their professional preparedness to teach in an urban educational setting after student teaching; and (c) are there any personal/professional factors that positively or negatively impact preservice teacher candidates confidence level in teaching culturally diverse students? The focus group was videotaped with the facilitator guiding the questions (Fontana & Frey, 2000). The

participants took approximately 90 minutes to complete the focus group. Focus group interviews were transcribed, analyzed and coded, looking for common themes and sub-themes (Bogdan & Bilken, 2007).

In the final phase of the study, a semi-structured questionnaire, survey, interviews and focus group were used to answer research questions three and four (a) How do teacher educators prepare elementary preservice teachers to instruct culturally diverse student populations? and (b) How are teacher educators preparing elementary preservice teachers to work in urban educational settings? Participants chosen were teacher educators that teach an undergraduate professional education course or supervise field or clinical experiences required of elementary preservice teacher candidates. The teacher educators were divided into two groups: foundation courses and methods block. The foundation course teacher educators were interviewed individually and the methods block course instructors were interviewed in a focus group. The Developing Culturally Responsive Teaching Interview Protocol (Appendix H), was constructed by the researcher specifically to probe into teacher educators' philosophies and practices about developing culturally responsive teachers. Since the researcher worked closely with the methods block instructors during the quantitative phase, every effort was made to honor the methods block teacher educators' privacy. Prior to the focus group session, the researcher met with a colleague to facilitate the DCRTIP group interview. The colleague was given a brief description of the purpose of the study, the methodology, and expectations. The open-ended questions included: (a) how is diversity addressed in your classroom, (b) how are culturally responsive teaching strategies discussed and/ or

modeled for preservice teachers, (c) how confident do you feel in your preservice teacher candidates' ability to teach culturally diverse students?; and (d) how are preservice teacher candidates guaranteed diverse field placements with culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse populations. In order to increase the response rate, the researcher chose to interview the foundation course instructors separately at their convenience. Participants were interviewed in their office. Before the interview began, participants were read the following prompt:

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the interview. The purpose of this interview is to examine how the teacher preparation program impacts preservice teacher candidates' knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in their classroom. I have prepared several questions regarding your professional education course(s), coursework, diverse field experiences, and your culturally responsive teaching philosophy and practices. At the end of the interview, I will provide you an opportunity to make any closing remarks regarding the issues discussed in this interview.

Each participant was assured full confidentiality. The tape-recorded interviews or telephone conversations ranged from 20 to 45 minutes. Participants' responses were typed verbatim and identifying marks changed to maintain their privacy. Within the framework of a qualitative approach, this semi-structure interview is phenomenological in nature as it seeks to understand the participant's point of view. According to Morgan (1997) an interview is a purposeful conversation, usually between two people but sometimes involving more, that is directed by the researcher eliciting information. In

addition, it allows for follow-up questions, and if necessary clarification and follow-up interviews may be scheduled at a later date if necessary.

Following the interviews, teacher educators were sent, by way of email, an informed consent cover letter (Appendix D), Developing Culturally Responsive Teachers Questionnaire (Appendix E) and Addressing Cultural Diversity Preparedness Survey (Appendix F) eliciting demographic characteristics such as race, gender, ethnicity, community makeup, and professional commitment to cultural diversity. The teacher educators were given a short time to respond before follow up emails and phone calls were made to encourage an acceptable response rate. All eleven teacher educators that were interviewed completed the questionnaire and survey representing a 100 percent response rate.

The semi- structured interviews and focus groups responses were transcribed, analyzed, and coded, looking for common themes and sub-themes (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007). These major themes were used to make constant comparisons for similarities and differences between elementary preservice teacher candidates and teacher educators. To double check the accuracy and reliability of the coding, an outside rater was used to recode the data. Only themes that were identified by both readers, independently, are considered common themes.

### **Trustworthiness of the Data**

The researcher used several methods to increase “trustworthiness” and to minimize the common threats to validity (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005). Trustworthiness of the data comes through providing credibility through the procedures followed in data

collection and analysis (Mertens, 1998). Developing interviews, focus groups, survey and questionnaire protocols provided the researcher the opportunity to address and represent all sides of the issue providing a solid foundation for believability, along with collecting very rich detailed descriptive data from the participants. A member check of the data was performed at the end of the interview, the researcher summarized what was said and asked if the notes accurately reflected the person's position (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). This validated participants' voices as they were represented in the data.

Data and findings were triangulated to establish validity. Four types of triangulations were used in this study: methodological triangulation, data triangulation, theory triangulation, and investigator triangulation to strengthen this study (Patton, 2002). In addition, the researcher used multiple methods to study the phenomenon of interest, which included official documents such as mission statement, NCATE Institutional Report, program descriptions/courses of study, and syllabi were collected. The researcher combined the data from all of these sources to support her findings. Because findings from this study were from a single university with predominantly White preservice teacher candidates and teacher educators, they may not be generalizable to all teacher education programs.

## **CHAPTER IV**

### **DATA ANALYSIS**

Yedlin (2005) states “A “good teacher” is able to look at diverse learners and see their areas of need but the teacher who is “culturally responsive” also sees their areas of strength” (p. 21). The purpose of this two-phase sequential mixed method design was to examine how the teacher education program impacts preservice teacher candidates’ knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in their classrooms. These results are organized based on the research questions: (1) What are preservice teacher candidates’ perceptions of their teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers?; (2) How do preservice teacher candidates’ perceptions about culturally responsive teaching change as a result of their student teaching experiences?; (3) How do teacher educators prepare elementary preservice teachers to instruct culturally diverse student populations?; and (4) How are teacher educators preparing elementary preservice teachers to work in urban educational settings?

In the first section, a background demographic discussion of participants is provided for the reader. In the second section, excerpts (qualitative findings) from written comments are presented to support the interpretation of data analyses (quantitative results). The quantitative results of the study are presented in the form of descriptive analyses to inspect item-specific means, pre- and post-survey results of the Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale (CRTPS), and independent sample t- test to explore the various experiences that may have an influence on the perceived readiness of preservice teachers to instruct culturally diverse students. In the second section, the

patterns found within interviews are explored and emergent themes were identified and described (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

This section begins with a brief demographic discussion to provide the reader with background information on the participants who took part of this study. The subjects (n=82) were elementary preservice teacher candidates (PTCs) enrolled in the Teacher Education Program at a state regional university located in rural, Central Appalachia. Of the total sample (n=82) participants, 74 (90.2 percent) were female and eight (9.8 percent) were male. Participants were asked to indicate their race/ethnicity: 80 (98 percent) were White, non-Hispanic, one (1 percent) was Black, non-Hispanic, and one (1 percent) was other.

Additionally, 11 teacher educators participated in the study. Of the total sample (n=11) participants, nine (82 percent) were female and two (18 percent) were male. Participants were asked to indicate their race/ethnicity: 11 (100 percent) indicated that they were White, non- Hispanic. Teacher educators were defined as the faculty members who teach a professional education course or supervise a field or clinical experiences required of all preservice teacher candidates.

### **Quantitative Results**

Research Question 1: What are preservice teacher candidates' perceptions of their teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers? The Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale (Appendix C) developed by the researcher was designed to measure preservice teacher candidates' perceptions concerning their professional preparedness to implement culturally responsive teaching practices in the

classroom. The scale included a comment section to ascertain PTCs perceptions regarding their professional preparedness to teach children of diversity. In analyzing the preservice teacher candidates written comments, this study revealed candidates beliefs about diversity appreciation and their perception of professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse student populations. Information gathered revealed that the majority of PTCs appreciation of diversity was at the awareness stage and later moved toward the diversity acceptance stage after their student teaching experiences (Thompson & Cuseo, 2009) .

Diversity Awareness: One candidate stated, “In our program, we discussed different ways to differentiate our instruction for diverse students” (i.e. special needs only). Several candidates mentioned going to schools for math and science outreach days where they interacted with diverse student populations [e.g., race, ethnicity and social economic] prepared them to teach children of diversity. One candidate mentioned, “I have learned that not all students from similar backgrounds are the same... diverse students are sometime the most intelligent and most interactive.” Another student stated, “We only covered race when we talk about diversity and that seemed limiting.”

Diversity Acceptance: One student mentioned that courses should require them to engage in co-curricular experiences that involve diversity. Another student stated, “I feel that diversity has been discussed in our classes, more needs to be done to prepare us for real-life diverse educational classrooms.” One teacher candidate mentioned the following:

I feel my student teaching seminars have helped prepare me for any diversity I might encounter as a teacher. I work with a wide spectrum of students on a daily basis and these professional development opportunities will help me in the future. I believe the College of Education needs to incorporate more diversity into the program by making students do observations at urban settings [actual names omitted]... they have a lot of diversity.

Another student teacher stated:

Honestly, I feel better prepared to go out to teach in diverse populations not because of the teacher education program, but because of the professional development. I don't understand why we don't have a multicultural class to introduce us to diversity and incorporate that knowledge and information into the rest of our classes in the program.

Several teacher candidates stated their desire to have additional diverse experiences prior to student teaching. Most agreed that the program discussed differentiated instruction approaches for diverse learners. One preservice teacher stated, "The most diverse learning experiences I've had come from my student teaching experiences... I do not feel like I was prepared to teach in a diverse classroom or how to handle these students."

The open response questions revealed preservice teacher candidates (a) personal conception of diversity, (b) experiences that influenced preservice teacher candidates' knowledge of diversity, and (c) perception regarding the degree their teacher education program prepared them to teach culturally diverse student populations. During the pre-

survey, when asked about their perceptions regarding their professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse students, the participants gave varied responses: “prepared”, “somewhat prepared”, “under-prepared” and “not prepared”. In contrast, after their student teaching experiences, when asked about their culturally diverse learning experiences, the majority of the participants responded that the program curricula and clinical/field experiences (e.g., diversity outreach days and student teaching) “prepared” them for teaching culturally diverse student populations.

This study revealed candidates wanted additional coursework and diverse field experiences related to diversity during their professional preparation program. From the preservice teacher candidates’ perceptions there appears to be a contrast between how well the teacher preparation program curricula and field experiences prepare them for teaching students of diversity.

### **Descriptive Results of Pre and Post-Surveys**

Item- specific means for the data on the Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale pre-survey and post- survey means are presented in Table 4. The preservice teacher candidates mean scores ranged from  $M= 5.51$  to  $M=8.43$  on the pre and post-surveys. Internal reliability for the 21- item measure was .95 as estimated by Cronbach’s Alpha. Preservice teachers’ perceptions concerning professional preparation to implement culturally responsive teaching practices in their classrooms were highest for “emphasized that all students’ learning styles are different within the same racial or ethnic group” ( $M=8.18$ ,  $SD=2.06$ ); and “stressed the need to avoid categorizing individuals based on their race” ( $M=8.43$ ,  $SD= 1.40$ ). Item specific means were lowest

for preservice teachers' perceptions concerning professional preparedness to: "take a leadership role with respect to diversity in their professional field" (M=5.51, SD=2.45); and "encouraged me to engage in volunteer experiences that allow me to work in diverse settings" (M=5.57, SD=2.47). SPSS 18.0 statistical software was used for these preliminary analyses.

Table 4

Pre- and Post-Survey Means and Standard Deviations of Items on the CRTPS

Items	Pre-Survey		Post-Survey	
	M	SD	M	SD
Prepared me to take a stand against prejudice by constructively disagreeing with those who make stereotypical statements	6.94	1.93	7.94	1.64
Prepared me to take a stand for social justice, human rights and equal opportunity for all human beings	6.83	2.00	8.10	1.45
Addressed racial, ethnic, socioeconomic class, gender, special education and sexual orientation pedagogical skills as it relates to student development	7.23	2.01	7.85	1.40
Raised my awareness for the need to attend professional development activities or events regarding teaching and learning about diversity	7.00	2.11	8.10	1.35
Allowed me to experience both educational and ethical cultural diversity values other than my own	6.71	2.24	7.80	1.70
Provided opportunities (i.e., classroom discussions, events, trainings or workshops) to discuss my personal diverse field experiences	6.50	2.22	7.70	1.60
Prepared me to demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of cultural awareness	6.88	1.89	7.80	1.40
Prepared me to utilize a student's social and cultural heritage as it relates to student teaching	6.72	1.86	7.65	1.60

Table 4 (continued)

Intentionally created opportunities to teach individuals from diverse groups	6.24	2.26	7.54	2.00
Encouraged me to engage in volunteer experiences that allow me to work in diverse settings	5.57	2.47	7.00	2.20
Provided me with opportunities to observe students from diverse backgrounds and cultures	6.85	2.21	7.50	1.81
Enhanced my interpersonal communication skills when interacting with people from different cultures	6.40	2.08	7.30	2.00
Given me the opportunity to participate in group discussions about race, class and gender	5.90	2.32	7.15	1.90
Inspired me to take a leadership role with respect to diversity in my professional field	5.51	2.45	7.34	1.90
Stressed the need to avoid categorizing individuals based on their race	8.00	1.91	8.43	1.40
Prepared me to collaborate with colleagues from diverse backgrounds despite our racial or cultural differences	6.99	2.07	7.40	2.00
Prepared me to teach a diverse group of students, particularly those of color	6.26	2.36	7.40	2.00
Emphasized that all students' learning styles are different within the same racial or ethnic group	8.18	2.06	8.17	1.70
Prepared me to incorporate multicultural education practices into the curriculum	6.80	2.13	7.60	1.50
Stressed the importance of effectively communicating with parents from backgrounds different than my own	7.02	2.03	7.60	1.60
Prepared me to appreciate and understand how global educational issues are relevant to my education	6.49	2.12	7.40	1.75

### **Correlational Results of Pre and Post-Surveys**

Prior to student teaching, preservice teacher candidates were given the pre-survey and after their student teaching experiences the post-survey [same instrument] was given. The researcher utilized the CRTPS post-survey to measure elementary preservice teacher candidates' perceptions regarding the degree to which they felt professional prepared to teach culturally diverse student populations after their student teaching experiences. Researcher findings indicate that participants' perception regarding the teacher preparation program preparedness of culturally responsive preservice teacher candidates' met expectations.

In this study, participants' responses to the pre-survey and post-survey CRTPS means were analyzed using the SPSS Statistics 18.0 Paired Samples t-Test to determine changes in mean scores between pre-survey and the post-survey; mean scores, sometimes identified as change scores, are the difference between a pre-survey and a post-survey (Ary et al., 1996; Newman & Newman, 1994). The null hypothesis is that there is not a statistically significant difference between the means of the pre-survey and post-survey. The alternative hypothesis is that there is a statistically significant difference between the means of the pre-survey and post-survey. Table 5 contains the descriptive statistics for both pre-survey and post-survey variables. Table 5 indicates, the post-survey mean scores were higher.

Table 5

Paired Samples Statistics for Survey Scores			
	Mean	N	Std. Deviation
Post-	7.64	82	1.28
Pre-	6.07	82	1.40

In the second phase of data analysis, correlation coefficients were computed to examine the relationship between the pre-survey and post-survey. The results suggest that the pre- and post- surveys were interrelated ( $r = .29$ ,  $p = .009$ ). In order to find the effect size of the pre- and post-survey, the researcher subtracted the grand mean of the pre-survey group ( $M = 6.72$ ) from the grand mean of the post-survey group ( $M = 7.66$ ) divided by the pooled standard deviation ( $SD = 2.13$ ) of the pre-survey group. In this study, the effect size was  $+ 0.44$  (i.e., 44 percent of a standard deviation) a finding statistically significant and educationally significant. Table 6 reports the paired samples correlations between the pre-survey and post-survey variables.

Table 6

Paired Samples Correlations			
	N	Correlation	Sig.
Post- & Pre-Survey Scores	82	.29	.009

In the third phase of data analysis, the results of the paired samples t-test support this prediction ( $t(81) = 8.90$ ,  $p < .05$ ). The results of the CRTPS survey indicate the difference between the pre-survey and post-survey is statistically significant. These findings suggest that the teacher preparation curricula coursework and field experiences positively impacted elementary preservice teacher candidates' preparedness level to teach

culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. Table 7 reports results from the paired samples t-test descriptive statistics for both variables.

Table 7

Paired Samples t-test	T	Df	Sig. (2-tailed)
Post- & Pre-Survey Scores	8.93	81	.000

### **Descriptive Results of Demographics**

The preservice teacher candidates' demographic background questionnaire was designed to collect data on variables research has proven are relevant to teachers' knowledge of and willingness to implement culturally responsive teaching practices. It consists of 24 multiple choice questions including gender, ethnicity, community locale, ethnic composition of the school district, family composition, income status and racial composition of the university.

This study revealed that community locale, cultural diversity experiences and gender do not play a vital role in shaping how preservice teacher candidates viewed culturally responsive teaching and implementation of these practices in their classroom. With regards to "gender", the strongest disagreement was this statement: "I believe the education program has prepared me to take a stand against prejudice by constructively disagreeing with those who make stereotypical statements."

The information collected provided insight into the relevance of the variables for this study (e.g., gender, community locale, student ethnic background experiences, and

parental household income status). Research emphasizes the influence of exposure to diverse people as one indicator of overall attitudes toward diverse students in school settings (Middleton, 2002; Powell, Sobel, & Hess, 2001; Ukpokodu, 2004).

The survey was administered to elementary preservice teacher candidates in an effort to obtain perceptions of their professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse students. Initial findings indicated that the teacher education program is developing PTCs self-awareness toward addressing diversity, particularly an awareness of stereotypes and prejudices toward culturally diverse populations. Post student teaching, the researcher's findings indicated that preservice teacher candidates' cultural awareness moved toward cultural acceptance. Overall, the researcher found that PTCs desired additional opportunities to interact with students who differ culturally, ethnically and linguistically prior to student teaching.

### **Qualitative Findings**

#### **Preservice Teacher Candidates Beliefs about their Professional Preparation**

Research Question 2: How do preservice teacher candidates' perceptions about culturally responsive teaching change as a result of their student teaching experiences? In order to respond to this question, a purposive sampling (Creswell, 2009) of elementary preservice teacher candidates were selected to participate in the focus group. Of the original 82 elementary preservice teacher candidates that attended the diversity workshops, eight (seven females and one male) met the following criteria: (a) completed the pre- survey and post-survey (b) good academic standing, (c) student teaching in an urban educational setting, (d) currently teaching a culturally diverse student, and (e)

willing to participate in a follow up focus group. The researcher used pseudonyms for each of the PTCs to protect their anonymity. When asked “What do you think of when I use the phrase culturally diverse students?” the PTCs participating in the study had varying levels of points of view in terms of their knowledge of cultural diverse populations. Five participants responded they think of ethnicity, religion, social economic status, non- English speaking, and academically gifted. During the interview, Emily reported that she grew up in Southeastern Kentucky in a K—12 school with only one African American student in the whole building. “My family would travel to the next city to go to the mall or Wal-Mart and I would see diversity, but it really surprised me when I went to my college classrooms [to see] how diverse it was because I didn’t grow up with that.” Becky described her diverse experience through a busing experience. She stated, “The school I went to was really far out in the country and I lived in the city. Because of redistricting and everything... my one little street traveled 30 minutes to school... It felt like [silence]. I went to school with all these kids that lived out in the country... the majority of us were white but there were African Americans.”

The participants’ personal attitudes and beliefs about their professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse students were grouped by emergent themes: preparation, classroom management, and communication. Due to the open-format of the questions, PTCs reported identifiable information about their diverse educational settings. These identifiable descriptions about their urban educational settings have been altered to maintain confidentiality.

### **Emergent Themes about Preparation.**

According to the National Council of Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), teacher education programs' conceptual framework should clearly articulate its professional commitment to prepare teacher candidates to support learning for all students and provide a conceptual understanding of how knowledge, dispositions, and skills related to diversity are integrated across the curriculum, instruction, field experience, clinical practice, assessments, and evaluations (NCATE, 2010). Gay (2010) reported that part of the responsibility of teacher preparation programs is to prepare PTCs to work effectively with culturally and linguistically diverse students.

This section addresses participants' perception concerning their professional preparedness to teach in a diverse educational setting. Their overall professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse students was explored, and addressed from the participants' perspectives. When asked "What professional preparation did you receive to prepare you to teach culturally diverse students prior to methods?" Four of the participants mentioned that they were required to read articles on diverse learners [e.g., special needs, cultural diverse and low socio-economic status] and write a reflection." Two students recall talking in class about providing accommodations for diverse learners." Becky asserts, "We read research articles that address different learning needs... diverse groups and Title I schools." Emily mentioned, "In most cases, we would end up having discussions about our own cultural norms...because we have few diverse students in our program" Six of the participants expressed they learned how to

differentiate instruction in small groups... but lacked opportunities to teach diverse groups prior to student teaching. April shared,

I didn't feel comfortable teaching students of color prior to student teaching. ... Prior to college, I wasn't exposed to people of color ... I came from a family of teachers, that taught at schools in eastern Kentucky that are predominately white. She stated that she learned the importance of addressing diversity in class, but wasn't required to interact with culturally diverse students prior to student teaching.

Hillary mentioned, "I agree... I completed my hours back home in eastern Kentucky." She also stated that she wasn't exposed to any diverse schools until her classroom management course that required her to complete three hours of observation.

Emily mentioned,

In our classes we were given the knowledge to teach diverse students... and the things we needed to do to accommodate different situations. Actually having the ability to teach and getting the opportunity didn't happen until I was actually placed in my first placement.

In agreement, George [the only male participant] stated, "I think we learned the theory from the textbooks, but lacked experience [deep breath]." Jen [chimes in] responded, "Yeah, I think classroom management was a lot harder for me. I had the content knowledge to teach... but when it came to having them sit down and pay attention... it got a lot harder." Two participants mentioned learning Harry Wong techniques, but

realized they didn't have a plan B. All of the participants expressed a great deal of frustration and feelings of being overwhelmed.

The professional education program affords candidates a wealth of opportunities to engage in course activities and field experiences. From the participants' perceptions there appears to be a contrast between how well the teacher preparation programs curricula and field experiences challenged them to confront diversity issues and examine them in light of their own experience and philosophy. Candidates desired more opportunities during their preparation program to interact with students who differ culturally, ethnically and linguistically to adequately prepare them to teach culturally diverse students.

#### **Emergent Themes about Classroom Management.**

According to Siwatu (2007), culturally responsive teachers consciously apply their knowledge base of their students' cultural background and home life to create a positive classroom environment through four processes: (a) create a culturally compatible learning environment that is warm and supportive, (b) minimize the effects of the cultural mismatch, (c) effectively communicate with students, and (d) develop a community of learners.

When asked "What professional preparation did you receive to prepare you to teach culturally diverse students after methods?" Cathy reflected on her level of preparedness and related it to her first placement experiences:

One of the things I remember thinking during my first placement was why we didn't get more in class experience during classroom management and more

culturally responsive teaching skills... like knowing how to teach diverse learners in our classroom management course. In class we did whole group lessons and tons of small groups activities, but not a lot of real-life experiences.

During the focus group, participants reported that classroom management was a major concern. They believed their classroom management preparation provided theory without real-life practice. That is, few participants felt that they were prepared to effectively teach and meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of their culturally diverse classrooms. All of the participants acknowledge that this topic [culturally responsive teaching] was one that they had definitely thought about on more than one occasion.

Several of the PTCs mentioned that their methods course required them to participate in a two-day math and science fun day at a diverse educational setting [PTCs visited a rural and urban school setting]. Four of the PTCs felt that the math and science fun day helped somewhat to prepare them to teach culturally diverse students. April commented, “We should have some more interactions with culturally diverse students... maybe more observations in diverse schools, before being let loose to go out and teach.” Hillary stated, “I wish we could have more experience in a diverse classroom through the entire teacher education program to have a better understanding... and an opportunity to become confident in teaching diverse learners.” Four of the participants felt that math and science fun day provided them with a baseline of knowledge and preparedness to teach culturally diverse students. April stressed:

I don't mean to sound like a broken record [everybody laughs], but I agree with everybody.... In Methods, I really would have liked to be placed [practicum experience] in a diverse school just so you get a taste of reality before student teaching.... It was frustrating to teach sometimes because it was hard to manage the class.

Based on researcher's findings implications for the professional education program include providing PTCs extensive opportunities to develop diversity awareness and multicultural approaches recognized as "best practices" necessary to teach culturally and linguistically diverse student populations.

### **Emergent Themes about Building Relationships.**

Gay (2002) asserted cornerstones of culturally responsive teaching in the classroom include: the power of caring, culture and communication, ethnic and cultural diversity representation in the curriculum and cultural congruity in teaching and learning. Cathy confirmed this philosophy in describing how she initiated and cultivated out of classroom relationships with her students to get to know them personally:

I try to get to know as many students as possible on a personal level... I learned how important it is to create a family environment. In many cases this eliminates those unexpected behavioral problems that are more common in culturally diverse settings.

Becky concurs, "I agree, that classroom community is very important... If you don't have a relationship with your students then it is hard for them to respect you as a teacher.

April reflects on her student teaching experience:

In my second placement, my cooperating teacher would provide me with constructive criticism. She would break it down to me... This is what you did correct. This is what you need to work on... This is what you did wrong. We all need somebody that's going to break it down so that we can learn.

George mentioned in his diverse school he had a little United Nation. He stated, "I noticed that each culture has different characteristics... and react differently to different situations." During the interview, he reflected on a student teaching experience:

In my third grade class I have African Americans, Saudi Arabians, Muslims and Hispanic... the first couple of weeks you spend getting acclimated to the classroom... learning about the different cultures and effectively teaching them [students]... then I'm pulled out.

Five participants' echoed similar sentiments such as: open communication, making connections with the students and collaborating with the cooperating teacher is the key in building a positive classroom environment for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Tomorrow's teachers are asked to deliver high quality instruction to a student population that is becoming increasingly diverse. Similar to current research, these initial findings indicated that PTCs were under-prepared to teach in a culturally and linguistically diverse classroom. Researchers have documented the need and importance of preparing highly qualified teachers who are also culturally competent and efficacious (Guyton & Wesche, 2005; Siwatu, 2007; Taylor & Sobel, 2001). According to the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (2010), culturally competent

teachers are those who acquire and apply the knowledge, skills, and dispositions, necessary to help all students learn. What does this mean for professional education programs? Throughout the program, course curriculum and field experiences should mirror the ethnic and cultural diversity of the student populations that exist in today's classrooms. The researcher asserts that effectively teaching students from culturally diverse backgrounds requires the development of culturally responsive teachers.

### **Teacher Educator's Beliefs about Preparing Preservice Teacher Candidates**

For question 3 and 4, data were analyzed using Glaser and Strauss (1967) constant comparative method. Teacher educators' semi-structured interviews and focus group transcripts were examined several times by the researcher for trends, patterns, contradictions and various categories. To double check the accuracy and reliability of the coding, an outside reader was used to recode the data. There were three common themes that were identified by both readers, independently: preparation, addressing diversity, and culturally responsive teaching theory and practice. The following section addresses research questions three and four: How do teacher educators prepare elementary preservice teachers to instruct culturally diverse student populations? How are teacher educators preparing elementary preservice teachers to work in urban educational settings? The researcher used pseudonyms for each of the Teacher Educators to protect their anonymity.

## **Emergent Themes about Preparation**

The Addressing Cultural Diversity Preparedness Survey (Appendix F) developed by the researcher was designed to examine the professional education programs commitment to cultural diversity. The Addressing Cultural Diversity Preparedness Survey revealed faculty have experience and knowledge related to preparing candidates to work with diverse learners, including English Language Learners and students with exceptionalities.

When asked how satisfied are you with the cultural elements and offerings [concerts, productions, exhibits etc.] at this institution. Ten participants were satisfied or very satisfied with the cultural elements and offerings at this institution and one was dissatisfied. When asked “How satisfied are you with the cultural professional development offerings at this institution?” Five participants were satisfied or very satisfied with the cultural professional development offerings at this university and six was indifferent or dissatisfied. When asked “How satisfied are you with your department in preparing teacher candidates to teach culturally diverse students?” Five participants were satisfied or very satisfied with the professional preparation [department] of preparing preservice teachers to teach culturally diverse students and six participants were dissatisfied.

This survey revealed that faculty attended conferences and training seminars related to diversity, and many are former P-12 classroom teachers and post-secondary education faculty prior to employment at this institution. According to faculty, the College of Education co-sponsors a two day annual diversity conference and an annual

Dean's Lecture Series that focuses on transition issues for students with disabilities and at risk behaviors. The researcher's findings indicate that the institution actively supports faculty professional development related to diversity.

### **Emergent Themes about Addressing Diversity**

One's belief drives one's instructional practices. This study is crucial for teacher education programs seeking to implement a seamless diversity curricula and field experiences that prepare preservice teacher candidates to teach culturally diverse student populations. From teacher educators' viewpoints, diversity is addressed in the teacher preparation programs curricula but lack opportunity for diverse field experiences.

Through teacher education programs curricula and field experiences, preservice teacher candidates need to become more culturally aware and gain new perspectives regarding pluralism (Banks, 2001; Sleeter, 1995; Ukpokodu, 2003; Van Hook, 2002; Vaughan, 2002; Weist, 1998). Across the nation teacher education programs strive to find effective methods to better prepare preservice teacher candidates to teach in diverse educational settings. Thus, the responsibility of developing culturally responsive preservice teacher candidates to teach diverse populations lies with teacher preparation programs.

When asked "How is diversity addressed in your classroom?" all of the teacher educators stated diversity is interwoven in the content. Professor Black stated, In their first foundation course, PTCs are required to complete a 500 word reflection about a time they had to work with someone [culturally diverse] to complete a goal. In the next foundation course, PTCs are required to debate a school law diversity issue. Five of the

teacher educators mentioned that in their classrooms PTCs are required to read research articles and case studies that address special needs, cultural diversity, ESL, and Gifted learners. Professor Brown stated, “We have some discussions about diversity... I’m not sure it’s really a topic PTCs understand at this point because... many of them [preservice teacher candidates] come from similar backgrounds where not a whole lot of cultural differences exist.”

According to teacher educators, addressing diversity in the professional education program included coursework and minimal diverse field experiences opportunities. In EDF 103, candidates developed an awareness of diverse and exceptional populations through coursework. In subsequent courses, candidates increased their direct work with students in classrooms, proceeding from tutorial/mentoring experiences to working with students in small groups and teaching lessons with students from diverse groups. Teacher educators indicated that multiple strategies are used to evaluate preservice teacher candidates’ performances during classroom activities, field experiences and clinical placements. Preservice teacher candidates collect data on student learning during field experiences. Teacher educators and preservice teacher candidates confirmed that samples of student work are selected by candidates to be included in their electronic portfolio with a rationale for each selection. Table 8 summarizes courses curriculum that address diversity.

Table 8

## Matrix of Courses Curriculum That Address Diversity

Courses	Field Experiences Or Coursework	Field/Clinical Hours	Comment
EDF 103, Introduction to Education	(a)observing (b)diversity interaction writing assignment (c)social justice issue video	5 hours	Candidates initial field experiences with students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds are minimal
EDF 203, Schooling and Society	(a)tutoring, mentoring (b) rural and urban settings (c) discussion of legal and historical issues of social and economic justice as they have impacted schools	15 hours	Candidates tutoring and mentoring with diverse populations is limited due to locale of university
EDF 319, Human Development and Learning	(a)Identify the role of student human development in teaching and learning (b) case study	15 hours	Candidates observe and analyze student behavior in the classroom
SED 401, Exceptional Learners in Inclusive Classrooms	(a)discussion of legal mandates such as IDEA (b)use of accommodations or adaptations for diverse learners	10 hours	Candidates write instructional objectives that address the cognitive needs of diverse learners (disabilities and giftedness)
Methods	(a) practicum (b) differentiated instruction (c) culturally diverse field experiences in a rural and urban setting (small groups)	12 days	Candidates interact with diverse student populations including race, ethnicity, disability and socioeconomic class

Table 8 (continued)

ELE 499, Student Teaching	(a) implements lesson plans that address the diverse needs of students (b) uses multiple assessment that address diverse learners (c) assessment of student learning (d) two diversity seminars	16 weeks	Candidates are provided with cultural responsive teaching strategies and resources (b) Candidates exhibit an appreciation and value of diversity
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### **Emergent Themes about Culturally Responsive Teaching**

According to the No Child Left Behind legislation, teachers should possess specific skills that are effective in teaching academic subjects to diverse learners (United States Department of Education, 2004). In response, a group of scholars and researchers have been documenting the practices of teachers who have been successful teaching students from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds. Stemming from both quantitative and qualitative inquiries; researchers have described the pedagogy of many effective teachers as being culturally responsive (Foster, 1994; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Culturally responsive teaching is an approach to teaching and learning that (a) uses students' cultural knowledge, experiences, prior knowledge, and individual learning preferences as a conduit to facilitate the teaching-learning process, (b) incorporates students' cultural orientations to design culturally compatible classroom environments, (c) provides students with multiple opportunities to demonstrate what they have learned using a variety of assessment techniques, and (d) provides students with the knowledge

and skills needed to function in mainstream culture while simultaneously helping students maintain cultural identity, native language, and connection to their culture (Siwatu, 2007).

When asked “How confident do you feel in your preservice teacher candidates’ ability to teach culturally diverse students?” Ten teacher educators believed the PTCs aren’t ready to teach culturally diverse students. In agreement Professor Parks stated, “We talk it, we teach it, but there should come a time when they have to experience it. That is where we have difficulty.” Two of the professors commented that the teacher education program is overwhelmingly white similar to their home environment and the schools they are placed to complete field experiences. According to Professor Black, in class many PTCs express ignorance about the issue of diversity. During the interview, he reflected on a class activity,

In class my PTCs watch a video called “Living the Story” that depicts Kentucky civil rights movement where people from their hometown [rural Appalachia] were perpetuating racial stereotypes and injustice to other people [culturally diverse populations]. It is my experience that the PTCs haven’t had a whole lot of exposure to people of color.

Professor Smith concurs, “I don’t think they get it. I don’t think they will get it until they are in their own classroom.”

When asked does your course requires preservice teacher candidates’ to complete diverse field placements hours? Eight of the professors mentioned that their course requires field experiences. Dr. Black asserts, “Yes, we require field experience hours

but... do we require that those take place in a diverse setting is a combative point... I'm not sure how to monitor that." One professor mentioned, "Yes, I require them to complete three hours... they must observe a student interacting with another student [culturally diverse]. Four of the teacher educators mentioned that it's very difficult to place students in a diverse setting in a predominately white, rural Appalachia area. Four teacher educators have created an opportunity for the PTCs to interact with culturally diverse populations. One approach is Math and Science Fun Days. Professor Campbell explains, "We do our best to place our PTCs in a very intense situation for two days that is different from where they are from." Although professors provided two diversity outreach experience days, two of the professors believed it perpetuated stereotypes that PTCs bring with them. Professor Parks stated, "When they left the school [culturally diverse school] it was almost like a fear factor... this one day drop in and take out experience was an eye opener for many PTCs." Another approach mentioned by Professor Clay is the required case study project where they pick one student that can benefit from some extra help. She commented, "I think they are thinking about diversity... Their minds are now at the developmental stage."

When asked "Do you have any suggestions for better preparing our preservice teacher candidates to teach in a diverse setting?" Two of the professors mentioned restructuring the teacher education curriculum to ensure that PTCs are provided diverse field experiences throughout the program. Professor Campbell mentioned an urban project where PTCs are required to complete part of their student teaching in an urban educational setting. He asserts,

We should encourage our PTCs who are from rural areas to participate in an urban project during student teaching... this will prepare them to come out to go anywhere... from the very most rural to the deepest part of inter-city and anything in between.

Professor Black concluded, “It must be a deliberate act... We should offer courses that address diversity and provide real-life experiences... if we are truly committed to our conceptual framework.”

It is important to note what this study does and does not include. The researcher focused only on the preparation of elementary teacher candidates for teaching diverse students at a rural, Central Appalachia university. Middle grades and secondary teacher candidates were not included in this study. The researcher findings indicate that the issue of diversity is generally being addressed in the teacher preparation program course curricula. That is, diversity has been addressed through class discussions, assignments and differentiated instruction practices in the teacher education program.

Data obtained from interviews, focus groups, survey and open-ended questions revealed common themes among preservice teacher candidates and teacher educators such as: appreciation of diversity, culturally responsive teaching practices, and diversity interventions (i.e., trainings). The responses to the survey and open-ended questions indicate that preservice teacher candidates’ learning and understanding of culturally responsive teaching practices occurred through coursework, field/clinical experiences, and diversity interventions. The majority of preservice teacher candidates’ responses to the pre-survey appeared to be culturally sensitive and responsive to working with diverse

students. According to the post survey responses, preservice teacher candidates in ELE 499 (student teaching) were willing to work with culturally diverse students. Teacher educators' responses to the questionnaire, interview protocol and survey support the Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Survey findings that teaching of diversity to preservice teachers is being addressed in the teacher education program. However the implementation of these culturally responsive teaching practices is limited due to the locale of the university.

Pertinent to the current study, there are significant relationships between perceiving interventions (e.g. diversity outreach days and diversity seminars) as important and feelings that their [preservice teacher candidates] teacher preparation program supports/promotes diversity instruction and between how much they emphasize diverse field experiences in their courses. In addition, there is a significant relationship between how much they [teacher educators] think their institution emphasizes diversity and how much they emphasize diversity in their courses.

In the next chapter, the discussion and implications of the findings will be presented. In addition, limitations and recommendations for future work will be discussed.

## **CHAPTER V**

### **FINDINGS AND CONCLUSIONS**

This study was designed to examine how the teacher preparation program impacts preservice teacher candidates' knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in their classrooms. The research questions that guided the study were: (1) What are preservice teacher candidates' perceptions of their teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers?; (2) How do preservice teacher candidates' perceptions about culturally responsive teaching change as a result of their student teaching experiences?; (3) How do teacher educators prepare elementary preservice teachers to instruct culturally diverse student populations?; and (4) How are teacher educators preparing elementary preservice teachers to work in urban educational settings? This study is significant because it is the first sequential mixed methods design that investigates PTCs knowledge of culturally responsive teaching practices and their professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse students. The researcher concludes that findings to these research questions will contribute to the scholastic knowledge base of teacher education programs preparing preservice teacher candidates to teach culturally and linguistically diverse student populations. This chapter is divided into four sections: findings and conclusions, limitations, future implications and recommendations for further research.

## Findings of the Study

The first research question, “What are preservice teacher candidates’ perceptions of their teacher education program in developing culturally responsive teachers?” The Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale (CRTPS), developed by the researcher, measured preservice teacher candidates’ perceptions concerning their professional preparedness to implement culturally responsive teaching practices. The scale consists of 21- items on a ten point Likert type scale with a range of 0 (Not at all) to 10 (Exemplary) and two open response questions (Appendix C).

Item- specific means for the data on the Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale are presented in Table 4. The preservice teacher candidates mean scores ranged from M= 5.51 to M=8.43 on the CRTPS pre-survey instrument. In sum, the item specific mean suggested that PTCs awareness of diversity and knowledge of culturally responsive teaching practices are addressed in the professional education program. In analyzing the preservice teacher candidates written comments, this study revealed how diversity is being addressed in the program:

- Emphasizing that all students’ learning styles are different within the same racial or ethnic background.
- Addressing racial, ethnic, socioeconomic class, gender , special education and sexual orientation pedagogical skills as it relates to student development
- Stressing the need to avoid categorizing individuals based on their race

The researcher hypothesized PTCs perception concerning their professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse student populations would be positively impacted through coursework, assignments and diversity interventions. The results of the paired samples t-test support this prediction ( $t(81) = 8.90, p < .05$ ). The results of the test indicate the difference between the pre-survey and post-survey is statistically significant. These findings indicate that the teacher preparation program addresses diversity in their course curricula, field/clinical experiences, and through short-term interventions (e.g. diversity outreach days and diversity seminars). Researcher findings indicate that the majority of elementary preservice teacher candidates' surveyed felt professional prepared to teach culturally diverse student populations.

The second research question was “How do preservice teacher candidates’ perceptions about culturally responsive teaching change as a result of their student teaching experiences?” During the senior year, elementary preservice teacher candidates are enrolled in two semester long courses [methods block and student teaching] with short-term interventions (e.g., diversity outreach days, and diversity seminars) addressing diversity in the classroom.

The purposive sample population of eight elementary preservice teachers that agreed to participate in the focus group provided emergent themes based on their teacher education program professional preparation in developing CRTs. The sample of elementary preservice teachers interviewed during their professional semester (student teaching) felt less efficacious in their professional preparedness to teach culturally diverse students intellectually, socially and emotionally by using cultural referents in

their classrooms, specifically students of color. When asked how prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students prior to methods, the majority of PTCs answered ‘somewhat prepared’. One candidate mentioned, “A lot of my observations didn’t take place in diverse schools so I wasn’t comfortable.” As a group, candidates’ reported that the classroom management course was the first course that required them to complete diverse field experience hours. During the focus group, many preservice teacher candidates voiced their concerns about working with diverse populations due to limited diverse field experiences prior to student teaching.

When asked “What professional preparation did you receive to prepare you to teach culturally diverse students after methods block?” the majority of the participants answered coursework, field/clinical experiences, and interventions that addressed diversity. In analyzing the preservice teacher candidates’ responses, this study revealed that courses with diversity coursework, field /clinical experiences and interventions are more likely to increase PTCs appreciation of diversity but have minimal effect on their beliefs about teaching culturally diverse students. For greater understanding and communication with diverse student populations, participants preferred more opportunities to interact with students who differ culturally, ethnically and linguistically in their program to adequately prepare them to teach diverse student populations. From the participants’ perception there appears to be a contrast between how well the teacher education program curricula and field experiences prepare them for teaching students of diversity. According to research, these beliefs may stem from preservice teachers’ personal experiences, background, and schooling (Smith, 2000; Wideen, Mayer-Smith, &

Moon, 1998). As teacher educators attempt to alter these beliefs, they are faced with the challenge of changing beliefs that may be deeply rooted by the time preservice teacher candidates begin college (Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

The final research question was “How do teacher educators prepare elementary preservice teachers to instruct culturally diverse student populations and /or teach in an urban educational setting?” The participants [teacher educators] interviewed revealed that a small number of courses offer culturally responsive teaching practices that prepare candidates to teach students from diverse populations. Professor Parks, crafted her response in this manner, “How can we expect our students to be culturally responsive if they don’t see administrators, staff or students of color until student teaching.... We are really doing the future teacher candidates a disservice.” Many teacher educators believed the topic of diversity is embedded in their courses through assignments (e.g., case studies, reading assignments and classroom discussions). However, respondents mentioned that predominately white female student teachers don’t see a need to be culturally responsive if everyone looks the same. Along with that was the challenge to provide teacher candidates diverse experiences. As a group the methods course instructors viewed candidates’ preparedness to teach in a diverse setting as their number one concern. Professor Parks indicated, “There is a big difference in observing in a diverse setting and watching a diverse learner... because every school has at least one diverse learner.”

Teacher educators also made strong recommendations suggesting a variety of options for developing culturally responsive teachers. The recommendations were (a) more diverse field experiences, (b) restructure teacher education curriculum, (c)

transform current pedagogy, (d) in-service workshops, seminars and presentations for teacher educators and (e) practicum in culturally diverse classrooms influences preservice teacher candidates preparedness to teach in a diverse educational setting. The findings from the focus group, interviews, questionnaire and survey revealed:

- Teacher educators were willing to attend diversity professional development offerings at this institution.
- Diversity is addressed differently from classroom to classroom and it's more evident in some classes than others.
- Teacher educators believed more can be done in developing culturally responsive preservice teacher candidates at the department level.
- Teacher educators requested additional instructional resources to provide PTCs significant real world experiences with diverse populations.

In general, the results of the pre- and post- survey coincide with the written responses and themes that emerged from the semi-structured interviews and focus groups. For example, both preservice teacher candidates and teacher educators commented on more than one occasion, emphasizing the need for more diverse field experiences to adequately prepare them [preservice teacher candidates] to teach diverse student populations and or in diverse educational settings. These findings of the study provide implications for teacher education programs with factors that have the potential to increase or decrease the professional preparedness of culturally responsive preservice teachers.

The mixed method study revealed the need for preservice teacher candidates' to have a common knowledge of diversity throughout their coursework and continue during their field –based experiences. At this institution, the commitment to develop culturally responsive preservice teacher candidates has been twofold: institutional and instructional.

The institutional commitment reflects the processes that have been put in place by university leadership (e.g. provosts, dean, chairs and faculty) to facilitate conversations about developing culturally competent faculty. These conversations manifest themselves in policy, practices and processes that support systemic culturally competent institutional practices. However, researcher recommends restructuring the current conceptual framework to include diversity as the common theme to address content knowledge, curriculum, pedagogy, disposition and technology. The researcher believes that an institution committed to diversity develops culturally responsive educators regardless of their locale.

According to the preservice teacher candidates and teacher educators who participated in the interviews and focus group, the majority of the participants pointed out limitations of the instructional commitment to prepare tomorrow's teachers for diversity. The limitations included diverse field experiences (transportation), supplemental multicultural education resources, and diversity interventions (i.e., professional development). In light of these limitations, teacher educators reported utilizing instructional materials such as: stories, reflections, and supplemental multicultural text to develop culturally responsive preservice teacher candidates. Since the participants [preservice teachers and teacher educator] believed that these practices play a role in preparing elementary preservice teacher educators to teach culturally diverse

student populations. The researcher proposes that preservice teacher candidates interact with diverse student populations throughout the program bringing culturally responsive teaching practices to life by culturally competent educators.

As the literature review was conducted, it quickly became apparent that much has been written about preservice teachers' attitudes and beliefs about teaching diverse learners. According to Villegas and Lucas (2002), teacher candidates must examine their attitudes and beliefs about themselves to address biases that may influence their teaching diverse learners. The personal dimensions are the cognitive and emotional processes preservice teacher candidates must participate in to become culturally responsive. This study stops short of examining the relationship between preservice teacher candidates personal beliefs toward diversity and preservice teacher candidates sense of professional preparedness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.

The researcher posits that all three dimensions [institutional, instructional and personal] are critical in the development of culturally responsive teacher candidates. In addition to examining preservice teacher candidates' perception of professional preparedness these findings and conclusion may also be used by teacher educators to assess personal beliefs of preservice teacher candidates.

### **Implications of Study**

The researcher supports that these findings have implications for teacher education programs seeking accreditation through the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE):

1. Preservice teacher candidates should have experiences working with culturally responsive educators who effectively teach in urban settings or teach culturally diverse students.
2. Preservice teacher candidates' field experiences should include interacting with culturally and linguistically diverse administration, faculty, staff and students.
3. Diversity roundtable discussions, trainings and professional development opportunities should be available for administration, faculty, staff and preservice teacher candidates.
4. Teacher educators, inservice teachers and preservice teacher candidates' should have ongoing opportunities to collaboratively explore best practices in multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching.
5. Teacher education program should collaborate with local urban school systems to hold teacher education classes on-site at the schools.

### **Limitations**

It is important to note what this study does and does not include. This study was conducted at a rural, Central Appalachia university. The researcher participants were elementary preservice teacher candidates enrolled in two sequential teacher education courses (methods block and student teaching). Middle grades and secondary teacher candidates were not included in this study. Teacher educators who participated in this study taught foundation courses, methods block or supervised student teaching. The sample size of teacher educators was limited to those who volunteered to participate in the study. An inherent limitation to this study was the inability to generalize the findings

to all preservice teacher candidates, teacher educators and programs. This study is limited to data collection in only one teacher education program at one university. It must be noted that the findings of this study are not generalizable to all colleges and universities.

Data collected in this study relied on participants [preservice teacher candidates and teacher educators] responses to surveys, questionnaires and open-ended questions. This single study was not designed to be a program evaluation of the elementary program completed by the participants, although there may be implications for possible improvements.

Because of my role as coordinator of field experiences and student teaching, I must acknowledge the impact I may have on their responses. There may have been efforts on their part to say what they thought I wanted to hear. However, because I chose colleagues to serve as facilitators to conduct the interviews and focus group sessions with the preservice teachers and teacher educators, I hoped to lessen their desire to provide what they perceived to be the desired responses to my questions. These limitations should be considered in the interpretation of both the quantitative results and qualitative findings. Also, caution should be used when applying these findings to other teacher education programs.

### **Future Research**

The researcher recommends a number of topics for further study for the advancement of culturally responsive teaching:

1. In future research, investigator should observe teacher candidates in their diverse classrooms for culturally responsive teaching strategies, techniques and practices and compare these with their responses to the surveys and interviews.
2. The researcher recommends a longitudinal study to track the development of preservice teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy. Preservice teachers' self-efficacy will be assessed at four intervals: admission to the teacher education program, admission to student teaching, exiting student teaching and again after their first year of teaching. These findings of this study will provide implications for the teacher education programs revision of their conceptual framework, curriculum and pedagogy.
3. A study is needed to investigate what other colleges and universities (rural settings) are offering in the teacher education programs to prepare preservice teacher candidates to teach effectively in urban educational settings.

As colleges and universities seek accreditation from NCATE across the United States, it is imperative that teacher education programs critically re-examine their policies, practices and procedures as it relates to addressing diverse learners. According to this study, it can be argued that even though preservice teacher candidates' perception concerning their professional preparedness to teach diverse learners was positive, it does not necessarily mean they are culturally competent. The researcher proposes that institutions provide diversity interventions for teacher educators to effectively teach multicultural education and model culturally responsive teaching. The researcher urges teacher education programs to modify existing courses and programs to become more

consistent with multicultural education theory and culturally responsive teaching practices. That is, institutions would provide teacher educators multicultural resources and units that are taught in each course with diverse field experiences opportunities. The researcher's findings add to the literature that indicate exposure to diverse learners, multicultural education resources and culturally responsive teaching practices increases preservice teacher candidates self-efficacy to teach culturally diverse student populations (Sleeter, 2001).

### **Recommendations for Practice**

In addition to suggestions for future research, several recommendations for practice follow. Colleges and universities seeking accreditation from NCATE across the United States should critically re-examine their policies, practices, and procedures in the areas of addressing the needs of diverse learners.

Based on the results of this study, it can be argued that even though preservice teacher candidates' perception of their professional preparedness to teach diverse learners was positive, it does not translate into PTCs being culturally competent. For that reason, one area that must be given serious consideration is a policy whereby issues of diversity are addressed not only in specialized courses but throughout the entire professional education program. However there is concern that a policy without sufficient resources will result in superficial attention to issues of diversity, especially since many teacher educators expressed a need for additional CRT training and resources to effectively integrate such practices into the curriculum. The researcher proposes that institutions in geographic areas that have a limited exposure to diversity provide effective ongoing CRT workshops

with resources for both PTCs and teacher educators. These workshops would include culturally relevant curriculum, instructional strategies and assessment resources. The researcher believes the first step in developing culturally responsive preservice teacher candidates is acknowledging cultural differences as an asset.

Another area of concern is the limited exposure to culturally and linguistically diverse student populations while in the teacher education program. The researcher suggests that institutions located in these areas develop a memorandum of agreement with diverse schools in other areas. Direct experience with culturally diverse student and faculty populations has been shown to increase cultural sensitivity, interracial understanding, and social responsibility (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The researcher's findings add to the literature that indicate exposure to diverse learners, multicultural education resources and culturally responsive teaching practices increases preservice teacher candidates self-efficacy to teach culturally diverse student populations (Sleeter, 2001).

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APPENDIX A  
Preservice Teacher Candidate  
Informed Consent Form

Appendix A  
Preservice Teacher Candidate  
Informed Consent Form

This is a research project that will examine preservice teacher candidates' perception of their preparedness to teach culturally diverse students. You must be at least 19 years or older to participate in this study. You are invited to participate in this self-administered survey because you are a teacher candidate in the Elementary Teacher Education Program at Eastern Kentucky University.

Participation in this study will require an estimated 25- 30 minutes of your time and will take place in your classroom. Participation is not considered as a part of your course. In the first phase of the study, which will take you 10 minutes to complete, you will be given a demographic data questionnaire. In the second phase of the study you will be asked to complete the Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale survey.

Your decision on whether or not to participate is up to you and it will not affect your grade in the course. There will not be any compensation for participating in this research. There are no risks or discomforts associated with this study. However, your voluntary participation in the survey is very important; it will assist the teacher education program in the future with policies and practices as it relates to addressing diversity and preparing teachers to teach students from different backgrounds.

Your name will not be attached to the data and any individual identifying information obtained during this study will be kept confidential. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the investigator during the completion of this study. The information obtained in this study may be published in scientific journals or presented at educational conferences, but the data will be reported as aggregated data.

You are free to decide not to participate in this study or to withdraw at any time without adversely affecting your relationship with Eastern Kentucky University, your instructors, or the researcher. Your signature certifies that you have decided to participate

having read and understood the information presented. You will be given a copy of this consent form to keep.

If you have any questions concerning your rights as a research subject that have not been answered by the investigator or to report any concerns about the study, you may contact the Eastern Kentucky University Institutional Review Board at Jones 414/ Coates CPO 20, 521 Lancaster Avenue, Richmond, KY, 40475-3102 or telephone (859) 622-3636.

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Signature of Participant

---

Date

Thanks for your assistance.

Sincerely,

Rose Gilmore-Skepple,

Eastern Kentucky University

Principal Investigator (859) 622- 8724

APPENDIX B

Demographic Background Questionnaire

## Appendix B

### Demographic Background Questionnaire

This questionnaire explores preservice teacher candidates' perceptions concerning their professional preparation to teach culturally diverse students. Your participation and honest feedback is critical to my study. To ensure confidentiality of your responses, all statements will be kept private with no names used in the report. Thank you for your participation.

**A. The following personal identification code allows you to keep your responses anonymous but allows the surveys to be matched in the future.**

Personal identification code:

First three letters of your mother's maiden name:

\_\_\_ \_ \_

Last four digits of your best friend's phone number:

\_\_\_ \_ \_ \_

### **Culture**

The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. These patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community, or population (Gay, 2000).

## **Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and learning styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning personally meaningful and effective for them (Gay, 2010).

## **Diversity**

A group of people that include individuals from different ethnic and cultural groups that have distinct characteristics, qualities, or elements (Bennett, 1999).

## **Ethnicity**

A group of people sharing a common and distinctive racial, national, religious, linguistic, or cultural heritage (Banks, 1994).

## **Multiculturalism**

A social or educational theory that encourages interest in many cultures within a society rather than in the mainstream culture (Banks, 1994).

### **This section addresses general information**

Directions: Please circle the appropriate number or fill in where required.

1. Identify your gender
  - Female
  - Male
2. How do you identify your ethnicity?
  - Asian/ Pacific Islander
  - Black, non- Hispanic
  - Hispanic/ Latino American
  - American Indian/ Native Alaskan
  - White, non- Hispanic
  - Biracial/ Multi-racial (Belonging to more than one racial group)
  - Other (please specify) \_\_\_\_\_

3. What birth order represents you?

- First born
- Second born
- Third born
- Fourth born
- Fifth born
- Sixth or later

4. What is your grade point average with this institution?

- Below 2.5
- 2.50 - 2.75
- 2.75- 3.0
- 3.0 - 3.25
- 3.25- 3.5
- Above 3.50

5. Identify your county/ town of residence at time of high school graduation.

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Identify your city of residence at time of high school graduation.

\_\_\_\_\_

7. Have you always lived in the same county/ town where you graduated from high school?

- Yes
- No

8. Do you plan to return to your county/ town after graduating from college?

- Yes    Why \_\_\_\_\_
- No    Why not \_\_\_\_\_

9. What type of community did you live in while growing up?

- Rural (population less than 25,000 with farmland; ex: Corbin)
- Urban ( population more than 500,000 people; large city, ex: Lexington)
- Suburban ( larger than a rural area, smaller than urban; ex: Madison)

10. What type of dwelling did you live in while growing up?

- apartment
- house
- mobile home
- other

11. Identify the number of languages you speak fluently, including English.

- one
- two
- three
- more than three

12. Was your high school population considered ethnically diverse?

- Yes
- No

13. Was the teaching staff in your school district considered ethnically diverse?

- Yes
- No

14. Was your community in which you were raised considered ethnically diverse?

- Yes
- No

15. Did you ever receive free or reduce lunch while attending school?

- Yes
- No

16. How would you describe the student body at this institution?

- Mainly one racial group
- Two or more racial groups
- Many racial groups

17. Did you vote in 2008 (pick all that apply)?

- Local
- State

- National
- Did not vote
- Two or more apply

**This section deals with your parents and other family connections**

18. What was/is the marital status of your parents?

- Married
- Separated
- Divorced
- Widowed
- Never married

19. What was the highest grade completed by your mother?

- 0 – 8
- some high school
- high school diploma (or equivalent)
- some college
- 2 year degree
- 4 year degree
- graduate work

20. What was the highest grade completed by your father?

- 0 – 8
- some high school
- high school diploma (or equivalent)
- some college
- 2 year degree
- 4 year degree
- graduate work

21. Whom did you live with while growing up?

- both parents
- mother
- father
- other (grandparents, etc.)

22. Did your parents or legal guardian work outside the home?

- Mother
  - Yes (before I was 6 years of age)
  - Yes (after I was 6 years of age)
  - Before and after I was 6 years of age
  - Never worked
  - Not Applicable
- Father
  - Yes, Always
  - Yes, Sometimes
  - Never Worked
  - Not Applicable
- Legal Guardian
  - Yes, Always
  - Yes, Sometimes
  - Never Worked
  - Not Applicable

23. What was the average household income when you were 17?

- Under \$30,000
- \$30,001 to \$50,000
- \$50,000 to \$100,000
- 100,001 or more

24. Did your family receive financial assistance from any other sources? If so, from where?

- No
- Public assistance
- Social security benefits
- Retirement or disability benefits
- Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix C

### Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale

## Appendix C

### Culturally Responsive Teaching Preparedness Scale

Directions: Rate how confident you are that your professional education preparation has prepared you to complete the following culturally responsive teaching practices using a 10 point Likert type scale with a range of 0 (Not at all) to 10 (Exemplary). This is not a test, so there is no right or wrong answers to the questions. All responses are anonymous and confidential.

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
Not At All	Below Novice	Novice	Above Novice	Below Apprentice	Apprentice	Above Apprentice	Below Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient	Exemplary

#### **I believe my teacher education program has....**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. prepared me to take a stand against prejudice by constructively disagreeing with those who makes stereotypical statements.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. prepared me to take a stand for social justice, human rights and equal opportunity for all human beings.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. addressed racial, ethnic, socioeconomic class, gender, special education, and sexual orientation pedagogical skills as it relates to student achievement.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. raised my awareness for the need to attend professional development activities or events regarding teaching and learning about diversity.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. allowed me to experience both educational and ethical cultural diversity values other than my own.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 6. provided opportunities (i.e., classroom discussions, events, trainings/ workshops) to discuss my personal diverse field experiences.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 7. prepared me to demonstrate a basic knowledge and understanding of cultural awareness.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 8. prepared me to utilize a student's social and cultural heritage as it relates to student learning.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 9. intentionally created opportunities to teach individuals from diverse groups.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 10. encouraged me to engage in volunteer experiences that allow me to work in diverse settings.

<b>0</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>6</b>	<b>7</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>10</b>
Not At All	Below Novice	Novice	Above Novice	Below Apprentice	Apprentice	Above Apprentice	Below Proficient	Proficient	Above Proficient	Exemplary

**I believe my teacher education program has ....**

- \_\_\_\_\_ 11. provided me with opportunities to observe students from diverse backgrounds and cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 12. enhanced my interpersonal communication skills when interacting with people from different cultures.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 13. given me the opportunity to participate in group discussions about race, class and gender.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 14. inspired me to take a leadership role with respect to diversity in my professional field.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 15. stressed the need to avoid categorizing individuals based on their race.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 16. prepared me to collaborate with colleagues from diverse backgrounds despite our racial or cultural differences.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 17. prepared me to teach a diverse group of students, particularly those of color.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 18. emphasized that all students' learning styles are different within the same racial or ethnic group.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 19. prepared me to incorporate multicultural education practices into the curriculum.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 20. stressed the importance of effectively communicating with parents from backgrounds different than my own.
- \_\_\_\_\_ 21. prepared me to appreciate and understand how global educational issues are relevant to my education.

In the comment box below: Please include additional comments about your college diversity learning experiences (if you need more space use the back).

Comment:

In the comment box below: Please include additional comments about your student teaching cultural diversity learning experiences (if you need more space use the back).

Comment:

Appendix D

Teacher Educator Informed Consent Letter

## Appendix D

### Teacher Educator Informed Consent Letter

<b>Title of Study:</b>	Developing Culturally Responsive Preservice Teacher Candidates: Implications for Teacher Education Programs
<b>Investigator:</b>	Rose Gilmore-Skepple, Doctoral Candidate
<b>Faculty Sponsor:</b>	Dr. Aaron Thompson

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You are invited to participate in a research study. The purpose of this study is to explore how the teacher education program prepares elementary preservice teachers to teach culturally diverse student populations. You are being asked to participate in this study because you have taught a professional education course for elementary preservice teacher candidates at this university between Fall 2009 and Fall 2010.

There is no anticipated risk to you, since your participation is limited to exchange of information through interviews and structure questionnaire. You will have the opportunity through participation in this study to share information that will potentially benefit the program, preservice teacher candidates and other teacher educators.

Your participation in this study is voluntary. You may refuse to participate in this study at any time without prejudice to your relations with the university. The study will take approximately 15-20 minutes of your time. No compensation will be offered for your participation in this study. However, the benefit of participating in this study includes the opportunity for participants to participate in advancing the research literature in the field.

The information obtained during this study will be kept confidential. No reference will be made in oral or written reports, which could link you to the study. You will be referred to by a pseudonym in order to protect your identity. The data will be stored in a locked cabinet in the investigator's office and will only be seen by the investigator during the completion of this study. At the completion of this study, journal entries, identifiable only to your pseudonym will be destroyed. Under this condition, you agree that any information obtained from this research may be published in scientific journals, presented at educational conferences or used by the program only.

I have read the above information and agree to participate in this study. I am at least 18 years of age. I have received a signed copy of this form.

Participant's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

Investigator's signature \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

## Appendix E

### Developing Culturally Responsive Teachers Questionnaire

## Appendix E

### Developing Culturally Responsive Teachers Questionnaire

This questionnaire explores teacher educator's personal and professional factors that impact their role in developing culturally responsive teachers. Your participation and honest feedback is critical to my study. To ensure confidentiality of your responses, all statements will be kept private with no names used in the report. Thank you for your participation.

**A. The following personal identification code allows you to keep your responses anonymous.**

Personal identification code:

First three letters of your mother's maiden name:

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_

Last four digits of your best friend's phone number:

\_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_ \_\_\_

Identify your professional education course load(s) below: For example, EDF 203

Subject and Course Number \_\_\_\_\_

Subject and Course Number \_\_\_\_\_

## Definitions

### **Culture**

The totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought. These patterns, traits, and products considered as the expression of a particular period, class, community, or population (Gay, 2010).

### **Culturally Responsive Teaching**

Culturally responsive teaching is defined as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and learning styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning personally meaningful and effective for them (Gay, 2010).

### **Diversity**

A group of people that include individuals from different ethnic and cultural groups that have distinct characteristics, qualities, or elements (Bennett, 1999).

### **Ethnicity**

A group of people sharing a common and distinctive racial, national, religious, linguistic, or cultural heritage (Banks, 1994).

### **Multiculturalism**

A social or educational theory that encourages interest in many cultures within a society rather than in the mainstream culture (Banks, 1994).

## Demographics

Please circle the appropriate number or fill in where required.

1. Gender

- Female
- Male

2. Race/Ethnicity

- Asian/ Pacific Islander
- Black, Non Hispanic
- Hispanic / Latino American
- American Indian/Native Alaskan
- White, Non Hispanic
- Biracial/ Multi- racial ( Belonging to more than one racial group)
- Other (please specify)\_\_\_\_\_

3. Do you live and work in the same county?

- Yes
- No
- If no, what county do you live in\_\_\_\_\_.

4. Please indicate the total number of years teaching with this institution:

Less than 1 year                      1 to 5 years                      More than 5 years

5. Please indicate the total number of years teaching experience:

Less than 1 year                      1 to 5 years                      More than 5 years

6. Was your high school population considered ethnically diverse based on non- White categories?

- Yes
- No

7. Was the teaching staff in your school district considered ethnically diverse based on non- White categories?

- Yes
- No

8. Was your community in which you were raised considered ethnically diverse?

- Yes
- No

9. How would you describe the student body at this institution?

- Mainly one racial group
- Two or more racial groups
- Many racial groups

10. How many cultural awareness/ competence workshops or conferences have you attended within the last five years?

- None
- 1 to 3
- 4 to 6
- 7 to 9
- 10 or more

11. Did you vote in 2008 (pick all that apply)?

- Local
- State
- National
- Did not vote

## Appendix F

### Addressing Cultural Diversity Preparedness Survey

Appendix F

Addressing Cultural Diversity Preparedness Survey

<b>VS</b> Very Satisfied	<b>S</b> Satisfied	<b>I</b> Indifferent	<b>D</b> Dissatisfied			
<b>Directions: Place a check mark (√) in the column that represents how satisfied you feel with respect to each statement.</b>			<b>VS</b>	<b>S</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>D</b>
1. How satisfied are you with the cultural elements and offerings (concerts, productions, exhibits, etc.) with this institution?						
2. How satisfied are you with the cultural diversity professional development offerings with this institution?						
3. How satisfied are you with your department in preparing teacher candidates to teach culturally diverse students?						
4. How satisfied are you with your college in preparing teacher candidates to teach culturally diverse students?						
5. How satisfied are you with your university in preparing teacher candidates to teach culturally diverse students?						
6. How satisfied are you with your effort in creating an environment that is conducive to learning for all teacher candidates?						
<b>VP</b> Very Important	<b>P</b> Important	<b>I</b> Indifferent	<b>NP</b> Not Important			
<b>Directions: Place a check mark (√) in the column that represents how satisfied you feel with respect to each statement.</b>			<b>VP</b>	<b>P</b>	<b>I</b>	<b>NP</b>
7. How important is addressing diversity to colleagues in your department?						
8. Is developing culturally responsive teacher candidates important to colleagues in your department?						
9. Is developing partnerships with school districts important to your department?						
10. Is developing partnerships with school districts important to your college?						
11. Is developing community partnerships important to your department?						
12. Is developing community partnerships important to your college?						

## Appendix G

### Preservice Teachers Interview Protocol

## Appendix G

### Preservice Teachers Interview Protocol

The purpose of this focus group is to examine preservice teacher candidates' perceptions concerning their professional preparedness to implement culturally responsive teaching practices in an urban educational setting.

#### Interview Protocol

1. Welcome participants to the session
2. Ask permission to videotape interview

#### Interview Questions:

1. As a preservice teacher, what do you think of when I use the phrase “culturally diverse students”?
2. As you approach graduation, how confident do you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students?
3. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students prior to methods (in August 2009)?
4. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse after methods (in January 2010)?
5. How prepared did you feel in your ability to teach culturally diverse students upon existing your student teaching experience (May 2010)?
6. Are there any personal and/ or professional factors that positively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?
7. Are there any personal and/ or professional factors that negatively impacted your confidence in teaching culturally diverse students?
8. Is there anything else you like to add to assist our (teacher education) program in preparing preservice teachers to teach culturally diverse students

Appendix H

Developing Culturally Responsive Teachers Interview Protocol

Teacher Educators

## Appendix H

### Developing Culturally Responsive Teachers Interview Protocol

#### Teacher Educators

Thank you for your willingness to participate in the interview. The purpose of this interview is to examine how the teacher preparation program impacts preservice teacher candidates' knowledge of culturally responsive teaching and the implementation of these practices in their classroom. I have prepared several questions regarding your professional education course(s), coursework, diverse field experiences, and your culturally responsive teaching philosophy and practices. At the end of the interview, I will provide you an opportunity to make any closing remarks regarding the issues discussed in this interview.

#### Interview Protocol

1. Welcome participants to the session
2. Ask permission to audio tape interview

#### Interview Questions:

1. How is diversity addressed in your classroom? Please explain.
2. In your teacher education course, how are culturally responsive teaching strategies discussed and/ or modeled for preservice teacher candidates?
3. How confident do you feel in your preservice teacher candidates' ability to teach culturally diverse students?
4. Does your course require preservice teacher candidates' to complete diverse field placements hours? If so, how do you ensure that preservice teacher candidates' interact with students who differ culturally, ethnically and linguistically diverse populations?

5. Prior to your course, do you believe preservice teacher candidates are prepared to teach in a diverse setting?
6. Upon exiting your course, do you believe preservice teachers candidates are prepared to student teach in a diverse setting.
7. What aspect of the teacher education program is most beneficial in preparing preservice teacher candidates to teach in a diverse setting?
8. Do you have any suggestions for better preparing our preservice teacher candidates to teach in a diverse setting?

## VITA

Rose Gilmore-Skepple earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Biology with a minor in Chemistry in 1986 from Eastern Kentucky University. In addition, she has earned a Master of Arts in Student Personnel Services in Higher Education in 1993 and a Master of Arts in Guidance Counseling in 1995, both from Eastern Kentucky University. Rose has earned a Principle Certificate in 2002 and a Superintendent Certificate in 2010, both of which were also earned at Eastern Kentucky University.

Rose holds positions in several organizations including being a member of the Board of Directors of the Kentucky Middle School Association and serving as a committee member for the Richmond Kiwanis Kentucky-Tennessee chapter. She is also a member of several professional organizations including Phi Kappa Phi, National Association of Laboratory Schools, Kentucky Association of School Administrators, National Middle School Association, Kentucky Association of School Councils, and the Association of Supervision and Curriculum and Development.

Rose has presented several peer reviewed presentations including “Who’s on First and Who’s on Second” at the 51<sup>st</sup> Annual Kentucky Counseling Association conference in 2007, “Discovering a Sense of Place” at the National Council of Professional Educational Administration conference in 2009 (co-authors Burns, A., Moore, M., & Sageser, M.). In 2009, she participated in a panel discussion along with Dr. Roger Cleveland on “The Impact of Teacher Education Program in Developing Culturally Responsive Teacher Candidates” at the National Council of Professional Educational Administration Conference. Along with co-authors (Moore, M., Sageser, S., & Tippins,

J.), Rose presented “Discovering a Sense of Place in Rural Appalachia” at the annual conference of the Southeastern Regional Association of Teacher Educators in 2009. Also in 2009, Rose presented a research session at the 56<sup>th</sup> annual conference of the Southeastern Regional Association of Teacher Educators titled “The Role of Leadership in Developing Culturally Competent Preservice Teachers.” In 2009, Rose and Dr. Roger Cleveland offered a teacher recruitment and retention workshop at the National Association of Black Educators conference. In 2010, Rose and Dr. Cleveland presented “Addressing Diversity in a Teacher Education Program” at the Kentucky Conference on the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning.

Rose has held several positions within the field of education including high school teacher, principal, coordinator of school wide services for a laboratory school located on the campus of Eastern Kentucky University, and part-time faculty in higher education. She currently serves as the Assistant Director of Teacher Education Services at Eastern Kentucky University.