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Pre-Service Teachers' Perception and Knowledge of Multicultural Education

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Pre-Service Teachers' Perception and Knowledge of Multicultural Education

by

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of the requirements for the degree of
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PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERCEPTION AND KNOWLEDGE OF

MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Sharondrea R. King

ABSTRACT

It is estimated that by the year 2020, African American, Latino, Asian American, and Native American groups will comprise 40% of the population. This implies that we must be equipped to teach students from both genders and various ethnic groups efficiently through educational systems that promote diversity, equality, and empowerment. Due to the teaching force becoming more female and white, while the student population is becoming more diverse, teacher educators and pre-service teachers need to learn and accept that diversity and multicultural education goes beyond celebrating holidays and sampling ethnic dishes. Therefore, it is paramount that teachers increase their awareness about issues related to multicultural education.

The purpose of this research study was to examine an education program and its job in promoting and facilitating tactics that embrace multicultural education ideologies. Thus, a teacher education training program's efforts to provide pre-service teachers with knowledge and experiences in issues related to diversity and multicultural education were investigated. Three questions guided this study (a) Do student teaching/internship experiences affect teachers' attitudes about multicultural education and diversity, (b) Do pre-service teachers believe they are knowledgeable about cultural diversity and teaching minority students, and (c) Do pre-service teachers believe their internship address issues

of diversity? An analysis of survey and focus group data indicated that teachers believed they were knowledgeable about multicultural education. However, the data gathered also indicated the need for teacher education programs to improve their efforts in providing pre-service teachers with opportunities to learn and apply their knowledge in teaching minority students.

CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

The number of students from diverse backgrounds (i.e., ethnic, culture, language, and gender differences) is increasing in our schools. For example, it has been estimated that by the year 2020, African American, Latino, Asian American, and Native American groups will comprise 40% of the population (Gollnick & Chinn, 1998). As a result, the United States school systems will become more diverse, as well. What does this mean for current and future educators? It implies that we must be equipped to teach students from both genders and various ethnic groups efficiently through educational systems that promote diversity, equality, and empowerment. Teachers must be prepared to address issues of concern, such as modifying the curriculum for a non-English speaking student or providing positive support for students from under-represented groups.

One of the first steps for teachers to feel confident and prepared to address issues related to educating students from diverse backgrounds is to be educated in the area of multicultural education. Teachers are expected to fulfill many roles as an educator, some of which are realistic and others idealistic. However, in order to ensure the success of children it is important for teachers to be aware of the literature, recommendations, and research that relates to teaching children from a multicultural perspective. This perspective is beneficial to all children in the educational system as a means to promote equality and to expose them to an array of opportunities.

The researcher's purpose was to investigate the effectiveness of teacher education programs in providing pre-service teachers with knowledge and experiences in issues

related to multicultural education. This investigation was important because the diversity of students in schools is increasing, while the number of white and female teachers is increasing. To examine the effectiveness of the teacher education program, the researcher collected information about the university's efforts to educate and provide experiences to address diversity and multicultural education and collected data about how pre-service teachers are responding to the university's efforts.

The specific research questions that guided this project were:

a) What are the attitudes about multicultural education and diversity, as indicated by a diversity inventory, of pre-service teachers who have completed a multicultural education course and are completing their internship?

b) Do pre-service teachers believe they are knowledgeable about cultural diversity and teaching minority students?

c) Do pre-service teachers believe their internship experiences address issues of diversity that will assist them in the future?"

The investigation of these questions will provide information about teachers' current attitudes and knowledge level of multicultural education issues. These data will benefit teacher educators and administrators because it will offer pertinent information that can be used to initiate an assessment of the efficacy of teacher training programs in preparing teachers to work with students of different genders, cultures, and ethnicities. Knowing teacher attitudes and level of competency in utilizing techniques and recommendations related to a multicultural perspective will assist in developing programs that are designed to address these concerns in order to promote a learning environment for students which provides equal educational opportunities.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

This literature review is focused on topics that are essential to understanding the importance of multicultural education, current research on teacher attitudes about multicultural educational issues, and characteristics of teachers currently in the field. These issues are targeted for discussion to stress the need for multicultural education in schools and the need for reform tactics in teacher training programs and schools. The purpose of this review is to also emphasize the need for this study.

Multicultural Education

This review begins with a discussion of what multicultural education means in research and in schools. The goals of multicultural education, overall, consist of school reform programs that incorporate strategies, theories, awareness, and sensitivity training techniques into an education program to promote equal educational opportunities for all. Specifically, these opportunities for students involve empowerment, exposure, awareness, and sensitivity. The explicit goals of multicultural education are the following:

a) to reform schools, colleges, and universities so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class will experience educational equality.

b) to give both male and female students an equal chance to experience educational success and mobility (Banks, 2001; Campbell, 2000; Diaz, 2001; Nieto, 1996).

Banks introduced five dimensions that are encompassed in the ideology of multicultural education as a framework for educators. The first dimension, "content

integration," involves an emphasis on curriculum. The dimension focuses on examples and content used in the classroom that represents various cultures and groups to discuss "key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories" (Banks, 2001, p. 8). The dimension of "constructing knowledge" consists of methods, activities, and questions teachers use to help students explore and investigate information presented in lectures, texts, and other sources. The purpose of this dimension is to allow students to examine how cultural assumptions, perspectives, and biases influence the construction of knowledge.

The next three dimensions focus on prejudice, pedagogy, and empowerment. The prejudice reduction dimension emphasizes the use of "strategies that can be used to help students develop more democratic attitudes and values" (Banks, p. 11). Teacher modifications, such as the way teachers teach, assess, and facilitate learning in the classroom are the highlight of the equity pedagogy dimension. Lastly, the dimension labeled empowering school culture and social structure involves "restructuring the culture and organization of the school so that students from diverse racial, ethnic, and gender groups will experience equality" (Banks, p. 14).

These dimensions are not exclusive to Bank's work, but are dynamic factors many
other scholars use to define and describe the purpose of multicultural education. In recent years, an aim of multicultural education has been to address the issue that all children in the school systems are miseducated (Nieto, 1996). All children include children who are European-, African-, Native-, Mexican-, Latino-, and Asian American, as well as all other ethnicities within the United States. Including children from the

dominant group, European Americans, is an essential component because their experiences or lack of informed information reinforces the ideology that their way of living (customs, beliefs, etiquettes, and politics) is the norm and the standard to adhere to for respect and acceptance.

Elements of global education, a separate reform movement, are also part of the multicultural education mission (Banks, 2001; Nieto, 1996). The purpose of global education is for students to "develop an understanding of their roles in the world community and identifying the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to become effective and influential citizens" (Banks, 2001). The integration of global education is only one example of how contributors to the research and study of multicultural education are advocating for a change in schools that facilitate reflection, critical thinking, and social actions on the part of students and educators.

The components of multicultural education are not limited to content integration and discussions about differences, it also demands that prejudice reduction, equity pedagogy, forums for discussion on social justice, encouragement of critical thinking, and empowerment of school culture and social structure be integrated in the schools. The integration should not start or end at the classroom level. The factors should be conceptualized and enforced throughout the entire school because they impact all aspects of school, such as instructional strategies, staff development and training, communication with parents, and student support services.

In sum, the meaning of multicultural education includes practices that account for racial, ethnic, gender, and cultural differences. These practices also support the philosophy that all students should have equal educational opportunities and access to

those opportunities. In schools these practices should be integrated into all aspects of a school's mission to educate all children, such as curriculum and assessment procedures.

Teacher Resistance to Multicultural Education

Resistance is the act of opposing or working against something, such as policies, ideologies, facts, opinions, and systems. In the field of education, resistance has played a positive and negative role in educating our children. A positive impact of resistance occurred when educators decided to oppose the false ideologies that there are children who are incapable of learning how to read or write. Although, there are educators who hold on to this belief, there are many who have transcended and are dedicated to educating children. However, a negative role of resistance remains and hinders the progress of our educational system by limiting the equality of education for students who are racial, ethnic, or religious minorities. This form of resistance is the opposition to understanding and valuing the philosophy and goals of multicultural education.

Currently, one reason why the goals and philosophy of multicultural education are not wholeheartedly integrated in schools is teacher resistance. This resistance is evident in the school system through its use of tracking, the constant disproportionate number of minorities in special education, and its Eurocentric curriculum. It is also evident within the teacher training programs that are designed to prepare teachers to educate all children. The problem in teacher education programs is not resistance to educating all children, but occurs with regards to providing equal opportunities for all children to learn. For all children to have equal opportunities to learn, teachers must understand how racial, ethnic, and religious differences impact the child's school experiences, life (family and personal) experiences, and the school system as an organization. Teacher education programs are

addressing these issues, but are not facilitating ways for teachers to process this information outside of a foundations course, so that knowledge is transferred from the one foundations course to other required courses and impact teachers' behavior in the classroom.

For teachers to understand the impact of the above differences, a personal investment in obtaining the goal is necessary. Teachers must self-evaluate their attitudes toward people who are different, recognize stereotypes formed about those who are different, examine and recognize the existence of racism and discrimination in society, and take ownership in making a change to resist discrimination and inequality in schools. Teacher training programs offer classes to initiate critical thinking about the impact of discrimination and recommendations to provide learning environments to teach children who are different (racial, ethnical, religious, or disabled). However, there are many teachers who are resistant to change in the school system. They are not receptive to why changes are needed in schools which is evident through the fact that many minority children do not have equal opportunities in the educational system, information is not integrated about cultures and traditions outside of the European American customs, and other issues related to establishing educational diversity.

The focus of this literature review is to examine research to unveil possible answers to the following questions: (a) what are the factors contributing to resistance to attitude and stereotype change, (b) what are the reasons pre-service teachers are resistant to attitude and stereotype change, and (c) what are effective strategies to reduce resistance. The above questions are relevant to multicultural education because they address the problems that prevent educators, in this case teachers, from being receptive to

the need for change in schools in order to increase the educational opportunities for minority children.

Pre-service Teachers and Resistance to Attitude Change

Reasons for resistance to courses designed to facilitate pre-service teachers' critical thinking and actions needed to learn about issues regarding the need for multicultural education and its implementation are so interrelated that a clear line cannot be drawn between what factors contribute to resistance and the reasons for it. However, an attempt will be made to separate the two variables. The separation is necessary as a means to understand teacher resistance in order to intervene.

Factors that contribute to resistance are based on personal and environmental causes. One factor is based on belief systems. For instance, research has documented that many pre-service teachers believe that racism and sexism do not exist in our society (Ahlquist, 1991; Carpenter, 2000). The belief that the United States is a just society leads to some very disturbing assumptions, such as "the belief that poor people, people on welfare, and some minorities were poor because they were lazy" (Ahlquist, p. 159). Overwhelmingly, a large percentage of pre-service teachers enter the field with an idealistic perception of the opportunities available in the United States (Ahlquist, 1991; Carpenter, 2000; Causey et al., 2000). These beliefs are similar to other individuals, outside of teacher education, who oppose multiculturalism because equality exists and it is a matter of a person "putting forth the effort" (Schlesinger, 1998; Sleeter, 1996). Causey, Thomas, and Armento (2000) termed this phenomenon as "optimistic

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individualism", which means "the inevitability of triumph over any obstacle through hard work and individual efforts" (p. 33).

Unconscious and conscious chauvinistic or racist ideologies that result in denial about the reality of life for others not a part of the majority group are other factors that contribute to resistance (Alquist, 2000). This denial results in pre-service teachers having a difficult time accepting information that contradicts their current thinking or ways of treating others. These ideologies make it difficult to understand why self-examination of beliefs is needed to facilitate changing attitudes or stereotypes held against others in society. It is also difficult for some to receive and understand viewpoints different from those that govern their thoughts and actions (Lin, Gorrell, & Porter, 1999). However, these difficulties are not limited to pre-service teachers.

The third factor is knowledge. Many pre-service teachers enter a foundations course with limited understanding of multicultural education. Definitions of multicultural education usually consist of terms that refer to "foods, holidays, and customs, but the majority indicated little if any contact or experiences with people of color or poor people" (Ahlquist, 1991). Along with a limited definition, pre-service teachers may assume that multicultural education is a separate component to educating children. As a result, they believe that "special efforts [have] to be made to 'fit in' this diverse material rather than incorporating it as an integral part of the curriculum [and practices]" (Causey et al., p.40).

The fourth factor is based on the background of the pre-service teacher. Background includes race, experiences, and socioeconomic status. Pre-service teachers have been identified as predominately White, middle-class women with limited

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experiences outside of "their world." The teachers described themselves as "open-minded." These teachers also believed that children are the same and should be treated the same. Causey et al. (2000) referred to this attitude as naïve egalitarianism, which is the belief that people are created and treated equally, as well as have equal access to resources. These beliefs result in a denial of privileges based on skin color or class because it discounts the reality that people face discrimination and denial of access based on race, sex, class, or other factors. Data from various studies indicated that pre-service teachers have limited or no experiences with persons from different ethnicities or social class before entering a diversity course (Ahlquist, 1991; Causey et al., 2000; Carpenter, 2000). Thus, denial is a product of their limited experiences.

Related to factors, resistance is represented in many forms. However, only a few will be highlighted for discussion. Forms of resistance have been demonstrated in foundation courses through the following behaviors: avoiding discussions, disregarding the information as biased or non-representative, claiming the information is taboo, unfounded, irrelevant; silence; absenteeism; or hostility. It is important to note that of the articles reviewed, a student arguing a point was not considered a form of resistance.

One form of resistance revolves around the structure of the foundations course and misconceptions about the purpose of the course. A discrepancy between the actual course objectives and the objectives the pre-service teachers assumed can cause a barrier between what the students are willing to learn and what the course is designed to teach. Thus, resistant students may "oppose the very objectives of the course content" (Carpenter, 2000, p. 5). As a result, these students make it difficult for instructors to develop effective methods for active participation. This form of resistance can hinder the

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learning experience for the pre-service teachers and lead to additional misconceptions of the course's purpose and expected outcomes.

Regarding pre-service teacher expectations, Carpenter concluded that the following were the expectations of the teachers: (a) to understand that individuals are unique, (b) to become aware of "up and coming" issues, and (c) to promote tolerance of differences, especially individual differences (2000, p. 8). Though these expectations often are addressed in such a course, the teachers may fail to incorporate objectives that facilitate critical thinking in order to bring about change and action, such as examining practices within schools and being receptive to viewpoints unlike their own. Consequently, teachers are reluctant to discuss topics that challenge unexamined beliefs because they believe the issues emphasize guilt, shame, or blame.

Pre-service teachers were also resistant because the content was viewed as a means to create separatism in society by focusing on differences. This concern stemmed from the idea that the school curriculum would change and they would adopt an Afrocentric curriculum. Afrocentric curriculum emphasizes group membership and students were apprehensive about discussing forms of membership over individualism.

Resistance may also be the result of the following: discomfort with students unlike themselves, lack of belief that all children can learn, absence of desire to work with diverse schools, and the belief that Civil Rights movement ended inequality and injustices (Ahlquist, 1999; Carpenter, 2000). Ironically, these forms of resistance are the same reasons why a course, such as a foundational course emphasizing the issues related to multiculturalism is needed in teacher education programs. If pre-service teachers were

as open-minded as they profess to be, then the importance of the class could be appreciated.

Research Findings on Attitude Change and Stereotype Change

The impact of majority and minority influence on attitudes is relevant when examining resistance to attitude change. It is important to understand the effects of societal norms, dictated by the views of the majority, for discussions designed to lead to change and decrease resistance to learning. In this section, majority and minority are used to represent quantity.

De Dreu, De Vries, Gordijn, and Schuurman (1999) investigated the significance of majority and minority arguments by examining divergent and convergent processing, which are terms that refer to how groups come to a consensus about a topic or ways information is processed. Divergent processing is when "recipients consider alternative points of view including minority position, think about the issue in an open-minded manner, and try to understand and perhaps falsify the minority position" (De Dreu et al., 1999, p. 331). Minority arguments are processed in a divergent manner, which allows attitude change to have an impact on related issues other than the focal point. As for processing information in a convergent manner, the argument focuses on the validity of the argument and ways to justify the point. Majority arguments are processed in a convergent manner and concentrate on the focal topic (De Dreu et al., 1999). It is important to keep in mind that majority arguments are supported by consensus of information, which is socially derived and influences attitudes (Hodson, Maio, & Esses,

2001). In Dreu et al.'s study they manipulated the use of majority or minority arguments to determine which had an influence on focal and related issues.

The procedures required the students to complete an attitude survey. The participants were also required to write supporting arguments for the topic, increase in study load, after a presentation that informed them of the majority and minority viewpoints on the topic. The researchers manipulated the support of the majority and minority viewpoints, in which the majority argued for an increase in study load. In the experimental group, some students were also asked to write alternative solutions. The presentation of arguments and the writing of supportive and alternative solutions (for some) were completed using computers.

An analysis of the participants' responses on the attitude survey and to argument presentations indicated the following: (a) minority arguments are not attended to when the group is not motivated to process the information systematically (convergently or divergently), (b) convergent processing results in positive influences on the focal point rather than on related issues when the majority supports the point, and (c) divergent processing contributes to positive attitudes on related issues when the minority group is the supporter. One can apply his findings to group discussions. In group discussions on "heated" topics that are more likely favored by the minority, the use of divergent information processing would allow individuals to think of alternative viewpoints to the ones they support. Along with considering alternative viewpoints, it prompts individuals to think critically about current attitudes or positions on a topic.

The consideration of alternative viewpoints, at times, may lead to the assumption that individuals who are unclear of their position on an issue are ambivalent (Hodson et

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al. 2001). For instance, ambivalent individuals may view "a group member positively if exposed to (or made aware of) positive information about the target or very negatively if they are exposed to negative information about the target" (Hodson et al., p. 198). Therefore, the result may be an unstable attitude or grounded view. Remarkably, these individuals experience a level of dissonance that motivates them to obtain more information to determine a position about the target. A state of ambivalence has an effect on the degree to which consensus information is influential.

The study consisted of three phases: (1) completion of an attitude survey, (2) involvement in an unrelated "filler task", and (3) completion of questions related to a videotaped presentation of social welfare supporter and non-supporter. Participants were randomly assigned to manipulated consensus information in support of the prosocial welfare debater or the antiprosocial welfare debater. Hodson et al.'s findings suggested that highly ambivalent individuals were influenced by consensus information after being exposed to supported data. The authors concluded that there are people who are ambivalent that may (a) not seek additional information (i.e., low ambivalent individuals), (b) counter consensus information, and/or (c) not be influenced by consensus information.

These findings are meaningful because they suggest a reason why it is difficult for minority viewpoints to be accepted as true or valid. The way in which some individuals process information that challenges their current perspectives is to scrutinize the matter before accepting it. Unfortunately, views of minority groups in society are processed as such because a lack of exposure or information about a topic, more so than a lack of validity.

Due to the fact that quantity means more, majority group arguments seems to prevail in light of inconsistencies, misinterpretations, or evidence in support of minority group's perspective. Arguments are validated by the number of individuals who support a similar perspective as a way to "form 'accurate' perceptions, provide norms for behavior, or avoid social isolation or rejection" (Hodson et al., 2001). It appears that individual perspectives (e.g., of a minority person) are discounted because of a majority individual's lack of experience with those issues and because other majority people do not agree with the minority individual's perspective. However, the issues supported by the majority or dominant group should be questioned just as minority group views to justify a position and determine whose interests are being served by the arguments. The way information is processed and the reasons why people chose to go with the majority, such as to avoid social isolation or rejection, also shed light on possible reasons why it is difficult for individuals to change or modify current attitudes, even after valid information has been presented.

In conjunction with examining attitude research, stereotype change is also important to understanding teachers' resistance. Tan et al. (2001) provided an operational definition of stereotypes as "overgeneralizations that constitute a denial of individual differences among racial groups and other out-groups… and are driven by beliefs and feelings about the target group, and can direct behaviors depending on the valence (positive or negative) of the evaluations" (p. 172). Moreno and Bodenhausen's (1999) review of literature emphasized that stereotypes are maintained to serve particular functions. These functions are, basically, to keep a level of consistency and order. For instance, stereotypes can be used to serve the following functions: justify the status quo,

provide predictability in one's social environment, assist in interpreting daily information, and as a mechanism to disregard individual differences of people in the out-group (Moreno & Bodenhausen, 1999; Tan et al., 2001). Given these functions, stereotypes are considered as difficult to modify (Hewstone et al., 2000; Moreno & Bodenhausen, 1999; Tan et al., 2001).

However, as Tan et al. noted, modifications to stereotypes have been documented to occur when individuals discover a discrepancy between what they believe is true and how they actually respond to situations that may be a reflection of prejudice. This phenomenon is similar to cognitive dissonance that occurs, according to Festinger (1957), when individuals reach a state of psychological discomfort after receiving information that does not fit within current schema and they seek to remedy the discomfort through establishing a level of consistency (as cited in Galinsky, Stone, & Cooper, 2000). To accomplish psychological consistency, an individual becomes motivated to reduce the level of dissonance.

Moreno and Bodenhausen (1999) examined change in stereotypes through the use of counter stereotypic information. These researchers specifically examined the roles of motivation, capacity, and dispersion and their impact after individuals were exposed to counter stereotypic information. Motivation consisted of whether or not the student was accountable for explaining their description of a particular target. This variable is significant because some research (Chaiken & Trope, in press) on social-cognitive theory emphasizes that motivational orientations influence social reactions and behaviors (as cited in Moreno & Bodenhausen, 1999). The researchers described a motivated person as accuracy- or defense motivated. An individual who is accuracy-motivated constructs

impressions or judgments based on truthful information (i.e., facts or reality). Moreno and Bodenhausen hypothesized that if an accuracy-motivated person's understanding of his/her environments is based on truths, then this person would be attentive to stereotype inconsistent information and modify beliefs. Defense-motivated individuals' understanding is based on pre-existing beliefs and prejudices. A couple of reasons an individual may defend stereotypic views are for the following social purposes: (a) to maintain the existing superiority of in-group identities and (b) to maintain order and predictability of the social environment.

Subtyping is a strategy used to maintain stereotypic beliefs as generalizations. It involves attributing characteristics of an individual who counters a perceived stereotype as irrelevant. The atypical individual is also considered a "special case" because the behavior is viewed as a consequence of temporary, external, or situational circumstances (Moreno & Bodenhausen, 1999). This strategy is not automatic; Kunda and Oleson (1995) reported that subtyping requires mental effort (as cited in Moreno & Bodenhausen, 1999).

The capacity (no distractions) variable was chosen to assess its effect on an individual's decision to preserve or change stereotype. The ability to preserve a stereotype is reduced if a person is mentally occupied (e.g., while being presented with descriptive information about a target (picture of person) and required to form an impression about the target, the individual is also required to remember a 9 digit number). Basically, the individual is unable to actively construct a rationale to disregard the inconsistent information due to cognitive capacity.

As for the dispersion variable, it was necessary to determine if the disconfirming stereotype information moderated the impact of capacity and motivation on stereotype change. Moreno and Bodenhausen used inconsistent information about a stereotype in two ways: (1) dispersed pattern, in which a small amount of disconfirming information is seen in each of several targets; or (2) a concentrated pattern, in which a large amount of inconsistent information is concentrated in only a few targets (1999, p. 8). Subtyping is more common when using the concentrated pattern to present information.

This study was a 2x2x2 between-subjects design, in which the factors were motivation (accountable vs. not accountable), capacity (load vs. no load), and dispersion (dispersed vs. concentrated). A total of 192 participants were randomly assigned to one of the eight conditions. Stimulus material consisted of six sheets each with a first name, a stereotype label, and four typical behaviors of the target. The dispersion of information was spread across each target as consistent, inconsistent, and irrelevant stereotype information. Participant were allowed to view the stimulus for five minutes. However, those apart of the accountability condition were told that they would present and explain their impressions of each target and those in the cognitive load condition were told to remember a 9-digit number. Afterwards, they completed a dependent measures packet which required participants to rate the degree each trait accurately described the target, estimate the number of typical and atypical targets, and provide their perceptions about particular exemplars.

The results of this study provided evidence that individuals who are not motivated to uncover the truths about a judgment and are not distracted by stimuli, such as counter stereotypic information, manifest greater levels of stereotypes. As for individuals whose

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cognitive capacity is decreased due to an overload of distracting stimuli, their attempts to defend stereotypes failed. The researchers concluded that an individual's determination to defend a stereotype does not prevent transformation of stereotypes because constant exposure to accuracy motivation, which means seeking to understand judgments or impressions based on truthful information, increases the possibilities for change (Moreno & Bodenhausen, 1999; Tan et al., 2001). Change can be facilitated by exposure to individuals who are typical members of a group, but who also disconfirm stereotypes (Hewstone et al., 2000). However, stereotypes could be maintained by peer influence and subtyping those who disconfirm stereotypes (Hewstone et al., 2000; Moreno & Bodenhausen, 1999; Tan et al., 2001).

Overall, various methods have been used to reduce stereotypical beliefs. A focus on similarities has been one attempt that has resulted in a decrease in cognitive dissonance results. This is due to the assumption that focusing on similarities among groups, more specifically between majority and minority groups, should be a less unsettling task (Hewstone et al., 2000). However, this tactic limits the process of learning about others. As Takaki (1993) stated in his review on multiculturalism in America, it is "crucial for our society's various ethnic groups to develop a greater understanding of each other" (p. 5). Tan et al. emphasized a new approach to reducing stereotypes called self-regulation. The theory behind self-regulation is that stereotypes can be controlled through cognitive efforts, even though they are automatically triggered (Tan et al., 2001). The researchers presented an unfortunate argument by Monteith, Zuwerink, and Devine (1994) which states that "people try to be fair and just to minority groups not because they have positive attitudes towards them, but because they strive for

a positive self-image as egalitarian" (as cited in Tan et al., 2001, p.173). The above situation, provides support for the self-regulation theory and that the effort to control prejudiced behavior is a conscious choice.

Current Attempts to Reduce Resistance

A major attempt to reduce resistance in teacher education to foster change has been immersion activities (Greenman & Kimmel, 1995; Jordan, 1995). These activities require pre-service teachers to interact with children and adults who are different from them, on such variables as race, religious, and ethnic differences. Immersion activities provide opportunities for teachers to reconstruct schema (i.e., myths or false assumptions) through hands-on experience working with children in urban schools, which is an area many teachers entering the field have limited exposure. Additional effective strategies used in foundation courses to reduce resistance, as well as to encourage and promote change are self-examination activities, journal writing, self-questioning, and reciprocal peer-questioning. For instance, reciprocal peer-questioning has been used to help students resolve socio-cognitive conflict and journals were used to record thoughts, reflection of experiences, and unanswered questions (Carpenter, 2000; Causey et al., 2000; Lin et al., 1999).

As for resistance that stems from the dynamics of the student-instructor relationship, Ahlquist (1991) described her experience with conflict in a college course that was not resolved before students began to disengage from discussions. She was determined to help the pre-service teachers reach a level of critical thinking that would help each develop a clear point of view on an issue, articulate and defend their point of

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view, and participate in future discussions about "visions of a better world" (Ahlquist, 1991, p.165). In her efforts to accomplish these goals, Ahlquist later recognized that, unconsciously, she wanted them to "see and accept my view" (p. 165). As a result, participating students withdrew from discussions and others remained withdrawn. A conclusion that can be drawn from Ahlquist's (1991) personal experience with student resistance is that caution should be used when discussing controversial or new issues so that pre-service teachers do not feel imposed upon or alienated.

One conclusion drawn from this review of literature is that teacher educators must be aware that one's attitude toward an issue can be shaped by societal influences and norms. This awareness is vital when attempting to challenge a person to change or expand their worldview or behavior. This conclusion is also important to understanding the reasons why teachers have a challenging time examining their own beliefs and practices, which may be due to fear of social isolation or rejection. The next conclusion is based on the change process. The level or degree of change is determined by how an individual creates or modifies schema. Therefore, lectures and experiential activities may not have the intended effect without self-reflection and guidance. For instance, when a person reaches radical restructuring, the memory structure changes. The outcome can be a "discovery of new paradigms, identification of new concepts, and/or the creation of new schematic structures" (Causey et al., 2000, p. 34). Finally, the realization that "learners' effort to understand is the drive for concept change" (Lin et al., 1999, p. 15) is crucial to accepting the fact that attempts to reduce resistance and promote change will not reach all pre-service teachers. However, the goal is to not give up and attempt to

reach as many as possible to increase the educational opportunities for minority and disadvantaged children.

Pre-service Teacher Characteristics

Recognizing general characteristics of teachers will be helpful when advocating for the implementation of multicultural education ideologies and recommendations. Brookhart and Freeman (1992) presented research findings based on a descriptive synthesis of findings from studies that examined characteristics that are common in teacher candidates entering the teacher education program. The authors' review of the literature defined teacher candidates as those enrolled for the first time in a teacher preparation course, such as introduction to education, early field experience course, and/or an introductory educational psychology course.

The general findings across the studies examined revealed that teacher candidates are typically white and female (Ahlquist, 1991; Brookhart & Freeman, 1992; Taylor, 1999; Winitzky, 1998; Carpenter, 2000). Thus, samples usually consisted of 75%-96% persons of Caucasian or European ethnic origin (Brookhart & Freeman, 1992). Brookhart and Freeman also noted that the percentage of men were almost always higher for secondary education candidates than in elementary education. Reasons for entering the education field were based on service-oriented goals, altruistic purposes, a desire to work with children/adolescents, a desire to impart knowledge, opportunity to continue one's own education, and service to society.

Many of the pre-service teachers can be characterized as having limited exposure outside of their culture, class, or racial group (Ahlquist, 1991;Winitzky, 1998).

Ahlquist's observation data also noted that many of her students were naïve about the impact of social and political issues on the education of minority students. Consequently, an overwhelming number of pre-service teachers' lack of exposure "impedes learning" in foundation courses that focus on why multicultural education is needed in all educational settings (Winitzky, 1998, p. 2).

Winitzky (1998) listed several personal and lifestyle characteristics of pre-service teachers who entered the field of education with limited exposure and a lack of knowledge about issues and people of diverse backgrounds. The characteristics came about through narrative data collected and coded from students whose perceptions changed or broadened to educate minority and disadvantaged children in environments that promote success. Personal characteristics that were common among the pre-service teachers were (Winitzky, 1998):

> They shared an openness to learning and to new ideas. They were all proactive, self-starting learners, willing to take on extra work to further their own learning. They studied culture independently through personal reading. …sought out a student teaching placement in a high diversity school. They shared an interest in other cultures….As a group, they exhibited a willingness to admit what they did not know, that they needed to learn more; they were honest in their own self-appraisals (p. 11-12).

As for life characteristics, Winitzky concluded that these pre-service teachers immersed themselves in diverse experiences, such as volunteer work with in low-income settings and participating in activities with diverse cultures. It is important to recognize characteristics of pre-service teachers to understand why it is crucial for education programs to provide better means of preparing teachers to work with children from various backgrounds, to understand why pre-service teachers may be resistant to change in teaching practices or obligations, and to learn from the characteristic data what

learning experiences are needed throughout the program to help teachers in their teaching endeavors.

Pre-service Teachers' Perception

In examining issues related to diversity and education, it is essential to investigate current teacher perceptions regarding educating students from various ethnic groups, their individual levels of cultural sensitivity, and knowledge of cultural issues. This investigation is necessary because a teacher's perception plays a role in students' developing beliefs and attitudes based on what they are exposed to in home and, especially, school. Therefore, it is inevitable for a teacher's perception or attitude to influence his or her teaching style, instructional methods, classroom management techniques, and interactions with students.

Due to the concerns of equality in schools and the implementation of multicultural practices, studies have analyzed teacher perceptions using survey, observation, and interview methods. Bell (1997) conducted a longitudinal study evaluating the effect of pre-service teachers' practicum experiences on their attitudes related to cultural diversity issues and interpersonal competencies. Two main premises that guided Bell's analysis of the student teachers' perception were based on behavior and attitudinal changes. The first premise was that "individual sensitization to cultural difference and/or appreciation of cultural diversity involves the consideration of behavioral change" (Bell, 1997). This premise emphasizes the notion that in order for a behavioral change to occur, an attitudinal change is necessary. The second premise dealt with traditional means of examining behavior change in experimental studies. It is common for a pre-test, treatment, post-test design to be used as a part of the methodology to evaluate change.

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The significance of this premise when examining change is for one to keep in mind that the above methodological design "is not capable of telling us whether an expressed behavior change indicates attitude change; it can only tell us whether an expression of behavior has or has not changed as a result of a particular experimental treatment" (Rokeach, p. 140, as cited in Bell, 1997). Bell is one of few authors who stress the importance of understanding the relationship between behavior changes and attitude changes. Therefore, it is paramount to include the information provided by Bell to facilitate the process of accurately examining results related to change in attitude and behavior.

Bell's analysis focused on the effect of a treatment as determined by the difference of scores on a pre- and post-test of a Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI). Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, and Wise (1993) developed the MCI before Bell modified it for the purposes of his study. Four subscales make up the inventory. These subscales are: behavioral teaching skills, cultural awareness, knowledge about cultural diversity, and student-teacher relationships. Bell describes each subscale as a means to provide clarity to what the inventory is intended to measure. First, behavioral teaching skills, "include competencies as recognition and ability to recover from cultural mistakes, effective self-monitoring, and modifying teaching techniques to accommodate minority learner needs" (Bell, 1997). The next subscale, cultural awareness, "focuses on the affective domain and encompasses the educators' attitude toward their own culture, pro-active multicultural sensitivity and responsiveness, multicultural interactions and life experiences, advocacy, within institutions, and enjoyment of multiculturalism" (Bell, 1997). Knowledge about cultural diversity examines the teachers' understanding of

cultural diversity. Lastly, the student-teacher relationships subscale examines the

following factors: trust, absence of stereotyping, and comfort in a new, more diverse

relationship (Bell, 1997). The inventory was used before and after the treatment in the

study that consisted of a six day, forty-five hour practicum. In addition to using an

inventory scale, Bell obtained demographic information regarding the students'

employment. This information was gathered in order to determine if the students were

exposed to other forms of experiences related to cultural diversity.

Bell's analysis reflected a significant change in teacher-student relationships, one

of the subscales. The pre-test scores increased from a 2.95 to a 3.29 on the follow-up

test. Bell noted in his discussion that the decrease between the pre- and post-test scores

was due to the student teachers' "becoming aware of their unconscious bias" (Bell,

1997). There were gains between pre- and post-test scores for knowledge about cultural

diversity and cultural awareness, but a regression of post-test scores were indicated

through an analysis of the follow-up scores. Although the scores were lower on the

follow-up test it is important to note that the scores did not regress below the pre-test

scores. Given these results, Bell suggested that further data collection was needed to

explain the phenomena beyond the fact that "the mean score for awareness has always

been the lowest of the subscales—in this research" (Bell, 1997). As for the knowledge

subscale, Bell stated that it should be expected that the post-test score would be higher

because the inventory was administered following the student teachers' seminar course

that was a part of the treatment phase.

Bell (1997) concluded that a behavioral change of attitude was expressed in the

following: (a) interactions in client/student-teacher relationships, (b) demonstration of

adaptive teaching behavior, or (c) making use of knowledge regarding cultural diversity. An underlining message one can draw from Bell's conclusion is "if attitude change is to occur in teachers it will do so as a result of satisfaction from the change" (Bell, 1997). This factor is important when examining change or a lack of change in teacher attitude.

The message from Bell's research was reemphasized in a study by Agnello and Mittag (1999). Their study was concerned with the implementation of multicultural education practices. Agnello and Mittag examined pre-service teachers' attitude change between their internship and student teaching experience using a cultural sensitivity inventory. Attitude change is one of the necessities, along with structural changes in schools that must be a part of system level changes addressing multicultural needs in schools. Pre-service teachers, as well as the school system, must view attitude change as a necessary step in improving the education of minority students. Angello and Mittag also included a qualitative component in their study by collecting data on how pre-service teachers viewed their experiences in relation to issues of diversity.

Participants were students enrolled in two "secondary approaches classes." The treatment group included students who were involved in student teaching or internship during the Fall of 1998. The students in the control group did not student teach or complete an internship during the Fall of 1998. All participants were administered the cultural inventory during Spring of 1998. The second administration of the survey was given to all students Fall of 1998, only students who were student teaching or completing internships received an open-ended questionnaire along with the survey. The explanation for the design of the study was to "determine if classroom experiences of the treatment group affected cultural attitudes" (Agnello & Mittag, 1999).

An independent t-test was used to determine if classroom experiences had an effect on the outcome between the treatment and control groups. No significant differences were found between the two groups. Therefore the authors concluded that "this showed that classroom teaching for one semester had not statistically affected the cultural attitudes of these pre-service teachers even though the magnitude of positive change was more for the treatment group" (Agnello & Mittag, 1999). The mean of the treatment group was 1.19 and 0.90 for the control group.

Agnello and Mittag also included qualitative findings to provide a thorough investigation of the pre-service teachers' attitudes. Although the quantitative analysis did not result in significant changes experienced by the interns and the treatment group, the narrative statements of the pre-service teachers shed light on personal thoughts and experiences of the students. The students were involved in schools that ranged from settings that consisted of predominately African American children, predominately white children, or ethnically and racially mixed schools. Overall, students enjoyed their experience as interns or student teachers. Throughout the list of narrative statements provided by various students, it became apparent that many had incorporated information related to working with students from different cultural backgrounds to create positive learning environments, especially in situations where obtaining a positive learning environment was difficult from day to day. On the other hand, there were pre-service teachers who incorporated stereotypical ideologies when discussing children from minority groups. The usage of these stereotypical statements leads one to question how much impact educators can make when providing pre-service teachers will sufficient evidence and ethical reasons not to fall into a belief system that, consequently, does not

take into account individual differences when working with children. A sample statement by a student looking back over his internship and student teaching experience was that "black students are very, very noisy; Mexican-American students and Anglo students are quiet. That is the truth"(Agnello & Mittag, 1999). A positive way to examine the particular statement and others with narrow viewpoints is to take Bell's (1997) rationale for attitudinal change into account. He suggested that "the process of affective teacher attitude change is a slow process marked by the time it takes to move through the stages of awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption" (Bell, 1997). Therefore, pre-service teachers who graduate with stereotypical views of certain cultures may eventually take the knowledge, exposure, and training into context as time goes on and experiences increase. This process may result in change in attitude and behavior toward minority students.

In both studies discussed, the researchers believed that the pre-service teachers reached some level of cultural sensitivity through their experiences (i.e., coursework and teaching experiences). As a means to examine teachers' attitudes further, Agnello and Mittag (1999) suggested that more inventories be designed that are sensitive enough to probe pre-service teachers' attitudes toward their students and cultural differences. Bell suggested that reinforcements should be in place for pre-service teachers that link behavioral change and meaningful activities related to multicultural inservice opportunities (Bell, 1997). Therefore, the more experiences and opportunities related to diversity, the more chances pre-service teachers would be able to self-evaluate and learn.

Various researchers also have collected qualitative data to provide insight on pre-service teachers' perceptions before and after entering the classroom. For instance,

Carpenter's (2000) data and review of literature suggested that many pre-service teachers enter the field with idealistic viewpoints on teaching children. The teachers in this study believed that having an open-mind, which entailed "being nice to all students," was a common method employed when teaching children from diverse backgrounds. Although the practice of treating all students nice is not wrong, it is the fact that teachers may confuse this with practices that are necessary to ensure equal education for all children. Along with "being nice," teachers need to include other methods to ensure equitable and accessible education, such as advocating for students in schools who are being discriminated against, and providing opportunities in the classroom that allow students to think critically about why it is important to treat others fairly.

The practice of being nice to all students is also another way for pre-service teachers to remain neutral to issues within the school that hurt and hinder the success of disadvantaged students, such as the high suspension rates of minority students. Ahlquist (1991) noted that the pre-service teachers in her study adamantly argued reasons why teachers should remain neutral in regard to controversial issues. These controversial issues her students referred to were those surrounding viewpoints that may challenge "racial, gender, or other forms of oppression"(Ahlquist, p. 164). The pre-service teachers went as far as collecting in-service teachers' support for their argument that being neutral is the best practice. The main reason for neutrality was based on the fact that teachers are influential and powerful in the classroom. However, this reason is exactly why teachers should not remain neutral to racial, gender, class, and religious injustices.

Pre-service Teachers and Teacher Educators Knowledge of Multicultural Education

Issues

Knowledge related to issues of multicultural education is another area to examine carefully to evaluate the preparedness of teachers and pre-service teachers. It is also important to emphasize the need for exposure to information on multicultural issues in the teacher education programs. Knowledge, or lack thereof, has a direct impact on educating children from diverse backgrounds. Many pre-service teachers enter education programs with a limited amount of knowledge about diversity and multicultural education (Ahlquist, 1991; McCain-Reid, 1994; Winitzky, 1998). Gollnick's (1990) research findings suggest that it is only when teachers are culturally sensitive that students are able to develop their full potential for academic, social, and vocational success. The more knowledge teachers have about areas related to multicultural education and educating students outside of the dominant culture, the greater the gains may be for students from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds.

Taylor (1999) conducted a study that examined the knowledge level of pre-service teachers and teacher educators in the area of multicultural education and investigated whether there were statistically significant differences in the scores on the Multicultural Knowledge test between the two groups in knowledge level. The Multicultural Knowledge test is a 35-item, Likert-type response measure, in which responses range from 1 (none) to 7 (extensive). The items measure general multicultural education knowledge. An average knowledge score on the test is 4.00. There were 78 pre-service teachers and 45 teacher educators who participated in Taylor's study. Pre-service teachers were defined as persons enrolled in a teacher education program. As for

teacher educators, they were identified as faculty members preparing future teachers in a college of education.

Taylor's (1999) data analysis, using a one-sample t-test, revealed that pre-service teachers' multicultural knowledge mean score was significantly below average (M=3.08). Scores that were statistically significant were above 4.00 and indicated above average knowledge levels. A statistical significant score below 4.00 indicated below average knowledge levels. As for the teacher educators, the mean score equaled 3.93, which was indicative of average knowledge level.

The second half of the study examined if the scores between the two groups, pre-service teachers and teacher educators, were statistically significant. Through the use of an independent sample t-test, the analysis revealed that teacher educators had a significantly higher mean score than pre-service teachers (Taylor, 1999). This finding indicated that there was a significant difference in the knowledge level between pre-service teachers and teacher educators as it relates to multicultural education issues. Taylor noted that such a difference is to be expected given the number of experiences and exposure teacher educators have had in comparison to pre-service teachers.

It is important to emphasize the fact that teacher educators' mean score was not a statistically significant difference from the test value (t-value= -.51, p< .05). This result indicates that teacher educators are not as knowledgeable about multicultural issues as one would hope. Therefore, there is a need for this group to increase their awareness of issues related to multicultural education, just as there is a need for pre-service teachers to be educated in the area. Taylor stresses the importance of this through the notation of Trent's (1990) three reasons for the inclusion of "scholarship on race and ethnicity as a

core part of the preparation of the nation's teachers" (p. 360). First, the student body is becoming more diverse. Secondly, the teaching force is becoming more female and white. The third reason is that the economic future of the nation depends on meeting the educational needs of students from diverse and disadvantaged backgrounds. Thus, teacher educators and pre-service teachers need to learn and accept that diversity and multicultural education goes beyond celebrating holidays and sampling ethnic dishes.

CHAPTER III

METHOD

Participants

The participants in this study were 44 college students enrolled in a mandated

seminar course that is taken simultaneously with their student teaching internship. There

are approximately eight seminars held each semester. This internship is the final stage

before completing a Bachelor of Science degree for teaching in the College of Education

at a large urban university in the southeast. The purpose of the internship is to provide

pre-service teachers with "hands-on" experience teaching children in a designated school

under the supervision of an in-service teacher currently in the field. A college faculty

member known as the school supervisor also supervises the students. As a result, the

students meet at least once a month for seminars directed by the school supervisor at the

university, as well as receive weekly or monthly visits from the supervisor at their

assigned schools for internship. Upon entering the College of Education program, the

students are required to enroll in a state-mandated course focusing on issues related to

teaching students from diverse populations. The course provides information on cultural

sensitivity, barriers faced by ethnic minorities, valuing diversity in the class, and cultural

awareness. The diversity course has many objectives to accomplish in one semester.

Using a course syllabus for the diversity course, the following are objectives taken

directly from the syllabus: (a) to deepen [students] understanding and appreciation of

ways diversity has shaped American culture, social thought, social institutions and,

intergroup relations; (b) to take a broad look at diversity in American life historically and

contemporarily and its impact on education; and (c) to provide a realistic view of the challenges that will be faced by educators…when addressing the needs of a diverse student population.

The composition of undergraduate education majors at the university in 2002-2003 was: 83% White, 7% African American, 8% Hispanic, 1% Asian, >1 % Native American, and 1% Other. As for the school district surrounding the university, the student population is 53% White (non-Hispanic), 24% Black (non-Hispanic), 19% Hispanic, 2% Asian/Pacific Islander, >1% American Indian/Alaskan Natives, and 2% Multiracial. The teacher composition in the surrounding school district is 78% White (non-Hispanic), 13% Black (non-Hispanic), 8% Hispanic, and 1% Other. The composition of pre-service teachers enrolled in the seminar course and internship, also closely mirrors the above numbers.

The total number of participants ranged from 44 for pretest survey administration to 42 for posttest administration. For those responding to the pretest, 65% were Caucasian. The next largest racial group was Hispanic students comprising 22% of the population. African Americans and individuals who chose the other category represented 7% and 2%, respectively. Overall, 98% of the participants were Elementary Education majors. Approximately 74% had taken 1-3 multicultural courses (19% had taken 4-6 courses) and 42% had participated in at least 1-3 multicultural workshops (see Table 2).

Surveys measuring attitudes related to multicultural education were administered in a total of four seminars. The students who completed the survey were in their last year of college. A few of the students received permission to take one additional course with

the internship, but the majority of the students were enrolled in only the seminar course and internship.

Procedures

    Pilot study. Prior to administering the survey to the selected seminar classes, students enrolled in the prerequisite course completed the survey as a pilot. The course focuses on issues related to teaching students from diverse populations. This is the same course mentioned earlier, which study participants also completed before being accepted into the College of Education. The following questions were asked of the pilot participants: (a) were items logically arranged; (b) were items understandable, such as understanding what the question was asking and knowing how to respond; and (c) what would they change about the survey. The general consensus of the pilot participants was that the order of questions appeared appropriate and that they did not have difficulty with answering the survey questions (e.g., word choice was not a problem). However, a recommendation from the pilot group was to add a category so that participants could indicate if they did not have experience related to a particular survey question. For instance, the response column ranging from 1 to 4 (very inaccurate to accurate) should include a column to indicate not applicable or no experience. This change was not made. The researcher chose to use the exact survey from Bell's study because the instrument had current statistical data on its reliability and validity.

    Present study. The study involved a mixed methods approach. Data were gathered through the use of surveys and focus groups. The researcher attended four out of eight seminar classes to recruit students. The seminar classes were selected by the university's internship coordinator based on the intern supervisors who would be most

receptive to participating in the research project. The results of the data would not be affected by the seminar selection method because each seminar consisted of pre-service teachers who were placed based on the schools the intern supervisor was assigned. The students were told the purpose of the study, their role in the study, and how the information gathered would be useful to the College of Education and future education majors. The data were used to answer the following research questions:

d) What are the attitudes about multicultural education and diversity, as indicated by a diversity inventory, of pre-service teachers who have completed a multicultural education course and are completing their internship?

e) Do pre-service teachers believe they are knowledgeable about cultural diversity and teaching minority students?

f) Do pre-service teachers believe their internship experiences address issues of diversity that will assist them in the future?"

Instrumentation

Bell's (1997) multicultural counseling inventory (modified) was administered at two time points (pretest and posttest). Pre- and posttest inventories were completed during the seminar. The inventory consists of a number of items, using a Likert-type format, addressing the following topics:

a. General knowledge of cultural diversity (8 survey items: 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, and 17). Example: I consider the range of behaviors, values, and individual differences within a minority group.

b. Pre-service teacher-student relationships (8 survey items: 1, 2, 3, 5, 6, 8, 11, and 18). Example: I perceive my race causes students to mistrust me.

c. Behavioral teaching skills which "include such competencies as recognition and ability to recover from cultural mistakes, effective monitoring, and modifying teaching techniques to accommodate minority learner needs" (Bell, 1997, p. 6) (7 survey items: 4, 15, 19, 20, 21, 22, and 23). Example: I emphasize the effects of prejudice, discrimination, and social inequities in my lesson planning and teaching.

d. Cultural awareness which "focuses on the affective domain and encompasses the educator's attitude toward their own culture, pro-active multi-cultural sensitivity and responsiveness, multi-cultural interactions and life experiences, advocacy within institutions, and enjoyment of multiculturalism" (Bell, 1997, p. 6) (9 survey items: 24,25,26,27,28,29,30,31, and 32). Example: I am familiar with nonstandard English.

Bell's attitudinal inventory is an adaptation of the Multicultural Counseling Inventory (MCI) designed by Sodowsky, Taffe, Gutkin, and Wise (1993). Bell examined the inventory's face and content validity, as well as, internal consistency reliability. He used a panel that consisted of agricultural education faculty, consumer science faculty, and the MCI's authors to judge validity. Bell used Cronbach's alpha to report internal reliability. Based on pretest, posttest, and follow-up administrations, the reported internal reliability for each subscale were as follows, respectively: total of all subscales (.82, .85, .89), skills (.56, .74, .62), awareness (.75, .76, .86), knowledge (.85, .72, .84), and relationship (.46, .58, .64). The results of Bell's data were obtained using 18 student teachers of agricultural education (see Table 3).

Data Collection Procedures

Surveys were administered to Elementary education interns from four internship seminar courses. There were approximately 10-15 interns in each seminar course. Seminar courses were three months long beginning in January and ending in April, in which the students met once a week. The location of the seminars varied for some groups. For instance, one of the seminar courses was held at an elementary school. The other three seminars were held at the university, at times, in different meeting areas. The reasons for different locations ranged from convenience for interns to space availability. Survey administrations occurred twice, once the third week of seminar and again, about two months after the pretest. Interns completed the surveys during the time allocated for seminar.

For anonymity, students created an eight digit numeric code for identification purposes. The code consisted of the following format to facilitate students remembering their code over time:

a. First and second digits were the first two digits of student's social security number

b. Third and fourth digits were the student's day of birth

c. Fifth and sixth digits were the month of birth

The codes remained the same for the first and second administration of the inventory. The purpose of using codes was to provide the students with an assurance of anonymity, thereby increasing the likelihood of obtaining reliable and honest results. It was

important for the students to remember their codes for the researcher to analyze change from the previous inventory.

Data Analysis

To examine the changes in attitude after the completion of the internship, seminar course, and multicultural diversity course (completed upon entering the college of education), paired t-tests were used to determine if there was a difference in scores between the pretest and posttest inventories.

Descriptive analysis of the data was also conducted to examine the variables in the study. The information consisted of means, standard deviations, range, skewness and kurtosis. Tables are provided to present the data for each variable.

Focus Groups

During the final survey administration, the researcher asked for volunteers to participate in a short focus group. The purpose of the focus group was to obtain anecdotal data about the participants' internship experiences. The focus group was held during the last month of inventory administration, so that the focus group location and time would be convenient for the students. The focus group was a general discussion addressing questions from the inventory, as well as issues related to the students' internship experience and teaching students from different races, ethnicities, and genders (see Appendix A).

The researcher facilitated the focus group discussion. The facilitator's role is to direct the discussion and take notes (Krueger & Casey, 2000). An assistant was present

during the focus group discussion to take notes, operate tape, and attend to unexpected interruptions (Krueger & Casey, 2000). The assistant was a School Psychology doctoral student in her second year of graduate school. Participants were asked to share information about obstacles, methods used to teach students, changes or steps incorporated into daily class schedule or curriculum as evidence of promoting multicultural education, and personal growth related to understanding diversity and teaching children from diverse backgrounds.

One focus group with 5 participants was conducted for 60 minutes. The session occurred in an observation lab, so that the session could be recorded using a tape recorder. Focus group discussion was utilized to obtain anecdotal information regarding attitude changes and experiences of the students. The session was transcribed by hand. Anecdotal data were analyzed by determining core themes. Thought units (e.g., statements made by the participants) were used to categorize information into preset and emerging themes. A doctoral graduate student (Assistant B) in the department of Special Education, whose research focused on multicultural and urban education, assisted the researcher in examining the transcript and determining themes and issues discussed by the participants. The researcher and Assistant B examined the transcript separately and noted common themes based on the participants' statements.

Preset themes were derived from the literature on multicultural education and teachers' attitudes. The following preset themes were used in the data analysis: resistance, experience of internship, and view about teaching children from diverse backgrounds. Additional themes were determined during the analysis of the data by grouping related thought units together to create a category that best fit the related units.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The data were analyzed using the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). Means, standard deviations, skewness, kurtosis, and internal reliability were derived for each subscale. Paired t-tests were used to determine if there was a difference in scores between the pretest and posttest inventories.

Following is a discussion of the results in which each of the three research questions are addressed separately. The first half of the discussion will address the results pertaining to the survey. The data from the focus group will conclude the results.

For the present study, internal reliabilities of each subscale pretest and posttest results were as follows, respectively: skills (.38 and .35), awareness (.79 and .77), relationship (.70 and .59), and knowledge (.69 and .72) (see Table 3). These data differed from Bell's reported alpha coefficient for each subscale as it relates to pretest, posttest, and follow-up administrations, respectively: skills (.56, .74, .62), awareness (.75, .76, .86), knowledge (.85, .72, .84), and relationship (.46, .58, .64). A noticeable difference was between the current study and Bell's internal reliability results for the multicultural skills subscale. The authors of the MCI, Sodowsky et al., conducted their study with 320 counselors and reported Cronbach alpha coefficients of .83 for multicultural skills, .83 for multicultural awareness, .65 for multicultural relationship, and .79 for multicultural knowledge (see Table 3).

Research question one examined pre-service teachers' attitudes about multicultural education and diversity as indicated by the MCI at the start of internship

(after completion of coursework and a multicultural education course) and at the end of the internship experience. The four attitudes examined were multicultural skill, awareness, relationship, and knowledge. The scale ranged from 1 (very inaccurate) to 4 (very accurate). The mean for Multicultural Relationship pre- and posttest was constant with a mean of 3.55 (SD = 0.40 and 0.34 for pretests and posttests, respectively). The mean for Multicultural Knowledge increased from 3.19 (SD = 0.46) to 3.23 (SD = 0.38) and Multicultural Skill increased from 3.30 (SD = 0.38) to 3.37 (SD = 0.39). A slight decrease in the mean for Multicultural Awareness was noted by a change from 2.76 (SD = 0.54) to 2.73 (SD = 0.51). For additional descriptive results, see Table 4.

To examine if change over time was statistically significant (pretest to posttest), paired t-tests were conducted to examine the difference in pre-service teachers' perspective at the beginning and end of internship. After conducting t-tests for paired samples, results indicated that there were no significant mean differences between pretest and posttest scores for all subscales: multicultural skill (t-value = -0.98, p = .34), multicultural awareness (t-value= -1.01, p= .32), multicultural relationship (t-value= -0.90, p= .38) and multicultural knowledge (t-value= 0.56, p= .58). Additional paired t-tests were conducted to determine if responses on individual items differed between the pretest and posttest (i.e., pretest item 7 through item 10 with posttest item 7 through item 10). All individuals items were compared using 32 paired t-tests. Two items were answered slightly differently from pretest to posttest. These items were 13 and 32. The statement for item 13 asked students to rate how in tune they are with changing practices, views, and interests. Item 32 asked students to rate the accuracy of the statement "In order to be able to work with minority students, I frequently seek consultation with

multicultural experts and attend multicultural workshops or training sessions." However, due to chance, it is expected that at least two items would be significantly different. For item 13, the participants' response value decreased from 3.54 (pretest) to 3.25 (posttest). For item 32, there was a slight increase in response value 1.88 (pretest) to 2.45 (posttest).

Do pre-service teachers believe they are knowledgeable about cultural diversity and teaching minority students?

Research question two examined how pre-service teachers rated their knowledge about diversity and teaching minority students. The questions that related to knowledge were eight items 7, 9, 10, 12, 13, 14, 16, and 17. Using a Likert scale with values of 1 through 4, with 4 indicating high multicultural competence, and 1 indicating poor multicultural competence, the pre-services teacher responded to each of the items. The pretest response values ranged from 1.67 (2% of the participants) to 3.63 (13% of the participants) on the overall knowledge subscale. As for posttest values, they ranged from 2.38 (2% of the participants) to 3.38 (10% of the participants). Therefore, many of the pre-service teachers selected values 3 (somewhat accurate) and 4 (very accurate) to answer questions related to knowledge of multicultural education and teaching minority students, which indicates that most view themselves as being knowledgeable.

Do pre-service teachers believe their internship or student teaching experiences address issues of diversity that will assist them in the future?

Research question three examined data from the focus group to determine a general consensus about how the internship experience addressed issues related to

diversity to prepare them for the future. Participants spoke mostly about how their internship experiences led to an increase in exposure and awareness, such as being at a school where the minority student was a white student or being in a class in which there was a diverse group of students from various ethnicities (i.e., a class with students who are Jamaican, Asian, Indian, African American, and White). The participants also commented on their observation that SES was more of an issue in many of their schools than race. They observed how poor students attended poor schools.

Emergent themes noted by the researcher were the following: Assistance with processing information outside of courses, personal investment in learning about other cultures and ethnicities, background information about self, information on family's perspective, discussion of beliefs, perception of the university's role in preparing them to work with diverse children, level of awareness, appreciation, knowledge, limited exposure, exposure before and after entering program, changes in perspective, and challenges. After review of the transcript, Assistant B indicated that the following were emergent themes throughout the group discussion: growing up with limited experiences or none at all, family acceptance, awareness, exposure to diversity, open-mindedness, challenges, personal experiences, experiences in the program, color-blind mentality, program's focus, and knowledge.

The researcher and Assistant B observed similar themes in the analysis of the focus group data (see Appendix B). Of the 18 themes the researcher determined after analyzing the focus group data, Assistant B also identified 8 of the same themes in her analysis. For instance, limited experiences were one of the themes identified by both examiners. A statement that highlights this point is one student's comment, "I come from

a tiny town in upstate New York where everyone is white. Very white bread, middle class." However, exposure was another emerging theme and was emphasized by the same student in response to her experience with others from different backgrounds, "then I moved to Florida and I was able to get more experiences with adults, with children it was not so much until I got into the schools." Other students with limited exposure indicated that their schools were mostly "white and upper class" and if students were not white, they were bused in from the inner city. Others spoke of their diverse schooling experiences in grade school. One participant commented that her school was "pretty even racially, religiously, and everything was pretty spread out." This same student had an eye-opening experience in regards to social class differences once she entered the College of Education. She was assigned to a low socio-economic school. She stated the experience was not shocking, "just different than what I expected or what I was used to. Some of the kids did not have pencils and their parents could not afford them." The participant rated the overall experience as "pretty good."

Family values and perspectives were discussed in the group. Some students described their families as liberals who accepted everyone, while other students described their families' views as narrow and limited. Although there were a small number of participants, many commented that their families believed in treating others as equals.

Awareness or exposure since college increased for many of the participants. For example, one student stated "I think I am a lot more aware since taking the education courses and I know more about different cultures." Other comments focused on practica experiences, "I know a lot more and more aware of people and their cultures, especially since my level II (referring to second practica)" or "I am aware of backgrounds and

accept that some kids cannot afford $1.50 field trip, even though it is only $1.50." After

working on a required English Speakers of Other Languages (ESOL) portfolio and

teaching students whose second language is English, one of the participants came to the

realization that she can "teach them, they can sit in the room and still absorb things."

Although many comments of awareness were made, some of the teachers made remarks

that were indicative of a color-blind mentality. This phenomenon was evident in the

following statements made by different participants: "yes, if the kid is having trouble, I

do not care, kids are kids," "it does not matter what their background is," and "there is

too much focus on race and culture."

Participants addressed knowledge of multicultural issues on several occasions.

The participants shared information about knowledge as it relates to understanding

customs, learning about the history of different cultural groups, educating others, and

how knowledgeable one is about multicultural issues. Many students expressed how

much they have learned through their own personal experiences and practica experiences.

A viewpoint shared by many was that they knew enough to get by, but wanted to know

more. Some of the students believed that there is only so much to learn in a classroom as

a college student and that "being in the classroom as the teacher, you learn more than

sitting in a class being told. Year by year, you become more culturally aware, the

stereotypes come and go but you get more experience."

As for the College of Education's role in preparing the pre-service teachers to

work with children from diverse backgrounds, many shared that their exposure and

awareness either increased throughout their overall college experience, was increased

during their student teaching experiences, or remained the same (for those who had prior

diverse experiences). One of the participants stated that the group activities in one of her education classes were intense because "it was more hard core things that would come up [during class discussions] or you would be sitting in ethics class and talking about your beliefs." All of the students agreed that the teaching diversity class (multicultural education course) should be much later in the program, preferably, "after you have had time to be in the schools because then you know what the diverse populations are." Since some students had different experiences with the teaching diverse course, all the participants agreed the course should only be offered at the university [in which the student is getting his/her degree]. For example, one of the students who took the class at a community college stated, "all we did was make crafts such as how to make a piñata and I did not learn much about others." As for the curriculum, participants suggested that more time be allotted to learn ways to modify lessons other than for ESOL purposes. The students agreed that an excessive amount of time is given to ESOL modifications, but not on creating regular education lesson plans or learning information necessary to teach children from various backgrounds (i.e., children who speak other languages such as French or Creole).

Chapter V

DISCUSSION

The purpose of this research was to investigate pre-service teachers' perceptions about multicultural education and diversity, knowledge of issues related to multicultural education, competency in teaching minority students, and their perception of the preparation provided by the university for teaching minority students. A multi-method approach was used to examine pre-service teachers' perception of the preparation they received from the university and their knowledge of multicultural education. This section will elaborate on the findings related to research questions, limitations of the study, implications, and directions for future research.

It is essential to begin with reiterating the many purposes of multicultural education. Its main purpose is to influence the current views and practices of school personnel by encouraging the philosophy that all students should have an equal educational opportunity, regardless of their race/ethnicity, social class, cultural differences, customs/traditions, or gender. As the nation's schools become increasingly more diverse, the number of individuals from minority groups entering the field of teacher education is not increasing with the trend. Therefore, the need for an understanding of multicultural education and the implementation of practices that facilitate the success of minority and disadvantaged children are needed. However, to facilitate change, we must evaluate what is currently taught in teacher education programs to promote this ideology and determine where additional supports are needed

for pre-service teachers to value and practice strategies that lead to equal educational opportunities for minority students.

Attitudes about multicultural education and diversity

The survey data represent participants' perception of what multicultural education means in the classroom (i.e., use of various teaching techniques), how well they work with minority students (e.g., comfort level, ability to interact despite racial or cultural differences), and their perception of how race, socioeconomic factors, and culture impact decisions and practices. Fortunately, participants appeared willing to provide information about their experiences.

To provide a more descriptive explanation of the mean scores, Bell's ranking will be used to depict the level of competency in each domain (i.e., relationship, knowledge, awareness, and skills). Bell based his means on a scale of 1-4, in which 1=poor multicultural competence, 2=fair multicultural competence, 3=good multicultural competence, and 4=strong multicultural competence (1997). Therefore, the mean score between pre- and posttest also indicated that students perceived their level of competency as "good" in the area of multicultural relationship. It is important to note that the multicultural relationship domain is synonymous to the student-teacher relationship domain in Bell's study. The questions ranged from how comfortable the pre-service teacher felt in his/her interaction with minorities students to the impact of stereotypes on the interaction process. Bell's (1997) study found a significant change in student-teacher relationships over time (Table 3).

Overall, the pre-service teachers' responses to the questions in each domain, in the present study, indicated a perception of good competency and with slight increases

between pre- and posttest administrations. For instance, the pre-service teachers believed that they are competent in using effective strategies to assist minority learners and knowledgeable about research on the learning needs of minority students. The goal is for this perception of competency to be reflected in their teaching practices.

The teachers rated their multicultural awareness competency level as fair (M = 2.77, SD = 0.54 [pretest] and M= 2.73, SD = 0.51[posttest]). Additional information was obtained through the focus group discussion, in which participants elaborated on their breadth of awareness and explained how their exposure or interactions with others from different backgrounds contributed to their awareness of other cultures. Many of the focus group participants attended secondary schools, lived in communities, or worked for agencies in which they interacted with diverse groups of people before entering the education program. Examples of the interactions included working with minority children and participating in activities at school or home with minority students. Participants who had limited experience with different racial or socioeconomic class groups in secondary schools or communities, had opportunities to engage in diverse experiences during college and prior to entering the education program. Because studies indicate that many pre-service teachers enter with limited or no experiences, it is hoped that the percentage of participants who did not participate in the focus group had positive interactions with others from different backgrounds, which led to an increase in awareness (Ahlquist, 1991; Carpenter, 2000; Causey et al., 2000; Winitzky, 1998). If the prior experience of the focus group participants is an exception to what other pre-service

teachers experience, then the diversity course and practica are the perfect opportunities for the university to immerse teachers in activities with minority children.

However, the difference between pre- and posttest mean scores of the multicultural awareness domain illustrated an uncertainty amongst the teachers regarding their competence. The scores decreased slightly between administrations. This finding is similar to Bell's, in which the scores on average were at the fair level and a regression of scores was noted between posttest and follow-up administrations. Such results mean that the pre-service teachers perceived their awareness of other cultures and issues related to the individuals of other cultures, interactions outside of their own culture, attitude toward their own culture, and enjoyment of multiculturalism as fair. Bell indicated that the awareness domain has consistently had the lowest mean score of all the domains because affective change is usually not a target issue when designing interventions related to diversity. Instead, the emphasis is on understanding the content and applying the information. However, to acquire a level of multicultural sensitivity and responsiveness and be an effective teacher, such as being proactive and advocating for children through intervention, one must transition through the stages of awareness to reach attitude change. As noted earlier, Gollnick's findings (1990) indicated that culturally sensitive teachers are more capable of guiding students in reaching success in academic, social, and vocational aspirations. Such findings imply the need to impact affect and attitude, not just an understanding of content.

Pre-service teachers knowledge about multicultural education and diversity

Pre-service teachers' knowledge about multicultural education and related issues was an area the researcher wanted to examine as an aspect of preparedness. For example,

data were collected regarding their knowledge about these issues when entering the public school system. Researchers who have experience with teaching pre-service teachers suggest that many people enter the teacher education programs with misconceptions about the meaning of multicultural education and view it as a separate curriculum from the core curriculum in schools such as math and reading (Ahlquist, 1991; Carpenter, 2000). Therefore, it is essential to examine this area. Such an examination will help determine if additional supports or interventions are needed to help teachers recognize multicultural education as a component that should be integrated into the core curriculum to provide all students with an equitable and positive educational experience (Causey et al., 2000).

Pre-service teachers' responses to questions in the knowledge domain indicated that many perceive themselves as knowledgeable. Beyond their responses to survey questions, this notion was also emphasized in the focus group discussion. Knowledge was not only obtained in the university classroom, but many of the pre-service teachers expressed that knowledge was also gained through practica experiences in the school setting and personal experiences unrelated to their elementary education program. For example, one focus group participant acquired knowledge about the history of African Americans through an African studies course she completed in addition to her education courses. Although there were a small number of focus group participants, the desire to gain more knowledge and learn how to interact, teach, and support minority students was expressed by the majority.

In contrast to these results, Taylor's analysis of pre-service teachers' response to a Multicultural Knowledge test indicated significantly below average scores (M = 3.08,

average score on test = 4.00). Teacher educators also completed the test and obtained a mean score of 3.93 (average). However, Taylor's research revealed that teacher educators, as well as pre-service teachers, needed additional guidance in these areas. As Taylor's finding suggest, we need to provide teacher educators with updated training or educative methods to increase their awareness and knowledge level. Therefore, efforts to ensure that our pre-service teachers exit education programs with sufficient knowledge and skills might be more effective.

Logically, we cannot expect the skill and knowledge of pre-service teachers to meet professional standards if teacher educators are not prepared to teach or provide necessary support. Florida's Department of Education has set preprofessional competencies for teachers of the 21st century. One of those standards is diversity. This standard entails that a teacher demonstrate knowledge and awareness of various cultures and linguistic backgrounds. Demonstrating this knowledge and awareness includes creating a climate of openness, inquiry, and support by practicing strategies such as acceptance and tolerance (Florida Education Standards Commission). With these expectations, pre-service teachers need a foundation of knowledge and guidance in order to develop effective techniques to meet the needs of minority children. For teachers entering the field with limited experiences, this support from teacher educators must be even greater. Florida's expectation in the area of diversity stresses the changes in thinking pre-service teachers need to make. One belief that needs changing was illustrated in Carpenter's (2000) study. In Carpenter's study, pre-service teachers' believed being nice to all students was a method that addresses issues of diversity. Unfortunately, this method is problematic because teachers need to be cognizant that

differences exist and modifications or accommodations might be needed to address differences that affect students' performance. If standards are not enforced, then this level of thinking will not be challenged and it is likely that teachers will not go beyond the prerequisite of being nice. Being nice is expected, but being aware that differences exist for individual children or groups of children and knowledge about strategies to support their educational needs is also expected.

Many of the pre-service teachers in this study expressed that the internship experience increased their exposure and awareness of issues related to multiculturalism, such as the impact of language barriers. Some pre-service teachers will complete their internship with an experience that involved integrating their knowledge and skills about teaching children from minority backgrounds, some will exit not sure of how to teach children who are different from them as it relates to diversity (i.e., language, customs, beliefs), and some interns will complete the process with the same narrow beliefs or increased stereotypical beliefs. These scenarios are similar to the experiences of participants in a study by Angello and Mittag (1999). In Angello and Mittag's study, they were able to gather student teachers' perspectives about topics such as teaching experience, class and race issues in their schools, and culture and curriculum. For instance, an experience shared by a few participants in the present study's focus group and Angello and Mittag's participants is the need to diversify instructions based on what works for a class or an individual. However, in Angello and Mittag's study, at least one participant still held stereotypical beliefs. Based on the student teacher's experience, he stated that "Black students are very, very noisy; Mexican-American and Anglo students are quiet. That is the truth" (Angello & Mittag, 1999, p. 15). The purpose of noting the

student's statement is not to question the student's experience, but to emphasize how an experience can lead to negative generalizations about a group of people. The extent of negative views held by participants in the present study could not be evaluated, due to the lack of focus group participation. Gathering information about positive experiences is important to highlight, but knowledge about negative experiences is as important to educate and provide students with guidance and support. Teacher educators, including those within the school system, cannot be expected to change the minds of pre-service teachers. One can only hope that pre-service teachers are receptive to the information and, through exposure and time, practices that do not account for individual differences will be eliminated from the teacher's repertoire. It is important to note here that affective change is a slow process and goes through several stages such as awareness, interest, evaluation, trial, and adoption (Bell, 1997). Similar to other practices in education, it takes time for all to agree on a common goal, decide what tactics to use to accomplish the goal, and to collectively work towards the common goal. Unlike some practices in education, it is hoped that the norm becomes an acceptance of differences, equal educational opportunities, and the inclusion of practices that account for differences and empower students.

Implications of Study

The research questions and supporting literature emphasize the need for teacher education programs to improve their efforts in providing pre-service teachers with opportunities to learn and apply their knowledge in teaching minority students. Student teaching and internship are times in which pre-services teacher are in schools observing, teaching, and learning. Therefore, why not make this experience meaningful and place

pre-service teachers in classroom settings that are occupied by children who are culturally and linguistically diverse? Such an arrangement would be an improvement, in comparison, to the present way of business where many of the pre-service teachers are getting limited exposure to working with minority or disadvantaged children. Teacher educators should be expected to guide pre-service teachers in enhancing their knowledge level about multicultural issues and meeting the needs of minority students. However, pre-service teachers also have to take the initiative to educate themselves about matters or areas they feel less knowledgeable and/or areas not covered in courses (i.e., consulting with other professionals, attending workshops, and consulting with families). As one focus group participant stated, "I know enough to get by, but I would like to know more." The majority of focus group participants stated that they received information and support on modifying or developing plans for students who are eligible for English Speakers of other Languages (ESOL) services, as well as, how to integrate works from authors from various cultures for language/reading classes. However, participants also expressed that the information they received from the diversity course was forgotten by the time of internship. Therefore, these experiences support the need for education programs to help teachers learn how to process and apply information gained in diversity courses (or classes that incorporate diversity strategies), and stress the importance of self-education.

The experiences of the pre-service teachers in the present study may suggest that perhaps improvements have been made and have resulted in positive outcomes. However, more work needs to be done to ensure that minority children are not discriminated against in schools because of the color of their skin, the language or

manner in which they speak, or because of the customs/traditions that impact school behavior (i.e., lack of eye contact with adults). More work also needs to be done to ensure that minority children receive equal access and educational opportunities as other students. For example, making sure teachers are aware of cultural differences in communication and social behavior of different ethnic groups that impact a child's behavior or acquisition of information. Educating teachers about this area would involve discussing social behaviors that are acceptable or expected amongst various ethnic groups, but may not be accepted or expected by individuals who embrace standards of the dominant culture group. For example, teachers need to understand that language or dialect differences exist, such as sentence structure or the use of grammar rules that differ from Standard English grammar conventions. Language or dialect differences that limit the communication between teacher and student also exist, but teachers must be flexible and non-judgmental when determining appropriate times to educate children about Standard English through corrective techniques. This type of education may not be possible in a college course, but teachers need to know ways to go about collecting this information about their students in order to "respect children's cultures, to guide students' learning of the basic skills, language, and attitudes of the macroculture, and to nourish each student's self-esteem" (Campbell, 2000, p. 39). Campbell's emphasis on understanding the attitudes of the macroculture was not emphasized in this study. This omission was not purposeful. The researcher's intent was to emphasize the need for teachers to understand the culture of minority groups because, for many minorities, understanding the attitudes of the dominant culture is a forced, hidden curriculum for success. However, it is necessary to emphasize a need to embrace all cultures and

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teachers can assist students by being knowledgeable and respectful of cultural differences.

There are various ways in which universities can prepare pre-service teachers to learn and apply skills related to teaching minority students. First, teacher education programs need to adopt a philosophy about diversity that encourages discussions of the impact of diversity in every course. Topics for discussion should highlight the following areas: the impact of social class on learning or access to educational opportunities, the impact of poverty on a child's performance in reading, the impact of language barriers on understanding teacher expectations, the impact of culture on a child's perception of rules, consequences, and expectations. The topic of multicultural education should not be limited to one course, nor should it only be a focus during one time frame (e.g., before completing courses for major). For pre-service teachers to be comfortable with teaching minority students or addressing their needs, they will need experience interacting with minority children, knowledge about resources to use for challenging situations, and available strategies to use to support minority students in the classroom.

As for the timing of the diversity course, the information and experiences built into the diversity course should also be apart of the interns' seminar course because the internship is the time when what is learned in courses is applied. Seminar is an opportunity to support and guide teachers in being effective at their job. Therefore, a component of the seminar should address these multicultural issues in a manner that provides ways to process and apply knowledge. The integration of this component should not be contingent upon teachers having difficulties at the time of seminar, but

should be a part of the internship supervisor's agenda in preparing the pre-service teachers for the school system.

Strategies that should be fused throughout the program to address diversity and the discussion of ways to teach children from minority backgrounds are the following: self-examination activities, journal writing, immersion activities, and reciprocal peer-questioning (Carpenter, 2000; Causey et al., 2000; Greenman & Kimmel, 1995; Jordan, 1995; Lin et al., 1999). Researchers used these strategies with pre-service teachers to address issues related to race, social class, and cultural differences (Carpenter, 2000; Causey et al., 2000; Greenman & Kimmel, 1995; Jordan, 1995; Lin et al., 1999). The immersion activities provide opportunities for teachers to gain experience in working with children in urban schools. As for the self-examination activities and reciprocal peer-questioning, they were used by researchers to help resolve socio-cognitive conflicts, reflect on experiences, obtain information for unanswered questions, facilitate critical thinking to initiate positive change in attitudes, or reduce stereotypes. The purpose of these strategies and others is to provide teachers with many opportunities to self-evaluate, learn, and apply their acquired knowledge.

Limitations

Approximately 65% of the participants in this study were Caucasian. Hispanics and African Americans represented the remaining proportion, approximately 22% and 7%, respectively. As for the focus group participants, 100% were Caucasian. Approximately, 96% of the participants were female and 2% were male (see Table 1). As a result, one limitation of this study is the difficulty in obtaining a representative number of participants who identified themselves as an ethnicity or race other than white,

as well as participants that were male. The percentage of participants that represented each racial or gender group was also below the university's College of Education estimates. The College of Education is comprised of 79% Caucasians, 10% African Americans, 9% Hispanics, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, and <1% American Indian. These data limit the researcher's ability to generalize the data gathered from the survey and focus group. Such limitations mean that a representative number of students who are minorities may not have been obtained. Therefore, we are still not well informed about the perspective of minority students on the following: (a) attitudes about multicultural education, (b) knowledge about cultural diversity and teaching minority students, (c) perception of their internship experiences in addressing issues of diversity. This information is important to know because one should not assume that an individual of a minority group knows how to teach all minority children or children within his/her own ethnic group. Individuals within each ethnic group are different and may have different experiences relating to values, education, beliefs, and other factors that impact teaching. The experience and perspective of minority, pre-service teachers are also valuable to inform us about what works and areas in need of improvement. In sum, all pre-service teachers should be (a) asked to assess their beliefs and teaching practices and (b) educated in effective teaching methods that support the success of minority children.

In addition to the lack of minorities in the focus group, the small number of participants also prevents generalization. There were 5 focus group participants who shared their views about their pre-service teaching experience and preparedness in teaching minority students. Although this number was small, the participants shared meaningful information regarding the scheduling of the diversity course, their limited

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exposure to modifications for differences that impact student success, and their

experience with individuals from different ethnic groups.

Lastly, a limitation of the survey was the language. During the administration of

the survey, the researcher had to explain to a few of the participants what the words in a

question meant or elaborate on what the question was asking. After each administration,

the researcher asked all participants about their perception of the instrument. Many

commented that some of the questions were difficult to understand because of the

wording or choice of words. Such limitations could have impacted the pre- and posttest

responses of the pre-service teachers because the teachers may have responded

differently depending on how they interpreted the question during each administration.

The language used also could have impacted the validity of the questions. However,

statistical tests did not indicate significant differences between pre- and posttest

administrations in regards to reliability or validity.

Future Directions

Investigating teacher education programs is not the only area that needs

improving. To ensure equal education and accessibility, schools responsible for

educating children also need to be examined. Teachers can be trained and prepared to

work with minority students, but the other personnel in the system must also be trained

and effective in teaching minority students. Specifically, future research might examine

the support of administrators for teachers who exit education programs with sufficient

knowledge for meeting the needs of minority students. For example, when a first year

teacher enters a school in which racial inequality is an issue, such as a disproportionate

number of African American males in the school being referred for alternative education, does the principal support the teacher in making changes?

To assist with the investigation of teacher preparedness, "more sensitive instruments to probe students' [pre-service teachers] attitudes toward their students and cultural differences" are needed (Angello & Mittag, 1999, p. 22). The instrument used for this study was designed by Sodowsky et al. (1994) for counselors and modified by Bell to use with pre-service teachers. However, the instrument did not address specific questions related to the impact of the university experience on attitudes about diversity or multicultural education. The survey was also written with language that limited the quality of information received from the pre-service teachers. For example, the accuracy of the pre-services teachers' responses was limited because it is unknown how well the teachers understood questions after the researcher provided additional explanations regarding the meaning of questions or the experience referred to in a particular question.

Future research should also examine the impact of the diversity course and student teaching/internships once pre-service teachers have taught for a selected number of years, such as 1 or more years. Timing a study in this manner would allow the examination of questions that evaluate: (a) teacher preparedness to teach minority students, (b) aspects of teacher education programs that are beneficial in preparing teachers to work with diverse children, and (c) behavior or attitude changes that manifested after completing the program and practicing for a while. A follow-up study should include survey data, as well as, qualitative data to give teachers an opportunity to voice their perceptions and needs.

Conclusion

The goal of this project and similar projects is to provide universities with information to enhance teacher education programs so that all children's educational experiences are led by individuals who are prepared and, whole-heartedly, willing to teach children from diverse backgrounds. Knowing the perspective of pre-service teachers completing education programs also informs school systems. The data gathered from this study emphasizes a need for more direction from universities in teaching minority students (e.g., language, culture, and socio-economic factors). These data also suggest support from administrators is needed for teachers entering the school system.

When assisting pre-service teachers in understanding the purpose of multicultural education, it is important to keep in mind factors that contribute to the resistance of accepting ideologies that recognize differences and the integration of practices that accommodate for, acknowledge, and embrace these differences into the school culture. Contributing factors for teacher resistance are the following: one's belief system, knowledge level, denial of others' experiences, and background of teacher (Ahlquist, 1991; Carpenter, 2000; Causey et al., 2000; Lin, Gorrell, & Porter, 1999).

For teachers to be receptive and apply skills learned in education programs, professors will need to help pre-service teachers process the new or conflicting information (experiences) by providing experiences beyond class discussions. These experiences should allow the pre-service teachers to participate in activities that lead to awareness, experiences with different cultural/ethnic groups, opportunities to work with minority children, and opportunities to demonstrate and receive feedback on creating a classroom experience for students that empowers and embraces differences. The latter

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should give pre-service teachers hands-on experience with integrating multicultural education ideologies into the school's/classroom's core curriculum.

Schools should also increase their efforts in training about cultural sensitivity, the use of strategies that reduce prejudice and discrimination in classrooms and empower students, and training that facilitates positive communication with parents of minority students in order to better meet the needs of the child. These efforts might include teacher modifications related to teaching and assessment, as well as using a curriculum that represents various cultures and groups.   In addition, efforts should include dialogue in school that addresses cultural assumptions, bias, and accepting the perspective of others. School training should be provided for school personnel, including available training for new teachers who have entered the profession of education as a second career. In sum, the goal is to ensure the success of minority students by preparing effective teachers who understand the importance of integrating multicultural education into teaching practices. To reach this goal universities and grade school systems must work together.

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Appendix A

Focus Group Questions

- Before entering the education program, what were your experiences with others from different backgrounds?

- What were your perceptions or understandings about others from different cultures or ethnicities?

- Were your understandings challenged throughout courses and if so, in what way(s)?

- Were your understandings challenged during practicum and internship experiences and if so, in what way(s)?

- Do you believe that you are prepared to teach minority students?

- Do you believe you are knowledgeable about cultural diversity?

- What aspects of your coursework were most beneficial in helping to prepare you to work with diverse children, especially children not from your culture or race/ethnicity?

- What aspects of your practica were most beneficial in helping to prepare you to work with diverse children, especially children not from your culture or race/ethnicity?

- What aspects of your internship were most beneficial in helping to prepare you to work with diverse children, especially children not from your culture or race/ethnicity?

- Have you made any behavioral or attitudinal modifications, explain?

Table 1

Composition Data of Present Study

_____

	Race	
	Pretest	Posttest
Caucasian	65.2	76.7
Hispanic	21.7	14.0
African American	6.5	4.7
Other	2.2	2.3

_____

	Gender	
	Pretest	Posttest
Female	95.7	97.7
Male	2.2	2.3

_____

Table 2

Participation in Multicultural Workshops and Courses

_____

	Multicultural Workshops	
	Pretest	Posttest
1-3 Workshops	28.3	42
4-6 Workshops	2.2	0

_____

	Multicultural Courses	
	Pretest	Posttest
1-3 Courses	71.8	74.4
4-6 Courses	15.2	18.6

_____

Table 3

Cronbach Alpha: Studies using the Multicultural Counseling Inventory

_____

Subscale	Sodowsky's Study (N=604)	Bell's Study (N=21)	Present's Study (N=44)
Multicultural Skill			
Pretest	.83	.56	.38
Posttest		.74	.35
Follow-up		.62	
Multicultural Awareness			
Pretest	.83	.75	.79
Posttest		.76	.77
Follow-up		.86	
Multicultural Relationship			
Pretest	.65	.46	.70
Posttest		.58	.59
Follow-up		.64	
Multicultural Knowledge			
Pretest	.79	.85	.69
Posttest		.72	.72
Follow-up		.84	

_____

Table 4

Statistics of Multicultural Counseling Inventory: Present Study

Subscale	Pretest (N=44)	Posttest (N=42)	Paired t-test
	Time		
Multicultural Skill			-.98
Mean	3.31	3.37	
SD	0.38	0.39	
Skewness	-0.36	-1.33	
Kurtosis	0.29	4.22	
Multicultural Awareness			-1.01
Mean	2.77	2.73	
SD	0.54	0.51	
Skewness	-0.43	0.29	
Kurtosis	0.38	-0.15	
Multicultural Relationship			-.90
Mean	3.55	3.55	
SD	0.41	0.34	
Skewness	-1.17	-1.22	
Kurtosis	1.10	1.81	
Multicultural Knowledge			.56
Mean	3.19	3.23	
SD	0.46	0.38	
Skewness	-0.87	-0.25	
Kurtosis	1.35	-0.52	

$*p < .05, **p < .01, *** p < .001$

Table 5

Subscale Mean Scores of Multicultural Counseling Inventory: Bell's Study

Subscale	Time (N=21)		
	Pretest	Posttest	Follow-up
Multicultural Skill			
Mean	3.12	3.27	3.31
SD	.41	.44	.38
Multicultural Awareness			
Mean	2.20	2.48	2.30
SD	.46	.50	.61
Multicultural Knowledge			
Mean	2.86	3.24	3.02
SD	.51	.41	.55
Multicultural Relationship			
Mean	2.95	2.82	3.29
SD	.41	.53	.46

Appendix C

Emergent Themes

Researcher's Broad Themes

Resistance

Facilitation to process information outside of courses (i.e., Multi. Foundation course)

Personal investment (i.e., self-evaluation, ownership in making a change to prevent discrimination and inequality in schools, educating self)

Background

Family's perspective

Beliefs

Knowledge

View of university preparation to work with diverse children

Role/View of multicultural course in preparation to work with diverse children

Awareness

Appreciation

Limited Exposure

Exposure before entering program

Exposure after entering program

Teaching Techniques

Student-teacher relationship

Change in perspective

Challenges

Assistant B's Themes

Question 1
- Growing up with limited diverse experiences or none at all
- Everyone was accepted by family despite limited face-to-face contact with diverse people
- Exposure to diversity on the job and field experience in schools
- Fewer, but more than one, indicated growing up with a lot of diversity

Question 2
- Increased awareness about different beliefs with increased exposure
- Increased awareness with education courses
- Accepting of everyone; open-minded

Questions 3 and 4
- Open-minded generally, but increase awareness of culturally distinct behaviors
- Challenged regarding stereotypes
- Challenged by learning about American history, particularly realities of black history and slavery
- Mismatch/difference between personal experience and practicum experience
- Challenge of realities of social stratification

Question 5
- Color-blind mentality
- Consensus of feeling of preparedness to teach all students regardless of background
- Prepared to assist struggling students in general
- Too much focus on race and culture
- ESOL seems to be primary focus, need info on specific strategies and techniques
- Course should be offered closer to practicum *after* official entry into college of education

Question 6
- Know enough to "get by"
- Need to know more

Question 7
- Learned from classes other than Teaching Diverse Populations (ESOL, Literacy)

Questions 8 and 9
- Field experiences
  - Working with diverse students
  - Working in a school community different than their own
    - Low SES, students of color

Question 10
- Increased awareness of differences as it relates to SES, culture outside of one's personal experiences
- Increased awareness of social stratification