THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ELEMENTARY TEACHERS' BELIEFS

ABOUT DIVERSITY AND THEIR SELECTIONS OF MULTICULTURAL

MATERIALS FOR INSTRUCTIONAL PRACTICES

IN ONE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Dissertation

by

QUINITA D. OGLETREE

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2012

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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ABSTRACT

The Relationship Between Elementary Teachers' Beliefs About Diversity and

Their Selections of Multicultural Materials for Instructional Practices

in One Urban School District. (August 2012)

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The purpose of this research was to understand the relationship between urban elementary teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of literacy material for instructional practices in their classrooms. Currently, the teacher population is essentially homogenous, consisting of a majority of middle-class White females, while the student population is growing more diverse. Teachers' instructional decisions tend to reflect their own cultural background and not the cultural background of the diverse student population. This study examined urban teachers' personal and professional beliefs about diversity and found that gender was a factor in the teachers' diversity scores. The review of children's literature listed by the teachers further revealed that there was a lack of representation of characters of color in the teachers' classrooms. Finally, teachers that scored high on the diversity scale had more multicultural literature available in their classrooms.

DEDICATION

I dedicate this work to my past, my present, and my future.

My past: the ancestors who came before me, who believed in education even though they did not have the opportunity to pursue it, especially my grandfather, Joseph R. Graham, Jr. I wish you were here to see the seeds you planted bloom.

My present: my partner, Johnny Dwight Ogletree, III. I cannot believe what we have accomplished in almost twenty years of knowing each other. Thank you for your patience, time, and support.

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First and foremost, thanks to God, who can do exceedingly and abundantly more than you can ask or imagine: "For I know the plans I have for you—to prosper not to harm you." Thank you for a to b directions when I want a to z directions. If not for your directions, I may have never started this journey.

Thanks also to my family. I would be nothing without you all. Johnny, after I had Adaiah, you encouraged me to go back to school. You said if I did not do it then, when would there be time to go back. Thank you for always believing and encouraging me. You have always been the wind beneath my wings.

To my grandmother, Lola Fisher Graham, thank you for all the time and resources you invested in me. I am glad you are here to see the fruits of your labor. To my mother, Vanessa Fisher, thank you for doing your best. To the girlies, thank you for your patience and support; I am so excited to have more time with you now.

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To the Weldon/Graham family, you have always been supportive and independent. I am proud to be a product of such a great family.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

In our nation today, research has shown teachers' beliefs and practices impact student learning (Gomez, 2009; Herrera, 2010; Pajares, 1992; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). Teachers' beliefs drive their instructional decisions and the opportunities students have to learn in the classroom (Brock, 2004; Knopp & Smith, 2005; Milner, 2005; Pajares, 1992). Teachers' understanding of diversity is crucial. In 2010, the International Reading Association (2010) added diversity as a separate standard in the revised version of *Standards for Reading Professionals*. Examining teachers' beliefs about diversity are necessary because these beliefs impact their decisions regarding students, especially culturally, linguistically, economically, and ethnically diverse (CLEED) students (Milner, 2003a, 2003b; Milner & Woolfolk-Hoy, 2003; Woolfolk, 2004).

Teachers' beliefs about themselves and others are the filter and framework for their classroom judgments and decisions. These beliefs inform the way teachers create a context for students to become literate and the way in which the students connect literacy in the classroom (Gomez, 2009). Consequently, if teachers have limited or negative experiences with other cultures, it can influence their students' opportunity to learn (Milner, 2005). Multicultural literature can be a door, window, and mirror to help students and teachers relate to other cultures and to see themselves in the daily life of the classroom, which can then assist students and teachers in becoming culturally competent

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This dissertation follows the style of *American Educational Research Journal*.

(Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Nieto, 2009a). Multicultural literature can also help teachers engage students in the literacy process and assist students in developing a love of reading.

CLEED students who are taught by a primarily homogenous teaching force may experience cultural mismatch or discontinuity. Cultural mismatch occurs because of teachers' beliefs and the lack of culturally responsive instructional practices. This is especially true for urban school districts, which tend to consist of CLEED students (Teale, Paciga, & Hoffman, 2007). Cultural mismatch or cultural discontinuity occurs if there is a disconnection between the student's home culture and his or her school culture. Researchers have discussed this in terms of what is culturally appropriate, culturally congruent, culturally responsive, culturally relevant, and culturally compatible (Au & Jordan, 1981; Gay, 2010; Jordan, 1985; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Mohatt & Erickson, 1981).

Cultural mismatch can occur because of the differences between the mainstream culture and the culture of the people of color, which often contributes to cultural misunderstandings, conflicts, and institutionalized discrimination (Banks & McGee Banks, 2007). The student population in public schools is growing more diverse, while the teacher population continues to consist primarily of Caucasian American females (Banks & McGee Banks, 2007; Gay, Dingus, & Jackson, 2003; Gay & Howard, 2000; Howard, 2007; Knight & Wiseman, 2005; Landsman & Lewis, 2011; National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Strizek, Pittsonberger, Riordan, Lyter, & Orlofsky, 2006; U.S. Department of Education [USDOE], 2006). Howard

(2010) called this the demographic divide. In the demographic divide, teachers must realize they will teach students from different cultural, ethnic, linguistic, racial, and social backgrounds than their own (Howard, 2010).

In 2012, the birthrate of children of color was greater than that of White children in the United States for the first time (U.S. Census Bureau, 2012). The diversity in the classroom will continue to grow, and the educational system must adapt to a more diverse student population. The largely homogenous teaching force occasionally views the growing diversity of the student population as a problem instead of an opportunity. These teachers may do so because they do not have the experience or educational background to prepare them to teach a heterogeneous student population (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2002; Vavrus, 2002). If teachers use culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms, they will be better prepared to teach a CLEED student population.

The topic of literacy and reading has become the focus of policy and research in recent years. The achievement/test score gap between children of color and White children has been called one of the most pressing problems that has yet to be solved in American education (Nisbett, 2011). Since 1992, the reading scale scores of African American and Hispanic students have been consistently lower than their White peers, as measured by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) (Aud et al., 2011, Vanneman et al., 2009). This underachievement is normally found in schools that serve low-income students and racially/culturally marginalized students (Cummins, 2011). Legislators have tried to solve this through a call for every child to achieve, which is stated in No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and continued in The Race to The Top.

However, little to no improvement in the reading achievement of low-income students and students of color has been made since the beginning of NCLB in 2002 (Scott, 2007).

The little change in the reading achievement of CLEED students may be because the focus, especially in terms of policy, has emphasized certain aspects of reading and not all aspects. Morrell (2008) suggested teachers of language and literacy must avail themselves of the various social, ideological, cultural, and political contexts and the places of operation of languages and literacies. Carter (2003) analyzed the relationship between standard, the assessment movement, and the growing CLEED student population.   Straus (2011) felt that several pieces are missing in the literacy achievement model including the affective, motivational, and attitudinal factors (Biancarosa & Snow, 2004; Gambrell, 2011). Reading First, a NCLB initiative, increased children's decoding ability, but there were no associated increases in reading comprehension (Gamse, Bloom, Kemple, & Jacob, 2008). Cummins (2007) used culturally relevant teaching (Ladson-Billings, 2004) to address the issues with Reading First and NCLB. Cummins stated that culturally relevant teaching "emphasizes that cultural validation promotes engagement with instruction and is particularly important for student whose culture is devalued in the wider society" (p. 570).

Literacy learning occurs in the classroom and has both cognitive and social aspects (Pransky & Bailey, 2002). The cognitive aspect focuses on items such as reading comprehension and decoding, while the way students relate their reading to their values and experiences is the social aspect. Rosenblatt (2005) stated, "The tendency in the teaching of literature has been to turn the student's attention away from the actual

experience, and to focus on presenting a 'correct,' traditional interpretation, and on knowledge about technical devices or biographical or historical background" (p. xxvii). This type of teaching focuses more on the cognitive than the social aspects of literacy. It has been posited that inequalities in literacy education can be traced to the social aspects or contexts of the school. The results create "The Matthew Effect," where the students who are strong in literacy grow stronger and those who are weak in literacy become weaker (Densmore-James, 2011). Multicultural literature assists in literacy learning by combining both the social and cognitive aspects. However, the manner in which multicultural literature is used depends on the teacher in the classroom.

Cognitive Theories

Constructivism is a cardinal tenet in which students are active learners and create/construct their own knowledge (Schunk, 2012). In constructivism, the cognitive processes of learning are situated in physical and social contexts. Social constructivism places emphasis on the significance of social interactions in relation to the acquisition of skills and knowledge (Schunk, 2012). Vygotsky's theory of cognitive development has been called a type of social constructivism (Au, 2011; Schunk, 2012). It emphasizes that learning occurs in culturally and socially shaped environments (John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996; Moll, 1990; Vygotsky, 1978; Wertch, 1991). Both aspects of learning, social and cognitive, should be considered when developing educational programs such as literacy programs. Vygotsky stressed the importance of interaction between the person and environment; however this interaction has been expanded to include learning in a community with others (Schunk, 2004).

Vygotsky discussed spontaneous (home learning) and nonspontaneous/ scientific/scholarly concepts (school learning; Au, 2011; Gallimore & Tharp, 1990; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). Spontaneous concepts are ideas a child acquires without explicit instruction. These concepts are rarely taught to a child in a systematic way, and seldom are any connections made to other related concepts. Scientific concepts are explicitly introduced by teachers in school and are often connected with interrelated ideas (Au, 2011; John-Steiner & Mahn, 1996). According to Vygotsky (1986):

> We believe that the two processes—the development of spontaneous and of nonspontaneous concepts—are related and constantly influence each other. They are parts of a single process: the development of concept formation which is affected by varying external and internal conditions but is essentially a unitary process, not a conflict of antagonistic, mutually exclusive forms of thinking. (p. 157)

In many classrooms, spontaneous and nonspontaneous concepts conflict, or the spontaneous concepts are not valued. Moll (1992) examined the social situatedness of concept formation and the effective education of linguistically and culturally diverse students. Moll and Greenburg (1990) found sometimes mediating structures that facilitate connections between home and school need to be in place. They found if these structures are not present, students may have trouble adjusting to the requirements of formal education. Hughes-Hassell, Koehler, and Barkley (2010) stated that cultural knowledge is a mediator in the reading comprehension process of African American students.

Curriculum materials (i.e., multicultural literature) have been found to impact learners and their learning in several ways: for example, the manner in which learners view their social group and themselves and the ways in which they are motivated to work, play, learn, and live (Hernandez, 2001). Multicultural literature can be the mediating structure that facilitates learning between home and school. Au (1997) felt the absence of Asian American characters in literature as she grew up made her believe that books represented other worlds but not her own. Multicultural literature would bridge this gap by showing some students their own world and giving others a glimpse into different worlds.

Vygotsky's theory has three dimensions: cultural-historical, social, and individual. One premise of the cultural-historical dimension is that learning and development cannot be disconnected from their context (Schunck, 2012). Social emphasizes the way learners interact with their environment (i.e., persons, objects, and institutions in it) and the impact these interactions have on their thinking (Schunck, 2012). The individual aspects focuses on the inherited characteristics that impact a person's learning trajectory (Schunk, 2012). Alfred (2009) stated that based on Vygotsky's theory, a learning environment cannot be defined as just a physical space; it should be viewed as an institutional culture that has historical significance and whose aim it is to promote learning and citizenship.

One of Vygotsky's arguments proposed that higher psychological processes (i.e., literacy) occur first in the social interactions between people and then over time within the individual (Boyd & Brock, 2004; Schunk, 2012). The higher psychological

processes include those that happen during literacy teaching and learning. Therefore, literacy is never content or context free (Perez, 1998). Literacy, in this perspective, is diverse and heterogeneous instead of homogenous and focused only on a student's ability to decode and comprehend (Kozulin, 2003). This perspective on literacy tries to understand the cultural context in which a child has grown and developed (Perez, 1998). Teachers, using this learning perspective, would identify, understand, and evaluate cultural practices and incorporate them into their students' meaning making as part of their instructional practices (Gay, 2010; Perez, 1998).

Failing to value spontaneous concepts or incorporate students' cultures could be alienating to a CLEED student population. The individual dimension of social cultural theory focuses on the characteristics of the learner, including race, class, gender, abilities, sexual orientation, religious preference, motivation, history, learning style, and prior learning experience. This is one of the reasons why some believe sociocultural theory is relevant in the discussion of contemporary educational questions (Boyd & Brock, 2004; Kozulin, 2003).

Statement of the Problem

The current American classroom is growing more diverse, while the teacher population primarily remains homogenous, consisting of middle-class White females. These teachers tend to make instructional decisions based on their beliefs, which are grounded in their cultural background, and these beliefs may be detrimental to the literacy achievement of CLEED students. This phenomenon occurs because teachers can impact the way a child sees the world and other cultures.

The primary issue is that teachers are choosing to provide literature instruction that reflects the teachers' background and not the students' background. Thus, CLEED students have a literacy gap, meaning that low socioeconomic status (SES) children tend to score lower in reading and writing than students in the middle or higher SES. This literacy gap is also seen when comparing African American and Hispanic students to Caucasian students (Teale et al., 2007). NAEP scores from 2003 and 2005 revealed that the fourth- and eighth-grade reading score gap in 11 urban districts was significantly larger for students of color than for the general student population (Teale et al., 2007). This gap also appears when comparing American students to students around the world (Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007).

Teacher educators are being taught to use students' prior knowledge to connect with "quality" children's literature; however, this literature often focuses on the experiences of White people and marginalizes children of color (Gangi, 2008). According to Hughes-Hassell et al. (2010), "By combining the use of culturally relevant texts with instructional strategies that focus on building on prior knowledge, educators are more likely to attain their goal of promoting high achievement for all students" (p. 3).

Therefore, research needs to be conducted to understand the relationship between teachers' beliefs and their instructional practices. This study fills a void that exists in academia by adding an understanding of the relationship between teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of literature for instructional practices in their classroom.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explore the beliefs about diversity of elementary reading teachers in an urban school district and the manner in which these beliefs relate to their selection of literature for instructional practices. It is an assumption that teachers with high scores on the diversity scale would have diverse literature available in their classroom. This study sought to examine this assumption.

Significance of the Study

Reading is a part of every educational subject. How well students understand a subject is often dependent on their ability to comprehend (reading proficiency) what they are reading in textbooks. Reading proficiency impacts every aspect of a child's life including academic, personal, professional, and social. The National Endowment for the Arts found that proficient readers were more likely to volunteer, exercise, and vote. They were also more likely to be employed in management and earn over $850 week (Catterall, Dumais, & Hampden-Thompson, 2012).

Reading proficiency not only impacts the individual but impacts society. Adult illiteracy costs the United States taxpayers over $224 billion a year through welfare payments, crime, job incompetence, lost taxes, and remedial education (National Reading Panel, 2000). A study of prisoners found that 70% of prisoners were categorized at below basic and basic.

Table 1

Definitions of NAEP Reading Achievement Levels

NAEP Reading Achievement Level	Characteristics
Basic	Students are able to locate relevant information, make simple inferences, and use their understanding of the text to identify details that support a given interpretation or conclusion. Students are able to interpret the meaning of a word as it is used in the text.
Proficient	Students are able to integrate and interpret texts and apply their understanding of the text to draw conclusions and make evaluations.
Advanced	Students are able to make complex inferences and construct and support their inferential understanding of the text. Students are able to apply their understanding of a text to make and support a judgment.

Note. From National Center for Education Statistics (2011).

Reading proficiency is examined by the National Assessment Educational Progress (NAEP) at fourth, eight, and twelfth grades. The scores on the fourth grade NAEP scores have been consistent since 2002. The National Center for Education Statistics (2010) found that approximately one-third of fourth-graders performed at or above the proficiency level. An examination of the 2011 fourth-grade NAEP reading scores showed that the majority African American, Hispanic, and American Indian students were categorized as Below Basic or Basic (Figure 1). In elementary schools, the first years are considered extremely important to modify the trajectory of a child's reading development (Hernandez, 2011; Pianta, Belsky, Vandergrift, Houts, & Morrison, 2008). Students who read at the lower levels tend to stay at the same level and tend to leave before graduating (Allington, 2002; Casey Foundation, 2011).
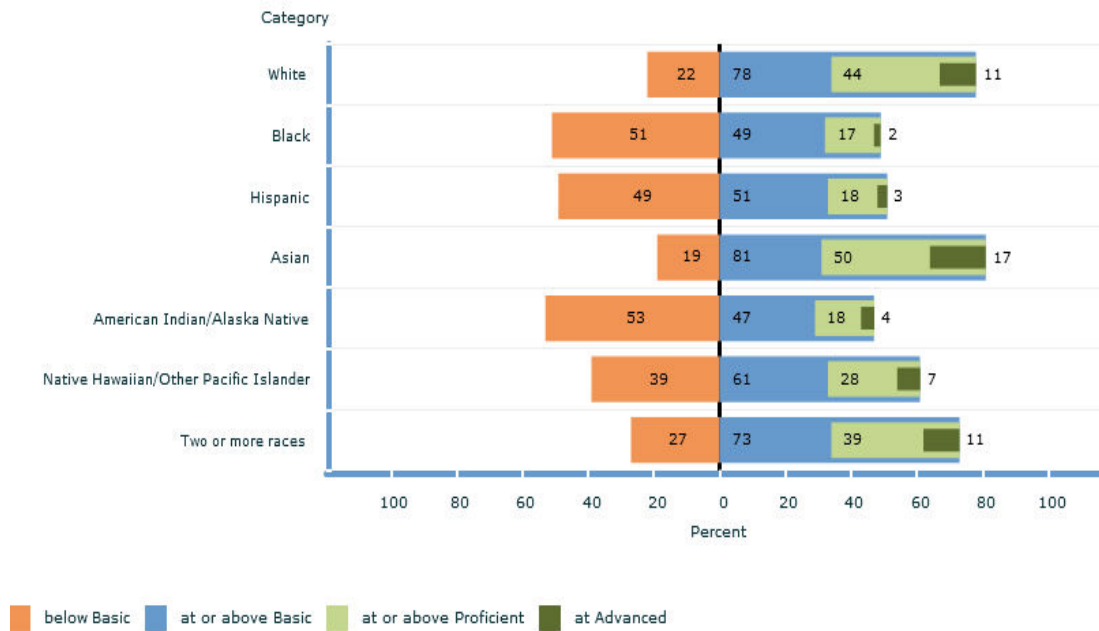
Figure 1. NAEP reading proficiency by race.

Researchers have focused on ways to improve the reading achievement scores of all students, especially CLEED students. Guthrie (2004) examined Programme International Student Assessment (PISA) and NAEP scores and found that reading engagement was a significant factor in reading achievement scores regardless of gender, parental education, and income. Reading engagement is influenced by home and classroom factors. Home factors include parental expectations and involvement (Xu, 2008). Classroom factors include the application of reading strategies, activation of the readers' knowledge, and the social interaction around the text. Each of these is influenced by the teachers' instructional practices in the classroom.

A lack of research exists in the area of teachers' beliefs about diversity and the impact those beliefs have on their instructional practices (literature they choose in their

classrooms and how it is used). Several studies have found that books related to students' backgrounds increase student engagement, achievement, and comprehension (Milner, 2005; Parris & Block, 2007). Currently, CLEED students tend to attain lower reading scores (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2010), indicating a gap between diverse students and the literature being taught in the classroom. This study sheds light on the impact of teachers' beliefs about diversity and their choice of multicultural literature for instructional practices in elementary schools. It can assist teacher education and professional development programs in developing teachers who can effectively teach all students.

Research Questions

The following research questions directed this study:

1. What are urban elementary teachers' personal and professional beliefs about diversity?

2. What are urban elementary teachers' selections of literature for instructional practices?

3. What is the relationship between urban elementary teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of multicultural materials for instructional purposes?

Definition of Terms

Beliefs—the manner in which an individual organizes and understands certain contexts and situations (Abelson, 1979; Fang, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992).

Children's literature—"books for children from birth to adolescence, covering topics of relevance and interest to children of those ages, through prose and poetry, fiction and nonfiction" (Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 2005, p. 3).

Culture—a distinctive shared way of life for a group of people that can include unique values, symbols, lifestyles, and institutions (Banks, 1997; Gonzalez-Mattingly, 2011).

Cultural mismatch—the differences between a teacher's, school's, or mainstream's culture and a student's home culture.

Culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse—people who are not proficient in English and come from diverse social, cultural, and ethnic backgrounds (International Center for Leadership in Education, 2011).

Culturally responsive pedagogy—teaching that recognizes the importance of including students' cultural backgrounds in all aspects of learning (Ladson-Billings, 2009).

Deficit theory—based on the belief that children of color have intellectual deficiencies or handicaps because of their family structures, linguistic backgrounds, and cultures (Valencia, 2010).

Multicultural children's literature—literature for children from birth to adolescence that validates all sociocultural experiences (i.e., language, race, gender, class, ethnicity, and ability; Gopalakrishnan, 2011).

Multicultural education—an educational reform movement and a process whose main goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female

students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups have an equal chance to achieve academically in school (Banks, 2004; Banks & McGee Banks, 2007).

Multicultural literature—texts from all cultures by authors that have an insider or outsider perspective of the culture being studied (Woods, 2009).

Teachers' beliefs—teachers' attitudes toward learning, teaching, programs, learning, and curriculum (Borg, 2006; Ghaith, 2004; Pajares, 1992).

Urban schools—refers not only to a geographic location but to the "socioeconomic and racial connotations" (Noguera, 2003, p. 23); most times, it refers to schools with populations of primarily people of color, poor, English as a Second Language (ESL) individuals, and it has also been used to refer to the largest school districts in the country, which serve one-third of the students in the United States (Ewell, 2009).

Assumptions

The following assumptions were made in this study: the yielded inventory responses represent honest and unbiased opinions, and quantitative measures can assess teachers' beliefs (Isaac & Michaels, 1997).

Limitations

The study was limited by the criteria used to gain the sample, including the use of teachers from one urban school district in Texas. It was also limited by the use of a sample of convenience. This study identifies a relationship but not a cause and effect

relationship. There can be an extraneous variable that influences the relationship that is not being measured. These criteria limited the ability to generalize the findings.

Summary

Comparison of American reading achievement scores continue to show a lack of reading achievement for all students, especially CLEED students. This is a very serious problem as the student population grows more diverse and the teacher population continues to consist of White females. Educational policy holders continue to create programs to increase the reading achievement, such as Reading First. However these problems tend to focus on the cognitive aspects of literacy and ignore the social aspects of literacy, the beliefs of the teachers, and the teachers' instructional practices.

Reading engagement has been shown to increase reading achievement. Teachers are a very important factor in reading engagement. Teachers' beliefs influence their instructional practices which is one of the aspects of reading engagement. The purpose of this study is to examine the relationship between teachers' beliefs and teachers' instructional practices through literacy selections in an urban elementary classroom.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The student population in the United States will continue to grow more diverse in the next two decades in terms of race, ethnicity, and language (Hernandez, Denton, & Macartney, 2008; U.S. Department of Education, 2006). By 2022, over 50% of students in K-12 will be of a race or ethnic group other than White, and currently, several states are already in this category, including Texas, California, New York, and Hawaii (Kyles & Olafson, 2008). This diversity has caused some to question if a Eurocentric curriculum taught by a majority of European American teachers is appropriate for a diverse student population (Herrera, 2010). The cultural mismatch or cultural discontinuity that often occurs in schools has prompted some educators to advocate for the usage of culturally responsive pedagogy and multicultural education in school systems (Banks & McGee Banks, 2009; Gay, 2000; Gorski, 2009; Ladson-Billings, 2009, 1995; Sleeter & Grant, 2007).

The implementation of new educational programs has been done historically by the government. For instance, in 1965, Congress began funding the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA). The central focus was to use the funds for the education of disadvantaged students (Herrera, 2010). Furthermore, federal funds were allocated in 1989 to establish goals for American schools, and then No Child Left Behind was enacted in 2002 to reauthorize ESEA (Cochran-Smith, 2005). The goal of NCLB was to close the achievement gap. NCLB has since been replaced by Race to the Top, yet according to the National Association of Educational Progress and the College

Board, the test score gap in all subjects, including reading, has remained steady in the last 5 years (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010; The College Board, 2010). Stiefel, Schwartz, and Ellen (2006) suggested teachers' methods and attitudes need to be examined to understand the test score gap.

Many teachers are not prepared to teach CLEED students, or they may have low expectations for these students (Au, 2011). This lack of preparation may impact CLEED students' achievement. In a study by the Casey Foundation (2011), third-graders' reading skills and social economic status impacted their ability to graduate from high school. In fact, students who did not read proficiently by third grade were four times more likely to be high school dropouts. Students who were at the basic reading level in third grade were six times more likely to not finish high school. When evaluating according to race, African American and Hispanic third-graders who were not proficient readers were twice as likely to drop out compared to Caucasian students who had the same reading level in third grade.

Social constructivism, according to Au (2011), is "a powerful and generative framework for thinking about the literacy achievement gap" (p. 27). Using this perspective, Au offered five explanations for the literacy achievement gap evidenced by the research described above: linguistic differences, cultural differences, discrimination, inferior education, and rationales for schooling. Linguistic differences refer to the fact that diverse students speak a home language that is not standard American English. The lack of academic achievement is not due the students' limited English proficiency but is explained by exclusion or limited use of their home language in school instruction or the

lack of status of their home language. Cultural differences ascribe the underachievement of children of color to their preference of certain forms of language, interaction, and thoughts. These forms may seem to some to be in conflict with mainstream behaviors that are needed for school success (Au & Mason, 1981; Philips, 1972). Socialization practices that occur in the home and community impact the students' preferences and reflect the students' cultural values. Therefore, the preferences are learned and inborn. In a classroom, a student can have difficulty learning because the lessons do not follow their community's cultural values and standards for behavior (Au, 2011).

Discrimination is another explanatory reason. The basis of this argument is that poverty and school failure are both expressions of the historical and systemic discrimination that occurs in American society and the American educational system. Au (2011) gave the example that children of color are disproportionally labeled as poor readers and are placed in the lowest reading groups. The instruction that they receive because of their placement hinders their learning to read because it is qualitatively different from students placed in higher reading groups.

Inferior education, as an explanatory category, places the reason for the lack of academic achievement on the differences in the educational system that children of color experience. These differences can be physical (buildings) and material (books, labs, and computers). It can also include the quality of the teacher and the type of instruction. Low socioeconomic schools tend to focus more on testing practices and devote less time to reading instruction, therefore limiting the students' ability to learn (Allington, 1991b).

The last explanatory reason is rationales for schooling. This is based on D'Amato's (1987) research that found students who accept school and cooperate with their teachers do it because of either structural or situational rationales. When a student cooperates or does well based on a structural rationale, they do this because they realize school success impacts areas outside of the school setting (i.e., employment, college). Situational rationales are based on whether the student experiences school as being enjoyable and rewarding. The problem occurs when CLEED students may not have the background to make the connections for a structural rationale and the educational system relies more on structural then situational rationales (Au, 2011).

This study focuses on the linguistic and cultural differences. The problem that arises with linguistic differences is that students' home language is not used as a foundation for learning to read and write. Cultural differences impact school learning when school instruction is not the same as the cultural values and standards of behavior in the students' community (Au, 2011). Au (2011) proposed several methods for closing the literacy achievement gap. Specifically, she posited that literacy of students of diverse backgrounds will be improved as educators establish ownership of literacy as the overarching goal of the language arts curriculum. Educators would also need to recognize the importance of students' home languages. She continued this line of thought by stating that educators need to be able to see biliteracy as an attainable and a desirable outcome. Finally, she stated that if teachers begin using the works of authors of diverse backgrounds, using materials that present diverse cultures in an authentic manner, and becoming culturally responsive in their management of classrooms and

interactions with students, they will assist in the academic achievement of students from diverse backgrounds.
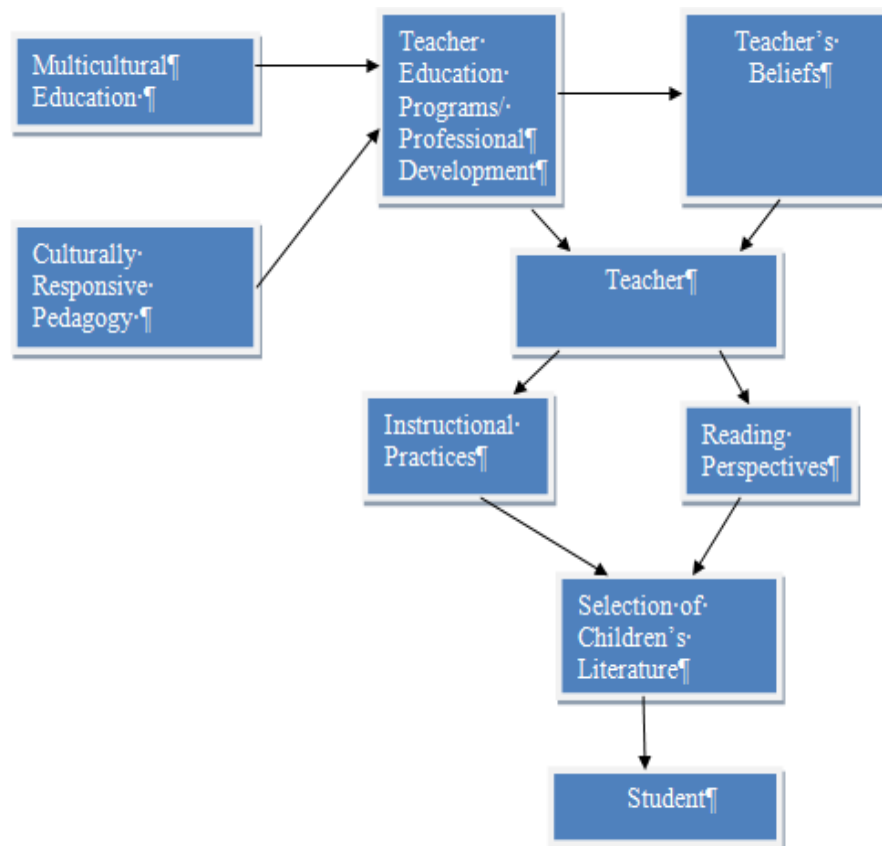
Figure 2. Conceptual framework.

It is often said that reading is fundamental. Reading is part of every educational subject. It has been called the "most important subject area for academic success" (Howard, 2010, p. 15). Research has found that when students have a strong literacy and reading background, it enhances their overall achievement (Cunningham, 2005; Snow, Burns, & Griffin, 1998; Valencia & Buly, 2004; Yopp, 1992). This study examines how

multicultural education, teachers' beliefs, and teacher educational programs impact the instructional decisions that teachers make in the classroom that can increase students' reading engagement, thereby increasing students' reading achievement (Figure 2).

Multicultural Education

Multicultural education emerged in the 1970s based on the work of several African American scholars: Carter G. Woodson, Charles H. Wesley, and W. E. B. Dubois. It was created as conceptual framework that was used to assist teachers in obtaining the necessary skills and knowledge needed to teach diverse students (Howard, 2010). According to Banks and McGee Banks (2007), multicultural education is defined as:

> an idea, an educational reform movement, a process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are member of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups have an equal chance to achieve academically in school. (p. 1)

For multicultural educators' a teacher's knowledge base has to acknowledge the importance of race, culture, language, gender, and class in the American society (Howard, 2010).

Sleeter and Grant (2009) called multicultural education an umbrella concept that examines educational practices in view of race, culture, language, social class, gender, and disability. In the 1960s and 1970s, three strands merged together to form the multicultural education movement: (a) the civil rights movement, (b) the critical

analyzation of school textbooks, and (c) the critical critique of the deficit beliefs. From

this grew several approaches to multicultural education including the advocacy, cultural

pluralism, and antioppressive approaches. However, the polices grew more conservative

in the 1980s as critics called multicultural education divisive and called for return to the

basic curriculum (Sleeter & Grant , 2009).

Banks (2001) suggested that multicultural education has several dimensions:

content integration, knowledge construction, equity pedagogy, prejudice reduction, and

empowering of school culture and social structure. These dimensions build on top of

each other. Knowledge construction focuses on the way culture shapes the identification

and interpretation of educational materials. It has a four-level approach to curriculum

reform, which consists of the contribution approach, additive approach, transformational

approach, and social action approach.

The contribution approach focuses on "heroes, holiday, and discrete cultural

elements" (Banks, 2001, p. 15). This is usually the starting point for most multicultural

education programs. A contribution approach to multicultural literature would be

including Latino books during Hispanic Month or Jewish books during Hanukah. The

additive approach occurs when "concepts, themes, and perspectives are added to the

curriculum without changing its structure" (Banks, 2001, p. 15). An additive approach

to multicultural literature would be bringing in a speaker or author to represent the

culture discussed in the literature. These two approaches can lead to exoticism (Miller,

1997) because they cause the culture to be seen as other and different.

The next two approaches lead to critical consciousness. The transformational approach occurs when the curriculum has to be modified so students will be able to "view concepts, issues, events, and themes from the perspective of diverse ethnic and cultural groups" (Banks, 2001, p. 15). The transformative approach to multicultural literature would provide literature that gives authentic and appropriate perspectives from an insider's viewpoint. The social justice approach occurs when students are able to synthesize and execute the prior information they have learned on the previous level and use this knowledge to make decisions about social issues and take steps toward solving them. A social justice approach to multicultural education involves students' taking action against inequities they have become aware of through discussion of the text. Gopoalakrishman (2011), along with other multicultural educators, stated that there needs to be more than just a contribution approach to multiculturalism. Many believe multicultural children's literature can assist in moving students toward taking a critical perspective (Gopoalakrishman, 2011).

Gollnick and Chinn (2002) discussed six goals of multicultural education: (a) to promote the value of cultural diversity; (b) to promote human rights and respect for those who are different from oneself; (c) to acquire knowledge of the historical and social realities of a society in order to better understand the existing inequalities of racism, sexism, and poverty; (d) to tolerate people's alternative life choices; (e) to promote social justice and equality; and (f) to promote equity in the distribution of power and income among diverse ethnic groups. The goals are laudable, but are they being implemented in the classroom? These goals are especially relevant when looking

at the importance of literacy in a classroom. According to McVee et al. (2004), "Teaching and literacy instruction are political endeavors imbued with cultural beliefs, ideals, and values with implications for identity" (p. 2). Roth (as cited in Ferdman, 1990) suggested that literacy acquisition has implications "for how knowledge is transferred, reproduced, and transformed" (p. 288).

Many believe there is a gap between theory and practice of multicultural education (Brown, 2004; Bruch, Jehangir, Jacobs, & Ghere, 2004; Milner, Flowers, Moore, Moore, & Flowers, 2003). The teachers in one study located in the Midwestern United States showed a simplistic view of multiculturalism. They celebrated diversity without critiquing the social injustices or educational inequities that exist or discussing how to be transformative (Zimmerman, 2010). A review of research about teachers' views of cultural diversity divided research into three time periods to compare the themes across the time periods. In each time period there was a lack of complexity in understanding multicultural issues (Castro, 2010).

Multicultural education has grown from the works of African American scholars to encompassing the issues of race, social class, gender, language, disability, and sexuality (Howard, 2010). However, teachers still tend to have a simplistic view of multicultural education. The reason for the lack of a complex view of multicultural education may be because of teachers' beliefs.

Teachers' Beliefs

Teachers' beliefs impact every aspect of the classroom including the manner in which content presented and interpreted. Teachers' beliefs begin before they enter they

enter a teacher preparation program or the classroom to teach. Beliefs can be defined as judgments and evaluations. They are the building blocks of attitudes and are instrumental in defining behavior, making decisions, and organizing knowledge (Pajares, 1992). Beliefs in this study refer to a conceptual framework that forms an individual's organization and understanding of certain contexts and situations, as suggested by numerous researchers (Abelson, 1979; Fang, 1996; Kagan, 1992; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992). Examination of beliefs started to rise in the 1960s and 1970s. Belief theorists focused on distinguishing between knowledge and beliefs, even though they have much in common. Abelson (1979) stated that both knowledge and belief systems are a "network of interrelated concepts and propositions at varying levels of generality" (p. 356). However, individuals can have conflicting beliefs simultaneously. This cannot occur with knowledge.

There are several characteristics of beliefs. Beliefs are highly personal and central to a person, therefore, making modifications to them difficult to accomplish (Byran, 2003; Kagan, 1992, Parajes, 1992; Rokeach, 1968). There are four prominent characteristics of beliefs: existential presumption, alternativity, affective/evaluative loading, and episodic structure (Abelson, 1979; Guise, 2009; Nespor, 1987). Existential presumption is a proposition or assumption about the existence or nonexistence of entities (e.g., conspiracy, student ability, belief in God). These are often seen as not controllable by the teacher (Nespor, 1987). Alternativity symbolizes the alternative worlds or realities. For teachers, this is the aspiration of a perfect classroom experience. Affective and evaluative loading are centered on the idea that belief systems are based

on emotional components rather than knowledge systems. Lastly, episodic structure

relates to the premise that beliefs are based in certain episodes and events where they

gain their subjective power, authority, and legitimacy (Nespor, 1987). Brauer (2010)

provided the example of teachers' drawing from influential school experiences as

templates for their teaching practices, as well as the source for their beliefs about

teaching, their subjects, and school.

Pintrich (1990) proposed that one of the most valuable psychological constructs

of teacher education is the examination of teachers' beliefs. Teachers' beliefs became

the focus of research in the 1980s and 1990s when Nespor (1987) expanded the research

of belief theorists (Abelson, 1979; Rokeach, 1968) into the discipline of education

(Freeman, 2002; Guise, 2009). Teachers' beliefs are teachers' attitudes about education,

teaching, and learning (Pajares, 1992). Teachers' beliefs are constructs that assist in the

understanding of teachers' practice (Nespor, 1987; Richardson, 1996).

Teachers' beliefs are based on personal experiences, prior schooling, and

instructional experiences that interact with their formal knowledge (Shaw, Barry, &

Mahlios, 2008), and these beliefs drive their instructional decisions (Brock, 2004; Knopp

& Smith, 2005; Pajares, 1992). One empirical study by McCutchen et al. (2002) found a

relationship between teachers' belief systems about literacy instruction, their disciplinary

knowledge, and their instructional practices. The National Reading Panel (NRP; 2000)

posited that unless teachers' attitudes are altered due to intervention, it is unlikely that

instruction and student outcomes will change. Swan (2006a, 2006b) found that a

professional development model that challenged teachers' values, beliefs, and practices

resulted in substantial changes in the teachers' classroom practices and the attitudes and academic attainment of their students.

Research has shown teachers' beliefs seem to be one of the best indicators of teachers' behavior and also influence teachers' perceptions and practices (Bandura, 1986; Brown, 2004; Dewey, 1933; Pajares, 1992; Rokeach, 1968). The landmark study for this concept is from Rosenthal and Jacobson (1968), who found the expectations they created for teachers about their students impacted the achievement of the students. The expectations teachers create can be called a self-fulfilling prophecy, which can lead to actions that cause the expectations to be fulfilled (Good & Brophy, 2008). Varian (2008) found that teachers who successfully implemented culturally relevant pedagogical approaches in their classrooms had their beliefs influenced by several factors: (a) their parents' attitudes, values, and behaviors; (b) culturally sensitive experiences that affected them personally; and (c) firsthand exposure to social injustices that heightened their awareness of culturally rooted inequities. However, when cultural mismatch or discontinuity occurred, teachers had a tendency to rely on stereotypes they had learned from their parents or the media, which may impact students negatively (Milner, 2005). There are several belief ideologies or stereotypes teachers may have that impact students in a negative manner, such as colorblindness and deficit thinking.

Teachers' colorblind ideologies are detrimental to their students (Milner, 2005). This belief system is based on the idea that one does not see color; everyone is equal and therefore experiences the world equitably (Milner, 2005). This gives teachers an incomplete view of the students because they ignore an essential part of students'

backgrounds and experiences. It also allows teachers to avoid confronting their own racist assumptions and the racial realities in their communities and dealing with racist events (Lewis, 2001). Alexander (1994) argued that most teachers have been taught a "melting pot" theory that focuses on the assimilation of a group into the predominant culture, thereby diminishing individual culture to create one culture and identity.

Deficit thinking can also be a part of teachers' belief systems. The deficit model of thinking is based on the belief that children of color have intellectual deficiencies or handicaps resulting from their family structure, linguistic background, and culture (Valencia, 2010). There are six characteristics of the deficit model: blaming the victim, oppression, pseudoscience, temporal changes, educability, and heterodoxy. In addition, there are three key ways the deficit model is transmitted: genetics, culture and class, and familial socialization. The concept of genetics tends to be the most harmful because it stems from the belief that genetics are a strong indicator of intelligence and shape behavior. The concept of culture and class has two explanations. One explanation is the poor are creating their own issues due to their insular and deviant culture, individual shortcomings, and familial dysfunction. The other is victimization, which states the poor are being economically exploited, socially ostracized, and discriminated against based on class (Valencia, 2010). Familial socialization is based on the belief the deficit comes from the way the child is socialized or raised in his or her family.

Teachers show deficit thinking when they have negative, stereotypical, and counterproductive views about CLEED students (Ford & Grantham, 2003). Teachers who have deficit thinking lessen their expectations of these students. For example,

Delpit (1995) posited that teachers who are not familiar with the life experiences of African American or poor children may stereotype them as "damaged and dangerous" instead of "vulnerable and impressionable" (p. xiii.). Teachers that have deficit beliefs are unable to see that CLEED students have a wealth of strengths and knowledge (cultural capital) that can be brought into the classroom (Milner, 2005). Many educational reforms or interventions fail to examine educators' deficit views (beliefs), which tend to undermine efforts to raise achievement in low-performing schools (Berman & Chambliss, 2000; Berman, Chambliss, & Geiser, 1999; Valencia, Valenzuela, Sloan, & Foley, 2001). Guerra and Nelson (2009) stated that "without addressing the underlying deficit beliefs influencing educators' behavior, providing 'high-quality' or 'research-based' professional development does little to change practice once educators return to classrooms and close their doors" (p. 355).

The Impact of Teachers' Beliefs

Belief theorists proposed three factors that mediate the relationship between beliefs and practice: level of consciousness, level of connectedness, and context (Ernest, 1989; Rokeach, 1968). Researchers focusing on teachers' beliefs added another factor, called teacher agency (Agee, 2004; Muchmore, 2001; Rex & Nelson, 2004). Teacher agency can be defined as a "teachers' capacity to make choices, take principled action, and enact change" (Anderson, 2010, p. 541)

Some researchers and scholars believe that an individual's level of consciousness of a belief impacts the relationship between belief and behavior (Ernest, 1989; Irvin, 1999; Kagan, 1992; Muchmore, 2001; Nespor, 1987; Pajares, 1992; Rokeach, 1968).

One study found that a teacher's level of consciousness was a decisive factor in deciding

if there was a misalignment between a teacher's belief and instructional practice (Ernest,

1989). Ernest (1989) discovered that the more conscious a teacher was about an

individual belief and the more he or she used reflective practice, the more likely a

synthesis of the teacher's beliefs and instructional practices would exist. The social

context of the school was also found to be a powerful influence on the relationship

between beliefs and practices (Ernest, 1989). Other researchers have also focused on the

importance of context in the relationship between belief and practice (Agee, 2004;

Bednar, 1993; Brousseau, Book, & Byers, 1988; Bunting, 1984; Calderhead, 1981; Clark

& Peterson, 1986; Cooney et al., 1998; Ernest, 1989; Fang, 1996; Irvin, 1999; Lasky,

2005; Rex & Nelson, 2004; Rokeach, 1968; Schraw & Olafson, 2002; Sigel, 1985).

Examination of teachers' beliefs tends to focus on whether they are consistent or

inconsistent (Bednar, 1993; Connelly & Clandinin, 1999; Enyedy, Goldberg, & Welsh,

2006; Lasky, 2005; Richardson et al., 1991). However, research does not often examine

the reason for the consistencies and inconsistencies. For example, research fails to

consider whether the teachers are aware of the existence of the belief, whether they

connect the belief to the larger belief systems, and whether they are aware of mediating

factors (educational contexts and teacher agency) that impact the belief (Guise, 2009).

Guise (2009) focused on the negotiations teachers make when their beliefs come in

conflict with instructional practices and education contexts. When teachers encountered

tension between their beliefs and school and policy pressures, they either negotiated the

tension by isolating themselves from the school context or becoming actively involved

in the school context. The negotiation strategies used by the teachers were dependent on the level of teacher agency the teacher felt in the school and the administrative leadership in the school. Guise felt the misalignments were attributed to (a) school or national educational policies, (b) teachers' lack of critical reflection on their instructional practices, and (c) teachers' core beliefs about teaching and learning being vague and broad.

The practice of teaching involves two vital areas: (a) teachers' thought processes, and (b) teachers' actions and their observable effects (Clark & Peterson, 1986). Currently, emphasis is being placed on teachers' actions and their effects, especially in terms of student achievement. However, the impact of the unobservable teachers' thought processes is seldom explored. Clark and Peterson (1986) developed a model of teachers' thought and action based on their belief that there is an interdependent relationship between teachers' thought processes and their actions. These processes and actions are limited or shaped by environmental factors, including curriculum, school environment, educational policies, and other controls.

Several researchers have discussed teachers' beliefs and their instructional practices. According to Fang (1996), "Teachers' theories and beliefs represent the rich store of general knowledge of objects, people, events and their characteristic relationships that teachers have that affects their planning and their interactive thoughts and decisions, as well as their classroom behavior" (p. 49). Furthermore, Serafini (2003) stated, "Regardless of whether teachers can explicitly articulate their theoretical perspectives, their beliefs play a dominant role in the resources they choose, the

instructional practices they employ, and the environment they create in their classrooms." Finally, Johnson and Inoue (2003) proposed that student achievement, curriculum content, curriculum materials, instructional approaches, and educational settings are all impacted by teachers' beliefs and attitudes.

Not only do teachers' beliefs about diversity impact student achievement, but their beliefs impact their expectations of students. For instance, Auwarter and Aruguete (2008) found that teachers rated high SES boys more favorably than low SES boys. The teachers believed that low SES students did not have as promising a future as the high SES students.

Pohan and Aguilar (2001) found a relationship between teachers' personal and professional beliefs. When pre-service teachers had a strong bias and negative stereotype about children of color, they were less likely to develop professional beliefs and behaviors that would express multicultural sensitivity and responsiveness. Several studies have shown that pre-service teachers have limited knowledge of the contributions of different cultures and limited interactions with people whose backgrounds and needs differ from theirs (Taylor & Sobel, 2001). This lack of knowledge may be the reason for a teacher's lack of multicultural sensitivity and responsiveness.

Teachers' beliefs and attitudes have been shown to have various outcomes on the achievement, beliefs, and attitudes of students. Ethnocentric attitudes are often unconsciously instilled in students because their teachers have these attitudes (Johnson & Inoue, 2003). Baccus (2004) found teachers in urban classrooms who had high efficacy in teaching reading used more authentic children's literature than less

efficacious teachers. It was also found that instructional factors impacted teachers' efficacy beliefs in reading more than their attitudes (Baccus, 2004). This study revealed that teachers believed reading instruction could be used to have a positive impact on their students' lives and achievement in spite of other challenges in the students' lives.

In addition, teachers' beliefs and attitudes are related to their use of instructional materials and instructional time in reading. Teacher experience, class size, reading training, and reading habits impact teachers' beliefs (Baccus, 2004). Therefore, in order for teachers to use a culturally responsive pedagogy framework in their classrooms, they must examine the beliefs and attitudes about themselves and others. When they are doing this, they are in the personal dimension of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Many studies have examined pre-service and in-service teachers' beliefs about multiculturalism and diversity (Rothenberg, McDermott, Gormley, 1997; Love & Kruger, 2005; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). Phuntsog (2001) suggested teachers agreed with the idea that culturally responsive pedagogy should be implemented in their classrooms. The teachers also believed in the importance of discussing the home and school cultural differences. However, they did not advocate for "curricular reforms to foster alternatives to hegemonic experiences in beliefs of prospective teachers, nor did they suggest the importance of incorporating multicultural education into the entire structure, content and process of teacher education" (Phuntsog, 2001, p. 62).

Few studies on teachers' beliefs and instructional practices focus on the conceptualization of beliefs or usage of theories of beliefs as a framework upon which the research is built. Fang (1996) suggested the research in teachers' beliefs can be

furthered by examination of in-service teachers' beliefs. This study, which focuses on a conceptual framework based on constructivist theory and culturally responsive pedagogy, contributes to existing research by providing a better understanding of in-service teachers' beliefs about multicultural literature and their instructional practices involving multicultural literature.

Belief Instruments

There are many instruments that measure either teachers' beliefs about literacy or their beliefs about multiculturalism. However, there are no instruments that do both. There are several instruments that assess teachers' beliefs about literacy. The Literacy Orientation Survey was developed to measure teachers' beliefs about literacy learning and classroom practices from a constructivism perspective (Lenski, Wham, & Griffey, 1998). The Theoretical Orientation to Reading Profile (TORP) assesses a teacher's emphasis on phonics or explicit skills instruction and the whole language approach (Deford, 1985).

Most multicultural instruments explore the elimination of stereotypes and beliefs about multicultural education and cultural diversity (Amodeo & Martin, 1982; Henry, 1986; Larke, 1990; Moore & Reeves-Kazelskis, 1992; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001; Tabashnick & Zeichner, 1984; Tran, Young, & Dilella, 1994; Washington, 1981; Wergin, 1989) or examine attitudes toward multicultural education. In reviews of instruments that measured teachers' beliefs about diversity (Bodur, 2003; Hopkins-Gillispie, 2008; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001), it has been found that many of the instruments used in research literature do not report validity and reliability information. The

instruments reviewed include the Teacher Belief Inventory (Tabachnic & Zeichner, 1984), Attitudes of University Students toward Diversity (Wergin, 1989), Cultural Attitude Test (Amodeo & Martin, 1982), Survey of Multicultural Education Concepts (Moore & Reeves-Kazelskis, 1992), Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (Henry, 1986), and a modified version of Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (Larke, 1990). Only two instruments were found to have a reliability score above .80 and satisfactory validity data: the Educators' Beliefs About Diversity (EBAD) and the Teacher Multicultural Attitude Survey (Bodur, 2003; Hopkins-Gillispie, 2008; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001).

Several studies have examined teachers' attitudes and beliefs on multiculturalism and teaching in diverse settings; however, none have focused on teachers' beliefs about multicultural literature (Gay, 2000; Grant & Secada, 1990; Ladson-Billings, 2009, 1995; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). Every teacher has beliefs about his or her work, students, subject matter, roles, and responsibilities (Pajares, 1992). Instructional judgments and decisions are filtered through teachers' beliefs (Fang, 1996). Research has shown teachers' beliefs can be used to understand and predict the decisions they make (Ernest, 1989). Bandura (1986) believed that self-efficacy as a belief construct was too vague and context free to be useful; he posited that self-beliefs should be relevant and context specific to the behavior in order to be useful to researchers. There needs to be a valid and reliable way to measure teachers' beliefs in general and in various context areas.

One instrument that examines teachers' beliefs in the context of professional and personal is the EBAD. The EBAD has been used in several studies to measure teachers'

professional and personal beliefs about diversity. For instance, Schroeder (2008) used the EBAD to examine elementary educators' personal and professional beliefs and predictive values on the amount of multicultural courses and cross-cultural experiences. Akiba (2011) used the EBAD to measure differences in pre-service teachers' beliefs about diversity after being enrolled in a diversity course and completing a teacher education field experience. Positive changes in the EBAD scores were significantly associated with three themes: (a) classroom as a learning community, (b) teacher educator modeling constructivist and culturally-responsive teaching, and (c) field experience for understanding diverse students (Akiba, 2011).

Pavone (2011) used the EBAD to examine the changes in secondary mathematics teachers' attitudes and beliefs about diversity after a 10-week multicultural education professional development. This study found that teacher familiarity with multicultural content and their professional beliefs about diversity made a significant positive change. However, the teachers' personal beliefs did not change. If the teachers were from a lower social class background or had previous exposure to multicultural content, they were more likely to exhibit comfort and familiarity with multicultural content. Participants' concurrent teaching placements and personal stories shared by CLEED teachers (participants) were found to be the catalyst for changes in teachers' beliefs about diversity.

In a study by Kyles and Olafson (2008), the EBAD was used with pre-service teachers in the southwest region of the United States. The pre-service teachers were doing their practicum in a culturally diverse urban elementary school. They found that

pre-service teachers that had multicultural schooling and life experiences were more likely to have favorable beliefs and attitudes about diversity than pre-service teachers who had monocultural schooling and life experiences.

In summary, teachers' beliefs continue to be a major area of educational research. Teachers' beliefs have an impact on student achievement through the teachers' instructional practices. Teachers' do not have to be aware of their beliefs for the impact to occur. When teachers have beliefs such as colorblindness or deficit thinking, they have a negative impact on student achievement, beliefs, and attitudes. Teachers who do believe in multiculturalism, diversity, and culturally responsive pedagogy tend to fail to advocate for curricular reforms that would support their beliefs. Therefore, these teachers fail to advocate for the academic achievement of CLEED students.

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Culturally responsive pedagogy requires teachers to dismantle the cultural discontinuity or cultural mismatch that impacts literacy achievement and calls for teachers to be responsive. Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) stated that culturally responsive pedagogy is a way for schools to recognize the home-community cultures of the students and integrate them into the teaching and learning environment. When there is a discontinuity or difference between the home and school culture (mismatch), it is often viewed by the teacher as a deficit in the student (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). In culturally responsive pedagogy, the teacher is a facilitator who builds a bridge between the home culture and school culture (Au, 2011). This is because the teacher must know

about the student academically and culturally in order to teach to the whole child. The teacher uses this knowledge to assist the student in achieving academically.

Responsive teachers know the educational needs of their students. The principle of responsivity focuses on the idea that teachers need to understand and respond to the knowledge that students bring into the classroom (MacGillivray, Rueda, & Martinez, 2004). MacGillivray, Rueda, & Martinez (2004) based the principle of responsivity on Vygotsky's sociocultural theory. They used the concept of responsivity to analyze research done at the Center for the Improvement of Early Reaching Achievement. They posited that to improve the literacy skills of CLEED students, teachers needed to practice responsivity. Responsivity includes being responsible for knowing about students' lives, expecting the most from the students (avoiding the deficit model), implementing curriculum that is meaningful to the students, recognizing curriculum that is meaningful to the students, recognizing knowledge of two languages and culture, and being aware of the default curriculum (content and structure). The researchers also stated teachers need to look beyond reading instruction and examine societal factors (i.e., poverty, anti-immigrant sentiment and antibilingualism, lack of institutional resources, and environmental hazards). When a student's previous and current knowledge is ignored, it shows a lack of responsive pedagogy and may create alienation from the student. Culturally responsive pedagogy assists in minimizing the alienation that CLEED students may feel (Nieto, 2012).

Many researchers have discussed culturally responsive instruction and culturally responsive teaching in terms of culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000; Ladson-

Billings, 1995; McIntyre, Hulan, & Layne, 2011). Culturally responsive pedagogy is based on the work of Gloria Ladson-Billings (1995) and Geneva Gay (2000). For Ladson-Billings (1995), culturally responsive pedagogy must include three items: "an ability to develop students academically, willingness to nurture and support cultural competence, and the development of a sociopolitical or critical consciousness" (p. 483). Culturally responsive teaching for Gay (2000) is the use of "cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them" and should be "culturally validating, and affirming" (p. 29).

Culturally responsive pedagogy is a conceptual framework that endeavors to incorporate different racial and ethnic groups' cultures into the academic framework (Elementary & Middle School Technical Assistance Center, 2007). Gay discussed culturally responsive teaching in terms of caring, communication, curriculum, and instruction. More specifically, there are four premises to culturally responsive teaching: teachers' attitudes and expectations, cultural communication in the classroom, culturally diverse content in the curriculum, and culturally congruent instructional practices.

There is both a personal and instructional dimension to culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billing, 1995). Richards, Brown, and Forde (2004) stated that culturally responsive pedagogy consists of three dimensions: institutional, personal, and instructional. The institutional dimension consists of the manner in which the school is organized, the schools' policies and procedures, and the involvement of the school in the community. The cognitive and emotional processes that teachers must

employ to become culturally responsive are the personal dimension. Finally, the instructional dimension includes materials and instructional strategies teachers use to convey knowledge.

Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) examined the literature and found five themes/principles of culturally relevant pedagogy: identity and achievement, equity and excellence, developmental appropriateness, teaching to the whole child, and student-teacher relationships. Under each theme are definitive concepts that are aligned to the focus (see Figure 3). When culturally responsive pedagogy is used, it has the potential to increase the academic performance of students of color (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009; Love, 2001; Richards et al., 2004; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Use of multicultural literature is one tool of culturally responsive pedagogy because it can bridge the home and school culture of the student. Multicultural literature has been shown to increase the reading engagement of students of color, as well as, increasing their self-identity. Multicultural literature can help serve as an affirmation to CLEED students and their communities (Botelho & Rudman, 2009).

Figure 3. Themes of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Ibrahim-Balogun (2011) listed seven tenets to what she called culturally relevant

and responsive instruction (CRRI) that focuses on literacy, in particular, the writing

aspect. In Tenet 1, culture is used as a vehicle to bridge the gap between content and

instructional practices and the worldviews of students. It is multifaceted and includes

descriptors such as family background, community, race and ethnicity, language, age

and generational determinants, and geographic location. In Tenet 2, teachers, as masters

of content, must demonstrate care and believe all students can learn by possessing an

affirming attitude toward students and learning while demanding excellence. In the third tenet, learning is shared between the teacher and the students. Teachers must scaffold learning based on the student's current knowledge. Knowledge is validating and empowering and demands that students become critically aware of their own learning processes.

Instruction and environment are the basis for Tenet 4. Instruction and environment must be inclusive of language, cultural practices, and learning styles. They must be collaborative and designed around a community of learners. Students and teachers are responsible and accountable for each other's learning. Tenet 5 states that the content and curriculum is examined and taught critically and strategically using a sociopolitical lens. Content, curriculum, and assessments must be age appropriate and meet the needs of the individual learners. In Tenet 6, multiple literacies and multiple identities of students are embraced. Instruction must allow these identities to be expressed and expanded upon. Students should feel comfortable situating their sociocultural identities in collaborative and individual settings. Lastly, Tenet 7 focuses on literacy being highly respected and encouraged. CRRI engages in literary practices that benefit and position learners for optimal expression, empowerment, and validation.

Culturally responsive pedagogy as a term is less than 30 years old, but because of the growing diversity of the student population and the underachievement of this population, it is becoming a more relevant term in the field of education. Culturally responsive pedagogy is labor intensive and requires the teacher to know the students and their community. Therefore, the teachers have to be committed to "holistic development

and well-being of students, their families, and their communities" (Howard, 2010, p. 89). This commitment to teaching is not something that one can learn in a teacher education program but something one must have when beginning a teacher education program and saying, "I want to be a teacher."

Teacher Education Programs

The NRP (2000) and the U.S. Department of Education (2001) have researched ways to improve literacy education. The NRP (2000) found that research had not focused on the areas of instruction involving teachers, students, tasks, and materials. Thus, the research has not had a significant influence on literacy teacher education programs (Joshi et al., 2009). Research is also lacking on how teaching placements shape what pre-service teachers learn about teaching (Anderson & Stillman, 2010). Densmore-James (2011) proposed that research that clarifies the relationship between teachers' beliefs, knowledge, and practices could be the framework for the restructuring of teacher education programs.

Most teacher education programs offer multicultural education classes; however, no sustained focus on multicultural issues exists (Zeichner, 2003). Some teachers still state that they "see no color" (colorblindness) and believe differences should be alleviated so there can be a level playing field (Howard, 2007; McVee, 2003; Paley, 2000). According to Hsu (2009), the two principal tasks teacher education programs should undertake are to "create a literate environment in which the teachers know enough about, and value, the cultures and languages that students bring to school; and use those differences as resources for accelerated learning rather than excuses for below-

average performance" (p. 169). Banks (2001) stated that an integral part of teacher education should be creating teachers who will be "cultural mediators who interpret the mainstream and marginalized culture to students from diverse groups and help students understand the desirability of and the possibility for social change" (p. 240).

To be cultural mediators, teachers must understand their own cultural identity. Dedeoglu and Lamme (2010) reviewed Southern United States pre-service teachers' reflective papers on their cultural identity. The sample was largely White and female (81% and 97%, respectively), while 19% were people of color. Using Banks' (2006) stages of cultural identity as a guide, Cultural Encapsulation was the stage of the majority of pre-service teachers. The authors revealed that most of the participants had not examined their own racial identity, which was the reason they were in the Cultural Encapsulation stage. The majority of the respondents did not have the fundamental, basic understanding and experiences as they related to sexual orientation, religious beliefs, gender, race, and social class issues. Very few participants were in the Multiculturalism and Reflective Nationalism stage, perhaps because many of the participants lacked experiences with diversity before going to college.

The need for multiculturalism in teacher education has been expressed by educational researchers, educational practitioners, and national educational organizations (Banks, 2001; Escamilla & Nathenson-Mejia, 2003; International Reading Association, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Johnson and Inoue (2004) studied professors in a predominantly people of color university and found approximately 25% of the faculty "only seldom" or "very seldom" used multicultural instructional materials in their

teaching. Therefore, students in the teacher education classroom may have professors who are unprepared to meet their educational needs or understand the worlds of the students. CLEED students do not receive a free and appropriate education when teachers do not use instructional strategies that are effective for student achievement and that positively reinforce cultural identity (Callins, 2006).

When multicultural classes are added, they tend to be taught by teacher educators who lack experience in culturally diverse schools (Zeichner, 2003). Johnson and Inoue (2003) studied a university whose student body consisted of predominantly Asian/Pacific Island ethnicities and whose faculty consisted of people from a Caucasian background. The faculty scored high on their willingness to use multicultural strategies in their teaching; however, many felt they lacked the skills and knowledge to do so. They also thought they were not given the tools needed to be in a multicultural environment.

A serious concern is whether teacher educators can develop classes that change pre-service teachers' beliefs. There are two approaches to teaching diversity issues in literacy teacher education: the multicultural literature-based approach and the community-service learning model (Hsu, 2009). The multicultural literature-based approach assists teachers in embracing diversity and appreciating multiculturalism using diverse literature. However, it tends to confine a teacher's understanding to a strictly contextualized situation that sometimes makes it difficult for teachers to transfer the knowledge they have acquired about diversity into practical methods used to teach literacy in diverse settings (Hsu, 2009). The community-service approach allows

teachers to have firsthand experiences in meeting the needs of CLEED students. However, each community-service experience is unique (Anderson & Stillman, 2010; Hsu, 2009).

An example of a literature-based approach can be seen in a study done by Escamilla and Nathenson-Mejia (2003) in which pre-service teachers read and discussed multicultural literature to improve their awareness of diversity issues. Teachers in this study tended to avoid the controversial topics in children's literature. One conclusion was that teachers were more comfortable with multicultural stories that focus on interpersonal acceptance instead of literature that discusses the social/structural dimensions of racism (Gonzalez, 2008). Another literature-based approach study found that early childhood pre-service teachers who read multicultural children's books were able to better identify with people of another culture. The early childhood pre-service teachers were able to develop knowledge, empathy, and commitment to the success of their future students (Howrey & Whelan-Kim, 2009). Barnes (2006) used a community-based approaching that used a culturally responsive teaching framework in a reading methods class for pre-service teachers that allowed the pre-service teachers to work with diverse students and parents. Through this interaction, the pre-service teachers gained understanding about diversity in the classroom.

There has been a move to create urban-focused teacher education programs (Schultz, Jones-Walker, & Chikkatur, 2008) designed to assist future teachers in learning and enacting practices that will allow them to be successful in urban schools. The hallmark of urban teacher education programs should be to assist teachers in

transforming teaching and learning by adapting their pedagogy to the context and the children that they teach (Howrey & Whelan-Kim, 2009). One studied examined whether graduates from an urban teacher education program could implement what they had learned about having listening stance in the classroom. A listening stance is a "pedagogy and curriculum that is based on listening closely to students and their communities, hearing what they say, and acting on that knowledge" (Schultz et al., 2008, p. 156). In this study, novice teachers had limited time to listen to their students, as they were trying to negotiate their beliefs (experiences, family, and schooling), what they had learned in the urban teacher education program (research, listening stance, and urban, social justice focus), and the district and school policies (core curriculum and standardized testing; Schultz et al., 2008).

A study by Milner (2005) found pre-service teachers were unlikely to recognize the way their subject matter and diversity intersected. Most of the participants in the study recognized that diversity as a social phenomenon but did not connect it to academics. Thus, they did not relate it to their instructional learning decisions. Only when probed or questioned were some able to relate diversity to academic content. These pre-service teachers also expressed reluctance and skepticism that diversity mattered. Milner (2005) believed one of the reasons this occurred was because the teachers were interning in predominantly White schools. One pre-service teacher reported that adding a Hispanic Cinderella story empowered the "Mexican girls" in her class. This thought showed growth, but how she discussed her students showed a lack of culturally responsive pedagogy.

Effective literacy teachers have several characteristics. Secondary literacy supervisors were asked about the characteristics of effective literacy teachers. They listed knowledge about how to deal with students' diverse needs as a major characteristic (Parris & Block, 2007). Hsu (2009) expanded upon this idea by saying that pre-service teachers should be able to perform two key tasks: (a) construct a literate setting where they know and value the cultures and languages of their students, and (b) implement instructional practices that use the differences as resources for high achievement rather than as excuses for low achievement.

The manner in which teachers instruct students on literacy is influenced by their personal theories and beliefs (Allington, 1991a; Lehman, Freeman, & Allen, 1994; Palardy, 1998; Richardson, Anders, & Tidwell, 1991). McVee, Baldassarre, and Bailey (2004) examined the beliefs of pre-service and in-service teachers in a literacy master's course who were involved in a book club that used multicultural literature. The participants were chosen because they were Euro-American, female, and monolingual, thus representative of the United States teaching force. Preliminary analyses showed three of the students were highly engaged in the course. These three participants made substantial changes in their beliefs through a highly reflective process that took hard work and an emotional investment.

They also found several students had little growth during the semester. These were students that tended not to be reflective in their reading and tended to do less analysis and synthesis of the information given. Courses like this one are extremely beneficial because, as Gay (2010) stated, the change process should begin in the

professional preparation of teachers. The professional preparation of teachers should have them critically analyzing their individual attitudes and beliefs, generally and specifically, in the school context about cultural diversity.

National organizations have begun to include cultural diversity as one of their standards. The International Reading Association (2010) added diversity as one of its six standards, which also include foundational knowledge, curriculum and instruction, assessment and evaluation, literate environment, and professional learning and leadership. The standard states, "Candidates create and engage their students in literacy practices that develop awareness, understanding, respect, and a valuing of differences in our society" (p.12). Several assumptions were the basis of adding diversity as a standard:

Diversity will be as much a reality in the future as it is in our lives today and has been in the lives of our predecessors.

There is a tradition of "deficit" thinking and discourse in the context of diversity and schooling. As a society, we are not far removed from a time when cultural deprivation was an accepted term.

Diversity is a potential source of strength of a society to be encouraged not discouraged. Diversity is the basis for adaptability to change, and change is the only certainty in the future.

Creating a curriculum that values diversity requires that teacher educators and teachers step outside their personal experiences within a particular linguistic, ethnic, or cultural group to experience the offerings of other groups.

The elements of diversity in a society cannot be isolated within that society and certainly not within an individual. The elements of diversity interact in the form of multiple identities that may move from the background into the foreground as a function of the context and the moment.

There is a danger in overgeneralizing (i.e., stereotyping) characteristics to all members of a group.

Language-minority students need appropriate and different language and literacy instruction if they are to be successful academically while they learn English.

It is the responsibility of teachers and schools not only to prepare learners in ways that value their diversity but also to prepare those learners to engage in active citizenship to redress areas of inequity and privilege. (p. 12)

Teacher education programs are where teachers' beliefs can be modified.

Currently, most teacher education programs require students to take multicultural classes, but are their beliefs changed as a result? Do these classes assist teachers in becoming more open to diversity in the classroom? Research continues to be inconclusive in this area. Some studies show modification of teachers' beliefs, yet other studies do not show changes in teachers' beliefs.

Teachers' Instructional Practices

Teachers' beliefs influence their instructional practices. Instructional practice holds the greatest promise for CLEED students to become better readers, especially the ones that address culture and language (Beaulieu, 2002). According to Shields (2004), "When children feel they belong and find their realities reflected in the curriculum and conversations of schooling, research has demonstrated repeatedly that they are more engaged in learning and that they experience greater school success" (p. 122). Ndura (2004) stated that teachers have two essential and complementary roles: curriculum mediators and agents of social change. Teachers are curriculum mediators because they plan and deliver instruction in such a manner that meets district and state requirements. By connecting classroom learning experiences to the real world, teachers act as social change agents. Effective teachers are able to assist students in seeing the hidden curriculum.

Brock, Moore, and Parks (2007) offered two reasons for the difficulty in preparing teachers to provide quality literacy instruction: (a) the deficit perspective that may be held by educators and the general public about CLEED students; and (b) the belief that teachers can be taught and learn methods, strategies, and instructional frameworks in a decontextualized manner that is separate for the context and the students in that context. For teachers to provide effective literacy instruction that meets the unique and diverse needs and strengths of all children, they must have the ability to select appropriate instructional strategies/practices. They must also be able to modify and adapt to the daily changes that occur in the classroom and the individual child.

One of the elements in the *Standards for Reading Professionals* for prekindergarten and elementary classroom teacher candidates is that candidates use a literacy curriculum. The literacy curriculum should use instructional practices that positively impact students' knowledge and belief while engaging themes of diversity (International Reading Association, 2010). It also lists four ways this can be done: (a) assess the various forms of diversity that exist in students as well as in the surrounding community; (b) provide differentiated instruction and instructional materials, including traditional print, digital, and online resources, that capitalize on diversity; (c) provide instruction and instructional materials that are linked to students' backgrounds and facilitate a learning environment in which differences and commonalities are valued (e.g., use literature that reflects the experiences of marginalized groups and the strategies they use to overcome challenges); and (d) provide instruction and instructional formats that engage students as agents of their own learning (International Reading Association, 2010) .

In summary, teachers' instructional practices are very important to the success of CLEED students. Teachers have implemented instructional strategies/practices that meet the need of their students while planning and delivering the curriculum in a manner that meets district and state requirements. However, they may not have learned the skills in their teacher education programs or have the time to do so effectively.

Literacy

Reading is a complex and purposeful sociocultural, cognitive, and linguistic process in which readers simultaneously use their knowledge of spoken and

written language, their knowledge of the topic of the text, and their knowledge of

their culture to construct meaning with text. (National Council for Teachers of

English, 2004, p. 1)

Today's world calls for literacy to be defined as more than just reading and

writing but an ability to participate and function within various groups or society

(Gopalakrishnan, 2011). Literature promotes language development, cognitive

development, personality development, and social development (Norton & Norton,

2011). Brock (2004) stated that literacy involves the "ability to read, write, and use

language in powerful ways as complex social and cultural endeavors" (p. 325).

Frequently, in today's classroom, literacy is a "one size fits all" model. This means the

language practices, literacy instruction, and literature tend to pander to the interests and

background of middle-class European American children (Connell, 1994; Jimenez,

2003, Labov, 2003; MacGillivray et al., 2004). Therefore, many students become

alienated because they are unable to see their lives or experiences in the curriculum

(MacGillivray et al., 2004).

Guerrra (1998) offered several different notions of literacy. One is literacy as a

practice, which occurs when literacy is seen as a "socially constructed and highly

contextualized activity. Literacy is [not] considered a singular, monolithic, or universal

entity; instead, scholars who take a practice-oriented perspective contend there are many

literacies in any society serving multiple and culturally specific purposes" (p. 57). This

definition matches very closely with the sociocultural theory's perspective on literacy.

However, literacy can also be seen as an entity. In this paradigm, literacy is an entity

that "is institutionally possible to help people become literate" (p. 52). Another perspective is literacy as an institution. This occurs when "the capitalist-oriented approaches recommend literacy as a currency that makes it possible for members of the society to buy their way to success" (p. 55).

Pennington (2004) conducted a study on teachers' general definitions of literacy and found their definitions were impacted by high-stakes testing that was taking place in elementary schools in Texas. The Texas elementary school in the study was a majority Latino school with a high level of Spanish speakers. The participants were four Latino teachers and four European American teachers. The interviews began by discussing the reading and writing teaching methods and assessments and the teachers' perceptions of literacy in the students' families. However, discussion turned to the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills (TAAS). The teachers all agreed the TAAS test had become the first priority of the literacy goals, as it had become the only indicator of student and teacher achievement. The school had moved from believing that literacy was a practice to focusing on test-taking strategies and using practice tests in the everyday curriculum. The teachers all felt the TAAS did not show a high level of literacy. Specifically, they criticized the TAAS because it did not provide diagnostic information on the manner in which teachers should develop the students' reading skills. In fact, the teachers believed the TAAS test required a specific type of literacy that could only be understood through explicit test-taking instructional methods. They felt their primary goal was to teach students to read well enough to pass the TAAS. Pennington also used the framework of

Guerra (1998) to discuss the movement of the school from viewing literacy as a practice to an institution because of the pressure of high-stake testing.

Literacy has gone through many stages in history. Historically, it has been used to control others (Cohen, 1982). Myers (1996) listed the following literacy shifts: orality to signature (1660s to 1776), signature to recitation (1776-1864), recitation literacy to decoding/analytic literacy (1864-1916), and decoding/analytic literacy to critical/transitional literacy (1916 to 1983). It was during the transition from oral to signature that Horace suggested the need for national standards for curriculum content (Myers, 1996).

The movement to critical/transitional literacy moved students from just reciting the text to interpreting the text. It was during this period that student tracking became more evident (Densmore-James, 2011). Students who were tracked as vocational were to become informational readers. The results of tracking were inequalities in race, social class, gender, and ethnicity when diverse ways of reading were linked to different reading material (Wheelock, 1992). Also during this time period, according to Myers (1996), five important things were discovered: (a) reform was driven by changes in technology, the economy, social needs, and politics; (b) when readers began to identify different facets of reading and use different varieties of text, new forms of language were discovered; (c) the reading level of most citizens needed to be at the basic reading level for them to be able to successfully read in their everyday lives; (d) readers and reading are historical and social constructions (therefore there will be mismatches between the

readers and school literacy); and (e) the model of literacy is shared even when different forms of English are used in different classes.

Currently, some literacy programs use the decoding/analytic literacy approach, and others use a critical/translational literacy approach because there is still a debate about which is better (Denmore-James, 2011). Those who grew up during the decoding phase and those who have jobs that used this type of literacy tend to resist critical/translational literacy. Also, people who use a critical literacy in their jobs tend to resist a decoding emphasis (Denmore-James, 2011). Myers (1996) suggested that literacy focused on decoding assists in maintaining inequities.

Cowen (2003) listed 15 essential elements to an effective literacy program. They include authentic, real literature that gives students the opportunity to read and enjoy a diverse range of genres (including multicultural resources) and a nurturing, supportive classroom that meets the needs of all students and supports writing, listening, reading, speaking, and viewing as positive experiences.

Freire (1983) posited that literacy instruction should include culturally relevant reading material, as it is believed that using teaching materials that represent realistic images can develop positive racial attitudes (Herrera, 2010). Quality multicultural children's literature can engage the reader and create critical encounters of social (in)justice (DeNicolo & Franquz, 2006). Rochman (1993) stated that quality literature can break down barriers because it can dispel prejudice and build community. Still, while there has been a call for multiculturalism in the classroom, instructional materials used in classrooms have unfortunately become more regimented because of national

policies. For example, Montgomery (2009) found Hispanic students in a California elementary school did not have access to bilingual books reflecting their culture on a regular basis because the district restricted the type of materials that could be used to teach reading.

Reading Perspectives

There are three theoretical perspectives on reading: modernist, transactional, and critical. These perspectives are significant because they discuss how readers interact with the text. The modernist perspective locates the meaning inside of the text and focuses on the cognitive processes and mechanics of literacy (Garcia, 2003; Serafini, 2003). Teachers often do not make the text-to-world or text-to-self connections when they have the opportunity (Doubek & Cooper, 2007). In the transactional perspective, the meaning is constructed between the reader and the text (Rosenblatt, 1978; Serafini, 2003). The readers bring to the text their prior knowledge and background and use them to interpret the text.

Finally, the critical perspective is based in critical theory (Garcia & Willis, 2001). It examines the way in which texts are situated in the social, political, and historical contexts and the interpretations that readers and text promote (Garcia, 2003; Serafini, 2003). Giroux (2003) suggested that critical literacy encourages the reader to confront and dismantle inequity. Silverman (2010) stated that for teachers to have a radical social justice orientation, they must have a strong sense of responsibility in order to implement cross-cultural and culturally relevant pedagogy. Critical literacy calls for teachers to have a radical social justice or critical consciousness orientation. Figure 4

illustrates the three reading perspectives, which are then described in more detail in the following sections.
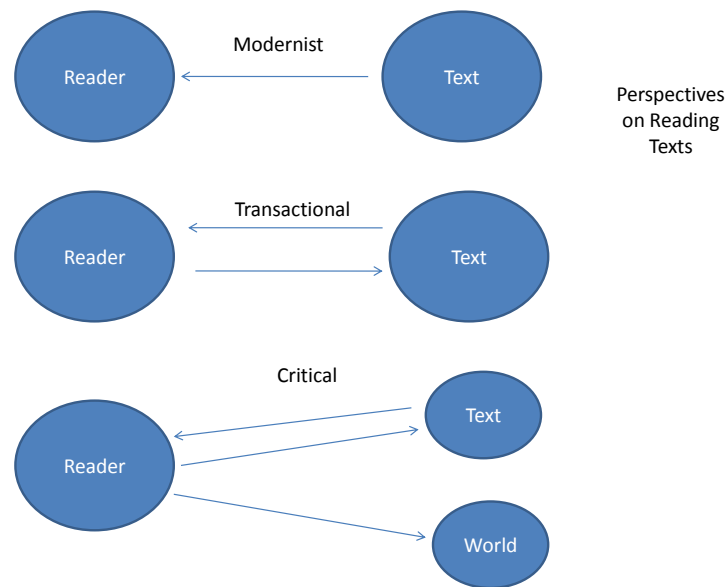
Figure 4. Perspectives on reading texts.

Modernist perspective. A modernist reading of text believes everyone reads the text the same way; therefore, the meaning of the text resides within the text. A modernist view is also described as an exogenic orientation. This perspective contends that knowledge is external to the person. Therefore, in this case, knowledge is transmitted from teacher/text to the student (Many, Howard, & Hoge, 2002). A study by Many et al. (2002) found most of the pre-service literacy teachers in their study had this perspective. Their reflections, comments, and work expressed that they believed literacy instruction was "a set of skills that needed to be transmitted by a teacher and then

practiced" (p. 307). When they did mention using materials that interested the students, it was to practice skills and learn vocabulary. Some of the teachers also expressed their belief that knowledge is static, absolute, and objective. However, there were some pre-service teachers who expressed a transactional perspective.

Transactional perspective. The foundation of transactional theory is the belief that "meaning is being built up through the back-and-forth relationship between reader and text during the reading event" (Karolides, 2005, p. xix). Reader response is an example of transactional reading theory. Reader response was brought forth by Louise Rosenblatt (1983). She felt personal experiences shaped a reader's literary experiences. Therefore, teachers needed to understand that not all readers would comprehend the text in the same way. The meaning of the text does not reside only in the text or in the reader's mind, but it comes from the place where the two meet or transact. One issue is that a reader's comprehension can be impacted by the reader's personal experience and the manner in which it corresponds with the experiences of the text (Flores-Duenas, 2004). The more closely the reader's experiences are to the text, the more likely he or she will comprehend the text. When there is a mismatch, the CLEED reader may respond or interpret the text differently than the author or teacher expects. The CLEED reader may even begin to focus on the mechanics (decoding, pronunciation) and not the meaning of the text (Flores-Duenas, 2004).

Purves, Rogers, and Soter (1995) recognized four products of a reader-response approach to literature: (a) the reader will feel secure in his or her response to the text and not copy another's response; (b) the reader will understand why he or she responds to the

novel; (c) each reader will be respectful of the responses of others to the text and realize the response is valid for the person; and (d) the reader will come to understand the culture of the text and compare and contrast it with his or her own. The reader's transaction with the text creates products or outcomes that are developed from his or her own meaning. This would move to a critical perspective if the reader were required to respond, act, or change his or her judgments and evaluations.

Rosenblatt (1978) discussed two ways readers focus on understanding a text: efferent and aesthetic. Sometimes readers may use the characteristics of both. In the efferent method, a person reads for informative purposes. The reader seeks and retains information to answer questions. This is the method that is often modeled to help students in classrooms (Flores-Duenas, 2004). It falls in a modernist perspective of reading because it says there is only one interpretation to the text and it can only be found in the text. One limitation of this method is it can stop the student from fully engaging in the text. Another limitation is teachers are unlikely to learn about the creative interpretation and experiences the students bring to the text (Flores-Duenas, 2004). In contrast, the aesthetic method of reading is both personal and private. The reader not only focuses on the concepts the words bring to the text but also uses his or her personal experiences to interpret the text. Rosenblatt (1978) believed this method to be beneficial for students because it gives them an opportunity to combine their personal experiences with the texts they are reading. When this occurs, the transactional nature of reading comprehension takes place.

Flores-Duenas (2004) studied the responses to literature of four bilingual students who had exited bilingual programs. The students had passed the Texas Assessment of Academic Skills in the fourth grade, and their teachers had indicated they were average or above average. The students themselves believed they were not proficient readers and said they did not read for enjoyment. The curriculum and classroom library reflected the values of the European American middle class. In this study, there were only a few stories authored by African Americans and a few picture books of Mexican Americans available to the students (Flores-Duenas, 2004).

As part of the study, the students were asked to read selected stories from the curriculum silently, retell the story in writing, and discuss the story as a group. They tended to recall only a few events of the literature read, especially when they lacked the background knowledge needed. When asked their thoughts about the text, at first they did not respond; then after prompting, they began to discuss the issues they had with the text. Their comments focused on the text, and they discussed unknown vocabulary, misunderstood words, and the strategies they used to ignore the unknown vocabulary. An evaluation of the discussion would show the students' reading level was below grade level; however, Flores-Duenas believed this occurred because they lacked the vocabulary or cultural context needed to understand the literature.

The students also felt most American books were boring, and they were surprised to have liked one of the books they read. The students' amount of recall of details and events was correlated with their comprehension of the text. She also found that when students had the prior knowledge, they were able to understand the main themes;

however, if they lacked the knowledge of language, they had issues interpreting content and characters' emotions. Even when they liked a story, they still took an efferent stance when asked why the book was engaging. They tended to retell the story instead of why they believed the book was engaging (Flores-Duenas, 2004).

Flores-Duenas (2004) then used Mexican American literature. When reading this type of literature, students tended to use an aesthetic stance. They interacted with the content and characters instead of just recalling text details. They brought their own knowledge and experiences to the discussion of the text. In the Mexican American literature, students sometimes had issues with new vocabulary, but they seemed to understand the main idea and the depth of the characters. They were also able to use their prior knowledge to support the themes. Their work was evaluated as more intelligent and profound compared to the work they did with the curriculum literature. Specifically, their writing samples were longer and had more depth.

Critical perspective. Critical literacy for educators occurs when "we implicate ourselves in this pedagogical and revolutionary task of fostering in our youth skills with an attitude towards language and texts that are essential to remaking the planet" (Morrell, 2008, p. 7). Ciardiello (2004) suggested that critical inquiry as a process assists one in regaining identity, finding a call of service, examining multiple perspectives, finding an authentic voice, recognizing social barriers, and crossing borders of separation. A foundational piece to Paulo Freire's (1985) work is the belief that readers of a text must have a critical view when reading a text. By this, he meant readers should question the text and not simply believe the text because the author stated

it. He posited that texts that lead to critical consciousness should be chosen. Freire wrote about reading the world through the word. Using multicultural literature with children allows this to happen (Gopalakrishnan, 2011). Freire defined conscientization as "the process by which human beings participate critically in a transforming act" (p. 106). Conscientization requires an amplification of the hidden ideas and beliefs in us and the world. Multicultural children's literature can assist in beginning this process of conscientization by teaching children to question what they read and see.

According to Harwood (2008), challenging books have several characteristics. For example, these types of books do not make differences invisible but rather explore the diversities that make a difference. In addition, challenging books enrich children's understanding of history and life by giving voice to those who have been traditionally silenced or marginalized. Characters in these texts can take action on pertinent social issues. Books should explore dominant systems of meaning that operate in society to position people and groups of people and should not provide "happily ever after" endings for complex social problems. According to Gangi (2008):

> Since children must be able to make connections with what they read to become proficient readers, White children whose experiences are depicted in books can make many more text to self, text to text, and text to world connections than children of color. (p. 30)

Literacy Engagement

Illiteracy in children is costly, for both the students and society. For example, adult illiteracy costs the taxpayers $224 billion a year through welfare payments, crime,

job incompetence, lost taxes, and remedial education (National Reading Panel, 2000).

The usage of multicultural literature in a classroom can assist in teaching students who

are CLEED in becoming more literate.

Brozo, Shiel, and Topping (2007) suggested examining the variables that have a

significant impact on reading performance on the Program for International Student

Assessment (PISA) as a way to close the achievement gap. Literacy as measured by the

PISA seeks to measure "the capacity of a student to apply knowledge and skills and to

analyze, reason, and communicate effectively as they pose, solve, and interpret problems

in a variety of situations" (Brozo, Shiel, & Topping, 2007, p. 305). The test score gap

between White students and African American and Latino students is evidenced in the

PISA. White students in the United States ranked second on the reading literacy scale

while African American and Latino students ranked 25th among the 32 participating

countries.

Guthrie (2004) examined NAEP and PISA data and suggested that engaged

reading can prevail over the reading achievement gap in spite of gender, parental

education, and income. There are three components of engagement in reading in the

PISA: diversity of reading, frequency of leisure reading, and attitude toward reading

(Brozo, Shiel, & Topping , 2007). After examining the PISA data for 15-year-olds in 27

countries, the conclusion was drawn that "the level of a student's reading engagement is

a better predictor of literacy performance than his or her socioeconomic background,

indicating that cultivating a student's interest in reading can help overcome home

disadvantage" (OECD, 2004, p. 8). This conclusion was also evidenced in the PISA 2009 results (OECD, 2010).

Research has shown there is a decline in children's reading for pleasure between the ages of 8 and 11 (McKenna, Kear, & Ellsworth, 1995; Scholastic, 2008). A Scholastic (2008) survey found children between the ages of 9 to 11 were three times as likely to be identified as low-frequency readers as children between the ages of 5 to 8. Thirty-four percent of children between the ages 9 and 11 said one of the top reasons they did not read for pleasure was because they were unable to find books they liked. This may be because this is the period when children are transitioning from picture books and easy readers to chapter books (Barkley, 2009).

Strauss (2011) found that level of agreement (i.e., agree or strongly agree) for the statement that reading was a favorite activity was similar for Whites (33%), African Americans (34%), and Hispanics (27%), while 44% for Asians. However, for White and Asian students who strongly disagreed with the statement, they scored 77% and 76%, respectively, at or below the basic reading level. African Americans, Hispanics, and Native Americans who disagreed with the statement scored 93%, 91%, and 89%, respectively, at the basic or below basic reading level (Strauss, 2011). Therefore, children of color who dislike reading score at the basic or below basic reading level.

The lack of reading has resulted in a test score gap between African American and Hispanic students compared to White students. The NAEP report for the year 2009 showed this test score gap has continued when comparing the reading scores of the African American and Hispanic students to the White students. Also, when looking at

performance level, only one-third of the fourth graders performed at or above the proficient level (National Center for Education Statistics, 2010). Stiefel, Schwartz, and Ellen (2006) examined the test score gap in New York City and stated teachers' methods and attitudes needed to be examined to have a better understanding of the gap.

As they progress through elementary school, children tend to become less motivated to read and often develop negative reading attitudes and beliefs which impact their future reading achievement (McKenna, et al., 1995; Wigfield, 1997). Students who have reading problems in the fourth grade tend to continue to have reading issues in future grades (Allington, 2002). The Casey Foundation (2011) found students who had not reached a proficient reading level at third grade were four times as likely to have left high school than students who were proficient readers in third grade. They also found students who were not basic readers in third grade were six times more likely to not graduate from high school than proficient readers.

Research has found the perceptions and beliefs of teachers and unsuccessful instructional practices often lead to students' negative attitudes and beliefs and lack of achievement (Henk & Melnick, 1995; Irvine, 2002; McKenna et al., 1995; Morrison, Jacobs, & Swinyard, 1999). Literacy instruction that is culturally responsive can promote high achievement for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Brown University, 2003; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Nichols, Rupley, & Webb-Johnson, 2000). Gangi (2008) argued that children need books that reflect themselves to start the process of becoming proficient readers. Children's multicultural literature can increase students' engagement in reading by allowing them to make self-

connections to the text. This process can also impact their ability to perform well on standardized tests.

Reading comprehension, which is one of the focuses of the reading achievement tests, has been substantially correlated to reading motivation in later elementary grades (Guthrie et al., 2007). Guthrie and Wigfield (2000) developed an engagement model of reading comprehension development. One premise of this model is that reading comprehension is the result of a time spent engaging in reading. In Guthrie et al. (2007), engaged reading is described as "motivated, strategic, knowledge driven, and socially interactive" (p. 283). Engaged reading is influenced by the types of experiences students have in the classroom (Guthrie & Cox, 2001). Based on previous research (Baker and Wigfield, 1999; Guthrie & Humenick, 2004; Wigfield & Guthrie, 1997), children's reading motivation in later elementary grades was based on several factors: curiosity or interest, preference for challenge, involvement, self-efficacy, competition, recognition, grades, social interaction, and work avoidance (Guthrie et al., 2007). A student's interest in reading has been shown to correlate with (a) deep processing of individual texts (Schiefele, 1999); (b) elementary students' reading grades (Alexander & Murphy, 1998); and (c) elementary students' ability to recall passages (Renninger, 1992).

Guthrie et al. (2007) examined reading motivation and comprehension using pre- and post-interview data, teacher ratings, motivation self-reports, and reading comprehension scores of four fourth-grade students. They found that highly interested students had a positive attitude toward certain authors and books and had favorite topics, while the least interested readers tended not to have a favorite book and did not enjoy

any authors. They also did not list reading as a preferred activity. Those students who expressed a high interest in reading tended to like being able to select what they read, while children who showed less interest in reading did not believe selecting what they read was important. Reading motivation was found to increase reading comprehension as measured by changes in comprehension on the standardized test. However, reading comprehension did not influence motivational growth.

Straus (2011) examined the motivation to read, application of reading strategies, activation and use of readers' knowledge, and social interaction around texts using the 2007 NAEP scores of eighth-graders. Straus (2011) suggested not only that reading achievement could be predicted by engaged reading but that classroom instruction influenced reading engagement. Motivation to read was found to be the strongest predictor of reading achievement, though all four constructs were significant predictors for all ethnic groups and genders.

Using the Guthrie and Wigfield model (2000), Padak and Potenza-Radis (2010) suggested that there are three keys for motivating struggling readers. The first is purposeful, authentic reading programs that consist of texts that are connected to students' interests, lives, and the real world. These types of texts assist students in becoming engaged readers. Authentic texts have natural language patterns that assist struggling readers in using their oral language competence. The other two keys are having time for independent reading and having an authentic and purposeful instructional routine.

Furthermore, there are several benefits to reading aloud to students in regular classrooms (Conrad, Gong, Sipp, & Wright, 2004; Pappas, 1993; Teale & Sulzby, 1986). For instance, reading aloud in a classroom can increase a student's motivation to read. It also promotes a student's oral language development and knowledge of written language syntax (Sipe, 1996). When read aloud, literature reflects the language and culture of students, and it can increase students' empathy toward others, change their personal value systems, and impact their own identity development (Freeman & Freeman, 2004; Medina & Encisio, 2002). It uses challenging texts to advance the oral language and comprehension skills of students through focused read-alouds. A study by Conrad et al. (2004) found that using culturally responsive teaching and culturally relevant texts in Text Talk increased the comprehension and oral language skills of the second-grade students who participated in the read-alouds.

The introduction or inclusion of culturally relevant texts has also been shown to assist in improving the motivation to read of CLEED students (Cleary, 2008; Guthrie, Wigfield, & Perencevich, 2004). Cleary (2008) conducted a study of Native American students and found that they were more likely to read when the reading materials included representations of their culture. When Native American students were asked how teachers could improve instruction, they answered that teachers should include more stories that related to their lives and were about their culture and their people.

There are many aspects of reading that benefit from culturally and linguistically relevant reading material. McCollin and O'Shea (2005) found that multicultural literature increased the reading comprehension and fluency and decreased phonological

awareness gaps of culturally and linguistically diverse students. They suggested that reading materials that relate to the students assist in supporting the students' reading acquisition skills and increase their motivation to read.

The passage of the No Child Left Behind Act and Reading First mandates have required states to use scientifically based research curricula. Therefore, many states have replaced literature-based instruction and usage of authentic texts with core reading (basal) programs (Dewitz, Jones, & Leahy, 2009). Current basal readers do reflect diversity, unlike the basal readers from the 1950s and 1960s; however, when multiculturalism is reflected in the basal, it is often placed in its own unit (Montgomery, 2009). A study by Dewitz et al. (2009) reported that over 70% of the schools surveyed by Education Market Research stated they closely followed or selectively used a basal program.

The use of structured basal programs increases the likelihood that students may not be reading effectively in their reading classrooms because of the lack of opportunities for students to practice independently and for teachers to offer support with guided reading (release of responsibility; Dewitz, Jones, & Leahy, 2009). Moustafa and Land (2002) found the usage of basal programs tended to be scripted, and teachers allowed the curriculum (basal program) to instruct the reader instead of them. Because students' growth as readers is largely impacted by their teachers (Bond & Dykstra, 1997; Hoffman, 1991), as Darling-Hammond (2000) suggested, "Students whose education is guided mostly by the basal readers and workbooks compatible with basic skills tests find themselves at a growing disadvantage when they confront the more challenging

expectations of new standards and the performance assessments that accompany them"
(p. 266).

In addition, leveled books are often used to encourage children to read in
elementary classrooms. Fountas and Pinell (1996, 2001) used the work of Marie Clay to
assist students in becoming proficient readers by leveling various children's books. In
their 1996 book, they recommended 2,500 titles, which contained less than 10 authors of
color (approximately 1%). In their 2001 book, they listed 44 author websites, but only
one author of color was listed. Gangi (2008) suggested that if leveled books are to be
used in a classroom, about 40% should be "multicultural so that all children can make
text-to-self connections" (p. 32).

There has been some research on the impact of phonic based programs on
CLEED students. Cummins (2011) presented one study that followed the
implementation of an intensive scripted phonic program on a Navajo reservation
(McCarty & Robmero-Little, 2005). The Navajo school had used a process oriented,
literature based approach to English and Navajo reading and writing. This Navajo
bilingual bicultural program used culturally relevant themes prior to NCLB. From 1988
through the 1990s, the elementary students at the Navajo school consistently improved
on their standardized tests and locally developed reading assessment that measured their
oral English and English reading abilities. The Navajo elementary students
outperformed comparison groups on the previous tests and increased their oral and
literacy skills in Navajo. By 2003, funding for the bilingual program had ended and the
Navajo school was labeled underperforming. This label caused the school to be

required to use a prescriptive phonic programs mandated under NCLB's Reading First provision. A comparison showed that reading comprehension scores for limited English proficient (LEP) students were higher in 1999 than in 2003 and non-LEP elementary student scores dropped by as much as 50% between 2002 and 2005 (McCarty & Romero-Little, 2005), which was during the time of the prescriptive phonic program.

Literacy achievement continues to be a major focus in educational policy. However, the focus continues to be on the cognitive and not the social aspects of literacy. Reading engagement has been shown to be a major key to reading achievement. Until the social aspects of literacy are included and valued in research, the literacy achievement issues of students, especially CLEED students, will persist.

Children's Literature

Children's literature has been defined as "books for children from birth to adolescence, covering topics of relevance and interests to children of those ages, through prose and poetry, fiction and nonfiction" (Lynch-Brown & Tomlinson, 2005, p. 3). The historical foundation of children's literature is stories told through oral tradition (Norton & Norton, 2011). According to Gopalakrishnan (2011), children's literature reflects the historical time in which it was published. For instance, the stories in the 16th and 17th centuries tended to be didactic tales that were often moralistic and religious in nature, while the stories of the 18th and 19th centuries focused on adventure and travel. Near the end of the 20th century, children's books became extremely popular, as evidenced by the different genres that developed.

Children's literature is used in all schools today in some form. Many schools have recommended reading lists for their students. In the 1990s, children's literature was a substantial component in the elementary reading curriculum in the United States (Serafini, 2003). Today, in the time of high-stakes testing, children's literature has become more of an instructional tool used to teach students skills (e.g., decoding and comprehension; Gopalakrishnan, 2011; Serafini, 2003).

Not all agree with this definition of multicultural children's literature. Shannon (1994) argued that multicultural children's literature should include any books that acknowledge cultural aspects in any children's literature. An example he gave was an animal fantasy book that had the farm animals revolting against the farmer. This book would not normally be classified as multicultural literature, but Shannon believed that it could create great discussion about class, capitalism, gender, race, and language. For Shannon (1994) and Fishman (1995), all books should be viewed through a multicultural perspective. Several researchers have argued against Shannon's description of multicultural literature. Cai (1998) believed multicultural literate should remain a separate category because it challenges the domination of all-White literature. Bishop (1994) and Harris (1994) responded to Shannon by discussing people of color and saying they are not trying to exclude but call attention to those who have been traditionally omitted from the cannon. Schwartz (1995) examined the perspectives of Bishop, Harris, and Shannon and called for multicultural children's literature that is a "critical interrogation of difference and its relationship to culture, language, and power." Yokota (1993) defined quality multicultural literature as "literature that represents any distinct

cultural group through accurate portrayal and rich detail" (p. 157). Multicultural

literature can also be defined as literature "about the sociocultural experiences of

previously underrepresented groups" (Gopalakrishnan, 2011, p. 5). Based on these

definitions, multicultural children's literature would be books for children from birth to

adolescence that authentically represent previously underrepresented groups.

Multicultural children's literature has been called a mirror, window, and door

because it assists in affirming and gaining entry into one's own culture and the cultures

of others (Botelho & Rudman, 2009; Nieto, 2009b). According to Willett (1995),

"When children cannot identify with a book or see their lives celebrated through stories,

it may have a negative impact on their self-image. The message they get is that their

lives and their stories are not important" (p. 176). Multicultural literature has been used

by many literacy teachers in the United States to challenge the existing canon of

children's literature (Cai & Bishop, 1994; Montero & Robertson, 2006).

Though many cultures have been underrepresented or portrayed negatively in

literature there have been positive portrayals of people of color. For example, in the

early 20th century, *Brownies' Book* magazine was published for an African American

audience to counteract the stereotypes and misrepresentations of people of color in other

literature (Gopalakrishnan, 2011). It was developed by W. E. B. Du Bois to show

African American children as normal and beautiful and showcase their achievements and

history. Before then, most children's books and magazines showed African American

characters as comic relief or of lesser intelligence (Gopalakrishnan, 2011).

The foundational study that examined the lack of diversity in children's publications was done by Nancy Larrick (1965). Larrick examined over 5,000 books published between 1962 and 1964. She found only 6.6% of the books published during that time period included an African American character and less than 1% had a contemporary African American character. Larrick discussed the negative impact this absence of African American characters could have on African American children. The lack of African American characters could also impact society because the majority of images in children's literature were White children. Some believe this study was the beginning of the multicultural publishing movement (Hughes-Hassell & Cox, 2010).

Quality multicultural literature may still be hard to find (Horning, Febry, Lindgren, & Schliesman, 2011). In 2009, only 15% of all children's literature published was considered multicultural (Children's Cooperative Book Center, 2010). A review of the National Endowment for the Humanities' summer reading list found that less than 5% of the recommended books were multicultural (Gangi, 2005). McNair (2008) reviewed Scholastic's Seesaw and Firefly book order forms for 6 months and discovered that of the 1,200 books listed, only two books were written by Hispanic Americans and one book was written by an Asian American. There were not any books written by a Native American. African American authors were listed more frequently but they tended to be featured during Black History Month.

The lack of multicultural representation of literature in the classroom begins at an early age. Pentimonti, Zucker, and Justice (2011) examined the read-alouds of 13 preschool teachers during an academic school year. The teachers read 426 books, but

only 10.6% of the children's literature was identified as multicultural. This discrepancy continues as students grow older. Agosto, Hughes-Hassell, and Glimore-Clough (2003) found one-sixth of the sample of books for middle-grade readers had people of color as the main or major secondary characters.

Hughes-Hassell and Cox (2010) examined children's board books published between the years of 2003 and 2008 and evaluated them for the representation of people of color using critical race theory and a typology developed by Rudine Sims Bishop. They found that of the 218 books reviewed, 89.9% contained White characters and 36.6% contained characters of color. In addition, 59.6% of the books contained only White people, while 5.5% of books contained only people of color. Finally, 22.9% showed multiple racial and ethnic groups, and 9.6% of the books examined were bilingual or Spanish.

Several studies have examined books for transitional readers who are moving from early readers to independent, self-regulating readers (Szymusiak, Sibberson, & Koch, 2008). Second- through fifth-grade students (transitional readers) tend to decrease their frequency of reading and tend to develop a negative attitude toward reading as a pastime and as a school-related activity (Lempke, 2008; McKenna et al., 1995; Scholastic, 2008). In an examination of transitional books, Barksdale (2009) found 81% contained White main or major secondary characters, 16% contained African American characters, 1% contained Hispanic characters, 0% contained American Indian/Alaska Native characters, 5% contained Asian/Pacific Islander characters, 14% contained characters classified as "other," and 3% were unidentifiable. There were 106 books containing

main characters from two races/categories and 11 books that had main characters from three different races. Hughes-Hassell, Barkley, and Koehler (2009) examined transitional books on the Fountas and Pinnell Leveled Book List database (http://www.fountasandpinnelllleveledbooks.com) and found that approximately 16% included literature about African American children.

The lack of representation of people of color impacts students. Students are more likely to read and value the importance of reading when they are able to see characters that are like them and with whom they are able to connect (Heflin & Barksdale-Ladd, 2001). When students were able to identify with the characters in the text and their experiences, the students' level of reading enjoyment increased (Cianciolo, 1989; DeLeón, 2002; Jose & Brewer, 1984). Eight- to 11-year-olds often read to gain assistance in answering life's basic questions, including who they are and why they are the way they are, as well as questions about the world. The text and illustrations help students develop a sense of identity that stays with them (Cianciolo, 1989). However, multicultural literature not only assists CLEED students but also allows all students to move beyond stereotypes (Rochman, 1993).

There are many ways to analyze multicultural literature. For example, some studies have examined the cultural authenticity and accuracy (Bishop, 1992; Fox & Short, 2003; Louie, 2006; Moreillon, 2003; Short & Fox, 2003, Smith & Wiese, 2006). Also, illustrations have been evaluated for accuracy and authenticity (Mo & Shen, 1997). Another aspect evaluated is an insider or outsider perspective (Bishop, 1992; Harris, 1997; Louie, 2006; Moreillon, 2003). Finally, ideologies have also been examined

(McNair, 2008; Sims, 1982). For instance, Yoon, Simpson, and Haag (2010) studied the ideologies of assimilation and pluralism by examining multicultural children's picture books using these ideologies. They found two themes that focused on assimilation ideology. One was the main character transitioning from opposition of the new culture to assimilation. The second focused on the United States as the land of opportunity. In their survey, they found some books showed equity and excellence, but it was only through the immigrants' assimilation into the dominant culture. There were several books that exhibited both pluralism and assimilation, but the assimilation ideology tended to be the dominant ideology.

Gopalakrishnan (2011) offered four criteria for evaluating multicultural children's literature: the author's and illustrator's perspectives, multidimensionality, stereotyping, and authentic language. Analyzing the author's and illustrator's perspectives is done by evaluating whether they are using an insider perspective. In other words, is one able to see the culture reflected through complete characterizations of the characters, plot line, and resolution of the story? Next, in multidimensionality, the work is assessed in terms of whether the characters are well rounded and the setting shows the culture's depth and breadth. Evaluation of stereotyping involves analyzing the illustrations, characterizations, and story resolution for labeling and realism. Finally, assessment of authentic language examines the language spoken by characters for believability.

Nieto (2005, 2012) suggested the following questions be asked when reading multicultural children's literature:

Point of View: What is the point of view? Who is telling the story? How is the story being told? Whose story is this? Who sees? Who is observed?

Social Processes among the Characters: How is power exercised? Who has agency? Who resists and challenges domination and collusion? Who speaks and who is silenced? Who acts? And who is acted upon? Who waits? What possibilities for being in the world are offered by the text?

Ending: How did the writer close the story? What are the assumptions imbedded in this closure? Is there space for imaging different outcomes or is the ending fixed?

Illustrations: How do the text and images work together? How is power represented in the illustrations?

Genre: What is the genre? How does the genre shape how the story is told and one's expectation as the reader? How does the genre organize the reader's perceptions of the reality created by the story?

Sociopolitical Context: What is the sociopolitical situation of the characters? What dominant messages about race, gender, and class are imbedded in the children's book and its reviews?

Historical Context: How has the cultural experience been rendered in children's literature over time? Since these texts are social transcripts of US power relations, what are the prevailing dominant ideologies about class, race, and gender translated in the texts? (p. 4).

Children's literature is one way of engaging children in reading. Multicultural children's literature shows CLEED students that they are part of the canon of children's

literature. However, teachers need to be aware that not all multicultural children's literature is quality. Some multicultural children's literature can reinforce stereotypes about other cultures, races, and gender. Yet, these types can still be used if critically analyzed by the teacher and students.

Summary

The importance of culturally responsive pedagogy within a teacher's instructional practices has been stressed by many researchers (Garcia, 2001; Gay 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Zeichner, 1996). However, Gangi (2008) referenced the National Education Association's Teachers' Favorites and Children's Favorites book lists and found that authors of color represented only 2% of the books on the list. Research has shown that there is a relationship between classroom practices and teachers' beliefs (Fang, 1996). While quantitative studies have examined teachers' beliefs about multiculturalism and diversity and teachers' beliefs about reading, few studies have explored in-service teachers' beliefs about multicultural literature, their perceptions of theories of reading, and their beliefs about their ability to implement culturally responsive pedagogy through the use of multicultural literature in the classroom.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This study was a mixed-methods research study using both quantitative and qualitative methodology. The study obtained data from in-service elementary teachers about their instructional practices and beliefs about diversity using the EBAD and open-ended questions about literature in their classrooms. It also assessed the relationship between the teachers' beliefs about diversity and their instructional practices in the classroom. This study collected two data sets. The first set was a compiled list of the collection of books that were being read aloud and were available in the classroom library. The second set consisted of scores from the EBAD.

There are three ways of mixing quantitative and qualitative data: merging the data, connecting the data, and embedding the data (Creswell & Clark, 2007). This study merged the qualitative data from the types of literature available in the classroom and the quantitative data from the EBAD. According to Collins, Onwuegbuzie, and Sutton (2006), there are four rationales for mixing quantitative and qualitative data: participant enrichment, instrument fidelity, treatment fidelity, and significance enrichment. Significance enrichment, which can expand the interpretation of the results and assist in adding depth to the data, was the focus of this research. Leech and Onwuegbuzie (2009) provide a typology for mixed- methods sampling designs. This study was a partially mixed concurrent equal status design; the quantitative and qualitative aspects occurred at the same time and were given equal weight but were not mixed until both data types had been collected and analyzed.

An urban school district located in southeastern Texas was used to collect the data. The southeastern Texas school district is one of the top 15 largest districts in Texas and one of the top 30 largest in the nation. The Broad Prize Award was awarded to this district less than 5 years ago. Districts that receive this award are recognized for being an urban school district that is making overall improvement in reducing the achievement gaps across ethnic groups, as well as improving student achievement (School District Website, 2010). The $1 million prize goes directly to graduating seniors in the awarded districts to attend college or for other post-secondary training. The Broad Prize has four goals: reward districts that improve achievement levels of disadvantaged students; restore the public's confidence in our nation's public schools by highlighting successful urban districts; create competition and provide incentives for districts to improve; and show case the best practices of successful districts (The Broad Prize for Urban Education, 2012). This school district has also been named the second-best large school district in Texas at educating African American students. It is also listed as third among large school districts in Texas at educating Hispanic students, according to studies conducted by Texas A&M University, Texas A&M University-Prairie View, and Beloit College (School District Website, 2011). Currently, the Texas Education Agency (TEA, 2011) rates the district as "academically acceptable." This school district has showcased as an model urban school district because of the rewards that it has received.

Demographics of the Study

The enrollment of the district has increased by over 25,000 since 2004. In 2011-2012, the student population of the district was 2.17% White, 69.75% Hispanic, 25.73%

African American, 1.39% Asian, and 0.11% Native America. During the 2009-2010

school year, the student population was identified as 69% at risk, 85% economically

disadvantaged, and 32.1% English language learners (TEA, 2011).

Population

The target population for this study was in-service teachers of pre-kindergarten

through fifth-grade students in an urban public school district within the United States.

Participating teachers were employed by an urban school district located in southeastern

Texas. At the time of the study, there were 34 elementary schools and nine

preschool/Head Start schools. The 2009-2010 teacher ethnicity composition was

35.71% African American, 2.27% Asian, 21.09% Hispanic, 4% Native American, and

40.84% White (TEA, 2011).

Sample

The study consisted of a convenience sample. When a convenience sample is

used, it must be inferred how the results of the convenience sample might be generalized

to the population by giving a careful description of the sample (Gall, Gall, & Borg,

2007). Elementary teachers were chosen as the population of interest for three reasons.

First, elementary schools are where students begin the educational career. Second,

several studies have shown that the reading gap that occurs in elementary school

continues through high school. Third, a student's reading level in elementary can be a

predictor of educational attainment and future success.

Of the 43 elementary and pre-kindergarten/Head Start schools in the district, 23

were randomly asked to participate in this study. Six elementary campuses agreed to be

involved in this research. The six schools are representative of the school district

population when comparing the schools' rating, gender, and race (Tables 2, 3, 4, and 5).

The sample population included 198 elementary in-service teachers who taught

kindergarten through fifth grade in an urban public school district in southeast Texas

during the 2011-2012 academic year. The respondents were categorized by ethnicity,

gender, grade level, degrees earned, years of experience, and number of languages

spoken. There were 225 educators who returned the survey including the EBAD and the

list of books; however, two were not completed, and 20 participants that completed the

survey were not teachers. Thus, the total sample was 198.

The sample was a close representative of the population from which it was

drawn, as seen in Table 2. The respondents' ethnicities were 31.8% European

American, 32.3% African American, and 30.3% Hispanic American. Additional

represented ethnicities included 0.5% Native American, 3% Asian, and 2% multiracial

American. A comparison of the sample population to the district's population revealed

only slight differences. The number of African American teachers in the sample was

about three percentage points lower than the district's population for the same ethnic

group of teachers. European teachers within the sample also represented a lower

percentage by almost nine points. The Hispanic and Native American teachers were the

only overrepresented groups, by almost nine and three points, respectively. The Asian

teachers within the sample were within one percentage point of the population.

Table 2

Comparison of Study Sample and District Teacher Population 2011-2012

	Sample	Population
European American	31.80%	40.84%
African American	32.30%	35.71%
Hispanic	30.30%	21.09%
Asian	3%	2.27%
Native American	0.50%	4%
Multiracial	2%	

Table 3

Comparison of Study Sample and School Teacher Population 2010-2011 by Race

	Sample	School A	School B	School C	School D	School E	School F
European American	31.80%	27.6%	26.1%	42.1%	29%	31%	25.5%
African American	32.30%	19%	57.2%	21.1%	34.8%	25.3%	21.6%
Hispanic	30.30%	51.7%	11.9%	33.3%	27.6%	41.4%	47.1%
Asian	3%	1.7%	2%	3.5%	5.8%	0%	3.9%
Native American	0.50%	0%	0%	0	0%	0%	0%`
Multiracial	2%	0%	0%	0%	2.9%	2.3%	2%

Table 4

Texas Education Agency's Educational Rating of Each School by Year

	2010-2011	**2009-2010**	**2009-2008**
School A	Exemplary	Exemplary	Exemplary
School B	Recognized	Exemplary	Exemplary
School C	Recognized	Exemplary	Recognized
School D	Recognized	Recognized	Recognized
School E	Academically Acceptable	Recognized	Recognized
School F	Academically Acceptable	Recognized	Exemplary

Table 5

Comparison of Study Sample and District School Rating 2010-2011

	Sample	**Population**
Exemplary	17%	18.75%
Recognized	50%	59.38%
Academically Acceptable	33%	21.88%

Table 6

Sample Demographic Data

		Frequency	Percent
Gender	Female	178	89.9
	Male	20	10.1
	Total	198	100.0
Languages Spoken	Monolingual	96	48.5
	Bilingual	66	33.3
	Multilingual	8	4.0
	Missing	28	14.1
	Total	198	100.0
Age	22-30	41	20.7
	30-40	67	33.8
	40-50	57	28.8
	50 and above	31	15.7
	Missing	2	1.0
	Total	198	100.0
Years Taught	Missing	2	1.0
	1-11 months	4	2.0
	1 to 3 years	21	10.6
	4 to 6 years	60	30.3
	7 to 9 years	19	9.6
	10 or more years	92	46.5
	Total	198	100.0
Degree Earned	Missing	8	4.0
	Bachelor's	136	68.7
	Master's	52	26.3
	Doctorate	2	1.0
	Total	198	100.0
Subject(s) Taught	Math/Science	24	12.1
	Reading/Language Arts	24	12.1
	Both	134	67.7
	Other	16	8.1
	Total	198	100.0
Grade Taught	Kindergarten	28	14.1
	First Grade	33	16.7
	Second Grade	33	16.7
	Third Grade	31	15.7
	Fourth Grade	30	15.2
	Various Grades	39	19.7
	Missing	4	2.0
	Total	198	100.0

Additional teacher demographic data is shown in Table 6. The majority of the sample was female, and about half was monolingual and one-third was bilingual. The sample of teachers tended to be over 30 years old, and most had been teaching 10 or more years. In addition, the majority had a bachelor's degree. Among subjects taught, 67.7% taught both math/science and reading/language arts, and there was an almost equal distribution between grade levels taught.

Instrument

The EBAD, developed by Pohan and Aguilar (1999), was the instrument used in this study. The EBAD was not designed to create subscales on individual diversity issues (i.e., gender and race). It is a two-scale, 40-item, self-administered instrument. The Personal Beliefs About Diversity (PeBAD) is the first scale and consists of 15 items. The PeBAD examines race/ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, disabilities, language, and immigration. The statements on the PeBAD focus on one's personal view of the world (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). The second scale, Professional Beliefs About Diversity (PrBAD), consists of 25 items. The PrBAD focuses on educational contexts (practices, resources, or approaches) including instruction, staffing, segregation/integration, ability tracking, curricular materials, and multicultural versus monocultural education. The diversity issues in the PrBAD include race/ethnicity, gender, social class, sexual orientation, disabilities, language, and religion. The authors included a large range of items to distinguish between individuals who are more accepting of a range of social diversity and individuals who are less accepting of diversity (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001).

A five-point Likert-type scale is used by the EBAD for responses: 1 = *strongly disagree*, 2 = *disagree*, 3 = *undecided*, 4 = *agree*, and 5 = *strongly agree*. Likert scales ask respondents to rate their level of agreement with a statement (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2007). Gall et al. (2007) suggested including a "no opinion" option for respondents who may not be familiar with the topic. The EBAD includes several items worded negatively to avoid a response set. Scoring the EBAD includes reverse keying these items.

The range for the EBAD is 40-200. The range for the PeBAD is 15-75, and the range for the PrBAD is 25-125. Low scores on the EBAD reflect general intolerance for diversity, while high scores reflect an openness or acceptance of most or all of the diversity issues (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). Those who score in the middle reflect a general tolerance or acceptance of some diversity issues or topics but have an indifference to some diversity issues/topics that are on the EBAD. Midrange scores can also reflect high acceptance of some diverse issues/topics and low acceptance or tolerance of other diverse issues/topics. The result is a balanced (midrange score) on the EBAD.

Permission to use the EBAD was obtained from Pohan, one of the authors of the instrument (Pohan, 2011). The administered EBAD was hand scored, and the data were converted using SPSS (Statistical Package for the Social Sciences).

Validity and Reliability

The EBAD was developed from previous research consisting of a series of four pilot studies, reviews by experts in the field, and analyses (Pohan, 1994, Pohan & Aguilar, 1999).   The internal consistency was determined by a principle components

analysis (Pohan, 1994, Pohan & Aguilar, 1999; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). When the

EBAD was analyzed for construct validity, the results indicated significantly related

scores on the personal and professional beliefs scales as well as overall predictive

validity.

The reliability and validity of the EBAD was investigated in several ways.

Pohan and Aguilar (2001) examined response set bias by varying the order of the

PeBAD and PrBAD. Neither scale varied significantly; thus, the scores on the scales are

not influenced by the order of administration (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). They also

examined social desirability by using the Crowne-Marlowe Social Desirability Scale

(Strahan & Gerbasi, 1972) to see if the participants felt the need to answer in a socially

desirable way. There was not a significant relationship between social desirability and

the personal or professional beliefs of the participants (Pohan & Aguilar, 2001).

The reliability of the scales indicated Cronbach's alpha coefficients of 0.70 for

in-service teachers and 0.80 for pre-service teachers for personal beliefs and 0.77 for in-

service teachers and 0.82 for pre-service teachers for professional beliefs (Pohan, 1994).

The reliability of the EBAD is 0.70, which is considered acceptable; however, scores

between 0.80 and 0.90 are very good (Gall et al., 2007). The overall reliability of the

40-item EBAD was verified again using the sample size of 198 elementary teachers. An

alpha coefficient value of .77 was determined for the total EBAD, with 0.67 for the

personal beliefs scale and .067 for the professional beliefs scale.

Research Design and Procedures

This study was designed to (a) describe teachers' beliefs about diversity, (b) describe the types of children's literature in the classroom, and (c) explore the degree of correlation between elementary teachers' personal and professional beliefs about diversity and their instructional practices concerning literature. Related studies have studied pre-service teachers, university educators, and in-service teachers (Cardona, 2005; Pohan, 1994 Pohan & Aguilar, 1999; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001; Schroeder, 2008; Taylor, 1999; Yin, 2000). This study focused on urban in-service elementary teachers.

Mixed methodology connects the data between the qualitative and quantitative (Creswell & Clark, 2007). According to the framework by Creswell and Clark (2007), there is a two-phase process consisting of exploratory and triangulation design types. The second phase, triangulation, is often used to validate quantitative data and transform data. It is in a concurrent design that qualitative and quantitative research are done at the same time. In this design type, quantitative and qualitative are emphasized equally. The quantitative and qualitative data are merged during the interpretation or analysis. Tashakkori and Teddlie (1998) discussed the characteristics of the mixed-method design, such as equal status, dominant-less dominant, sequential and parallel/simultaneous. Figure 5 presents a visual of the design.

QUAN+QUAL

Procedures
 -Field Test
Products
 -Numerical
 -Item scores

| QUAN Data Collection | QUAL Data Collection |

Procedures
 -Field Test
Products
 -Transcript

Procedures
 -Scale reliability
 -Scoring EBAD

Products
 -Cronbach's Alpha
 -Descriptive Data

| QUAN Data Analysis | QUAL Data Analysis |

Procedures
 -Coding
 -Thematic
  Development
Products
 -Coded Text

| Overall results, crossover data analysis and interpretation |

Figure 5. Design of study.

Collins (2010) provided an integrative sampling typology with five criteria. The first criterion examines the relationship between samples based on time. This means that phases are either concurrent or sequential. Criterion two examines the relationship between the samples during the phase being examined. Criterion three examines the relationship between the specific combination of sampling schemes and the type of generalization (i.e., external statistical, internal statistical, analytic, case-to-case transfer, naturalistic). Criterion four examines the relationship between the various types of data collected in view of the research question(s). Lastly, criterion five examines which

approach was emphasized (dominant, dominant-less, equal) and forms meta inferences and generalizations.

There were several types of analyses used in this study. Research Question 1 used descriptive statistics. In descriptive statistics, mathematical calculations are used to organize and summarize numerical data (Gall et al., 2007). Research Question 2 consisted of developing categories based on the main character of the children's literature listed by the teacher. Research Question 3 used correlational statistics, specifically bivariate correlation coefficient. This statistic determines the strength of the relationship between two variables mathematically (Gall et al., 2007).

Data Collection

The current study replicated previous studies that assessed educators' personal and professional beliefs about diversity using the EBAD scales (Cardona, 2005; Pohan, 2004; Pohan & Aguilar, 1999; Schroeder, 2008; Taylor, 1999; Yin, 2000). This convenience sample consisted of in-service elementary teachers from an urban school district in a southwestern city in Texas that volunteered to participate. The data were collected using a survey distributed to elementary teachers in an urban southeastern Texas school district.

The researcher contacted 23 elementary principals, and six principals allowed the researcher to administer the survey at a staff meeting or during a professional development day. The participants were asked to list the literature that was available in the classroom library and that was read aloud in their classroom. They were also asked

to complete a paper copy of the EBAD provided by the researcher. The 40-item Likert

scale, self-reporting inventory was completed and returned by 198 teachers.

The participants' data were hand scored, labeled, and checked twice on data

sheets for analysis using SPSS 19 software. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov and Shapiro-

Wilk tests of normality were done for the EBAD scores along with Q-Q plots. The

EBAD score showed D(198) = .05, p < .05; therefore, the EBAD score was significantly

non-normal (Table 7 and Figure 6).

Table 7

Tests of Normality for the EBAD

	Tests of Normality					
	Kolmogorov-Smirnov[a]			Shapiro-Wilk		
	Statistic	df	Sig.	Statistic	Df	Sig.
EBAD Total	.055	198	.200[*]	.992	198	.399

*This is a lower bound of the true significance.
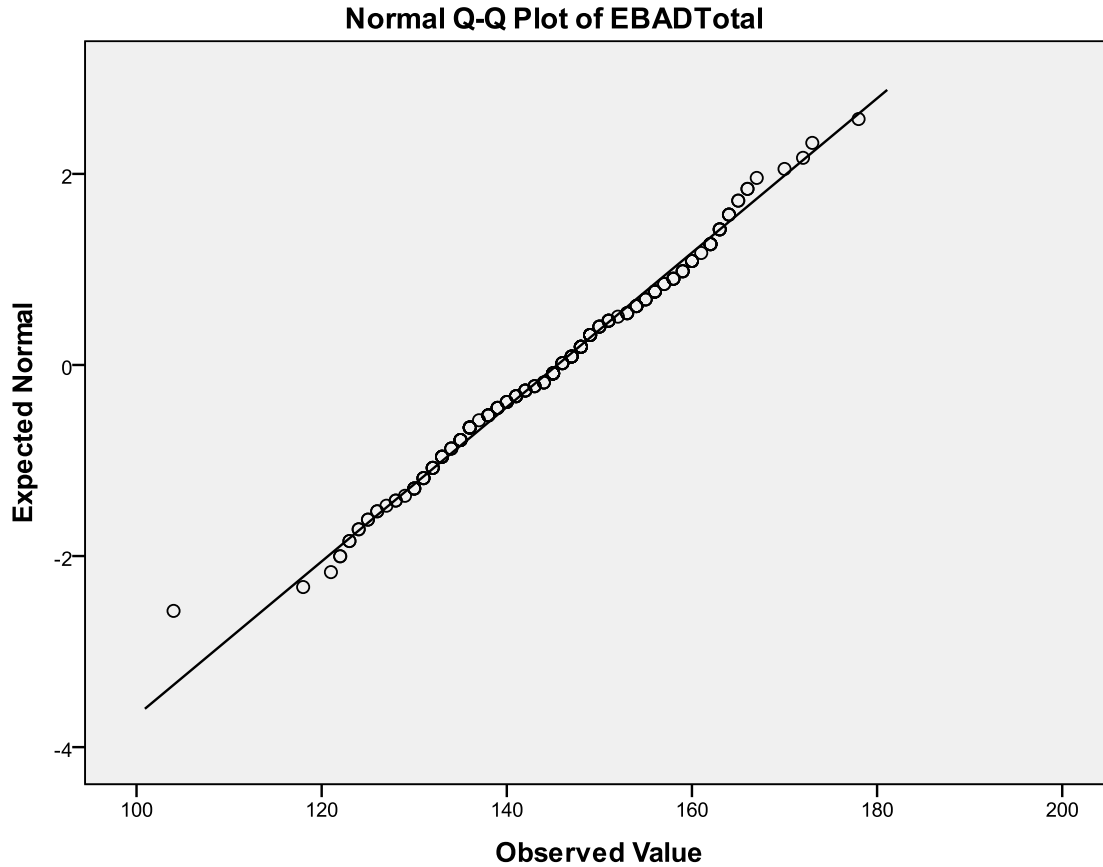
Figure 6. Normal Q-Q plot of educators' beliefs about diversity.

Data Analysis

SPSS was used to analyze the data. Before analysis, the data were examined for missing values, distribution, and assumptions of univariate and multivariate analysis. The analysis method used for each research question is described below.

Research Question 1

The first research question asked the following: "What are urban elementary teachers' personal and professional beliefs about diversity?" Negatively worded

statements were reverse scored to create the overall score for each teacher. Frequencies,

means, and percentages were calculated for each item on the survey (Figures 7,8, and 9).

The assumptions for an analysis of variance are normality, homogeneity of variance, and

independence.

PeTotal
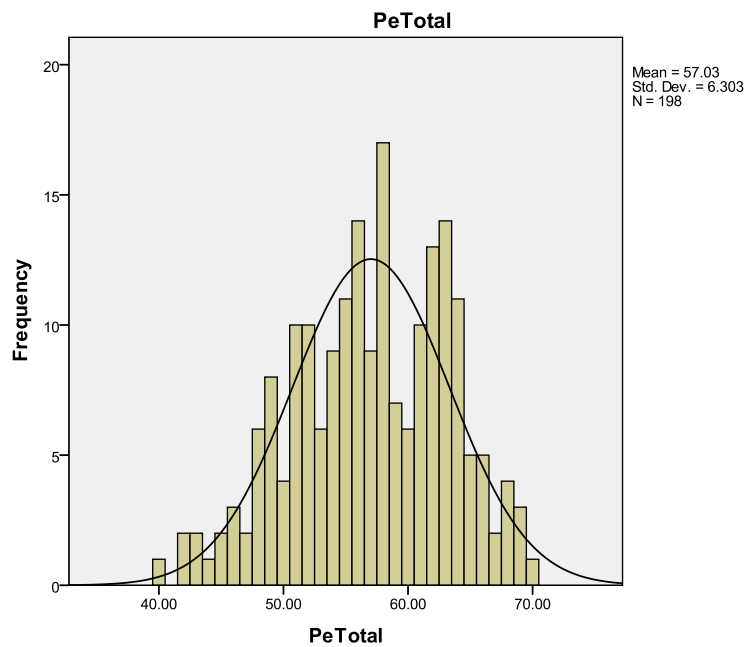
Figure 7. Personal beliefs about diversity histogram.
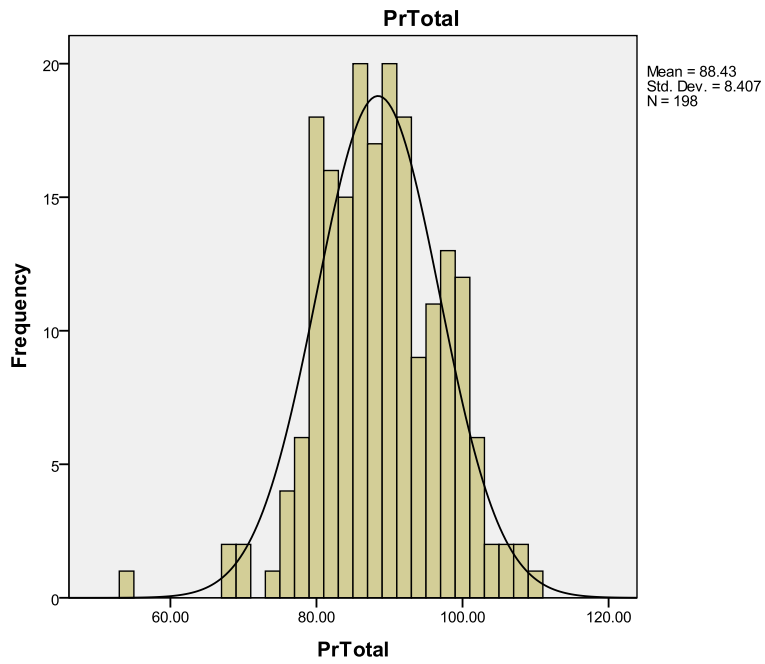
Figure 8. Professional beliefs about diversity histogram.
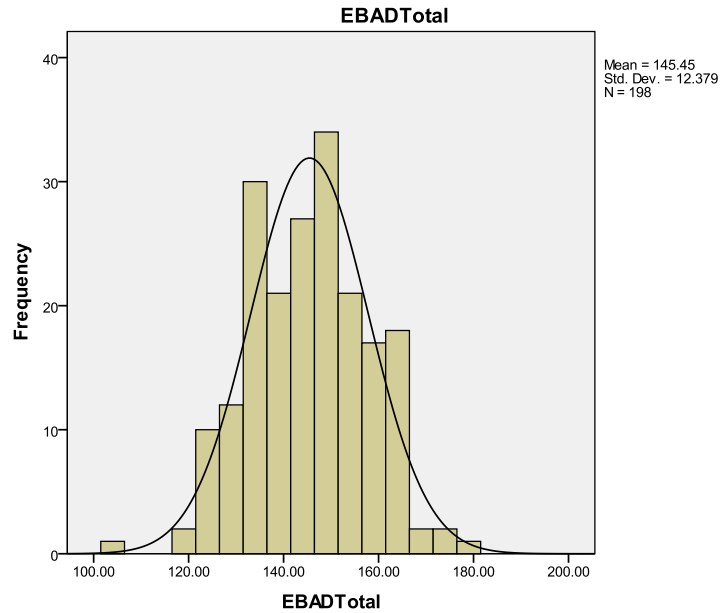
Figure 9. Educators' beliefs about diversity histogram.

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 asked, "What are urban elementary teachers' selections of literature for instructional practices?" The books listed by the teachers were coded based on the ethnicity of the main character, type of book, and language of the book. This resulted in 27 categories. The categories were then combined into the following five main categories: White main character, people of color as the main character, cultural/various races represented with no main character, animals/objects, and other/book not found. This type of system is a variation of the system used in a study by Pentimonti et al. (2011). Each title was searched via the Internet using www.amazon.com and the "search inside" feature. Pentimonti et al. found there was a high interrater agreement between the Amazon Internet search coder and the coder that had a paper copy of the text (i.e., kappa values > 0.88).

Research Question 3

The final research question asked the following: "What is the relationship between urban elementary teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of multicultural materials for instructional purposes?" A Pearson's correlation coefficient was used calculate the relationship between urban elementary teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of multicultural materials for instructional purposes. To establish if the correlation coefficient is significant the following assumptions must be met: one variable must be normally distributed interval data and if one variable is categorical there can only be two categories (Field, 2009).

Summary

This chapter described the methodology employed in this study. Specifically, the methods used for analyzing the EBAD scores. Descriptors of the instrument used and the sample population were also provided. Furthermore, the steps used to answer the research questions were explained, and the data collection and data analysis procedures were provided. The next chapter reveals the study results.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This mixed-method study collected data from 198 urban elementary teachers in southeast Texas regarding their personal and professional beliefs about diversity and the types of children's literature available in their classrooms. SPSS was used for the data analysis. Specific results are provided below for data related to each research question.

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked the following: What are urban elementary teachers' personal and professional beliefs about diversity? The return rate was 77% because the researcher had close contact with the participants. There were 225 surveys returned; however, two did not complete the survey, and 20 were not teachers. This created a sample of 198 participants. Table 8 shows the EBAD scores. The average score for the EBAD was 145.45, with a standard deviation (SD) of 12.38. The total EBAD score was almost 10 points below mean range (155-166.79) of the national EBAD sample, meaning the sample teachers had a slight tendency to be less accepting of diversity issues. The mean score for the PeBAD was 57.02 (SD = 6.30), and for the PrBAD, the mean score was 88.43 (SD = 8.41). Examination of the PeBAD and PrBAD scales when compared to the national sample showed that the largest difference was in the PrBAD scores of the respondents as shown in Tables 9 and 10. The teachers in this sample tended to have midrange scores. This can be indicative of high levels of diversity on some items and low levels of diversity on others. Another plausible explanation is that teachers in the sample selected "undecided" on several of the statements.

Tables 11 and 12 show the percentages and frequency for the Personal Beliefs about Diversity and the Professional Beliefs about Diversity Scale, respectively. The highest mean scored item on the EBAD was the reverse-coded statement "Since men are frequently the heads of households, they deserve higher wages than females" (M = 4.59, SD = .75). This statement had the least amount of variance.

Table 8

Participant Scores From the EBAD

	Personal BAD Score	Professional BAD Score	EBAD
N Valid	198	198	198
Missing	0	0	0
Mean	57.02	88.43	145.45
Std. Error of Mean	.45	.60	.88
Std. Deviation	6.30	8.41	12.38
Variance	39.73	70.68	153.24
Skewness	-.27	-.24	-.10
Std. Error of Skewness	.17	.17	.17
Kurtosis	-.47	.79	-.18
Std. Error of Kurtosis	.34	.34	.34
Range	30.00	55.00	74.00
Minimum	40.00	54.00	104.00
Maximum	70.00	109.00	178.00

Table 9

Participant Scores From the PeBAD Compared to the National Sample

	Sample PeBAD Score	Pre-Test PeBAD	Post-Test PeBAD
Mean	57.02	59.37	62.90
SD	6.30	7.10	6.38
Minimum	40.00	39	45
Maximum	70.00	72	75

Table 10

Participant Scores From the PrBAD Compared to the National Sample

	Sample PrBAD Score	Pre-Test PrBAD	Post-Test PrBAD
Mean	88.43	95.63	103.89
SD	8.41	9.39	9.32
Minimum	54.00	67	82
Maximum	109.00	119	125

Table 11

Participant Responses to the Personal Beliefs Scale

Personal Beliefs About Diversity	Strongly Disagree % (count)	Disagree % (count)	Undecided % (count)	Agree % (count)	Strongly Agree % (count)	Mean (SD)
1. There is nothing wrong with people from different racial backgrounds having/raising children.	0.5(1)	2.5(5)	8.1(16)	27.8 (55)	61.1(121)	4.46(.79)
2. America's immigrant and refugee policy has not led to the deterioration of America.	4(8)	8.6(17)	32.8(65)	30.8 (61)	23.7(47)	3.61 (1.06)
3. Making all public facilities accessible to the disabled is not too costly.	1(2)	4.5(9)	9.1(18)	32.8 (65)	52.5(104)	4.31 (.89)
4. Accepting many different ways of life in America will strengthen us as a nation.	1(2)	4.5(9)	13.1(26)	40.4 (80)	40.9(81)	4.15 (.89)
5. It is a good idea for same-sex couples to raise children.	10.1(20)	14.1(28)	32.8(65)	16.7 (33)	26.3(52)	3.35 (1.28)
6. The reason people live in poverty is not because they lack motivation to get themselves out of poverty.	8.1(16)	18.7(37)	21.2(42)	40.9 (81)	11.1(22)	3.28 (1.14)
7. People should develop meaningful friendships with others from different racial/ethnic groups.	0.5(1)	1.5(3)	4.5(9)	45.5 (90)	48(95)	4.39 (.69)
8. People with physical limitations are not less effective as leaders than people without physical limitations.	1(2)	3.5(7)	6.6(13)	32.8 (65)	56.1(111)	4.39 (.84)
9. In general, White people do not place a higher value on education than people of color.	2.5(5)	11.1(22)	11.6(23)	39.4 (78)	35.4(70)	3.93. (1.07)
10. Many women in our society continue to live in poverty because males still dominate most of our major social systems in America.	17.7(35)	48(95)	20.2(40)	12.6 (25)	3(1.5)	2.32 (.96)
11. Since men are frequently the heads of households, they do not deserve higher wages than females.	1(2)	1.5(3)	5.1(10)	22.2 (44)	70.2(139)	4.59 (.75)
12. It is a good idea for people to develop meaningful friendships with others having a different sexual orientation.	1.5(3)	16.2(32)	27.8(55)	36.4 (72)	18.2(36)	3.53 (1.02)
13. Society should become more accepting of gay/lesbian lifestyles.	9.1(18)	11.6(23)	28.8(57)	24.2 (48)	26.3(52)	3.47 (1.25)
14. It is not more important for immigrants to learn English than to maintain their first language.	17.7(35)	33.8(67)	15.2(30)	22.7 (45)	10.6(21)	2.75 (1.28)
15. In general, men do not make better leaders than women.	0.5(1)	3(6)	6.6(13)	30.3 (60)	59.6(118)	4.45 (.79)

A review of PeBAD showed over 45% of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed with six statements: Statements 1, 3, 7, 8, 11, and 15. Statement 1 had 61.1% strongly agree and 27.8% agree. The teachers in this sample were open to different racial backgrounds having or raising children. This openness continued in Statement 3 (reverse coded), where 52.5% strongly agreed and 32.8% agreed that making public facilities accessible to the disabled was not too costly. This openness to disability was shown again in the reverse coding of Statement 8. For Statement 8, 56.1% strongly agreed and 32.8% agreed that physically disabled people were not less effective leaders than those without physical limitations.

For Statement 7, the teachers also strongly agreed (48%) and agreed (45.5%) that meaningful friendships should be developed across racial and ethnic groups. Statements 11 and 15 both focused on gender and were reverse coded. It was strongly agreed (70.2%) and agreed (22.2%) that men did not deserve higher wages because they were more likely to be head of a household. For Statement 15, 59.6% strongly agreed and 30.3% agreed that men did not make better leaders than women.

For only two statements on the PeBAD did the majority of the participants respond in the disagree section of the Likert scale. For Statement 10, 17.7% strongly disagreed and 48% disagreed with the statement that many women continue to live in poverty because men dominate in the major social systems. Furthermore, the teachers' responses to Statement 14 showed an openness to maintaining a student's first language. Exactly 17.7% strongly disagreed and 33.8% disagreed with the belief that it is more important for immigrants to learn English than to maintain the first language.

For four statements (Statements 2, 5, 12, and 13), over a quarter of the participants were undecided. These statements discussed the following: immigration policy and deterioration of America; same sex couples and children; homosexual couples and meaningful friendships; and homosexuality and acceptance in society.

Table 12

Participant Responses to the Professional Beliefs Scale

Professional Beliefs About Diversity	Strongly Disagree %(count)	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean (SD)
1. Teachers should be expected to adjust their preferred mode of instruction to accommodate the needs of all students.	0(0)	7.1(14)	3.5(7)	39.9(79)	49.5(98)	4.32 (.85)
2. The traditional classroom has been set up to support the middleclass lifestyle.	16.2(32)	30.3(60)	21.2(42)	30.3(60)	2(4)	2.72 (1.12)
3. Gays and lesbians should be allowed to teach in public schools.	2.5(5)	0.5(1)	10.6(21)	35.4(70)	51(101)	4.32 (.88)
4. Students and teachers would benefit from having a basic understanding of different (diverse) religions.	3(6)	3(6)	15.2(30)	50.5(100)	28.3(56)	3.98 (.91)
5. Money spent to educate the severely disabled would not be better spent on programs for gifted students.	0.5(1)	6.1(12)	12.1(24)	35.4(70)	46(91)	4.20 (.91)
6. All students should be encouraged to become fluent in a second language.	1.5(3)	4.5(9)	8.1(16)	47.5(94)	38.4(76)	4.17 (.87)
7. All schools not just schools serving students of color need a racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse staff and faculty.	1(2)	6.1(12)	4.5(9)	27.3(54)	61.1(121)	4.41 (.91)
8. The attention girls receive in school is not comparable to the attention boys receive.	5.1(10)	25.8(51)	30.8(61)	32.8(65)	5.6(11)	3.08 (1.00)
9. Tests, particularly standardized tests, have frequently been used as a basis for segregating students.	5.6(11)	24.7(49)	24.2(48)	39.4(78)	6.1(12)	3.16 (1.04)
10. People of color are not adequately represented in most textbooks today.	4.5(9)	22.7(45)	22.7(45)	35.9(71)	14.1(28)	3.32 (1.11)

Table 12 Continued

Professional Beliefs About Diversity	Strongly Disagree %(count)	Disagree	Undecided	Agree	Strongly Agree	Mean (SD)
11. **Students with physical limitations should be placed in the regular classroom whenever possible.**	1.5(3)	6.1(12)	18.7(37)	47.5(94)	26.3(52)	**3.91 (.91)**
12. **Males are given more opportunities in math and science than females.**	15.7(31)	39.9(79)	27.8(55)	14.1(28)	2.5(5)	**2.4 (1.00)**
13. **Generally, teachers should not group students by ability levels.**	7.6(15)	31.8(63)	21.7(43)	30.8(61)	8.1(16)	**3.00 (1.12)**
14. **Students living in racially isolated neighborhoods can benefit socially from participating in racially integrated classrooms.**	1.5(3)	8.1(16)	14.6(29)	52.5(104)	23.2(46)	**3.88 (.91)**
15. **Historically, education has been monocultural, reflecting only one reality and has been biased toward the dominant (European) group.**	4(8)	14.6(29)	37.4(74)	37.4(74)	6.6(13)	**3.28 (.93)**
16. **Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction.**	4.5(9)	16.2(32)	15.7(31)	43.9(87)	19.7(39)	**3.58 (1.11)**
17. **Teachers often expect less from students from the lower socioeconomic class.**	20.7(41)	35.9(71)	13.1(26)	26.8(53)	3.5(7)	**2.57 (1.19)**
18. **Multicultural education is not most beneficial for students of color.**	5.1(10)	15.7(31)	17.2(34)	42.9(85)	19.2(38)	**3.56 (1.12)**
19. **More women are needed in administrative positions in schools.**	6.1(12)	24.2(48)	42.4(84)	18.2(36)	9.1(18)	**3.00 (1.02)**
20. **Large numbers of students of color are improperly placed in special education classes by school personnel.**	7.6(15)	31.3(62)	28.8(57)	27.3(54)	5.1(10)	**2.91 (1.04)**
21. **In order to be effective with all students, teachers should have experience working with students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds.**	2(4)	8.6(17)	9.6(19)	51(101)	28.8(57)	**3.96 (.96)**
22. **Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds typically have fewer educational opportunities than their middle-class peers.**	5.6(11)	17.2(34)	13.6(27)	51(101)	12.6(25)	**3.48 (1.09)**
23. **Students should be allowed to speak a language other than English while in school.**	3(6)	6.1(12)	8.1(16)	45.5(90)	37.4(74)	**4.08 (.98)**
24. **It is important to consider religious diversity in setting public school policy.**	7.6(15)	16.7(33)	28.3(56)	36.4(72)	11.1(22)	**3.27 (1.10)**
25. **Multicultural education is not less important than reading, writing, arithmetic, and computer literacy.**	3.5(7)	6.6(13)	18.2(36)	49(97)	22.7(45)	**3.81 (.98)**

The PrBAD had 17 statements for which the teachers strongly agreed or agreed. For Statement 1, the teachers showed that they strongly agreed (49.5%) and agreed (39.9%) to differentiation in accommodating the needs of all students. They also strongly agreed or agreed (79.8%) that in order to be effective teachers of all students, teachers need to have experience working with racially and ethnically diverse students (Statement 21). The teachers strongly agreed or agreed (73.6%) that students from a lower SES had fewer educational opportunities than their middle-class peers.

The teachers, in reverse-coded Statement 3, were open to homosexuality in a professional context. Over 86% strongly agreed or agreed that homosexuals should teach in public schools. This openness was also seen in Statements 4 and 24 about religion. Over 78% strongly agreed or agreed that students would benefit from having a basic understanding of different religions in Statement 4. For Statement 24, over 47% strongly agreed or agreed that it was important to consider religious diversity in the public school setting.

The openness to disability was also evidenced professionally. More than 81% strongly agreed or agreed that money spent educating the disabled would not be better spent in gifted programs (reverse-coded Statement 5). For Statement 11, over 73% of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed that physically disabled students should be in a regular classroom whenever possible.

The diversity in language statements all had positive responses. The teachers were open to students being fluent in a second language. Over 85% of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed with Statement 6. For Statement 16, more than 62% strongly

agreed or agreed that second language learners should receive instruction in their primary language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction. This openness to different languages was also evidenced with reverse-coded Statement 23. For this statement, over 82% of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed that students should be allowed to use other languages besides English in school.

Four statement agreements that promoted a global world view were reverse-scored Statements 7, 10, 18, and 25. For Statement 7, over 88% of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed that all schools needed a CLEED staff and faculty. The representation of people of color in textbooks was examined in Statement 10. More than 49% believed (agreed or strongly agreed) that people of color were not adequately represented in textbooks today. Yet, for this statement, 22.7% of the teachers felt that people of color were adequately represented and 22.7% were undecided. In Statement 18, over 61% strongly agreed or agreed that multicultural education is most beneficial for all students. Over 71% of the respondents for Statement 25 strongly agreed or agreed that multicultural education was not less important than reading, writing, arithmetic, and computer literacy.

Several statements examined integration and segregation. Over 45% of the teachers strongly agreed or agreed that tests are frequently used to segregate students (Statement 9). For Statement 14, 75.7% strongly agreed or agreed that students living in segregated neighborhoods could benefit from belonging to integrated classrooms.

There were only three statements in which over 45% of the teachers strongly disagreed or disagreed. For Statement 2, 16.2% strongly disagreed and 30.3% disagreed

with the belief that the traditional classroom supports the middle-class lifestyle. This demonstrates teachers may be disconnected with educational history. For Statement 12, over 55% strongly disagreed or disagreed with the belief that males are not given more opportunities in math and science than women. Statement 17 showed that the teachers (over 55%) believed in high teacher efficacy for students of lower socioeconomic status. This may be because they teach in a school district where the student population consists primarily of students of lower socioeconomic status.

There were seven statements for which a quarter of the participants were undecided. The professional diversity issues in these statements included the following: gender and attention, testing and tracking, gender and math/science, monocultural dominance historically, gender and administration, children of color and special education, and religious diversity and public school policy.

A comparison of the PeBAD and PrBAD statements showed that the teachers tended to continue to be less open to homosexuality professionally and personally. They also tended to be more open to disabilities professionally than personally.

Additional data analysis examined the PeBAD, PrBAD, and EBAD in relationship with the demographics. Gender was the only significant relationship as shown in Tables 13 and 14. Shown in Table 15 is the one-way analysis of variance result, pertaining to the influence of teachers' gender on their EBAD, PeBAD, and PrBAD scores. A significant difference was found between the EBAD scores of male and female teachers ($F = 10.978$, $df = 196$, $p < .01$).

Pohan and Aguilar (1999, 2001) also found a significant relationship between gender and teachers' beliefs about diversity. They did not anticipate gender differences when the instrument was developed. However, they did find that women were more accepting of diversity. They gave two possible reasons for the differences. One is gender bias in the measure itself. The other possible reason supports the validity of the measure. Wergin (1989) found that women generally had more positive attitudes than men (including with the issues of culture, ethnocentrism, and racism; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). Pohan and Aguilar (1999, 2001) found that age was only a factor for pre-service teachers on the EBAD. Age was not a factor in the scores on the PeBAD, PrBAD, and EBAD in this study.

Table 13

Demographics on Gender and PeBAD, PrBAD, and EBAD

		N	Mean	Standard Deviation	Minimum	Maximum
EBAD	Female	180	146.46	12.17	104.00	178.00
	Male	17	136.41	9.25	122.00	151.00
	Total	197	145.59	12.25	104.00	178.00
PeTotal	Female	180	57.42	6.06	42.00	70.00
	Male	17	53.35	7.67	40.00	64.00
	Total	197	57.07	6.29	40.00	70.00
PrTotal	Female	180	89.04	8.40	54.00	109.00
	Male	17	83.06	4.72	73.00	90.00
	Total	197	88.53	8.31	54.00	109.00

Table 14

Homogeneity Test on Gender

Test of Homogeneity of Variances				
	Levene Statistic	df1	df2	Sig.
EBAD	1.971	1	195	.162
PeTotal	3.600	1	195	.059
PrTotal	5.103	1	195	.025

Table 15

Analysis of Variance Results Regarding the EBAD, PeTotal, and PrTotal Scores by Gender

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	p
EBAD	Between Groups	1568.67	1	1568.67	10.98	.001
	Within Groups	27862.85	195	142.89		
	Total	29431.51	196			
PeTotal	Between Groups	256.51	1	256.51	6.66	.011
	Within Groups	7505.63	195	38.49		
	Total	7762.14	196			
PrTotal	Between Groups	556.51	1	556.51	8.36	.004
	Within Groups	12988.59	195	66.61		
	Total	13545.10	196			

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

Research Question 2

Research Question 2 was as follows: What are urban elementary teachers'

selections of literature for instructional practices? The teachers were asked to recall and

list the books they had read aloud and the books they had available in their classroom.

These lists were created from the teachers' memory of the literature that had been used during the school year. The lists were combined and examined using a variation of the system developed by Pentimonti et al (2011). Each title was searched via the Internet using www.amazon.com and the "search inside" feature. Pentimonti et al. found there was a high interrater agreement between the Amazon Internet search coder and the coder that had a paper copy of the text (i.e., kappa values > 0.88). The children's books listed by the teachers were coded based on ethnicity of the main character, the type of book, and the language of the book. This resulted in 27 categories. These categories were then combined into the following five major categories: White main character, people of color as the main character, cultural/various races represented with no main character, animals/objects, and other/books not found/two books with the same name (Table 16).

Table 16

Children's Literature Categories

	Count	Percentage	Examples
White Main Character	340	38.11%	Junie B. Jones, No David
People of Color Main Character	147	16.47%	Amazing Grace, Abuela
Cultural	66	7.40%	Amazing Faces, If the World Were a Village
Animal/Object	339	38.00%	Are You My Mother, Chrysanthemum
Can't Find	99	2.27%	

The results found in this study agreed with previous research. The Children's Cooperative Book Center (2010) found that only 15% of all books published in 2009 could be considered multicultural. Studies conducted by Gangi (2005), McNair (2008), and Pentimoni, Zucker, and Justice (2011) found less than 15% of the children's literature in various contexts could be designated as multicultural (summer reading list of the National Endowment for the Humanities, Scholastic book order forms, and read-alouds of preschool teachers). When using broader criteria in that the books contain characters of color, Hughes-Hassell and Cox (2010) found that 36.6% of children's board books published between 2003 and 2008 contained these types of characters. When using this type of criterion in this study, there would be at least 23.87% that contained characters of color.

Research Question 3

Research Question 3 asked the following: What is the relationship between urban elementary teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of multicultural materials for instructional purposes?

A Pearson correlation coefficient was used to examine the relationship between urban teachers' beliefs as measured by the EBAD and the amount of children's literature with people of color as main characters (Table 17). The EBAD scores were transformed into quartiles. The first quartile was below 136. The second quartile was between 137 and 145, while the third quartile was between 146 and 154. Lastly, the fourth quartile was above 155. There was a significant relationship between the EBAD quartile and the

amount of literature with people of color as the main character, r = .15, *p* (two tailed) <

.05.

Table 17

*The Relationship Between the EBAD Quartiles and the Type of Children's Literature
That Contained People of Color as a Main Character*

		Color
Quartile	Pearson Correlation	.152*
	Sig. (2-tailed)	.032
	N	198

Note. p < .05.
*Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

A Pearson's chi square was used to determine if there was a relationship between

the EBAD scores and the types of children's literature selected for instructional

purposes. The Pearson's chi-square did not show a significant association between

teachers' beliefs and the types of literature chosen in the classroom. There are several

potential reasons for this result. For example, there are two assumptions on a Pearson

chi-square. One is that each person or item contributes to only one cell of the

contingency table (Field, 2009). The other is that expected frequencies should be greater

than 5. If this occurs, a Fisher's exact test or the likelihood ratio can be used. Neither of

these analyses showed significance, which led to examining the EBAD scores and the

categories of books.

The EBAD uses a 5-point Likert scale, in which 3 represents *undecided*. Over

50% (21 statements) of the statements had a mean of 3.00 to 3.96. The statements were

then analyzed for a Likert selection of *undecided* that was over 20%. There were 16

occurrences of this happening. One method of avoiding this issue is to have a larger sample and then eliminate respondents who select undecided over 10 times.

Another concern is that EBAD scores tended to be lower than the previous reported means (Pohan & Aguilar, 1999; Pohan & Aguilar, 2001). This lower mean in the sample might have impacted the relationship between teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of literacy.

Summary

This chapter discussed the results of the data analysis of the EBAD, types of literature, and the relationship between teacher beliefs about diversity and their selection of multicultural literature. The sample consisted of 198 urban elementary teachers. The reliability of the study was ascertained with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .77. A Pearson correlation coefficient was used to determine if there was a relationship between teachers' beliefs about diversity and the amount of multicultural literature available in their classroom. Teachers who score higher on the EBAD tended to have more multicultural literature available in their classroom. However, less 17% of the books that the teachers recalled having available or reading aloud in their classroom contained a person of color as the main character.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

The achievement gap continues to be an issue for legislators, educators, and parents. The government's goal that every child be proficient in math and reading by 2014 has already faced challenges, with 10 states requesting and being granted waivers to NCLB and 28 more states considering seeking waivers (Associated Press, 2012). In 2007, no ethnic group had a majority of its students performing at a proficient reading level. White and Asian students had 60% and 59%, respectively, scoring at the below-basic and basic levels. Meanwhile, 87% of African Americans, 85% of Hispanics, and 83% of Native Americans scored at the same levels (Strauss, 2011). Thus, America has not reached the goal of all children performing on grade level in reading, especially students who are of color or who come from low-income families (The Education Trust, 2008).

The Education Trust (2008) focused on the importance of teachers in achieving the goal of having students proficient in reading and math. Teachers are an integral part of students meeting mandated state and federal guidelines through their roles of teaching and designing the instruction. The population of teachers remains homogenous while the student population continues to grow more diverse, resulting in teachers who do not have the experience or educational background to reach the heterogeneous CLEED student population (Gay, 2010; Hernandez, Denton, & MacCartney, 2008; Kyles & Olafson, 2008).

There are several elements that assist teachers in effectively teaching CLEED students. Employing culturally responsive pedagogy and understanding teachers' beliefs are just two of the elements in this puzzle. Culturally responsive pedagogy is a bridge that allows the teacher to connect home and school culture for the success of the student. When culturally responsive pedagogy is implemented in a classroom, it can assist in overcoming several of the differences that Au (2011) gave as explanations for the literacy achievement gap.

Teachers' belief systems are formed before they enter their first college-level education class because their personal experiences, prior schooling, and prior instructional practices are the basis of their belief system. These beliefs direct their instructional decisions (Brock, 2004; Knopp & Smith, 2005; Pajares, 1992). The NRP (2000) suggested that unless teachers' attitudes are changed, instruction and student outcomes will not change. The American educational system is focused on the students' educational achievement; however, it needs to begin focusing on the teachers' beliefs and attitudes and how the impact students' educational achievement. Instead, it is focused on finding a set prescription (i.e., Reading First) to solve achievement issues. Very little research exists on how teachers' beliefs about diversity impact their selection of literature in the classroom.

The purpose of this study was to examine urban elementary teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of literature in their classroom. Participant teachers completed the EBAD, which consists of two scales on personal and professional beliefs about diversity, and listed literature that was available in their classroom during the

2011-2012 school year. This study also examined the relationship between teachers'

beliefs about diversity and their selection of literature in their classroom.

Teachers who taught in the selected Texas school district during the 2011-2012

school year were asked to complete the EBAD. Two hundred and twenty-five educators

returned the survey to the researcher; only 200 of those were teachers, and two teachers

did not complete the survey, resulting in the 198 teachers that became the sample

population. The data collected from the respondents were used for a mixed-method

study (Gall et al., 2007). The quantitative section of this study was descriptive. The

qualitative section of this study used a coding system based on the race of the main

character in the book.

The next section includes a discussion and corresponding conclusions, organized

by research questions.

Discussion

Research Question 1

Research Question 1 asked the following: What are urban elementary teachers'

personal and professional beliefs about diversity? The elementary teacher diversity

scores were just below the ranges listed in Pohan and Aguilar (1999, 2001). The

teachers in the study exhibited midrange scores, which are reflective of two things. One

is that the teachers are indifferent to an issue. This could be a form of colorblindness, in

that everyone in the classroom is equal and experiences the world equitably (Milner,

2005). Lewis (2001) stated that colorblindness allows teachers to ignore or avoid their

own racial assumptions, racial realities in their communities, and racist events. With

over 50% of the EBAD statements having a mean score between 3.00 and 3.96, and
since 3 represented *undecided*, colorblindness may have been a factor. Midrange scores
also reflect that respondents may be open to diversity in some areas but less tolerant in
other areas. This could be seen in the EBAD scores on statements that focused on
homosexuality.

The minimum and maximum scores on the PeBAD were close to the ones found
by Pohan and Aguilar (1999). However, the minimum and maximum scores for the
PrBAD were 13 points and 10 points lower, respectively, than those found by Pohan and
Aguilar (1999). This may be representative of teachers who have a deficit perspective.
The PrBAD measures diversity in the educational context (i.e., practices, resources, and
approaches). There are statements about instruction, staffing, segregation/integration,
ability tracking, curricular materials, and multicultural versus monocultural education.
A teacher with a deficit thinking perspective would be less open to diversity as measured
in the PrBAD.

Further data analysis was done to examine PeBAD, PrBAD, and EBAD scores
and participant demographics. Gender was the only demographic data that was shown to
be significant through an ANOVA. Ethnicity, educational degree, and years teaching
did not indicate a significant difference on the PeBAD, PrBAD, and EBAD.

Examining the statements for trends showed various themes. One was that
teachers were both personally and professionally open to people who were disabled. In
addition, both personally and professionally, the teachers were open to friendships with
people of other races and ethnic groups. Openness to language diversity was also

exhibited personally and professionally. A quarter of the sample was undecided personally when it came to openness to homosexuality and the impact of immigration policy.

Previous research has stated that beliefs, unlike knowledge, can be contradictory. This study found that teachers were more open to homosexuality professionally than personally. Mediating factors such as context (personal and professional) can explain the inconsistency of teachers' beliefs about homosexuality. Teachers may use their critical reflection, awareness of education policies, and core beliefs about teaching (Guise, 2009) to be more open to diversity professionally than personally.

Research Question 2

The second research questions was as follows: What are urban elementary teachers' selections of literature for instructional practices? This study found 16.47% of children's literature used by urban elementary teachers for instructional practices had a main character of color. The supports previous research that found that less than 16% of children's literature (Agosto et al., 2003; Children's Cooperative Book Center, 2010; Gangi, 2005; Hughes-Hassell et al., 2009; McNair, 2008; Pentimonti et al., 2011) had main characters of color.

The lack of characters of color lessens the teachers' ability to use literature to bridge the cultures of the students' home and school as culturally responsive pedagogy suggests. Cummins (2007), in discussing the issues with Reading First and NCLB, stated that culturally relevant teaching (Ladson-Billings, 2004) should "emphasize that

cultural validation promote engagement with instruction and is particularly important for student whose culture is devalued in the wider society" (p. 560).

The lack of characters of color also impacts the literacy engagement of children of color. Literacy engagement as evidenced by reading motivation increases reading comprehension. Guthrie (2004) examined NAEP and PISA and suggested that students that are engaged readers can prevail over reading achievement factors (i.e., gender, parental education, and income). After examining PISA data of 15-year-olds in 27 countries, the conclusion was drawn that "the level of a student's reading engagement is a better predictor of literacy performance than his or her socioeconomic background, indicating that cultivating a student's interest in reading can help overcome home disadvantage" (OECD, 2004, p. 8). The same results were duplicated in PISA 2009 results (OECD, 2010). The Matthew Effect becomes evident because those who are engaged in reading increase their vocabulary and their understanding of academic writing, and therefore increase their comprehension skills, while those who do not engage in reading have the same level of skill or their skills become weaker.

The number of books that had White main characters was similar to the number of books that contained animals or objects. This may be because these books are seen as safe. Shannon (1994) argued that both of these types of books could be used to teach multicultural concepts. However, research has shown that CLEED students need to be able to see themselves represented in the literature that they read. When they are able to see themselves in the text and use their prior knowledge, their reading engagement and

skills increase, which leads to increased reading achievement (Cianciolo, 1989; DeLeón, 2002; Jose & Brewer, 1984).

Teachers assign value to a book when they choose to read it aloud or have it available in the classroom (Au, 2011; Hall, 2009). Hall (2009) stated that every book that was read aloud in her elementary classroom became a class favorite. Therefore, the lack of books with people of color in today's diverse classrooms, especially urban classrooms, is troubling. Texts that are connected to students' interests and life can assist them in becoming engaged readers (Padek & Potena-Radis, 2010). Culturally relevant texts have been shown to increase CLEED students' motivation to read and comprehension ability, as well as decrease phonological awareness gaps (Cleary, 2008; Guthrie et al., 2004; McCollin & O'Shea, 2005). Texts that use natural language patterns assist readers, especially struggling readers, in their oral language ability (Padek & Potenza-Radis, 2010).

The district studied in this study has been called a model for urban school districts because it received many rewards both nationally and in the state of Texas. However, the teachers were not able to recall a great amount of multicultural children's literature for such a diverse student population and teacher population. If this is the case in a model urban school district, what are the multicultural children's literature practices in other urban school districts?

Research Question 3

The final research question asked the following: What is the relationship between urban elementary teachers' beliefs about diversity and their selection of multicultural

materials for instructional purposes? Analysis found a correlational relationship between teachers' EBAD percentile and the amount of literature that had people of color as a main character. The higher the EBAD score, the more likely the teacher would have literature with a person of color as the main character. This result corresponds to Pohan and Aguilar's (1999, 2001) belief that the higher an educator scores on the EBAD, the more open he or she is to diversity. The Pearson chi square found no significant relationship in view of the categories of children's books. This may because of the respondents' tendency to select "undecided" and the lack of items in each category.

Richards, Brown, and Forde (2004) stated that culturally responsive pedagogy consists of three dimensions: institutional, personal, and instructional. This study focused on the personal and instructional. Though the institutional was not a focus, it may have impacted the selection of books listed. Several teachers listed *Texas Treasures*, which is a basal reader, along with leveled reader books. This brings into question how much choice a teacher has in literature selection. It has been suggested that teachers in classrooms consisting of mainly White students have the ability to use instructional practices that draw on the needs and interests of the learners, while the instructional practices of teachers in CLEED classrooms are scripted (Cummins, 2007).

Recommendations

This study concurs with previous literature on the lack of multicultural literature available in the classroom, finding that only 17% of literature used in the elementary urban classes represented in this study contained a main character of color. As a result,

it is necessary to continue conducting studies about teachers' beliefs about diversity and the availability and usage of multicultural literature in their classrooms.

It is further recommended that a group consisting of administrators, teachers, specialists, and parents examine reading materials available in the classroom and ensure diversity. In addition, it is recommended teachers need to measure student engagement and comprehension with children's multicultural literature. Reading engagement occurs when students are able to see themselves in the literature they are reading, and reading engagement leads to reading comprehension. When students are engaged readers, they score higher on reading achievement tests. If teachers know what multicultural children's literature their students find engaging, they can increase their students' reading comprehension and reading achievement scores.

Furthermore, it is recommended that teacher preparation programs focus on teaching multicultural children's literature as a way of understanding various cultures. Previous studies have shown how analyzing multicultural children's literature can help teachers become more open to diversity, as teachers are cultural mediators (Banks, 2001). However, if teachers are not aware of multicultural children's literature, they cannot intersect the "mainstream" and the "marginalized" cultures for the students. It is also recommended that teacher preparation programs in reading use multicultural literature across different classes to increase student and teacher exposure. Reading engagement of CLEED students has been shown to increase with the usage of multicultural literature. In addition, Milner (2005) found that teachers were able to relate their subject matter to the multicultural education or diversity, perhaps because

they were taught methods, strategies, and instructional methods in a decontextualized manner (Brock et al., 2007). Howrey and Whelan-Kim stated that urban teachers need to be able to adapt their pedagogy to the context and the children that they teach.

Finally, it is recommended that administrators provide professional development for teachers that keeps them updated on the latest multicultural children's literature and trains them on how to use multicultural children's literature in the classroom. Research has found that when teachers use multicultural children's literature, they tend to avoid controversial topics (Gonzalez, 2008).

Implications for Further Research

The results from this study suggest a need for further research in the area of teachers' beliefs about diversity and instructional practices concerning literacy. The following implications are based on the findings and conclusions of this study:

1. Conduct a qualitative study on the indecisiveness of teachers on several areas of diversity. This is important because a qualitative study can reveal why teachers are indecisive on certain areas of diversity.

2. Conduct a qualitative study to observe teachers' behaviors in the classroom, particularly how teachers use multicultural literature in the classroom. This study could reveal if teachers are effectively using multicultural literature in the classroom and would also show the reading perspective that the teacher uses in relationship to the text.

3. Conduct a qualitative study on the dichotomy of personal and professional beliefs about homosexuality. This study would create a better understanding

of the negotiations teachers make when there are inconsistencies in their

beliefs and how these negotiations are made and the impacts that they have.

4. Using a mixed-methods study, examine the perceptions between the actual

usage of multicultural literature and perceived usage of multicultural

literature in the classroom in various school contexts. It is important to know

exactly how many multicultural books are used in the classroom.

5. Replicate this study with a lower-rated urban school district. Compare the

results with this study.

6. Replicate this study with a less-diverse school district. Compare the results

with this study.

7. Replicate this study with a less-diverse teaching population. Compare the

results with this study.

8. Conduct a qualitative study on literacy of teachers who demonstrate high

levels of culturally responsive pedagogy in their classrooms, which can

reveal why the teachers demonstrate a high level of cultural responsive

pedagogy and can provide insight to educators and legislators about programs

that could increase the level of culturally responsive pedagogy in teachers

and the academic achievement of CLEED students.

9. Conduct a mixed-methods study examining the teachers of CLEED students

who score high on reading achievement tests and that are reading on or above

the proficient level. Including teachers whose students score in the bottom

quartile may reveal whether there is a difference between the two types of

teachers. This qualitative study can reveal the characteristics of teachers who demonstrate the ability to work with CLEED student successfully.

10. Conduct a mixed-methods study to develop an instrument that measures teachers' literacy perspectives when teaching literature. The goal is to have students who read through either a transformational or critical perspective; however, if their teachers are only teaching from a modernist perspective, the students will only be informational readers; they will not be implementing practices that engage critical thinking skills, which are needed to be successful on achievement tests.

11. Conduct a qualitative study to understand how teachers select the literature they read aloud and have available in the classroom. Are the books selected because of personal, institutional, instructional, or other preferences? Or does another reason exist that has yet to be identified?

12. Conduct a quantitative study on the literacy engagement of CLEED students and the type of literacy instruction received. This study would examine the manner in which literacy instruction impacts the literacy engagement of CLEED students. Literacy engagement has been shown to be a mediator for the improvement of reading achievement scores. Knowledge of which type of literacy instruction increases the literacy engagement of students is critical to the success of literacy instruction.

Summary

This chapter summarized the findings and conclusions from this study. The scores obtained from the EBAD were not significantly lower than previous studies using the same instrument, and further data analysis of the demographic information found that only gender was significantly related with the EBAD scores. The evaluation of books replicated what had been found previously, specifically that there is a lack of multicultural literature in the classroom. This is especially troubling in an urban school district where less than 3% of the student population is White, yet main characters of color made up less than 17% of the literature the teachers listed as being available in the classroom. Most CLEED students read at or below basic, which may be because they are not engaged in the selection of materials they are given to read.

The lack of reading achievement among CLEED students has been the focus of many studies. The lack of quality education and lack of CLEED students' background being valued have been two of the many aspects focused on, and research has shown that reading engagement is one of the best indicators of reading achievement. This study may provide insight into specific teachers' beliefs that may contribute to the lack of multicultural children's literature made available in the classroom.

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APPENDIX A

RACE AND PEBAD, PRBAD, AND EBAD SCORES

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
EBAD	White	56	144.73	13.97	1.86692	104.00	178.00
	African American	69	146.04	11.29	1.35942	123.00	165.00
	Hipanic	64	145.53	12.10	1.51316	118.00	173.00
	Asian	5	144.00	15.03	6.72309	126.00	164.00
	Native American	1	135.00	.	.	135.00	135.00
	Other	3	149.67	14.50	8.37324	135.00	164.00
	Total	198	145.45	12.38	.87975	104.00	178.00
PeTotal	White	56	57.16	7.07	.94415	40.00	70.00
	African American	69	56.17	5.71	.68753	43.00	69.00
	Hipanic	64	57.95	6.22	.77806	42.00	68.00
	Asian	5	56.60	6.95	3.10805	47.00	66.00
	Native American	1	51.00	.	.	51.00	51.00
	Other	3	57.00	6.56	3.78594	51.00	64.00
	Total	198	57.03	6.30	.44795	40.00	70.00
PrTotal	White	56	87.57	9.21	1.23053	54.00	108.00
	African American	69	89.87	7.78	.93613	75.00	106.00
	Hipanic	64	87.58	8.22	1.02736	67.00	109.00
	Asian	5	87.40	10.64	4.76025	79.00	100.00
	Native American	1	84.00	.	.	84.00	84.00
	Other	3	92.67	8.08	4.66667	84.00	100.00
	Total	198	88.43	8.41	.59748	54.00	109.00

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EBAD	Between Groups	226.64	5	45.33	.29	.92
	Within Groups	29962.46	192	156.05		
	Total	30189.09	197			
PeTotal	Between Groups	143.35	5	28.67	.72	.61
	Within Groups	7683.53	192	40.02		
	Total	7826.87	197			
PrTotal	Between Groups	309.50	5	61.90	.87	.50
	Within Groups	13615.02	192	70.91		
	Total	13924.51	197			

APPENDIX B

LANGUAGE AND PEBAD, PRBAD, AND EBAD SCORES

		N	Mean	Std. Deviation	Std. Error	Minimum	Maximum
EBAD	Monolingual	95	147.13	11.82338	1.21	104.00	178.00
	Bilingual	69	146.80	12.39851	1.492	118.00	173.00
	Multilingual	8	144.13	16.26949	5.75	121.00	163.00
	Total	172	146.85	12.21478	.93	104.00	178.00
PeTotal	Monolingual	95	57.75	5.67370	.58	42.00	70.00
	Bilingual	69	57.83	6.28948	.76	42.00	68.00
	Multilingual	8	58.88	6.46833	2.29	51.00	68.00
	Total	172	57.83	5.93242	.45	42.00	70.00
PrTotal	Monolingual	95	89.38	8.27863	.85	54.00	108.00
	Bilingual	69	88.97	8.29594	1.00	69.00	109.00
	Multilingual	8	85.25	10.95119	3.87	67.00	100.00
	Total	172	89.02	8.40771	.64	54.00	109.00

ANOVA

		Sum of Squares	df	Mean Square	F	Sig.
EBAD	Between Groups	66.85	2	33.42	.22	.80
	Within Groups	25446.51	169	150.57		
	Total	25513.37	171			
PeTotal	Between Groups	9.39	2	4.69	.13	.88
	Within Groups	6008.73	169	35.56		
	Total	6018.11	171			
PrTotal	Between Groups	126.11	2	63.05	.89	.41
	Within Groups	11961.80	169	70.78		
	Total	12087.91	171			

APPENDIX C

EDUCATORS' BELIEFS ABOUT DIVERSITY SCALE

Personal Beliefs About Diversity Scale

This scale measures your beliefs about diversity. Indicate the degree to which you agree

or disagree with each item below by circling the number corresponding to your

selection. Please answer every item, and use the following scale to select your answers:

(1) Strongly Disagree (2) Disagree (3) Undecided (4) Agree (5) Strongly Agree

	SD	D	U	A	SA
1. There is nothing wrong with people from different racial backgrounds having/raising children .... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
2. America's immigrant and refugee policy has led to the deterioration of America .... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
3. Making all public facilities accessible to the disabled is simply too costly .... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
4. Accepting many different ways of life in America will strengthen us as a nation .... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
5. It is not a good idea for same-sex couples to raise children. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
6. The reason people live in poverty is that they lack motivation to get themselves out of poverty .... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
7. People should develop meaningful friendships with others from different racial/ethnic groups .... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5

	SD	D	U	A	SA

8. People with physical limitations are less effective as leaders than people without physical limitations 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

9. In general, white people place a higher value on education than do people of color 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

10. Many women in our society continue to live in poverty because males still dominate most of the major social systems in America 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

11. Since men are frequently the heads of households, they deserve higher wages than females 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

12. It is a good idea for people to develop meaningful friendships with others having a different sexual orientation 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

13. Society should not become more accepting of gay/1esbian lifestyles 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

14. It is more important for immigrants to learn English than to maintain their first language 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

15. In general, men make better leaders than women 1 2 3 4 5
Comments:

PROFESSIONAL BELIEFS ABOUT DIVERSITY SCALE[1]

This scale measures your beliefs about issues of diversity as they relate to policies and practices within educational settings. Indicate the degree to which you agree or disagree with each item below by circling the number corresponding to your selection. Please answer every item, and use the following scale to select your answers:

(1) Strongly Disagree   (2) Disagree   (3) Undecided   (4) Agree   (5) Strongly Agree

		SD	D	U	A	SA
1.	Teachers should not be expected to adjust their preferred mode of instruction to accommodate the needs of all students... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
2.	The traditional classroom has been set up to support the middle class lifestyle.. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
3.	Gays and lesbians should not be allowed to teach in public schools.. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
4.	Students and teachers would benefit from having a basic understanding of different (diverse) religions.................... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
5.	Money spent to educate the severely disabled would be better spent on programs for gifted students........................... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
6.	All students should be encouraged to become fluent in a second language... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
7.	Only schools serving students of color need a racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse staff and faculty............... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
8.	The attention girls receive in school is comparable to the attention boys receive.. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5

[1] Pohan, C. A., and Aguilar, T. E. (1998). Copyright .

		SD	D	U	A	SA
9.	Tests, particularly standardized tests, have frequently been used as a basis for segregating students. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
10.	People of color are adequately represented in most textbooks today. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
11.	Students with physical limitations should be placed in the regular classroom whenever possible. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
12.	Males are given more opportunities in math and science than females. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
13.	Generally, teachers should group students by ability levels. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
14.	Students living in racially isolated neighborhoods can benefit socially from participating in racially integrated classrooms. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
15.	Historically, education has been monocultural, reflecting only one reality and has been biased toward the dominant (European) group. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
16.	Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
17.	Teachers often expect less from students from the lower socioeconomic class. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
18.	Multicultural education is most beneficial for students of color. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
19.	More women are needed in administrative positions in schools. Comments:	1	2	3	4	5

		SD	D	U	A	SA
20.	Large numbers of students of color are improperly placed in special education classes by school personnel........ Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
21.	In order to be effective with all students, teachers should have experience working with students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds...................... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
22.	Students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds typically have fewer educational opportunities than their middle class peers........................... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
23.	Students should not be allowed to speak a language other than English while in school.......................... Comments:	1	2	3	4	5
24.	It is important to consider religious diversity in setting public school policy...........................	1	2	3	4	5
25.	Multicultural education is less important than reading, writing, arithmetic, and computer literacy..................	1	2	3	4	5

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