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EFFECTS OF THE PREPARATION AND PERCEPTION OF MIDDLE SCHOOL

TEACHERS ON THE INFUSION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

by

John McCraney

Dissertation

Submitted to the Faculty of

Harding University

Cannon-Clary College of Education

In Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for

The Degree of

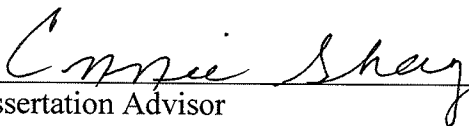Doctor of Education

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Educational Leadership P-20

December 2014

EFFECTS OF THE PREPARATION AND PERCEPTION OF MIDDLE SCHOOL

TEACHERS ON THE INFUSION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

by

John McCraney

Dissertation

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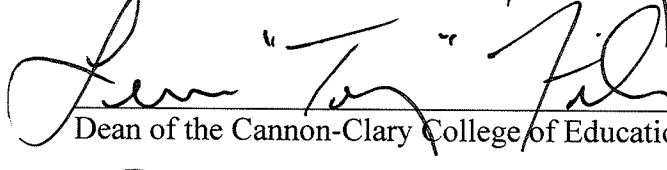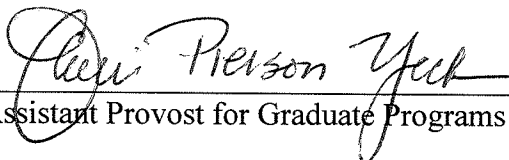
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I would like to thank the Harding University staff who supported, guided, and mentored me through this journey. First, a special thanks to my advisor, Dr. Connie Shay, for her commitment and dedication. I am also grateful to the other dissertation readers, Dr. Michael Brooks and Dr. Lewis "Tony" Finley for their feedback, suggestions, and support.

This journey also included my immediate family and my church family. My husband, Marty, has given me unconditional encouragement and support during the entire process. Thanks to my personal cheerleaders, my daughters, Amanda and Grace. Amanda became the perfect big sister to Grace on those occasions when I was not physically or emotional present. A special thanks to Grace for being patience while I studied and/or attended classes. No words can ever express my gratitude to Angela Rogers for her words of encouragement during those times of uncertainty.

I am grateful to my church family, Reverend Davis and all the members for their words of encouragement and prayers. A special thanks to Gwen Davis for riding to Bentonville with me and for entertaining my daughter, Grace. Thanks to Anita Williams, Jonathan Calvin, and Robin Williams for supporting the Youth Choir rehearsals on Saturdays during my absences.

Finally, I thank God for his grace and mercy during this journey. Although I had a great support system throughout this journey, my greatest supporter was God. God provided this experience. As Matthew 21: 21-22 states, "And whatever things you ask in prayer, believing, you will receive."

ABSTRACT

by
John McCraney
Harding University
December 2014

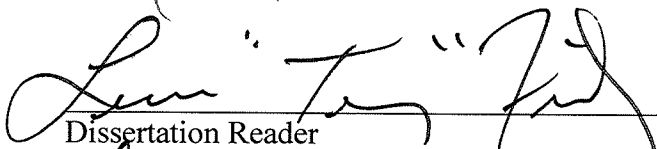Title: Effects of the Preparation and Perception of Middle School Teachers on the Infusion of Multicultural Education (Under the direction of Dr. Connie Shay)

The purpose of this dissertation was to determine the difference of how teachers perceive multicultural orientation, multiculturalism and cultural relations, multiculturalism and perceived sense of community, and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility based on gender, experience, and racial identity. The subscales on the Multicultural Emphasis Inventory (MEI) measured the teachers' perceptions. The sample included middle school teachers in a large urban district in central Arkansas.

A quantitative, non-experimental research used four one-way analyses of variance to determine whether the evidence existed to reject the formulated hypotheses. The independent variables were as follows: gender for Hypotheses 1-4, teacher experiences for Hypotheses 5-8, and racial/ethnic identification for Hypotheses 9-12. The dependent variables for the hypotheses were multicultural orientation (Hypotheses 1, 5, and 9), multiculturalism and cultural relations (Hypotheses 2, 6, and 10), multiculturalism and perceived sense of community (Hypotheses 3, 7, and 11), and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility (Hypotheses 4, 8, and 12).

The results of this study showed no significant difference in multicultural orientation, cultural relations, sense of community, and a sense of responsibility based on gender and years

of experience. Concerning racial identification, no significant difference existed in cultural

relations, sense of community, and a sense of responsibility. However, teachers of color had a

significantly higher total mean score in multicultural orientation.

One of the findings supported the importance of multicultural education. Another finding

from the literature emphasized that cultural aspects of teaching and learning must be connected

to the teacher and the learner.

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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The growing population of culturally diverse students has created a platform to address multicultural education. The National Center for Education Statistics (2007) calculated in 2005 that 42% of school-aged children in the United States were minorities. The most noted case of addressing multicultural education was *Brown v. Board of Education*, declaring segregation in public schools unconstitutional; however, the pattern of desegregation, segregation, and re-segregation prevailed (Smith, 2004). Trends such as white flight, segregated housing, and economic status limited the infusion of multicultural education (Chapman, 2008). Although trends played a significant role in the infusion of multicultural education, schools have been held responsible for implementing multicultural education programs (Sogunro, 2001). Not only has society placed that responsibility on schools, but also, the passage of the No Child Left Behind Act required schools to provide evidence that every student make annual achievement test gains (Copenhaver-Johnson, 2007).

Historically, multicultural education initially focused on curriculum with limited agreement on the definitions. Banks (1993) viewed multicultural education as an educational reform to promote equity for all students regardless of race, social class, exceptionality, and gender. In 1988, Pulaski County Special School District Board of Education adopted a policy defining multicultural education as an interdisciplinary

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educational process that included curriculum development, curriculum review, direct classroom instruction, parent/community involvement and education, and teacher training ("IFC: Multicultural Education," 2011). To enhance the instructional perspectives, Sogunro (2001) recognized multicultural education as a political program. This view institutionalized the framework for teachers to educate students and to implement multiculturalism. However, Mushi (2004) described multicultural education as a perception with the focus on curriculum, materials, race of learners, lesson plans, or teaching strategies. The definition also included ways of teaching that encouraged learners to view themselves as individuals who are capable of learning and who are integral members of a global society. Nieto (2003) defined multicultural education as an anti-racist education with an emphasis on student learning. Although the curriculum is used to gauge the learning of students, the achievement gap between White students and students of color is growing (Nieto, 2003).

Teachers are faced with the challenge of meeting the needs of a diverse student population (Futrell, Gomez, & Bedden, 2003). Teachers must understand the cultural backgrounds of students to be able to develop effective teaching and learning strategies (Sharma, 2005). The perceptions and attitudes of teachers are crucial to teaching in multicultural classrooms. Classrooms that value racial and cultural differences promote equal opportunities for all students (Nelson, 2001). To create such classrooms, teachers' background experiences and current beliefs influence the incorporation of multicultural education (Smith, 2000). Although background experiences and the response to multicultural teaching affect the importance of multicultural education, changes must take place with educators before they begin to take place with students (Howard, 2007).

Principals are encouraged to create cultural changes involving collaboration and cooperation of teachers and staff (Landeau, Van Dorn, & Freeley, 2009).

Due to the increased number of diverse students in schools, the environment must be created to promote cultural pluralism (McCray, Wright, & Beachum, 2004). Principals are encouraged to initiate and infuse multicultural concepts and ideas into the school culture (Decker, 1997). Ryan (2003) noted that it is important for principals to acknowledge racism in their schools and provide a foundation for constructive responses. Understanding racism is crucial in formulating strategies for preventing racist practice (Henze, Katz, & Norte, 2000).

Principals need training in creating a multicultural climate in their schools. The training opportunities could consist of courses and programs that allow critical reflections and first-hand experiences (Ryan, 2003). Leadership preparation programs for principals should provide workshops with an emphasis on multicultural issues (McCray et al., 2004). In these classes, the school leaders will recognize the need to understand the characteristics and expectations of the different cultural groups within the schools. Consequently, this understanding will help in developing a proactive strategy with an emphasis on addressing cultural conflicts and misunderstandings (Escobar-Ortloff & Ortloff, 2003). These types of strategies help create an environment that encourages the empowerment of teachers and other staff members to lead within the schools (Landeau et al., 2009).

Because of the increased population of minority students and the decreased number of minority teachers, schools should provide teachers opportunities to develop the skills to engage learners of various cultural backgrounds (DeJaeghere & Zhang,

2008). Bazron, Osher, and Fleischman (2005) suggested that the cultural mismatch of teachers and students has attributed to students' poor self-concepts, discipline problems, and poor academics, especially for minority students. Participation in professional development activities enhances the intercultural competence of teachers. Professional development that addresses culturally responsive approaches helps teachers to connect and to teach students; regardless of culture, language, and other characteristics (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007). To create an environment that addresses the needs of all learners, knowledge, understanding, and respect of all cultures are necessary (Chicola, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

The purposes of this study were three-fold. First, the purpose of this study was to determine the differences of how male versus female teachers perceive multicultural orientation, multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers, multiculturalism and perceived sense of community, and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas. Second, the purpose of this study was to determine the differences of how less experienced versus more experienced teachers perceive multicultural orientation, multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers, multiculturalism and perceived sense of community, and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas. Third, the purpose of this study was to determine the differences of how teachers of color versus White/Caucasian, not Hispanic, perceive multicultural orientation, multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers, multiculturalism and perceive sense of

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community, and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

Background

Legal Impact

Although the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case legalized separate facilities for Black and White people, the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, which desegregated the schools (Kahn, 2008), reversed it. Later, however, the legal segregation still existed among Whites and Blacks and influenced the 1970s civil rights movement position on denouncing the notion of separate but equal school systems (Banks, 1993). In an effort to create more equitable education for all students, multicultural education evolved from the *Brown* decision and impacted curriculum reform, school restructuring, and district modification (Gay, 2004). These reforms focused on equity and equality for all students in public schools (Chapman, 2008).

An example of inequity in public schools occurred in 1984 when the United States District Court found that the Pulaski County Special School District contributed to the decline of the White population in the neighboring Little Rock School District (*Little Rock Sch. Dist. v. Pulaski County Special Sch. Dist.,* 1984). A settlement was entered in 1988 to address multicultural curriculum (*Little Rock Sch. Dist. v. Pulaski County Special Sch. Dist.,* 1988). Because of the settlement, Pulaski County Special School District developed the Desegregation Plan, which was approved by the Court in 1992. Afterward, the Board of Education adopted a policy that outlined the district's philosophy of multicultural education and its commitment to the concept ("IFC: Multicultural Education," 2011). The Desegregation Plan of 1992 was replaced with Plan 2000. Plan

2000 included an education plan that identified specific goals in areas such as achievement, discipline, academic remediation, and academic enrichment. In an effort to monitor the implementation and status of the Desegregation Plan/Plan 2000, the federal court created the Office of Desegregation Monitoring.

To address schools not involved in legal battles, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001 required schools to insure that all children are making annual achievement test gains in math and reading (Copenhaver-Johnson, 2007). NCLB (2002) has been viewed as a means to eliminate racism and discrimination in the schools of diverse students (Navarrette, 2005). However, Kozol (2005) criticized NCLB as lacking attention to other factors in children's lives that influence academic achievement such as poverty, inequities in school funds, and summer reading gaps. Although the legislation recognized the inequities, it did not discuss why those inequities exist (Kahn, 2008).

Instructional Impact

Multicultural education offers an alternative to teaching diverse students (Gay, 2004). Teachers must be prepared to implement instructional strategies that accommodate the learning styles of the diverse students (Gay, 2000). However, teachers must be skilled in using pedagogy that is sensitive and responsive to the needs of students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural background (Davis & Thompson, 2004). In order to provide culturally relevant pedagogy, the curriculum must acknowledge the needs and experiences of the students (Baker & Digiovanni, 2005). By connecting the diverse students' experiences and the required curriculum, teachers will be knowledgeable about the cultural aspects of teaching and learning (Banks et al., 2001). This form of teaching is based on the idea of culturally responsive instruction. Culturally responsive instruction

creates a learning environment where lessons and activities build on the strengths the diverse students bring from home (Au, 2009/2010).

Some teachers and administrators blame state standards and assessment for the decline of multicultural education (Bohn & Sleeter, 2001). Baker and Digiovanni's (2005) study investigated the challenges of reducing biases in a standardized curriculum. Although many challenges were mentioned, the effort to bridge theory into practice was the most common. However, dialogue between teachers about how culturally relevant pedagogy emerged in their classroom was suggested as an initial combined effort.

Chicola (2007) conducted a study that revealed a lack of confidence when teachers reflected on their biases; however, a commitment to becoming culturally responsive teachers was evident. Culturally responsive teaching includes strategies for transforming instructional practice to meet the needs of diverse students (Davis, 2006). In a culturally responsive classroom, teaching and learning occur in a culturally supported, learner-centered setting (Richards et al., 2007). This type of a setting produces a learning environment of students involved in learning different ways of knowing, understanding, and presenting information (Baker & Digiovanni, 2005).

Teachers' Preparations

Villegas and Lucas (2002) stated that the preparation of educators to teach diverse students is a major concern for schools of education. Regardless of increased concern, the literature on diversity and instruction in higher education is weak (Wasonga & Piveral, 2004). Schools of education need to provide professional development that prepares educators with the strategies to teach diverse students and align instruction with assessment, curriculum, and standards (Futrell et al., 2003). Courses offered in the

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teacher education curriculum with topics such as culture, linguistic, diversity, gender, race, and equality should empower teachers to work against the social and structural arrangement that promote inequalities (Blackwell, Futrell, & Imig, 2003). However, Gracia and Pugh (1992) found that many White middle-class pre-service teachers view courses on multicultural education as insignificant.

Wasonga and Piveral (2004) argued that university faculty members do not acknowledge the importance of integrating multiculturalism in the curriculum because of the limited faculty and student minority population. As the number of minorities in faculty and student body increase, faculty will be more prone to integrate multiculturalism in the curriculum. A diverse college population will encourage pre-service teachers to embrace the different backgrounds, interests, and skills. Teachers' background experiences and current beliefs influence the incorporation of multicultural education (Smith, 2000). Smith's (2000) study further supported the power of teachers' backgrounds to the response to multicultural pedagogy. Teacher education programs are needed to prepare culturally responsive teachers who are capable of teaching diverse learners effectively (Grant & Wieczorek, 2000). Although some teacher education programs might incorporate multicultural education into course offerings, such efforts must build on current knowledge of culturally responsive pedagogy (Taylor, 2010).

In an effort to align teacher education programs and multicultural pedagogy, researchers suggested that teachers prepared in a multicultural teacher education programs are more capable of teaching diverse students (Cwick, Wooldridge, & Petch-Hogan, 2001). In multicultural classrooms, a high level of consistency exists between teachers' intended multicultural practices and their implementation practices (McNeal,

2005). The factors that supported the implementation of multicultural education into the classrooms were teachers' previous experiences in diverse setting, meaningful high school experiences, and similar background experiences of students. In contrast, factors that impeded the implementation were school structure, time restraint, racism, and tracking.

Professional development, a systemic and ongoing process, prepares educators to function effectively in a highly diverse environment (Howard, 2007). Although teacher education programs influence teachers' beliefs and attitudes about culture and race, professional development is suggested to increase intercultural competence (Carignan, Sanders, & Pourdavood, 2005). DeJaeghere and Zhang (2008) concluded that professional development has a positive effect on teachers' perceived intercultural competence. The professional development activities should be aimed at helping teachers to understand that intercultural competence is developmental.

Teachers' Perceptions

Although pre-service teachers perceived a lack of integration of multiculturalism in their teacher education program, they attributed it to lack of ethnic and gender diversity in classroom, lack of time, and not a part of the curriculum (Wasonga & Piveral, 2004). Pre-service teachers' definitions of multicultural education can be influenced by their enrollment in courses infusing multicultural concepts. Mushi (2004) discovered that, initially, teachers' definitions of multicultural education were narrow and brief, but by the end of the third semester, the definitions were complex and descriptive with concrete examples. Field experiences allow pre-service teachers the opportunity to participate in activities that address diversity (Capella-Santana, 2003).

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As educators emerge from pre-service teachers to practicing teachers, they are still faced with the challenges of teaching students from diverse backgrounds. Practicing teachers' perceptions and attitudes about diverse students are factors in motivating and educating students regardless of gender, ethnicity, age, religion, language, or exceptionality (Sharma, 2005). Teachers' practices and beliefs about incorporating culture in the curriculum are shaped by their own experiences of culture (Chan, 2006). Teachers might be competent in their subject areas, but a change in attitudes is needed to be successful in the implementation of multicultural education (Sogunro, 2001). Teachers' limited knowledge, skills, and attitudes affect their ability to work with students from different cultural backgrounds. An effective teacher is sensitive to cultural differences, and as a result, an attitude of appreciation and respect will surface. Regardless, teachers must create a classroom where all students of different cultural backgrounds are provided with the best opportunity to learn the content (Richards et al., 2007). The most powerful approach to serving diverse students is to align classroom instruction with the cultural value systems of a diverse student population (Bazron, Osher, & Fleischman, 2005). Although teachers' preconceived beliefs and attitudes are reflected in their classroom practice, the curriculum should provide opportunities for students to explore different cultures (Jones, 2004). To ensure such equity and access for all students, Nieto (2003) stated that difficult questions pertaining to advanced placement courses, teachers' background, and allocation of resources must be addressed.

Principals' Perceptions

Principals, as leaders, are expected to provide guidance and clarification in the implementation of multicultural education (Sogunro, 2001). As schools become

culturally diverse, principals initiate collaboration and cooperation of all stakeholders to create cultural change in schools (Landeau et al., 2009). Secondary principals of smaller schools have a negative perception of multicultural education (McCray et al., 2004). Unfortunately, the smaller schools are in rural, low-socioeconomic communities. Nevertheless, principals are obligated to create environments that promote cultural diversity.

Because of limited research, Ryan (2003) conducted a 4-year study on how principals address challenges associated with ethnocultural diversity in elementary and secondary schools. In this study, some of the principals were reluctant to acknowledge racism. Those principals viewed it as an individual prejudice and not a subtle pattern. Principals recognize that ethnocultural diversity is significant in how students' ethnic and cultural backgrounds contribute to the identity of the school (Billot, Goddard, & Cranston, 2007). Ironically, most principals are conservative in their actions toward the system they are trying to change (Riehl, 2000).

Dimmock and Walker (2000) believed that leadership principals of the 21st century must embrace the international cultural perspective. Globalization in education implies the exportation of theory, policy, and practice from one system, usually the Anglo-American world, and the importation of other systems such as non-western and developing countries. If theory, policy, and practice were cultural sensitive, there would be an understanding of culture and cross-cultural similarities and differences. Principals are expected to negotiate communities' expectations, meet the learning needs of all students, and understand the social and cultural values (Billot, 2005).

Principals are faced with the cultural challenge of understanding the different cultures within the school culture. Principals must be aware of the various cultures, understand the cultural differences, and facilitate strategies to meet the challenges (Escobar-Ortloff & Ortloff, 2003). Secondary principals' negative perception of multicultural education is reflective of the school and community characteristics (McCray et al., 2004). The perception of racial identity as a defining category created an avenue for principals to become proactive in improving local schools' race/ethnic relations (Henke et al., 2000).

Principals' Preparations

Principals' roles are becoming more pluralistic (Madsen & Mabokela, 2002). As pluralistic leaders, principals must understand the characteristics and expectation of the different cultural groups within the school community (Escobar-Ortloff & Ortloff, 2003). Principals are faced with cultural challenges in a multicultural school. To meet those challenges, the principal must acknowledge the presence of other cultures and recognize each cultural contribution, belief, and characteristic. Principals need to understand the cultural differences, the areas of cultural conflict, and the strategies to address the differences and conflicts. Principals who are proactive in improving race/ethnic relations do not use race or ethnicity as a unitary explanation of intergroup relations among students (Henze et al., 2000). However, when race or ethnicity is used as a blueprint to create policies for students, race or ethnicity becomes a conflict between students. Therefore, principals usually feel that rethinking racial or ethnic conflict is necessary for examining relationships among students (Henze et al., 2000).

Leadership preparation programs should provide workshops to address multicultural education issues (McCray et al., 2004). Although formal programs are noteworthy, mentoring and shadowing are also effective learning opportunities (Billot et al., 2007). Principals are expected to have the necessary expertise and experiences to implement successful multicultural education policies (Sogunro, 2001). Therefore, ongoing professional development must also be provided to address ongoing diversity needs (Ryan, 2003).

Hypotheses

An initial review of the literature suggested a connection between teachers' perceptions of multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy. Although evidence supported the importance of educating all students, regardless of cultural background, some have suggested that professional development must be provided to address multiculturalism in schools (Carignan et al., 2005; DeJaeghere & Zhang, 2008; Howard, 2007). The researcher generated four null hypotheses for each of the problem statements. The following hypotheses guided the rest of this study:

1. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of male versus female teachers on multicultural orientation for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

2. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of male versus female teachers on multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers for teachers in six middles schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

3. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of male versus female teachers on multiculturalism and perceived sense of community for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

4. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of male versus female teachers on multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

5. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of less experienced versus more experienced teachers on multicultural orientation for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

6. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of less experienced versus more experienced teachers on multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

7. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of less experienced versus more experienced teachers on multiculturalism and perceived sense of community for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

8. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of less experienced versus more experienced teachers on multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

9. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of teachers of color versus White/Caucasian on multicultural orientation for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

10. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of teachers of color versus White/Caucasian on multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

11. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of teachers of color versus White/Caucasian on multiculturalism and perceived sense of community for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

12. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of teachers of color versus White/Caucasian on multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school in central Arkansas.

Description of Terms

Community/communal spirit. McCray (2000) defined community/communal spirit as the sense of belonging to a community or being in communion with others in terms of ideas, feelings, and experiences.

Cultural pluralism. McCray et al. (2004) defined cultural pluralism as a society consisting of individuals from different cultural background working together as a cohesive unit.

Cultural relations. McCray (2000) defined cultural relations as the initiatives or practices that address, reduce, or prevent cross-cultural conflict. These conflicts include

the clashing of feelings or interests occurring between people of different racial/ethnic backgrounds.

Culturally responsive pedagogy. Richards et al. (2007) defined culturally responsive pedagogy as effective teaching and learning in a culturally supported, learned-centered context where the strengths of the students are identified, nurtured, and used to promote student achievement.

Ethnocultural diversity. Billot et al. (2007) defined ethnocultural diversity as multiple domains of diversity in areas such as language, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, culture, heritage, and gender.

Intercultural competence. DeJaeghere and Zhang (2008) defined intercultural competence as teachers' assessments of their competence in relation to majority/minority group interaction.

Multiculturalism. Sogunro (2001) defined multiculturalism as a sociopolitical construct aimed at promoting interconnectedness and respect between and among people of varying cultural and racial backgrounds.

Multicultural education. Mushi (2004) defined multicultural education as the learner activities and experiences that are organized to facilitate effective learning for every learner to the best of his/her potential.

Multicultural orientation. McCray (2000) defined multicultural orientation as any practice or program routinely engaged in to increase knowledge, understanding, and/or skill in managing cross-cultural relations.

<center>**Significance**</center>

Research Gap

        The multicultural education concept has challenged schools of education to prepare teachers to teach diverse students. Although multicultural education has been the focus of many studies, the emphasis was on pre-service teachers (Chicola, 2007; Mushi, 2004; Sharma, 2005). Future research conducted on in-service teachers after graduation is needed. This study investigates the integration of multicultural principles and practices into classroom application. The results could provide data to measure the success of the transition from multicultural theory to multicultural practice in a typical diverse classroom setting.

        The research gap between pre-service teachers' clinical experiences and teachers' implementation of culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom creates a need for a systemic approach for teaching a diverse student population. The disconnect between teaching strategies and meeting the learning needs of diverse students is somewhat problematic. However, culturally responsive instruction should be age appropriate, and teachers, especially middle school teachers, are expected to incorporate culturally sensitive pedagogy that is developmentally and educationally appropriate (Clauss, 2006). To meet such a challenge, teachers must acquire the skills to integrate research-based strategies into culturally responsive pedagogy.

        Professional development must provide instructional strategies that integrate race and culture to meet the needs of all students. Sadly, training is usually provided through 1-day or 2-day professional development seminars. However, in-depth studies to investigate how on-going professional development on cultural issues can affect teachers'

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perception of multicultural education are needed. Gay (2000) stressed the importance of professional development that provides strategies that examine the pedagogy, curriculum, and experience for all learners.

Possible Implication for Practice

Because of the rapid growth of diversity in schools, a learning environment that promotes success for all students must be developed. The classroom environment must acknowledge, understand, and appreciate the racial and ethnic group represented in the school. Principals and teachers must reflect on multicultural education reforms that focus on issues of equity and equality for all students in public schools (Chapman, 2008). The results of this study will benefit teachers and principals by providing information on how teachers' definition and experiences are reflected in the classroom. The principals, as well as teachers, could use this information to guide future professional development.

This study is significant because the information will be used as documentation for a district's pending unitary status in a desegregation lawsuit. The data will be used as evidence to support or dispute the district's effort to comply with the courts. Although the court decision is pending, this study will provide feedback on how teachers' instructional practices reflect cultural responsive pedagogy. Trivializing multicultural education through food and festivals is frequently practiced; however, this study will emphasize the many facets and perceptions of multiculturalism.

Through acknowledging the importance of multiculturalism, culturally relevant pedagogy and self-reflective skills could become indicators in assessing the success of the infusion of multicultural education in the classroom. However, once multiculturalism becomes a priority, policies could be developed to incorporate an accountability system

that measures teachers' and students' cultural competency (Copenhaver-Johnson, 2007).

It is the responsibilities of teachers and principals to enforce the policies; however, the

overall goal is to increase student achievement (Futrell et al., 2003).

Process to Accomplish

Design

This study used a quantitative, non-experimental design. The independent

variables for the three statements of the problem were gender (male versus female),

teacher experience (five years and less versus six years plus), and racial/ethnic

identification (teachers of color versus White/Caucasian) regarding the preparation and

perception of multicultural education, respectively. The dependent variables for all three

statements of the problem were the measured perceived attitudes represented by the four

components of a multicultural survey for middle school teachers in a large urban school

district in central Arkansas. These components included multicultural orientation,

multiculturalism and cultural relations among teachers and students, multiculturalism and

perceived sense of community, and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility.

Sample

According to Office of Desegregation Monitoring Report (2006), the infusion of

multiculturalism has not been as successful at the secondary level compared to the

elementary level. Jefferies (2000) found that elementary teachers perform in more

culturally responsive ways compared to middle and secondary level teachers. Therefore,

middle school teachers were chosen for this study. The participants for this study were

selected from the six middle schools in a large urban school district in central Arkansas.

The survey was sent to approximately 300 middle school teachers.

Demographic characteristics of the participants included the gender, years of experience in teaching, years of experience at the current site, and racial/ethnic identifications. The racial (77% White teachers and 23% teachers of color) and gender (75% females and 25% males) demographics were similar at the individual schools. The years of teaching experience within the district (45% five years and less and 55% six years plus) were comparable to the total years of teaching experience (42% five years and less and 60% six years plus). The data were reported using descriptive statistics.

Instrumentation

The dependent variables were measured by scores on a survey developed and validated by McCray (2000). The survey instrument, MEI, measured the teacher's perception and preparation of multiculturalism in a school setting. The inventory contained 23 statements using a 4-point Likert scale. The scale ranged from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree) without a neutral choice. The MEI subscales included multicultural orientation, cross-cultural conflict management, communal spirit, and multicultural responsibility. The multicultural orientation subscale provided items that addressed teachers' perceptions about practices or programs that promote multiculturalism and their influence on student and teacher behavior. The cross-cultural conflict management subscale provided items that address possible contentions resulting from multiculturalism and possible solutions. The communal spirit subscale provided items that addressed inclusion and sense of belonging. The multicultural responsibility subscale provided items that address teachers' perceptions about job duties related to multiculturalism.

The MEI was piloted on a sample of 31 middle school teachers enrolled in professional development classes (McCray, 2000). After each inventory had been completed, test analysis was performed on the inventory to determine the dimensionality and the internal reliability consistency. The Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the multicultural orientation was .91; cross-cultural conflict management was .87; communal spirit was .74; and multicultural responsibility was .80. Overall, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the entire inventory was .90.

Data Analysis

One-way analyses of variance (ANOVAs) were used to conduct the appropriate statistical tests to accept or reject the formulated hypotheses. Hypotheses 1-4 used gender as the independent variable and multicultural orientation, multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers, multiculturalism and perceived sense of community, and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility as the dependent variables, respectively. Hypotheses 5-8 used years of experiences as the independent variable and multicultural orientation, multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers, multiculturalism and perceived sense of community, and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility as the dependent variables, respectively. Hypotheses 9-12 used racial/ethnic identifications as the independent variable and multicultural orientation, multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers, multiculturalism and perceived sense of community, and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility as the dependent variables, respectively. The one-way ANOVAs examined the main effects of each hypothesis. To test the hypotheses, the researcher used a two-tailed test with a .05 level of significance. However, to limit the possibility of committing at least one Type I

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error because of multiple statistical procedures, a modified Bonferroni correction was used. Given that three independent variables were used, the adjusted alpha to reject the null hypothesis was .05/3 or alpha = .017.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF RELATED LITERATURE

The increased diverse population of students in the United States has provided a forum for multicultural education. Schools of education and school districts must develop and implement multicultural education strategies that prepare educators to teach diverse students (Futrell et al., 2003). Gay (2002) defined such transformation as culturally responsive education. Culturally responsive education incorporated the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of references, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning more relevant and effective. This change requires a systemic process of professional development that affects teachers' perception of multicultural education in the classroom (DeJaeghere & Zhang, 2008).

Initially, The NCLB required highly qualified teachers to meet the educational needs of all students (Copenhaver-Johnson, 2007). One of the main goals of NCLB was to insure that all children are proficient in math and reading by 2014 (Kahn, 2008). Although NCLB emphasized the issue of accountability, educational and cultural controversy surfaced (Siegrist & Van Patten, 2007). For instance, special education and English language learners in some states failed to meet the standard. NCLB appeared to have weakened the momentum of infusing multicultural education in the curriculum and the instruction (Madda & Schultz, 2009). When multicultural education has political and pedagogy perspectives, the purpose of multicultural education is to acknowledge the

diversity of students and to improve the learning environment (McCray, 2000). Although multiculturalism in an educational setting explores historical but somewhat controversial equity issues, the political influence can affect educational reforms and initiatives that focus on issues of equity and equality for all students (Chapman, 2008).

Diversity and multicultural education are terms used interchangeably in the development of policies and reforms. In an effort to implement multicultural reforms, districts have provided texts that included works of people of color and all other minorities including, but not limited to, gender, nationality, and religion. Supported culturally responsive pedagogy and funded professional development acknowledge diverse learning styles and multiple intelligences (Chapman, 2008). Although reforms are the first steps, school policies and allocation of resources will have a direct influence on addressing diversity in schools. Curriculum reforms are the most crucial factors in determining the success of the implementation of multicultural education (Sogunro, 2001).

Historical Perspective

In the late 1800s, the legacy of 200 years of slavery and Jim Crow laws created segregation in schools and residential neighborhoods. In 1896, the *Plessy v. Ferguson* case legalized separate facilities for Black and White people (Kahn, 2008). The federal government did not acknowledge cultural diversity until the 1954 ruling in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* in which the United States Supreme Court declared segregation unconstitutional (Johnson, 2003). This ruling struck down the 1896 *Plessy v. Ferguson* case (Kahn, 2008). The *Brown* decision made multicultural education possible and necessary (Gay, 2004). In addition, during the 1950s, Carter Woodson

established the *Journal of Negro History* and the *African American History Month* (Levine, 2000). The production of such information on Black Americans emerged the ideology that multicultural education is a method of including all people by simply adding to the content (Kahn, 2008). During the civil rights movement of the 1960s, multicultural education became a method to integrate educational programs, procedures, and practices that reflect the ethnic, racial, cultural and social diversity of the United States society (Gay, 2004).

The high court's promise in the *Brown* decision of an equal and equitable education for all citizens gave multicultural education movement the momentum to promote the issues of access and equality in educational reform (Chapman, 2008). Multicultural education reforms have been the focus of many educational debates for students in public schools. The challenge for educators to implement and document multicultural reforms resulted in the schools becoming a vehicle for social justice (Gay, 2004). Although students of color gained access to the White schools, the students lost cultural connections (Walker, 2000).

Within the first 20 years of the *Brown* decision, school desegregation was troubled (Orfield, Frankenberg, & Lee, 2003). An example of such an incident occurred in Little Rock, Arkansas when nine African-American children enrolled and attended an all-White school to have a better education. However, during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s, desegregation was on a rise with more minority students attending predominantly White schools, which created a wave of second-generation discrimination effects that included ways to segregate in the same school and practices that hindered minority students' academic success (Smith, 2004). The predominantly White teacher profession

recognized the negative effects of desegregation. However, school districts have a tendency to integrate teachers rather than to integrate students (Smith, 2004).

Desegregation's attempt to address inequities in funding between predominantly White schools and predominantly segregated schools provided minority children access to better-funded schools, most often predominantly White schools (Smith, 2004). The minority students were more likely to attend schools that were funded at lower levels (Biddle & Berliner, 2002). A majority of these minority students remained in schools that were predominantly minority and underfunded. The continued segregation of students is a trend that has been escalating for the past 20 years (Chapman, 2008).

Instructional Effects

Teachers must become educated about the pedagogy that is sensitive and responsive to the development and educational needs of students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds (Davis & Thompson, 2004). Models for culturally responsive teaching incorporated cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and learning styles of diverse students to make curriculum and instruction more reflective and responsive (Gay, 2000). Culturally responsive teaching provides strategies for transforming instructional practice. Instructional strategies such as visuals, peer tutoring, cooperative learning, and alternative forms of assessment have been identified as effective tools in teaching diverse students (Allison & Rehm, 2007). Instructions built on the strengths and interests of the students served as a bridge to new learning experiences (Au, 2009/2010). The use of multicultural strategies can be used to bridge the gap between what the diverse students already know and what they are to be taught (Banks et al., 2001).

Responsive Curriculum

Although the school district provides the curriculum, the curriculum should help

students to understand that the values and perspectives are reflective of European

Americans (Banks et al., 2001). The values of the diverse students are often reflected

through celebrations of heroes and holidays, but these celebration practices can promote

or hinder the learning of diverse students (Nieto, 2002/2003). Artificially infusing culture

into the curriculum promotes stereotypical viewpoints. However, teachers who engaged

in practices that include rather than exclude students from different backgrounds are

fulfilling their responsibilities to all students (Richards et al., 2007).

Teachers might experience challenges and complications in acknowledging

students' diversity within the curriculum and teaching practices (Chan, 2006). The most

challenging and difficult changes involved the infusion of new literature that forced

teachers to relinquish their individual classroom domains (Chapman, 2008). The

challenges and complications have a tendency to surface whenever the teachers and

parents differ in values and beliefs. Although teachers demonstrate sensitivity to the

differences in values and beliefs, teachers must understand the curriculum beyond the

classroom materials, which includes curriculum structures, processes, and discourses

(Yosso, 2002).

Retaining the traditional curriculum promotes the European American's stories,

cultural norms, and knowledge that is valued in society (Yosso, 2002). When the

curriculum was altered based on teachers' perceptions, the teachers functioned in

isolation that affected their ability to meet the needs of the diverse students (Chapman,

2008). In retrospect, teachers should be empowered to modify the curriculum to integrate

cultural diversity. Curriculum reforms, an option promoted by some school districts, were created on the premise that cultural backgrounds affect how students learn; therefore, cultural diversity becomes an integral component of the curriculum (Sogunro, 2001).

Responsive Instructional Strategies

Although the cultural gap between curriculum and instruction is evident, culturally responsive teaching strategies are needed that address diversity in the classroom. Teachers lack the cultural knowledge needed to address diversity in the *real* classroom (Chicola, 2007). Curriculum-based activities with a focus on diversity and tolerance would assist teachers in becoming cultural responsive. Effective culturally responsive teachers must learn culturally responsive pedagogy, embrace diversity, and confront their biases (Chicola, 2007). Through the implementation of culturally responsive strategies, diverse students are encouraged to preserve their customs, traditions, knowledge, and languages (Banks et al., 2001). Two of these responsive strategies are the use of narrative and journal writing.

The use of narratives is one of the many strategies to meet the needs of diverse students. Narratives provide the opportunities for students to find culturally relevant ways of applying the curriculum to previous knowledge (Baker & Digiovanni, 2005). Although narratives may foster students' exposure and perception of diverse cultures, curriculums are considered standardized, which interferes with the teachers' ability to infuse students' experiences into the teaching and learning (Bohn & Sleeter, 2000). The results of the standardized test scores are influenced by the characteristics of the students; therefore, standardized tests might be considered biased (Phillips, 2006).

For teachers, journal writing is another method for implementing cultural responsive strategies (Culp, Chepyator-Thomas, & Hsu, 2009). Journal writing for teachers allows them to express their understanding and application of new concepts into their personal and/or professional experiences. The Culp et al. study revealed the following themes from teachers' journals: (a) student-student interaction is based on cultural backgrounds, (b) teachers experience the role as an outsider, and (c) communication and language barriers have an impact on non-verbal communication and cultural confusion with students. Although the teaching approaches varied, the results indicated that the acknowledgement of race, culture, and gender was evident in the multiple strategies of instructions. Overall, teachers have not acquired the necessary skills to incorporate culture into the curriculum (Chan, 2006).

Critical Race Theory

Critical Race Theory can be used as a tool to examine issues of race, class, and gender in educational settings (Chapman, 2008). Critical Race Theory tenets centralize race and racism, challenge the dominant perspectives, commit to social justice, value the experiences of people of color, and integrate interdisciplinary units (Kohli, 2009). Using the Critical Race Theory tenets, teachers of color can reflect upon their racial experiences as a tool to understand students' cultural experiences. Although Critical Race Theory challenges teachers to examine the inequalities embedded in the curriculum, diverse students can develop an understanding of culturally relevant knowledge (Knaus, 2009). When Critical Race Theory is applied in an educational setting, there is a sense of awareness about racism and educational inequities (Kohli, 2009).

According to Chan (2006), the incorporation of culture into the curriculum is based upon the teachers' beliefs and experiences. A diverse curriculum allows teachers and students a venue to examine and discuss racial attitudes and behaviors (Sampson & Garrison-Wade, 2011). Multicultural education can be successful when diversity is not only integrated into the curriculum but also in every facet of the school environment (Sogunro, 2001). Due to teachers' lack of experiences, Sogunro (2001) suggested that cultures should be examined through literature and oral presentations with the intent of developing an appreciation of the differences and similarities. Students are also encouraged to reflect on their cultural experiences while working on cultural projects. Sogunro noted that integrating field trips, tours, and other cultural related activities into class instructions exposed students and teachers to different cultures.

Teachers' Preparation

The primary goal for schools of education primary goal is to prepare educators to teach students. However, preparing educators to teach diverse students has become a challenging issue (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Diversity, as an educational entity, creates a sense of urgency for the schools of education. To meet the test, the curriculum must reflect the teaching strategies that the graduates must possess to teach diverse students effectively (Futrell et al., 2003). Strategies such as using research as a part of the decision-making process, using data to monitor student's progress, and incorporating appropriate learning strategies are examples of infusing educational theory into classroom settings. Teacher education faculty members are responsible for preparing the students in the schools of education with the necessary skills to develop a multicultural classroom (Nelson, 2001).

Most teacher education programs usually incorporate multicultural education into course offerings. Unfortunately, the teacher education programs efforts are sometimes counter-productive to the culturally responsive pedagogy concept (Taylor, 2010). Course offerings do not provide a culturally supported, learner-centered context environment (Richards et al., 2007). To meet the challenge, teachers must bridge traditional educational theory and culturally responsive pedagogy. In an effort to incorporate multiculturalism, teacher education programs must promote the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy. However, due to the homogeneous nature of pre-service teachers and faculty, teacher education programs do not whole-heartily incorporate multiculturalism into the curriculum (Wasonga & Piveral, 2004). The Wasonga and Piveral (2004) study indicated inconsistencies in the instructional principles of multicultural education at the university level because they did not develop the skills and knowledge in recognizing and responding to the needs of the diverse students in a multicultural classroom setting.

Multicultural Service Learning

Culp et al. (2010) argued that an increased awareness of multiculturalism creates the need to develop a multicultural service learning practicum in a physical education teacher education program. Culp et al. suggested that the practicum should require the pre-service teachers to develop multicultural teaching strategies, to identify the learners' issues, to promote a positive learning environment, and to identify innovative methods of instruction. The final requirement should be to document their experiences in a weekly journal. The results should indicate the importance of using multiple instructional strategies through the development of culturally responsive pedagogical skills. In an

effort to maintain a similar multicultural learning perspective, Grow Your Own Teachers program represented another approach to multicultural education within teacher preparation program (Madda & Schultz, 2009). The main goal of Grow Your Own Teachers is to recruit prospective teachers from high-need neighborhoods with the intent of them returning to improve the teaching and learning. Producing multicultural teachers is a process that involves not only competence in pedagogical skills but also the transformation in the acceptance of diversity (Smith, 2004).

Multicultural Teacher Education Programs

Requiring the infusion of multicultural principles and strategies into a traditional teacher education program supports the multiculturalism movement (Banks et al., 2001). Multicultural teacher education programs prepare pre-service teachers with significant knowledge about multicultural principles. According to Lee and Dallman (2008), pre-service teachers agreed that multicultural education programs should explore beyond the issues of African American cultures. Other researchers suggested that teachers who are prepared in a multicultural teacher education program are somewhat competent in teaching diverse students (Cwick et al., 2001). Obviously, graduates of a multicultural teacher education should be capable of infusing their background knowledge into effective multicultural practice and theory (McNeal, 2005). However, becoming a multicultural teacher is a process involving the transformation of attitudes, values, and views regarding diversity (Smith, 2004).

In the multicultural teacher education programs, it is assumed that teachers are knowledgeable about multicultural principles. McNeal (2005) investigated how teachers' multicultural practices reflect their preparation from a multicultural teacher education

program. The findings indicated a positive correlation between the teachers' intended multicultural practices and their implemented practices. Although most teacher education programs incorporate multicultural education into course offerings, such efforts have not been sufficient (Taylor, 2010).

Critical Teacher Reflection

Critical teacher reflection is a tool used for analyzing race, ethnicity, and culture and how these concepts affect the learning experiences (Howard, 2003). Effective reflection is a rigorous, painful process that involves reflecting on teaching students of various diverse backgrounds. Milner (2003) suggested the use of race reflective journal as a tool to process the issues through the form of writing, a more private approach. Reflecting merely for the sake of reflective is very superficial. For example, a pilot study incorporated a writing/reflective assignment as a requirement in a method course (Chicola, 2007). The results revealed that the students lacked cultural knowledge and the ability to create a plan based upon real experiences. In other words, the lack of critical reflection practice has resulted in the inability to create an action plan that embraced diversity in real-life experiences. To facilitate the process of critical reflection, Howard (2003) made five key suggestions. Howard noted that schools should ensure that the faculty is equipped with the skills necessary to address the issues of race, ethnicity, and culture, and schools should stress the importance that reflection is an ongoing process. In addition; Howard asserted that teachers should be specific of the topic, should recognize that teaching has explicit and implicit implications, and should avoid creating stereotypical profiles of students.

Researchers suggested that teachers who engage in a reflective process acknowledge the racial and cultural differences between students and teachers (Baker & Digiovanni, 2005). Clearly, schools of education have a professional responsibility of designing programs that prepare graduates to teach students with diverse backgrounds (Futrell et al., 2003).

Teachers' Perceptions

Teachers' limited knowledge, skills, and attitudes interfere with teaching culturally diverse students. A change in teachers' attitudes can determine the success or failure of multicultural education (Sogunro, 2001). If teachers perceive multicultural education as a controversial topic, they are limiting their ability to work with a diverse student population. When teachers examine their attitudes, they begin to understand the impact of their value system on students (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Field experiences can facilitate a change in pre-service teachers' knowledge and attitudes about diversity (Capella-Santana, 2003). Field experiences can positively influence the teaching and the learning process of diverse students. When teachers perceive multicultural education as a strategy, they will explore their personal histories and experiences, as well as the histories and experiences of the students (Richards et al., 2007).

The appropriate perception and attitude are crucial in multicultural classrooms. In creating an equitable climate for learning, teacher candidates should realize how biases affect their attitudes (Chicola, 2007). An awareness of teachers' cultural beliefs influences the realization that their individual cultural perspective is not universal (Sharma, 2005). When teachers examine their multicultural attitudes, the perceived perceptions of their knowledge on multicultural issues are challenged (Gay, 2002). For

example, an action-research study revealed that teacher candidates concluded that a writing assignment and a field trip to low socioeconomic status schools provided a better understanding of their multicultural viewpoints (Szabo & Anderson, 2009).

Teachers' perception of multicultural education could have an adverse effect on the learners, both inside the classroom and outside of the classroom. Teacher candidates need to examine their personal views in order to understand the influence of their experiences on teaching diverse students (Chicola, 2007). According to Chicola (2007), pre-service teachers are uncomfortable reflecting on their biases, but they voiced a commitment to making necessary changes in order to teach in a culturally responsive manner. Applied Critical Race Theory gives students a voice of expression in a culturally relevant environment (Knaus, 2009). Voices of commitment and listening to others' experiences are examples of teachers' social construction of knowledge (Lee & Dallman, 2008). Mushi (2004) conducted a study that revealed how pre-service teachers' definition of multicultural education became more descriptive and inclusive over the course of three semesters. At the beginning of the semester, the teachers exhibited a frozen, somewhat isolated, awareness of intercultural competence. During the course of the class, the teachers' level of awareness ranged from beginner to moderate and eventually to sophisticated multicultural awareness in teaching.

Teacher education programs affect teachers' beliefs and attitudes about race and culture (Carignan et al., 2005). The pre-service teachers gained a better understanding of cultural experiences through their sense of social representations. The social representations included their social norms and their specific value system (Carignan et al., 2005). Teachers' beliefs influence student outcomes and teaching practices. The

relationship between beliefs and classroom practices is evident in the teachers' actions and students' activities. Teachers need to recognize and accept how their beliefs affect their actions and practices (Jones, 2004). DeJaeghere and Zang (2008) indicated that participation in professional development contributed to an increase in perceived intercultural competence score. Professional development aimed at improving intercultural competence should be ongoing, meaningful workshops. Although teachers may understand the importance of culture, they lack the skills to interpret that knowledge into practice. Teachers have a tendency to address cultures through their personal awareness of holidays and celebrations (Joshi, Eberly, & Konzal, 2005).

Principals' Perception

The principals' roles in addressing diversity in schools have been a constant challenge. The challenge of recruiting and selecting a principal to lead a diverse school has been a major concern for many school districts. In response to diversity, principals must create constructive meanings of diversity, promote inclusive school cultures, and collaborate with the communities (Riehl, 2000). To create such a cultural change in schools, principals' perception of what constitutes diversity within their schools must be explored. According to Billot et al. (2007), principals acknowledged diversity as ethnic, culture, religion, socioeconomic background, and/or learning needs of students. Principals' perception of diversity is affected by the cultural climate of the schools. Within schools, there are similarities in principals' perception of diversity and their decision-making processes (Billot et al., 2007). Principals who make diversity invisible failed to create a school culture that embrace and support diversity (Riehl, 2000).

The principals' perception of their schools' culture has an effect on the school's diversity identity (Billot et al., 2007). Individualizing the school culture fosters positive interactions within the school. At the same time, acknowledging students' differences contributed to the identity of the school (Billot et al., 2007). Not only are principals responsible for negotiating cultural norms, but they are also influential in the transferring of cultural norms and values (Billot, 2005).

The 21st century school leaders must have an understanding of culture and cross-cultural similarities and differences (Dimmock & Walker, 2000). Principals, known as school leaders, are conservative in addressing diversity issues. For example, in one study, principals were reluctant in acknowledging racism in their schools (Ryan, 2003). Principals' perception of the term *racism* had a negative connotation. Ryan noted that school districts must encourage principals to question, challenge, and work to change systems that do not systemically address all forms of diversity.

Principals determine the level of implementation of multicultural education within the school (McCray et al., 2004). Although principals are obligated to promote cultural diversity, shared leadership emerges to support the successful implementation of multicultural education (Sogunro, 2001). When secondary principals exhibit a negative perception of multicultural education, the level of implementation suffers.

Researchers indicated that secondary school principals' perception of multicultural education is based on the size of the school (McCray et al., 2004). Principals from smaller schools in rural and lower socioeconomic communities have a negative perception of multicultural education. The role of the principal is critical in reforming schools to meet the needs of diverse students (Riehl, 2000). To be successful in

working in a diverse school, principals should develop a strong commitment to an embedded social justice school culture, an acceptance of various cultures through the cultural activities, and an emphasis on high learning expectation for all students (Billot et al., 2007).

Principals' Preparation

Schools of education need to prepare principals with the skills to understand diversity and equity issues within a school setting. Universities and preparation programs provide the opportunities to reflect on diversity (Ryan, 2003). Programs that require principals to participate actively in real-life diverse settings provide the necessary skills and experiences to implement multicultural education. Within the programs, a new leadership framework will emerge that focuses on diversity domains involving strategic and cultural dimensions (Madsen & Mabokela, 2002). Dimensions that value diversity will provide skills to create an inclusive culture within the school (Riehl, 2000).

Although formal programs are essential, mentoring and shadowing are more effective (Billot et al., 2007). Mentoring and shadowing provide opportunities that encourage and reward risk-taking and critical thinking. Capitalizing on such opportunities provide the principal with an understanding of the challenges in a multicultural school (Escobar-Ortloff & Ortloff, 2000). Adequate professional development, one of the many ongoing learning opportunities, provides principals with the tools to address the challenges (Ryan, 2003). Effective professional development that recognizes and understands various cultural differences provides strategies to meet the cultural challenges (Esobar-Ortloff & Ortloff, 2003). A systemic professional development plan

must be provided to principals that value diversity and responds to diversity challenges (Madsen & Mabokela, 2002).

Principals should be provided the skills to implement multicultural education policies, administration, and organization within their schools (Sogunro, 2001). Professional development and courses that create an awareness of different cultural expectations can offset potential misunderstanding and cultural differences. Henze et al. (2000) developed a curriculum for aspiring principals that incorporated proactive approaches to addressing conflict and building cultural relations. Practicing principals must understand and be aware of the presence of the different cultural expectations in relation to the present school culture (Escobar-Ortloff & Ortloff, 2003).

Conclusion

The multicultural education concept created a political and pedagogy forum. The forum focused on policies to address inequalities in educating diverse students and instructional strategies that emphasized the importance of students' backgrounds. In an effort to infuse multiculturalism into the curriculum, instructional strategies that integrate cultural diversity into the teaching practices were highly encouraged. Curriculum reforms determined the success of the level of implementation of multicultural education (Sogunro, 2001). Not only was the focus on curriculum but also the significant role of policies. Policies were created to insure that all diverse students were provided a culturally sensitive education in a multicultural environment. Clearly, Brown's decision created a platform for future policies; however, NCLB was criticized for not addressing inequities that influence diverse students' academic achievement (Kozol, 2005).

Although principals are expected to create cultural changes in schools, teachers' perceptions and preparation are crucial to the success or failure of the infusion of multicultural education. Schools of education are responsible for preparing teachers with the skills and strategies to develop multicultural classrooms (Nelson, 2001). Unfortunately, most teacher education programs have not been successful in preparing pre-service teachers. Course offerings are inconsistent; therefore, multiculturalism is counter-productive in promoting the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy (Taylor, 2010). Teachers' limited knowledge about diversity limits their ability to understand the importance of students' cultural backgrounds. When multicultural education is perceived as a strategy and not a change agent, teachers will explore their personal histories and experiences, as well as the histories and experiences of diverse students (Richard et al., 2007).

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Schools of education and school districts have an obligation to teach diverse students (Futrell et al., 2003). However, teachers' preparation to educate diverse students influences teachers' perception of multicultural education. Because teachers' preparation is limited, the exposure of culturally responsive pedagogy and professional development has an affect on the infusion of multicultural education in the classroom (Sogunro, 2001). Further, culturally responsive strategies transform instructional practices to reflect the educational needs of students from diverse backgrounds. Therefore, cultural knowledge, prior experiences, and learning styles of diverse students should be incorporated into the curriculum to meet the needs of the students (Gay, 2000).

Multicultural education provides a forum to address the gap between traditional curriculum and curriculum reforms. When infusing multicultural strategies into the curriculum, diverse students are provided the opportunity to demonstrate what they already know and what they are to be taught (Banks et al., 2001). Nevertheless, the success of the incorporating culture into the curriculum is based upon the teachers' preparation and perception. Teachers who examine their personal views should acknowledge the influence their experiences have on educating diverse students (Chicola, 2007).

The objective of the study was to determine the perceptions of middle school teachers in a large urban school district in central Arkansas regarding multicultural education. The purpose of this chapter was to describe a systematic approach to support or not support the following hypotheses:

1. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of male versus female teachers on multicultural orientation for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

2. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of male versus female teachers on multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

3. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of male versus female teachers on multiculturalism and perceived sense of community for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

4. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of male versus female teachers on multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

5. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of less experienced versus more experienced teachers on multicultural orientation for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

6. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of less experienced versus more experienced teachers on multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

7. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of less experienced versus more experienced teachers on multiculturalism and perceived sense of community for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

8. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of less experienced versus more experienced teachers on multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

9. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of teachers of color versus White/Caucasian on multicultural orientation for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

10. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of teachers of color versus White/Caucasian on multiculturalism and cultural relations among students and teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

11. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of teachers of color versus White/Caucasian on multiculturalism and perceived sense of community for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

12. No significant difference will exist between the perceptions of teachers of color versus White/Caucasian on multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for teachers in six middle schools in a large urban school district in Arkansas.

The components discussed in this chapter include (a) an explanation of the research design, (b) a description of the participants and the sample process, (c) a description of the survey instrument, (d) an explanation of the data collection procedures, (e) a justification of the analytical methods, and (f) a list of limitations.

Research Design

This quantitative, non-experimental research examined teachers' perceptions of multicultural education. Survey research is used to assess the preferences, attitudes, or interest of the target population (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2009). The specific group used for this study included the middle school teachers of an urban school district. The survey research design used in this study can be classified as cross-sectional. Although the cross-sectional survey was only administered once, it did provide an insight of the current attitudes in the target population (Gay et al., 2009).

The independent variables for the study were gender (male versus female) for the first four hypotheses, teacher experience (five years and less versus six years plus) for the second four hypotheses, and racial/ethnic identification (teacher of color versus White/Caucasian) for the last four hypotheses regarding the preparation and perception of multicultural education. The dependent variables for all the hypotheses were the measured perceived attitudes represented by the four components of a multicultural survey for middle school teachers in a large urban school district in central Arkansas. These components were multicultural orientation for Hypotheses 1, 5, and 9; multiculturalism and cultural relations among teachers and students for Hypotheses 2, 6, and 10; multiculturalism and perceived sense of community for Hypotheses 3, 7, and 11; and multiculturalism and sense of responsibility for Hypotheses 4, 8, and 12.

Sample

The sample identified for this study was middle school teachers from a large urban school district in central Arkansas. Although the school district has six middle schools and six high schools, only the six middle schools were invited to participate in this study. The selection was based upon the assumption that middle school teachers have the challenge of meeting the educational needs and the developmental changes of diverse students (Allison & Rehm, 2007). The demographic characteristics of the participants included gender, racial/ethnic identification, and years of teaching experiences.

Middle school teachers were selected as the participants. According to Clauss (2006), middle school teachers exhibit a commitment in addressing the academic and developmental needs of their students. For this study, participants were certified teachers responsible for sixth through eighth grade students. Although the teachers from the six middle schools were emailed a copy of the Multicultural Emphasis Inventory (MEI) survey, a hard copy was available for their use.

Of the approximately 300 surveys sent to the middle school teachers, only 111 teachers (37%) responded. The gender population of the middle school was 75% females and 25% males, which approximated the respondents' ratio of 79% female and 21% males. Within the district, 60% of the teachers had six years or more teaching experience and 45% had five years or less. Of those responding to the survey, 73% of the respondents had six years or more and 27% had five years or less. Of the potential participants in the six schools, the racial population was 77% White/Caucasian and 23% teachers of color. Similarly, the respondents were 71% White/ Caucasian and 29%

teachers of color. In contrast, the racial population of the students served by the pool of teachers was 52% White/Caucasian and 48% students of color.

<center>**Instrumentation**</center>

Multicultural Emphasis Inventory

McCray (2000) developed and validated the MEI, which was used to collect data for this study. Upon permission granted by McCray, the MEI was used to collect data pertaining to teacher's perception of multiculturalism. The inventory contains 23 statements followed by a 4-point Likert scale. The 4-point scale ranged from 4 (strongly agree) to 1 (strongly disagree) without a neutral choice. The MEI subscales included multicultural orientation, cross-cultural conflict management, communal spirit, and multicultural responsibility. These four subscales served as the dependent variables for the study. In addition, the demographic data collected from the participants included gender, race/ethnic identification, and years of teaching experience.

The MEI was piloted on a sample of 31 middle school teachers enrolled in professional development classes (McCray, 2000). Test analysis was performed on the inventory to determine the dimensionality and the internal reliability consistency. McCray reported the Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the multicultural orientation was .91, cross-cultural conflict management was .87, communal spirit was .74, and multicultural responsibility was .80. Overall, the Cronbach's coefficient alpha for the entire inventory was .90.

<center>**Data Collection Procedures**</center>

The researcher obtained approval from the Institutional Review Board (see Appendix A) prior to requesting permission from the district superintendent to conduct

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the study. After receiving approval, the researcher contacted each middle school administrator. Upon gaining support from all six administrators, the researcher contacted a representative from each school to assist with the process. Each representative received a packet containing a cover letter, informed consent forms, and the MEI. The informed consent form addressed voluntary participation, confidentiality, and the purpose of the study. Each representative distributed the informed consent forms to the teachers. The teachers were encouraged to sign the inform consent form and wait for an email from the researcher. The representative collected the forms and forwarded them to the researcher.

The researcher emailed all middle school teachers instructions on how to complete the online version or the hard copy of the MEI. Afterwards, the researcher contacted the representatives to inform them that the survey was online, and the teachers had been contacted via district email address. Representatives were encouraged to re-emphasize the importance of the survey. Periodically, the researcher emailed a reminder to the subjects to participate in the study.

The process began in November of 2012 and ended in January of 2013. During this time span, consideration was given for Thanksgiving Break and Winter Break, which in retrospect may have adversely affected the completion of the survey. Of the 111 teachers, only one teacher submitted a hard copy. After collecting the hard copy and closing the online version, all data collected were compiled.

Analytical Methods

IBM Statistical Packages for the Social Sciences (SPSS) Version 21 was used to analyze the data. The descriptive statistics for gender, racial/ethnic identification, and

years of experience provided means, standard deviations, and frequency distributions. To test the differences between groups, three one-way ANOVAs were performed.

One-way ANOVAs were used to conduct the appropriate statistical tests to support or reject the null hypotheses. The independent variables for the hypotheses were as follows: Hypotheses 1-4 was gender (male versus female); Hypotheses 5-8 was years of experience (five years and less versus six years plus), and Hypotheses 9-12 was racial/ethnic identification (teacher of color versus White/Caucasian). The dependent variables for all hypotheses were the four components of the MEI, which consisted of multicultural orientation, cross-cultural conflict management, communal spirit, and multicultural responsibility. The ANOVAs were used to evaluate the significance of mean differences on the dependent variable between the two levels of each independent variable (Mertler & Vannatta, 2005). The researcher used a two-tailed test with a .05 level of significance. However, to limit the possibility of committing at least one Type I error because of multiple statistical procedures, a modified Bonferroni correction was used. Given that three independent variables were used, the adjusted alpha to reject the null hypothesis was .05/3 or alpha = .017.

Limitations

In most research studies, limitations need to be noted to help the reader determine how to interpret the results of the studies. The following limitations were associated with this study. First, with any survey, participants have to choose to participate in the study. Participants were encouraged to complete an online survey, but the option not to participate was available. Even though every attempt was made to increase the responses, only 37% chose to respond; therefore, this could affect the generalizability of the results

to other middle schools in Arkansas. In addition, using an electronic version hindered the researcher's ability to monitor the number of participants per school.

Second, the researcher did not personally invite the teachers to participate in the study. A designee from each school distributed pertinent information to the teachers. Although the designee had a paper copy of the survey, teachers were encouraged to complete the online version of the survey. Due to the possibility that some teachers might not be computer literate, the results might not be representative of the opinions of all members of the accessible population.

Third, because the study dealt exclusively with middle school teachers, the results might not represent the opinions of other level teachers. Restricting the study to middle school teachers excluded the perceptions of elementary as well as secondary teachers. In addition, the teachers were also not representative of the population of the teachers in the secondary schools serving a wider range of student, namely, grades 6 through 12.

Fourth, the sample of teachers was predominately White/Caucasian and female, which limits the general perception of multicultural education. A more diverse population might have provided a different perspective. Historically, student populations are more diverse than teacher populations in most school setting. Therefore, students' perception of multicultural education would also have been beneficial to collect.

Fifth, the survey instrument used for the study was limited in scope regarding multicultural issues. Although the instrument measured the teachers' perceptions of multiculturalism, the instrument did not measure the level of implementation of some of the key components. Because it dealt with specific components of multiculturalism only, concepts such as instructional strategies, learning impact, and students' attitudes toward

these issues were not measured. Not surprisingly, using one instrument limited the ability

to measure other aspects of multiculturalism.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

This chapter provides the statistical analysis of a study of the perception of middle

school teachers on the infusion of multicultural education. The perception of

multicultural education was measured by the total scores of each of the four subscales of

the MEI. The four components of the MEI consisted of multicultural orientation, cross-

cultural conflict management, communal spirit, and multicultural responsibility.

The researcher used three independent variables for this study: gender (male

versus female) for Hypotheses 1-4, teacher experience (five years and less versus years

plus) for Hypotheses 5-8, and racial/ethnic identification (teacher of color versus

White/Caucasian) for Hypotheses 9-12. The dependent variables for the hypotheses were

the four components of the MEI. These components included multicultural orientation for

Hypotheses 1, 5, and 9; cultural relations for Hypotheses 2, 6, and 10; sense of

community for Hypotheses 3, 7, and 11; and sense of responsibility for Hypotheses 4, 8,

and 12.

The total scores for each component were calculated. Total multicultural

orientation consisted of Items 1-6, and total cultural relations consisted of Items 7-12.

Total sense of community consisted of Items 13-17, and total sense of responsibility

consisted of Items 18-23. The individual scores for each item of the components were

computed to reflect the strongly agree (4), mostly agree (3), mostly disagree (2), and

strongly disagree (1) on the 4-point Likert scale. Thus, for the components of

multicultural orientation, cultural relations, and a sense of responsibility consisting of six

items each, the score range was from 6 to 24. For the component of sense of community

consisting of five items, the score range was from 5 to 20. The SPSS program analyzed

the data using one-way ANOVAs and descriptive statistics. An alpha of .05 was used for

the analysis. However, to limit the possibility of committing at least one Type I error

because of multiple statistical procedures, a modified Bonferroni correction was used.

Given that three independent variables were used, the adjusted alpha to reject the null

hypothesis was .05/3 or alpha = .017.

Hypothesis 1-4

Hypothesis 1 stated that no significant difference will exist between the

perception of male and female teachers in multicultural orientation as measured by the

MEI. Item responses were totaled for statements 1-6; the total scale scores were normally

distributed, and no outliers were present. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to

determine if there was a significant difference based on gender on multicultural

orientation. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA.

The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was violated, $F(1, 109) = 7.17$, $p = .009$.

However, the robust tests of equality of means were not violated, $F(1, 28.37) = 0.49$, $p =$

.492. The results of the ANOVA are displayed in Table 1. Evidence failed to reject the

null hypothesis because no significant difference existed based on gender, $F(1, 109) =$

0.70, $p = .404$, $ES = 0.18$.

The second hypothesis stated that no significant difference will exist between the

perception of male and female teachers in cultural relations as measured by the MEI. The

total scale scores were normally distributed. Item responses for statements 7-12 were totaled; a few outliers were present, but the two mean values (14.59 and 14.64) were very similar. Given this fact, the cases remained in the data file. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 0.01$, $p = .905$. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference based on gender in cultural relations (See Table 1). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because no significant difference existed based on gender, $F(1, 109) = 0.002$, $p = .965$, $ES = 0.01$.

The third hypothesis stated that there is not a significant difference between the perception of male and female teachers in the sense of community as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 13-17 were totaled; the total scale scores were normally distributed, and no outliers were present. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 1.63$, $p = .204$. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if a significant difference existed between males and females (See Table 1). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because no significant difference existed based on gender, $F(1, 109) = 0.13$, $p = .721$, $ES = 0.08$.

The fourth hypothesis stated that there is not a significant difference between the perceptions of male and female teachers in the sense of responsibility as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 18-23 were totaled, and the total scale scores were normally distributed. Outliers were present, but the two mean values (13.82 and 13.73) were very similar. Given this fact, the cases remained in the data file. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for

homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 0.526$, $p = .470$. To determine if a significant difference existed between the male and female teachers, a one-way ANOVA was conducted (See Table 1). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because there was no significant difference based on gender, $F(1, 109) = 0.24$, $p = .622$, $ES = 0.11$.

Table 1

Descriptive Statistics and ANOVA Results for the Four Multicultural Emphasis Inventory Subtests with Gender as the Independent Variable

| | Gender | | | | | | |
| | Males (n = 23) | | Females (n = 88) | | | | |
MEI Subtest	M	SD	M	SD	F	p	ES
Multicultural Orientation	15.78	4.85	16.53	3.53	0.70	.404	0.18
Cultural Relations	14.57	2.57	14.59	2.48	0.002	.965	0.01
Sense of Community	12.00	4.09	11.72	3.18	0.13	.721	0.08
Sense of Responsibility	14.04	2.77	13.76	2.35	0.24	.622	0.11

Thus, as noted in Table 1, no significant differences existed between gender and the four dependent variables as measured by the MEI.

Hypothesis 5-8

The fifth hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of less experience (5 years or less) and more experience (6 years or more) teachers in multicultural orientation as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 1-6 were totaled; the total scale scores were normally distributed, and no outliers were present. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The

Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 0.83$, $p = .365$. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference based on years of experience in multicultural orientation. The results of the ANOVA are displayed in Table 2. Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because no significant difference existed based on years of experience, $F(1, 109) = 2.19$, $p = .142$, $ES = 0.33$.

The sixth hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference in cultural relations between the perceptions of the years of experience of less than five years and six years of experience as measured by MEI. Given this fact, the cases remained in the data file. Item responses for statements 7-12 were totaled, and the total scale scores were normally distributed. A few outliers were present, but the two mean values (14.59 and 14.64) were very similar. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 0.65$, $p = .421$. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference based on years of experience in cultural relations (See Table 2). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because there was no significant difference based on years of experience, $F(1, 109) = 2.05$, $p = .156$, $ES = 0.30$.

The seventh hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of less experienced teachers and more experienced teachers in the sense of community as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 13-17 were totaled; the total scale scores were normally distributed, and no outliers were present. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 0.54$, $p = .466$. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if a significant difference existed based upon years

of experience (See Table 2). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because there was no significant difference based on years of experience, $F(1, 109) = 2.82$, $p = .096$, $ES = 0.36$.

The eighth hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of less experienced teachers and more experienced teacher in the sense of responsibility as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 18-23 were totaled; the total scale scores were normally distributed. Outliers were present, but the two mean values (13.82 and 13.73) were very similar. Given this fact, the cases remained in the data file. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 0.410$, $p = .523$. To determine if a significant difference existed based on the years of experience, a one-way ANOVA was conducted (See Table 2). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because there was no significant difference based on years of experience, $F(1, 109) = 0.99$, $p = .766$, $ES = 0.06$.

Table 2

Descriptive Statistics and ANOVA Results for the Four Multicultural Emphasis Inventory Subtests with Years of Experience as the Independent Variable

| MEI Subtest | Experience | | | | | | |
| | 1-5 Years (n = 30) | | 6 Years + (n = 81) | | | | |
	M	SD	M	SD	F	p	ES
Multicultural Orientation	15.50	3.43	16.70	3.94	2.19	.142	0.33
Cultural Relations	14.03	2.66	14.79	2.41	2.05	.156	0.30
Sense of Community	10.90	3.46	12.10	3.30	2.82	.096	0.36
Sense of Responsibility	13.93	2.16	13.78	2.54	0.99	.766	0.06

Thus, as noted in Table 2, no significant differences existed between years of teaching experience and the four dependent variables as measured by the MEI.

Hypothesis 9-12

The ninth hypothesis stated that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of teachers of color and White/Caucasian teachers in multicultural orientation as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 1-6 were totaled; the total scale scores were normally distributed, and no outliers were present. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 0.04$, $p = .834$. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference based on race in multicultural orientation. The results of the ANOVA are displayed in Table 3. Evidence existed to reject the null hypothesis based on race, $F(1, 109) = 5.87$, $p = 0.17$, $ES = 0.51$. The result had a medium effect size.

Hypothesis 10 stated that there is no significance difference between the perceptions based on racial identification in cultural relations as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 7-12 were totaled, and the total scale scores were normally distributed. A few outliers were present, but the two mean values (14.59 and 14.64) were very similar. Given this fact, the cases remained in the data file. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 2.14$, $p = .146$. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if there was a significant difference based on race in cultural relations (See Table 3). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because there was no significant difference based on race, $F(1, 109) = 1.27$, $p = .262$, $ES = 0.23$.

Hypothesis 11 stated that there is no significant difference between the perceptions of teachers of color and White/Caucasian teachers in the sense of community as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 13-17 were totaled; the total scale scores were normally distributed, and no outliers were present. The test for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 2.30$, $p = .132$. A one-way ANOVA was conducted to determine if a significant difference exist based on race (See Table 3). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because no significant difference existed based on race, $F(1, 109) = 0.54$, $p = .465$, $ES = 0.17$.

The final hypothesis of this study stated that there is no significant difference between the perceptions based on racial identification in the sense of responsibility as measured by MEI. Item responses for statements 18-23 were totaled, and the total scale scores were normally distributed. Outliers were present, but the two mean values (13.82

and 13.73) were very similar. Given this fact, the cases remained in the data file. The test

for homogeneity of variances was conducted within the ANOVA. The Levene's test for

homogeneity of variance was not violated, $F(1, 109) = 0.00$, $p = .987$. To determine if a

significant difference existed based upon race, a one-way ANOVA was conducted (See

Table 3). Evidence failed to reject the null hypothesis because there was no significant

difference based on race, $F(1, 109) = 0.03$, $p = .876$, $ES = 0.03$.

Table 3

Descriptive Statistics and ANOVA Results for the Four Multicultural Emphasis Inventory Subtests with Race as the Independent Variable

	Race						
	Teachers of Color ($n = 32$)		White/Caucasian ($n = 79$)				
MEI Subtest	*M*	*SD*	*M*	*SD*	*F*	*p*	*ES*
Multicultural Orientation	17.83	3.97	15.87	3.66	5.87	.017	0.51
Cultural Relations	14.14	2.89	14.74	2.33	1.27	.262	0.23
Sense of Community	11.38	2.72	11.91	3.58	0.54	.465	0.17
Sense of Responsibility	13.76	2.47	13.84	2.43	0.03	.876	0.03

Thus, as noted in Table 3, no significant differences existed between race and three of the

four dependent variables as measured by the MEI. The only significant result was

between race and multicultural orientation.

Summary

In summary, no statistically significant differences existed between gender and the four component dependent variables as measured by the MEI. In addition, no statistically significant differences existed between years of teaching experience and the four dependent variables. Finally, no significant differences existed between race and three of the four dependent variables, but a difference did exist between race and multicultural orientation. For Hypothesis 9, perceptions of teachers of color, on average, were significantly higher on their sense of community as measured by MEI compared to the perceptions of their White/Caucasian counterparts.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION

Mushi (2004) described multicultural education as having a focus on curriculum, materials, race of learners, lesson plans, and strategies. Teachers are faced with the challenge of meeting the instructional and cultural needs of all students. Teachers are provided a curriculum, which might or might not integrate cultural diversity. Infusing multicultural education into the curriculum connects diverse students' experiences and the required curriculum. Teachers' perceptions and attitudes are important in providing a multicultural classroom setting. To create such environment, professional development must be provided. Professional development would provide the skills necessary to engage with learners of different cultural backgrounds (DeJaeghere & Zhang, 2008). Schools of education and school districts must prepare teachers for the challenges and rewards of meeting the instructional and social needs of diverse students.

The focus of this study was to determine the differences of how teachers' gender, teaching experience, and racial identification affected their perceptions on multicultural orientation, cultural relations, sense of community, and sense of responsibility. The teachers' perceptions were measured by the four subscales of the MEI. This chapter includes the conclusions based on the data collected and analyzed. Second, the implications and limitations of the study are discussed. Finally, recommendations for potential practice and future research are included.

Conclusions

Hypotheses 1-4

An analysis of Hypothesis 1 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on gender on perceptions of multicultural orientation. Incorporating multicultural information had the highest rate of agreement with 83% males and 82% females. Overall, the female teachers had a slightly higher total mean score compared to the male teachers; however, statistical significance was not achieved. Based on the results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 1. An analysis of Hypothesis 2 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on gender on perceptions of multiculturalism and cultural relations. The total mean scores were statistically similar between the male and female teachers. However, there was a discrepancy in regard to multicultural activities. More female teachers (86%) felt that the materials were not a burden; whereas, 70% of male teachers were comfortable with multicultural activities. A contributing factor to such discrepancy could be the low number of male participants (88 females versus 23 males). However, both gender agreed that multicultural activities and programs are necessary. Based on the results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 2. An analysis of Hypothesis 3 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on gender on perceptions of multiculturalism and perceived sense of community. According to 52% males and 55% females, the school's multicultural emphasis helps provide a sense of community. The impact of each school's multicultural emphasis might be due to the perception that 70% of males and females are not provided adequate collaboration in organizing multicultural programs. Although the male teachers had a slightly higher total mean score compared to

female teachers, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 3. An analysis of Hypothesis 4 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on gender in multiculturalism and sense of responsibility. Teachers agreed that it was the responsibility to provide students with multicultural information. Although 87% male and 92% female teachers posted multicultural images and information in their classroom, parents did not praise the school for their multicultural efforts. The male teachers had a slightly higher total mean score compared to female teachers. Based on the results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 4.

Hypotheses 5-8

An analysis of Hypothesis 5 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on years of experience on perceptions of multicultural orientation. Based on years of experience, 80% of inexperienced teachers with 5 years and less and 88% of experienced teachers with six years and more believed that multicultural education should be a part of the curriculum and lesson plans. Ironically, 47% of inexperienced teachers and 51% of experienced teachers thought that the multicultural emphasis made students and teachers accountable for their behavior. Teachers with six years or more experience had a slightly higher total mean score compared to teachers with five years or less experience. Based on the results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 5. An analysis of Hypothesis 6 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on years of experience on perceptions of multiculturalism and cultural relations. Years of experience did play a role in perceptions on some individual items of cultural relations. For example, 75% of experienced teachers thought that the school's multicultural emphasis helped students

learn from other's experience, whereas 63% of inexperienced teachers did not share that mindset. However, on other items, both groups did not consider participation in multicultural activities or programs a burden. Overall, the total mean scores were statistically similar between having six years or more and five years or less experience. Based on the results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 6. An analysis of Hypothesis 7 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on years of experience on perceptions of multiculturalism and perceived sense of community. Teachers with six years or more had a slightly greater sense of community. For example, 57% of experienced teachers compared to 50% of inexperienced teachers felt that the school's multicultural emphasis helped provide a sense of community. On another item, 77% of experienced teachers and 68% of inexperienced teachers were not involved inadequate collaboration in organizing multicultural programs and/or activities. Due to the lack of collaboration, it was not surprising that 64% of inexperienced teachers felt that different cultures are not given the same attention. Teachers with six years or more experience had a slightly higher mean score compared to teachers with five years or less. Based on results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 7. An analysis of Hypothesis 8 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on years of experience on perceptions of multiculturalism and sense of responsibility. Regardless of years of experience, teachers felt that they were responsible for providing students with multicultural information. Multicultural images and/or information are posted in classrooms in 93% of experienced teachers and 81% of inexperienced teachers. Surprisingly, 91% of inexperienced teachers received praise from parents for their multicultural efforts; whereas, 75% of experienced teachers did not receive praise from

parents. The total mean scores were statistically similar. Based on the results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 8.

Hypotheses 9-12

An analysis of Hypothesis 9 using a one-way ANOVA indicated a significant difference existed based on racial identity on perceptions of multicultural orientation. Teachers of color had a significantly higher total mean score compared to the White/Caucasian teachers with a medium effect size, which means the result has some measure of practical significance. However, 59% of the teachers of color and White/Caucasian teachers agreed that the school's multicultural emphasis set priorities in the classroom. Of the teachers, 75% of teachers of color agreed with the notion that the multicultural emphasis made teachers and students accountable for their behavior compared to 45% of the White/Caucasian teachers. Regardless of race, the teachers believed that multicultural education should be a part of the curriculum and the lesson plans. Based on the results, evidence existed to reject Hypothesis 9. An analysis of Hypothesis 10 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on racial identity on perceptions of multiculturalism and cultural relations. In reference to cross-cultural relations, 59% of teachers of color and 62% of White/Caucasian teachers felt that schools multicultural emphasis managed the cultural relations. According to 80% of White/Caucasian teachers and 73% of teachers of color, multicultural emphasis provided students with accurate information. Although White/Caucasian teachers had a slightly higher total mean score compared to teachers of color, the evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 10. An analysis of Hypothesis 11 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on racial identity on

perceptions of multiculturalism and perceived sense of community. White/Caucasian teachers had a slightly greater sense of community. For example, 55% of White/Caucasian teachers and 52% of teachers of color believed that a school's multicultural emphasis provided a sense of community. Regardless of race, teachers were not encouraged to collaborate in organizing multicultural programs and/or activities. The lack of collaboration might explain the perception of 62% teachers of color and 43% White/Caucasian teachers that different cultures are not given the same attention during the school year. The White/Caucasian teachers had a slightly higher total mean score compared to teachers of color. Based on the results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 11. An analysis of Hypothesis 12 using a one-way ANOVA indicated no significant differences existed based on racial identity on perceptions of multiculturalism and sense of responsibility. Teachers of color, at 93%, had a greater sense of responsibility of providing students with multicultural information in comparison to the 79% of White/Caucasian teachers. However, 92% White/Caucasian teachers and 86% of teachers of color posted multicultural images and/or information in the classroom. Although teachers involved students in creating multicultural activities, parents did not praise the school for their multicultural efforts. The total mean scores were statistically similar between the teachers of color and White/Caucasian teachers. Based on the results, evidence failed to reject Hypothesis 12.

<div align="center">**Implications**</div>

Gender

In this study, gender did not make a statistically significant difference in the perceptions of multicultural orientation, cultural relations, sense of community, and a

<div align="center">66</div>

sense of responsibility. Regardless of gender, the teachers agreed that multicultural classes in college helped them to be non-biased and inclusive. Such findings indicated a need for a systemic, strategic plan for higher education institutions with an emphasis on multicultural education. Researchers suggested that teacher education programs are capable of preparing teachers for diverse learners (Cwick et al., 2001; Grant & Wieczock, 2000). Unfortunately, some teacher education programs are not successful (Richard et al., 2007; Taylor, 2010). Teachers' willingness to offer alternative learning approaches could be the first step in meeting the needs of students.

Surprisingly, male teachers had a greater sense of community and responsibility. An action research study revealed that visiting a community could affect the teachers' multicultural viewpoint (Szabo & Anderson, 2009). In addition, field experiences can influence the teaching and learning of diverse students. Sogunro (2001) suggested integrating field trips, tours, and other cultural-related activities into the classroom setting. When teachers integrate cultural activities and collaborate with each other, students and teachers reap the benefits of a growing community.

Concerning responsibility, the teachers acknowledged the importance of the students' role. However, teachers do not believe that parents acknowledge the school as a support to the multicultural efforts. Obviously, the multicultural movement inadvertently omitted the parents' perspectives. To educate the whole child, parents and teachers are key players in the educational system.

Years of Experience

For this study purposes, the inexperienced teachers have five years and less, and the experienced teachers have six years and more in the teaching profession. Regardless

of years of experience, cultural relations and sense of responsibility were equally valued. The difference in cultural relations was in cross-cultural relations. Similarly, McCray (2000) stated that time spent in the profession influenced the commitment to cultural relations. Although teachers felt responsible for providing multicultural information, experienced teachers posted more multicultural images and information. A contributing factor is that inexperienced teachers have not accumulated as many materials in comparison to experienced teachers.

Although experienced teachers had a greater sense of multicultural orientation, inexperienced teachers believed that the multicultural emphasis held teachers accountable. According to Nieto (2003), celebratory practices can promote or hinder the learning of diverse students. Teachers can gain an understanding and/or insight about different cultures through professional and personal experiences. Experienced teachers are expected to be more resourceful. Sogunro (2001) agreed that a greater appreciation of culture develops when inexperienced teachers integrate cultural activities into the classroom.

Racial Identification

As mentioned earlier, there was a significant difference between teachers of color compared to White/Caucasian in multicultural orientation. Teachers of color agreed with all of the statements in the multicultural orientation subscale. The results supported the assumption that teachers of color used their racial identity as a tool to emphasize multicultural orientation. In contrast, Jones (2004) believed that the teachers' beliefs affect their practices and not their racial identity. Teachers' beliefs and racial identity

influenced the value of cultural relations. According to Joshi et al. (2005), teachers viewed culture through their personal experiences.

When different cultures are reflected in the community, teachers are obligated to demonstrate a heightened sense of community. Regardless of racial identity, multicultural emphasis helped provide a sense of community. Ironically, a similar study indicated that teachers of color had a greater sense of the importance of the community (McCray, 2000). In addition, teachers of color felt more responsible in providing students with multicultural information compared to White/Caucasian teachers. However, White/Caucasian teachers involved students in the process of gathering multicultural information. McNeal's (2005) findings suggested that teachers' multicultural practice have an effect on the level of implementation. Teachers involved in a practicum with a multicultural emphasis were better prepared to implement multicultural strategies. Teachers who were prepared in a multicultural teacher education program are competent in teaching diverse students (Cwick et al., 2001). Unfortunately, not all teacher education programs are providing necessary skills and knowledge to create a multicultural school setting (Sogunro, 2001). Although teacher education programs are crucial, teachers rely on their personal experiences to address culture (Joshi et al., 2005).

Recommendations

Potential for Practice/Policy

This study provided insight and information on the perceptions of multicultural education by gender, years of experience, and racial identification of teachers. This study was conducted in six middle schools in a large urban district in central Arkansas. The perceptions were measured with an emphasis on multicultural orientation, cultural

relations, sense of community, and a sense of responsibility. The findings of this study have implications of multicultural educational practices and policies in surrounding school districts in at least three ways.

First, districts should develop a comprehensive, strategic plan that promotes multicultural education in all schools. A strategic plan should include the following components: (a) actions that support multicultural education, (b) a process to achieve the actions, (c) persons responsible for monitoring the plan, and most importantly, (d) evidence of impact. The data/evidence could be used to support the district-wide multicultural plan. Data could also determine funding. Therefore, monetary support and embedded professional development are important components of a successful strategic plan. Multicultural education should not be viewed as another boxed program but as an educational reform to promote equity for all students, regardless of race, social class, exceptionality, and gender (Banks, 1993).

Second, schools should provide multicultural resources to teachers. If teachers cannot successfully infuse multiculturalism, schools are responsible for providing professional development. Professional development that connects students' experiences and curriculum creates the foundation for culturally responsive instruction (Au, 2009/2010). According to the results of this study, teachers agreed that professional development helped them not to use biased language or behavior. Richards et al., (2007) suggested that the professional development addresses culturally responsive approaches.

Third, teachers and principals should create a learning environment that addresses the needs of diverse students. Teachers must acknowledge the cultural background of the students. Mushi (2004) described multicultural education as a form of teaching that

encouraged students to view themselves as capable learners. Principals, the instructional leaders, are obligated to create a school culture that promotes multiculturalism. Principals should empower teachers to embrace multiculturalism.

Future Research Consideration

The findings from this study indicated the need to extend the survey to include teachers from middle and high schools. The sample size of the respondents did not provide substantial evidence to support the findings. Combining the secondary teachers would increase the probability and generalization of the results. Although this study focused on the teachers' perceptions, expanding the study to examine the perception of students could provide a different perspective.

There is a need for future research with a focus on teachers' preparation. A large number of the respondents agreed that multicultural classes in college or professional development were beneficial. A study is needed to investigate what courses were offered that had a direct influence on teachers' multicultural attitudes and knowledge. Given the importance of preparing teachers, documenting multicultural efforts of the teacher education program would also yield relevant data.

In addition to examining teacher education programs, researchers should observe teachers who have received training with a focus on culturally responsive strategies. Such study should also include how culturally responsive strategies are embedded into the curriculum. According to this study, approximately 54% of the respondents incorporated multicultural information in lesson plans. A longitudinal study could provide more data on the level of implementation of multicultural education.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

HARDING
U N I V E R S I T Y
INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD

Status of Request for Exemption from IRB Review
(For Board Use Only)

Date: October 2, 2012

Proposal Number: 2012 – 078

Title of Project: Effects of the Preparation and Perception of Middle School Teachers on the Infusion of Multicultural Education

Name and Contact Information for the Principal Investigator: John L. McCraney; jmccrane@harding.edu

■   Research exempted from IRB review.

☐   Research requires IRB review.

☐   More information is needed before a determination can be made. (See attachment.)

I have reviewed the proposal referenced above and have rendered the decision noted above. This study has been found to fall under the following exemption(s):

☐   ■   ☐   ☐   ☐   ☐
1   2   3   4   5   6

In the event that, after this exemption is granted, this research proposal is changed, it may require a review by the full IRB. In such case, a *Request for Amendment to Approved Research* form must be completed and submitted.

This exemption is granted for one year from the date of this letter. Renewals will need to be reviewed and granted before expiration.

The IRB reserves the right to observe, review and evaluate this study and its procedures during the course of the study.

Rebecca O. Weaver

Chair
Harding University Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B

Permission Letter to use the Multicultural Emphasis Inventory

Cheris Johnson McCray, Ph.D.
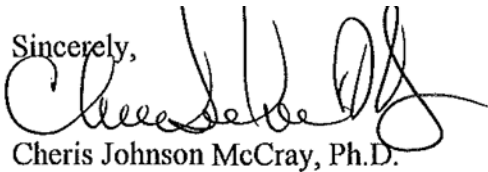
14611 Nevada Court

Fontana, California 92336

March 3, 2011

To Whom It May Concern:

STATEMENT OF CONSENT

I, Cheris Johnson McCray, Ph.D., give doctoral candidate, John McCraney permission to use the Multicultural Emphasis Inventory I developed for my doctoral dissertation entitled, An Exploratorv Study of Multiculturalism in Middle School Education and its Effect on Cultural Relations. At this time, McCraney is to use this original and copyrighted inventory explicitly for the purpose of completing her dissertation.

Sincerely,

Cheris Johnson McCray, Ph.D.