

EVALUATING THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERSONAL
AND PROFESSIONAL READINESS TO TEACH CULTURALLY AND
LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS

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NIKITA Mc CREE
Dr. Matthew Burns, Dissertation Supervisor

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The undersigned, appointed by the dean of the Graduate School, have examined the dissertation entitled

EVALUATING THE PERCEPTIONS OF PRE-SERVICE TEACHERS' PERSONAL
AND PROFESSIONAL READINESS TO TEACH CULTURALLY AND
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presented by Nikita Mc Cree,

a candidate for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy,

and hereby certify that, in their opinion, it is worthy of acceptance.

Professor Matthew Burns

Professor Timothy J. Lewis

Professor Melissa Stormont

Professor Wendy Reinke

Professor Amber L. Greene

DEDICATION

This Dissertation is dedicated to my parents Nedd and Patricia Mc Cree (deceased). Both my parents were educators and government workers who dreamt of a better life for their children and worked tirelessly to make that dream a reality for us. Thank you both for the sacrifices you made for me to achieve this milestone.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines preservice teachers from Historically Black Colleges and Universities and non-Historically Black Colleges and Universities and their perceptions of being personal and professional ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students with and without disabilities. Their exposure to the three characteristics of “teacher preparation for diversity” (Akiba, 2011) is also examined. Ninety-two preservice teachers from HBCUs and non-HBCUs across the United States completed a questionnaire about their experiences and perceptions of professional and personal readiness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Quantitative results showed that diverse field experiences, instructor modeling culturally responsive practices and town size were significant predictors of professional and personal readiness to teach culturally diverse students. Implications for teacher preparation programs and future research are discussed.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The cultural and linguistic diversity of K-12 students within the United States public school system is transforming drastically. By 2028, the enrollment of culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students in United States public schools is expected to increase by more than 25%. The most significant increases will most likely occur with Asian/Pacific Islander students (20%), Hispanic students (8%), and Black students (1%). In comparison, enrollment for White and American Indian /Alaska Native students is expected to decrease by 7% (Hussar & Bailey, 2020). This increase in student diversity juxtaposed with the racial composition of the current teaching workforce shows a stark contrast as more than 80% of elementary and secondary school teachers are identified as white (Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, 2020). A similar trend is noticeable in teacher preparation programs (TPP) as more than 70% of preservice teachers (PSTs) enrolled in teacher preparation programs (TPPs) at Institutes of Higher Education (IHE) in the 2018 academic year were white (US Department of Education, 2021). According to many in the field, this racially and culturally homogeneous saturation of the current teaching workforce has raised concerns regarding whether teachers with limited exposure to cross-cultural experiences can effectively educate CLD students. Commenting on the cultural makeup of teachers, Kahn et al. (2014) argued, “The majority of teaching professionals identify as White, female, heterosexual and middle-class with little to no experience working with diverse populations” (p.53). This reported lack of experience working with diverse populations is further exacerbated when most white PSTs attend teacher preparation programs taught primarily by white faculty members who are underprepared to teach multicultural education courses. These faculty members also

generally use preparative courses on multicultural education to fulfill students' cultural competency requirements (Sleeter, 2017; Keengwe, 2010).

Diller and Moule (2005) succinctly define "cultural competence" as a teacher's ability to effectively engage in cross-cultural teaching, which "entails developing certain personal and interpersonal awareness and sensitivities, learning specific bodies of cultural knowledge and mastering a set of skills that taken together underlie effective cross-cultural teaching" (p.2). Most importantly, it creates a sociopolitical consciousness and awareness of social justice issues, such as discrimination and prejudice, that typically affects culturally and ethnically diverse populations. This awareness can then prompt teachers to pursue equity, social justice, and equality for all groups and possibly create respect and appreciation of different perspectives and world views (Macqueen et al., 2020).

Having teachers with limited cross-cultural experiences and limited development of cultural competence has been shown to have several negative consequences for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Fergus, 2017). Firstly, teachers with limited cross-cultural experience and limited cultural competency may unknowingly misjudge and reject specific culture-related developmental mannerisms through which students develop academic fortitude, discipline, and ability (Keengwe, 2010). Secondly, teachers with limited cultural competence are also known to contribute to the unnecessary and inappropriate referral of culturally and linguistically diverse students to special education. They are more likely to conflate diversity with disability (Winzer & Mazurak, 2017), more likely to racialize disability, and typically allow their implicit biases to affect a decision to refer a student (Seidl & Pugach, 2009; Sleeter, 2008).

Statement of the Problem

A lack of cross-cultural experiences with PSTs has shown to contribute to racially- biased and stereotyped opinions and beliefs about culturally diverse groups (Glock, 2016).

These teacher beliefs which are believed to have been formed long before enrollment in TPPs through life experiences, also act as "a filter to knowledge, influences the framing of a problem or task, and guides the teacher's intention and action in the classroom" (Civitillo et al., 2018 p. 68). By failing to have the opportunity to challenge these beliefs, it may lead to incorrect beliefs about culturally diverse groups that can negatively impact teacher's instructional practices and by extension also negatively impact a students' learning environment (Keengwe, 2010, Civitillo et al., 2018). Therefore, professional and personal preparation of the next generation of PSTs must include opportunities for them to challenge the validity of any personal racially biased and stereotyped beliefs through the development of teacher preparation programs whose curricula infuses cultural competency and cross-cultural exposure into all educational aspects which will aid in developing "culturally responsive readiness" within our PSTs. Karatas and Oral (2017) defines culturally responsive readiness as being willing to "be cognitively, emotionally and behaviorally competent at the level of performance and behavior as a prerequisite for teaching in a classroom where students from different cultures are present" (p.247). Karatas and Oral (2017) separate culturally responsive readiness into two different components, *personal readiness*, and *professional readiness*. A PST who is personally ready "believes in the principle of social justice and equality ... is far from the ideas of discrimination and who is aware of ...the importance of diversity" (p.247). The

professionally ready PST can "carry out culturally responsive pedagogy during the learning/teaching process for students from different cultures" (p.247).

Conceptual Framework

Akiba (2011) identified three critical components/characteristics of a TPP, called *Teacher Preparation for Diversity*, that help to prepare culturally responsive teachers, (a) classroom as a learning community where collective dialogue and reflection on instruction and learning are encouraged (b) instructors who model culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), and (b) field experiences that help better understand diverse students. Students exposed to these three characteristics within their teacher prep program reportedly had improved attitudes towards multiculturalism, gained more knowledge about racism and cultural diversity, and felt more confident to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students (Akiba, 2011). The components of teacher preparation for diversity will provide the conceptual framework for this study.

Purpose of Study

This study will examine the extent of preservice teacher's exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity at Historically Black Colleges and Universities and non-Historically Black Colleges and Universities related to PSTs' perceptions of professional and personal readiness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. The study's findings will assist academic faculties, universities, and colleges in preparing preservice teachers to achieve cultural competency.

Research Questions

The following research questions will guide this study:

1. To what extent does institution type affect the self-reported prevalence of

exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity?

2. To what extent do institution type, preservice teacher background, and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (classroom as learning community, instructor modeling CRP, and field experiences) predict perceptions of being professionally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students?

3. To what extent do institution type, preservice teacher background, and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (classroom as learning community, instructor modeling CRP, and field experiences) predict perceptions of being personally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students?

Assumptions

The following assumptions are made regarding this study:

- 1) That participants will answer questions honestly and thoughtfully, and that their self-reports will be accurate.
- 2) That participants will accurately remember their experiences.
- 3) That both professional and personal readiness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students can be measured and that self-reports are valid indicators of each.
- 4) That both personal characteristics and factors associated with teacher preparation for diversity will each play a role in readiness.

Limitations

There are a few limitations inherent to the study design. The study utilizes a self-report method to investigate whether preservice special education teachers feel ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students in a classroom. PSTs may overestimate their capability or preparedness to teach in a culturally diverse classroom, and therefore

responses may not accurately reflect their actual ability to teach a culturally diverse classroom (Hsiao, 2015).

A second limitation with any questionnaire is the lack of student participation. While the current pandemic has brought more emphasis to online communication, there is still the motivation factor to consider when recruiting participants for an online questionnaire. Lastly, while the aim is to assess PSTs' readiness to use culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom, there is no certainty of their instructional habits in the field or the extent to which they incorporated culturally responsive practices within their classroom.

Delimitations

Due to the paucity of literature regarding this specific class of educators and institution, this study focused specifically on special education teachers in their final year of their teacher education program in Historically Black Colleges and Universities. This study also centers on retrospection and not observation.

Definition of Key Terms

Culturally Responsive Readiness. The teacher candidate's sense of being cognitively, emotionally, and behaviorally competent is a prerequisite for teaching in a classroom where students from different cultures are present (Karatas & Oral, 2017).

Personal Readiness. The extent to which PSTS self-reflect, acknowledge, and challenge their biases within the classroom and still be fair in their educational support. Their acknowledgment and support of Social Justice issues and their expectations for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Karatas & Oral, 2017).

Professional Readiness. The extent to which PSTs are aware of systemic issues that can affect culturally and linguistically diverse students and how capable they are to consider cultural differences such as language into the learning-teaching process and prepare lessons and create a class environment that can (Karatas & Oral, 2017)

PSTs. Preservice Teachers – an individual enrolled in a teacher preparation program working towards certification or licensure.

Cultural competence. The ability to analyze professional beliefs and expectations of minority cultures and use these reflections and apply them in the fight for social injustice (Diller & Moule, 2005, Macqueen et al., 2020)

Intercultural Competence. The ability to communicate effectively and appropriately in intercultural situations (Deardorff, 2006, p.247-248).

Historically Black Colleges and Universities. Institutions that were established prior to 1964 with the principal mission of educating Black Americans (Aud et al., 2010).

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students are significantly overrepresented in special education and are unnecessarily and inappropriately referred for special education services by teachers who lack cultural competence, conflate diversity with disability (Ferri & Connor, 2005; Grant & Barger-Anderson, 2009; Anastasiou & Kauffman, 2012; Winzer & Mazurak, 2017), racialize disability, and who have implicit biases that affect the referral decision (Artiles, 2013; Seidl & Pugach, 2009; Sleeter, 2008; Sleeter, 2017). As a result, students without disabilities are wrongfully removed from the general education setting, leading to limited access to the general education curriculum. Removal from the classroom has shown to result in poor matriculation rates and a lower quality of life as these students' educational experiences differ from their peers who are not referred to special education (White et al., 2021; Brown et al., 2019).

This chapter will summarize research around two points. First, the characteristics of culturally incompetent teachers such as their racialization of disability and conflation of diversity with a disability will be discussed. Second, the definitions of personal and professional readiness of PSTs to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students will also be discussed. Finally, the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity at teacher preparation programs at Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and non-Historically Black Colleges and Universities (non-HBCUs) will be examined.

The Racialization of Disability

In the literature on teacher preparation and multicultural education, racialization of disability is just one of the symptoms of a culturally incompetent teacher educator or

preservice teacher. Currently, there are federal policies in place to prevent the overrepresentation of minoritized students in special education. The Individuals with Disabilities Improvement Act (IDEA, 2004) monitors disproportionality and identifies districts with a disproportionate overrepresentation of students. IDEA requires schools to spend 15% of Part B federal funds on early intervening services (like Professional Development) when significant disproportionality is found. However, this has had its complications with interpretations of the law at both state and local levels, confusing the interpretation of disproportionality levels within a district (Albrecht et al., 2012). Debates continue about the best and most accurate way to interpret disproportionality.

Many scholars hold the view that although racial segregation was abolished more than 60 years ago under *Brown v. Board of Education* 1954, the racial segregation of Black and White students continues to be perpetuated under disability labels (Proffitt, 2022, Kholi et al., 2017). It is also thought that this modern-day segregation is most likely facilitated through a concept called “status competition” where “dominant groups often vacate high-status categories only to move up to new, more advantageous categories as subordinate groups strive to catch up and emulate” (Skrtic et al., 2021, p.4). Status competition could be relevant to mild-disability category identification, where disabilities are ranked according to their level of stigmatization (Ferri & Connor, 2005; Skrtic et al., 2021). For example, less stigmatizing disabilities are labeled "high-status disability" categories and are mostly populated by white students, while more stigmatizing disabilities are labeled "low-status disability" categories and are populated by culturally and linguistically diverse students (Skrtic et al., 2021). For example, Attention Deficit Hyperactive Disorder (ADHD) and Autism are usually considered high-

status disabilities (Skirtic et al., 2021) and the plurality of students with those disabilities are white (National Center for Education Statistics, 2022). Conversely, Specific Learning Disability (SLD), Emotional Disturbance (ED) and Intellectual Disability (ID) are usually considered low-status disability categories (Ferri & Connor, 2005; Skrtic et al., 2021), and culturally and linguistically diverse students are over-represented in these disability categories (de Brey et al., 2019). This concept of high and low status disability categories was first noted in the 1960s when learning disability category was viewed by parents as a high-status alternative to ID and ED. “Schools used ID and ED to explain why lower class and minority children could not keep up with the general curriculum in regular classrooms. LD, by contrast, carried a lower risk for removal from these classes ... LD helped maintain the superiority of white culture and facilitated better academic outcomes” (Skrtic et al., 2021, p.3). By using the educational processes as the premise, this attempt at modern day segregation could be viewed as more palatable in the continued marginalization of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Ferri & Connor, 2005).

Conflating Diversity with Disability

Another potential symptom of cultural incompetence is the conflation of diversity with disability. This occurs when the process of acculturation takes place and is (mis)identified by educators who view a student’s manifestation of linguistic or cultural diversity as a deficit (Brown et al., 2019; Hoover, 2012).

Accordingly, Merriam Webster (n.d.) dictionary defines “acculturation” as the “cultural modification of an individual, group or people by adapting to or borrowing traits from another culture.” This process of culturally and linguistically diverse students

acculturating to a new school climate being misconstrued as a disability, is typically seen when teachers mistake the student's manner of movement, behavioral response, or linguistic style and interpret them as symptomatic of a disability such as an emotional disturbance (ED) or a learning disability (LD) (Neal et al., 2003). An example of this is commonly seen in emerging bilingual students whose attempt to acculturate to a new culture and language, manifests as academic and behavioral difficulties and are misinterpreted as signs of a specific learning disability (Hoover, 2012). With the proper preparation in teacher preparation programs, teachers will be able to differentiate whether a student is displaying characteristics of "acculturation" or a specific learning disability. By effectively developing preservice teachers who can differentiate these salient differences, it can reduce the overrepresentation of culturally and linguistically diverse students with and without disabilities in Special Education and the effects this misidentification has on their quality of life, contributing to low matriculation and employment rates (Brown et al., 2019; Cavendish et al., 2015).

Implicit Biases

Most teachers and preservice teachers (PSTs) are white middle-class females with limited exposure to culturally and linguistically diverse students or quality multicultural curriculum (Kayaalp, 2019; Sleeter, 2017; Yuan, 2018). Thus, many PSTs may have problems relating to culturally and linguistically diverse students and, at times, may not be challenged to identify or confront their biases in their program (Hancock et al., 2017; Shah & Cole, 2020). A failure in helping PSTs identify and confront their biases could be problematic. For instance, some white PSTs fail to understand social justice issues and systemic racism, and the manifestation of racial inequality in schools (Swartz, 2003;

Ullucci & Battey, 2011), and may have deficit views that impact the academic expectations held for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Swartz, 2003; Ullucci & Battey, 2011). These unchallenged beliefs have also been shown to contribute to teachers more likely to consider culturally and linguistically diverse students such as Black, Hispanic and Native American students as having a disability compared to their white classmates, with Blacks students having 1.56 times the odds of being identified as having a disability compared to their white peers (Cooc, 2017). Teachers may also be more inclined to endorse a color-blind approach in teaching, denying the impact race has on instruction, and, due to a lack of cross-cultural exposure, fail to recognize themselves as cultural beings resulting in not realizing the importance of culture in the education and lives of their students (Sleeter, 2008).

Fergus (2017) also identified three types of bias-based beliefs relevant for practitioners to understand: color-blindness, deficit-thinking, and poverty disciplining. Accordingly, color-blindness is the failure to regard a person's membership of a specific race to manage potential race-related issues such as prejudice and discrimination (Apfelbaum et al., 2012). Deficit-thinking is believed to be attributing the failure of low-income minority students to internal characteristics such as low-level intelligence instead of systemic issues ingrained in the educational system that is designed to prevent students of a particular race from learning (Valencia, 2010, 2012). Poverty disciplining is thought to be the belief that poor students have maladjusted behaviors that can only be reformed through harsh punishment (Fergus, 2019). To date, there are very few studies that have examined the pervasiveness and application of these bias-based beliefs amongst practitioners. Training institutions can help PSTs be critical of dogmatic power dynamics

to understand the systemic issues that contribute to the academic underachievement of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Cherng & Davis, 2019). However, how often TPPs adopt social justice frameworks for training is unknown.

Teacher Preparation Programs

Teacher Preparation Programs (TPPs) are necessary to the development of effective and high-quality teachers as they prepare preservice teachers (PSTs) to have "a foundation of knowledge about pedagogy and subject matter while providing clinical classroom experience" (Feur et al., 2013, p.1). Under federal law, PL 114-95, also known as The *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA; 2015), high-quality teachers are supposed to be well-versed in their content area. They have also shown that they can improve student academic achievement and performance. Regarding diverse students, ESSA also requires PSTs to meet state and local certification requirements for teaching English language learners (ELLs) and improve their teaching skills to meet the diverse needs of ELLs, including how to implement effective curricula and programs on teaching ELL students. (PL 114-95). Despite these federal mandates, culturally and linguistically diverse students continue to make up most referrals for high-status disability categories like emotional behavior disorders (EBD), specific learning disabilities (SLD) and intellectual disabilities (ID) and are still among the lowest academic performers for literacy (White et al., 2021).

Teacher Preparation and Diverse Students

The responsibility falls on TPPs better to equip PSTs with the awareness and instructional strategies to effectively deal with characteristics of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Gupta, 2010). Gupta (2010) conducted a study regarding African American English (AAE), which is a unique dialectical variation of standard

English used by most Black people in the United States of America (Diehm & Hendricks, 2021; Gupta 2010). Elementary school teachers reported feeling unprepared by their TPPs to teach and address the linguistic needs of students that spoke AAE in the classroom and expressed their desire to learn more pedagogical strategies to address the language needs of their Black students (Gupta, 2010). Additionally, Gupta (2010) found that 55% of the teachers attributed AAE as one of the contributing factors of the Black-White Achievement Gap. While AAE has its unique linguistic markers, its language structure includes many syntactic errors, including mismatched subject-verb agreement (e.g., We not finna go) and double negatives (e.g., We ain't got no extra food; Diehm & Hendricks, 2021; Gupta, 2010). Moreover, while poor subject-verb agreement does not signal a learning disability, educators misunderstand and misidentify the characteristics of AAE. As a result, educators interpret the linguistic characteristics of AAE as a disability instead of it being a byproduct of acculturation (Gupta, 2010).

TPPs differ from state to state, with each state having the autonomy of creating its guidelines and policy requirements for teacher preparation programs. However, while the federal government requires TPPs to prepare teachers to teach ELL students effectively, research shows many of these programs offer foundational diversity courses that have no depth and fail to address systemic issues that cause racial disparities in the educational system (King & Butler, 2015; Lewis et al., 2017). TPPs are often not audited, causing a lack of understanding of the theoretical foundation used in programs and whether faculty are interweaving theory in their courses (Goodwin, 2017). For example, multicultural education is filled with terms that can be conceptually vague and misused and used interchangeably (e.g., multicultural education; Trent et al., 2008; Webb-Johnson et al.,

1998). These terms are also being infused inaccurately in and outside the classroom by faculty who are not versed in the terminology nor are prepared to deal with the discomfort that discussions on topics regarding systemic racism bring (He & Cooper, 2009; King & Butler, 2015; Webb-Johnson et al., 1998). Effectively designing TPPs to address systemic issues can ensure educational equality, academic achievement, and support to all children regardless of race, denomination, gender, or class (Goodwin et al.; 2017).

Research shows some TPPs are failing to train PSTs to become advocates of culturally and linguistically diverse students (Goodwin, 2017; He & Cooper, 2009). This failure to train PSTs is seen through their failure to teach PSTs to question the status quo by asking why culturally and linguistically diverse students are behind academically and what they should and can do to remedy it (Cho & Herner-Patnode, 2020; Goodwin, 2017; King & Butler, 2015). One aspect preventing culturally and linguistically diverse students from falling behind is ensuring TPPs provide field placements that will allow PSTs exposure to culturally and linguistically diverse students. Most TPPs are not providing field experiences that allow PSTs exposure to these types of students. As a result, they fail to develop communicative skills that can be developed through exposure to different cultural communities. This results in PSTs having low self-efficacy when communicating with students different from themselves and their families because they do not see themselves as cultural beings (Cho & Herner-Patnode, 2020). Additionally, this low self-efficacy regarding cultural awareness and competence was also noted by He and Cooper, (2009) who found teachers felt comfortable discussing and implementing school rules but felt uncomfortable applying culturally responsive practices in their curriculum or class

instruction (He & Cooper, 2009). Let us now consider discussing the importance of historically black colleges and universities (HBCU) in the discussion on teacher preparation.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities and Teacher Preparation

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) were originally built to educate Blacks, advance social justice, community service, and engagement, and maintain cultural identity (Harper & Mawhinney, 2017; Lee, 2019). Black educators continue to make up a small percent (7%) of the teaching workforce (Irwin et al., 2021), and 16% of Black students in teacher preparation programs attend an HBCU (US Department of Education, 2016). Advocates of HBCUs argue that the impression exclusive of the Black culture is limited due to many reasons, including a lack of cultural appreciation for the Black culture outside the Black race (Dilworth, 2012).

Few studies have investigated whether teacher preparation programs at HBCUs were adequately preparing their preservice teachers to engage in culturally responsive pedagogy. Due to research showing the positive effects that Black and Hispanic teachers have on the academic success of students of related ethnic groups (Redding, 2019; Scott et al., 2019), there is the assumption that Black educators are already culturally responsive and, as such, have no need to be taught about culturally responsive pedagogy (Dilworth, 2012; Jackson, 2015). However, Jackson (2015) found that preservice teachers of color at a predominantly white institution (PWI) felt ill-prepared to teach diverse students due to a lack of instruction on CRP because the topic of race and CRP was addressed superficially by most of their teachers, which was attributed to a lack of diverse faculty members and an inability to teach the subject due to a lack of subject

matter knowledge. While the former study results do not speak specifically to HBCUs, Lee (2019) examined 7 HBCU teacher preparation programs to determine their efficacy in preparing their PSTs. However, that study revolved around descriptive information and supporting documentation found on the Universities' websites to determine if their programs were effective. As a result, limited research shows if the teachers prepared to teach at an HBCU feel adequately prepared to use CRP in diverse classrooms.

The rationale for evaluating the differences in teacher preparation practices between the two institutions was based on two factors: the first was the historical significance of both institutions. The first Historically Black College/Institution was established nearly two hundred years ago post U.S. civil war. The mission of this HBCU and others created thereafter, was birthed from the need to empower, and liberate the newly freed slaves, who found themselves uneducated and illiterate after the abolishment of slavery. By violently removing their access and a right to an education, slave masters disempowered the black slave through illiteracy, which was one of the ways slave masters sought to control and break the spirits of enslaved African Americans. Even though slavery was abolished, it still took some time for black students to be welcomed at educational institutions, thus the HBCU was born, where black people could receive a just and fair education. Consequently, at that time, education was a privilege viewed only for white upper middle-class citizens, with the curriculum of most educational institutions promoting white ethics, attitudes, and beliefs (Alexander-Snow, 2010). Which most scholars argue, most non-HBCU institutions are still unable to do (Kaler-Jones et al., 2022).

Presently, the demographics at both HBCU and non HBCU institutions have drastically changed; with the population of each institution no longer resembling the demographic they each were initially created for. HBCU institutions are now enrolling more white students than black students and vice versa. Several factors are associated with this rise in enrollment of white students at HBCUs. The first is, there are currently 101 functioning HBCUs, 95 of which are in the south, 4 in the Midwest and 2 in the Northeast (National Center for Education Statistics, 2019). Consequently, with the majority of HBCU's primarily located in the south and there being a much larger amount of PWI's located all over the United States, access to these PWIs is preferred over an HBCU experience.

Gassman (2013) supports findings from previous research that found there is an overwhelming number of whites at HBCUs. The researcher had an expectation of finding a larger and more diverse sample of black preservice teachers at HBCU institutions and that proved to be false, as the two HBCUs the researcher visited in the Midwest had a predominantly white cohort, with 70% of the preservice teachers being white. What the researcher was expecting to see was a larger sample of black preservice teachers at these HBCUs. It was somewhat surprising to the researcher that this note in racial demographics was found at an institution specifically created for Black students. While results for this study showed there were no significant differences in exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation between PSTs in HBCUs and Non-HBCUs, this homogeneity in racial demographics can be viewed as a strong and most likely contribution to the lack of differences between institution means during the statistical analysis.

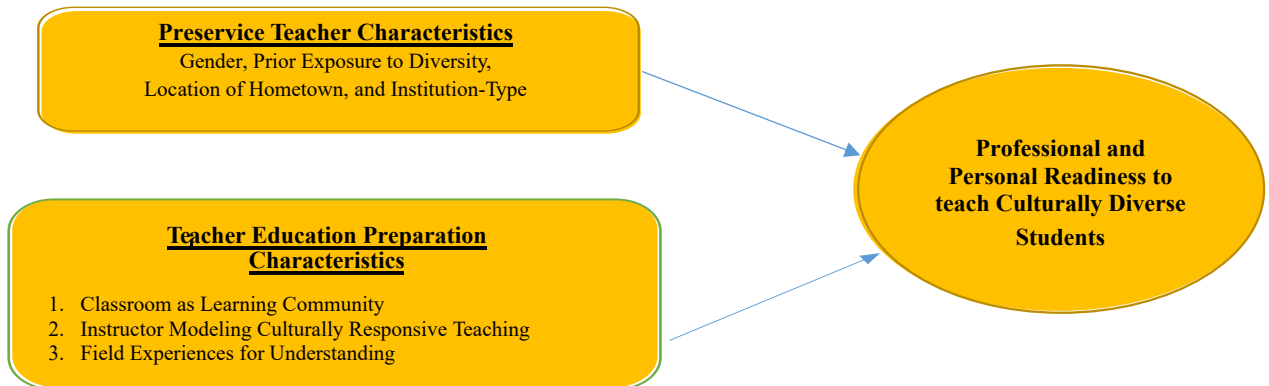
The second rationale for evaluating the differences in teacher preparation practices between the two institutions was connected to many teacher preparation programs giving into the pressure to create a more diversity-centered program. However, many programs may have added multicultural and diversity courses to their program without having instructors and faculty members who are not sufficiently knowledgeable on diversity. Thus, making them unable to guide, explain and prepare preservice teachers in the classroom and in praxis about diversity, multicultural education and culturally responsive pedagogy is.

Preparing Teachers for Diversity

Akiba (2011) identified three critical components/characteristics of a TPP, called “teacher preparation for diversity,” that help to prepare culturally responsive teachers, (a) classroom as a learning community where collective dialogue and reflection on instruction and learning are encouraged, (b) instructors who model culturally responsive teaching, and (c) field experiences that help better understand diverse students. Students exposed to these three characteristics within their teacher prep program reportedly had improved attitudes towards multiculturalism, gained more knowledge about racism and cultural diversity, and felt more confident to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students (Akiba, 2011).

The model in Figure 1 illustrates the connection between three components outlined by Akiba (2011) and personal background variables to contribute to personal and professional readiness to teach culturally diverse students. The model will serve as the framework for the study, and the three components are discussed in more detail in the following pages.

Figure 1. *Hypothesized Relationship Between Preservice Teacher Characteristics, Teacher Education Preparation Characteristics (Akiba, 2011), and Readiness to Teach Culturally Diverse Students.*



Classroom as a Learning Community

The topic of learning communities within teacher preparation programs produced dated and few articles. Gabelnick et al., (1990) expressed a learning community as a collaborative approach to teaching and learning that "purposefully restructured the curriculum to link courses together so students could make connections academically as well as interpersonally through relationship building with faculty and classmates. Lipman (1993) states a learning community is about "converting the classroom into a community of inquiry in which students listen to one another with respect, build upon one another's ideas, challenge one another to supply reasons for otherwise unsupported opinions, assist each other in drawing inferences from what has been said and to seek to identify one another's assumptions" (p.15).

Turning a classroom into a learning community inside a teacher preparation program can help create culturally competent teachers ready for diversity. Creating a learning community for a group of diverse freshmen in a TPP resulted in a feeling of community and support among participants who received feedback, support, and mentorship from instructors and also provided support to their colleagues (Costello & Stahl, 1996). The feeling of community and cultural pluralism was fostered in the classroom when students were asked to share personal narratives and apply them to the learning process and engage in dialogue that was centered on institutional racism and its impact on oppressed groups, especially within the school system. At the end of the study, the second-year retention rate was higher, and the students had higher cumulative GPA (Costello & Stahl, 1996).

If teachers are to be able to successfully interact with members of diverse members of society, they may first need to successfully interact with members of their learning community, thus making the learning community an integral part of the preservice teaching experience. A learning community could counteract feelings of loneliness, judgment, and secrecy by creating a social connection to colleagues established through a willingness to share (Cookson, 2005). It also may help teach tolerance and promotes collaboration, which is essential to developing cultural competence competency.

Field Experiences for Understanding Diverse Students

Assigning PSTs to field experiences in diverse classroom settings is a mandatory component of preparing teachers who feel culturally competent with instructing culturally and linguistically diverse students. Bloom and Peters (2012) measured teachers' efficacy

levels and their White Racial Identity (WRI) and found that teachers' efficacy levels decreased when placed in a room with Black students when they became more aware of their WRI. The more their awareness of white privilege and racial inequities increased, their teaching efficacy in using instructional strategies and classroom management for diverse students decreased.

For some teachers, being placed in a diverse classroom within a field experience is the only opportunity to challenge unconscious biases and internalized misconceptions they may have developed about students from different racial and ethnic backgrounds and cultures. White PST experienced cognitive dissonance when their preconceived beliefs about students from different racial backgrounds were proven false after interacting and developing relationships with them (Eisenhardt et al., 2012). These findings suggest that PSTs are possibly not given opportunities within their TPPs to discuss and confront characteristics of racial inequality like unconscious bias, "whiteness," and the potential impact on the education of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Moreover, white preservice teachers reportedly felt more comfortable discussing racism and institutional racism after a service-learning experience with diverse schools (Coffey, 2010).

Instructor Teaching Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Teacher preparation programs are paramount to the successful development of culturally responsive teachers (Karatas & Oral, 2017) and thus there is a necessity to ensure TPPs have instructors who are capable of teaching culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP). There is a common complaint among teachers that while research shows CRP is imperative in successfully preparing PSTs to be culturally competent, there is confusion about how to apply CRP in the classroom (Griner & Stewart, 2012; Howard &

Rodriguez-Scheel, 2017). The term CRP was first popularized by Ladson-Billings (1995) after she found there was no language of excellence associated with identifying black students' academic achievement. She developed CRP to be used as "a theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate" (p.469). She acknowledged the necessity of CRP being used by teachers of diverse and marginalized students as it encouraged the development of their socio-political consciousness making them aware and change agents of social inequities that are more likely to affect historically marginalized groups.

Gay (2018) expanded the definition to define CRP as "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant and effective for them" (p.36). In her expansion of the pedagogy, she also created eight distinguishing qualities of the CRP framework: it is validating, comprehensive and inclusive, empowering, transformative, emancipatory, humanistic, normative and ethical, and multidimensional (Gay, 2018).

When applied to the classroom, CRP has been shown to have positive effects. Culturally and linguistically diverse (CLD) students exposed to an integrated reading comprehension strategy through a culturally responsive teaching framework increased their mean scores for word recognition, reading comprehension, and story retell increased significantly (Bui & Fagan, 2013). However, 0% of teacher preparation candidates who were surveyed reported being very familiar with the teaching approach, 15% of students

reported being unfamiliar with it, and 63% reported only limited knowledge of CRP pedagogy (Samuels et al., 2017).

Personal and Professional Readiness

Personal and professional readiness is essential in ascertaining PSTs have developed a culturally responsive pedagogical perspective in the classroom. Thus, leading to instructional/curricula content that bolsters academic achievement by including students' cultural perspective and diversity and improving PSTs cognizance of how momentous the role social justice or lack thereof plays in the CLD student experience.

Karatas and Oral (2017) applied the terms *personal readiness* and *professional readiness* to their developmental of the *Cultural Responsive Teaching Readiness* scale, which they designed to measure the cultural responsive teaching readiness level of PSTs. The term "*personal readiness*" embodies a multitude of concepts such as emotional and cognitive competency to teach students from different cultures and a sociopolitical consciousness that considers the impact discrimination can have on diverse groups, equality, and social justice. According to a definition provided by Karatas and Oral (2017) *personal readiness* measures PSTs cognitive and emotional readiness as an individual concerning enabling the learning-teaching process for individuals with different cultural responses and includes the measurement of a PST's belief in the principle of social justice and equality, their stance on discrimination and their awareness and acknowledgment of the importance of cultural diversity.

Professional or occupational readiness also measures the degree of vocational pedagogical knowledge and the level of contribution to the professional readiness of the classroom teacher degree program so that PSTs can create a learning-teaching process in

the classroom environment for students with different cultural responses (Karatas & Oral, 2017). Nevertheless, for this study, *professional 4eadiness* will measure PSTs ability to incorporate/utilize culturally responsive pedagogy during the learning/teaching process for culturally and linguistically diverse students.

Readiness has shown to develop through exposure to practical training and exposure to CRT but also in multi-cultural/culture-oriented course enrollment that discuss theoretical knowledge and how to apply that knowledge to implement CRP teaching practices (Moore et al., 2021; Ozudogru, 2018; Zorba, 2020). Effects of increasing readiness results in improvement in cultural awareness knowledge, skills and abilities related to CRP and an increase in culturally responsive classrooms (Moore et al., 2021).

Current Study

Based on the results attained by Akiba (2011), this present study hypothesizes that preservice teachers exposed to these three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity at HBCUs would be more professionally and personally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. The model in Figure 1 does assume that personal background has a larger or weaker effect on readiness than factors associated with teacher preparation for diversity because this is the first study of its kind that examines both. However, I hypothesize that both will play a role in readiness.

To add to the literature, preservice teachers, in their third and 4th year at TPPs from HBCUs and non-HBCU institutions were assessed to determine (a) how often they were exposed to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity and (b) the extent to which they felt professionally and personally ready to meet the needs of

culturally and linguistically diverse students. Data obtained from these aims will be used to address the following research questions:

1. To what extent does institution type affect the self-reported prevalence of exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity?
2. To what extent do institution type, preservice teacher background, and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (classroom as learning community, instructor teaching CRP, and field experiences) predict perceptions of being professionally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students?
3. To what extent do institution type, preservice teacher background, and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (classroom as learning community, instructor teaching CRP, and field experiences) predict perceptions of being personally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students?

CHAPTER III: METHOD

The purpose of this study was to examine the extent to which there were differences in exposure to the three characteristics for teacher preparation reported among teachers at HBCU and non HBCU institutions, and their effect on preservice teachers' (PSTs) professional and personal readiness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Specifically, the following three questions were addressed:

1. To what extent does institution type affect the self-reported prevalence of exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity?
2. To what extent do institution type, preservice teacher background, and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (classroom as learning community, instructor teaching culturally responsive pedagogy [CRP], and field experiences) predict perceptions of being professionally ready to teach culturally diverse students?
3. To what extent do institution type, preservice teacher background, and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (classroom as learning community, instructor teaching CRP, and field experiences) predict perceptions of being personally ready to teach culturally diverse students?

Research Design

The study used a correlational design with a questionnaire to investigate preservice teachers' exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity and their perceptions of professional and personal readiness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. Questionnaires are among the more common methods in examining the readiness and beliefs of preservice teachers (PSTs) (e.g., Dee & Henkin, 2002; Manasia et al., 2019; Moon et al., 1999). Groulx (2001) used a questionnaire in the

evaluation PSTs perceptions of marginalized or minority students. However, there are certain drawbacks to the use of a questionnaire correlational design research method including non-response errors, difficulty in reading, interpreting the words and social desirability bias.

Participants

The participants for the study were 92 PSTs in their 3rd or 4th year of preservice training studying to work with students with and without disabilities at HBCU and Non-HBCUs across the United States. Respondents completed a questionnaire via Qualtrics over the course of 6 months from March 2022 to September 2022. In total, 116 survey responses were received. Follow up calls and campus visits to two of the participating institutions were made to ensure participant participation. Campus visits to two of the institutions occurred due to their proximity to researcher. Attempts to make campus visits to two other institutions in proximity were also made, but requests for campus visits were rejected due to it being close to the end of semester. All demographic information were self-reported, and participation was voluntary. There were minimal risks identified for participants, and respondents were entered into a drawing for a \$50 gift card as an offer for participating.

Of the 116 potential respondents, 23 did not complete the questionnaire (i.e., marked that they agreed to participate but did not complete any other items) and one selected the same response for every item and was removed from the dataset. After data cleaning to include completed survey responses, the sample consisted of 92 responses. As shown in Table 1, 88% of the respondents were female ($n = 81$) and 12% were male ($n = 11$). A total of 83.7% of respondents were White ($n = 77$), 10.9% were Black ($n = 10$)

and 5.4% were Asian ($n = 5$). Moreover, 73.9% of respondents were from Non-Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Non-HBCU) and 26.1% were from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU).

The frequency distribution for size of the city that represented the respondents' hometowns indicated that 55.4% of respondents lived in cities with populations \geq to 50,000 people, 32.6% lived in towns with populations \geq to 5000 people and 12% lived in rural areas with populations \leq to 300 people.

All participants answered nine questions about their backgrounds and educational experiences. Each participant was asked to self-report their Race (Black or African American, White, American Indian, or Alaska Native, Asian, Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander), Gender (Male, Female), Hometown location (rural = a population \leq 15,000, urban = 50,000 \geq , Suburban = \geq 100,000), their Hispanic heritage, and the number of languages spoken in the home when growing up (1, 2 or 3). Finally, participants were asked to report the university they attended coded as HBCU or Non-HBCU. The research questions were assessed with data obtained from the questionnaires regarding personal readiness, professional readiness, and perceptions about characteristics of teacher preparation programs.

Table 1*Demographic Data for Study Participants*

Demographics	Number of Participants	%
Gender		
Male	11	12.0
Female	81	88
Race		
Asian	5	5.4
Black	10	10.9
White	77	83.7
Institution Type		
HBCU	24	26.1
Non HBCU	68	73.9
Town Size		
City (population \geq 50,000 people)	51	55.4
Rural area (\leq 300 people)	11	12.0
Town (\geq 5,000 people)	30	32.6
Language in the Home		
English	76	82.6
Other	16	17.4

Measures

Participants responded to statements in an online questionnaire in the form of a five-point Likert scale. It required approximately 10 -15 minutes to complete the survey, and all participant responses remained anonymous. The data consisted of responses to questions that measured the participants' experiences in their TPP, their readiness, and their background. Each is described below.

Survey Development

The questionnaire, which was cross-sectional in nature, looked at one point in time and was a snapshot of participant responses. It was constructed by choosing items from four published assessments within the field of education. The assessments used were (a) Characteristics of Teacher Preparation for Diversity (“Classroom as a learning community $\alpha = 0.83$ ”, “Instructor modeling constructivist and cultural responsive teachings $\alpha = 0.92$ ”, “Field experience for understanding diverse students $\alpha = 0.78$ ”) (Akiba, 2011), (b) The Cultural Responsive Teaching Readiness Scale ($\alpha = .90$) (Karatas & Oral, 2017), (c) The Culturally Responsive Teacher Preparedness Scale ($\alpha = .95$) (Hsiao, 2015).

The questionnaire had four sections. Section I had nine items on PST demographic variables. Section II had nine items on Professional Readiness and nine items on Personal Readiness. The last three sections were pertaining to the three characteristics of teacher preparation with Section III consisting of 11 questions on Field Experiences, Section IV had 5 questions on Classroom as Community, and Section V had 5 questions regarding Instructor Modeling CRPs. Participants were asked to rate themselves and their experiences within their teacher preparation program using a 5-point

Likert-scale, 1 = strongly disagree, 2 = disagree, 3 = neither agree nor disagree, 4 = agree, 5 = strongly agree.

Pilot Testing

A total of 39 items (Sections II through V) were initially selected from the four measures. Items were examined with pilot testing (Burns et al., 2008). The selected items were pilot tested before beginning the study. The purpose of the pilot testing was to (a) determine the length of time it took to complete the questionnaire, and (b) ensure the questions selected would result in reliable data and valid conclusions.

A total of 16 doctoral-level special education students from a Mid-western university participated in the pilot phase of this study. Respondents were asked for feedback on clarity, flow, and necessity of study. Participants were also asked to highlight questions that troubled them and questions they felt were not necessary or were necessary. Length of time to complete survey was also asked to be identified by participants. A close structured response format was used. Ordinal response type Likert scale was used.

The longest pilot survey respondents estimated survey completion was 20 minutes and the quickest reported time estimate for survey completion was 5 minutes. At the conclusion of the pilot questionnaire, participants were asked to give written feedback on their thoughts on the importance or necessity of this area of study. Below are the following responses:

“Absolutely!”

“Yes. This can help us professors who teach multicultural classes to know whether or not we are doing a good job of preparing our students to work with diverse populations.”

“Yes, definitely!”

“Definitely! I am excited to see the results of the dissertation!”

“Yes. Being able to discuss positionality with teachers at every level is vital and more research is needed to support this discussion!”

“Yes, most definitely!”

“Yes! Absolutely!”

Reliability was examined with a coefficient alpha for each of the five areas. Data resulted in high estimates of reliability for Instructor Modeling CRP (Instructor; $\alpha = .85$), Field Experiences for understanding diverse students' items (Field; $\alpha = .88$), Professional Readiness (Professional; $\alpha = .87$), and Personal Readiness (Personal; $\alpha = .88$). The classroom as a learning community item resulted in low reliability (Classroom as Community; $\alpha = .59$). To improve internal consistency, items from Section V (Classroom as Community) were removed to examine the effect on reliability, but the coefficients from the revised scales ranged from .38 to .53. Thus, the scale was kept as written, which suggested that the data would need to be interpreted cautiously.

Final Scale

The participant's teacher preparation experiences were assessed with three scales included in Appendix A. The Classroom as Community scale consisted of 5 items and measured the organizational structure of the college classroom; the Instructor scale contained 5 items that measured the instructor's engagement and participants' personal

and professional readiness; and the Field scale consisted of 11 items and measured the extent to which the respondents worked with diverse students in their field experiences. The Professional and Personal Readiness scales contained 9 items each. The reliability estimates from the current sample were $\alpha = .85$ for Instructor, $\alpha = .88$ for Field, $\alpha = .59$ for Classroom as Community, $\alpha = .87$ for Professional Readiness, and $\alpha = .88$ for Personal Readiness. Again, the Classroom scale resulted in low reliability and the data from it should be interpreted cautiously.

Procedure

Following the pilot phase, the questionnaire was made available online at *Qualtrics* and available to students during their regular classroom hours. Participants were recruited by emailing University teacher preparation programs across the country. The script of the email is included in Appendix F and Appendix D. Table 2 includes a list of programs that were contacted, and which had students complete the questionnaire. The email included a link to the questionnaire and the Program Coordinator was asked to forward it to their qualifying students. Participants who complete the Questionnaire were entered into a drawing for an \$50 Walmart gift card. Due to low responses, I visited Lincoln University in Jefferson City, Missouri and Harris Stowe University in St. Louis Missouri to obtain survey responses and had students complete the questionnaire during a class. The universities were visited in person because of proximity to the researcher. Other attempts to visit campuses were not successful (i.e., the campus denied permission to do so).

Table 2*Participating Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) and Non-HBCU**Universities (n=92)*

University	Classification	Responses
Harris Stowe State University	HBCU	4
Illinois State University	Non-HBCU	3
Kent State University	Non-HBCU	1
Lincoln University	HBCU	16
St Philip's College	HBCU	1
The University of Texas Arlington	Non-HBCU	18
Winston-Salem State University	HBCU	2
Utah State University	Non-HBCU	4
University of Missouri-Columbia	Non-HBCU	38
University of Missouri- St. Louis	Non-HBCU	4
University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff	HBCU	1

Data Analysis

The quantitative data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential statistics. To analyze the first research question (the effect that institution type has on self-reported prevalence of exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity), each student was categorized as attending an HBCU or a non-HBCU. The data regarding the frequency of three characteristics were summed into three scores (Classroom as

Community, Instructor Modeling, and Field Experiences) and were examined with three analyses of variance using a corrected alpha level ($p < .017, = .05/3$).

To analyze the second research question (effect of preservice teacher background, institution type, and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity on professional readiness), the items for professional readiness were totaled and regressed onto three blocks. Block 1 was student self-reported race, gender, hometown, and the number of languages spoken, Block 2 added in self-reported type of institution. Block 3 added in the total of the items for the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity. An r^2 was used to examine the amount of variance attributed to each block.

To analyze the third research question (effect of preservice teacher background, institution type, and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity on personal readiness), the items for personal readiness were totaled and regressed onto three blocks. Block 1 was student self-reported race, gender, hometown, and number of languages spoken, Block 2 added in self-reported type of institution and Block 3 added in the total of the items for the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity. An R^2 was used to examine the amount of variance attributed to each block.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

The research questions were assessed with data obtained from the questionnaires regarding personal readiness, professional readiness, and perceptions about characteristics of teacher preparation programs. The descriptive statistics for all variables are included in Table 3. The estimates of skew and kurtosis were all less than 2.00 and were within 2 standard errors for all scores except the Personal Readiness data. The analyses used to address the research questions were robust enough to withstand minor deviations from normality. A Levene's test was used to assess the equality of variance between the two groups, which resulted in nonsignificant findings and equality in variance (see below). Thus, the data were analyzed with parametric analyses.

Research Question One: Comparing HBCU and Non-HBCU

The first research question compared data from respondents who attended HBCU and Non-HBCU institutions across the United States and evaluated whether there was a difference in reported exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity at each institution. Three independent-samples t-test were conducted to compare the characteristics of teacher preparation (Classroom as Community, Field Experience, and Instructor Modeling Culturally Responsive Pedagogy [CRP]) at HBCUs and Non-HBCUs. A Bonferroni corrected alpha level of .017 was used to evaluate significance.

Table 3*Descriptive Statistics for Readiness and Characteristics of Teacher Preparation*

Variables	<i>M</i>	<i>SD</i>	Skew (<i>SE</i> = 0.25)	Kurtosis (<i>SE</i> = 0.50)
Personal Readiness	39.43	4.96	-1.72	3.63
Professional Readiness	34.97	6.01	-0.27	-0.54
Instructor modeling CRP	19.25	3.94	-0.38	-0.44
Field Experience	45.78	6.88	0.67	0.28
Classroom as Community	9.05	2.41	0.79	0.29

Note. CRP = culturally responsive pedagogy.

As shown in Table 4, the Levene's tests for the three variables was not significant, which allowed for parametric comparison of the two groups. The 24 participants who attended an HBCU showed no significant differences in the characteristics for Classroom as a Community ($M = 17.08$, $SD = 3.26$) or Instructor Modeling CRP ($M = 19.21$, $SD = 3.58$) from the 68 participants who attended a non-HBCU university: Classroom as Community ($M = 17.18$, $SD = 2.82$) and Instructor Modeling CRP ($M = 19.26$, $SD = 4.08$). However, there was a significant difference in Field Experiences with HBCU ($M = 43.71$, $SD = 6.81$) scoring lower than non-HBCU participants ($M = 46.51$, $SD = 6.8$); $t(90) = -1.73$, $p < .017$, $g = 0.41$).

Table 4

Comparison of Student Perceptions of the Three Characteristics of Teacher Preparation by Institution Type (Historically Black College and University [HBCU] and Non-HBCU).

Characteristics	<u>HBCU</u>		<u>Non-HBCU</u>		<i>t</i>	Levene's Test	Hedges <i>g</i>
	Mean	<i>SD</i>	Mean	<i>SD</i>			
Classroom as Community	17.08	3.26	17.18	2.82	0.13	0.79	-0.03
Instructor Teaching CRP	19.21	3.58	19.26	4.08	0.06	1.72	-0.01
Field Experience	43.71	6.81	46.51	6.80	1.74*	0.02	-0.41

Note. CRP = culturally responsive pedagogy.

* $p < .017$

Research Question Two: Predicting Professional Readiness

The second research question examined the impact the demographical and institutional components related to respondent preservice teachers and how it impacted their perceptions of being professionally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. The second question was tested by regressing the Professional Readiness score onto institution type (Model 1 - HBCU or Non-HBCU), preservice teacher background (Model 2 – gender, race, town size), and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (Model 3 - classroom as learning community, instructor modeling CRP, and field experiences). The Levene's test for the Professional Readiness score was not significant, $F(1, 105) = 0.88, p = .35$ and suggested equal variance between the HBCU and non-HBCU groups.

As shown in Table 5, the first model (institution type) accounted for negligible variance in professional readiness predicting < 1% of the variance and the results were not significant. $F(6, 85) = 0.97, p > .05$. For the second model (preservice teacher background) accounted for negligible variance in professional readiness predicting again <1% of the variance.

Adding in the three characteristics of educator preparation programs (Model 3) added 58% more variance ($\Delta R^2 = 0.58, F[9, 82] = 14.84, p < .001$), which was a large and significant effect. Instructor significantly predicted professional readiness ($\beta = 0.53, p < .05$), as did field experiences ($\beta = .28, p < .05$) and Town ($\beta = .18, p < .05$).

Table 5*Regression of Professional Readiness on the Three Characteristics of Teacher Preparation Programs*

Predictor	<u>Model 1</u>				<u>Model 2</u>				<u>Model 3</u>			
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>
Constant	35.29	1.23		28.62*	33.09	1.60		20.66*	5.48	3.20		1.71
Institution Type	0.44	1.43	.03	0.31	0.47	1.50	.03	0.37	-0.68	0.99	-.05	-0.68
Gender					1.24	1.99	.07	0.62	1.87	1.32	.10	1.41
Race					2.33	1.88	.14	1.23	-0.67	1.26	-.041	-0.53
Town Size												
City vs. Rural					0.49	2.10	.03	0.24	-0.01	1.36	< -.01	-0.01
City. vs. Town					2.79	1.43	.22	1.9	2.29	0.95	.18	2.41 *
English only					0.19	1.75	.01	0.11	0.7	1.15	.044	0.61
Field Experiences									0.24	0.08	.28	3.06 *
Instructor Modeling									0.81	0.14	.53	5.70 *
CRP												
Classroom as									0.12	0.16	.061	0.75
Community												
	$R^2 < .01, \Delta R^2 < .01, F = 0.09$				$R^2 = .07, \Delta R^2 < .07, F = 1.65$				$R^2 = .62 \Delta R < .55, F = 14.84*$			

Note. Institution type is historically black college and university (HBCU) and non-HBCU. CRP = culturally responsive pedagogy.

* $p < .05$

Research Question Three: Predicting Personal Readiness

The third research question in this study was designed to analyze how institutional and demographic data influenced preservice teacher's perceptions of being personally ready to instruct culturally and linguistically diverse students. The question was addressed by regressing personal readiness onto institution type (Model 1, HBCU and Non-HBCU), preservice teacher background (Model 2, gender, race, and town), and exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (Model 3 - classroom as learning community, instructor modeling CRP, and field experiences). The Levene's test for the Personal Readiness score was not significant, $F(1, 105) = 0.42$, $p = .52$ and suggested equal variance between the HBCU and non-HBCU groups.

As shown in Table 6, Model 1 accounted for a negligible amount of variance in personal readiness, predicting < 1% of the variance, which was not significant $F(6, 85) = 0.83$, $p > .05$. Model 2 also accounted for a negligible amount of variance in personal readiness, also predicting <1% of the variance.

Results from multiple regression analysis for Model 3 indicated that three predictors explained 44% of the variance ($\Delta R^2 = .44$, $F[9, 82] = 8.79$, $p < 0.05$). Instructor significantly predicted personal readiness ($\beta = .25$, $p < .05$), as did field experiences ($\beta = .44$, $p < .05$) and town ($\beta = .18$, $p < .05$).

Table 6*Regression of Personal Readiness on the Three Characteristics of Teacher Preparation Program*

Predictor	<u>Model 1</u>				<u>Model 2</u>				<u>Model 3</u>			
	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>	<i>b</i>	<i>SE</i>	<i>beta</i>	<i>t</i>
Constant	39.58	1.02		38.89*	38.69	1.32		29.16*	16.18	3.05		5.29*
Institution type	-0.20	1.18	.03	-0.17	0.13	1.24	.01	0.10	-0.99	0.95	-.08	-1.04
Gender					-1.90	1.65	-.12	-1.15	-1.09	1.26	-.07	-0.87
Race					1.46	1.56	.11	0.94	-0.31	1.20	-.02	-0.26
Town Size												
City v. Rural					-0.11	1.72	-.01	-0.06	-0.55	1.30	-.04	-0.42
City v. Town					2.09	1.19	.20	1.76*	1.93	0.91	.18	2.13*
English only					-0.18	1.45	-.01	-0.12	0.49	1.09	.04	0.45
Field Experiences									0.32	0.08	.44	4.16*
Instructor Modeling CRP									0.31	0.14	.25	2.29*
Classroom as Community									0.17	0.16	.10	1.08
	$R^2 < .01, \Delta R^2 < .01, F = 0.03$				$R^2 = .05 \Delta R^2 < .05, F = 0.83$				$R^2 = .49 \Delta R^2 < .44, F = 8.79^*$			

Note. Institution type is historically black college and university (HBCU) and non-HBCU. CRP = culturally responsive pedagogy.

* $p < .05$

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

The current study examined the personal and professional readiness of preservice teachers' at HBCUs and non-HBCUs to work with K-12 culturally and linguistically diverse students. Reported exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation were examined: the classroom as a learning community, the instructor modeling culturally responsive teaching (CRP) and field experience for understanding diverse students between preservice teachers from Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) and Non-Historically Black Colleges and Universities (Non-HBCUs). Also examined the extent to which demographic variables such as gender, race, exposure to different languages, and town size contributed to their readiness. Research has suggested a lack of professional and personal readiness to teach culturally, and linguistically diverse students contributes to cultural misunderstandings which can manifest in the form of a disproportionate number of student referrals to special education, exclusionary practices, or discriminatory discipline (Green et al., 2020; Whitford & Katsiyannis, 2016).

There were three research questions that guided this study:

RQ1: To what extent does institution type affect the self-reported prevalence of exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity (classroom as learning community, instructor modeling culturally responsive pedagogy, and field experiences)?

RQ2: To what extent does institution type, preservice teacher background, and reported exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity predict

perceptions of being professionally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students?

RQ3: To what extent does institution type, preservice teacher background, and reported exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation for diversity predict perceptions of being personally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students?

The study determined that exposure to diverse field experiences and instructors modeling culturally responsive practices (CRP) in preparation programs predicted preservice teachers' (PSTs) feeling personally and professionally ready to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students in the classroom. Race, gender, and institution type student attended were not as impactful as the town size they came from.

Comparison of HBCU and Non-HBCU institutions

In RQ1, the value of the means suggested very little variation in exposure between institution type, suggesting very little difference in HBCU and non-HBCU students' access and exposure to the essential elements of preparation to become culturally competent educators. In RQ2 and RQ3, both race and institution also failed to add any variance to the models. The reader must keep in mind, these findings do not necessarily indicate a lack of correlation and should not be extrapolated to all HBCU and non HBCU institutions.

The current study did not find significant difference in the teacher characteristics for diversity between preservice teachers who attended HBCUs and non-HBCUs. All respondents showed the same exposure to all three characteristics. The lack of difference in characteristics for diversity between HBCUs and non-HBCUs was consistent with

previous research that found proportionately equal number of courses on cultural diversity between HBCUs and non-HBCUs (Lim et al., 2009), and inconsistent with Marchitello and Trinidad (2019), who found that HBCUs were more effective in preparing teachers to successfully work with marginalized communities due to their curricula design that emphasized supporting the educational needs of marginalized students.

One potential explanation for the lack of difference between HBCUs and non-HBCUs could be that both institutions had similar demographics of PSTs, with both populations at HBCU and non-HBCU teacher preparation programs comprising of more than 70% white students. These demographics may partly be explained by national data that state HBCUs are becoming more diverse (Gasman et al., 2007; Mobley & Johnson, 2022), with white students comprising 25 % of HBCU enrollment in 2020 (Digest of Education Statistics, 2020). This also confirms findings that show some HBCUs are becoming predominantly white (Jackson, 2022). While there is nothing inherently wrong with HBCUs becoming predominantly white, HBCUs are traditionally a place where black students experience greater social support (Terenzini et al., 1997), greater exposure to black culture (Stewart et al., 2008), and less exposure to racism (Cross, 1994; Terenzini et al., 1997). With HBCUs becoming predominantly white, those experience may become lost. Additionally, attending an all-white school can further reduce the opportunity of white students' exposure to different cultures resulting in there being reduced opportunities for their preconceived notions or stereotypes to be challenged

This study's results showed there was no difference in teacher's exposure to the three characteristics to teacher preparation of diversity for PSTs at HBCUs and Non-

HBCUs adding no support to previous literature that stated HBCUs were more effective in preparing teachers to serve communities of color (Marchitello & Trinidad, 2019). Due to the lack of previous research surrounding this topic and due to the unique history of HBCUs and their programming towards serving historically marginalized communities, more research needs to be conducted for a more conclusive finding on whether HBCUs can add substantial value to the conversation regarding how to better prepare culturally competent teachers. The United States has thousands of educational institutions with different educational designations, histories, foci, and purposes, which contributes to differences in programming, curricula, and program requirements (Lim et al., 2009). Even though HBCUs have a unique history, account for nearly 20% of all education degrees earned by Black students (Houston et al., 2022), and have a plethora of successful graduates who have become leaders, celebrities, and educators (Cantey et al., 2013; Johnson et al., 2017), HBCUs still “represent one of the least researched sectors of American higher education” (Koch & Swinton, 2022, p.317) and receive less federal financial support than predominantly white institutions (Jones, 2016).

HBCUs and other minority serving institutions (MSIs) were created to fundamentally serve students and members of historically marginalized communities; and intentionally embedded, created, designed, and formulated their curricula and programming to support and serve both the educational and non-educational needs of marginalized communities (Marchitello & Trinidad, 2019). This intentionality to serve historically marginalized communities is also reflected in their teacher preparation programming; as most MSIs have a “long track record of preparing teacher candidates to work successfully in communities of color” (Marchitello & Trinidad, 2019, p.7).

Many institutions without the HBCU designation have received harsh criticism for not sufficiently preparing teachers for the linguistic, ethnic, and cultural diversity in today's classrooms (Bazemore-Bertrand & Porcher, 2020; Coffey, 2010; Marchitello & Trinidad, 2019; Yuan, 2018). This criticism has resulted in a substantial reform, with some non-HBCU teacher preparation programs adopting a social justice-oriented approach to their programming. Unfortunately, some have struggled with the adjustment and have fallen short in that area. Kohli (2019) interviewed a preservice teacher candidate who lamented that although their program had advertised a social justice orientation, they felt the program had overpromised and underdelivered saying: "I think they said the term social justice once, I think it was a paragraph in a textbook for one class. That was the extent to which we talked about it; it was just not addressed ever" (p.43).

Predicting Personal and Professional Readiness

The current data indicated that field experiences and having instructors model CRP within the college classroom predicted personal and professional readiness. The college classroom as a community did not predict readiness to teach students of color, but there were potential difficulties with the scale, which will be discussed in the Limitations section. The Council for Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP; 2022) requires that teacher candidates must be provided curriculum and field experiences that expose them to diversity and by default prepares them to work effectively with and positively impact culturally diverse students and their families. Gist et al., (2019) and Baumgartner et al., (2015) both discuss the importance of a teacher preparation program being learning sites and places of opportunity where preservice teachers are taught about multicultural

education including culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) and where they can learn how to apply/implement CRP in practice. I will discuss both next.

Instructors Teaching CRP

The current finding was consistent with previous research that found that faculty members teaching CRP in the classroom contributed to feelings of professional and personal readiness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students (Akiba, 2011), and the effect was large with both HBCU and non-HBCU teacher candidates (Baumgartner et al., 2015). Hiring instructors who can model culturally responsive practices in the classroom was also a critical component in helping students learn a new skill or concept (Baumgartner et al., 2015). Additionally, providing opportunities for students to debrief with effective mentors about any instances of culturally responsive teaching being applied in the classrooms is another component teacher preparation programs should provide (Gist, 2019). There is a “pervasive whiteness that is integrated into teacher preparation programs that should be acknowledged and challenged” (Gist et al., 2019, p.1), but most of the faculty within teacher preparation programs are white (Teacher of Color Collective & Souto-Manning, 2022). Thus, there is a lack of faculty to teach and mentor PSTs on the application of CRP. Although learning about CRP is important for PSTs, it must not lead to more teachers who have a “white savior” mentality (Matias, 2013). Instead, teachers need to be able to interrogate their whiteness and examine white privilege and what that means centered as a teacher and as a white person with power in a sea of students of color (Matias, 2013).

Diverse Field Experiences

Diverse field experiences also predicted PSTs sense of readiness to teach students of color, which was consistent with previous research that found diverse field experiences were critical in developing teachers' readiness to teach diverse students (Akiba, 2011; Ellerbrock et al., 2016; Kea & Trent, 2013; Miller & Mikulec, 2014) especially regarding teaching students how to teach in a culturally responsive manner. As posited with instructors modeling CRP in the classroom, diverse field experiences where PSTs are intentionally placed in a classroom during clinical experience where they teachers are also effectively modeling CRP in the classroom will improve readiness. As seen in Lambeth & Smith (2016) where preservice teachers efficacy in using CRP in the classroom improved after being placed with mentors in their field experience.

Classroom as Community

The Classroom as a learning community variable added no significant differences to PSTs perceptions of personal and professional readiness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students, which contradicted Akiba (2011) who found that having a classroom as a learning community where students felt safe in discussing, reflecting, and studying was also an essential characteristic of effective teacher preparation.

Baumgartner et al., (2015) reported that PSTs who had safe supportive classroom environments were more likely to participate and discuss difficult topics and perspectives and beliefs. Thus, it is unclear why the current data were not consistent with previous research, but the Classroom scale has the lowest reliability estimate ($\alpha = .59$), which suggests that the data should be interpreted cautiously.

Student Demographics

The study found that neither race nor institution type was a significant predictor in teacher candidates' professional or personal readiness to teach students of color. Both race and institution type added < 1% variance to the regression analysis, failing to establish any sort of significance in readiness or showing a difference in exposure to teacher characteristics during this study. However, there was a significant relationship between urbanization and preparedness. Students who grew up in towns felt more professionally and personally prepared to teach diverse students than those from rural areas. A person's demographic information such as racial, ethnic, and geographic backgrounds has been shown to relate to a teacher's ability to teach and their manner of instruction in the classroom (Dedeoglu & Lamme, 2011). Milner et al., (2003) acknowledged that preservice teachers who "never attended schools themselves with individuals from diverse backgrounds, or lived in racially diverse neighborhood, due to their lack of exposure to diverse populations may rely on stereotypical conceptions of diverse students to inform their future work as teachers (p.64). It is possible that PSTs who were from towns interacted more with people of color than did their counterparts in rural communities (Beutel & Tangen, 2018).

Han et al., (2015) also found that preservice teachers attending a rural institution in Mid-west America were less likely to be interested in social justice concerns and develop cultural competency compared to counterparts in urban institutions, as their teacher preparation program lacked emphasis on multicultural content. This lack of emphasis of multicultural competency is not surprising as Garmon (2005) found that students who had more intercultural experiences or who had more exposure to relationships and direct contact with students from culturally diverse backgrounds "were

more likely to develop positive beliefs about diversity than those who didn't have" (p. 280).

Implications for Practice

Many multicultural scholars have discussed curriculum reform through the lens of an institution, but few have sought to compare HBCU and non-HBCU institutions. Creating partnerships where researchers can evaluate HBCU curriculum format and structure objectively and intentionally may create positive and long-lasting results for teacher preparation research.

This study also has suggestions for reconceptualizing PSTs field experiences. Administrators need to ensure selected practicum sites, will provide cross-cultural experiences and mentor teachers who utilize CRP practices in the classroom. This may also be beneficial for rural teacher preparation programs where their exposure to different cultures may be limited.

Limitations

While the study produced potentially important results regarding teacher preparation, it is important to note the limitations that need to be considered when interpreting the data. There was a low response rate from the targeted sample population and HBCU institutions. While I received responses from HBCUs, it was difficult to get responses from many of HBCUs who would have a higher population of Black students. This low response rate resulted in the need to send over 60 emails and make weekly follow up calls, asking for participation. The reason there are any HBCU responses, is due to the presence of two HBCU institutions within the researcher's proximity, which allowed her to visit the institutions herself to collect the data. The low response rate also

led to different sized groups that were compared statistically. The Levene test of variance did not find differences in variance, which allowed for parametric comparisons, but the groups were of different sizes.

An additional limitation is that due to the nature of the study, surveys were sent to faculty and departments and were then distributed. Therefore, it is difficult to ascertain the response rate as it was not clear as to how many surveys were distributed to contacted institutions.

An uncontrolled factor in this study was the possibility of social desirability bias or socially desirable responding. This is “the tendency for people to present a favorable image of themselves on questionnaires” (Van de Mortel, 2008, p.41), which contributes to respondents answering potentially sensitive questions in a socially acceptable way instead of answering the questions truthfully. As all the data for the study were self-reported, there is no way of knowing how truthful the respondents were or if their responses were a result of agreement bias.

Given that the quantification of participants’ experiences did not allow for clarifying questions and conversations regarding items such as quality of the curricula was not asked. As stated above, the Classroom scale had low reliability, which could have affected the results. Future researchers could replicate the design with more psychometrically rigorous tools. Additionally, another limitation was that one-third of the non-HBCU data came from students attending the University of Missouri teacher preparation program. Finally, the location of practicum placements and the level of diversity they were exposed to in their practicum placements is unknown. This would also have been an excellent question and may have transformed the data.

Recommendations for Future Research

This study intended to evaluate whether there were significant differences in how prepared preservice teachers at HBCU and non-HBCUs felt to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students. While this study's findings found no significant differences between PSTs exposure to the three characteristics of teacher preparation and the preparedness of preservice teachers at both institutions, this study has raised important questions about the nature of teacher preparation at HBCUs. To answer them, this study should be replicated with a larger sample of HBCU and non-HBCU institutions in a different geographical location within the U.S. to test both generalization of the data and to determine the extent to which the non-significant results are due to a lack of power.

With HBCUs being one of the least researched institutions in the United States educational system (Koch & Swinton, 2022), they may represent an unused and untapped avenue in teacher preparation research. Therefore, an in-depth evaluation of the constitution and quality of TPPs at HBCUs also needs to be conducted. With the HBCU focus more geared towards accommodating the needs of communities of color, it would serve teacher preparation literature to examine how and if HBCUs are preparing their preservice teachers to effectively help marginalized communities as intended. Specific examination of the integration of multicultural concepts such as social justice and culturally responsive pedagogy within the program and examining class modules and field placements within the HBCU curricula can also be useful to explore.

The lack of qualitative research not integrating focus groups or one-on-one interviews during this study, to ask clarifying questions regarding their experiences at the

institutions, differences in multicultural curricula and also regarding specific survey items especially those related to non-significant items as classroom as a community. In future investigations, it would benefit researchers to implement a more qualitative focus to help strengthen their investigation into teacher readiness. Both quantitative and qualitative research has their purpose and place within the field of educational research; and it benefits the field when they're both used effectively by researchers. By creating opportunities to dialogue with respondents and ask what they may not have been able to explain or verbalize during survey completion is one of the most effective things future researchers can implement as they seek to understand what contributes to their preparedness.

Lastly a natural progression of this work would include interviewing white students attending white majority HBCUs and investigate their decision to attend an HBCU. Examination of their thoughts on school climate and course design would also be beneficial to further research on teacher preparation and HBCUs. Interviews should also be conducted with black students at majority white HBCUs to also evaluate their thoughts on this evolution of the HBCU institution.

Conclusion

As student demographics within the United States school system continues to become more racially diverse, the field of teacher preparation must train teachers to uplift students' diverse realities. The predominantly white teacher workforce demands that PSTs be culturally responsive to students' different mannerisms, behaviors, and beliefs. A failure to do so can result in cultural misunderstanding that contributes to the disproportionate or an overrepresentation of student referrals to special education,

exclusionary practices, or discriminatory discipline (Green et al., 2020; Whitford & Katsiyannis, 2016). While the culturally responsive preparation of a white teacher workforce is critical, it is just as important for students in HBCUs to obtain the preparation to work with public schools' diverse student body. However, a gap in the research literature exists where the HBCU voice is missing in the educational discourse.

A culturally responsive curriculum for pre-service educators will not only protect the learning experiences of PK-12 students of color. Offering culturally responsive opportunities to PSTs can hold them accountable for the cultural misunderstandings they may have when working with diverse students or colleagues (Mc Cree, 2022). A culturally responsive curricula within teacher preparation programs can begin stripping away the fear-induced, deficit-oriented perceptions teachers have of students with diverse identities and abilities. This study's findings provide evidence to the need for deliberate and intentional diverse field experiences for preservice teachers in the classroom, where the instructor and mentor models culturally responsive pedagogical practices, therefore allowing the contribution to effectively preparing educators to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.

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Appendix A - Questionnaire of Professional and Personal Readiness of Preservice Teachers to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students

The survey was distributed electronically using Qualtrics®

Part one of the survey consists of demographic information only.

Gender

- Female
- Male
- Non-binary / third gender
- Prefer not to say
- Prefer to self-describe

Please select Race

- White
- Black or African American
- American Indian or Alaska Native
- Asian
- Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander

Are you of Hispanic, Latino or Spanish origin?

- Yes
- No

I am a

- General Education Preservice Teacher
- Special Education Preservice Teacher

I grew up in an area which was considered:

- A city (a population of at least 50,000)
- A Town (at least 5,000)
- A rural area (less than or equal to 300 people)

Was/Is there a language other than English spoken in your home?

- Yes
- No

If yes to Question 6, Which language(s)?

Are you in your last year of your teacher educator program?

- Yes

● No

Did you take a multicultural/diversity course during your teacher preparation program?

Please read each question carefully and select a category which best represents your academic experience in your teacher education program:

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
Our class discussions on cultural and linguistic diversity helped me reflect on my own perspectives.					
Our class discussions on cultural and linguistic diversity made me feel uncomfortable.					
I learned from my classmates' different opinions and perspectives on culture and diversity					
The class discussions regarding culture and diversity often confused me.					
I felt comfortable expressing my perspectives in class on culture and diversity and the issues that affect my culturally and linguistically diverse students					
My college instructors guided class discussions to focus on important issues on diversity.					
My instructor provided examples to help us understand difficult concepts related to diversity.					

My instructor was interested in my cultural backgrounds.					
My instructor shared personal experiences related to diversity.					
My instructor's comments on my papers helped me understand culturally and linguistically diverse students					

Please read each question carefully and select a category which best represents your field experience in your teacher preparation program.

During my Field experience within my teacher education program

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree nor Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I worked with culturally and linguistically diverse learners in my field experiences.					
I worked with socio-economically diverse learners in my field experiences.					
I worked with a student(s) with a disability.					
I communicated with ethnically or socio-economically diverse community members.					
I communicated with family members of culturally and linguistically diverse students.					
I had access to an effective mentor when I needed help.					
I was closely supervised throughout the field/internship experience period.					

My field/internship experiences were connected with my coursework on diversity.					
My field experiences helped me understand perspectives of culturally and linguistically diverse students.					
My field experiences helped me reflect on my own perspectives on culture and diversity					
My field experiences prepared me for educating culturally and linguistically diverse students					

Please read each question carefully and select a category which best represents your experience in your teacher preparation program.

As a result of exposure to multicultural/diversity courses in my education program...

	Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Neither Agree or Disagree	Agree	Strongly Agree
I am able to infuse the curriculum and thematic units with the culture of students represented in the classroom					
I am able to review and assess curricula and instructional materials to determine their multicultural strengths and weakness, and relevance to students' interest and instructional needs, and revise them if necessary					

Our instructors created awareness of the cultural and linguistic diversity in the United States of America during my teacher preparation program					
I think the compulsory courses I have taken during my program have contributed to my knowledge in terms of sensitivity to cultural values					
I find my teacher preparation program sufficient in creating awareness about cultural diversity in the United States of America.					
I find textbooks used in my teacher preparation courses sufficient in terms of presenting information related to cultural diversity.					
I have gained awareness of cultural diversity thanks to the involvement of our instructors' personal lives and experiences.					
I gained an awareness of the cultural diversity that lives on the geography of United States of America during my undergraduate education.					
I am curious about the cultural values of the students in my class.					
I think that while I guide my students' learning, I					

need to consider their cultural values					
I must examine my own cultural beliefs and attitudes to determine how they might impact my interactions with students					
I am ready to teach in a class where there is cultural diversity					
I enjoy interacting with people from different races and cultures					
When cultural diversity is taken into consideration, I can teach anywhere in the United States of America					
I would like to increase interactions in and out of the classroom with my culturally and linguistically diverse students by learning vocabulary and sentences from the mother tongues of students with are bilingual					
I do not tolerate students in my class to discriminate against each other due to their cultural diversity.					
I am able to provide students with knowledge and skills needed to function in mainstream culture					

Appendix B - Descriptive Statistics of Questionnaire Items by Institution Type

Item	HBCU			Non-HBCU		
	Mean	SD	n	Mean	SD	n
I am able to infuse the curriculum and thematic units with the culture of students represented in the classroom.	4.25	0.53	24	3.91	0.84	68
I am able to review and assess curricula and instructional materials to determine their multicultural strengths and weakness, and relevance to students' interest and instructional needs, and revise them if necessary	4.08	0.97	24	4.01	0.72	68
Our instructors created awareness of the cultural and linguistic diversity in the United States of America during my teacher preparation program	4.21	1.06	24	4.09	0.99	68

I find my teacher preparation program sufficient in creating awareness about cultural and linguistic diversity in the United States of America	3.96	0.86	24	3.75	1.04	68
I think that the compulsory courses I have taken during my program have contributed to my knowledge in terms of sensitivity to cultural values.	4	0.83	24	4.04	.89	68
I find textbooks used in my teacher preparation courses sufficient in terms of presenting information related to cultural and linguistic diversity	3.42	1.25	24	3.37	1.06	68
I have gained awareness of cultural and linguistic diversity thanks to the involvement of our instructors' personal lives and experiences.	3.79	1.06	24	3.76	0.99	68
I gained an awareness of the cultural and linguistic diversity that lives within United States of America during my teacher preparation program	3.92	0.97	24	4.1	0.83	68
I think that elective courses I have taken in my teacher preparation program have contributed to my sensitivity in terms of cultural values	3.67	1.17	24	3.81	1.14	68
I am curious about the cultural values of the students in my class	4.75	0.44	24	4.6	0.69	68
I think that while I guide my students' learning, I need to consider their cultural values	4.62	0.77	24	4.72	0.59	68
I must examine my own cultural beliefs and attitudes to determine how they might impact my interactions with students	4.67	0.56	24	4.51	0.8	68
I enjoy interacting with people from different races and cultures	4.54	0.72	24	4.59	0.67	68
When cultural and linguistic diversity is taken into consideration, I can teach anywhere in the United States of America	3.75	1.03	24	3.75	1.1	68

I would like to increase interactions in and out of the classroom with my culturally and linguistically diverse students by learning vocabulary and sentences from the mother tongues of students who are bilingual	4.17	0.76	24	4.35	0.86	68
I do not tolerate students in my class to discriminate against each other due to their cultural and linguistic diversity	4.75	0.68	24	4.71	0.62	68
I am able to provide students with knowledge and skills needed to function in mainstream culture	4.21	0.78	24	4.13	0.79	68
I am ready to teach in a class where there is cultural and linguistic diversity	4.12	0.8	24	4.01	0.89	68
Our class discussions on cultural and linguistic diversity helped me reflect on my own perspectives	4.12	0.8	24	4.29	0.75	68
Our class discussions on cultural and linguistic diversity made me feel uncomfortable	2.5	1.35	24	2.54	1.34	68
I learned from my classmates' different opinions and perspectives on culture and diversity	4.25	0.85	24	4.28	0.88	68
The class discussions regarding culture and diversity often confused me	2.33	1.17	24	2.22	1.05	68
I felt comfortable expressing my perspectives in class on culture and diversity and the issues that affect my CLD students	3.88	0.8	24	3.84	1.03	68
My college instructors guided class discussions to focus on important issues on diversity	3.75	0.9	24	4.01	0.91	68
My instructor provided examples to help us understand difficult concepts related to diversity	4	0.66	24	4.06	0.94	68
My instructor was interested in my cultural background	3.75	0.94	24	3.71	1.13	68
My instructor shared personal experiences related to diversity	3.96	0.81	24	3.87	1.02	68

My instructor's comments on my papers helped me understand diverse students	3.75	1.03	24	3.62	1.15	68
I worked with ethnically diverse learners in my field experiences	3.79	0.93	24	4.37	0.86	68
I worked with socio-economically diverse learner in my field experiences.	4.12	0.8	24	4.53	0.68	68
I worked with a student with disabilities	4.25	0.85	24	4.81	0.58	68
I communicated with ethnically or socio-economically diverse community members	3.83	1.05	24	4.24	0.95	68
I communicated with family members of ethnically diverse students	3.67	1.13	24	3.63	1.27	68
I had access to an effective mentor when I needed help	3.96	0.75	24	4.03	0.95	68
I was closely supervised throughout the field/internship experience period	3.83	1.01	24	4.31	0.89	68
My field/internship experiences were connected with my coursework on diversity	3.75	1.15	24	3.78	1.21	68
My field experiences helped me understand perspectives of diverse students	4.17	0.76	24	4.25	0.92	68
My field experiences helped me reflect on my own perspectives	4.25	0.79	24	4.37	0.9	68
My field experiences prepared me for educating diverse students	4.08	0.87	24	4.21	0.87	68

Appendix C – IRB Approval Letter



Institutional Review Board
University of Missouri-Columbia
FWA Number: 00002876
IRB Registration Numbers: 00000731, 00009014

310 Jesse Hall
Columbia, MO 65211
573-882-3181
irb@missouri.edu

March 15, 2022

Principal Investigator: Nikita Azinnia McCree
Department: Special Education

Your Exempt Amendment Form v.2 to project entitled Evaluating Pre-Service Special Education Teachers' Personal and Professional Readiness to Teach Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students was reviewed and approved by the MU Institutional Review Board according to the terms and conditions described below:

IRB Project Number	2084823
IRB Review Number	375009
Funding Source	Department of Special Education
Initial Application Approval Date	January 13, 2022
Approval Date of this Review	March 15, 2022
IRB Expiration Date	January 13, 2023
Level of Review	Exempt
Project Status	Active - Exempt
Risk Level	Minimal Risk
HIPAA Category	No HIPAA
	Informed Consent & Assent - Consent (Exempt Studies Only): #587041
	Informed Consent & Assent - Consent (Exempt Studies Only): #587043
Approved Documents	Other Study Documents - Instruments (i.e. surveys): #587040 Other Study Documents - Instruments (i.e. surveys): #587042 Recruitment Materials - Recruitment E-Mail: #586732 Recruitment Materials - Recruitment E-Mail: #586734

The principal investigator (PI) is responsible for all aspects and conduct of this study. The PI must comply with the following conditions of the approval:

- No subjects may be involved in any study procedure prior to the IRB approval date or after the expiration date.
- All changes must be IRB approved prior to implementation utilizing the Exempt Amendment Form.
- Major noncompliance deviations must be reported to the MU IRB on the Event Report within 5 business days of the research team becoming aware of the deviation. Major deviations result when research activities may affected the research subject's rights, safety, and/or welfare, or may have had the potential to impact even if no actual harm occurred. Please refer to the MU IRB Noncompliance policy for additional details.

Appendix D – Informed Consent

Consent to Participate in a Research Study.



Project Title: **Pre-service Teachers' readiness to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students**

Principal Investigator/Researcher: Nikita Mc Cree.

IRB Reference Number: 2084823

Dear Student/Participant,

You are being invited to take part in a dissertation research project. You must be 18 years of age or older. Your participation is voluntary, and at any time you may opt out of this study. I am writing to request your assistance with an important Dissertation research project being conducted by myself at the University of Missouri. I am conducting a survey of Preservice teachers to ask their opinion on how well their teacher educator program prepared them to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.

As a preservice teacher, you were selected to be part of this project. I know this is a busy time of the year for you, but I hope you will take some time to participate in this very brief survey. This questionnaire will require only 10-15 minutes to complete. As a token of my appreciation for your participation in this important dissertation study, upon receipt of your completed questionnaire, **you have the option of entering your name into a lottery where you can have a chance to win one of five \$50 Visa gift cards.** There is no risk involved and your answers will be completely confidential. Moreover, the results of the survey will be reported in a summary format, so no one will be able to associate you with your responses on this survey. Text responses will be reported word for word, so please do not include your name or provide any identifying information in your comments. Participation is strictly voluntary, and you may refuse to participate or discontinue participation anytime. Completion and return of the questionnaire will indicate your willingness to participate in this study. Thank you in advance for your participation in this important research. To complete the survey online, please access the **URL:https://missouri.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_ewUjarvtylb0BDg**

If you have any questions about the administration of the survey, please contact our research offices at the University of Missouri researcher at 573-823-5668 or namcbc@mail.missouri.edu If you have questions about your rights as a research participant, please contact the University of Missouri Institutional Review Board (IRB) at 573-882-3181 or muresearchirb@missouri.edu. The IRB is a group of people who review research studies to make sure the rights and welfare of participants are protected. If you want to talk privately about any concerns or issues related to your participation, you may contact the Research Participant Advocacy at 888-280-5002 (a free call) or email muresearchrpa@missouri.edu. You can ask the researcher to provide you with a copy of this consent for your records, or you can save a copy of this consent if it has already been provided to you. We appreciate your consideration to participate in this study.

Sincerely,

Nikita Mc Cree
(Doctoral Candidate, University of Missouri)

Appendix E - Variables Contributing to Disproportionality of Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students in Special Education

Lack of intercultural awareness/competency for/among teachers (Cushner, 2011; Grant & Sleeter, 2006)	Teachers conflate diversity and disability (Sedil & Pugach, 2009)	Overrepresentation and referral practices (Ferri & Connor, 2005)	Schools systematically segregate subsets of students (Skrtic et al.; 2021).
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Appendix F- Recruitment email.

Good Day,

My name is Nikita Mc Cree. I am a 4th year Doctoral Candidate in Special Education at the University of Missouri in Columbia. I'm currently working on my dissertation study which is focused on *Evaluating whether Preservice Teacher are prepared to teach culturally and linguistically diverse students.*

Because [insert University name] University has an excellent Teacher Education program I would truly appreciate if Preservice teachers in their last year of their program can be forwarded my dissertation questionnaire. **The questionnaire is anonymous,** and all results will be used to improve Educator preparation programs. Additionally, all respondents will also have a chance to **win a \$50 Visa Gift card** for their participation.

As Educators and faculty of the [insert University name] University Teacher Educator program, I hope you can see the importance and necessity to continue to include the voice of Preservice teachers in the literature of Teacher preparation. I have attached my IRB approval letter as well as the consent form complete with the survey link as well. I have also added my Academic advisor Dr. Matt Burns to this email if you may need to contact him. I thank you so much for reading my email and forwarding it to your Preservice teachers as well. Additionally, I am more than willing to meet via zoom and discuss the necessity of my study. Please let me know if you need any further information from me.

Thank you so very much

Nikita Mc Cree

Doctoral Candidate

University of Missouri-Columbia