

EXAMINATION OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATIONAL RESEARCH 1992-2002

---

A PROFESSIONAL PAPER

SUBMITTED IN PARTIAL FULFILLMENT OF THE REQUIREMENTS

FOR THE DEGREE OF MASTER OF EDUCATION

IN THE GRADUATE SCHOOL OF THE

TEXAS WOMAN'S UNIVERSITY

COLLEGE OF FAMILY SCIENCES

BY

KIM MANASTER MITCHELL, B.S.

---

DENTON, TEXAS

DECEMBER 2002

## CHAPTER 1

### INTRODUCTION

The cultural composition of the United States has changed dramatically over the last few years. The US Census Bureau (2001) reported a significant increase in minority populations in the United States between 1990 and 2000.

The African-American population grew by 21.9%, the American Indian and Alaska Native population grew by 110.3%, the Asian population by 72.2%, the Hawaiian and Other Pacific Islander population by 139.5%, and the Latino population by 57.9% (U.S. Census, 2001). Some of the figures can be partially explained by the fact the Census Bureau in 2000 allowed people for the first time to identify themselves as more than one race. Even with allowances made for that change in reporting procedures, the population of all subgroups rose substantially above the overall growth in the population, and above the growth for the white sub-group. These changes highlight the importance of training teachers to be multiculturally sensitive.

## Statement of the Problem

Professional educators have been aware for some time that the cultural make-up of public classrooms has been changing (Dana, 1991; Dana 1992; Finch & Rasch, 1992; Reed, 1993). The typical teacher has been characterized in the literature as being white and raised in a suburban environment (Dana, 1991; Dana, 1992; Dana, 1993). Powell (2000) stated "Historically, education has been viewed as a primary means for promoting White, upper- and middle-class behaviors and values among the populace" (p. 11). The incongruity between the historical function of education, coupled with the typical teacher profile, and the diversity of school populations, warranted exploring teacher attitudes and practices and the role of training their development.

Three main areas of concern stemmed from the dichotomy between teachers and school populations. The first was that teachers' perceptions of what is "normal" affected their expectations of students. The second concern was that these expectations adversely affected their classroom management (Dana, 1992). The third concern was that teacher

expectations had a powerful effect on students' self-esteem and success (Rosenthal, 1992; Rhem, 1999; Bennett, 2001).

According to Reed (1993), awareness for the need of multicultural education has developed since the civil rights movement. Multicultural education first became an issue in the 1960s and 1970s as a result of desegregation and the civil rights movement. In the 1980s the issues of multicultural education took a backseat to other issues in education. The onset of the 1990s saw resurgence of interest in multicultural education (Finch & Rasch, 1992; Dana, 1991, 1992, 1993; Sia & Mosher, 1994; Hill, 1989; Nel, 1992; Larke, Wiseman, & Bradley, 1990).

In a review of the literature in the mid 1990s, an examination of the goals of multicultural education teacher training revealed six commonly cited goals. These goals included (a) to help teachers discover and define their own attitudes; prejudices and beliefs; (b) to foster cultural sensitivity; (c) to establish a knowledge base for teachers; (d) to provide teachers with multicultural experiences; (e) to provide teachers with the tools needed to establish authentic and productive relationships with

their students, thus allowing them to effectively manage classrooms; and (f) to foster the commitment to strengthen and improve education for all children (Dana, 1991; Dana, 1992; Dana, 1993; Sia & Mosher, 1994; Hill, 1989; Nel, 1992; Finch & Rasch, 1992; Larke et al. 1990; McCormick & Noriega, 1986).

#### Procedures

This proposal sought to examine the literature produced in the 1980s and 1990s and compare it to the current body of work produced from 1999 to 2002 in order to identify consistencies and changes in the areas of K-12 teacher preparation programs and inservice training with regard to multicultural education. The proposal also sought to examine the consistency of the typical teacher profile, the discrepancy between the cultural make-up of teachers as compared to the cultural make-up of students, and desired outcomes of multicultural teacher education training.

EBSCOHost and First Search One were the vehicles used to access the ERIC, Education Abstracts and Sociological Abstracts databases. Search terms were cross-checked in the ERIC thesaurus to ensure thorough searches. Literature used

to reflect current research in the field was limited to publications from the last three years.

#### Terms

Code-Switching-- Code-Switching is the ability to change the style and manner of communicating based on the demands of the situation. (Hertzog & Adams, 2001, p.3)

Collectivist Societies-- Collectivist Societies are hierarchical; social interaction is defined by age and gender. They tend to see children's primary role as being contributing members of the family unit. Children are expected to understand and act on a strong sense of responsibility toward the group, the family, and the community. Children are less likely to be asked to formulate and share their opinions or to talk about what they are learning in school. Ownership of property is less fixed, personal items are readily shared and often seen as family rather than private property. (Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, & Greenfield, 2001)

Culturally Relevant Teaching-- Instruction that incorporates interactional patterns, instructional methods, and social contexts for learning that are culturally compatible with students' everyday experiences into the curriculum and classroom instruction. Teachers help students access culturally relevant prior knowledge and then guide them as they build conceptual bridges between their prior and new information. (Jones, Pang, and Rodriguez, 2001)

Culture-- The behavior, values, beliefs, language, traits, artifacts, and products shared by and associated with a group of people. These characteristics are passed from one generation to the next through experiences and education. (York, 1991)

Hidden Curriculum-- The prejudicial teaching and learning that occurs indirectly through what has been omitted and not explicitly taught. (Payne and Welsh, 2000)

Individualistic Societies-- Individualistic societies stress making children independent--socially and economically. The primary emphasis is on self-reliance. (Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, & Greenfield, 2001)

Perceptual Filters-- The beliefs, values, attitudes, assumptions and experiences that color the way people perceive ideas, people, and events.

Transformational Experiences-- A significant experience, which causes a person to reflect upon themselves and the culture at large, and which facilitates and encourages change within a person. An experience which leaves a person altered and different from before.

#### Summary

This paper sought to compare and contrast the body of literature written about multicultural education. The work examined was written from the mid 1980s through the present. Topics included writings about training inservice and preservice teachers to be multiculturally aware and sensitive, as well as multiculturally sound classroom practices.

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

An examination of the current body of literature, compared to the body of literature produced in the mid-1990s revealed that many of the topics written about a decade ago were still being studying and discussed. As well as commonalties between the 19902 and the present bodies of work, there are some new issues that have been addressed.

#### Topics Common to Both Bodies of Literature

The fact that student diversity continued to accelerate, and is in fact the "norm", was widely written about (Artiles, Trent, Hoffman-Kipp, & Lopez-Torres, 2000; Sapon-Shevin, 2001; Pothoff, Dinsmore, & Moore, 2001). Reed (1998) predicted that 50% of schoolchildren in the year 2050 will be children of color. Geenen, Powers, and Lopez-Vasquez (2001) noted that by the year 2050 culturally and linguistically diverse people will be the majority numerically.

*Effects of a Lack of Multicultural Education Upon Children  
of Color*

The fact that children of color are not experiencing the same levels of success that Euro-American children are in schools was written about extensively in both bodies of literature. Nel (1992) noted that a disproportionately high number of minority students have been labeled as learning disabled, mentally retarded, or as having an "emotional disorder".

Nel (1992) noted the numbers of minority high school dropouts, citing "Afro-American students are dropping out of school at the rate of three in ten, Hispanic students at a rate of four in ten, and Native American at five in ten as opposed to a one in ten number for white students" (p.39). Nel also discussed the issue of tracking practices with regard to minority students, and the subsequent effect upon minority student representation in colleges. Hill (1989) talked about the great disparity between minority and non-minority students' test scores, and the dropout

rates of Hispanic students. Flores, Cousin, and Diaz (1991) spoke about the practice of labeling "the children of minority groups, children from low socioeconomic backgrounds, children who are bilingual, or children who speak a second language" as at risk, slow learners, learning disabled, culturally deprived, semi-lingual, and limited-English speaking. Flores et al. (1991) discussed how these labels serve to isolate and "display" children. They contended that students bearing these labels make up a large percentage of the drop out population. The literature continued to reflect these trends by noting that disproportionately high numbers of ethnically, linguistically, and culturally diverse students are receiving Special Education services (Geenen et al. 2001; Artiles et al. 2000; Cartledge, Tillman, & Johnson, 2001).

Cartledge et al. (2001) discussed that black students are suspended or expelled up to five times more than whites and also discussed the prevalent types of discipline used in American schools, such as; suspension, expulsion, time out, and corporal punishment. They noted the ineffectiveness of these measures, as indicated by

recurrent behaviors, the class time wasted, as evidenced by research and the inconsistency of the use of these measures with different ethnic groups. Cartledge et al. (2001) stated that discipline needs to be framed as preventive, as opposed to punitive. Paccione (2000) summed up the perceived state of affairs by noting, "by and large students of color do not succeed in American schools" (p.2).

#### *Attributes of Teachers*

Another dimension of the literature written about multicultural education that showed that contemporary themes overlap earlier themes is that surrounding what has been written about teachers themselves. Researchers (Dana 1991, 1992, 1993; Finch & Rasch, 1992; Avery & Walker, 1993) noted that the typical teacher is white, female, middle class and raised in a suburban environment. Noordhoff and Kleinfeld (1993) discussed that the "already small percentage of minority teachers is also decreasing alarmingly" (p.27). Researchers continued to note that teachers are, by and large, a monocultural group (Artiles et al. 2000; Parsons & Brown, 2001).

The fact that the teacher and student populations differ from each other has been noted as a potential obstacle in achieving the goals of multicultural education.

A predominantly white teaching force is likely to make most of its decisions through the lenses of white people's experiences and belief systems. This is not because the teachers don't care about the students, but because we all base our interpretations of the world on life experiences. (Bohm & Sleeter, 2001, p.4)

Betsinger, Garcia, and Guerra (2001) found that teachers "Defined their primary role as providing a caring and nurturing environment (at the expense of academic instruction) for children whom they perceived to be economically and culturally 'deprived'. Teachers feel it is their job to 'rescue them from their home environment'" (p.2).

This idea of "deficit students" was noted in both bodies of literature (Flores, Cousin, & Diaz, 1991; Noordhoff & Kleinfeld, 1993; Avery & Walker, 1993; Neuharth-Pritchett, Reiff, & Pearson, 2000) Parsons and Brown (2001) found five common trends in preservice

teachers' reflective writings, which reflect this concept of deficit students, students reflected their perceptions of diversity as; (a) diversity is "other than me"; (b) diversity as a challenge, a deficit; and (c) diversity as a condition to be fixed. They saw children of poverty, children of various ethnicities, or children of divorce as inherently needy. They said, "That is so sad!" and saw issues of diversity as indicative of brokenness requiring repair (p.2). They also believed that diversity required color blindness, believing that equality called for identical treatment of all children and identical responses to all children. A small minority saw diversity as a celebration, embracing it and perceived difference as richness. Those students wrote, "I'm bored when the students are all like me" (p.2).

White middle class teachers saw themselves as "accultural" and "normal" (Howard, 2000; Parsons & Brown, 2001; Gay & Pedelty, 2001; Groulx, 2001). The juxtaposition of who teachers are combined with who students are has led to some incongruities.

Teachers were lacking in knowledge, skills, attitudes and behavior that could help them be successful in diverse classrooms (Hill, 1989; Avery & Walker, 1993; Reed, 1998; Neuharth-Pritchett et al. 2000; Obiakor, 2001; Groulx, 2001). Teacher attitudes, expectations, and relationships with students were the most influential factor in determining the success of culturally diverse students (McCormick & Noriega, 1986; Nave, 1990; Nel, 1992; Sia & Mosher, 1994; Burnette, 1999; Bennett, 2001; Cartledge et al. 2001). "Teachers are largely responsible for what and how students learn. Therefore, the degree to which education for cultural diversity is realized in schools depends largely upon the attitudes, knowledge and behavior of classroom teachers" (Le Roux, 2001, p.45).

Haberman and Post (1998) stated that only eight percent of our teaching force is multiculturally competent. In classrooms where teachers were not multiculturally competent, diverse students were marginalized and teachers were unhappy, and generally abandoned the teaching profession within 2-3 years (Haberman & Post, 1998). Parsons and Brown (2001) stated,

Intellectual and emotional risk-taking is vital if we are to help teachers develop social and interpersonal empathy. They must reach out to understand the world beyond their experiences. They must be willing to entertain, seriously, ideas that may differ greatly from those they have embraced to this point. (p.3)

Both bodies of literature cited pluralizing the teaching force as a goal (Clarcken & Hirst, 1992; Avery & Walker, 1993; Tyler & Smith, 2000; Obiakor, 2001; Dieker, Voltz, & Epanchin, 2002).

#### *Information about Materials and Methodology*

The literature reflected that as well as common threads about students and teachers, there were also common threads with regard to materials and methodology. York (1991) extensively discussed the need for classroom materials that reflect diversity, as well as the need for educators to become critical evaluators of instructional materials, carefully screening them for accuracy and tokenism.

Clarcken and Hirst (1992) discussed at length the Standards, Procedures, and Policies for the Accreditation

of Professional Education Units of the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (1987), which discussed the need for curriculum to incorporate multicultural and global perspectives. They also cited the need for educators to become adept at identifying stereotypes in curriculum materials.

Nel (1992) discussed the importance of revising curricula to include multicultural dimensions and "establish multiple perspectives and empathy, including ethnic diversity, racism, minority views, global viewpoints and factors common to all cultures" (p.8). Hill (1989) spoke about the need to use ethnic literature whenever possible. Banks (1993) discussed the importance of materials, textbooks, and content, which reflected "examples, data, and information from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate the key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline" (p. 25).

In the contemporary body of literature Dieker et al. (2002) cited that "culturally relevant materials should permeate education at all levels" and that "curriculum

should be 'crafted' to embrace the strengths of our diverse student population." They further noted, "the cultures represented in the student body should be reflected in the curriculum and materials" (p.5).

Miller (2002) stated

We must always remember that textbooks and other teaching materials do not routinely portray minorities in nonstereotypical or 'nontokenistic' ways. We need to make a genuine effort to seek out and incorporate materials that reflect the world's diversity, and to develop curriculum that consistently incorporates and respects minority perspectives in ways that are not merely for show or that serve to single out cultural minorities as either heroes or victims of discrimination. (p.2)

#### Information New to the Literature

The examination of the literature illuminated many common areas of concern that have remained consistent. The examination also revealed that there are many concepts that

are either new to the literature, or appeared to take a more pronounced role in the writings.

*New Information Regarding Inservice and Preservice Teachers*

Several new implications for educators of preservice and inservice teachers surfaced in the literature. Teachers in preservice training frequently expressed fear of engaging multicultural content in their classrooms and resistance to developing the knowledge and skills needed for effectively implementing multicultural education (Gay & Howard, 2000). "When the reasons for these fears and resistance are examined, racial prejudices, anxiety about lack of knowledge of ethnic and cultural diversity, and doubts about teaching ethnic others quickly surface" Gay and Howard (2000, p.2).

One such new idea cited in the literature is that of warning of the potential dangers inherent in preservice and inservice multicultural education training which may lead to further perpetuation of myths, and reinforcement of previously held stereotypes and beliefs, thus impacting classroom practices in a negative way (Le Roux, 2001).

Another possible hazard cited was that of making participants feel uncomfortable (York, 2001; Leistyna, 2001), although discomfort seems to be an element that can be instrumental in cultivating transformative change within participants (Leistyna, 2001). Although this type of discussion has been widely recognized as an important part of preservice and inservice teacher multicultural education training (Neuharth-Pritchett et al. 2000; Le Roux, 2001; Valerio, 2001; Leistyna, 2001), it seemed critical to create a safe environment for participants to discuss and share views and experiences (Valerio, 2001).

In order to bring about substantive change, transformational experiences are an integral part of preservice and inservice teacher multicultural education (Reed, 1998; Donovan, Rovegno, & Dolly, 2000; Paccione, 2000; Bohm & Sleeter, 2001). This concept of transformational experiences facilitating change in teachers appeared as a prominent theme in the literature (Paccione, 2000; Gaudelli, 2001; Groulx, 2001; Jennings & Smith, 2002). The literature was rich with different models

and frameworks that have been implemented in an effort to bring about such transformative change.

Jennings and Smith (2002) wrote of using reflective writing coupled with participation in social action plans to facilitate transformation. Groulx (2001) discussed the need for "direct experience and sustained human contact" (p.64) citing the use of immersion experiences in another culture as a type of experience that "can change monocultural perspectives and promote self-discovery" (p.64). Groulx went on to mention several examples of such experiences, such as "working with immigrant families, tutoring foreign students in English, or volunteering at a homeless shelter" (p.64).

Jones et al. (2001) also cited the importance of social context with regard to educating teachers and prospective teachers to be multiculturally aware and sensitive, discussing Vygotsky's research, which noted the role of culture and cultural context were central to human development as well as the role of personal connections.

Field experiences for preservice teachers in diverse settings were widely thought to be a critical element in providing such a social and cultural context (Reed, 1998; Bohm & Sleeter, 2001; Donovan et al. 2000). Le Roux (2001) further highlighted the importance of field experiences and preservice multicultural education, when he stated: "Teachers' effectiveness or the lack thereof, with a culturally diverse group of students and with multicultural curriculum content, is a direct reflection of the quality of their professional preparation" (p.45).

#### *Content of Preservice and Inservice Training*

The content of multicultural education preservice and inservice training for teachers was widely discussed (Gay & Howard, 2000; Miller, Strotsnider, & Dooley 2000; Groulx, 2001; Hertzog & Adams, 2001; Sheets, 2001). Sheets (2001) voiced a concern that teacher preparation programs often address procedural rather than substantive issues. Several researchers noted that multicultural educational experiences for preservice and inservice teachers must be embedded throughout training, as opposed to being an add-on

(Le Roux, 2001; Payne & Welsh, 2000; Hertzog & Adams, 2001; Birkel, 2000). Le Roux (2001) stated that multicultural education teacher training has sometimes been "regarded as a luxury which cannot be afforded in a time of scarcity of resources, or as a contentious politically sensitive area best avoided" (p.47).

Another recurrent trend in the literature noted that in teacher preparation programs and professional environments there existed a powerful and subtle hidden curriculum which tacitly taught and reinforced pernicious messages about people outside the macroculture. This hidden curriculum was a threat to teachers developing and employing multicultural teaching strategies (Ewing, 2001; Herrera, 2001). Professional environments sometimes fostered and supported the use of stereotypes, "and are used to justify certain teacher attitudes and behaviors toward students of color" (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001, p.3). " Racial stereotyping blamed unequal outcomes on the students of color themselves rather than on society and its institutions" (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001, p.4).

Artiles et al. (2000) noted the need for continuing research in the arena of teacher education by noting an "alarming scarcity of research on the conditions which promote teacher learning for student diversity in preservice course and field experiences" (p.80). Paccione (2000) discussed the need to survey successful teachers in order to identify effective strategies. Along the same lines, Reed (1998) discussed interviewing flourishing teachers in order to glean attributes that make them successful.

The efforts to identify teaching behaviors and practices that have been effective have yielded some additional information. Researchers have identified the following as specific common traits of successful teachers:

(a) building rapport with students (Paccione, 2000; Cartledge et al. 2001); (b) becoming "culturally competent" (Paccione, 2000; Cartledge et al. 2001); (c) high teacher expectations (Reed, 1998); (d) good planning (Reed, 1998); (e) variety of instructional methods and techniques (Reed, 1998); (f) using different learning structures, like cooperative learning groups (Reed, 1998); (g) discipline

plan that is communicated and consistent (Reed, 1998; Cartledge et al. 2001); (h) good relationships with parents (Reed, 1998); and (i) need to explicitly instruct students on school culture and expectations of school environment with clear plain language (Cartledge et al. 2001).

Jones et al. (2001) noted:

From a sociocultural perspective, development and learning do not occur in a static environment. Instead they occur within dynamic and ever-changing sociocultural contexts. It is the social interaction among individuals that continuously transforms the sociocultural context of the classroom. Thus, culturally relevant classroom instruction provides regular opportunities for students and teachers to interact with each other. (p.3)

#### *Multicultural Education in Classrooms*

Multicultural education appeared to be permeating multiple disciplines, i.e. math, social studies, music, art, science, and language arts (Midobuche, 2001; Sapon-Shevin, 2001; Moldavan, 2001; Miller, 2002; Moyer, 2001; Jones, 2001). Instructional methods and materials such as

the use of; storytelling, narratives, chronicles, family history, scenarios, biographies, street murals and parables draw upon the strength of the lived experiences students bring to the classroom (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001). Solorzano and Yosso (2001) noted that teachers should "seek out media, professional, and artistic images that depict people of color in multiple contexts. (p.7)

Herrera (2001) noted "school is where teachers transmit American culture through a predetermined curriculum" (p.3). Ewing (2001), Herrera (2001), and Moss (2001) all discussed the concept of the "hidden curriculum", which Payne and Welsh (2000) defined as the prejudicial teaching and learning that occurs indirectly through what has been omitted and not explicitly taught. Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, and Greenfield (2001) stated that curriculum has consisted largely of

Superficial aspects of culture often addressed in multicultural education, such as major holidays, religious customs, dress, and foods. What's missing, teachers report, is a deeper kind of understanding-of the social ideals, values, and behavioral standards

that shape approaches to child-rearing and schooling.  
(p.2)

Jones et al. (2001) discussed multicultural education from the perspective of a Vygotskian:

At its most powerful, culturally relevant teaching goes beyond both the children's lived experiences and standard texts by providing cultural and historical examples from the student's own cultural and ethnic groups. . . using their own lives as a starting point, children were able to gain a deeper understanding of the context of history and the perspective from which it is written when they engaged in their own interpretations, interviews, and research. (p.2)

Czubaj (2001) stated that curriculum should extend multicultural educational content beyond "learning about people and cultures from around the world . . . to show how the cultures have influenced American culture" (p.1).

Another important aspect of educating children multiculturally that Hertzog and Adams (2001) discussed is that of code-switching. Hertzog and Adams (2001) observed that children need to be explicitly taught that there is a

context for different styles of communicating, and how to code-switch.

Reed (1998) discussed the value of employing a service learning component as a part of teachers' multicultural educational experiences. Solorzano and Yosso (2001) argued that the concept of social justice should be embedded throughout information disseminated to both teachers and students.

Another important instructional implication noted in the literature concerns assessment. Gay and Howard (2000) noted

It is unfair and unethical to depend entirely on written, individually competitive, standardized tests to determine achievement of students whose cultural socialization gives priority to oral expression, cooperative group efforts, and performance demonstration of mastery. The "one method for all" that is so much the emphasis of current "standards testing" is not very amenable to multicultural assessment. (p.7)

*General Trends Newly Identified in the Literature*

Cartledge et al. (2001) discussed their findings, which revealed a trend in public schools systems whereby

inexperienced teachers were placed in classrooms with low socioeconomic populations without the knowledge base, skills, or support they needed to be successful in a sort of "sink or swim" manner. If they survived, they were moved to less diverse classrooms, thus low socioeconomic schools had a high turnover rate. Classrooms in low socioeconomic schools commonly had two or more teachers within a given school year, all equally inexperienced and unskilled.

The face of multicultural education continued to evolve and change in many regards. One such change was the parameters by which it was defined. New to the literature was the inclusion of physical disabilities as part of diversity (Sapon-Shevin, 2001) and citing of sexual orientation as part of diversity (Nelson, 2001).

Another change reflected in the literature was the presence of people other than teachers in the effort to incorporate multicultural education and multicultural sensitivity in our schools. Dieker et al. (2002) discussed the presence of corporate groups and sponsors, parent groups, and professional organizations. Professional

organizations, while not entirely new, took a far more visible role in the current literature.

Dieter et al. (2002), Paccione (2000), and Midobuche (2001), in citing professional group standards noted the inclusion of multicultural educational standards addressed by an alphabet soup of educational organizations, including: Council on Exceptional Children (CEC), National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), National Association of Multicultural Education (NAME), National Association for Bilingual Education (NABE), Association of Teacher Educators (ATE), National Council for Teachers of Mathematics (NCTM). Dieter, Voltz, and Epanchin (2002) noted "despite the laudable activities of various educational organizations, there has been relatively little collaboration or coordination across these organizations with respect to preparing teachers for diversity" (p.2).

Standards appeared to be a concern in several arenas; professional organizations (Diekeret al. 2002), states' licensing and accreditation requirements (Miller, Strotsnider, & Dooley, 2000, 2002), and with regard to

students achievement, curriculum standards (Bohm & Sleeter, 2001). Miller et al. (2000, 2002) examined individual states' standards and found that 25 out of 50 states require multicultural education coursework. They noted a lack of expert consensus in establishing standards, which they believe was reflected by the lack of agreement regarding what should be covered and how in teacher preparation programs. Miller et al. (2000,2002) also postulated that multicultural education was not a high priority in general states' standards. Only 39% of "states reported a comprehensive explanation listing several specific categories" (Miller et al. 2000, p.3).

#### *Threats to Multicultural Education*

With regard to the standards movement in public schools as it relates to curriculum, Bohm and Sleeter (2001) noted that standards operate under the assumption that all students have an equal opportunity to learn. They further speculated that the testing and standards movements tended to either put multicultural education on the back burner, or sought to standardize it through the use of textbooks,

which they said do a cursory surface job of representing people of color, as all are portrayed as middle-class.

Bohm and Sleeter (2001) also mentioned that much of the material that attempted to be multicultural was housed in the ancillary materials portion of the textbook. They stated that history was cleaned up and sanitized, so as not to offend, and was rewritten to present a Eurocentric dominance, to the exclusion of other groups contributions, and that this in turn further marginalized groups. Sapon-Shevin (2001) saw standards and pushes for testing as a threat to multicultural education.

Many other threats to multicultural education were discussed in the literature. Le Roux (2001) stated, "Some schools of thought opposing multicultural education believe that it will inevitably give rise to the lowering of standards in this all accommodative approach" (p.44). In part, it appeared that the lack of consensus about what is included in multicultural education comprised one of the biggest threats to its existence (Fitzgerald, 2000; Ravitch, 2002; LeRoux, 2001).

Multicultural education appeared to be frequently misunderstood as a program on race relations, as an affirmative action vehicle, or as a civil rights movement. It has been charged with being a threat to the unity of our country and an attack on the importance of Western civilization in the school curriculum. (Birkel, 2000, p.22)

Some critics regarded multicultural education as an idealistic theory, which cannot be attained in practice (Le Roux, 2001).

Multicultural education is neither a well-delineated, nor a conceptually clear area, as reflected in numerous, often-confusing definitions . . . given the controversies surrounding multicultural education as a concept, many academic scholars have even argued that the term is outdated, offensive and politically incorrect. (Le Roux, 2001, p.43)

In light of the term "multicultural education" being a somewhat nebulous and misunderstood term, various euphemisms have been used. These euphemisms included such terms as: "multiethnic education, multilingual education,

intercultural education, cross-cultural education, immigrant education, bilingual education, community education, minority education" (LeRoux, 2001, p.43). Confusion and misconceptions appeared to foster a spirit of skepticism about multicultural education (LeRoux, 2001).

There appeared to be two diametrically opposed perspectives with regard to multicultural education, pluralism and separatism (Ravitch, 2002; Payne & Welsh, 2000). "It seems that the implementation of multicultural education, as a concept, depends predominantly upon the viewpoints of individual scholars, whether they take an assimilationist, cultural pluralist or anti-racist approach" (Le Roux, 2001, p.43).

Ravitch (2002) saw multicultural education as an institution, which threatened the principles of assimilation, the "melting pot" tenet the United States, was built upon. Ravitch (2002) appeared to have seen multicultural education as a separatist movement, "Instead, they have put a new emphasis on multicultural education, deemphasizing the common American culture and teaching children to take pride in their racial, ethnic, and

national origins" (p.2). Ravitch's article was written in response to the nation's response to September 11.

In the wake of the terrorist attacks of New York City and Washington last September 11, however, the tide may be turning away from multiculturalism. Americans' remarkable display of national unity in the aftermath of the attacks could change the climate in the nation's school as much as it has the political climate in Washington. (Ravitch, 2002, p.2)

Rose (2002) saw September 11 in a different light: Respecting the individual and celebrating religious, cultural, and ethnic diversity here and around the globe—these are the true enemies of terrorism, values that would make the events of September 11 all but impossible if they were more widely shared. And conveying this knowledge and these values to millions of students is precisely what public schools do each and every day. (p.2)

Politics appeared to be a potential threat to multicultural education (Bohm & Sleeter, 2001; Yamamura, 2001; Nelson, 2001). Bohm and Sleeter (2001) addressed the

issues of political conservatism and xenophobia impacting multicultural education adversely, citing California Propositions 187, 209, 227. Proposition 187 denies public services to undocumented immigrants, proposition 209 eliminates affirmative action from public hiring and college admissions, and proposition 227 limits bilingual education.

Nelson (2001) discussed the role of politics in the denouncement of multicultural education curriculum. Nelson noted that in an effort to be inclusive a New York City curriculum titled "Children of the Rainbow" was developed. He went on to say that this curriculum, which included references to children of gay and lesbian families, was altered to reflect the conservative values of the school-board members in power at that time in a heated and volatile environment.

The goals of multicultural education are to promote better understanding among our people, to reduce prejudice, to fulfill the democratic ideal of equality under the law and freedom of thought and action within established law. It seeks to fashion unity in

diversity through the idea of cultural pluralism. It aims to develop an appreciation of the contributions to our country and to humankind made by people from all elements of our society. (Birkel, 2000, p.4)

#### Summary

The body of literature written about multicultural education showed many consistencies between what was produced in the mid 1980s through the present. Also present were several new concepts. Although the basic desired outcomes of preservice and inservice teacher training have for the most part remained consistent, more ideas about how to reach these goals, and specific program components needed, were identified and discussed.

## CHAPTER THREE

### IMPLICATIONS/SUGGESTIONS FOR THE FUTURE

A thorough examination of the literature suggested that it is important to expose all people who work in education and their students to multicultural education concepts and practices. This included people involved in preservice education of teachers: university supervisors; cooperating teachers; and seminar leaders. Reed (1998) noted the importance of carefully screening and choosing the people who teach and train preservice teachers.

#### Implications for Preservice Teachers

Bohm and Sleeter (2001) stated that

Teachers who possess more complex understandings of multicultural issues have all had some kind of significant, long-term experience with minority communities in their private lives. Yet this kind of teacher training is rarely required and isn't even discussed in most places. (p.4)

Field experiences were widely recognized to be a potential vehicle for providing preservice teachers with transformative experiences, as well as providing them the

opportunities to hone teaching skills and develop strategies they need to cope and be successful in classrooms. Reed (1998) talked about the value of providing preservice teachers with field experiences in urban schools. Cartledge et al. (2001) highlighted the importance of making sure that field experiences are employing highly skilled teachers. Field experiences should train teachers "to be resourceful, creative, and observant" (Cartledge et al., 2001).

Reed (1998) discussed the importance of committing to preparing Anglo American teachers, although it appears that all beginning teachers should be prepared. Reed (1998) suggested informing prospective teachers about curricular and instructional practices that others in diverse settings, particularly Anglo American teachers, have found to be effective.

#### Implications for Inservice Teachers

Reed (1998) noted that half the successful Anglo American teachers surveyed in diverse settings reported having problems relating to African American teachers and administrators: "The Anglo Americans felt that the African

Americans resented having them in their schools. These Anglo teachers frequently heard the remark 'It's a Black thing, you wouldn't understand'" (p.7). This indicated a need for diversity training for all staff members, as well as team building between colleagues.

#### Implications for Inservice and Preservice Training

There appeared to be themes integral to sound multicultural educational preservice and inservice training for teachers. It seemed important for teachers to be "aware of their own cultural background and how that influences their attitudes toward others" (Cartledge et al., 2001, p.8). It appeared that teachers should also have knowledge of diversity in general, and knowledge about their students specifically, both culturally and individually (Paccione, 2000, Cartledge et al., 2001). Teachers should develop an awareness of how the two preceding factors affect the values and practices in their classrooms (Cartledge et al., 2001). Cartledge et al. (2001) cited the value of teachers reading intellectual work and literature by marginalized group authors.

Reed (1998) discussed the importance of teaching the effects of poverty and social class on children's learning. Sapon-Shevin (2001) suggested teaching the dynamics of prejudice and racism, and the subsequent effect they have on people. Information on individual and institutional racism and how to both develop an awareness of and counter the effects of these in classroom environments and teaching practices is valued (Le Roux, 2001).

Teaching teachers and prospective teachers the differences between different cultures and cultural values, such as the differences between collectivist societies and individualistic societies appeared to be of value. Reed (1998) wrote of the need to teach about the characteristics of children from varied cultural backgrounds, and how those backgrounds influence learning behavior. He also mentioned the need to recognize individual student differences.

Burnette discussed a need to "focus on the ways students learn and observe students to identify their task orientations" (p.2). Burnette (1999) wrote about teachers' attitudes toward cultural differences in classrooms, citing the value of acknowledging "both individual and cultural

differences enthusiastically and identify these differences in a positive manner" (p.2). Cartledge et al. (2001) discussed the importance of knowing "how to diffuse rather than exacerbate cultural dissonance" (p.8).

Along with teaching about culture and children, it seemed important to teach about communicating with, and involving, culturally different parents (Reed, 1998). In the effort to involve parents of different cultures in their children's school lives and to fully employ them as a resource, teachers appeared to need instruction on how to engage parents in the educational process and in making decisions regarding their children (Sapon-Shevin, 2001).

Cartledge et al. (2001) also discussed the importance of using direct, as opposed to veiled, indirect, language with children to convey information and limits. Cartledge et al. (2001) noted that some people from cultures other than white, middle-class America may be unfamiliar with the subtle culturally specific nuances that are sometimes used, such as, "Is this where you belong?" rather than "Return to your seat," and are therefore less likely to "obey" the former directive, which to them may not seem to be a

directive (p.6). Some teachers benefited from direct training on how to utilize language that is effective with students, which in turn helped cultivate order in classrooms and respect for them as teachers. Another dimension of this same issue of language usage involved teaching students to match their behaviors and language to different settings and registers (Burnette, 1999).

Reed (1998) and Sapon-Shevin (2001) discussed the importance of informing teachers about appropriate discipline models. A major component of effective discipline included building relationships with students (Burnette, 1999). Sapon-Shevin (2001) also spoke about teachers' need for varied and authentic assessment tools and techniques.

In general it appeared that pedagogies needed to move beyond teaching about others, to supporting teachers and students in thinking about and contributing to a more democratic, just society, where diversity is viewed as a strength and a resource (Jennings & Smith, 2002). Le Roux (2001) stated that culturally responsive teaching required teachers who understood that (a) culture, ethnicity, race,

gender, religion, socioeconomic position and exceptionality are potentially powerful variables in the communication and learning process of individuals and groups; (b) to optimally empower all learners, teachers need to lead students to understand that the construction of knowledge is a social and evolutionary process which is often distorted by negative aspects such as racism and sexism; (c) it is important to become more culturally competent: a process of becoming more successful in communicating with and helping students who are guided by different cultural habitual modes and norms; and (d) useful ideas about teaching and peaceful coexistence can result from cross-cultural studies and experiences in the multicultural classroom. (p. 48)

Bohm and Sleeter (2001) saw no quick fixes to the issue of training inservice and preservice teachers. They asserted that teachers must know their own perceptual filters and study the intellectual work of marginalized groups. Sapon-Shevin (2001) stressed the importance of replacing "single-shot inservice programs on student diversity of multicultural education with ongoing,

systematic teacher development" (p.4). Sapon-Shevin (2001) noted facilitating teachers mentoring and supporting one another through the training process and in classrooms as a significant component of successful multicultural educational preservice and inservice training.

#### Implications for Instructional Practices

Along with training teachers to use a variety of assessment techniques and strategies, it also appeared valuable to teach them to use a variety of instructional practices and learning activities (Burnette, 1999, Sapon-Shevin, 2001). Burnette (1999) noted the importance of considering students' cultures and language skills when developing learning objectives and instructional activities. Trumbull, Rothstein-Fisch, and Greenfield (2001) discussed the concept of bridging cultures by using such classroom practices as (a) selecting more than one helper or student of the week, allow children to share attention and responsibilities; (b) allowing for flexibility in work styles, configurations, allow children to work alone, or with others; (c) allowing for joint ownership of classroom supplies; and (d) holding group

celebrations of children's accomplishments create a sense of family.

Burnette (1999) discussed several valuable instructional implications for teachers, including incorporating instructional objectives for affective and personal development, communicating expectations to students, providing rationales for why students are learning material, and using and teaching students to use advance and post organizers to help students learn organizational skills. Burnette (1999) further suggested that teachers provide frequent reviews of instructional material, facilitate independence in thinking and action, promote student on-task behavior, monitor academic progress during lessons and academic work, provide frequent feedback on multiple levels, and require students to master material. Teachers also appeared to need instruction on how to discern materials that display multicultural sensitivity from those that do not. Dieker et al. (2002) discussed a need to develop more materials that reflect the diversity in our classrooms.

## Conclusions

In the quest to train and retain teachers, and pass the values and ethics of multicultural education on to children, the trend of thrusting inexperienced unknowledgeable new teachers into low socioeconomic schools without support, then moving them to less diverse settings, if they survive, must change. Revolving doors at urban, and (or) highly diverse schools hurt students and communities and hinder the building of mature, experienced staffs. This practice also deprives diverse schools of a resource for more effectively training new teachers how to be successful and from providing inexperienced teachers with peer support systems.

Some stability in the schools could perhaps be developed by providing urban field experiences for preservice teachers, preservice and inservice teachers with support systems, and conveying the benefits of working in urban schools. These would also nurture teachers and students, while building a cohesive sound educational system, which maintains academic integrity, and augmenting the curriculum

and classroom environments by valuing the diversity within and in the community at large.

Bennett (2001) noted:

To date there exists little evidence to show any K-12 classroom impact from the years of curriculum reform research. Scholarly research into the impact of multicultural curriculum on the knowledge, dispositions, and school success of young children and adolescents is extremely limited. Thus, the field is often perceived as having failed to fulfill its early promise to achieve equity and excellence in education through curriculum transformation. Furthermore, there is a small but growing body of research, primarily dissertations, that points to a gap between multicultural curriculum theory and classroom practice. (p.7)

This suggests that although educators have learned much about the need for multicultural education, the training of teachers, and what multicultural educational classroom practices are, there is much to learn about how to support teachers in daily practice. How to make

multicultural education a national priority, with an inherent system of checks and balances to ensure all children have opportunities that a genuine multicultural education can offer them, still lies ahead.

## REFERENCES

- Artiles, A. J., Trent, S. C., Hoffman-Kipp, P., & Lopez-Torrez, L. (2000). From individual acquisition to cultural-historical practices in multicultural teacher education. *Remedial and Special Education, 21*, 79-89.
- Avery, P. G., & Walker, C. (1993). Prospective teachers' perceptions of ethnic and gender differences in academic achievement. *Journal of Teacher Education, 44*, 27-36.
- Banks, J. A. (1993). Multicultural education development, dimensions, and challenges. *Phi Delta Kappan, 75*, 22-48.
- Bennett, C. I. (2001). Genres of research in multicultural education. *Review of Educational Research, 71*, 171-217.
- Betsinger, A. M., Garcia, S. B., & Guerra, P. L. (2001). Up for scrutiny. *Journal of Staff Development, 22*, 24-27.
- Birkel, L. F. (2000). Multicultural education: It is education first of all. *The Teacher Educator, 36*, 22-28.

Burnette, J. (1999). *Critical behaviors and strategies for teaching culturally diverse students.*(Report No. EDO-EC-99-12) Reston:VA: Special Education Programs(ED/OSERS).(ERIC Clearinghouse on Disabilities and Gifted Education).

Cartledge, G., Tillman, L. C., & Johnson, C. T. (2001). Professional ethics within the context of student discipline and diversity. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 24*, 25-37.

Clarcken, R. H., & Hirst, L. A. (1992, February). *Multicultural and global perspectives in teacher education.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators, Orlando, FL.

Czubaj, C. A. (2001). Shopping for Americulture. *Education, 122*,377-380.

Dana, N. F. (1991, February). *Developing an understanding of the multicultural classroom: Experiences for the monocultural preservice teacher.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators, New Orleans, LA.

Dana, N. F. (1992, February). *Towards preparing the*

*monocultural teacher for the multicultural classroom.*

Paper presented at the annual meeting of the  
Association of Teacher Educators, Orlando, FL.

Dana, N. F. & Floyd, D. M. (1993, February). *Preparing preservice teachers for the multicultural classroom: A report on the case study approach.* Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators, Los Angeles, CA.

Dieker, L. A., Voltz, D., & Epanchin, B. (2002). Report of the wingspread conference: Preparing teachers to work with diverse learners. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 25*, 1-10.

Donovan, C. A., Rovegno, I., & Dolly, J. P. (2000). Teaching development and diversity in field-based courses. *Action in Teacher Education, 22*, 37-46.

Ewing, N. J. (2001). Teacher education: ethics, power, and privilege. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 24*, 13-24.

Finch, M. E., & Rasch, K. (1992, June). *Preparing preservice students for diverse populations.* Paper presented at the AILACTE Forum, Louisville, KY.

- Fitzgerald, T. K. (2000). The multicultural movement and its euphemisms. *Multicultural Education, 8*, 8-14.
- Flores, B., Cousin, P. T., & Diaz, E. (1991). Transforming deficit myths about learning, language, and culture. *Language Arts, 68*, 369-377.
- Gaudelli, W. (2001). Reflections on multicultural education: A teacher's experience. *Multicultural Education, 8*, 35-37.
- Gay, G., & Howard, T. C. (2000). Multicultural teacher education for the 21<sup>st</sup> century. *The Teacher Educator, 36*, 1-16.
- Geenen, S., Powers, L. E., & Lopez-Vasquez, A. (2001). Multicultural aspects of parent involvement in transition planning. *Exceptional Children, 67*, 265-282.
- Groulx, J. G. (2001). Changing preservice teacher perceptions of minority schools. *Urban Education, 36*, 60-92.

- Haberman, M., & Post, L. (1998). Teachers for multicultural schools: The power of selection. *Theory into Practice*, 37, 96-104.
- Herrera, J. J. (2001). Children in time. *Multicultural Education*, 9, 40-41.
- Hertzog, H. S., & Adams, E. T. (2001). Blending cultural anthropology and multicultural education: Team teaching in teacher education program. *Multicultural Education*, 9, 26-29.
- Hill, H. D. (1989). *Effective strategies for teaching minority students*. Bloomington, IN: National Education Service.
- Jennings, L. B., & Smith, C. P. (2002). Examining the role of critical inquiry for transformative practices: Two joint case studies of multicultural teacher education. *Teachers College Record*, 104, 456-481.
- Jones, E. B. (2001). Social studies in the elementary classroom: Culture matters. *Theory into Practice*, 40, 35-41.
- Kleinfeld, J. (1998). The use of case studies in preparing

- teachers for cultural diversity. *Theory into Practice*, 37,140-147.
- Larke, P. J., Wiseman, D., & Bradley, C. (1990). The minority mentorship project: Changing attitudes of preservice teachers for diverse classrooms. *Action in Teacher Education*, 12, 5-10.
- Leistyna, P. (2001). Extending the possibilities of multicultural professional development in public schools. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision*, 16, 282-304.
- LeRoux, J. (2001). Effective schooling is being culturally responsive. *Intercultural Education*, 12, 41-50.
- McCormick, T. E. & Noriega, T. (1986). Low versus high expectations: A review of teacher expectations effects on minority students. *Journal of Educational Equity and Leadership*, 6, 224-234.
- Midobuche, E. (2001). Building cultural bridges between home and the mathematics classroom. *Teaching Children Mathematics*, 7, 500-502.
- Miller, H. M. (2002). Becoming a multicultural teacher. *The Reading Teacher*, 55, 346-347.

- Miller, M., Strotsnider, R. A., & Dooley, E. A. (2000). States' requirements for teachers' preparation for diversity. *Multicultural Education*, 8, 15-18.
- Miller, M., Strotsnider, R., & Dooley, E. (2002). States' diversity requirements for teachers. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, 25, 32-40.
- Moldavan, C. C. (2001). Culture in the curriculum: Enriching numeration and number operations. *Teaching Children Mathematics*, 8, 238-243.
- Moss, G. (2001). Critical pedagogy: Translation for education that is multicultural. *Multicultural Education*, 9, 2-11.
- Nave, B. (1990). *Self-esteem: The key to student success*. National Dropout Prevention Center, Clemson, SC.
- Nel, J. (1992). The empowerment of minority students: Implications of Cummins' model for teacher education. *Action in Teacher Education*, 14, 38-43.

- Nel, J. (1992, April). *Teacher preparation: Implications of Cummins' theoretical framework for analyzing minority students' school failure*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, CA.
- Nelson, M. R. (2001). No pot of gold at the end of the rainbow. *Journal of Curriculum and Supervision, 16*, 206-227.
- Neuharth-Pritchett, S., Reiff, J. C., & Pearson, C. A. (2000). Teachers leading teachers. *Childhood Education, 76*, 303-306.
- Noordhoff, K., & Kleinfeld, J. (1993). Preparing teachers for multicultural classrooms. *Teaching & Teacher Education, 9*, 27-39.
- Obiakor, F. E. (2001). Multicultural education: Powerful tool for preparing future general and special educators. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 24*, 241-255.
- Paccione, A.V. (2000). Developing a commitment to multicultural education. *Teachers College Record, 102*, 980-1005.

- Parsons, S. C., & Brown, P. U. (2001). Educating for diversity: An invitation to empathy and action. *Action in Teacher Education, 23*, 1-4.
- Payne, C. R., & Welsh, B. H. (2000). The progressive development of multicultural education before and after the 1960s: A theoretical framework. *The Teacher Educator, 36*, 29-48.
- Pedelty, M. (2001). Self as other: An intercultural performance exercise. *Multicultural Education, 8*, 29-32.
- Powell, R. (2000). Overcoming cultural racism: The promise of multicultural education. *Multicultural Perspectives, 3*, 8-14.
- Ravitch, D. (2002). Diversity, tragedy, and the schools. *Brookings Review, 20*, 2-3.
- Reed, D. F. (1993). Multicultural education for preservice students. *Action in Teacher Education, 15*, 27-34.
- Reed, D. F. (1998). Speaking from experience: Anglo-American teachers in African American schools. *The Clearing House, 71*, 224-230.

- Rhem, J. (1999). Pygmalion in the classroom [Electronic version]. *The National Teaching and Learning Forum*, 8, 1-6
- Rose, M. (2002). Teaching tolerance after terrorism. *The Education Digest*, 67, 4-8.
- Rosenthal, R., & Jacobson, L. (1992). *Pygmalion in the classroom: Teacher expectation and pupils' intellectual development*. New York: Irvington Publisher
- Sheets, R. H. (2001). Potential to teach our children: Pedagogy versus advocacy. *Multicultural Education*, 9, 46-47.
- Sia, A. P. & Mosher, D. (1994, February). *Perception of multicultural concepts by preservice teachers in two institutions*. Paper presented at the annual meeting of the Association of Teacher Educators, Los Angeles, CA.
- Sapon-Shevin, M. (2001). Schools fit for all. *Educational Leadership*, 58, 34-39.

- Solorzano, D. G., & Yosso, T. J. (2001). From racial stereotyping and deficit discourse toward a critical race theory in teacher education. *Multicultural Education, 9*, 2-8.
- Trumbell, E., Rothstein-Fisch, C., & Greenfield, P. M. (2001). Ours and mine. *Journal of Staff Development, 22*, 10-14.
- Tyler, N. C., & Smith, D. D. (2000). Welcome to the TESE special issue: Preparation of culturally and linguistically diverse special educators. *Teacher Education and Special Education, 23*, 261-263.
- United States Census Bureau. (2001). *Population by race and Hispanic or Latino origin for the United States: 1990 and 2000*. Retrieved June, 7, 2002, from <http://www.census.gov/population/cen2000/phc-t1/tab04.pdf>
- Valerio, N. L. (2001). Creating safety to address controversial issues: Strategies for the classroom. *Multicultural Education, 8*, 24-28.

York, S. (1991). *Roots and wings: Affirming culture in early childhood settings*. Minneapolis, MN: Redleaf Press