

MULTICULTURAL TEACHING COMPETENCE AS PERCEIVED  
BY ELEMENTARY SCHOOL  
TEACHERS

by

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Multicultural Teaching Competence As  
Perceived by Elementary School Teachers

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(ABSTRACT)

The purpose of this study was to (a) explore elementary school teachers' perceptions of their strengths and deficiencies for working with, and meeting the need of, students from diverse cultural backgrounds; and (b) assess the relationships between these perceptions and the teachers multicultural background and demographic factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity.

The participants were elementary school teachers in the Guilford County School System, North Carolina. One school was randomly selected from the four geographical regions in the school system. Teachers who taught summer school were also selected to participate in the program. Classroom teachers from selected schools participated in the study.

This study used Jacobeth Ntsebe Thabede's dissertation, Multicultural Teaching Competence as Perceived by Business Education Student Teachers (1996) as a model to frame the research. Thabede used Wayson's (1993) The Multicultural Teaching Scale classified into Banks' (1993) Dimensions of Multicultural Education to determine the level of multicultural teaching skills of business education student teachers. This study determined the level of multicultural teaching skills of elementary school teachers.

The outcome of the regression formula indicated 38 percent of the variance of Building Respect was explained. Building respect for diversity represents the teachers' reported willingness to model respect building practices. The four important independent

variables were age, the number of hours of multicultural instruction, whether they taught in a suburban school, and whether the participants had experiences with diversity during their education. The more multicultural background during teacher education, the older the participant, the more hours of multicultural instruction, and if teachers were working in a suburban teaching environment, the more likely teachers were to report behaviors that reflect building respect for multicultural diversity.

The findings of the focus groups and the survey showed teachers, who had multi-ethnic family origin, early education experience with cultural diverse students and multicultural friendship groups, perceived themselves competent to teach multicultural students.

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## Chapter I

Probably more than anytime in the history of the education system of this country Americans are aware of the changing nature of the school population. Appreciating individual and cultural differences has become a goal of American society. According to Schlesinger (1992) Americans must learn much more about other races, other cultures, and other continents. As they do, they should acquire a more complex and invigorating sense of the world—and of themselves. But, pressed too far, Schlesinger suggests that the “cult of ethnicity” also has had undesirable consequences.” The new ethnic gospel rejects the unifying vision of individuals from all nations melted into a new culture. And the reality is the American population unquestionably has grown more heterogeneous during the 21<sup>st</sup> century. It is this increasing heterogeneity that makes the quest for unifying ideals and understanding different culture all the more urgent.

A variety of educational terms such as, multicultural education, ethnic studies, and cultural diversity describe the path to this quest. A resurgence of interest in multicultural education has been influenced by a number of factors, a major one being demographic change among the school-aged population (Lyman, Fayle & Azwell, 1993). The number of children considered members of ethnic or racial minority groups has changed dramatically. It is the perception of Marcelo Suarez-Orozco, in an article written by Lynn Oslon (2000), that the term “minority,” will soon become anachronistic, as it is in California, where there is no single majority. In the future, according to the U. S. Census Bureau (2000), minorities will account for a greater proportion of the school-age population, with the largest gains coming among Hispanic Americans. By the year 2040, white non-Hispanics will make up less than half the school-age population.

Between 1999 and 2010, Hispanics are projected to account for 43 percent of U.S. population growth. The Hispanic school-age population is predicted to increase about 60 percent in the next 20 years; and by 2025, nearly one in four school age youngsters will be Hispanic. The Asian and Pacific-Islander population will also increase by 64 percent over the next 20 years, but starting from a much smaller base. The proportion of the school-age population that is Asian non-Hispanic is estimated at 4 percent in 2000 and is projected to rise to 6.6 percent in 2025.

Meanwhile, the percentage of school-age population that is African-American or Native American is predicted to remain relatively stable (p.34).

No other ethnic or racial group will do more to change the makeup of American schools over the next quarter-century than Hispanics. They're already the nation's largest minority group among children under 18; in 25 years projections show, one in every four elementary school pupil will be Hispanic. This historic trend presents challenges for school. As a group, Hispanics perform well below average on national achievement tests, and their high school dropout rate is nearly four times that of their non-Hispanic white peers (Zehr, 2000).

Although multiple factors, such as minority racial/ethnic group, socio-economic status and education of the parent (s) have been linked to being educationally disadvantaged, the combination of minority racial/ethnic group and poverty seemingly results in the greatest academic challenge. According to Olson (2000), public schools today are being asked to educate a generation that is more racially and ethnically diverse than at any time in the nation's history. George Vernez, director of the center for research on immigration policy at the RAND Corporation in Santa Monica, California, presents

another perspective. He states “the big challenge will be how to improve the educational prospects for the children of foreign-born parents with low levels of education and income. Schools have a relatively low level of effect on student achievement once you control for these factors... If we don’t do any better than we are doing now, the educational gap between Hispanics and African-Americans, on the one hand, and whites and Asian-Americans on the other is going to increase (p. 38).”

Historically, members of certain minority groups, particularly Black and Hispanic children, have performed less well in schools, as measured by various achievement tests, than White children. Results from the National Assessment of Education Progress (NAEP), for instance, has shown that the reading and math skills of Black and Hispanic children are substantially below those of White children at each of grades four, eight, and twelve (Beaton, 1986; NAEP, 1996). While 63 percent of grade four students who were White scored below the proficient level, 87 percent of Hispanic students were below proficient and 91 percent of Black fourth graders were below proficient. Results in reading for grade eight and grade twelve students displayed similar performance gaps.

The NAEP mathematics results for 1996 revealed a similar pattern in the achievement gap between White and Non-White students. At grade four, 95 percent of Black students scored below the proficient level, with 92 percent of Hispanics below proficient, and 72 percent of Whites. When socio-economic status was extrapolated, the results revealed ninety-one percent of students eligible for free/reduced lunch scored below the proficient level.

Americans, according to Olson (2000), must prove that demography is not destiny: that the color of children’s skin, where they live, the language they speak, and

the income and education levels of their parents do not determine the educational opportunities they receive.

What does this mean for teachers, who will be expected to maintain high achievement although more students are enrolling from culturally diverse backgrounds? Although a school curriculum sometimes reduces cultural diversity to the topics of food and holidays, teachers are increasingly aware that they must understand a great deal more about the cultural background of all their students as well as the communities where their students reside. Teachers realize that the classrooms consist of students from different cultural backgrounds who have a wide variety of instructional and curricular needs. Unfortunately, although teachers may not have the skills necessary to meet needs of the broad array of the students they serve, they must be prepared to teach all children. This is certainly true for Guilford County Schools, in North Carolina, and it is likely that the mix of cultures for the entire school district will become more pronounced in the future.

In 2000-2001, there were 101 schools in the Guilford County School System, with a teacher population of 4,933 that was 76.30 percent White, 21.60 percent Black, .45 percent American Indian, .40 percent Asian, 1.25 percent Hispanic. However, the pupil population shows a much higher minority percentage than was reflected by the teacher composition. Specifically, the student population, 61,409 was characterized by a percentage breakdown that included 49.70 percent White, 44.60 percent Black, 1.20 percent Asian, 1.60 percent Hispanic, 1.10 percent American Indian and 1.80 percent other.

Teachers in Guilford County, similar to teachers elsewhere, will have to equip themselves with the necessary skills, knowledge, and attitudes in order to meet the needs

of students who come from diverse cultural backgrounds. Although both theory and research on curriculum, instruction, and school reform have multiplied in recent years, only a small share of this increased activity has specifically addressed the educational needs of the increasingly culturally diverse student population. The question is, who will have the necessary skills and knowledge to educate this culturally diverse student population? This supposition exists because one inescapable requirement for the United States is a highly educated work force. Our continued national imperative, therefore, is to educate all children to the highest possible level, an increasingly difficult task due to the rapidly change in technology, which is coupled with an increasing diverse population. At present, schools are struggling to successfully educate all students, although the national imperative demands that substantial improvements are realized.

According to Bowman (1994), children from low-income families and those from some minority groups primarily African American, Hispanics, Native Americans are more likely to drop out, be retained, and be placed in special education settings than non-minority children. If current trends in educational achievement continue, these students will not have the skills necessary for full participation in the economic and civic life of the country. Furthermore, according to Banks (1993), a society that has sharp divisions between the rich and the poor as a result of differences in educational achievement among children is likely to make that society increasingly unstable.

James Banks and Cherry McGee Banks (1993) have indicated that, "while the percentage of students of color in the nations' schools is increasing rapidly, the percentage of teachers of color is decreasing sharply." Thus, teachers must have the skills, experiences, and the resolve to offer an accurate rendering of the American

experience to their students. Whether teachers' race and ethnicity directly affect student achievement remains unanswered. This is paramount since it has been reported that the majority of students in the 25 largest public school systems are students of color (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Viadero (1996) projected a decline of white children in the nation's classrooms by the year 2000, while the nations' teaching force remains overwhelming White and a trend analysis reflect that it likely will become more so. King (1993) gleaned from his review of literature on African-American teachers that there was no connection between teacher race/ethnicity and student achievement. It is Ladson-Billings' (1994) opinion that this makes all teachers accountable for teaching all students.

Although the present American educational system is dysfunctional for disproportionately large numbers of children who are not part of the racial mainstream, there is not a universal strategy for teaching about cultural diversity. A strategy does not exist for teaching children who are culturally different from their teachers or from the "majority" students--for whom the curriculum, instructional materials and school expectations have been tailored and whose best interests are served by continuation of the current situation (Cochran, 1995).

### Statement of Problem

How will teachers of ethnic groups who are different from the students they will teach meet the challenge of providing a high quality education for their students in a culturally diverse society? Because the U.S. system of education is built so solidly on a monocultural, Euro-American worldview, it tends to benefit White students, whose cultural patterns and styles are more attune to this worldview (Hilliard & Pine, 1990).

Hollins (1993) states that the current teaching force probably can combine knowledge about content, pedagogy, and how their students learn in ways that generate positive learning outcomes for their diverse student populations. Teachers have the capacity to make adjustments in instruction and curriculum, which should facilitate students' understanding of their own history, life experience, perceptions, and life goals. The planning and monitoring of instruction to insure that this is accomplished are the essence of teaching and learning (Hollins, 1993). This will be the change and the challenge faced by all teachers, but specifically elementary classroom teachers who are likely most affected during this millennium. Projections, according to Zehr (2000) indicate one in every four elementary school pupils will be Hispanic.

In an extensive ERIC search conducted on multicultural competence and perception on in-service elementary teachers failed to find any related literature. Professor Carl Grant (1996) of the University of Wisconsin also indicated that he found little empirical research regarding multicultural competence. As a result, scholars have voiced theories regarding the content of pre-service and in-service training teachers should receive to address this issue.

#### Dimensions of Multicultural Education

If multicultural education is to become better understood and implemented in ways more consistent with theory, its various dimensions must be more clearly described, conceptualized, and researched (Darling-Hammond, 1993). Earlier, Banks (1991, 1992) conceptualized and formulated multicultural education as a field consisting of five dimensions, which could be used in teacher training. The dimensions are based on his research, observations, and study of the field commencing during the latter years of

1960s. The five dimensions are (a) content integration (b) the knowledge construction process, (c) prejudice reduction, (d) equity pedagogy, and (e) empowering school culture and social structure.

1. Content integration deals with the extent to which teachers use examples, data, and information from various cultures and groups in order to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline.

2. The knowledge construction process describes the procedures by which social, behavioral, and natural scientists create knowledge, and the manner in which the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence the ways that knowledge is constructed. When the knowledge construct process is implemented in the classroom, teachers help students to understand how knowledge is created and how the racial, ethnic differences influence both knowledge and the social-class positions of individuals and groups.

3. The prejudice reduction dimensions of multicultural education describe the characteristics of children's racial attitudes and suggest strategies that can be used to help students develop more democratic attitudes and values.

4. Equity pedagogy exists when teachers use techniques and methods that facilitate the academic achievement of students from diverse racial, ethnic, and social-class groups.

5. The concept of empowering school culture and social structure is used to describe the process of restructuring the culture and organization of the school so that students from diverse racial, ethnic and social-class groups will experience educational equity and cultural empowerment.

### Purpose of Study

The purpose of this study was to (a) explore elementary school teachers' perceptions of their strengths and deficiencies for working with, and meeting the need of, students from diverse cultural backgrounds; and (b) assess the relationships between these perceptions and the teachers multicultural background and demographic factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity.

### Research Questions

The following research questions will be examined using Banks' (1993) Dimensions Typology of Multicultural Education.

1. For which of Banks' dimensions of multicultural education do elementary school teachers perceive themselves as competent?
2. For which of Banks' dimensions of multicultural education do elementary school teachers perceive necessary for developing competence?
3. Are elementary school teachers' perceptions of their multicultural competence related to their (a) multicultural background and their demographic characteristics, (b) racial/ethnic background, (c) hours of instruction for courses that address multicultural issues, (d) age, (e) gender, and (f) area of student teaching?

### Significance

This study will provide perceptions of elementary school teachers' multicultural education competence. These perceptions will help participating teachers design and implement appropriate curriculum, instructional strategies and techniques for working with their students. Further, these data will help central office personnel design

appropriate staff development, curriculum, instructional strategies and techniques for teachers in the Guilford County School System in North Carolina. The results of the study may also assist the school system when assessing the multicultural competence of new employees enabling them to provide appropriate professional staff development related to multiculturalism. Additionally, school districts with similar student and teacher demographics as Guilford County can use the results obtained from this study.

### Limitations

This study is limited to the elementary school teachers employed by the Guilford County School System during 1996-1997. Participants included teachers employed during the traditional and summer school calendar. The school system is divided into four geographical areas and one elementary school was randomly selected from each area.

Wayson (1988) cited in Thabede (1996) that "self-report instruments carry some inherent limitations that must be borne in mind as data are presented and reviewed.

1. Self-reports on matters as sensitive as multicultural relations tend toward socially acceptable answers; consequently, the findings likely appear more positive than findings resulting from the use of other methodologies (p.42).

2. The respondents possess few models for assessing their skills or knowledge; consequently, their responses are more likely to reflect their experiences and tend to produce assessments of ability beyond their capacity (p.42).

3. Some statements may have been open to interpretation; thus, the implications for practice will be unclear until the data for this study are supplemented with interviews" (p.42).

The dimension typology (Darling-Hammond, 1993) is an ideal-type conception. It approximates but does not describe reality in its total complexity. Like all classification schemes, it has both strengths and deficiencies. Typologies have proved helpful as conceptual tools because they provide a way to recognize and make sense of complex, disparate data, and personal observations. However, such established categories overlap and are interrelated but often are not mutually exclusive. Consequently, some cases can be described only by assigning them to multiple categories.

### Definition of Terms

Multicultural Education is an educational reform movement, and process whose major goal is to change the structure of educational institutions (Banks, 1993).

Multicultural education consist of beliefs and explanations that recognizes and values the importance of ethnic and cultural diversity which shapes lifestyles, social experiences, personal identities, and educational opportunities of individuals, groups and nations.

Multicultural education also prescribes what should be done to ensure equitable accessibility and treatment for diverse groups in schools and in the society as a whole (Baptiste, 1986).

A comprehensive definition of multicultural education includes the following four dimensions:

1. the movement toward equity aims to transform the total school environment;
2. the multicultural curriculum approach strives to integrate multiethnic and global perspectives into the traditional curriculum that is primarily monoethnic and Anglo-European;

3. the process of becoming multicultural clarifies the fact that individuals can be multicultural; this dimension avoids divisive dichotomies between native and mainstream culture, and brings an increased awareness of multiculturalism as the normal human experience;
4. and the commitment to combat racial and ethnic prejudice and discrimination through the development of appropriate understandings, attitudes, and social action skills (Bennett, 1995).

Multicultural background in this study refers to the degree to which individuals are exposed to diverse cultures in the family, through their educational experiences, working world, and friends. It reflects the involvement and exposure to people of other cultures from surface exposure (e.g. going to a multicultural fair) to deep personal connections.

Multicultural curriculum is one that attends to the school's informal curriculum--for example, teachers' values and expectations, student cliques, and peer groupings, and school regulations. It also attends to the values, cultural styles, knowledge, and perceptions that all students bring to school. A multicultural curriculum, in its broadest sense, influences the total school environment (Bennett, 1995).

Curriculum usually is defined in five ways: as a product, content, program, intended learning outcomes, and the experiences of learners. Curriculum as a product translates into documents, such as subjects offered, course syllabi, lists of course objectives and content to be mastered, and the titles of textbooks. Curriculum content addresses the specific information or data to be taught in a course or subject. When considered a program, curriculum usually refers to the courses of study offered or the subjects taught by educational institutions. Curriculum as intended learning outcomes deals with the

specific knowledge, skills, attitudes and behaviors students are required to learn.

Curriculum as experience of learners is different from the other four concepts since it reports what actually happens to students whereas the other only indicate what should happen. It includes planned and unplanned experiences, because students learn from the formal instructional encounters sanctioned by the school as well as the structural arrangements and social environments in which materials are presented and teaching-learning interactions occur (Grant and Gomez, 1996).

Culture, the ideals, symbols, behaviors, values, and beliefs shared by a human group.

Culture may also be defined as the symbols, institutions or other components of human societies created by human groups to meet their survival needs (Banks, 1994). Spradley and McCurdy (1975), defined culture as the acquired knowledge that people use to interpret experience and to generate social behavior.

Ethnic groups, a sub-group of the same race that share a common history, a sense of cultural identity, values, behavioral characteristics, and a communication system. The members of an ethnic group usually view their group as distinct and separate from other cultural groups within a society (Banks, 1994).

Global Education, the study of cultures, institutions and interconnectedness of nations outside of the United States. Global education often is confused with multicultural education. Global education deals with issues, problems, and developments outside a particular nation, e.g., United States (Banks 1994).

Learning Style is that consistent pattern of behavior and performance by which an individual approaches educational experiences. It is the composite of characteristics (cognitive and affective), and physiological behaviors that serve as relatively stable

indicators of learners perceive, interact, and respond to various learning environments. It is formed in the deep structure of neural organizations and personalities [that] mold and is molded by human development and the cultural experiences of home, school, and society (Bennett, 1995).

## Chapter II

### Review of Literature

This study used Jacobeth Ntsebe Thabede's dissertation, Multicultural Teaching Competence as Perceived by Business Education Student Teachers (1996) as a model to frame the research. The purpose of her study was (a) to identify the strengths and deficiencies as perceived by student teachers for working with students from diverse cultural backgrounds and for meeting these students' needs, and (b) to examine business education students' multicultural backgrounds and demographic factors as they relate to their perceptions of their multicultural competence (Thabede, 1996). Her population sample consisted of 152 business education student teachers who were completing their internships during the spring of 1996. The sample student teachers were drawn from the Southern Region states as defined by the National Business Education Association (NBEA).

Multicultural education incorporates the idea that all students, regardless of their social-class, racial, ethnic, or gender characteristics, should have an equal opportunity to learn. Multicultural education implies that teachers should carefully examine their own racial and ethnic attitudes—as well as the culture and structure of classrooms and schools. This self-assessment should help determine which dimensions of multicultural education are being implemented in our schools. Additionally, multicultural education requires that each dimension is implemented both successfully and continuously (Banks, 1992).

Wayson's (1993) The Multicultural Teaching Scale was classified into Banks' (1993) Dimensions of Multicultural Education in order to determine the level of

multicultural teaching skills achieved by business education student teachers. Thabede's findings suggest that student teachers perceived themselves as needing to develop competence in three dimensions: 1) Content Integration, 2) Knowledge Construction and 3) Prejudice Reduction Dimensions.

Specifically, the outcomes of the regression analysis revealed the following:

1. Ethnicity was significant in predicting the Content Integration dimension.
2. Ethnicity and multicultural background were significant in predicting the Knowledge Construction Process dimension.
3. Ethnicity, gender and multicultural background were significant in predicting the School Culture Dimension.

Thabede (1996) also found that age, hours of instruction for courses addressing multicultural issues and student teaching areas were not significant predictors of multicultural teaching competence in all the dimensions.

### Instruction

The following literature on multiculturalism is advocated for classroom teachers by authors who have written extensively on topics of multiculturalism, cultural diversity, and ethnicity. Garibaldi (1992), states to be effective, teachers must be competent in the courses they teach if their students are to be academically successfully.

An interorganizational report of the American Association of College for Teachers Education, the American Federation of Teachers, and the National Education Association identified four essential skills that teachers must possess before engaging in instruction:

1. Understanding students' cultural background, interests, skills, and abilities as they apply across a range of learning domains and /or subject areas.
2. Understanding students' motivations and their interests in specific class content.
3. Clarifying and articulating the performance outcomes expected by pupils.
4. Planning instruction for individuals or groups of students (Standards for teacher competency in the educational assessment of students, 1989 p.2).

Logically, instruction should contain the knowledge already accumulated by the students. Teachers should allow, when appropriate, for students to use their own learning styles, and then gradually shift to classroom practices that include new content and more efficient techniques for acquiring knowledge. Teachers should provide a variety of instruction techniques that appeal to nearly all children regardless of individual, family and cultural differences. However, instructional techniques also should specifically target the several different cultures represented in each classroom. For example, cooperative preference, a practice strongly recommended as a key multicultural instructional practice by Sleeter and Grant (1993), is a cultural family preference for teaching American Indian students.

Slavin (1990) believes a key element of instruction is cooperative learning, and that elementary teachers can help students appreciate each other when differing factors such as gender, ethnicity, race, religion, cultural and physical attributes are presented in the classroom. Research on cooperative learning consistently has indicated that increased liking and respect among students of diverse backgrounds is a positive outcome of classroom instruction. Of 68 studies reviewed by Slavin (1990), 49 showed positive

effects in terms of academic achievement for the groups involved in cooperative learning. In five studies investigating cooperative learning's effectiveness, Black students and students with learning and physical disabilities outperformed both their control counterparts as well as White, high-achieving, nondisabled students. These studies were conducted at elementary and middle school levels in urban and rural Baltimore, Maryland between 1977 and 1981.

Gollnich and Chinn (1986) insist that learning styles of the students and the teaching styles of the teachers have to be understood before effective instructional strategies can be developed. Teachers and students can be mismatched in teaching and learning styles, which will disadvantage both parties. Teachers who are aware of their learning/teaching styles can learn to organize classroom and instructional activities that are beneficial to students with different learning styles. Teachers also should develop skills for individualizing instruction that is based on the specific needs of students. No longer can teachers afford to teach all students identically, tailoring instruction to the needs of individuals is one way to help all students reach their full potential.

Gollnich and Chinn (1994) subsequently state that, multicultural teaching, learning styles of students, and teaching styles of the teachers have to be used in order to develop effective instructional strategies. Knowing the cultural background of students assists teachers to determine how to structure their classrooms in order to take advantage of their students' natural learning styles. Learning styles often are correlated with how students are assimilated into the dominant society. Minority students are more likely to be field-sensitive than students from the dominant group. Field sensitive is one dimension of learning styles. Individuals who are categorized as "field-sensitive" have a more global

perspective of their surrounds; they are more sensitive to the social field. Field-sensitive persons are more likely to choose careers in teaching or social work.

Research has shown that visual instructional methods are far more effective in teaching concepts to Native American students compared to verbal methods (Erickson, 1972; McCarter and Schill, 1982). Winne and Marx (1982), state students are active interpreters of instructional encounters and they make inferences about the meaning of instructional information. Consequently, instructional information must be presented so that the chance that students will misinterpret the teachers' intentions is minimized.

A number of instructional strategies have been used to address the needs of culturally diverse students (Fradd & Weismantel, 1989; Ortiz & Ramirez, 1988; Fradd & Tikunoff, 1987. Strategies include:

1. Practice and repetition, oral and visual cues, and individualized instruction and participation.
2. Cooperative learning activities (Hudson & Fradd, 1990; Hudson, 1989);
3. Reading and writing scaffolds (Pergegoy & Boyle, 1990);
4. Direct instruction, peer tutoring, and precision teaching (Morsink, Thomas & Correa, in press).
5. Learning strategies (Deshler & Schumaker, 1986).

Cooperative learning, an instructional strategy that involves students helping one another in a small-group setting, appears to be an effective strategy, which also provides students an opportunity to develop academically as well as socially. The major elements of cooperative learning include positive interdependence, individual accountability, collaborative skills, and group processing (Johnson & Johnson, 1984). Curriculum

content and material can be evaluated, updated, and instructional strategies and methods can be expanded.

Bennett (1995) encouraged teachers to utilize learning activity packets (LAPs) and learning centers (LCs), which are useful strategies that can supplement large group instruction. Both strategies are self-contained learning units for individual students or small groups. Minimum of teacher guidance is required if self-contained learning units designed and implemented properly. Both can be designed as a single lesson or a series of lessons, or they may be integrated into an entire instructional program or classroom organization plan. Learners usually are permitted to progress at their own rate.

Banks (1979) stress that if facts and concepts are combined around a broader frame of knowledge, a key method to organize instruction can be realized.

Generalizations serve this purpose well and can be defined as each,

...contains two or more concepts and states the relationship between them. Like empirical facts, generalizations are scientific statements, which can be tested and verified with data. Generalizations are very useful tools in instruction because they can be used to summarize a large mass of facts and to show the relationship between higher-level concepts, which students have mastered. Like concepts, generalizations vary greatly in their level of inclusiveness; there are low-level generalizations, which are little more than summary statements, and there are very high-level generalizations, which are universal in applicability (p.57).

Baker (1983), insists that teachers should be required to restructure the instructional content pursuant to the following:

1. Identify areas they can immediately affect students' perceptions such as developing bulletin boards that display diversity via pictures, assembling room book collections, and selecting materials to be read to children; and
2. Teachers should list the kinds of help they to begin to develop instructional content and methodology that are multicultural.

A unit of instruction prepared solely by the teacher will usually have a good of structure. Baker also suggests that it is essential instructional units contain the following: (a) goals and objectives, (b) a content outline, (c) a set of behavioral objectives, (d) generalizations, (e) activities, and (f) resources.

Lynch (1983) stressed that effective instruction presupposes mastery of the subject-matter content, but it cannot be guaranteed. To achieve instructional success in classrooms, teachers have to do more than merely share their knowledge. They must be able to translate their knowledge of the discipline into a delivery system that is meaningful to students. For any curriculum to be successfully implemented, the “what” and the “how” are both indispensable.

Gay (1981) stated that “pedagogy,” is the art as well as the science of teaching and requires that instructional actions are directed toward others. These actions imply the need for planning, which in turn requires the use of informed decision-making. The pedagogical elements of multicultural teaching, then, should focus on planning and practicing multicultural instruction. Gay (1992) further provided examples in teaching and the powerful potential they offer for making classroom instruction more effective for a greater variety of students in multicultural classrooms. These teaching examples serve many functions simultaneously. In addition to functioning as a “binder of

meaningfulness” between academic abstraction and practical living, these examples assist students to learn about cultural pluralism as they develop their academic skills. Further, these teaching practices help penetrate the inner core of the teaching and learning processes. For example, showing how basic mathematical forms of shapes like circles, squares, and triangles are applied in different types of ethnic Architecture (such as Native American dwellings, Moslem mosques, Jewish synagogues, indigenous African homes, and American schools), simplify learning for some students. Using ethnic examples of protest poetry in the process of teaching literary criticism skills may cause some students to be more interested in poetry and may improve their mastery. It also introduces all students to multicultural content within the context of studying normal literature themes and/or genre. In addition, it simultaneously teaches several different kinds of skill development, i.e., literary criticism, critical thinking, ethnic and cultural literary understanding, and infusion of multiculturalism.

Hollins, King, and Hayman (1994), stressed that teaching African-American and other children from culturally diverse backgrounds is neither difficult nor impossible. It does require a restructuring of teaching attitudes, instruction, and strategies. Teachers must become facilitators and directors of learning processes, rather than information givers. Classroom must become more group-oriented and cooperative rather than individualized, competitive, and repressive. Peers and other students must be included as teachers in the learning process, along with the community, including the parents of children, and the materials used in the classroom must be a reflection of the experiences of the children, not just in character images, but also in settings and contexts. Perhaps the greatest change needed is that simple delivering of information must be replaced with

demonstrations, modeling and student involvement through use of multiple media presentations.

Modeling accomplishes this goal by providing explicit information, thereby reducing instructional ambiguity. This is particularly important for students who find reading difficult and lack appropriate parental assistance. The result is a misunderstanding of reading, and in the absence of explicit instructional information, they draw erroneous conclusions about lesson objectives. In brief, modeling minimizes the guesswork and enhances the ability of students to achieve reading competence.

Modeling also is an effective instructional strategy employed by teachers to demonstrate new or unfamiliar processes for students (Good: 1983, Rosenshine; 1986). It minimizes students' misinterpretations by providing explicit information and reduces cultural conflict by eliminating the ambiguity of learning. Two instructional programs that demonstrate this approach are the Distor programs of Bereiter and Engleman, Duff and Associates cognitive modeling in reading (Shade, 1989); and problem solving (Whimbey, 1985).

Rosenshine (1986) reframed the discussion of effective instruction in order to focus on a process-product view such as that found in "direct instruction." The Chicago Mastery Learning Project described by Black and Anderson (1975), was tied closely to the process-product view of effective instruction. Mastery learning, like direct instruction, could be employed in teaching any content by using a variety of approaches. An underlying assumption of direct instruction is that there are universal or generic qualities of instruction that have proved successful for all children regardless of culture or

background experiences. This is tied to a universalistic view of human growth and development.

### Curriculum

The literature recommends explicit pedagogical practices that teachers should adhere to in the development of the curriculum, particularly as it pertains to culturally diverse populations, although such practices should not be limited to this population. What changes do teachers have to implement for achieving a successful multicultural curriculum? Banks (1994) indicated that changes begin at the personal level first and then extend outward. He states,

First, teachers need to examine their own ideologies. Many teachers in our society are highly assimilationist oriented, but they have not examined their ideologies about America and their own conceptions about America. I have developed a topology that consists of three ideologies: assimilationist, multicultural, and cultural pluralism.... I ask teachers to look at these and to place themselves on the topology. Assimilationist teachers tend to believe that Columbus really did discover America and tend to believe that if we teach about differences that we will disrupt America. In addition to examining their own ideologies, teachers need new knowledge about the culture and history of groups, and need to know how to accomplish the same paradigm shifts that their students will need to make. I know that's complicated, and I know that many teachers feel that they will never know enough about all groups. But more than gaining knowledge about the cultural characteristics of specific groups, we need to help teachers attain a process for

looking at the American experience so that they can raise questions. We won't know all the answers (p.87).

Sanchez (1991), stressed that a multicultural curriculum must include the following components: (a) a teacher willing to critically evaluate his or her personal perspectives, (b) instructional materials that provide diverse but accurate perspectives, and (c) general goals and objectives.

Similarly, Hernandez (1989), stated the following goals are found most frequently in multicultural curriculum:

1. Help students recognize and understand the values and experiences of ones' own ethnic cultural heritage.
2. Promote sensitivity to diverse ethnicities and cultures through exposure to other cultural perspectives.
3. Develop an awareness and respect for the similarities and differences among diverse groups.
4. Identify, challenge and dispel ethnic/cultural stereotyping, prejudice, and discrimination in behavior, textbooks and other instructional materials.

Since, goals are intended to be guidelines, a multicultural curriculum is usually only effective when the teacher is given choices as to how to achieve such goals within his or her subject area or grade level.

Steinberger (1992) asserted, to reach the goal of equality, that multicultural curriculum must include as a vital component an emphasis on social skills and higher order thinking skills to help children develop meaningful interpersonal relationships, resolve conflict, and redress stereotypes and prejudices. Steinberger indicated that such information must be infused throughout the curriculum and should extend far beyond a mere focus on the heroes and holidays of various cultural groups.

Sleeter (1989) emphasized that the transformative curriculum will be consistent with the basic mission of the multicultural education movement. That is, “to challenge oppression, and to use schooling... to help shape a future America that is more equal, democratic, and just, and that does not demand conformity to one cultural norm (p.63.)” A curriculum designed to empower students must be transformative in nature and assist students to develop the knowledge, skills, and values needed to become social critics who make reflective decisions and implement their decisions in effective personal, social, political and economic actions. Banks (1992) agreed that the transformative curriculum must help students to reconceptualize and rethink the experiences of humans in both the United States and other countries so that human experience can be viewed from the perspective of a range of cultural, ethnic, and social-class groups. In order to construct their own versions of the past, present, and future students should hear multiple voices (Banks, 1992).

Baker (1993) offered the following suggestions to accomplish the goal of restructuring the curriculum so that it is multicultural.

1. If textbooks are to be used, they must be selected with multicultural content in mind.

2. If textbooks are used to teach writing, spelling, mathematics, science and music, the teacher will need to supplement them with relevant materials.
3. In each subject area, the teacher should select only one unit or section through which multicultural content can be presented. Expansions into the remainder of the unit or subject area should follow, as information is available.
4. Opportunities to help children becomes bilingual can be coordinated with the activity presented in speaking and listening.

Banks (1994) identified two effective approaches teachers should use to integrate cultural content into the school curriculum. The transformation approach differed fundamentally from the contributions and additive approaches because neither the challenged the basic structure of the curriculum. These students often were unable to view concepts, issues, themes, and problems from different perspectives and points of view. Further, goals of these approaches included helping students to understand knowledge as a social construction.

The decision-making and social action approach extended the transformative curriculum by enabling students to pursue projects and activities that allow them to take personal, social and civic actions related to the concepts, problems, and issues they have studied. Banks (1994) stated that in order to build a conceptual multicultural curriculum, it is necessary to choose higher-level, powerful concepts like culture, power, socialization, protest, and values as organizing concepts. Taba (1971) and her colleagues developed a conceptual curriculum model that is often replicated by educators. The Taba Social Studies Curriculum was designed for grades 1-8 and organized around 11 powerful, organizing concepts:

(1) causality, (2) conflict, (3) cooperation, (4) cultural change, (5) differences, (6) interdependence, (7) modification, (8) power, (9) societal control, (10) tradition and (11) values.

In order to implement the curriculum, Taba (1971) suggested the following steps:

1. Identify key concepts, such as ethnic diversity, immigration and assimilation, around which teachers will organize the curriculum.
2. Identify key or universal generalization related to the key concepts chosen. Identify an intermediate-level generalization for each of the key concepts.
3. Identify a lower-level generalization to the key generalization for each of the subject areas in which the key concepts will be taught.
4. Formulate teaching strategies and activities to teach the concepts and generalizations.

Banks (1994) acknowledged that a multicultural curriculum could be taught with almost any materials if teachers have the knowledge and the skills necessary to examine the materials critically. Most importantly, is staff development, which teachers have to be provided if they are to develop the knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to transform their thinking, and consequently the school's curriculum. Teachers need to teach about knowledge as a construct process, and transfer such knowledge through the process; and then, teachers need to ask students the questions that enable them to construct the same knowledge process. Again, the most important place to start is staff development for teachers implementing a multicultural curriculum (Banks, 1994).

There is much that can be done to prepare teachers to educate the diverse population anticipated for the future. Curriculum content and materials can be evaluated

and updated, and instructional strategies and methods can be expanded. Parents and professionals can learn to work together as a team in order to reach the goal of educating culturally diverse students. This will help prepare them for acculturation to the mainstream American culture without unwarranted stripping away their cultural characteristics (Morsink, Thomas, & Correa, in press).

Banks (1991) stated that multicultural education reforms the curriculum so that students view events, concepts, issues and problems from the perspectives of diverse racial, ethnic and social-class groups. The perspectives of both men and women also are important to the restructured, multicultural curriculum. Banks (1993) proclaimed that students learn best and are more highly motivated when the school curriculum reflects their cultures, experiences and perspective.

Erickson (1986, cited in Wittroch (Ed.) emphasizes that curriculum is both a message about how the world makes sense, and a medium through which sense is made most immediately, both by teachers and students. Unfortunately, most people remain in the dark about the affects that the school curricula (subjects) have on the students.

Nieto (1992), listed the following seven basic characteristics of a multicultural curriculum: (a) antiracist education, (b) basic education, (c) important for all students, (d) pervasive, (e) education for social justice, (f) a process, and (g) critical pedagogy. Nieto (1992) stated,

There is widespread perception that multicultural education is only for students of color or for urban students or for so-called “disadvantaged” students...Although the primary victims of biased education continue to be those who are invisible in the curriculum, those who figure prominently are victims as well. They receive

only a partial education, which legitimizes cultural binders. European American children, seeing only themselves, learn that they are the norm; everyone else is secondary. The same is true of males, and the children of the wealthy. Although generally exposed to a more comprehensive view of history, they learn that the wealthy and the powerful are the real makers of history, the ones who have left their marks on civilization. Multicultural education is by definition expansive because it is about all people (p.213).

Gollnich and Chinn (1986) echoed Nieto by stating that curriculum does not serve all students well if it reflects only the perspectives of the so-called Anglo middle-class. Students need to see some of their own cultural values reflected in the curriculum. They need help to see themselves as desirable and integral members of the school community rather than second class citizens who must learn the ways of the more economically advantaged in order to succeed. Teachers need to become aware of the curriculum and materials used in the classroom. Students' acceptance and motivation are likely to be limited if they never see their community (culture) in these instructional materials. Materials, films, and books can be obtained from a variety of community resources. Students should be encouraged to read about people from different cultures, backgrounds, and socioeconomic levels. When studying historical or current events, students should be urged to view events from several different perspectives. Drawing on examples from experiences familiar to students can enhance teaching.

Bowan (1994) suggested teachers should begin by assuming that children are developmentally able to learn and that the teachers' task is to find the key that will unlock their potential and channel it on behalf of the school's curriculum. Sleeter and Grant

(1993) provided the following multicultural education curriculum reform, which addressed race, class, gender, disability and sexual orientation in societal goals, school goals, instruction and other classroom and school-wide concerns. Brief descriptions of these approaches are:

1. Teaching the exceptional and culturally different; this approach accommodates students who are exceptional or culturally different through the use of teaching strategies or culturally relevant materials that otherwise might be used in a “pullout” program for students with “special needs.”
2. Human relations approach undergrids a curriculum that includes lessons about stereotyping and individual differences. It encourages instruction that includes collaborative and cooperative learning among students.
3. Single-group studies approach promotes social, structural equality for and the immediate recognition of an identified group. This approach assumes that because of past curriculum biases, knowledge about particular oppressed groups should be taught separately from conventional classroom knowledge in either separate units or separate courses.
4. The multicultural education approach to education promotes both social equality and cultural pluralism while encouraging the maintenance of students’ native languages and multilingual acquisition for all students.
5. Education that is multicultural and socially reconstructed provides a climate in which students can work toward structural equality, accept lifestyles different from their own, and understand the importance of equal opportunity.

Rodgers (1975) stated that the instructional program is tied theoretically and structurally to the curriculum. Materials and resources play a pivotal role in the implementation of the curriculum. In agreement, Bennett (1986) endorsed the following five principles, which specify how teachers can establish a multicultural education curriculum:

1. Most students are innately curious individuals capable of learning complex materials and performing at a high skill level.
2. Students have their own unique learning style. Teachers should not only build on this when teaching, but also help students “discover their own particular style of learning,” so that they can learn more effectively and efficiently (Kendall, 1983, p. 12).
3. Teachers should evaluate and encourage students to bring conceptual schemes that student bring to school. For example, Hollins (1982), drawing on the work of Cusubel, argues that students generally come to school with good conceptual schemes.
4. Teacher should have high and realistic expectations for all students. Bennett (1995) argues that high expectations are some prerequisites for equal education: “If teachers are to provide equal opportunity for learning, their expectations for student success must be positive and equitable (p.67).” Moreover, it is not only the teacher who needs to have high expectations for the students: students also need to have high expectations for themselves.
5. Fostering cooperation through cooperative learning activities is an essential component. After reviewing research on cooperative learning, Bennett (1995)

indicated “research results show that team learning improves both academic achievement and students’ interpersonal relationships.”

Gollnich and Chinn (1994), suggested that there are several components and concepts that should be included in a multicultural curriculum, such as: (a) ethnic, minority, and women’s studies; (b) bilingual education, (c) cultural awareness, (d) human relations and, (e) values clarification.

Giroux (1988) stated that the curriculum is more than the composite of courses that students are required to take, the so-called official curriculum. The school setting also included what researchers refer to as an informed curriculum. The hidden curriculum consists of the unstated norms, values, and beliefs about the social relations of the classroom life that is transmitted to students.

## Summary

When embedded into the curriculum, multicultural education is one mechanism that should allow educators to reform the curriculum so that students view events, concepts, issues, and problems from the perspectives of diverse, racial, ethnic, and social-class groups. The perspectives of both men and women also are important in the restructured, multicultural curriculum (Banks, 1991).

To maximize students' potential for success in the classroom, teachers have to do more than merely share their knowledge. Teachers must translate their knowledge of the discipline into a delivery system that is meaningful to students. For any curriculum to be successfully implemented, the "what" and the "how" are both indispensable.

Teachers should also have awareness of their own cultural, as well as explicit knowledge of their students' cultural background. This knowledge of students' cultural background can then be blended into the curriculum. This integration will transform the impersonal curriculum to a personal curriculum, where students can see their faces and hear their voices.

## Chapter III

### Methodology

The purpose of this study was to (a) explore elementary school teachers' perceptions of their strengths and deficiencies for working with, and meeting the need of, students from diverse cultural backgrounds; and (b) assess the relationships between these perceptions and the teachers multicultural background and demographic factors such as age, gender, and ethnicity.

The following research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Do elementary school teachers perceive themselves as being competent to teach students from diverse cultural backgrounds?
2. Do elementary school teachers perceive themselves as needing to develop competence to teach students from diverse cultural backgrounds?
3. Do elementary school teachers' perceptions of their multicultural competence relate to their (a) multicultural background and their demographic characteristics, (b) racial/ethnic background, (c) hours of instruction for courses that address multicultural issues, (d) age, (e) gender, and (f) locality of teaching?

#### Research Design

The survey instrument (see Appendix A) used in this study was The Multicultural Teaching Scale, referred heretofore as MTS, developed by Wayson (1993). The scale consists of 55 items. Participants were asked to respond to items 1-37 through use of a Likert-type scale 1-6, (1 indicating little competence and 6 indicating extreme competence). These items collected participants' perceived competence for teaching children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Items 38-42 identified participants'

demographical information. Items 43-55 used a Likert type scale of 1-5 (1=one culture through 5=Multicultural) and examined participants' multicultural background.

Descriptive statistics, means, medians, modes and standard deviations, were applied to the data collected by the MTS. Additionally, responses to the MTS were examined through use of factor analysis, frequency analyses and one-way ANOVAs.

To supplement the survey findings, focus group interviews were conducted with twelve teachers. Three teachers from each of the four schools were randomly selected to participate in the interviews. No teacher from the summer school participated. The purpose of the focus group interviews was to further explore participants' multicultural perception and competence.

The research design used in this study was ex post facto. In ex post facto research, the investigator cannot manipulate the independent variables, and assigning subjects into groups is not possible. While the schools were selected using stratified sampling technique, the teachers who responded were not selected based on the predictor variable (also called independent variables); (a) multicultural background, (b) racial/ethnic background, (c) hours of instruction for courses that addressed multicultural issues, (d) age, (e) gender, and (f) area of teaching.

#### Multicultural Teaching Scale

The MTS was designed to assess future educators' self-reported competencies that "authorities in the field feel important for professionals who will teach children from diverse cultural background" (Wayson, 1993). Wayson's original research obtained responses from over 700 students in 1985-86 and he reported an inter-item reliability for the scale of 0.90 (Wayson, personal communication, September, 1998).

Unfortunately, the MTS has resulted in little published research and a search of the ERIC archives revealed no published research. However, in 1996, Thabede used Wayson's 1993 MTS and incorporated the MTS into Banks' (1993) Dimensions of Multicultural education in order to determine the level of multicultural teaching skills of business education student teachers. The findings of the study indicated that age; hours of instruction for courses addressing multicultural issues, and area of student teaching were not significant predictors of multicultural teaching competence in all the dimensions of multicultural education.

#### Data Analysis

Statistical analysis tools used to analyze data were descriptive statistics, factor analysis and multiple regression. Descriptive statistic techniques were used to tabulate the frequency counts, percentage, means, and standard deviations for individual items and groups of items were defined by a factor analysis. The factor analysis procedure was used on the MTS to explore the measurement properties of the scale and reduce the information presented to a manageable level.

Multiple regression coefficients were used to determine the nature of the relationships that existed between the demographic predictor and multicultural background, and multicultural competence. This analysis used information obtained through the factor analysis. One-way ANOVA was conducted to test for significant difference between the three groups for age of survey participants (item 40).

#### Focus Group Study

In order to supplement the survey findings two focus group interviews were conducted with a total of twelve teachers from the four schools. Three teachers from each

school were randomly selected to participate in the interviews, none refused to participate. To make sure the two groups were similar in ethnicity and gender, the twelve teachers were assigned to one of two interview groups. The interviews were conducted after school hours at a school site not involved in the study. Each group was interviewed using themes developed from the analysis of data to further address the research questions.

### Population Sampling

The participants were elementary school teachers in the Guilford County Schools System in North Carolina. Five schools participated in the study, one randomly selected from each of four geographical regions, and a summer school program. A total of 136 surveys were distributed and 133 returned, resulting in a 98 percent return rate. Twenty-nine were returned from the Summer School, and 104 from the remaining four schools, referred to as the Main Group (A=28,B=27,C=24,D=25).

### Pilot Study

The instrument was field-tested through use of one of the 14 schools in the Guilford County School System that had a multicultural student and faculty population. This school was not included in the study. Multicultural student population is defined as approximately 60 percent majority and 40 percent minority, whereas faculty population is defined as approximately 75 percent majority and 25 percent minority.

A total of 16 of 24 surveys were returned from the pilot test for the MTS. The pilot study was aimed to explore the clarity and understanding of the MTS by elementary school teachers. Teachers easily followed questionnaires directions and all items were answered.

A reliability analysis for items 1-37 for the Pilot group was conducted to determine if the items of the MTS were assessing similar constructs. The items had a overall alpha of .97, and all items were highly correlated with the overall scale score. A reliability analysis was also conducted on items 43 to 55, a resulting alpha of .79. The SPSS information for both reliability analysis is contained in Appendix D.

An analysis of the pilot study responses was conducted to determine if the data from the 16 surveys could be added to the data-set from the Main Summer School surveys. The pilot study data were found to be different from the other two groups in terms of its factor clusters in later factor analysis conducted for this study. It would appear that this study group differed in some of their educational personal experiences relating to multiculturalism, and as a result were different in their responses to the Main and Summer School survey groups. Consequently, the data were not merged with the other two groups for analysis. The surveys were removed from later analysis because the study was purely to assess the validity of the instrument.

## Chapter IV

### Findings

Three major analysis of the Multicultural Teaching Scale, were undertaken. The first analysis assessed whether the two participants groups (Main and Summer) differed in background and multicultural experience (items 38-55). This was undertaken to establish whether the two survey groups could be combined into one data-set for further analysis. An analysis of the measurement properties for items 1 to 37, and 49 to 55 was conducted for the combined data-set. Finally, an analysis was undertaken to explore the relationships between the variables defined from the second analysis.

The demographic characteristics of the four schools are presented in Table 1. Characteristics from the summer school program were not included in the table, since the summer school program consisted of teachers across the school district. Data for each school was obtained from school system reports.

Table 1.

#### Demographic Characteristics of the four Schools

Characteristics	School A	School B	School C	School D
Total Certified Staff	42	37	41	28
Male Teachers	03	2	02	0
Female Teachers	39	35	39	28
African-American Teachers	13	09	07	10
White Teachers	28	28	33	17
Other Ethnic Groups	01	0	01	01
Students on Free and Reduced Lunch	456	159	141	325
Total School Population	549	795	721	424
White Students	72	564	504	55
African-American Students	273	189	155	313
Other Ethnic Groups	204	42	62	56

School A: Other =American Indian 01, Asian 126, Hispanic 64, Multi-Racial 03

School B: Other =American Indian 02, Asian 20, Hispanic 10, Multi-Racial 10

School C: Other =American Indian 02, Asian 34, Hispanic 10, Multi-Racial 16

School D: Other =American Indian 16, Asian 28, Hispanic 05, Multi-Racial 07

### Measurement Properties, Items 38-42

This section describes the analysis undertaken to assess whether teachers in the Summer School, and Main Survey groups differed on the background information contained in items 38 through 42. The results from two teacher focus groups also are presented.

A one-way ANOVA was conducted to test for differences between the two groups for age of survey participants (item 40). There was no significant difference in age for the two groups [ $F(1, 111)=2.72, p=.10$ ].

To examine whether the participants in the two groups differed by ethnicity (item 38), gender (item 39), teaching location (item 41) or multicultural instruction (item 42), a series of cross-tabulations were conducted. There were no statistical difference in the number of males and females in the two survey groups [ $\chi^2=.49, df=1, p > .05$ ]. There was no statistical difference in the number of people who had, or had not, taken a multicultural course among the two survey groups [ $\chi^2=.43, df=1, p > .05$ ].

There was no statistical difference in the ethnicity of the two groups [ $\chi^2=8.38, df=4, p > .05$ ]. There was a statistical difference in how much multicultural instruction individuals in the two groups had received. The Main Survey schools randomly selected from the four geographical regions had less people who had between 9-10 hours or 13+ hours of multicultural instruction than the Pilot and Summer School survey groups. [ $\chi^2=26.92, df=8, p < .05$ ]. The Pilot and Summer School groups had less people in the 11-12 hours category and more in the 9-10 hours category than the Main Survey group.

There was a significant difference in the teaching location of the participants in the two groups [ $\chi^2=16.49, df=2, p < .05$ ]. The Main Survey group had more individuals

from a suburban locale than expected, and had less than expected numbers of individuals in urban schools. The Pilot Test group had less than expected teachers from a suburban locale and more from an urban locale.

In summary the three groups differed in location, amount of multicultural instruction and there were some indications of ethnic composition differences.

Table 2 presents the means, modes, standard deviation and number counts for the two separate groups (Main +Summer) and the whole data-set for items 38-42.

Table 2.

Means, Median, Modes, Standard Deviations and Number of Respondents (N) for Items 38 through 42.

Group Category	Statistic	Ethnicity	Gender	Age	Area	Courses	Hours of Instruction
Main Survey	N	101	104	89	96	99	99
	Missing Cases	3	0	15	8	5	5
	Mean	4.01	1.96	42.01	1.56	1.15	4.23
	Median	5.00	2.00	42.00	1.00	1.00	6.00
	Mode	5	2	40	1	1	6
	Std. Deviation	1.49	.19	10.38	.86	.36	2.66
Summer School Survey	N	28	29	24	26	29	29
	Missing Cases	1	0	5	3	0	0
	Mean	3.32	1.93	38.17	2.38	1.10	4.55
	Median	2.50	2.00	40.50	3.00	1.00	5.00
	Mode	2	2	46	3	1	5
	Std. Deviation	1.52	.26	9.20	.90	.31	2.44
All Participants	N	129	133	113	122	128	128
	Missing Cases	4	0	20	11	5	5
	Mean	3.86	1.95	41.19	1.74	1.14	4.30
	Median	5.00	2.00	42.00	1.00	1.00	5.00
	Mode	5	2	40	1	1	6
	Std. Deviation	1.519	.208	10.221	.925	.349	2.610
	Minimum	1	1	22	1	1	0
	Maximum	6	2	65	3	2	9

\* Multiple modes exist. The smallest value is shown.

In summary the two groups differed in location, amount of multicultural

instruction and there were some indications of ethnic composition differences.

#### Measurement Properties: Items 43-55

Since there were background information differences (i.e., locale, hours of instruction), a one-way ANOVA was conducted to test for differences among the two survey groups for items 43 to 55. The only significant response difference was item 43, shown in Table 3, which assessed participants' family origin [ $F(1,128)=4.48, p=.04$ ]. The Main Survey group had a lower mean (1.67) than the Summer School (2.28) groups.

Table 3.

#### Information for Item 43

	N	Mean	Missing	SD	Mode
Main Survey	101	1.67	3	1.25	1
Summer School	29	2.28	0	1.67	1
All Participants	130	1.81	3	1.37	1

Note. A complete table of the means, standard deviations, numbers and mode for items 63 to 55 are contained in Appendix B.

#### Factor Analysis: Items 43-55

The first two series of analysis found some differences between the two survey groups in their responses to items 38 through 55. In order to undertake further analysis of the relationship of multicultural background (items 43-55) with 1 through 37, the multicultural teaching competency scale, a factor analysis was undertaken on items 43-55. While the two groups did not respond differently on an item-by-item basis, in order to check the validity of the analysis, a factor analysis of the two groups as separate data-sets were conducted. Similar results were found from application of factor analysis for the Summer School and the Main survey pursuant the identified factor clusters. As a consequence, the data for the individuals in the two sets were merged. (This procedure

allowed for concentration of the measurement properties and relationships for a similar population of participants despite the data being collected under different conditions.)

A final maximum likelihood factor analysis was conducted on the Combined Main/Summer data-set (n=133) for items 43 to 55, which is shown in Table 4. These items assessed the Multiracial Experiences of the participants. This analysis indicated that there were four factors with Eigen values greater than 1, accounting for 60 percent of the variance. The model had a Goodness-of-Fit test which suggested an adequate model [ $\chi^2=48.78$ ,  $df=32$ ,  $p=.03$ ].

The first factor represented individual experiences with cultural diversity of friends and was labeled (Friends). The second factor (Recent) reflected current exposure to cultural diversity in the workplace and at the college they attended. The third factor represented early experience with cultural diversity (Early). The final factor represented the early education experiences of culturally diverse student and friendship group (Education). The cluster of items that represented the four factor are presented below:

1. Items 47,49,50,51. Cultural diversity of adolescent friendship network [Friends].
2. Items 52,53,54,55. Current experiences of cultural diversity [Recent].
3. Items 43,44,45,48,49,51. Early cultural diversity background [Early].
4. Items 45,46,47,49,50. Early education/friendship cultural diversity [Education].

Table 4.

Factor Loadings and Factor Correlations for Items 43 - 55

	Factors			
	Friends	Recent	Early	Education
ITEM47	.26	.10	-.05	+.61
ITEM49	.30	-.09	.54	+.34
ITEM50	.73	-.02	.11	+.43
ITEM51	.27	.02	.53	-.10
ITEM52	-.06	.49	.02	-.00
ITEM53	-.13	.93	-.15	+.06
ITEM54	.19	.39	.05	+.05
ITEM55	.01	.74	.02	-.08
ITEM43	.00	.03	.53	-.08
ITEM44	-.05	-.07	.74	-.01
ITEM45	-.24	-.01	.61	+.48
ITEM48	-.08	.00	.88	+.14
ITEM46	-.05	-.06	.02	+.95

Factor Correlation Matrix

Factor	Friends	Recent	Early	Education
1	1.00			
2	.15	1.00		
3	.24	-.10	1.00	
4	+.25	-.01	-.34	1.00

Extraction Method: Maximum Likelihood. Rotation Method: Oblimin with Kaiser Normalization. Rotation converged in 35 iterations.

Factor Score Descriptive Statistics

For each individual, four scores were computed for their responses to items 43 through 55 based upon the conduct of factor analysis statistics. This was undertaken using the regression method, multiplying an individual's response to an item by its factor loading. Table 5 includes the descriptive statistics for the four obtained factors. For each factor the means are standardized to zero, with a standard deviation of one (that is, 67 percent of peoples factor scores will tie between -1 and +1).

Table 5.

Factor Descriptives for Combined Dataset and Survey group on the four factors identified.

	Friends	Recent	Early	Education
N	133	133	133	133
Missing	.00	.00	.00	.00
Mean	.00	.00	.00	.00
Median	-.35	.14	-.27	.09
Mode	-.48	.14	-.76	.94
Std. Deviation	.96	.96	.95	.96
Minimum	-2.03	-1.98	-1.27	-3.21
Maximum	3.25	1.66	3.70	1.13

Factor Analysis 1-37

A maximum likelihood factor analysis with oblique rotation (see Appendix C for definition) was conducted on the Combined group for items 1 through 37, and the complete data analysis is presented in Appendix C. These items assessed the self-reported competency of teaching children from multicultural backgrounds. The initial analysis provided four factors with Eigen values greater than one accounted for 63 percent of the variance [ $\chi^2=661.96$ ,  $df=524$ ,  $p<.001$ ]. However, items 6,21,26, and 29 were not loading clearly on any one factor. A second analysis was undertaken without those items and this provided a five factor solution [ $\chi^2=492.79$ ,  $df=430$ ,  $p<.02$ ] that accounted for 65 percent of the variance.

The definitions for the five factor model were clearer than the definitions for the four factor model. The five factors were labeled:

1. General Awareness, items 1,2,3,4,8,10,11,12,13,14,15,16,24,28,31 [Awareness];
2. Relationships with students, items 23,32,33,34,35 [Relationship];

3. Providing instruction to reduce/eliminate prejudice items 17,18,19,20,25,30, 31[Instruction];
4. Building respect for diversity, items 2,5,7,9,11,11,13,14,15,17, 24,27,28,36,37, [Respect]; and
5. Combating prejudice items 22,23,27,36,37 [Prejudice].

General Awareness represents the awareness of multicultural issues. Relationship with students represents the relationship with multicultural students. This was achieved through the provision of providing instruction in order to reduce/eliminate prejudice (represents teacher behaviors to engage in instructional changes that respond to diversity). Building respect for diversity represents the teachers' reported willingness to model respect building practices. Combating prejudice represents the teacher engaging in behaviors that counter prejudicial acts.

#### Relationship Between Factors Obtained

The third and final factor explored the relationship between the factors obtained in the two previous analysis and the participants' background variables. This analysis was designed to provide answers to the third research question:

Do elementary school teachers' perceptions of their multicultural competence relate to the following:

1. Multicultural background and their demographic characteristics?
2. Racial/Ethnic background?
3. Hours of instruction for courses that address multicultural issues; age, gender, or locale of teaching?

A series of correlations, presented in Table 6, were conducted to examine the relationship between the nine obtained factors detailed in the previous sections.

Table 6.

Correlations

	Experiences (43-55)				Instructional Competency MTS (1-37)				
	Friends	Recent	Early	Education	General Awareness	Relationship	Instruction	Building Respect	Combating Prejudice
Friends	1.0000								
Recent	.148+	1.000							
Early	.267	-.124	1.000						
Education	-.308	-.015	-.391	1.000					
General Awareness	.084	.175	.151	.054	1.0000				
Relationship	.104	.191*	.181*	.087	.455	1.000			
Instruction	.020	.014	.030	.035	.532	.519	1.000		
Building Respect	.123	-.058	.139	-.132	.468	-.428	-.325	1.000	
Combating Prejudice	-.007+	.239*	.123	-.117	.460	-.489	-.431	.324	1.000

\* Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Apart from the expected correlations within the related (i.e., Friends, Early), three relationships across two sets of factors were significant. The first correlation conducted indicated that participants with more recent multicultural background (Recent) were likely to be building more positive relationships with multicultural students (Relationship) ( $r = .19, p < .05$ ). The second correlation conducted indicated that teachers with more early multicultural background (Early) also were building more positive relationships with multicultural (Relationship) students ( $r = .18, p < .05$ ). The final significant correlation conducted indicated that participants with recent multicultural background (Recent) were engaging in higher levels of Combating Prejudice both at school and home ( $r = .24, p < .05$ ).

To examine how early multicultural experience and background variables influence behavior in the classroom and school, a series of standard regressions were

performed. The regression analysis had as dependent variables Awareness, Relationships, Instruction, Building Respect and Combating Prejudice. Each dependent variable was regressed with the independent variables defined in the first factor analysis, Friends, Recent, Education, and Early, and the background variables of Age, Hours of Multicultural Instruction, Ethnicity, and Teaching Locale. Ethnicity and Teaching Locale was dummy coded with the categories White, Non-White and Suburban, Not Suburban, respectively.

For the dependent variable of Instructional Strategies only the number of hours of multicultural instruction was a significant indicator with the regression formula explaining 21 percent of the variance (Table 7). The more hours of instruction the more likely teachers were to report that they altered their instructional strategies.

Table 7.

Regression Coefficients for the Relationship Between Instructional Strategies and the Independent Variables.

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.43	.58		2.48	.015
Teaching Locale	+.34	.21	+.17	-1.60	.113
Friends	-.07	.11	-.07	.66	.509
Recent	-.16	.12	-.14	1.30	.199
Early	-.03	.13	-.03	.23	.820
Education	-.18	.13	-.11	.94	.353
Age	+.02	.01	+.16	-1.30	.197
Hours of Instruction	+.15	.04	+.38	-3.59	.001*
Ethnicity	-.08	.21	-.04.	.36	.718

\*p <.05

The regression formula indicated 38 percent of the variance of Building Respect was explained. The four important independent variables were age, the number of hours of multicultural instruction, whether they taught in a suburban school, and whether the

participants had experiences with diversity during their early education (K-12). As shown in Table 8, if the participants had more multicultural background during teacher education, were older, participated in more hours of multicultural instruction, and if the participants were working in a suburban teaching environment, teachers were more likely to report behaviors that reflected building respect for multicultural diversity.

Table 8.

Regression Coefficients for the Relationship Between Respect and the Independent Variables.

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-1.75	.45		-3.92	.000
Friends	.01	.08	.01	.01	.989
Recent	-.11	.09	-.11	-1.13	.263
Early	.06	.10	.06	.61	.547
Education	-.24	.10	-.27	-2.51	.014*
Teaching Locale	.42	.16	.24	2.59	.012*
Age	.02	.01	.26	2.37	.020*
Hours of Instruction	.152	.03	.45	4.81	.000*
Ethnicity	-.08	.16	-.05	-.52	.605

\*p <.05

Table 9 shows that only two variables significantly predicted the teachers self-rating of their behaviors to Combat Prejudice, the number of hours of multicultural instruction, and their experiences with diversity during their early education (K-12). The regression equation explained 29 percent of the variance.

Table 9.

Regression Coefficients for the Relationship Between Combating Prejudice and the Independent Variables.

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-.82	.51		-1.61	.113
Friends	-.16	.10	-.18	-1.69	.096
Recent	.05	.11	.05	.49	.626
Early	.01	.11	.01	.13	.899
Education	.28	.11	.28	-2.49	.015*
Teaching Locale	.32	.19	.17	1.72	.089
Age	.01	.01	.08	.71	.480
Hours of Instruction	.14	.04	.37	3.71	.000*
Ethnicity	-.37	.19	-.19	-1.92	.056

\*p <.05

Results of the regression analysis between Awareness and the independent variables, shown in Table 10, indicated that the number of hours of multicultural instruction and teaching locale were the most important predictors of Awareness. The regression equation explained 41 percent of the variance in Awareness. The regression equation further explained that the higher the number of hours teachers were exposed to multicultural instruction, and if the teachers taught in suburban environments, the higher their General Awareness about multicultural issues.

Table 10.

Regression Coefficients for the Relationship Between Awareness of Multicultural Issues in the classroom and the Independent Variables.

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	-.90	.52		-1.72	.086
Friends	.02	.10	.02	.21	.831
Recent	.14	.11	.12	1.30	.198
Early	.07	.12	.06	.62	.539
Education	.12	.11	.11	1.08	.284
Teaching Locale	.40	.19	.19	2.13	.036*
Age	-.01	.01	-.02	-.19	.847
Hours of Instruction	.20	.04	.50	5.54	.000*
Ethnicity	-.29	.19	-.14	-1.52	.133

\*p <.05

A regression analysis of independent variables with Relationship with Students accounted for 29 percent of the variance. Two independent variables were significant contributors, age and the number of hours of multicultural instruction. Table 11 shows that the older participants, and the more hours of multicultural instruction they were exposed to, the teachers were more likely to report positive relationships with students of difference races.

Table 11.

Regression Coefficients for the Relationship Between Relationship With Students and the Independent Variables.

	Unstandardized Coefficients	Std Error	Standardized Coefficients	t	Sig.
(Constant)	1.75	.52		3.34	.001
Teaching Locale	+.28	.19	+.15	+1.46	.149
Teaching Locale	+.28	.19	+.15	+1.46	.149
Friends	+.01	.10	+.01	+.06	.953
Friends	+.01	.10	+.01	+.06	.953
Recent	+.07	.11	+.07	+.64	.521
Recent	+.07	.11	+.07	+.64	.521
Early	+.09	.12	+.09	+.82	.418
Early	+.09	.12	+.09	+.82	.418
Education	-.16	.11	-.16	-1.44	.153

Age	+0.03	.01	+.31	+2.66	.010*
Hours of Instruction	+.12	.04	+.33	+3.31	.001*
Ethnicity	-.20	.19	-.10	-1.04	.303

\*p <.05

From the multiple regressions we can note that previous educational or personal factors were rarely influential in how teachers rated their response to multicultural issues. The most consistently significant factor overall was the number of hours individuals were exposed to instruction/workshops about multiculturalism. Essentially, the more hours of multicultural instruction the better teachers feel equipped to responding to multiculturalism in their classrooms.

### Teacher Focus Groups

Twelve participants in the survey were also asked to attend one of two focus group sessions to further explore their multicultural background and classroom practices. Teachers in both focus groups were asked questions that addressed their multicultural background. They were asked to share their background experiences that had helped or hindered them in dealing with multicultural issues. They also were asked to reflect on background experiences from their personal background such as their family, community, high school, college and friends. Teachers were asked specifically if they felt competent to teach children from diverse cultural backgrounds, and if they believed that they were competent to teach a multicultural curriculum. Additional excerpts from participants' responses are presented in Appendix F.

The following reoccurring themes were echoed from the focus group sessions on multiculturalism. Participants felt these areas produced competence or lack of competence:

1. Family background

“I think it is based on your background. The more comfortable and knowledge you are of the topics from whatever. The more interaction that you have with other cultures; you become more competent because you feel you can speak on the subject more or you can get more resources if you actually interact with the different cultures in your community...acquiring that knowledge on a first hand basis is the best way to feel competent (group 1, 12/97).”

“My family, of course, has a great influence on my perception. Which I feel is positive because as growing up, I knew I was African-American (group 2, 12//97).”

“I think it is based on your background. The more comfortable and knowledgeable you are on the topic (group 2, 12/97).”

## 2. Multicultural Background

“I think seeking out experiences more has helped me. When I was in college seeking out experiences with different groups of people, it was interesting, exciting and sometime scary because of the prejudices that I had developed growing up (group 1, 12/97).”

“The more interaction that you have with other cultures; you become more competent because you feel you can speak on the subject more (group 1, 12/97).”

“Acquiring knowledge on a first hand basis is the best way to feel competent. It’s hard to just read a book or get materials and feel really competent (group 1, 12/97).”

## 3. Educational training

“I’ve also had some classes on multicultural diversity which enables me to do a better job with the class and help children understand differences and the likeness, which weigh more on the like than not alike. I think that is wonderful (teacher, group 2, 12/97).”

#### 4. Resources

“I like the book selections that we have now especially in reading and in science and everything. They bring into the books a lot of multicultural differences in teaching so it can reach child (group 2, 12/97).”

“...[w]hen you invite experts in you gain information as well as children with hands on with someone who is more knowledgeable about multiculturalism (group 2, 12/97).”

Teachers were very candid on their predictions of the future of multiculturalism. Teachers did not consider multiculturalism a racial issue, but as a way of life for all people. According to focus groups participants, multicultural education should provide the foundation for students’ knowledge and the school system should have a major role in this process. Teachers felt multicultural education should be a continuous process and not relegated to one month out of the year such as the celebration of Black History.

## Chapter V

### Discussion of Findings

Three research questions were addressed in this study:

1. Do elementary school teachers perceive themselves as being competent to teach students from diverse cultural backgrounds?
2. Do elementary school teachers perceive themselves as needing to develop competence to teach students from diverse cultural backgrounds?
3. Do elementary school teachers' perceptions of their multicultural competence related to their:

1. Multicultural background and their demographic characteristics;
2. Racial/ethnic background;
3. Hours of instruction for courses that address multicultural issues;
4. Age;
5. Gender; and
6. Locale of teaching?

The initial data analysis indicated that the items for the MTS described two sets of factors: Multicultural background (Friends, Recent, Early, Education) and Classroom competency (General Awareness, Relationship, Instruction, Building Respect, Combating Prejudice). The major predictor of classroom behavior was the number of hours individuals received on multiculturalism. Although other factors such as age and early education experience revealed some effect on teachers' classroom behavior, the patterns were inconsistent. The more multicultural background provided during teacher education, the older in years, the more hours of multicultural instruction, and if teachers were

working in a suburban teaching environment, teachers were more likely to report behaviors that reflect respect for multicultural diversity.

There were three relationships across two sets of factors that were significant:

1. Teachers with recent multicultural background were engaged in higher levels of combating prejudice at school and home ( $r = .24, p < .05$ ).
2. Teachers with more recent multicultural background were likely to build more positive relationships with multicultural students.
3. Teachers with more early multicultural background built more positive relationships with multicultural students ( $r = .18, p < .05$ ).

An important, and consistent finding in all the analysis was that the more hours of instruction teachers' received in multiculturalism, the more prepared those teachers felt about working in multicultural classroom. Data in Table 7 (p.48) highlights that teachers who received more multicultural training, were more likely to state that they changed their instructional strategies to work in a multicultural environment.

### Focus Groups

The focus groups provided findings that supported the MTS and added richness to the research. Teachers that interacted with others, who had different multicultural backgrounds than the teachers,' whether in elementary, high school or college, expressed a stronger competence to teach students from multicultural backgrounds. Teachers who spent their childhood in neighborhoods that were culturally diverse considered their background an advantage in the classroom when they taught students from diverse backgrounds and multicultural content. Teachers who were in elementary school and college with students from multicultural backgrounds and were exposed to courses in

multicultural instruction expressed a strong competence when they taught students from multicultural backgrounds. Teachers who spent their childhood in a mono-cultural environment, attended elementary, high school and college that had the same homogeneous environment and were exposed to no multicultural courses were more likely to feel inadequate when they taught students from cultures other than their own.

Teachers who perceived themselves competent indicated that they utilized resources that were available to them such as textbooks, parents, student teachers, people in the community and workshops in order to enhance their instruction of multicultural content to their students. In contrast, teachers who perceived themselves less competent felt that the lack of adequate textbooks and materials was the major hindrance in their ability to teach students from all cultural backgrounds.

There were three major areas of experiences that helped teachers work within a multicultural environment: family background; neighborhood in which they lived; and attending a multicultural school environment. Teachers who grew up in a multicultural family and attended a multicultural school environment expressed a high degree of competence in the focus group sessions as well as on the MTS. Teachers who had friends and early and recent multicultural background, expressed high competence on the MTS and perceived themselves in the focus group sessions better able to work with multicultural students. Teachers who did not attend culturally diverse schools and did not develop friendship groups with students of other cultures expressed little competence on the MTS and expressed their lack of competence during the focus group sessions.

Both the results of the focus groups and the survey showed teachers who had multi-ethnic family origin, early education experience with cultural diverse students and

multicultural friendship groups, perceived themselves competent to teach multicultural students.

## Chapter VI

### Recommendation and Implications

In the year 2000, thirty-five percent of U. S. children were members of minority groups, a figure that is expected to climb to more than 50 percent by 2040. Additionally, one in five came from a household headed by an immigrant and nearly one-fifth lived in poverty (Olson, 2000). This will challenge teachers, especially those whose race and ethnicity is different than that of their students. Universities should be charged to improve their schools of education to prepare future teachers to accept, value and promote diversity in every aspect of the students' educational preparation.

The MTS suggests teachers reported significantly higher competence when they taught students from multicultural backgrounds if the following factors were present:

1. Teachers had prior multicultural background,
2. Teachers had been provided formal instruction in multiculturalism,
3. Teachers were older, and
4. Teachers taught in a suburban locale.

The focus groups suggested similar results, if teachers had prior multicultural background, had multicultural instruction and access to curriculum resources, they perceived themselves as competent to teach multicultural students.

The consistency of findings throughout this study on the importance of multicultural instruction helping teachers work in a multicultural environment, highlights the necessity of educational systems to provide strong and consistent training in multicultural issues. Data from this study reinforce that such training, and the more of it

the better, will enable teachers to change instructional strategies and other behaviors in the classroom that will support a more diverse student body.

An unsuspected, and counter intuitive finding on the MTS was from teachers who taught in suburban locales. This group generally expressed higher competence when they taught multicultural students. It is possible that such teachers feel competent because they have limited experience with multicultural students. Another deduction is that they may slightly exaggerate their competence because they do not have to deal with significant numbers of students from multicultural backgrounds. Thus, their experiences are limited, easily managed, and not as challenging as a classroom with 15 or 16 separate ethnic identities. Future researchers who use the MTS need to realize that it is limited in implicit explanation and does not explore what would make instruction and the teacher more compatible.

Both white teachers and teachers of color must first understand, accept and value their own culture before they can extend the same feelings toward their students of different cultures. It is also important that teachers accommodate students' cultural and learning differences. Since a number of white teachers come from backgrounds that do not provide quality multicultural background before or after college, future teachers should have multiple diverse experiences before entering their first year of teaching. When teachers value multiculturalism they assist students to prepare to live and thrive in a multicultural society. Teachers' multicultural competence provides a framework for establishing an equitable learning environment for all students.

Multicultural education moves beyond the rhetoric and recognizes that the potential for brilliance is sprinkled evenly across all ethnic groups. Multicultural

education builds knowledge about various ethnic groups and provides a national perspective into the curriculum. A major goal of multiculturalism is the elimination of stereotypes. Multicultural education will further help reduce inequalities with regard to race, class and gender in the United States and the world. Moreover multicultural schools will help students develop more democratic values, beliefs, knowledge, skills, and attitudes that are needed to function cross-culturally. The number of people of color in our society should constitute a demographic imperative that educators must hear and act upon (Banks, 1993, p. 243).

In the next two decades, the United States will see more ethnic, racial and cultural diversity than in any previous period in American history. Population projections suggest dramatic future changes in the multi-ethnic dimensions of the United States. These changing demographics will pose difficult challenges to the nation. The challenge for schools to meet the needs of an increasing multicultural, multi-ethnic, and multiracial populace is a complex task that must be met through awareness, sensitivity, knowledge and skill. As noted by teachers in the focus groups and gleaned from the research for this study the following recommendations are suggested for schools:

1. Create a climate for learning where diversity is recognized, respected and appreciated that will promote knowledge construction and an understanding of a diverse school/community.

A method to achieve this would be to support the provision of multicultural education to teachers as data from this study shows that multicultural education will encourage teachers to change their instructional strategies to reflect a diverse student

body. The survey data clearly shows that more multicultural education will result in instructional changes, and this was also supported by the focus group data.

2. Apply a multicultural perspective to the subject content of the curriculum and use instructional techniques and strategies that address varied learning styles and preferences.

This was advocated by the focus groups and supported by research findings. Both suggest that when teachers have training in the area of multiculturalism i.e., college or university courses as well as workshops, they feel more prepared to provide a curriculum from a multicultural perspective (Bank, 1994). The findings also indicated that cooperative and collaborative learning increase students' academic achievement (Slavin, 1990), which is also a preferred learning style of black and Hispanic students (Sleeter and Grant, 1993).

Teachers are important factors in the climate of schools. The developments of a supportive teaching faculty, through such programs, as multicultural education will impact instruction and other classroom behaviors and build a more nurturing environment. However, as Delpt (1995) states...

teachers must not merely take courses that tell them how to treat their students as multicultural clients, in other words, those that tell them how to identify differences in interactional or communicative strategies and remediate appropriately. They must learn about the brilliance the students bring with them ...Until they appreciate the wonders of cultures represented before them—and they cannot do that without extensive study most appropriately begun in college-level courses—they cannot appreciate the potential of those who sit before them,

nor can they begin to link their students' histories and worlds to the subject matter they present in the classroom (p. 182).

This study raises a number of important areas for further research. Perhaps the most immediately interesting was the finding that suburban teachers felt more competent to teach in a multicultural environment. Questions for possible future study are cited below.

1. Why do suburban teachers feel more competent to teach in a multicultural environment? Is it realistic or false competence?
2. Why do teachers of color feel extremely competent to teach in a multicultural environment? Is it realistic or false competence?
3. How important is the role of community to assist teachers to become successful in a multicultural environment?
4. Positive experiences were important to teachers on the MTS and for the focus groups. How do early negative experiences affect teachers' competence?

Although the school curriculum remains western oriented, the growing number of non-majority stakeholders will increasingly demand to share in curriculum decision-making and in shaping a curriculum framework that reflects the experience, history, struggle and victories of all people.

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APPENDIX A

Multicultural Teaching Scale

APPENDIX A

Multicultural Teaching Scale

To: Survey Participants

This survey pertains to the teaching of children from diverse cultural backgrounds. All responses will be treated confidential. No adverse actions, regarding your responses, for any statement on this survey will be taken. Please fold and staple your survey upon completion.

Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Multicultural Teaching Scale

Several items listed below reflect content and activities that some authorities feel are important for teaching children from diverse cultural backgrounds. Please indicate by circling a number that corresponds to how competent you feel with respect to each statement.

	Little Competence			Extreme Competence		
	1	2	3	4	5	6
1. Demonstrate a basic knowledge of the contributions made by minority groups in our society.						
2. Identify cultural biases in commercial materials used in instruction.						
3. Develop materials appropriate for the multicultural classroom.						
4. Identify the social forces which influences opportunities for minority group members.						
5. Help students see cultural groups as real people.						
6. Show how mainstream Americans have adopted food, clothing, language, etc. from other cultures.						

7.	Present cultural groups in our society in a manner that will build mutual respect.	1	2	3	4	5	6
8.	Identify how language affects performance on certain test items.	1	2	3	4	5	6
9.	Present diversity of cultures as a strong positive feature of American heritage.	1	2	3	4	5	6
10.	Effectively utilize ethnic resources in the community.	1	2	3	4	5	6
11.	Identify the similarities between Anglo-American and other cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
12.	Know different patterns of child rearing practices among cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
13.	Adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of learners from diverse cultures.	1	2	3	4	5	6
14.	Analyze instructional materials for potential stereotypical attitudes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
15.	Know ways in which various cultures contribute to our pluralistic society.	1	2	3	4	5	6
16.	Know the history of minority groups in the United States.	1	2	3	4	5	6
17.	Provide instruction showing how prejudice affects individuals.	1	2	3	4	5	6
18.	Plan instructional activities that reduce prejudice toward other cultural groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6
19.	Create a learning environment that allows for alternative styles of learning.	1	2	3	4	5	6
20.	Provide instructional activities that help students develop strategies for dealing with racial confrontations.	1	2	3	4	5	6
21.	Help students examine their prejudices.	1	2	3	4	5	6

22. Help students recognize that competence is more important than ethnic background.	1	2	3	4	5	6
23. Develop activities that increase self-confidence of minority students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
24. Deal with prejudice shown by students' parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6
25. Assist all students to understand the feelings of people from other ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6
26. Help students work through problem situations caused by stereotypical attitudes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
27. Be direct in expressing feelings to someone from another culture.	1	2	3	4	5	6
28. Identify solutions to problems that may arise as the result of cultural diversity.	1	2	3	4	5	6
29. Identify student behaviors that are indicative of negative racial attitudes.	1	2	3	4	5	6
30. Develop instructional methods that promote intercultural cohesiveness.	1	2	3	4	5	6
31. Develop instructional methods that dispel myths about ethnic groups.	1	2	3	4	5	6
32. Visit students' homes in the poor part of town.	1	2	3	4	5	6
33. Get students from differing cultures to work together.	1	2	3	4	5	6
34. Get students from differing cultures to play together.	1	2	3	4	5	6
35. Feeling that every student can learn.	1	2	3	4	5	6
36. Identify school practices that harm minority students.	1	2	3	4	5	6
37. Deal with prejudice shown by my own parents.	1	2	3	4	5	6

Demographical Information

Please tell us the following things about yourself. Mark the appropriate number on the right-hand side of this paper. Fill the circle completely.

38. What is your racial/ethnic background?

- 1 = Asian American**                      **2 = Black, non-Hispanic**      **3 = Hispanic**  
**4 = Native American**                  **5 = Caucasian**  
**6 = Other – specify** \_\_\_\_\_

39. Your gender?      **1 = Male**      **2 = Female**

40. Your age: \_\_\_\_\_

41. Are you teaching in a(an):  
**1 = suburban area?**                      **2 = rural area?**                      **3 = urban area?**

42. Have you taken any course(s) that addressed multicultural issues? **1 = Yes**    **2 = No**  
If yes, how much instruction addressed these issues?  
**1 = 1-2 hours of instruction**              **2 = 3-4 hours of instruction**  
**3 = 5-6 hours of instruction**              **4 = 7-8 hours of instruction**  
**5 = 9-10 hours of instruction**              **6 = 11-12 hours of instruction**  
**7 = 13+ hours of instruction**

---

Multicultural Background

Please indicate by marking a number (1,2,3,4, or 5) that corresponds to your background to each statement. **PLEASE USE A NUMBER 2 PENCIL.**

**Scale: 1 = One Culture through 5 = Multiculture**

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 43. What is your family origin?  | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 44. What type of neighborhood did you grow up in as a child?               | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 45. What was the cultural diversity of students in your elementary school? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 46. What was the cultural diversity of students in                         | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

your middle or junior high school?

- |  |   |   |   |   |   |
|--|---|---|---|---|---|
| 47. What was the cultural diversity of students in your high school?                           | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 48. What was the cultural diversity of your circle of friends in elementary school?            | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 49. What was the cultural diversity of your circle of friends in middle or junior high school? | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 50. What was the cultural diversity of your circle of friends in your high school?             | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 51. What was the cultural diversity of your friends in college?                                | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 52. What is the cultural diversity of the students you are teaching now?                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 53. What is the cultural diversity of the teaching staff in your school?                       | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 54. What was the cultural diversity of the faculty members in your college (undergraduate)?    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |
| 55. What type of cultural diversity have you experienced in a work setting?                    | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 | 5 |

Thank you for your time!

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## APPENDIX B

Statistics for Items 43 to 55

## APPENDIX B

### Statistics for Items 43 to 55.

Item	N	Missing	Mean	Mode	Std. Deviation
<b>Main Survey</b>					
ITEM43	101	3	1.67	1	1.25
ITEM44	103	1	1.62		1.02
ITEM45	102	2	1.85	1	1.09
ITEM46	100	4	1.94	1	1.02
ITEM47	100	4	2.30	1	1.28
ITEM48	102	2	1.65	1	.96
ITEM49	102	2	1.84	1	1.05
ITEM50	102	2	1.86	1	1.03
ITEM51	101	3	2.23	1	1.32
ITEM52	101	3	4.24	5	.87
ITEM53	101	3	3.71	4	1.00
ITEM54	97	7	3.08	4	1.37
ITEM55	100	4	3.91	5	1.00
<b>Pilot Survey</b>					
ITEM43	16	0	1.88	1	1.20
ITEM44	16	0	1.50	1	.63
ITEM45	16	0	2.06	1	1.24
ITEM46	16	0	2.50	2	1.32
ITEM47	16	0	2.94	2	1.44
ITEM48	16	0	1.94	1	1.12
ITEM49	16	0	2.44	2	1.26
ITEM50	15	1	2.80	3	1.37
ITEM51	15	1	2.13	1	1.30
ITEM52	15	1	3.87	4	1.30
ITEM53	15	1	4.13	4	.74
ITEM54	15	1	3.20	3	1.61
ITEM55	15	1	4.33	5	.82
<b>Summer School</b>					
ITEM43	29	0	2.28	1	1.67
ITEM44	29	0	1.90	1	1.26
ITEM45	29	0	2.10	1	1.37
ITEM46	29	0	2.28	1	1.25
ITEM47	29	0	2.41	1	1.35
ITEM48	29	0	1.93	1	1.07
ITEM49	29	0	2.00	1	1.13
ITEM50	29	0	2.03	1	1.21
ITEM51	29	0	2.31	1	1.42

ITEM52	29	0	4.45	5	.78
ITEM53	29	0	3.76	5	1.21
ITEM54	29	0	3.41	5	1.52
ITEM55	28	1	4.14	5	.97
All Participants					
ITEM43	146	3	1.82	1	1.35
ITEM44	148	1	1.66	1	1.04
ITEM45	147	2	1.93	1	1.17
ITEM46	145	4	2.07	1	1.12
ITEM47	145	4	2.39	1	1.31
ITEM48	147	2	1.73	1	1.00
ITEM49	147	2	1.94	1	1.10
ITEM50	146	3	1.99	1	1.14
ITEM51	145	4	2.23	1	1.33
ITEM52	145	4	4.24	5	.91
ITEM53	145	4	3.77	4	1.01
ITEM54	141	8	3.16	4	1.42
ITEM55	143	6	4.00	5	.98

APPENDIX C

Factor Analysis: Items 1 – 37

And

Factor Correlation Matrix

Five Factors: Awareness, Relationship, Instruction, Respect and Prejudice

## APPENDIX C

### Factor Analysis

#### Factors

	Awareness	Relationship	Instruction	Respect	Prejudice
ITEM1	.66	-.24	.05	.17	-.17
ITEM2	.50	.13	.07	.34	.29
ITEM3	.48	.01	-.20	.17	.00
ITEM4	.61	.05	-.08	.22	.10
ITEM8	.47	-.14	.00	.09	.27
ITEM10	.67	-.03	.01	.15	.17
ITEM11	.38	-.06	.05	.25	.31
ITEM12	.83	-.10	-.11	-.07	-.06
ITEM13	.57	-.16	-.28	.09	-.06
ITEM14	.39	.04	-.22	.35	.10
ITEM15	.72	-.03	-.11	.27	-.15
ITEM16	.68	-.16	.02	.09	.05
ITEM24	.47	-.04	-.17	-.21	.36
ITEM28	.56	-.12	-.19	-.16	.35
ITEM31	.50	-.13	-.35	-.04	.12
ITEM32	.20	-.31	.09	.04	.12
ITEM33	.09	-.95	.01	.02	-.05
ITEM34	-.01	-.65	-.20	.16	.02
ITEM35	-.18	-.27	-.17	.06	.27
ITEM17	.11	-.05	-.44	.30	.14
ITEM18	.03	-.14	-.81	.20	-.09
ITEM19	.32	-.09	-.33	.07	.21
ITEM20	.38	.06	-.49	-.03	.20
ITEM25	.12	-.29	-.43	.07	.05
ITEM30	.49	-.27	-.39	-.12	-.03
ITEM5	.00	-.12	-.04	.61	.16
ITEM7	.05	-.19	-.04	.69	.01
ITEM9	.16	.02	-.12	.71	-.08
ITEM22	-.13	-.17	-.26	.24	.40
ITEM23	.07	-.27	-.20	.08	.34
ITEM27	.42	-.23	-.16	-.21	.38
ITEM36	.09	-.07	-.27	.07	.50
ITEM37	.06	-.17	.12	.19	.43

APPENDIX C (continued)

Factor Correlation Matrix

Factor	Awareness	Relationship	Instruction	Respect	Prejudice
1	1.000				
2	-.43	1.000			
3	-.48	.49	1.000		
4	.41	-.38	-.29	1.000	
5	.39	-.46	-.38	.29	1.000

Definition of Factor Analysis

Factor analysis attempts to identify underlying variables, or factors, that explain the pattern of correlations within a set of observed variables. Factor analysis is often used in data reduction to identify a small number of factors that explain most of the variance observed in a much larger number of manifest variables.

Maximum likelihood Factor Analysis

Maximum likelihood factor analysis produces estimates that are most likely to have produced the observed correlation matrix if the sample is from a multivariate normal distribution (a bell curve). Rotation is a technique to determine what pattern of factor loadings (a rough idea of how important an observed variable is to understanding the underlying factor) provides the simplest picture, and an oblique rotation is used when we assume that the factors are correlated with each other (orthogonal assumes no correlation).

## APPENDIX D

### Reliability Analysis for items 1-37 for the Pilot Group

Reliability Analysis for items 1-37 for the Pilot Group –Scale (Alpha)

ITEM1	4.6364	.6742	11.0
ITEM2	4.2727	1.0090	11.0
ITEM3	4.5455	.6876	11.0
ITEM4	4.4545	.8202	11.0
ITEM5	5.0909	.9439	11.0
ITEM6	5.0000	.8944	11.0
ITEM7	5.0909	.7006	11.0
ITEM8	4.4545	1.2136	11.0
ITEM9	5.0000	.7746	11.0
ITEM10	4.1818	1.3280	11.0
ITEM11	4.7273	1.0090	11.0
ITEM12	3.8182	.9816	11.0
ITEM13	4.5455	.9342	11.0
ITEM14	4.6364	.9244	11.0
ITEM15	4.5455	.8202	11.0
ITEM16	4.5455	.6876	11.0
ITEM17	4.8182	.8739	11.0
ITEM18	4.6364	.8090	11.0
ITEM19	4.6364	1.2060	11.0
ITEM20	4.2727	.7862	11.0
ITEM21	4.3636	1.0269	11.0
ITEM22	4.8182	.9816	11.0
ITEM23	4.3636	.8090	11.0
ITEM24	4.3636	1.0269	11.0
ITEM25	4.9091	.7006	11.0
ITEM26	4.6364	.9244	11.0
ITEM27	4.5455	1.0357	11.0
ITEM28	4.6364	1.0269	11.0
ITEM29	4.5455	.6876	11.0
ITEM30	4.7273	.9045	11.0
ITEM31	4.8182	.9816	11.0
ITEM32	3.4545	1.6348	11.0
ITEM33	4.9091	.8312	11.0
ITEM34	4.8182	.7508	11.0
ITEM35	5.8182	.6030	11.0
ITEM36	4.7273	.9045	11.0
ITEM37	4.1818	1.0787	11.0

\*\*\* Warning \*\*\* Determinant of matrix is zero

## APPENDIX E

### Focus Groups Questions

Question 1

What has helped or hindered your dealing with the issues of multiculturalism?

Question 2

Why do people feel competent and how do people feel competent?

Question 3

What have you done that makes you feel more competent or less competent?

Question 4

What in your past has helped or hindered you in dealing with the issues of multiculturalism such as family history, education background, or station in life?

Question 5

What in the present has helped or hindered you to deal with multicultural issues?

Question 6

What in the future will help you deal with multicultural issues?

Question 7

Do you have anything you would like to say overall about the topics we have discussed as it relates to multicultural, you classroom, etc. that would promote multiculturalism?

## APPENDIX F

### Focus Groups Responses

Resources: This theme reflects teachers' experiences with access, or lack of access to resources that support their multicultural awareness, for example community groups, parent presentations, books and supplies.

Available Resources

Lack of Available Resources

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"I like the book selections that we have now especially in reading and in science and everything. They bring into the books a lot of multicultural differences in teaching so it can reach child (group 2, 12/97)."

"...[w]hen you invite experts in you gain information as well as children with hands on with someone who is more knowledgeable about multiculturalism (group 2, 12/97)."

"I think what has helped me the most is allowing the children, themselves to express from their cultures as a whole in the classroom. Also, I've had a lot of parent participation... (group 2, 12/97)."

"I think something that' helped me is we have, in our grade tried to use as many community resources as we could (teacher, focus group 2, 12/97)."

"Student teachers, they really opened my eyes a lot. In the units that they have to do ... I've learned an awful lot in observing and helping them plan and get material together for that (group 2, 12/97)."

"You can get more resources if you actually interact with different cultures that are in your community (group 1, 12/97)."

"Reading of materials and just realizing that there are different traditions and customs within groups of people helps us to adjust to the differences that we may find with individuals (group 1, 12/97)."

"I think the first thing, as far as hindering, is the lack of materials. There is a need for more materials on different cultures to be more accessible so that you can provide for the children instead of having to put things off...if we had more resources and more materials, not only books and supplies, but access to individuals more involvement from the community (group 1, 12/97)."

"I think that what would help is if we had more materials that would help us teach about multiculturalism (group 1, 12/97)."

"A resource book of field trips possible would help (group 1, 12/97)."

“Workshops or things where we meet together, where the parents get together with the teachers and all of us just learn about each other (group 2, 12/97).”

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Education Training: This theme reflects teachers’ educational training or lack of educational training in the area of multiculturalism.

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Education Training

Lack of Education Training

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“I’ve also had some classes on multicultural diversity which enables me to do a better job with the class and help children understand differences and the likeness, which weigh more on the like than not alike. I think that is wonderful (teacher, group 2, 12/97).”

“I wasn’t exposed to multiculturalism in my time, in my education, so I think that hurt me a little bit (group 2, 12/97).”

“I’ve had some classes on multicultural diversity which enables me to do a better job with the class and help children understand differences and the likeness (group 2, 12/97).”

---

“I didn’t have a lot of, unfortunately, classes in college in multiculturalism, something that I think they should have offered more of (group 2, 12/97).”

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Family Background: This theme reflects teachers’ family background, and experiences that support or did not support their multicultural awareness.

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Family Background

Limited Exposure from Family Background

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“What has helped me most is probably a lot of years of experience. I, myself, have been exposed to a lot of multicultural differences. Thanks to my husband’s jobs and opportunities, I’ve been exposed to a lot of diversity and people and culture (group 2, 12/97).”

“The hindrance can still be not being educated enough from our families and society. Some of us are not educated (group 2, 12/97).”

“I think it is based on your background. The more comfortable and knowledge you are of the topics from whatever. The more interaction that you have with other cultures; you become more competent because you feel you can speak on the subject more or you can get more resources if you actually interact with the different cultures in your community...acquiring that knowledge on a first hand basis is the best way to feel

“...my past kind of hindered me because I was very sheltered when I was growing up. My first year of teaching was my first time actually getting out and seeing a lot of different things (group 2, 12/97).”

competent (group 1, 12/97).”

“My family, of course, has a great influence on my perception. Which I feel is positive because as growing up, I knew I was African-American (group 2, 12/97).”

“I think it is based on your background. The more comfortable and knowledgeable you are on the topic (group 2, 12/97).”

---

---

Multicultural background In and Outside of the Classroom: This theme reflects teachers’ experiences that support their multicultural awareness, for example, college with different groups of people, interaction with other cultures, volunteering, visiting children’s home, working and watching different children interact, parents contribution towards multiculturalism, allowing for individual differences.

#### Multicultural background

“I think seeking out experiences more has helped me. When I was in college seeking out experiences with different groups of people, it was interesting, exciting and sometime scary because of the prejudices that I had developed growing up (group 1, 12/97).”

“The more interaction that you have with other cultures; you become more competent because you feel you can speak on the subject more (group 1, 12/97).”

“Acquiring knowledge on a first hand basis is the best way to feel competent. It’s hard to just read a book or get materials and feel really competent (group 1, 12/97).”

“Through volunteering, I met a lot of different people....they would talk about wars or their family situation and then I would interact with their children (group 1, 12/97).”

“Getting out into the children’s home and actually seeing their background, what they are dealing with everyday (group 2, 12/97).”

“I think talking to the parent has helped me find out more about that particular child’s cultural situation at home (group 2,12/97).”

“I think it’s also very important to do a variety of different countries besides just doing one country (group 2, 12/97).”

“Working with the different children because I worked with a Native American last year and I actually went to one of their gatherings (group 1, 12/97).”

“Watching children interact...the different races within the classroom or nationalities, and just watching them and how they interact (group 2, 12/97).”

“I think what has helped me the most is allowing children, themselves to express from their culture as a whole in the classroom. Also I’ve had a lot of parents contribute towards multiculturalism in my classroom (group 2, 12/97).”

“I think allowing for individual differences and the sharing of traditions and customs within your classrooms helps you to come aware of our differences and how yet we are alike. Just individualized sharing and getting to know one another makes the difference (group 1, 12/97).”

The focus groups participants provided the following quotes on the future of multiculturalism.

“I see multicultural not as a race thing. I see it as a culture, the way of life. And the way of life, whether you’re black, white, green or yellow, can have the same values (teacher, focus group 2, 12/97).” “More education, just more education. More education of sequential things. You know from kindergarten or whatever level but from the little ones up....But education doesn’t do it by itself, people got to work towards it (teacher, focus group 2, 12/97).”

Another teacher comments, “We have to be open; let our children be open. The parents, the community, just open it up and continue with exposure as much as possible. An on going process, it never stops (teacher, focus group 2, 12/97).” “I think that the school itself has a large responsibility in trying to promote and execute this process. Because sometime, this is the only place the children get anything (teacher, focus group 2, 12/97).”