

THE MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE, SKILLS AND  
ATTITUDES OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS: A QUANTITATIVE  
AND HEURISTIC PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

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by

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ATTITUDES OF PROSPECTIVE TEACHERS: A QUANTITATIVE  
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ABSTRACT

Moule (2005) suggest diverse students suffer isolation, invisibility and inappropriate labeling in many educational institutions. This mixed-methods study explores the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills, and attitudes of prospective teachers. The research questions are: (1) what are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers during their final year of course work in a teacher education program (2) what are the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers about Multicultural Education and (3) how are prospective teachers prepared to teach diverse student populations in their teacher education programs?

The mixed-methods inquiry used a survey and interviews to ascertain the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers as related to Multicultural Education. This inquiry consisted of 36 survey respondents and three interviews of prospective teachers

who provided “rich descriptions” of their multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes. The sampling population consisted of (n=604) eligible participants from the three universities teacher preparation programs who were in their final year of course work. Prospective teachers in their final year of course work had completed all coursework and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year.

Results from the survey indicated that prospective teachers feel that they are being prepared to teach diverse student populations, however when face-to-face interviews were conducted, the researcher found that the prospective teachers did not feel as confident in their preparation to teach diverse student populations as opposed to what was affirmed in the survey. This would suggest more opportunities are needed for prospective teachers to gain awareness, knowledge, and skills in Multiculture Education in a practical sense.

## APPROVAL PAGE

The faculty listed below, appointed by the Dean of the School of Graduate Studies, have examined a dissertation entitled “The Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of Prospective Teachers: A Quantitative and Heuristic Phenomenological Study,” presented by Rotha M. Perkins, candidate for the Doctor of Philosophy degree, and certify that in their opinion it is worthy of acceptance.

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# CHAPTER 1

## INTRODUCTION

Some institutional characteristics of schools systematically deny some groups of students equal educational opportunities. (Banks, 2004, p. 3).

### Background

#### *Diverse Student Populations*

Current research suggests that an increasingly diverse population is enrolled in U.S. public schools. Such diversity includes racial, ethnic, cultural, linguistic, and disability differences. This is according to the latest statistics from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2010) which used data from 2009, reported approximately 55% of the students were White, 15% were Black, 22% were Hispanics, and others constituted 8%. Research indicates that the diversity of students in U.S. schools is the result of a “surge in immigration which has brought people from all over the world including Latin America and Asia” (Oakes & Lipton, 2007, p. 7). The implication is that teachers must teach students who have multiple languages, low socioeconomic status and exceptionalities.

Not only are race and ethnicity a growing factor in American schools, but students with varied disabilities (exceptionalities) are also attending in large numbers. Students with exceptionalities have special needs such as speech, language, mental retardation, emotional disturbances, and hearing disabilities.

Children with exceptionalities make up 8 percent of the K-12 students of which two-thirds are classified as mentally retarded and one-third as emotionally disturbed (Oakes & Lipton, 2007). Statistically, children with exceptionalities account for 2.8 million to 3.9 million of the students attending public schools—depending on the classification (Oakes & Lipton, 2007). Large groups of diverse students are classified as exceptional, especially a disproportionately number of African American (male) students who are classified as Special Education.

Structurally, diverse student populations encounter many inequalities in education. Diverse student populations face inequalities which include segregated schools, unequal funding, unequal opportunities to learn, unequal peer resources, achievement gaps and high dropout rates (Manning & Baruth, 2009). Other sources of inequalities include lack of qualified teachers, appropriate curriculum, equipment, materials, and safe schools. Research shows that teacher's deficit thinking and beliefs also contribute to the educational inequalities of diverse students. Many Americans of the majority culture believe that their "ways of knowing and being in the world" represent "intelligence and merit and therefore, they deserve the disproportionate schools and life advantages they enjoy" (Oakes & Lipton, 2007, p. 55). Statistics indicate that as a result of, "white privileges, stereotypes, racism, and ethnocentrism," diverse student populations continue to suffer inequities in education (Oakes & Lipton, 2007, p. 49). Diverse student populations must struggle for social justice and

equitable education. Manning and Baruth (2009) affirm “urban schools suffer from far greater complications than rural or suburban schools” because of:

high teacher absenteeism, high teacher turnover, high numbers of uncertified teachers and greater numbers of inexperienced teachers (Darling-Hammond, 1998 cited in Patterson, Collins & Abbott 2004, p. 3).

According to Belefio, Auld, and Lee (2005), a number of teachers in urban schools have a belief that student “underachievement is a consequence of conditions outside the realm of educational control:

lack of parental support, teen pregnancy, lack of technology, lack of funds, economic struggles of the home, school, and/or local community, and lack of student ability (p. 856).

Even though recent reports show some progress toward closing the K–12 “academic achievement gap, poor-urban schools continue to underperform” according to National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP, 2009). For example, by the end of high school, African American and Latino students display skills in both reading and mathematics that are the same as those of white students in the eighth grade (NAEP, 2009).

### *Prospective Teachers*

Many researchers propose that prospective teachers are entering the teaching field unprepared to teach diverse student populations (Soric, 2011). Teacher education programs have been condemned for ineffectively preparing

prospective teachers to improve the knowledge, skills and characters needed to effectively teach diverse students populations. In fact, it was shown that predominately white academic educational faculties that prepare prospective teachers “generally reflect the same attitudes and experiences” (Sleeter, 2001) of the predominately white students in the teacher education program. Sleeter (2001) asserts “it is as hard to change these universities as it is to change the people in them” Sleeter (2001, p. 239).

Milner (2005) posits prospective teachers’ professional beliefs are a form of deficit thinking which results in “inaccurate, incorrect, and harmful perceptions” of diverse student populations (p. 771). Deficit thinking may “prevent development of effective lessons to better meet the needs of diverse learners” (Milner, 2005, p. 771). These attitudes and personal and professional beliefs may cause prospective “teachers to look upon diverse student populations as ‘liabilities’ rather than as assets” (Milner, 2005, p. 771). Because of these perceived beliefs, prospective teachers tend to lower their hopes for diverse student populations.

Research studies have implied that prospective teachers need “opportunities to experience diverse student populations” during their teacher preparation (Hollins & Guzman, 2009 ) despite the fact that teacher education programs are adding Multicultural Education, bi-lingual and urban education to their course work (Lunsford, 2008). Lunsford’s study examined eight teacher education program websites and documents, and for five of the eight programs,

Lunsford (2008) noted “no references were found” in the programs of study or departmental documents about diversity and/or Multicultural Education. Subsequently, the “sprinkling of disparate bits of information” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002a) about Multicultural Education and diversity only serves to confuse prospective teachers’ attitudes and beliefs. These attitudes and beliefs hamper the development of prospective teachers to become multicultural competent (Hollins & Guzman, 2009, Banks, 2009). This study examined prospective teacher’s awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes related to Multicultural Education.

#### Statement of Problem

Research suggests prospective teachers in American public schools may not be prepared to teach diverse student populations. One reason is due to their mis-guided beliefs about diverse student populations (Milner, 2005) which are often stereotypical. Stereotypes produce a “mental picture or judgment of a people or culture” (Kyles & Olafson, 2008, p. 503) that may have no basis. As human beings, we are sometimes too quick to judge people, “making assumptions about other’s culture, character, traditions, values and beliefs” (Kyles & Olafson, 2008, p.504). According to Manning and Baruth (2009) stereotypical beliefs can create “disconnects between teacher and student which can affect the academic achievement” of students (Manning & Baruth, 2009, p. 191). Generally, stereotypes, discrimination, and social injustices continue to

exist and “often diminish the learning for diverse student populations and can have a drastic effect on their identity formation” (Manning & Baruth, 2009, p. 191).

The academic underperformance and achievement failure of diverse student populations is problematic. Research suggests that classroom teachers are inadequately prepared to teach diverse student populations, lack the knowledge, skills and dispositions to effectively work with diverse student populations and therefore negatively impact their learning and achievement, this is problematic. This means that diverse students will not have the knowledge, skills and attitudes to become successful and contributing citizens in their world. There is an urgency to address this problem.

Those in teacher education programs are predominantly white, middle-class, mono-lingual, female, and non-urban (Bartolome, 2004, Milner, 2006, Villegas & Lucas, 2007). Research suggests, “Whites don’t see their color as a privilege”, they are taught not to see any differences in color through “social reproduction” (McIntosh, 2002). When Whites do have opportunities to interact with people of color, they attempt not to see the color which upholds ‘color-blindness’ believing that “one is not participating in racism if one learns to ignore color and feel comfortable” around diverse student populations (Sleeter, 2001, p.38).

Howard (2006) identifies this as the “assumption of rightness, the luxury of ignorance and the legacy of privilege” (p. 54), which allows Whites to be

colorblind. 'Colorblindness' assumes that "race, color and ethnicity should not be considered" in explaining "how people are treated" (Sleeter, 2001). Whites also depend on "naïve, idealistic beliefs and have not explored their identities as members of a privileged white race, which leads them to adopt 'colorblindness' (Groulx, 2001, p. 61).

This research aimed to explore the perceived effectiveness of how three Midwest university teacher education programs prepared their prospective teachers to become multicultural competent to teach diverse student populations.

#### Purpose of this Study

The purpose of this quantitative and heuristic phenomenological qualitative study was to inquire into the multicultural competencies of prospective teachers and their attitudes and beliefs about Multicultural Education. This study describes and supports the need for improved Multicultural Education preparation in teacher education programs.

The primary goal of the quantitative portion of this study was to analyze the Multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills of 36 prospective teachers through a survey instrument and the qualitative inquiry was used to describe the attitudes and beliefs of three teachers who were in their final year of course work (teachers in their final year of course work had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching

practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year). The findings of this study will provide research information and knowledge that can be disseminated to assist academic educational faculties, universities and colleges as they prepare prospective teachers.

### Motivation for the Study

I was motivated to do this study because throughout my teaching career, I came to realize that today's public school students are being educated much the same way that I was when I attended school. It was standard protocol for schools to track students according to their abilities. Tracking is a form of differentiating among students by "using the old indicators of race and family background" (Oakes & Lipton, 2007, p. 311). In predominately White schools, African Americans were often placed in tracking tiers. Diverse student populations are still being educated by teachers whose beliefs, attitudes and practices are supportive of tracking. These practices support the lack of diversity, social justice and equitable education for diverse student populations.

When I was in under graduate teacher preparation programs, I was educated in the traditional methods of teaching. During my career as an educator, I engaged in traditional educational practices, subconsciously placing students in groups, according to their abilities. During my Master's course work, I realized that I was also guilty of educating students in the traditional methods that I learned in my under graduate program. Through my Master's and

doctoral course work in Multicultural Education, I have become aware of the positive effects of teaching for cultural responsiveness to improve academic achievement for all students. Given that Multicultural Education is so pervasive in the education of prospective teachers, I was motivated to query the multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills of prospective teachers.

### Research Questions

The questions used to develop this study are: (1) what are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers during their final year of course work in a teacher education program (2) what are the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers about Multicultural Education and (3) how are prospective teachers prepared to teach diverse student populations in their teacher education programs?

### Conceptual Framework

The framework for this study which examined prospective teacher's multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes about multicultural education are: (1) historical perspective on public education (2) Multicultural Education (3) teachers' beliefs and diversity and (4) teacher preparation programs.

The conceptual framework, historical perspective on public education provides background information on education in the United States. Historically,

students of color have not fared well with the American education system. Until *Brown vs. The Board of Education, Topeka*, students of color attended segregated schools that were “considered, separate but equal.” However, in reality, segregated schools were not equal. They were unequally funded and resources including facilities, curriculum and instructional materials were not at par with those of White schools.

Several programs have been established to narrow the achievement gap between Whites and diverse student populations: ESEA/Title 1 and Head Start, *A Nation at Risk: National Commission on Excellence in Education*, 1983, and No Child Left Behind 2001. Even though Title 1, part of Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) established through Johnson’s “War on Poverty” was targeted to help disadvantaged children (Vinovskis, 1999), the achievement gap persists. The ESEA Act was designed to help eliminate much of the academic achievement gap between children of the poor and more affluent. In 1965, Head Start was implemented to provide an “array of educational, health, nutrition, social and psychological services,” not just academic achievement (Vinovskis, 1999, p. 194). *A Nation at Risk: National Commission on Excellence in Education*, 1983, program was established to measure school quality and judge student outcomes (Guthrie & Springer, 2004). Today’s program is the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) passed by congress in 2001 and signed into law by the Bush administration in 2002. Under NCLB:

all students in grades 3-8 and one grade in high school must be tested once a year in reading and mathematics. Students are expected to score at the “proficient” level or above on state administered test by 2014 and make “Adequately Yearly Progress” toward that goal until then (NEA, 2010).

The second conceptual framework was developed around the concept of Multicultural Education. According to Oakes and Lipton (2007), the goal of Multicultural Education was to “establish that being culturally different did not equate to being culturally deprived” (p. 95). Banks (2004) offers a rationale for Multicultural Education:

the idea that all students—regardless of their gender and social class and their ethnic, racial, or cultural characteristics—should have an equal opportunity to learn in school (p. 3).

Manning and Bauth (2009) offers two goals of Multicultural Education:

(1) teach learners to recognize, accept, and appreciate differences in culture, ethnicity, social class, sexual orientation, religion, special needs, and gender and (2) instill in learners during their crucial developmental years a sense of justice, equality, and democracy (p. 5).

James Banks defined Multicultural Education as:

(1) a philosophy built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity and human dignity and (2) a process that permeates all aspects of school

practices, policies and organization as a means to ensure the highest levels of academics for all students (NAME, 2012).

Banks (1992) pointed out that the actual root of the Multicultural Education movement was directly linked to early ethnic studies movements initiated by scholars such as Woodson (1933) DuBois (1935), Woodson & Wesley (1935) and Bond (1939). To answer the request of African American/Black college students, Multicultural Education was introduced as an ethnic studies course in many colleges and universities. Social movements on the part of African Americans and other people of color “most oppressed” by the practices, advocated for educational reform (Banks & Banks, 1995).

Proponents of Multicultural Education (Gay, 2000, Irvine, 2003, Ladson-Billings, 2006, Banks & Banks, 2009) affirmed the “viability of culturally responsive teaching practices” (Gay, 2000) for higher academic achievement for diverse student populations. The practice of culturally responsive pedagogy provides opportunities for teachers to incorporate multiple perspectives in their teaching.

The third conceptual framework, teachers’ beliefs and diversity suggests teachers “are troubled by the apparent contradictions between these ideals and realities and have difficulty in finding a comfortable ideological place for themselves” (Gay, 2010, p. 146). Teachers’ personal and professional beliefs about teaching diverse student populations extend from their culture and prior knowledge. Research suggests that teachers as well as prospective teachers are

unaware of how culture orientation affects teaching and learning, because our culture determines what we teach and how we teach (Clarke & Drudy, 2006).

Richards, Brown and Forde (2007) noted prospective teachers, who come from mostly White middle-class backgrounds, teach diverse students, they seem to “confirm their erroneous preconceived beliefs.” As a result teachers may ignore their “students’ unique cultural beliefs, ethnic identities and the students’ perceptions, values and worldviews” (Irvine, 2003, p. xvii) in order to promote hegemonic values, perceptions and worldviews (Irvine, 2003). When diverse student populations’ “cultural values, beliefs and identities are ignored”, their contribution in the classroom becomes devalued, and “their learning is often disrupted” (Irvine, 2003, p. 7).

In addition, a cultural mismatch exists between teacher and students which may prevent prospective teachers from successfully teaching diverse student populations. The cultural mismatch between prospective teachers and diverse student populations may cause prospective teachers to rely on “naïve, idealistic beliefs” instead of exploring their identities as members of a privileged White race (Nieto, 2000). One iconic belief of prospective teachers, while teaching diverse student populations, was to view teaching as a way to enact their individual caring for children, thus protecting them from the diverse students’ societal and cultural perspectives (Groulx, 2001). Naively many White teachers believe they can become temporary parents, teaching their cultural, morals, values, and beliefs because diverse students are seen as somehow

“deficient” (McIntyre, 1997). Because of this naiveté, prospective teachers tend to establish patterns of resistance (Groulx, 2001) in thinking about another culture’s characteristics which do not conform to their personal and professional beliefs.

The fourth conceptual framework was teacher preparation programs. Research suggests that many academic educational faculties who are White, middle-class and mono-lingual lack the necessary experience and preparation themselves to teach Multicultural Education and diversity courses (Richardson, 2003, Barnes, 2006). Prospective teachers are entering the teaching field unprepared to teach diverse student populations (Sleeter, 2001, Richardson, 2003). As a result, many prospective teachers’ personal attitudes (conceptions and misconceptions) are not necessarily transformed from information presented in foundation courses (Lundeberg & Levin, 2003). To successfully impact prospective teachers’ attitudes and beliefs, academic educational faculties themselves must possess strong knowledge in Multicultural Education, must be multicultural competent and able to create and implement vital multicultural experiences. Academic educational faculties must model for prospective teachers to believe Multicultural Education could work. Regrettably, even though Multicultural Education and diversity courses are being taught in teacher education programs, prospective teachers are still inadequately prepared to teach diverse students (Sleeter, 2001, Barnes, 2006).

These conceptual frameworks (research bases) provided insight into prospective teacher's multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes and beliefs; their need to become multicultural competent and their desire for cross-cultural experiences. This study aimed to query prospective teachers' multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills in Multicultural Education. The personal and professional attitudes and beliefs of three prospectives teachers and 36 survey (MAKSS Form-T, D'Andrea, Daniels, & Noonan, 2003) respondents provide data for this study.

### Overview of Methodology

The research design of this study was mixed methods and was based on quantitative and qualitative inquiry. The qualitative data was used to substantiate the quantitative data. In other words, the interview data helped to explain the results of the survey data. The study used descriptive statistics to analyze the Means and Standard Deviation of the three subscales of the MAKSS Form-T, (D'Andrea, Daniels, & Noonan, 2003) multicultural awareness, multicultural knowledge and multicultural skills. Unlike D'Andrea et al, (2003) no ethnic or racial statistics were reported in this study. The researcher wanted the participants to retain anonymity because the focus was on the amount of multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills the participants possessed in their final year of their teacher education program. Prospective teachers in their final year of course work had completed all course work and teaching practicum

or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year.

The qualitative methodology used was heuristic and phenomenological. As a theoretical tradition, heuristic approach was used to “guide thinking toward a valid descriptive model” that can account for such individual differences (Mobley, 1977). The heuristic phenomenological approach was used to understand the viewpoints of prospective teachers who were in their final year in one of the three teacher education programs.

Eight letters requesting permission to conduct a study were sent to universities in the Midwest region. Three university teacher education programs consented to take part in the study. The three universities’ had distinct characteristics: rural, urban and suburban. The universities were identified as University One (suburban), University Two (Urban) and University Three (rural) (Chapter 4).

Two types of data were gathered from the participants of the three university teacher education programs: the MAKSS Form-T survey and interviews. The sampling population for the three university teacher education program was n=604.

Recruitment for participation in the research MAKSS-Form-T and interview request began on February 1, 2011. A letter introducing the study, and a flyer which provided links to MAKSS Form-T and interview request were made available to the sampling population. A staff member from each

university was sent an email advertising the research study and requesting participants for the MAKSS Form-T survey and interview request. A flyer containing the links to the survey and interview request was attached to the email. Staff members from each university, using their Listserv, emailed the letter and flyer to 604 eligible participants; prospective teachers in their final year of course work had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year.

Eligible participants who received the email and flyer introducing the study were encouraged to participate in the survey, interview request or both the survey and interview request. The eligible participants would click on the links to the survey or interview request to gain access to the study. Upon clicking on the link (survey) participants were able to select “yes” to consent to participate in the survey. Once the respondent consented, the survey opened. For the interview request, the respondent would click on the interview link and select “yes” to consent to participate. Once the respondent had consented, they were requested to provide name, gender, university affiliation and email address. If the participant selected “no” on either link, the link would close. At any point in the survey or interview request, the participant could exit the survey or interview.

The survey and interview request links were closed out on May 31, 2011. On June 1, 2011, the interview request data and survey data was downloaded

from the online survey link. The survey data was entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) for analysis. Fifty-nine or 10% of the 604 eligible population elected to participate in the MAKSS Form-T survey. Of the 59 respondents who selected “yes” on the survey, 42 respondents completed the MAKSS Form-T, but after missing data analysis and listwise deletions, only 36 were useable. The 36 respondents represented six percent (6%) of the eligible population of prospective teachers in their final year of course work. Prospective teachers in their final year of course work had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year.

Eleven participants agreed to be interviewed, out of the eleven, two did not provide contact information. Nine emails were sent out requesting interview permission, and four were returned. After further contact: text, email and phone calls, three participants volunteered and consented to be interviewed.

The interviews were conducted on June 4<sup>th</sup>, 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup>, 2011. After each interview, they were transcribed and later coded, using Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA), collaboration coded by researcher and two coders to establish credibility (Chapter 3). Qualitative Data Analysis is a program for analyzing qualitative data, which is a process of noticing, collecting and thinking (Jorgenson, 1989). The two coders were educators in their own right, one was a former principal of 40 years and the other had two Master’s degrees, one in Black Studies and the second in Human Relations.

Both coders were trained by the researcher in the QDA process of “noticing, collecting and thinking” (Jorgenson, 1989). After the initial training, each coder was given one of three colors (red, yellow or green) to code the transcript. The transcript was read and coded using “descriptive codes”. The researcher and two coders met to discuss the “noticing” or coding of descriptive codes. Codes were discussed, compared, reasoned and agreed upon. The “descriptive codes” helped to established the codebook. The codebook is a list of codes created during this research to categorized and facilitate analysis. From then on, each coder conducted the coding analysis in “the blind”. When the descriptive code reflected all three colors, the transcripts were read again, combining the tri-colored codes into interpretative codes.

### Significance of the Study

This study can contribute to the existing scholarship on preparing prospective teachers to teach diverse student populations. The quantitative and heuristic phenomenological qualitative study was designed to understand the extent to which prospective teachers gained multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills to teach diverse student populations. Given the rapidly changing demographics and the documented mismatch between prospective teachers and their students, prospective teachers need to be adequately prepared in order to help close the achievement gap for diverse student populations.

## Limitations

A significant limitation for this study was the small sample of volunteer survey takers and interviewees. A second limitation was the quantitative portion of the study, the lack of demographic information on the survey participants. Also there was no way to link the survey participants with the interview participants because the investigator had hoped to obtain a large sample of survey takers, so the requirements were changed to provide anonymity for the survey participants.

The third limitation of the study was the lack of volunteer interviewees, two respondents from the same university was interviewed. Initially, the study was designed to interview at a minimum one respondent from each university. The unavailability of an interviewee from one of the teacher education programs led the researcher to interview two participants from the same teacher education program. Both participants who attended the same teacher education program had strikingly different experiences in their respective teacher education program.

Since the investigator was conducting a heuristic inquiry her personal bias was a limitation to this study. Once the investigator had identified her biases, she was able to proceed with the study. Understanding the biases aided in describing, explaining and clarifying the study.

In summary, the small sample of respondents for both the survey and interview process was a significant limitation. Personal biases were a limitation to the inquiry. The researcher was able to put aside her biases, when analyzing the interview data.

## Acronyms and Definition of Terms

ESEA – Elementary and Secondary Education Act, designed to help disadvantaged children.

NAME – National Association for Multicultural Education, an organization of educators that supports freedom, justice, equality, equity and human dignity.

NCATE – National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education, evaluates and approves preparation programs in colleges and universities that prepare educators for K-12 certification.

NCES – National Center for Education Statistics, collects, analyzes and makes available data related to education in the United States.

NCLB – No Child Left Behind, is the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965. Its stated purpose is to assure that all U.S. students meet high education standards.

MAKSS Form-T, Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills Survey for Teachers, a 41 item, 3 subscale survey to measure Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills of teachers.

QDA – Qualitative Data Analysis, a program for analyzing qualitative data: involves “noticing, collecting and thinking” (Jorgenson, 1989).

SurveyMonkey.com, Registered online survey software which can be statistically analyzed.

SSIRB -- Social Science Internal Review Board, UMKC Institutional Review

Board reviews all research in the social sciences.

SPSS – Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS, Inc) - A software package for analyzing data.

Prospective teachers' beliefs are defined as psychologically held understandings, premises or propositions about the world that are felt to be true (Richardson, 2003).

Multicultural Education was defined as a progressive approach for transforming education that holistically critiques and addresses current shortcomings, failings and discriminatory practices in education (Banks & Banks, 2009).

Diverse student populations was defined as students who are culturally, ethnically, and linguistically different; it includes as well exceptionalities (Oakes & Lipton, 2007).

## CHAPTER 2

### LITERATURE REVIEW

The aim of this quantitative and heuristic phenomenological qualitative study was to analyze the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers. This study described and supported the need for teacher education programs to prepare prospective teachers to become multicultural competent.

In 1995, Grant and Tate found 47 studies that focused on multicultural preparation for prospective teachers. Grant, Elsbree, and Fondrice (2004) followed up on the research and found 39 studies devoted to multicultural and teacher education. Trent, Kea and Oh (2008) examined 17 studies that focused on prospective teachers, attitudes and beliefs about self, others and school. Sixteen of the studies focused on curriculum and instruction issues. Research results revealed prospective teachers viewed teacher education programs as constructive and accepting of diversity. Consequently, Kent, Kea, and Kevin (2008) study found approximately 60% of the deans in colleges and universities teacher education programs, reported that “their teachers were **not** being prepared” (Gomez 1998) to meet the needs of diverse students. Kent, Kea and Kevin (2008) followed up on Gomez (1998) study and noted “none of the participants [teacher education students] in the study believed their teacher education program prepared them well to teach students” from diverse cultures (p. 21).

This review discusses scholarly literature from preliminary, secondary and primary sources. Literature reviews are used as a research tool in emerging areas, that typically yield small samples (Mertens, 2010), such as prospective teachers. Preliminary sources are information from databases that contain published articles about the topic. Secondary sources are reviews published on the topic of interest, but is a synthesis and analysis of previous research published on the topic (Mertens, 2010). Primary sources are literature reports on studies that were conducted by the researcher(s), and include a description of the methods, sampling, data collection strategies, data analysis and results (Mertens, 2010). Books, peer reviewed articles and dissertations being reviewed were found through several databases in social science: *WorldCat*, *ProQuest*, *JSTOR* and *EBSCOhost*. This literature review was conducted on *The Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of Prospective Teachers*.

Several reviews were considered for the four conceptual frameworks: (1) *Historical Perspectives on Public Education*, (2) *Multicultural Education*, (3) *Teacher's Beliefs and Diversity* and (4) *Teacher Preparation Programs*. Each framework met the criteria for supporting *Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, Skills and Attitudes of Prospective Teachers*.

## Historical Perspectives on Public Education

Students, who attend public schools today, have multiple languages, low socioeconomic statuses and a variety of exceptionalities. Educationally, diverse student populations lag behind Whites as a result of inequalities in education.

### *History of Education*

Throughout history, schooling has been viewed as a “broadening of [student’s] culture, values and experiences” (Segall & Wilson, 2004, p. 12). Learners were heavily influenced by “Protestant morals, values, and cultures, economic, racial, anti-Semitic and anti-Catholic sentiments” (Segall & Wilson, 2004, p. 12). At the time, education prepared students to become functioning adults in American society. Learning grew out of “society’s collective decisions about what adult members needed to function well as individuals and to contribute to the common good” (Oakes & Lipton, 2007, p. 36).

According to Katz (1976), education had functioned to prepare students to become participating members of society by fulfilling their respective roles in the workforce. Compulsory education laws (Katz, 1976, Lleras-Muney, 2001) mandated that schools socialize youths with what some perceived as the “necessary basics for the budding capitalist” (Oakes & Lipton, 2007 p. 46). During the rapid industrialization era (1750 – 1825), urbanization and immigration demands on public schools changed the vision of schooling from learning to “Americanization”. Public schools were not only teaching literacy but

also young people learned the “habits, values and language of the predominately Anglo-Saxon Protestants who considered themselves the trustees of the American culture” (Oakes & Lipton, 2007, p. 30).

Throughout the colonial period, some notable political leaders: Thomas Jefferson, Benjamin Rush and Noah Webster, were concerned about the “inequity of schooling for different communities” and the “educational needs of the new nation” (Mondale, 2002, p. 39). Thomas Jefferson advocated that normal or “common schools” provide basic literacy--“reading, writing and mathematics” to all Americans citizens. Jefferson believed the “survival of the democracy depended on educating all Americans” (Mondale, 2002, p. 39). Schools known as “common schools” were characterized by “cultural biases, racism, discrimination and inequalities in funding” (Mondale, 2002, p. 40). In the 1830’s, “Horace Mann augmented Jefferson’s vision of public school” as the cornerstone of democratic life (Oakes & Lipton, 2007, p. 39). The common schools advocated by Mann, in addition to teaching the literacy that Jefferson promoted, also placed emphasis on the knowledge and habits that citizens needed to function in society.

Oakes and Lipton (2007) stated that by the end of the nineteenth century, public schools took on the “task of developing the ‘human capital’ required by the new industrial economy” (p. 46). Vocations aimed at teaching specific job-related knowledge and skills decreased, because the view of the nation’s economy was tied to the quality of public schools. As the twentieth century progressed,

schools continued to prepare “young people for work” which would make the nation’s economy strong and also were expected to help “solve social problems associated with poverty, racism, inequality, urban decay and cultural unrest” (Oakes & Lipton, 2007, p. 47).

### *Diverse Students and Educational Inequality*

After the Civil War (1861), the enactment of Jim Crow laws in some states, denied African Americans an equal education. In 1867, many states enacted Jim Crow laws, designed to “refuse African Americans the rights to citizenship” and deprived them of an equitable “education through segregation” (Segall & Wilson, 2004, p. 71). The Plessey vs. Ferguson (1896) decision established segregation through the law “separate but equal” (Segall & Wilson, 2004) which encouraged racial discrimination.

Throughout the 1950s, a variety of factors: legal segregation, de facto segregation, and the Brown vs. Board of Education (1954) Supreme Court decision, affected education for diverse student populations. Prior to Brown vs. Board of Education minorities in particular were prevented from a socially just and equitable education. Diverse student populations were not allowed to attend schools with White children in some parts of the country (Schneider & Keesler, 2007). Long after the Brown vs. Board of Education decision, schools were still segregated. As segregation spread throughout the United States, it became apparent that many educational institutions “systemically denied some

groups of students an equitable and socially just education” (Banks, 2004, p. 3). American public schools became characterized by “racial and socio-economic differentiation” (Hochschild, 2003) and in most cases teachers taught students most like them.

Traditional schools that participated in desegregation taught the basics of reading, writing, arithmetic and the dominant culture’s “traditions and values” (Schneider & Keesler, 2007). African American students who attended desegregated schools were often socialized to act and think like members of the dominant culture (Banks & Banks, 2009). This cultural indoctrination was so pervasive that many students were forced to accept male Anglo Saxon values, customs and traditions; although most African Americans and others of color could never fully become mainstream America because of their status as secondary minorities.

Ogbu and Simons (1998) defined “secondary minorities or involuntary minorities” as people who did not originally decide to become part of American society, but were forced through “slavery and conquest”. American mainstream principles, customs and rituals practiced in public schools, caused “secondary and involuntary minorities” to incorporate new cultural differences. Secondary cultural groups are defined as “minority groups that take on the American cultural aspects or incorporate new cultural differences” (Ogbu & Simons, 1998, p. 174). Often times these “involuntary minority” groups felt intensely about their culture, assuming there is a varied differentiation in the “dominant group

and the minority group” (Ogbu & Simons, 1998). Involuntary minorities or secondary cultural groups have varying views and experiences about schooling. For many generations, “involuntary minorities” have recognized that the barriers to opportunities continue even when an American education is achieved (Ogbu & Simons, 1998).

### *Public Schooling and Exceptionalities*

A traditional convention started when schools began to label and sort students when the students did not perform as “normal” (Blanchett, 2006). The idea was that once the school identified educationally pertinent differences, teachers could teach groups of students with significant similarities, and students would profit from instruction in these groups. Because students of color did not achieve as “normal” (Blanchett, 2006) they were often labeled as special education, placed in tracking tiers and taught a rote curriculum.

Still persistent in public schools is racial tracking; a form of long term placement. Oakes and Lipton (2007) explained that tracking is the “placement of students in classes of matched ability or the establishment of homogeneous groups within a classroom” (p. 69). Oakes and Lipton (2003) posit tracking is a form of “differentiating among citizens by using the old indicators of race and family background” (p.311). In addition, intelligence test scores were/are used as a “meritocratic and scientific basis for sorting students” (Oakes & Lipton 2003,

p. 311) which created a sorting and tracking system for diverse student populations.

## Multicultural Education

### *Definitions of Multicultural Education*

Multicultural Education has been defined, analyzed and synthesized by many scholars and researchers. The definition of Multicultural Education varies depending on cultural characteristics, social problems, political power and reallocation of resources (Gay, 1994). Baker (1978) stated Multicultural Education is “conceptualized broadly to include a range of cultural groups”. In 1979, Banks posits:

A major aim of Multicultural Education should be to educate students so that they will acquire knowledge about a range of cultural groups and develop the attitudes, skills, and abilities needed to function at some level of competency within many different cultural environments (p. 239).

Banks and Banks (1989) defined Multicultural Education as the practices and policies that “transform schools so that male and female students, social class, racial, and ethnic groups will experience an equal opportunity to learn in school” (p. 20). Nieto (1994) defined Multicultural Education as an “anti-racist education that is firmly related to student learning and permeates all areas of schooling” (p.2). In 1995, Multicultural Education was defined as a “progressive approach for transforming education that holistically critiques and addresses

current shortcomings, failings and discriminatory practices in education” (Banks, 1995, p. 3). Multicultural Education is framed within a context of “social justice and pedagogy, and it encompasses antiracist and basic education for all students and all backgrounds” (Nieto, 2002, p. 2).

Gay, (1994) in her work, *A Synthesis of Scholarship in Multicultural Education*, analyzed various definitions of Multicultural Education and concluded Multicultural Education requires “simultaneous changes on multiple levels”. Gay (1994) cited definitions of Multicultural Education by (Baptiste, 1979, Bennett, 1990, Nieto, 1992, and Banks & Banks, 1993) to name a few. Ladson-Billings (2002) defined Multicultural Education as a “composite”, the “infinite permutations that come about as a result of the dazzling array of combinations of human beings recruited to organize and fulfill themselves” (p. 50). Castagno (2009) defined Multicultural Education “as education that focuses on equity, culture, and power by requiring high academic expectations for all students” (p.48)

### *Multicultural Education Movement*

Earlier, in the mid 1930 to the mid 1940 interculturalists were divided about “cultural diversity--attributing ethnic, racial, and religious tensions”, in part, to “misconceptions about cultural differences” (Olneck, 1990, p. 149). Because interculturalists were seeking to ease racial, ethnic, and religious tensions, they were aware of the possible consequences of endorsing “diversity as

a valid social ideal” (Olneck, 1990, p. 149). The intercultural movement failed to become “institutionalized on a significant scale--within most American schools, colleges, and teacher training [preparation] institutions” (Banks, 1979, p. 241). Although the interculturalist or the intergroup education movement was an important antecedent of Multicultural Education, it was not the actual root (Banks,1992).

Initially, Multicultural Education began with event publications. Event publications were one way to disseminate information about “Negroes” and their achievements. The movement was kept alive by influential writers like W.E.B. DuBois, Carter G. Woodson, and Charles C. Wesley. African American scholars and administrators began to demand Black History or Black Studies courses be infused into the curriculum at the university level. One important development during this period was the reprinting of books and research studies on Black ethos--culture, values and traditions (Banks, 1992).

Multicultural Education grew out of the tumultuous 1960 Civil Rights Movement. The Civil Rights Movement aimed to eliminate discrimination in public accommodations, housing, and employment and educational institutions. Banks & Banks (2004) stated:

First, African Americans and then other groups demanded that the schools and other education institutions reform their curricula so that they [curricula] would reflect their experiences, histories, cultures and perspectives. Ethnic groups also demanded that the schools hire more

Black and Brown teachers and administrators so that their children would have more successful role models (p. 6).

The Civil Rights Movement, and the work of other liberals, motivated other marginalized groups to take actions to eradicate discrimination (Banks & Banks, 2004). Women who were discriminated against in employment, income and education formed a movement of Women's Rights. Leaders of this movement demanded political, social economic and educational institutions eliminate "sex discrimination" (Banks & Banks, 2004). Other marginalized groups "demanded that institutions be reformed" to alleviate discrimination (Banks & Banks, 2004). People with "disabilities, senior citizens, and gay rights advocates were among the groups that organized politically during this period and made significant inroads in changing institutions and laws" (Banks & Banks, 2004, p. 7).

By early 1970 Multicultural Education was developed in several phases. The first phase of Multicultural Education was "ethnic studies"; (structural and systemic changes to increase educational equality) "multi-ethnic education" was the second phase; "women, disabilities, and other minorities" (groups who viewed themselves as victims of society) was the third phase; and the development of "theory, research and practice" became the fourth phase (Banks, 1992).

## *Ethnic Studies*

Ethnic studies, also known as “Black Studies” emerged in colleges and universities in the late sixties to address the significance and specialization of ethnic minorities. Banks & Banks (2004) defined “ethnic studies” as:

The scientific and humanistic analyses of behavior influenced by variables related to ethnicity and ethnic group membership. This term is often used to refer to special school, university, and college courses and programs that focus on specific racial and ethnic groups. However, any aspects of a course or program that includes a study of variables related to ethnicity can accurately be referred to as ethnic studies. In other words, “ethnic studies” can be integrated within the boundaries of mainstream courses and curricula (p. 449).

*The Ethnic Heritage Studies Program of 1972* was developed in answer to various economic and political tensions (Brown, 1979). Several publications grew out of *The Ethnic Heritage Program of 1972*. *The Multicultural Education Commission of the Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development* published a booklet titled *Multicultural Education: Commitments, Issues, and Appreciation in 1977* (Brown, 1979). To incorporate “Ethnic Studies” into the curriculum, several approaches were tried, some were uneventful. “Ethnic studies” event publications of significant Black Americans were added to the curriculum in some schools and universities, usually as an extra curricula (Banks, 1993). In 1976, Banks argued:

Ethnic studies should be viewed as a process of curriculum reform that will result in the creation of a new curriculum that is based on new assumptions and new perspectives, and which will help students to gain novel views of the American experience and a new conception of what it means to be American (p. 77).

### *Multi-ethnic Education*

Multi-ethnic education, the second phase inserted “ethnic studies content” into the school and teacher education curricula. These insertions were in the form of “contributions”. The significant efforts of African Americans and other minorities were inserted into history books as “contributions”. The purpose was to help all students to enlarge their, democratic, racial and ethnic outlook (Banks, 1993). The “contribution” approach provided opportunities for students to study other “ethnic groups” (Brown, 1979). Banks and Banks (2004) affirmed that the purpose of multi-ethnic studies was:

to prepare future citizens to reconstruct society so that it better serves the interest of all groups of people, especially those who are of color, poor, female, and/or with disabilities (p. 71).

The multi-ethnic education facilitated the study of all ethnic groups, developing the sense of togetherness. As Americans, the study of multi-ethnic groups incorporated an “all-inclusive interpretation of ethnic heritage” (Brown, 1979). Banks (1987) argued that students should have accurate experiences of

both “mainstream and minority groups from the perspective of different cultural, racial, and ethnic groups”(p. 535).

### *Women, Disabilities, and Other Minorities*

The third phase included people with disabilities, women and other minorities. Women, people with disabilities and other minorities who viewed themselves as “victims of society” began to insist that their voices be heard (Banks, 1993). From 1989 to 1999, there was an over representation of elementary and secondary students with learning disabilities (LD). The LD category increased by 36.6% according to NCES (2001). This rise corresponded with the implementation of ESEA/Title 1 program. Oftentimes those labeled as LD were minorities: African Americans, English Language Learners and other minorities that represent demographic imperatives. To supplement the curriculum for women, minorities and others with disabilities, “their histories, cultures, and voices” were incorporated into the curricula of schools, colleges and universities (Banks, 1993).

The “women, disabilities, and other minorities” phase aimed to create democratic and socially just schools, colleges, and universities, due to the concerns that the “established concepts and knowledge systems must not privilege any particular racial, ethnic, social-class or gender group” (Banks & Banks, 2004, p. 165).

### *Theory, Research and Practice*

The fourth phase of Multicultural Education was the “development of theory, research and practices” (Banks 1993). The “practices” intergrated race, class and gender and is an important phase of Multicultural Education today (Banks, 1993). Research and theory are components of Multicultural Education that continues to be studied. Research has been conducted on the tenants of Multicultural Education by many scholars, some concerned with the social justice and equity aspects of education for all students.

One challenge of Multicultural Education is the quest for authentic voices. Problematic with the concept of practices “is people of color, women and disabled people, don’t often hear their voices” (Banks & Banks, 2004, p. 175) because knowledge is still rooted with the majority culture in many schools and institutions. Banks and Banks (2004) stipulated:

we need to better understand and to make explicit the biographical journeys and values of researchers so that we can more closely approach the aim of objectivity in social science research (p. 176).

At least three characteristics describe Multicultural Education; an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process. Banks and Banks (2004) denoted that Multicultural Education

...incorporates the idea that all students-regardless of their gender and social class and their ethnic, racial or cultural characteristics-should have an equal opportunity to learn in school (p. 3).

Grant and Sleeter (2003) explained that Multicultural Education “is not one identifiable course or educational program”. Multicultural Education “could be a curriculum that incorporates the experiences of ethnic groups”, or a means of school reformation to “increase educational equity for a range of cultural, ethnic, and economic groups” (Banks & Banks, 2009, p. 8).

### *Theories of Multicultural Education*

One theory of Multicultural Education integrates the concept that all students should have an equal opportunity to learn in school. Castagno (2009) theorizes six approaches to Multicultural Education: (1) educating for assimilation, (2) educating for amalgamation, (3) educating for pluralism, (4) educating for cross-cultural competence, (5) educating for awareness and (6) educating for social action. Educating for cross-cultural competence takes educating for pluralism one step further in requiring that students attain the knowledge and skills necessary to function in both their own and other’s culture” (Castagno,2009, p. 46). Educating for awareness “emphasizes increased understanding of power, privileges, and oppression within and between groups. Students should learn to question the status quo and current social relations of power and to “recognize racism, sexism, homophobia, and oppression in all it

various forms” (Castagno 2009, p. 46). Castagno (2009) suggests that the only difference between educating for awareness and educating for social justice is that “educating for social justice requires that students act to effect social change” (p. 47).

Another theory of Multicultural Education is that it’s a field of study and an emerging discipline whose major aim is to create equal educational opportunities for diverse student populations. The Multicultural Education model (Banks, 2009) contains five characteristic and goals: *Equity Pedagogy, Empowering School Culture, Prejudice Reduction, Knowledge Construction* and *Content Integration*. Each of these characteristics and goals work to implement programs so teachers and administrators can become “knowledgeable about diverse groups and democratic attitudes and values” (Banks 2010, p. 19). The effective implementation of Multicultural Education should “encompass methods, strategies, philosophies and perspectives in educating for diversity, social justice and equity” (Banks, 2010, p. 20).

### *Multicultural Education Approaches in Public Schools*

Most public schools still practice the contributive or additive curriculum approach to Multicultural Education. In the contributive approach to curriculum, “ethnic content is limited primarily to special days, weeks and months related to ethnic events and celebrations” (Banks (2002, p. 73). The curriculum focuses on the male Anglo-Saxon perspective, White historians

writing White histories for textbook publications. The intent of the “additive” approach was to infuse other ethnic or cultures into the male Anglo-Saxon perspectives of history. One problem with the additive approach was that the curriculum was still skewed toward the male Anglo-Saxon perspectives. For example, a unit on “The Westward Movement” of European Americans incorporated the Lakota Indians into the curriculum but from a male Anglo-Saxon perspective, not the Lakota Indian perspective. The additive approach failed to help students “to view society from diverse cultural and ethnic perspectives and to understand the ways in which the histories and cultures are inextricably bound” (Banks, 2002, p. 74).

The transformative approach or culturally responsive pedagogic approach allows students to view concepts from various perspectives. Culturally responsive pedagogy is a transformative approach to educating students by “infusing various perspectives, frames of reference, and content from various groups that will extend students’ understandings of the nature, development, and complexity of U.S. society” (Banks, 2005, p. 74). Howard (2006) states that “transformationist teachers are passionate and vigilant in their efforts to expand the arena of their own personal and political consciousness” and to “create schools that are worthy of students and compatible with the highest values of pluralistic democracy” (p. 136).

Culturally responsive pedagogy asserted by many researchers is an effective means of meeting the needs of diverse student populations, especially

those students who struggle: African Americans and Latino (Howard, 2003). Multicultural Education seeks a thorough understanding of what particular awareness, knowledge, and skills are needed to work with diverse student populations. It includes more concrete practice-based understanding of what is meant by multicultural competence. Even though attention has been given to the development of Multicultural Education and multicultural curriculum, less attention has been given to preparing prospective teachers to become multiculturally competent in terms of their effectiveness in improving education e.g., teaching strategies, literature, and classroom practices.

### *Cultural Models*

Diverse student populations face a cultural disadvantage because of their culture. According to Manning and Baruth (2009) these cultural disadvantages are: “cultural deficit model”, “cultural mismatch model” and “culturally different model” (p. 47). The “cultural deficit” model views diverse students as “deprived and disadvantaged only because their behavior, language and customs are different” from middle class values (Manning & Baruth, 2009, p. 47). The “cultural deficit” model does not address “cultural biases that shape negative perceptions and inhibit the understanding of the roles of socio-political forces” (Manning & Baruth, 2009 p. 47).

The “cultural mismatch model” views “cultures as inherently different, but not necessarily superior or inferior to one another” (Manning & Baruth,

2009, p. 47). The assumption of the “mismatch model” is “people from culturally different backgrounds fail to achieve academically because their cultural traits do not match those of the dominant culture reflected in schools” (Manning & Baruth, 2009, p.47).

Cultural compatibility is necessary for teachers and students to become aware of each other. The “culturally different” model recognizes “differences as strengths that are valuable and enriching to schools and society as a whole” (Manning & Baruth, 2009, p. 47). Prospective teachers’ perspective of the “cultural models” helps to determine their “beliefs toward learners and their own instructional practices” (Manning & Baruth, 2009, p. 46).

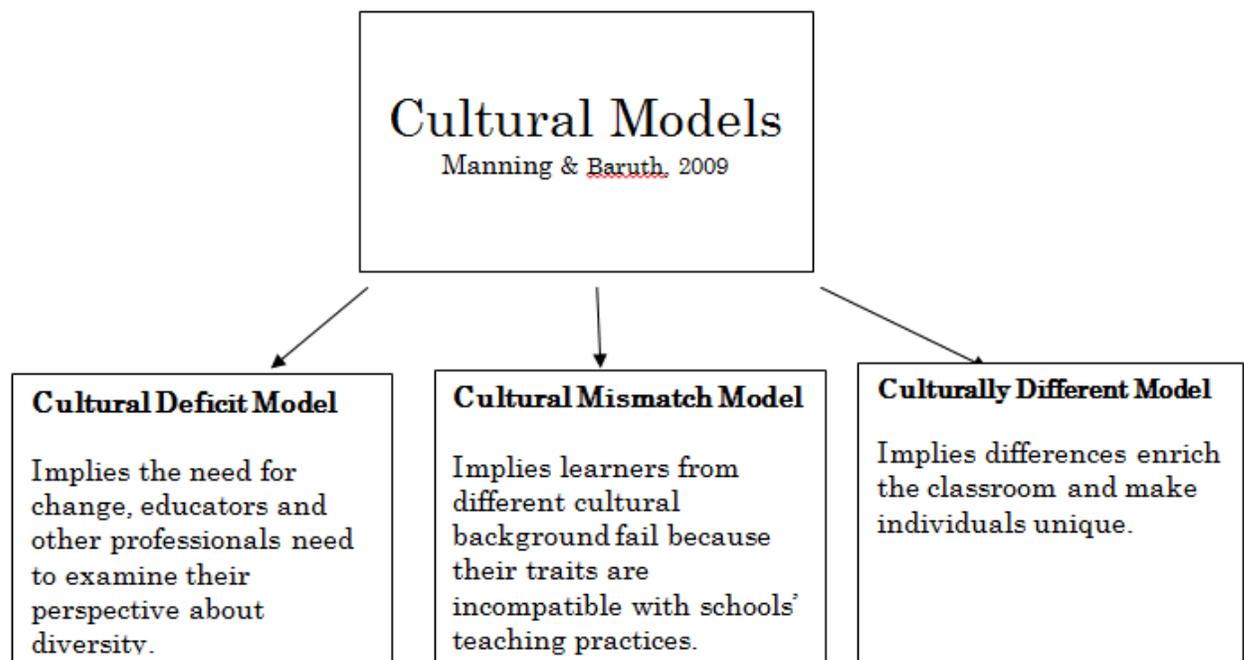


Figure 1: Cultural Models (Manning & Baruth, 2009)

### *Current Views*

Jenks, Lee and Kanpol (2001) stipulate “in fact, in suburban schools, in which the population is basically white and middle-class, Multicultural Education is often viewed as unnecessary” (p. 87). In more affluent and predominately white schools, teachers are usually unprepared to teach Multicultural Education; the contention is that Multicultural Education is only important in school districts with diverse student populations (Jenks, Lee & Kanpol, 2001). Multicultural Education’s aim is to “develop cross-cultural competency within the American national culture, with their own subculture and within and across different sub-societies and cultures” (Banks, 1994, p. 9). However, if the teacher is not “cross-culturally competent the students will not be” (Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol, 2001, p. 88).

## Teacher Beliefs and Diversity

### *Teacher Beliefs Defined*

Richardson (2003) defined teachers’ beliefs as “psychologically held understandings, premises or propositions about the world that are felt to be true” (p.2). Teachers’ beliefs according to Nespor (1987) were defined as “attitudes and values that form an individual’s belief system”. Kagan (1992) defined prospective teachers’ personal beliefs as assumptions. These assumptions affect how the prospective teacher views diverse student’s learning, and the subject matter to be taught. Milner (2005) defined beliefs as a form of deficit thinking which results in “inaccurate, incorrect, and harmful perceptions”

(p. 771). The definition of beliefs I used for this study is defined as “psychologically held understandings, premises or propositions about the world that are felt to be true” (Richardson, 2003, p. 2).

Pajares (1992) suggests beliefs travel in “disguise and often under alias”- judgments, attitudes, values, opinions, ideology, and perception. Beliefs can be deeply personal, rather than universal, and unaffected by persuasion” (p.309). Chester and Beaudin (1996) states prospective teachers’ beliefs are interceded by the “teacher’s age, prior experience and school practices”. Beliefs about teaching, which include awareness about what it takes to be a successful teacher, are “formed before a student enters the teacher education program” (Pajares, 1992). Fang (1996) suggests beliefs can be personified in the teacher’s convictions of his/her students’ performance, or in teachers’ theories about a particular subject area. Gay (2010) argued “racial, ethnic, and cultural beliefs” are always present in shaping teachers’ perceptions. Alexander, Schallert and Hare (1991) deemed that beliefs and knowledge includes all that a “person knows or believes to be true”, whether or not it is substantiated as true in some sort of objective or divergent way.

Causey, Thomas and Armento (2000) suggest that prospective teachers entered into teacher education programs with varied beliefs. One belief is ‘optimistic individualism’--the certainty of victory over any obstacle through hard work and individual endeavors (Nieto, 1998). Another is ‘absolute democracy’-- believing ‘kids are kids’ regardless of their cultural background.

Also some prospective teachers “enter with ‘naïve egalitarianism’--believing each person is created equal, should have access to equivalent resources, and should be treated equally” (Causey, et al, 2000, p. 34).

Beliefs are characteristics of how prospective teachers teach diverse student populations. Silverman’s (2007) investigation revealed that in addition to positive attitudes—beliefs about “knowledge and learning are essential” for all teachers. Prospective teacher’s beliefs influence how they teach and how they interact with diverse student populations. A body of research suggests teachers’ personal and professional beliefs drive instructional pedagogy (Richardson, 2003, Ertmer, 2005).

### *Teacher’s Personal Beliefs*

Many prospective teachers enter the teacher education program with personal beliefs, developed from their experiences, background and education. Prospective teacher’s personal beliefs which are at times, misguided, and resistant to change is supported by research (Kennedy, 1997, Richardson, 2003, Levin & He, 2008, Pinnegar & Hamilton, 2009). In 1997, Kennedy argued teachings that “challenge prospective teachers’ beliefs are often dismissed as theoretical, unworkable, or even simply wrong”. According to (Murrell & Foster, 2003) preparing prospective teachers to be successful in “racially and culturally diverse settings has meant contesting their racial bias and sense of race privilege” (p. 45). Racial, ethnic and “cultural attitudes and beliefs” are

profoundly significant in shaping prospective teacher's personal beliefs (Gay, 2010). Often prospective teacher's personal beliefs have overwhelming influences on their instructional judgments and teaching styles (Knopp & Smith, 2005, Gay, 2010).

### *Teacher's Professional Beliefs*

Prospective teacher's professional beliefs may also determine the ways in which prospective teachers understand and value what the academic educational faculty was attempting to teach. The prospective teacher's preferred teaching strategies in the classroom are often contrary to a commitment to diversity and Multicultural Education (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001).

Results from a study conducted by Milner, Flowers, Moore, Moore, and Flowers (2003) reported prospective teacher's professional beliefs were contrary to their personal beliefs. Milner, et al, (2003) states prospective teachers were: (1) "uncomfortable with people who had different values" (2) "felt uncomfortable with cross-cultural communication" (3) "agreed that students should be referred for testing if learning difficulties appeared to be based on cultural differences" and (4) were "neutral about integrating their learning environment" with programs that support Multicultural Education (p. 66). Whether prospective teachers actually change their professional "beliefs will depend on the impact that teacher education programs have on their prior knowledge and attitudes" (Jenks, Lee, Kanpol, 2001, p. 100).

## Teacher Preparation Programs

### *Research and Studies*

Several studies have been conducted on teacher preparation programs and preparing teachers to teach diverse student populations. These studies include: individual case studies (Garmon, 2004), action research study using autobiographical data (Clark & Medina, 2000) reflective narrative studies (Ladson-Billings, 1994, Larkin & Sleeter, 1995), and experimental research studies (Beck & Kosnik, 2001, Baldwin, Buchanan, & Rudisill, 2007). Research suggests that teacher preparation course work alone does not provide an adequate foundation for multicultural competencies.

Diverse student populations comprise seventy percent of the K-12 student population in urban schools (NEA, 2010). Those in teaching education programs are predominantly white, middle-class mono-lingual, female, and non urban (Milner 2009) and as a result there is a racial mismatch between teachers and students. Prospective teachers of color “do not necessarily bring more knowledge about pedagogical practices” than do White prospective teachers (Sleeter, 2001).

In 1979, National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) added Multicultural Education to the standards for all educational institutions that prepare prospective teachers for certification. In many universities, teacher education programs have required that prospective

teachers take Multicultural Education courses in accordance with NCATE. Currently, the implementation of Multicultural Education in most teacher education programs are fragmented and fail to seriously address issues of multiculturalism (Milner, Flowers, Moore, Moore, & Flowers, 2003). Reiter and Davis, (2011) suggests the increasing “student-teacher cultural mismatch leads to cultural and ethnic ignorance” which is potentially hazardous in the increasingly diverse classroom. While most teacher education programs have begun to acknowledge issues of diversity, they usually do so by requiring only one or two stand alone courses in Multicultural Education or electives that discuss cultural, ethnic or gender issues (Trueba & Bartolome, 2000). Although many teachers had one or more multicultural or cultural diversity courses during their teacher education preparation, they were often “resistant to commit” to or practice Multicultural Education (Brown, 2004).

White middle class teachers often “unjustly accept ability tracking, forms of traditional instruction that appeals to a narrow range of learning styles, and curricula that exclude contributions of minority groups” (Jenks, Lee & Kanpol, 2001, p. 88) . These teachers do not “believe that minority students are capable of learning high-level concepts or achieving excellence, subscribing, instead, to a compensatory skill-and-drill approach to learning” (Jenks, Lee & Kanpol, 2001, p. 88).

Understanding prospective teachers’ “beliefs about diversity is as important as how prospective teachers’ beliefs control their teaching judgments

in the classroom with all students” (Milner, 2005, p. 768). Teacher education programs provide the foundation in which these teachers teach. Prospective teacher’s lack of cross-cultural experiences has an overwhelming effect on how they approach teaching diverse student populations. When prospective teacher’s preconceived beliefs influence what they know about diverse student populations, these students are “systematically denied an equitable, socially just and cultural education” (Banks, 2004, p. 3).

### *Academic Educational Faculties*

The demographics of academic educational faculties are parallel to the demographics of teacher education students (Ladson-Billings, 2001). MacDonald, Colville-Hall and Smolen (2003) noted that 80% of the academic educational faculties were White and 63% have grown up in hegemonic communities. Very few of these academic educational faculties have had experience in teaching in urban schools (Ladson-Billings, 1999). Furthermore, the typical academic educational faculty has had fewer than five years’ experience in the K-12 classroom. Zeichner (1996, 2003.) states that most academic educational faculty “lack interracial and intercultural experiences” as well. Stanley (2006) reported that academic educational faculties themselves “are not all that comfortable” with Multicultural Education.

Predominately White institutions that prepare prospective teachers are “inhospitable to faculties of color” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002b). Academic

educational faculties, particularly those faculties of color who teach in predominately White universities or colleges are often “silenced”. In many institutions, academic educational faculties of color state, “their silenced state is a burdensome cycle that is rarely broken” (Stanley, 2006, p. 700). Often this silence is upheld by their White colleagues who are afraid “to speak truth to power or stand up for faculty[ies] of color when they observe behaviors that are racist, sexist, xenophobic, or omophobic” (Stanley, 2006, p. 701).

Faculties of color are often targeted to provide “diversity training” or become “diversity experts”. Stanley (2006) states although academic educational faculties of color “hesitate to serve the university and local communities as ‘diversity experts’, they do so because they know that if they do not, the diversity voice gets lost at the table” (p. 704).

Some academic educational faculties may “inadvertently undermine the educational impact of diversity” (Chang, 2002). This undermining of “institutional change and commitment” (Chang, 2002) may alter the benefits associated with diversity. Sleeter (2001) states many universities and colleges are unfriendly to faculties of color. One problem for academic educational faculties of color is the challenge to authority by students in their courses. Faculties of color who teach multicultural courses or incorporate multiculturalism into the courses often face resistance from White students. These resistances come in the form of “silence”, “disrespect to the faculty”, or

“threats of reporting” (Stanley, 2006) to other academic faculty or administrators.

Scholars of Multicultural Education have long proposed using “multiple ethnic perspectives as an instructional strategy” which can and should be implemented by academic educational faculties (Gay, 2010). Prospective teachers and academic educational faculties have “different views about ethnic, racial, and diversity” as curricula content (Gay, 2010) and or instructional practices. Prospective teachers struggle to comprehend how diversity impacts teaching and learning. Based on research and past experiences, White male and female Anglo-Saxton prospective teachers have a mistrust and an reluctance to consider other perspectives (Howard 2006).

### Summary of Literature Review

Prospective teachers’ attitudes and beliefs are as important as what they teach and how they teach. Teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about diversity and their chosen teaching strategies in the classroom are often dissimilar to a commitment to diversity and Multicultural Education (Cochran-Smith & Fries, 2001). Prospective teachers enter the teacher education program with erroneous beliefs about diverse student populations. The background, life experiences, language, family and socio-economic status of prospective teachers tend to validate these erroneous beliefs.

Academic educational faculties who teach prospective teachers are predominately White, heterosexual and are often unprepared to teach Multicultural Education or diversity courses (Smolen, et al 2006). Academic education faculties “tend to have limited international experiences and lacked cross-cultural experiences” (Smolen, et al 2006, p. 59). Johnson and Inoue (2003) assert academic educational faculties often felt “they lacked the skills and/or knowledge” themselves to teach Multicultural Education. According to Smolen, et al (2006) given the “gap between the COE [College of Education] faculty perceptions about the importance of diversity training and the COE faculty perceptions about the actual implementation, it is likely that piecemeal efforts to prepare candidates to teach culturally diverse students will be doomed to failure” (p. 56).

Educators on all levels--university and college, secondary, elementary and preschool must move toward affirmation, solidarity and critique. “Affirmation, solidarity and critique” are based on the “premise that the most powerful learning results when students work and struggle with one another, even if it is sometimes difficult and challenging” (Nieto 2002, p. 15). In order for educator’s pedagogy to contribute to educational equity and social justice, educators need to ban together and make their voices heard. Prospective teachers must teach their students to be reflective and social activists. Diverse student populations need to understand that they are the new history of society and understand how they fit into society.

## CHAPTER 3

### METHODOLOGY

The purpose of this mixed-methods inquiry was to ascertain prospective teachers' multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes and beliefs about Multicultural Education. For the purposes of this research, prospective teachers are defined as teachers who are in their final year of course work in their teacher education programs. Prospective teachers in their final year of course work had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year. The study researched the questions: (1) what are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers during their final year of course work in a teacher education program (2) what are the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers about Multicultural Education, and finally, (3) how are prospective teachers prepared to teach diverse student populations in their teacher education programs?

This chapter provides a discussion of the research design and procedures that were utilized and the rationale for the selected procedures. First, I specify the rationale for selecting the mixed method (quantitative/qualitative) approach and the theoretical traditions that drove the research process. Second, I describe the design of the study including the research site, sampling technique and participant selection. Third, I describe the procedures and timeline of the study. Fourth, I discuss the data collection and sources to include survey and

interviews. Finally, I review the limitations, validity, and reliability of the study.

### Introspection of the Study

Because I was interested in how well teachers were prepared to teach Multicultural Education I became interested in an instrument that would measure the level of multicultural knowledge, awareness and skills of prospective teachers. After searching many online sources I discovered a Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills Survey (MAKSS) for educators that was developed by D'Andrea., M., Daniels, J., & Noonan, M. J. (2003), entitled "New developments in the assessment of multicultural competence". The survey instrument was published in D. B. Pope-Davis, H. L. K. Coleman, W. M. Liu, & R. L. Toporek (Eds.), *Handbook of Multicultural Competencies in Counseling and Psychology* (2003) (pp. 154-168). A decision was made after reviewing many of the possible surveys to use the MAKSS Form-T because there are significant similarities between the roles of teachers and counselors.

According to Whetstone (1965) the similarities between counselors and teachers are varied. Counselors, like teachers must develop a personal relationship with children. There must be a mutual relationship in order for the child (ren) to progress successfully. Both counselors and teachers must develop

a helping relationship with child (ren), which may consist of one or more counselors and or one or more teachers.

Requests asking permission to use teacher education program for a study in Multicultural Education were emailed to eight universities in the Midwest region. Three universities consented to allow the study to be conducted in their teacher education program. The three universities had distinct characteristics; they were rural, suburban and urban. After receiving permission from the Social Science Internal Review Board (SSIRB) of the University of Missouri-Kansas City, I began to correspond with staff members at the three participating universities. In order to facilitate gaining access to student teachers at the three universities, through email, I corresponded with, a Professor of Special Education, and an Associate Dean of the College of Education at University One, an Administrative Specialist at University Two and an Administrative Specialist and one staff member in the Office of Institutional Review Board at University Three. These email exchanges allowed me to develop a professional relationship with these contacts.

### *Researcher's Biases*

To understand this researcher's biases, several questions were asked and answered:

1. What meaning was really communicated by the interviewee? Did the interviewee answer all questions the way the interviewer wanted them

answered or were the interviewee repeating what was taught in the course work?

2. What were the experiences of the participants? What could be the underlying unanswered question?
3. Could the interpretative codes be more reflective of the transcript?
4. Were there conclusions other than those the researcher derived from the data? Had the researcher identified other possible interpretations?
5. Had the participant really experienced the phenomenon under study (Creswell, 2007)?
6. What context or situations have typically influenced or affected the experience or the phenomenon? (Creswell, 2007)

According to Creswell (2007), it is important in phenomenology studies to understand your own experiences with the phenomena under study. Moustakas (1994) suggests the researcher set aside his/her experience, (called *epoche* or bracketing) as much as possible, to take a fresh perspective toward the phenomenon under study. Moustakas (1994) suggests the researcher:

1. Remain objective by employing objective personnel to analyze the data and reduce the information into significant statements or quotes.
2. Next, develop a textural description of the phenomenon and what he/she experienced.
3. Finally, develop a combination of the textural and structural descriptions to convey an overall essence of the phenomenon.

## Design of the Study

It has been argued that qualitative or quantitative inquiry alone does not provide the needed insight into prospective teachers' attitudes and experiences in their teacher education program (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2004, Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). The survey inquiry (quantitative) provided descriptive statistics on Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills of prospective teachers. To really understand prospective teachers' attitudes and beliefs about Multicultural Education, interviewing participants, i.e. gathering qualitative data, was needed. Combining the two approaches aided in providing "descriptions" of the phenomenon.

### *Rational for Mixed-Methods Research*

A significant feature of mixed-methods research is its methodological multiplicity which often results in exceptional research compared to singular method research (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004). Mixed-methods research design was first used by Campbell & Fiske in 1959 as "multiple operationism." Recent research has been published in Creswell (2003), Tashakkori and Teddlie (2003) and Johnson and Christensen (2004). Mixed-methods design research is becoming essential in interdisciplinary dissertations. Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004) argue that mixed-methods research can compete with "epistemological

and paradigmatic methods” because “epistemological and paradigmatic methods” can progress educational research, so that more efficient research can be conducted. Mixed-methods research uses a “method and philosophy that attempts to fit together” the understandings provided by “qualitative and quantitative research” into a practicable solution (Johnson & Onwuegbuzie, 2004, p. 19).

### *Methodological Framework for the Study*

Mixed-methods research can help bridge the gap between “quantitative” and “qualitative” research (Onwuegbuzie & Leech, 2004). Some strengths of “mixed-methods” research according to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie, (2004, p.21):

1. Words, pictures, and narrative can be used to add meaning to numbers.
2. Numbers can be used to add precision to words, pictures, and narrative.
3. Can provide quantitative and qualitative research strengths.
4. Can answer broader and more complete range of research questions because it is not confined to a single method or approach.
5. Can use the strengths of an additional method to overcome the weaknesses in another method by using both in a research study.
6. Can provide stronger evidence for a conclusion through convergence and collaboration of findings.

Quantitative design employs descriptive statistics (participants measured), to establish a correlation between variables in analyzing and reporting findings. Descriptive statistics was defined as a mathematical technique for organizing and summarizing a set of numerical data (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007). According to Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p. 19) some strengths of quantitative research are:

1. Data collection using some quantitative methods is relatively quick (e.g. telephone interviews, etc.).
2. It provides precise, quantitative, numerical data.
3. Data analysis is relatively less time consuming (using statistical software).
4. The research results are relatively independent of the researcher (e.g., effect size, statistical significance).
5. It may have higher credibility with many people in power (e.g., administrators, politicians, people who fund programs).
6. It is useful for studying large numbers of people.

Qualitative research begins with assumptions, a worldview, and the inquiring into the meaning individuals or groups attribute to a social or human problem (Creswell, 2007, p. 37). Qualitative researchers seek answers to questions that determine how “social experience is created and given meaning” (Denzin & Lincoln, 1994). When conducting qualitative research, a strong “ontological relativistic claim” (frame of reference) is important. The

“ontological relativistic claim” should reflect multiple perspectives, opinions and or beliefs of individuals who experienced the phenomenon.

Johnson and Onwuegbuzie (2004, p. 20) state the strengths of qualitative research are:

1. Data based on the participants’ own categories of meaning.
2. Useful for studying limited number of cases in depth.
3. Useful for describing complex phenomena.
4. Provides individual case information.
5. Can conduct cross-case comparisons and analysis.
6. Provides understanding and descriptions of people’s personal experiences of phenomena (i.e. “emic” or insider’s viewpoint).
7. Can describe, in rich detail, phenomena as they are situated and embedded in local contexts.

In quantitative research, -closed-ended surveys, experimental designs, scores on instruments, and frequency and magnitudes of trends, provide data about the study. With qualitative, open-ended questions, observations or archival data, or face-to-face interviews provide different perspectives and a complex view of the issues being investigated. Mixed-methods research can be employed to “build on the strengths of both approaches” (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2011).

This researcher chose to use a mixed-methods inquiry to examine and describe prospective teacher’s multicultural competence and attitudes and

beliefs about Multicultural Education. The quantitative data only provided a numerical assessment of the three subscales of Multicultural Education: awareness, knowledge and skills; while the qualitative data provided “rich descriptions” of the phenomenon of prospective teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about Multicultural Education. The complementary mixed-methods inquiry used quantitative survey with a phenomenological inquiry and was subjected to heuristic inquiry.

The use of both survey and interview questions make this mixed-methods study acceptable for research. A mixed-methods design (qualitative to supplement the quantitative-correlational design) was used to provide a more cohesive description of prospective teachers’ attitudes and beliefs about Multicultural Education and their multicultural competencies.

### Knowledge Paradigm and Theoretical Traditions

#### *Phenomenology and Pragmatism*

The knowledge paradigm that shaped this quantitative and heuristic phenomenological inquiry was pragmatism. In pragmatism, focus may be on: actions, situations, problem being studied and/or consequences of inquiry (Creswell, 2007). For this study, the focus was on the multicultural competence of prospective teachers in their final year of teacher preparation.

Creswell (2007) cites Cherryholmes’ (1992) and Murphy’s (1990) views on pragmatism (p.23):

1. Pragmatism is not committed to any one system of philosophy and reality.
2. Individual researchers have a freedom of choice to choose the methods, techniques and procedures of research that best meets their needs and purposes.
3. Pragmatists do not see the world as an absolute. Mixed-methods researchers look to many approaches to collecting and analyzing data rather than subscribing to only one way (quantitative or qualitative).
4. Truth is what works at the time; it is not based on a dualism between reality independent of the mind or within the mind.
5. Pragmatist researchers look to the “what” and “how” of research based on its intended consequences—where they want to go with it.

### *Theoretical Traditions*

Theoretical traditions may be defined as a spotlight; they are used to illuminate what you see (Maxwell, 2005) by drawing attention to particular events or phenomena. The worldview of “pragmatism” was chosen to shape the theoretical traditions—phenomenological and heuristic inquiry. The theoretical traditions themselves sought answer to the question: What are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers? With heuristic inquiry and phenomenological research, it was possible to visualize

how prospective teacher's personal and professional attitudes and beliefs about Multiculturalism were influenced.

A phenomenological study "is a paradigm, philosophy or a perspective and is sometimes combined with heuristic inquiry" (Patton, 1990). The phenomenon being experienced may be an "emotion (loneliness, jealousy, or anger), a program, an organization, or a culture" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007).

Phenomenological inquiry focuses on the question "What is the structure and essence of this phenomenon for these people" (Creswell & Plano Clark, 2007)?

The basic purpose of phenomenological study is to summarize experiences of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon under study –"grasp the very nature of the thing" (Van, Manen, 1990, p. 177). In phenomenology, the researcher collects data from persons who have experienced the phenomenon, develops a composite description of the essence of the experience for all the individuals, and reports "what" was experienced and "how" it was experienced (Moustakas, 1994).

Heuristic inquiry has strong roots in humanistic psychology (Maslow, 1956, Polanyi 1962, and Rogers 1979, 1980, 1985). Heuristic inquiry is derived from, but different from, phenomenology in many ways (Douglas & Moustakas, 1985). Heuristic inquiry brings to the forefront the personal experiences and insights of the researcher (Patton, 2002). Douglas and Moustakas (1985) state heuristic inquiry emphasizes connectedness and relationship, leads to depictions of essential means and the search to know. Heuristic inquiry ends with a

creative synthesis that includes the researcher's perception and implied understandings while participants remain visible in the examination of the data and continue to be portrayed as whole persons (Patton, 2002, p. 108). The use of "heuristic inquiry" (Moustakas, 1994) was employed to:

1. Focus on the wholeness of experience rather than just measurements and explanations.
2. Obtain descriptions of the phenomenon through first-person accounts using formal and informal conversations and interviews.
3. To formulate questions that reflects interest, involvement, and personal commitment of the researcher.

## Research Design

### SSIRB Approval

After the research proposal was approved by the dissertation committee, a research application was submitted to the university's Social Sciences Institutional Review Board (SSIRB). The academia in SSIRB carefully reviewed the participant recruitment scripts, conceptual framework, research design regarding site, sampling methods, data collection, participant's consent and protection. When all the necessary precautions were made to protect the participants, the SSIRB approved this dissertation design (Protocol # SS10-93e) on January 24, 2011 (Appendix 1).

## Research Site

The participants for this study were from three Midwest university teacher education programs. The petitions were emailed to eight universities in the Midwest, requesting permission to use their university teacher education program in a study involving Multicultural Education. Three universities consented to allow prospective teachers in their final year of course work for the 2010-2011 academic school year to participate in the study. Prospective teachers in their final year of course work had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum.

Each university was identified by an identification number assigned by the researcher. Each university served students who were: graduates or undergraduates, full and part-time and who live on and off campus.

**University One** is a suburban university, located in a community with a population of 17,000.

- Total University Student Enrollment-11,063 undergraduate and graduate students.
- Programs of Study-150 programs of study leading to an associate's degree, certificate, bachelor's degree, master's degree, education specialist degree, or cooperative doctorate.

- Teacher Education Programs-Over 27 teacher certification areas offered at the bachelor's and master's level.

**University Two** is an urban university, located in a community with a population of 441,545

- Total University Student Enrollment- 14,818 undergraduate and graduate students
- Programs of Study- Over 150 programs of study leading to bachelor's degree, master's degree, education specialist degree or cooperative doctorate.
- Teacher Education Program-Over 25 teacher certification areas offered at the bachelor's degree, master's degree level.

**University Three** is a rural university, located in a community with a population of 157,630

- Total University Student Enrollment- 16,685 undergraduates and graduate students
- Programs of study- Over 100 programs of study leading to certification, bachelor's degree, masters' degree, education specialist degree or doctorate
- Teacher Education Program-Over 27 certification areas offered at the master' level.

## Participants

To obtain a sample population for the MAKSS Form-T survey and interview process, a link was provided in an email with an attached flyer that was submitted to each university's teacher education program staff member. The eligible population of students attending the three universities was 604. These students were graduates and undergraduates, full or part-time, and lived on campus or off campus. The sampling population were prospective teachers in their final year of course work, had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year. At University One, there were 237 prospective teachers, University Two had 142 and from University Three 225 for a total of 604 prospective teachers that were eligible to participate in the study.

## Sampling Techniques

Convenience sampling was used to obtain a sample for the survey and interview process. Fifty-nine respondents volunteered to participate in the online survey (Table 4) and eleven respondents accepted the interview request (Table 5). The study used a convenience sampling strategy based on availability.

Staff and administrative assistants from the three universities teacher education programs used a ListServ to notify eligible candidates through email. Once the participants opened the email, he or she was invited to participate in the survey or interview request. In order to access the survey or interview, the participant clicked on the survey or interview link. Clicking on either link opened an Informed Consent Form.

The initial proposal asked for demographics for the survey and interview respondents. After careful thought, the researcher changed the criteria for the survey takers, so they would feel more comfortable taking the survey. It was also felt that the anonymity would yield a larger response.

In order to be considered for the interview portion of the study, the participant was asked to provide an email address and name along with their race, gender and university's name. Participants had the option of participating in one, both or no part of the survey and or interview. To ensure anonymity, only the interview participants were required to submit their race, university name and gender. Survey respondents only needed to consent to participate in the survey.

1. On February 1, 2011, the links for the survey and interview were made available to the staff of the three universities teacher education programs to be distributed to eligible candidates through email solicitation.

2. Contact was made once monthly to contact person at the three universities through email.
3. The survey link (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/L5CCQQY>) opened Survey Consent Form and the interview link (<http://www.surveymonkey.com/s/P75XP7K>) opened the Interview Consent Form. Participants must select “yes” on the Consent Form in order to enter the survey and/or interview request. A selection of “no” on either consent form closed out the survey or interview request.
4. On June 1, 2011, the survey data and interview request data was downloaded from source.
5. The survey data was entered into Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS Inc.) for analyzing for descriptive statistics.
6. The interview data was downloaded and emails were sent to all participants who provided email address, name, gender and university.

### *Survey Sampling Techniques*

The sampling population for the three universities teacher education programs were all students in their final year of their teacher education program (n=604). Of those eligible candidates from the three university teacher education programs, 59 or 10% of 604 eligible candidates volunteered to participate in the survey. Using the sampling technique discussed above and preliminary screening of data analysis, 17 were incomplete and therefore

unusable, and six were later deleted as statistical outliers in the data set, resulting in the final pool of 36 respondents (Table 1).

Table 1:

Survey Respondents

		Number	Percent of Total Survey Respondents
	Valid	36	61
	Excluded <sup>a</sup>	23	39
	Total	59	100

Listwise deletion based on all variables in the data.

*Interview Sampling Technique*

Eleven participants of the 604 eligible candidates initially elected to be interviewed. Of the eleven, two respondents did not provide any contact information. Nine emails were sent out requesting participation in the interview request (Table 2), only four participants consented to be interviewed. One participant finally decided not to be interviewed after numerous phone calls, emails and texts. Three prospective teachers volunteered to be interviewed.

The first respondent to be interviewed was a White female from University One. A Black male from University Two was interviewed second and a White male from University One was the third interviewee. The study was designed to sample one participant from each university. Since University One

had a predominance of White females based on enrollment data, the criteria was for one White female. University Two had a significantly larger number of Blacks, so the criteria was for one Black participant, preferably female, and University Three had a predominance of White males, so the criteria was for one White male. The eleven respondents and their responses to the interview process are identified in Table 2: Interview Respondent.

Table 2:  
Interview Respondent

Respondent	Race	Gender	University	Reason
1	Caucasian	Male	University Three	Yes/No Response
2	Caucasian	Female	University Three	Yes/No Response
3	Caucasian	Female	University Three	Yes/No Response
4	Caucasian	Male	University Three	No email address
5	Caucasian	Male	University One	Yes/Interviewed
6	Caucasian	Female	University One	Yes/Interviewed
7	Black	Male	University Two	Yes/Interviewed
8	Caucasian	Female	University Three	Yes/Declined
9	Black	Female	University Two	Yes/No Response
10	Caucasian	Female	University Three	Yes/No Response
11	Unknown	Unknown	Chose not to participate	Yes/Unknown

## Data Collection

On June 1, 2011, the survey and interview data were downloaded from the source. Eleven respondents consented to be interviewed; two respondents chose not to participate in the interview request by not providing email addresses. Nine emails were sent to the respondents to make sure they were still interested in participating in the interview request.

Next, the quantitative data was downloaded and entered into SPSS. Fifty-nine surveys were collected and entered into SPSS. A preliminary analysis was conducted to determine usable data. After preliminary analysis, 23 were usable. The survey data was statistically analyzed to produce histograms and frequency distribution tables for each subscale, which produced the following statistics: the mean, median, mode, minimum, maximum, first and third quartiles, standard deviation, and 95% confidence intervals of the mean.

Of the eleven respondents who initially consented to be interviewed, five were males and six were females. Five respondents were from University Three, two were from University Two and two were from University One and two respondents did not provide any information. Of those nine that were queried to see if they still wanted to participate; only four replied. Two email responses were received from University One, a White female and one White male. One email was received from University Two, a Black male, and from University

Three, a White female. The four potential interviewees were contacted by phone to set up interview times during the first week of June. After numerous emails, phone calls and texts, the female from University Three respectfully declined to participate in the interview. The final number of interviewees that volunteered to participate in the interview process was three.

The first interview took place on June 4, 2011, with the White female from University One at the public library. The interview lasted approximately 60 minutes. The second interview took place June 7, 2011, with the Black male from University Two at the same public library. This interview lasted approximately 50 minutes. The third interview took place on June 8, 2011, with the White male from University One on the university campus. This interview lasted approximately 60 minutes.

To summarize, the data collections consisted of 36 MAKSS Form-T surveys and three interviews. Both the interview data and survey data was collected on June 1, 2011. The data from the online source for the interviews was downloaded first followed by the survey information. In the following sections, the researcher discusses the approach for data analysis and interpretation.

### Types of Data and Data Collection Procedures

A mixed-methods inquiry is a practical solution to the tensions created in the research community concerning the use of a singular method quantitative or

qualitative (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007). The data for this mixed-study was obtained from surveys and interviews. The use of an online survey provided easy access to all eligible candidates. The links were provided in the flyer that was emailed to all eligible candidates by the staff of the three university teacher education programs. The university teacher education staff and administrators used a Listserv to contact all eligible candidates who met the criteria: prospective teachers in their final year of course work had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year.

### *Survey*

The purposes of surveys are to produce statistics that are quantitative or numerical descriptions about some aspects of the study populations. Gall, Gall, and Borg's book (2007) describes a survey as a "method of data collection using questionnaires or interviews to collect data from a sample that has been selected to represent a population to which the findings of the data analysis can be generated" (p. 230). Most surveys collect information by asking people questions. Generally information is collected on about a fraction of the population, a sample, rather than from every member of the population (Fowler, 2009, p. 7).

Special-purpose surveys have become a prevalent part of American life since 1930. These surveys provide data to fill information gaps. There are three major survey techniques: the measurement of public opinion, political perception

and market research. Each type is aimed at tapping the subjective feelings of the public.

The survey presented three different concerns: sampling, designing question, and data collection which were all essential to a good survey design. Every survey involves a number of decisions that have the potential to enhance or detract from the accuracy of survey estimates. The design of a survey involved a set of decisions to optimize the use of resources which are generalized to the public. The survey chosen for the study was the Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills Form-T (MAKSS Form-T, D'Andrea, Daniels, & Noonan, 2003).

The MAKSS Form-T is a 41 item Likert Scale which, is a “psychometric scale commonly used in questionnaires” (Albaum, 1997), and is widely used in survey questionnaires. The MAKSS Form-T contains three subscales: multicultural awareness, multicultural knowledge and multicultural skills. The scale options were from 1 to 4. A response of 1 indicated “Very Limited,” 2 indicated “Limited,” 3 indicated “Good,” and 4 indicated “Very Good”. The reverse code items were designed to decrease socially desirable responses. The MAKSS Form-T was used to assess the multicultural competency of prospective teachers. The rationale for using a survey was its descriptive abilities (Appendix B).

The MAKSS Form-T has been used in previous studies; to date one other study has been documented using the MAKSS Form-T (D'Andrea et al, 2003).

Several researchers have developed a number of instruments designed to assess counseling practitioners' and trainees' multicultural competence. One such measurement was the Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey-Counselor Education (MAKSS-CE) (D'Andrea, Daniels, & Heck, 1991). The rationale for selecting the MAKSS Form-T was that it was similar in content to the MAKSS-CE which contains items common to teachers. The MAKSS Form-T was derived from the MAKSS-CE, which was a 60 item survey. The MAKSS Form -T was first used by D'Andrea, Daniels & Noonan in 2003.

The survey was published in Pope-Davis, Coleman, Liu & Toporek (Eds.) 2003, *Handbook of Multicultural Competencies in Counseling and Psychology* (pp 154-168). This survey was administered through an online source. The link was provided in the flyer attached to the email that went to the Administrative Assistants or contact person at each university teacher education program. This solicitation was then disseminated to the eligible participants according to the design of the study.

### *Interview*

The purpose of interviews were to describe the "rich descriptions" of prospective teachers and their attitudes and beliefs about Multicultural Education. Clandinin and Connelly (2000) suggest collecting data from interviews and personal stories and McCracken (1988) used in-depth interviews. The importance of interviewing is to describe the phenomenon for a small

number of individuals who have experienced it (Creswell, 2007). The purpose of the interviews was to use a standardized open-ended interview approach, which required carefully wording each question before the interview (Creswell, 2007). The interview was highly focused so that the interviewee's time was used effectively.

The types of questions used were opinion and value questions also questions related to knowledge and background. Opinion and values questions are defined as questions aimed at understanding the cognitive and interpretive processes of peoples' opinions, judgments, and values (Creswell, 2007). Knowledge questions inquired about the respondent's factual information--what the respondent knows (Creswell, 2007). Background questions were used to acquire needed information to distinguish one interviewee from the other. The information requested during the interview request was: educational level, race, gender, age, and marital status.

### *Interview Protocol*

The purpose of the interviews in this study were to enable the researcher to describe the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers and their multicultural competencies. As the investigator, I wanted to understand prospective teachers' attitudes and beliefs about teaching Multicultural Education so I posed my first question to acquire the definition of Multicultural Education from each interviewee. This was a good starting point for the

interview protocol and helped set the tone of the interview. Two interviews took place in a public library and one interview took place on the university campus. Each interview lasted approximately 60 minutes.

All three interviews were recorded on an electronic recorder and were transcribed on my personal computer. All transcriptions and recordings were stored in my advisors office to ensure confidentiality after documentation and analysis. The interview protocol below contained 12 questions. The first four questions were aligned with the MAKSS Form-T. Seven questions were focused on the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers and the last question sought information about the teacher education program (Appendix C).

### Data Analysis

On June 1, 2011, data was collected. Data analysis proceeded independently for both the quantitative and qualitative phases. First the qualitative data was downloaded from the data source, and emails were sent out to nine of the eleven participants who provided name, email address, gender, and university affiliation. Next, the quantitative data was downloaded and entered into SPSS. The reliance was on statistical descriptive analysis of the quantitative data. Using SPSS, the survey data was entered into the statistical program to produce histograms and frequency distribution tables for each subscale, which produced the following statistics: the mean, median, mode,

minimum, maximum, first and third quartiles, standard deviation, and 95% confidence intervals of the mean.

Scatter plots and Pearson correlations were used to measure the degree and direction for the relationship among the three subscales: awareness, knowledge, and skill. As a basic check for reliability and validity, Cronbach's alpha estimates were computed for each subscale score. All values were above .70, and comparable to D'Andrea, Daniels and Noonan's (2003) results of the same survey.

## Preliminary Analyses

### *Test of Statistical Assumptions*

Preliminary analyses of assumptions were examined to ensure quality of the data set. First, each variable was visually inspected for data entry errors, and histograms and scatter plots calculated by SPSS were checked to ensure all variables were in appropriate ranges and scanned for missing data.

Next, the data was analyzed for descriptive statistics: Mean, Standard Deviation, Minimum, Maximum, Kurtosis and Skewness. The skewness values were close enough to +/- 0 to use in the analysis, the underlying assumption was that the data came from a normally distributed population. High values of kurtosis often indicate that there are outliers in the distribution. Four had kurtosis values greater than +/-1. The data was analyzed and, seventeen respondents had out of range values for the Likert scale. The value for these

variables was “0” on a scale that ranged from “1” to “4”. These were deleted from the data set. Finally, the data set was analyzed using box and whisker plots to see if there were any outliers that deserved investigation. The box plot identified six extreme outliers (plotted with a star) which means they were three deviations above or below the mean; these were deleted, bringing the final count to 36 respondents. Thirty-six respondents were analyzed using SPSS (Tables 3.1, 3.2 and 3.3) from the MAKSS Form-T.

The interviews were transcribed and analyzed by the researcher and two coders using Qualitative Data Analysis (QDA). The quantitative data findings were reported separately from the qualitative data findings. The survey was based on Research Questions 1: What are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers during their final year of course work in a teacher education program? The interview data was utilized to answer the three research questions: (1) what are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers during their final year of course work in a teacher education program (2) what are the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers about Multicultural Education and (3) how are prospective teachers prepared to teach diverse student populations in their teacher education programs?

### *Steps to Analyzing Interview Transcriptions*

Two coders, colleagues of qualitative research, and researcher reviewed the research questions and interview transcripts to establish a code book. The two coders were first trained in the QDA process of “noticing,” “collecting,” and then “thinking.” During the QDA training process, the researcher and two coders established a list of code words and definitions that helped to establish the code book. The purpose of a code book is to analyze data into component parts, which helps to clarify meaning and provides “rich descriptions”.

1. The interview transcription document was read several times and hunches recorded in the right hand margin about meanings that were gleaned from the reading(s).
2. Initially descriptive coding was used and then the transcript was read for interpretive coding (Miles and Huberman, 1994) by labeling what was seen line-by-line or paragraph-by-paragraph. Descriptive coding does not require interpretation; a segment of text could contain descriptive codes and interpretive codes, with the latter containing more inferences related to its meaning.
3. As coding continued, the codes were placed in a code book we developed which provided an abbreviation and definition that is more than one or two words. The definitions were connected to the context of the data and the knowledge base (conceptual framework) of the study. Example: Cultural Characteristics (CUL-CHAR) – students have needs,

disabilities, exceptionalities, families, learning styles and are culturally different.

4. The codes were counted to determine frequency. By counting the frequency of codes, patterns emerged from the data. When all codes had been recorded the next step was to categorize the codes.

To summarize, at various steps in the QDA process, member checks were employed. Each interviewee participated in the follow-up interview, and reviewed the transcript for accuracy. To test for validity defined as the extent to which the researcher “uses methods and procedures” to guarantee a “high degree of research quality”, member checks were employed (Jorgensen, 1989). The quantitative data utilized: the mean, median, mode, standard deviation, central tendency, and interquartile range and correlation between the three subscales.

Phenomenology data included individual(s) “rich descriptions” (Patton, 2002). In quantitative and qualitative data the use of “rich descriptive data” and “descriptive mathematical data” (Creswell, 2007) takes the readers into the time and place of the study. It computes and communicates someone’s experiences of the world. The surveys in this study provided data to fill information gaps while interviews provided “rich descriptions.”

### Data Interpretation

In the data interpretation process for the survey, I wanted to understand the particular context within which the participants were operating on the

phenomenon in question “what are the multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills of prospective teachers.” I began the interpretation phase by using descriptive statistics to obtain the correlations between multicultural awareness and knowledge, multicultural awareness and skills, and multicultural knowledge and skills. The MAKSS Form-T was only used to answer question 1 of the research questions.

Interview data interpretation preceded as follows: Each coder was assigned a color: the researcher was assigned “yellow”, one coder was assigned “red” and the other coder was assigned “blue.” The colors were used by the coders to identify descriptive codes, followed by interpretative codes. The researcher and two coders coordinated interpretations, and/ or descriptions, as well as identified other data that could be relevant to the research. The statements and or quotes selection of the coder(s) was contingent on his/her knowledge and experience as an educator, and background in Black Studies. Afterwards, “rich descriptions” of the three interviews were used to answer the three research questions.

#### Credibility of Instrument

A separate Cronbach’s alpha reliability coefficient was calculated for each subscale: awareness, knowledge and skills. The Cronbach’s alpha levels were similar to D'Andrea, Daniels, and Noonan (2003). The reliability coefficients were .73 for awareness, .86 for knowledge and .93 for skills subscales (Pope-

Davis, et. al. 2003, p. 161). The Cronbach alphas for this study were Multicultural Awareness subscale .74, for Knowledge subscale .86 and for Skills subscale .92. A test of intercorrelation of all three subscales was also performed and resulted in the three subscales being related but distinct in terms of the global construct –multicultural competency. The Awareness/Knowledge Subscales were significant at  $r (df=34) = .645$ ,  $p < .01$ , two tailed. The Knowledge/Skills subscales were significant at  $r (df = 34) = .441$   $p < .01$ , two tailed, and Awareness/Skills subscales were significant  $r (df=34) = .706$ ,  $p < .01$ , two tailed. The analysis indicated a statistically strong significant positive relationship between the subscales.

Credibility of each interviewee (Patton, 2002) was established when the interviewee and researcher established a friendly rapport. Refining and checking the credibility of patterns that emerged from one interviewee tended to be common with the other interviews. Holloway (2005) suggests “credibility, trustworthiness and integrity” are based on the researcher-informant relationship. Throughout the interview process, the credibility of the interview was established by the participant’s use of a ‘clear robust voice’. All participants used a clearly moderate volume, little hesitancy, no undue fidgeting, nervous laughter or throat clearing.

## Limitations, Validity, and Reliability

### *Limitations*

One limitation was the biases during coding and analysis of the transcripts. The use of two other coders throughout the process helped to put the coding and analysis into perspective. Miles and Huberman (1994), suggest that the researcher could have biases or preconceptions about the selection of the data which could overshadow the research. A significant limitation was the use of anonymity in the survey. Anonymity was used in hopes of obtaining a larger sample size, and was necessary for the conduct of ethnical research proved to be a limitation. The sample size obtained, 36 respondents were not large enough to generalize to the population of prospective teachers. In quantitative research, a large sample size is warranted in order to have scores on the “measured variables that are representative of the population scores” (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007). This study sampled 6% or 36 eligible respondents of the entire population sample.

Also a limitation was the lack of racial demographics of the survey respondents. There was no way to measure the racial demographics of the survey data. Another limitation was the small number of interviewees, two interviewees from University One, was used instead of one interviewee from each university.

### *Validity*

To test for validity, defined as the extent to which the researcher “uses methods and procedures” that ensure a “high degree of research quality” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). The MAKSS Form-T has been reviewed for reliability and validity by D’Andrea et al, (2003). Also a Cronbach alpha was used to test for validity and reliability. The interview data test for validity, defined as the extent to which the researcher “uses methods and procedure” to guarantee a “high degree of research quality,” through data analysis common patterns emerged (Lincoln & Guba, 1985).

### *Reliability*

To establish interview reliability defined as, to the degree which other researchers would arrive at comparable results if they studied the same case using exactly the same measures as the first researcher (Lincoln, 1997), the investigator and two coders conducted multiple listenings of audio tape and read and re-read transcriptions.

If three coders were present for that descriptive code or interpretation, it was considered reliable data. Inter-rater reliability was established when the data was independently coded and each coder compared their results for agreement. The purpose was to gauge whether two people were seeing things differently because of different levels or perspectives of the whole which is more

complex than any single perspective. Coding was done in the “blind” with the coding staff conducting the analysis without knowledge of the expectations of the researcher. The researcher and coders used the QDA model (Qualitative Data Analysis) in recording and analyzing the data to establish inter-coder agreement (Creswell, 2007)

### Researcher as Instrument

Trustworthiness is the quality of investigation that is made noteworthy to the audience (Schwandt, 2007). The recordings were transcribed verbatim by the researcher and were reviewed by the interviewees for accuracy. Dependability resulted in timely response to the interview request and providing a confident and secure place for the interviews. Transcriptions were done in my home on my personal computer from the recorder. The transcription was stored on a disc and the disc and recorder were stored in my advisors office, in a locked secure file cabinet.

### Insider and Outsider

As an insider and outsider-emic/etic Moustakas (1994) suggest that the researcher should maintain openness toward new interpretations. In the process of analyzing the data I suspended or bracketed my preconceptions about the data under analysis. To focus on the “rich descriptions” –vivid and nested in a real framework with a sphere of truth, the data was organized into meaningful

and naturally occurring settings to identify the “rich descriptions” of the interviewee. As the outsider, Miles and Huberman (1994), suggest “setting boundaries and creating a frame” to help confirm or qualify the basic processes or construction that may “undergird the study”. The use of three interviews added confidence to the findings, because the researcher was able to document a range of similar and contrasting ideas and concepts.

### Validity and Reliability of Interview

The validity and reliability of the interview was consistent with Johnson’s methods of establishing trust, because participants were “knowledgeable, reliable and accurate” in describing events that are “usual, frequent and patterned” (1990). The interviewees were engaged in the process from the beginning—responding to the email to be interviewed to the end as “member checkers”. As member checkers, each interviewee participated in the follow-up interview and verified the reliability of the interview transcriptions. The interview questions (See Appendix C) were open-ended to understand the cognitive and interpretive processes of participant’s opinions and values. Background questions were asked to ascertain the status of the interviewee: educational level, race, gender, age and material status which helped to identify each participant. Each interviewee’s confidentiality was maintained throughout the interview process by conducting the interview in private, and the

transcription and analysis were known only to me, my colleagues who were coders and my advisor. The data was stored under lock and key.

### Validity of the Writing Process

As a researcher, I conducted a phenomenological heuristic study to guide me in understanding the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers and their multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills. The characteristics of qualitative research (Patton, 2002) are “rich data descriptions” which can communicate someone’s understanding of the world in his/her own words, and a plan for data analysis and reporting of the findings. The illuminating of the participants’ experiences with the phenomenon were written in descriptive form, extracting patterns to provide “rich descriptions.” The stories, experiences and perceptions of the participants were written using their own words in “quotes” and documented with supportive evidence through the data analysis, the MAKSS Form-T analysis and pragmatic interpretations.

### Summary of Chapter 3

To summarize, as a researcher, my goal was to gain a holistic view of the phenomenon under study by capturing data on the perceptions of the participants through a deep, attentive and empathetic understanding “Verstehen”. The MAKSS Form-T survey and three interview participants provided data to describe the experiences of prospective teacher’s multicultural

awareness, knowledge and skills and attitudes about Multicultural Education. The MAKSS Form-T provided descriptive statistics that supported the interview data. Participants who responded to the interview were valuable to the phenomenon under study and provided “rich” descriptions.

The analysis of the data-survey and interviews provided documentation for the writing of the findings and results. Two professionals were utilized as coders and to establish reliability and verification. Qualitative analysis consisted of three concurrent flows of activity-data reduction, data display and conclusion drawing or verification (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The data reduction helped to sort, sharpen, and focus the data to a final conclusion. The meaning that emerged from the data was tested for sturdiness and validity (Miles & Huberman, 1994). The conceptual framework helped to channel the flow of the study.

## CHAPTER 4

### FINDINGS

The purpose of this study was to ascertain the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers. The study was conducted on prospective teachers who were in their final year of course work at three Midwest university teacher education programs. Prospective teachers in their final year of coursework were invited because they had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year.

The aim was to share the voices of prospective teachers with colleges and universities teacher education program faculties. The findings of this dissertation study answered the following research questions proposed in Chapter 1: (1) what are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers during their final year of course work in a teacher education program, (2) what are the attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers about Multicultural Education and (3) how are prospective teachers prepared to teach diverse student populations in their teacher education programs? The MAKSS Form-T findings for Research Question 1 and the interview findings for the three Research Questions are below.

## Survey Findings for Research Question 1

Findings to Research Question 1: What are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers during their final year of course work in a teacher education program?

The quantitative data from the MAKSS Form-T represent 36 surveys. Data analysis for Awareness subscale  $n=36$ , Knowledge subscale  $n=36$  and Skills subscale  $n=36$ , MAKSS Form-T survey (Tables 3.1, 3.2, and 3.3). Survey data was used to answer Research Question 1 only.

To determine whether a statistically significant relationship was present between multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills among prospective teachers, a Pearson  $r$  was calculated. A correlation simply describes a relationship between two variables; it does not explain why the two variables are related. If the Pearson Correlation is  $r > .10$ , there is a small effect size,  $r > .30$  is a medium effect size, and  $r > .50$  is a large effect size. A correlation of the data revealed that all three subscales had a strong positive significant relationship. The Awareness/Knowledge subscales were significant at  $r (df=34) = .645$ ,  $p < .01$ , two tailed. The Knowledge/Skills subscales were significant at  $r (df = 34) = .441$ ,  $p < .01$ , two tailed, and Awareness/Skills subscales were significant  $r (df=34) = .706$ ,  $p < .01$ , two tailed. The analysis indicated a statistically strong significant positive relationship between the subscales.

To test for the consistency, stability and precision of survey scores, a Cronbach's alpha was calculated. Separate Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were calculated using the 8 items that comprise the multicultural Awareness subscale, the 13 items that made up the multicultural Knowledge subscale, and the 20 items on the multicultural Skills subscale. Tests resulted in the following reliability coefficients: .78 (Awareness subscale) .86 (Knowledge subscale) and .92 (Skills subscale). All three Cronbach's alpha reliability coefficients were larger than .70, so the MAKSS Form-T was reliable.

The Mean for the Awareness subscale, 8 variables (n=36) averaged 24.06 (s= .480). The Knowledge subscale, 13 variables (n=36) averaged 36.56 (s= 5.901). For the Skills subscale, 20 variables (n=36) averaged 60.19 (s= 8.505). The Mean indicated that prospective teachers had high levels of multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills. Low levels of the subscales were reflective of self-selecting "1" or "2" and high scores were "reflective of self-selecting "3" or "4". The average rating for the Awareness subscale, Knowledge subscale and Skills subscale was "3".

Data interpretation involved looking at the average rating for each of the subscale items. A count of the frequency was conducted. If the frequency count reflected that the participants self-selected "3" or "4" more often, then the subscale was rated "high". If the frequency counts reflected that the participants self-selected "1" or "2" more often, then the level of the subscale was rated "low".

For example overall, on the Awareness subscale, 72% of the respondents selected “3” or “4”. There were 64 frequency counts for “1” and “2” and 224 frequency counts for “3” and “4”. On the Knowledge subscale, 55% of the respondent’s self-selected “3” or “4”. There were 142 frequency counts for “1” and “2” and 310 frequency counts for “3” and “4”. The Skills subscale indicated that 84% of the respondents self-selected “3” or “4”. There were 95 frequency counts for “1” and “2” and 574 frequency counts for “3” and “4”. On the average, survey takers felt they were multicultural competent.

In summary, overall the data suggest that prospective teachers are being prepared to teach diverse student populations in their teacher education program. Over 70% of the respondents self-selected “3” or “4” (high) in any one item in the three subscales. The highest rating was in the Skills subscale where 84% of the respondents selected “3” or “4”. Some items reflected “low” frequency counts in certain subscale items. For example, 42% of the prospective teachers rated themselves “low” on two items of the Awareness subscale. When scoring these particular questions, respondents rated themselves low- “How well do you think you could distinguish “intentional” from “accidental” communication signals in a multicultural classroom situation?” and 36% selected “1” or “2,” for “Ambiguity and stress often results from multicultural situations because people are not sure what to expect from each other.”

Several trends presented themselves in the Knowledge subscale. A selection of “1” or “2” rated the following items in the Knowledge subscale “low”.

A high percentage of prospective teachers rated themselves “low” on having knowledge of the following terminology: “pluralism,” “contact hypothesis,” “attribution,” “trans cultural” and “cultural encapsulation.” The percentage of prospective teachers rated themselves “low” in the understanding of pluralism- 58%, for contact hypothesis- 75%, attribution-58%, trans cultural- 61% and cultural encapsulation- 64%.

On the Skills subscale, two items were rated “low”, 50% for “How well would you rate your ability to critique multicultural research? and 47% for “How would you rate your ability to analyze cultural into its component parts?”

Table 3.1

## Awareness Subscale Questions Descriptive Statistics

<b>Questions(Awareness Subscale)</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Mdn</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1. At this point in your life, how would you rate yourself in terms of understanding how your cultural background has influenced the way you think and act?	3.38	3.50	4	.697	2	4	0	5	16	0
2. At this point in your life, how would you rate your understanding of the impact of the way you think and act when interacting with persons of different cultural backgrounds?	3.31	3.00	3	.643	2	4	0	4	21	0
3. In general, how would you rate your level of awareness regarding different cultural institutions and systems?	2.95	3.00	3	.697	1	4	1	8	25	8
4. At the present time, how would you generally rate yourself in terms of being able to accurately compare your own cultural perspective with that of a person from another culture?	3.05	3.00	3	.661	2	4	0	8	24	10
5. How well do you think you could distinguish "intentional" from "accidental" communication signals in a multicultural classroom situation?	2.74	3.00	3	.857	1	4	3	13	18	8
6. Ambiguity and stress often result from multicultural situations because people are not sure what to expect from each other.	2.68	3.00	3	.656	1	4	1	14	22	3
7. Teachers need to change not just the content of what they think but also the way they handle this content if they are to accurately account for the complexity in human behavior.	3.18	3.00	3	.601	2	4	0	4	24	11
8. How would you rate your understanding of the concept of "relativity" in terms of the goals, objectives, and methods of working with culturally different students and families?	2.95	3.00	3	.740	2	4	0	12	19	10

Table 3.2:

## Knowledge Subscale Questions Descriptive Statistics

<b>Questions: (Knowledge Subscale)</b> How would you rate your understanding of the following terms?	M	Mdn	Mode	SD	Q1	Q3	1	2	3	4
1. Culture	3.33	3.00	3	.586	2	4	0	2	20	14
2. Ethnicity	3.33	3.00	3	.676	2	4	0	4	16	16
3. Racism	3.53	4.00	4	.506	3	4	0	0	17	19
4. Mainstreaming	3.22	3.00	3	.591	2	4	0	3	22	11
5. Prejudice	3.42	3.00	3	.604	2	4	0	2	17	17
6. Multicultural Education	3.28	3.00	3	.659	2	4	0	4	18	14
7. Ethnocentrism	2.83	3.00	3	.775	1	4	1	11	17	7
8. Pluralism	2.39	2.00	2	.803	1	4	4	17	12	3
9. Contact hypothesis	2.03	2.00	2	.774	1	4	9	18	8	1
10. Attribution	2.33	2.00	2	.862	1	4	6	15	12	3
11. Trans cultural	2.17	2.00	2	.845	1	4	9	13	13	1
12. Cultural encapsulation	2.08	2.00	2	.874	1	4	11	12	12	1
13. The difficulty with the concept of "integration" is its implicit bias in favor of the dominant culture	2.61	3.00	3	.838	1	4	4	10	18	4

Table 3.3

## Skills subscale Questions Descriptive Statistics

<b>Questions: (Skills Subscale)</b>	<b>M</b>	<b>Mdn</b>	<b>Mode</b>	<b>SD</b>	<b>Q1</b>	<b>Q3</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>
1. How would you rate your ability to teach students from a cultural background significantly different from your own?	3.07	3.00	3	.712	2	4	0	9	21	12
2. How would you rate your ability to effectively assess the needs of students and their families from a cultural background different from your own?	2.81	3.00	3	.740	1	4	1	13	21	7
3. How well would you rate your ability to distinguish "formal" and "informal" teaching strategies?	3.19	3.00	3	.552	2	4	0	3	28	11
4. In general, how would you rate yourself in terms of being able to effectively deal with biases, discrimination, and prejudices directed at you by students and/or their families?	3.17	3.00	3	.667	2	4	0	6	22	13
5. How well would you rate your ability to accurately identify culturally biased assumptions as they relate to your professional training?	3.00	3.00	3	.548	2	4	0	6	29	6
6. How well would you rate your ability to discuss the role of "method" and "context" as they relate to teaching?	2.88	3.00	3	.772	1	4	2	9	23	8
7. In general, how would you rate your ability to accurately articulate a student's behavioral problem when the student is from a cultural group significantly different from your own?	2.79	3.00	3	.717	1	4	1	13	22	6
8. How well would you rate your ability to analyze a culture into its component parts?	2.55	2.50	2	.670	1	4	1	20	18	3
9. How would you rate your ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of standardized test in terms of their use with students from different cultural-racial-ethnic backgrounds?	2.90	3.00	3	.726	1	4	1	10	23	8
10. How would you rate your ability to critique multicultural research?	2.52	2.50	2	.773	1	4	3	18	17	4
11. In general, how would you rate your skill level in terms of being able to provide appropriate educational services to culturally different students and their families?	3.05	3.00	3	.623	2	4	0	7	26	9
12. How would you rate your ability to effectively consult with another professional concerning the educational and behavior needs of students who cultural background is significantly different from your own?	3.24	3.00	3	.692	2	4	0	6	20	16
13. How would you rate your ability to effectively secure information and resources to better serve culturally different students and their families?	3.17	3.00	3	.660	2	4	0	6	23	13
14. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of female students?	3.29	3.00	3	.636	2	4	0	4	22	16
15. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of male students?	3.21	3.00	3	.606	2	4	0	4	25	13
16. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of older students?	3.10	3.00	3	.656	2	4	0	7	24	11
17. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of boys who may be homosexual?	3.00	3.00	3	.826	1	4	2	8	20	12
18. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of girls who may be lesbians?	2.95	3.00	3	.764	1	4	2	7	24	9
19. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of students with mental health disorders?	3.02	3.00	3	.715	1	4	1	7	24	10
20. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of students who come from very poor socioeconomic backgrounds?	3.31	3.00	3	.643	2	4	0	4	21	17

## Interview Findings

The interviews were designed to gain the most information and data from the participants about their teacher education preparation experiences.

Interviews were used to answer the three research questions. Results of the findings were written in “rich description” of meaning making.

## Interview Participants

Table 4:

### Participant's Profile

Participant Number	Race	Gender	University	Marital Status
One	Caucasian	Female	One	Married
Two	Black	Male	Two	Single
Three	Caucasian	Male	One	Single

### *Participant Number One*

Participant Number One is a 41 years old Caucasian female, married mother of six children; the oldest is 20 years old and youngest is seven.

Participant Number One attended University One full time (commuting distance) and studied Early Childhood and Elementary Education. She completed her second semester of student teaching in the fall of 2011 in a

suburban school district in the Midwest and graduated in December 2011.

Participant Number One passed the Praxis exam and was certified for Early Childhood and Elementary education. She is married to a Muslim and other members of her family are married to other nationalities. She has had a lot of cross-cultural experiences through family connections. The pseudonym for Participant Number One is “Anna”.

### *Participant Number Two*

Participant Number Two is a single Black male in his early twenties, from a single parent home in a large urban core. In his elementary and middle school years, he attended public school in the urban core. He attended a suburban high school in his high school years because his district offered inner city youths an opportunity to attend. Participant Number Two attended University Two about 300 miles from his home of residence. Participant Number Two completed his student teaching in the Spring of 2011 in an urban school and has secured a teaching position for Fall of 2011 in Elementary Education. He had cross-cultural experiences during his high school years and completed his teaching practicum in a Hispanic community during his course work. The pseudonym for Participant Number Two is “Ben”.

### *Participant Number Three*

Participant Number Three is a Caucasian male in his early twenty's, single and an only child from well-to-do parents. Participant Number Three attended University Number One which is in commuting distance from his home of residence. Participant Number Three completed his student teaching in the Fall of 2011 at a rural high school as a music education teacher. Participant Number Three attended a private school where the student population was predominantly members of the cultural majority. His parents were able to afford him many educational opportunities. He met international students at community events sponsored by the university. The pseudonym for Participant Number Three is "Curt".

Findings to Research Question 1: What are the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers during their final year of course work in a teacher education program ?

To answer Research Question 1, the interview findings described prospective teacher's multicultural competences during their final year of course work. Although each of the participants had different plans of study for their respective teaching certification, each participant was able to express their awareness of other cultures and how the awareness enhanced their knowledge and skills of other cultures.

### *Examination of Prospective Teacher's Multicultural Competence*

In examining the level of multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills for the three interviewees revealed that participants were at varied levels of multicultural competence in their teacher education program. Anna had the most experience due to her age and work experience. Ben's level was moderate owing to the observation and teaching practicum experience in his teacher preparation program. Curt however had a low level of multicultural competence due to the lack of cross-cultural experiences and the opportunities to observe or teach diverse student populations. Curt's student teaching experience was in a rural town.

Anna demonstrated considerable knowledge level of multicultural competence, she was fully aware of other cultures and their values, traditions and customs through marriages within her family. She demonstrated knowledge of other cultures, as a teacher in the Islamic school where she taught a variety of cultures. The skills that she described in teaching diverse student populations suggested she was very knowledgeable. For one activity, she suggested that the children bring in artifacts about their culture to share with the class.

Ben awareness and knowledge of diverse student populations showed a moderate level of multicultural competence as indicated by the "eye-opening"

experiences. He met and became knowledgeable about African, India and Hispanic students and their culture, values and beliefs. Ben was able to demonstrate multicultural skills during his teaching experience in a predominately Hispanic school.

Curt demonstrated a low level of multicultural competence. Curt had limited awareness of other cultures, with the exception of a few friends that he met at the community center on campus. He felt that he was knowledgeable about the Korean culture and had read extensively about the Hispanic culture. Curt's knowledge of other cultures was moderate.

#### *Prospective Teacher's Cultural Competence*

Anna's awareness of other cultures included an appreciation of other cultures. She stated "it's something that I appreciate, something that I like to learn about other people's culture whether it's you know, what country they are from or what religion they are or what beliefs they have, so I feel that I am very culturally aware". Ben's awareness of other cultures revealed, "The more I learn about different cultures the more I realize I don't know about other cultures". Curt's awareness of other cultures revealed his need for cross-cultural exposure, "I don't have a lot of first hand awareness, probably of them [diverse societies] because ... I just haven't had a lot of exposure".

Curt's multicultural knowledge was acquired through his acquaintance with International students he met through the university Community Center.

Curt:

I've met students from a lot of countries here but those; probably South Korea is where I got actually my exposure first hand. I've also read quite a bit about Spanish culture...learned some in Spanish class about Spanish culture, as the people, South America...from the country of Spain differences and similarities (Curt, June 8, 2011).

All participants had awareness and knowledge of other cultures, some through family and friends and others through their interaction with other students on campus or through a campus community center. Anna was very knowledgeable as far as American culture was concerned, she stated that "within a main culture there's many, many sub cultures" (Anna, June 4, 2011). Until Ben attended his university, outside of his own culture, his knowledge stemmed from "what I would hear from the media, or just like reading books and magazines" (Ben, June 7, 2011). Curt's awareness of other cultures was evident in his statement "There's a few cultures that I've actually had, probably fairly good knowledge of because I have friends... [From Korea and Congo] (Curt, June 8, 2011).

*Content Knowledge Using Multicultural Education*

The knowledge of other cultures aided the participants in describing how they were able to teach a content course infusing Multicultural Education, Anna and Ben chose Social Studies as a content course and Curt chose Music. Anna would infuse technology and Ben would teach from diverse cultural perspectives. The participants described the skills used to infuse Multicultural Education in subject content: “students bringing artifacts about their culture to the classroom” (Anna) “scaffolding and learning the language” (Ben). Curt did provide an example that demonstrated that he had multicultural education skills, which involved a compare and contrast activity.

Curt:

Just show how it would relate to their culture... for instance the Music Theory relates to them [other cultures] because ... actually [they] have a different theory...societies don't use the same music theory that we teach in the United States ... you teach us about your culture... then I [I] also show how it connects to ours because there's similarities and there's differences, sort of compare and contrast... (Curt, June 8, 2011).

To summarize, each of the interview participants expressed an interest in getting to know other cultures. Anna's teacher education program provided numerous opportunities for her to interact with other cultures through her course work which offered “observation and participation” opportunities.

Ben's awareness, recognition and acceptance of other cultures came early in his teacher education program. His course work required him to teach in a

predominately Hispanic school. He was so inspired with the encounter, that he took several courses in Spanish. Curt was eager to have cross-cultural experience, since his course work did not provide opportunities for him to interact with other cultures. The only person of color in his teacher education program was a female who was three years ahead of him. Curt majored in secondary education music; his observations did not include observing diverse student populations. Curt was accepting and knowledgeable about how different cultures value and understand music.

The content knowledge provided by each participant indicated that teacher preparation programs provide opportunities for prospective teachers to infuse Multicultural Education in content knowledge. The opportunities that Anna and Ben had to observe and teach diverse student populations are evident that these programs are complying with NCATE. Even though Curt did not have opportunities to observe diverse student populations, the courses in his teacher education program provided case studies of other cultures.

Findings to Research Question 2: What are the attitudes  
and beliefs of prospective teachers about  
Multicultural Education?

Findings for Research Question 2 revealed that participant's beliefs and attitudes helped them to define Multicultural Education. The participants

focused on their personal and professional beliefs when defining Multicultural Education. Anna defined Multicultural Education as “inclusive of socio-economics, background, ethnicity, and religion”. Ben defined Multicultural Education as “teaching about other cultures”. Curt defined Multicultural Education in terms of “other cultural characteristics”.

### *Defining Multicultural Education*

Anna:

I would define Multicultural Education as a multicultural culture not just meaning ethnicity but also it's a very broad topic. I think I ... would take into consideration your [the] student's socio economics background, of course ethnicity, religious background and incorporating lessons to really create a community of learners in your [the] classroom to where other cultures are appreciated and celebrated (Anna, June 4, 2011).

Ben:

Okay, I believe that Multicultural Education is...just teaching others about, I don't want to say tolerance, but teaching others that ...the culture you live in ... isn't necessarily the only culture and that...different people live in many different ways. (Ben, June 7, 2011).

Curt:

When you have students who are from different backgrounds... like ethnic backgrounds, could even be... socio-economic backgrounds...most of the

time its'... so because of that they come from a different context. Their cultural beliefs may be different, religious beliefs and things like that...may also be English learners (Curt, June 8, 2011).

### *Attitudes About Multicultural Education*

The participants' beliefs and attitudes about Multicultural Education were suggestive of their background and preparation in their teacher education program. Anna's background was appreciative of other cultures through family relationships which accommodated her teacher preparation course work and experiences. Ben's background cultural experiences growing up in an urban core and practicum teaching in a Hispanic school helped him to understand and appreciate other cultures. Curt focused on other cultures and their efforts to assimilate into American culture. The participants' attitudes and beliefs about other cultures were supportive of promoting cultural acceptance. They were able to demonstrate knowledge, acceptance, and recognition of other culture's values, beliefs, and traditions.

Findings to Research Question 3: How are prospective teachers prepared to teach diverse student populations in their teacher education programs?

To answer Research Question 3, the findings support that teacher preparation programs are preparing prospective teachers to become multicultural competent. Each participant described how their teacher education program prepared them to teach diverse student populations. Anna was thoroughly impressed with her teacher preparation. She felt her course work, observations, reflections, and field experiences prepared her to teach: special education, urban education, and diverse student populations. Anna was more seasoned than the other two participants; she had family exposure and experiences of other cultures within her family and through her religious affiliation. Anna also had taught previous to attending the university to obtain her teacher certification. Ben and Curt's experiences were limited because of their age and/or limited exposure to other cultures outside their own. Even though Anna had more experience and multicultural competence, both Ben and Curt described their limited experiences and their earnestness to learn about other cultures and to promote cultural acceptance and provide multiple perspectives.

### *Teacher Preparation Programs*

University One provided opportunities for Anna to observe and participate in diverse student population classrooms. Ben also had opportunities during his teaching practicum to teach diverse student populations. Curt on the other hand, was not afforded the opportunity to teach diverse student populations, but

was prepared through his course work that utilized case studies, films and reflections.

Curt revealed some “classroom management challenges that you’d have from having multicultural backgrounds in the same classroom...We watched a movie about a classroom that [was] about a teacher that did really well in the class that had multicultural students” (Curt, June 8, 2011).

Anna had numerous opportunities for observations, participations and reflections.

Anna:

One day you are in the university classroom learning, listening to lectures by professors and then the other day out of the week, we are actually ...working in a school. Usually a teacher will assign us one child in the class that they are concerned with and they want one-on-one help with that child (Anna, June 4, 2011).

Ben was prepared to teach in the urban core using multiple strategies to work with diverse student populations.

Ben:

Some courses had those components imbued within them but they were not necessarily 100% geared toward Multicultural Education... it definitely informed me about other cultures and I knew more information ... about different cultures than the way that they lived, and different languages and a little bit about the[ir] histories (Ben, June 8, 2011).

### *Rating Teacher Preparation*

Ben stated that he felt prepared to teach in an urban setting but not prepared to teach diverse student populations. He rated his teacher preparation in Multicultural Education as a “five or six”.

Ben:

Like if I were to rate it on a scale from one to ten, like I definitely feel prepared to teach in an Urban setting that would be like a nine or a ten, but if it’s like, like talking about more ethnic cultures I would say probably like a five or a six in preparation to teach in a more ethnic setting (Ben, June 7, 2011).

Curt rated his preparation to teach diverse student populations as a “four” because of his limited exposure and experience with Multicultural Education and diverse student populations. In his teacher education program, he did not encounter any other cultures outside of one Black female who was a senior when he was a freshman.

In summary, all participants had varied ideas, views and descriptions of their teacher preparation program. Anna, because of her age and life experiences appeared more confident and assured about her teacher preparation.

Anna:

It's kind of like being a Girl Scout, being prepared for everything, that's the way I hope I am. I would like to be prepared, you know I don't like surprises and having to deal with emergency situations, although I expect it, I know as teachers we always have to adapt, we have to be real adaptable but still you want to be prepared as you can be (Anna, June 4, 2011).

Ben and Curt did not feel adequately prepared to teach diverse student populations, but admitted that they wanted to know more about other cultures. Ben states "I don't think I would be as adequately prepared as I would like to be when I think about my preparation". Curt would like the university teacher education program to teach prospective teachers about diverse student populations, "not just theory but methods and provide opportunities to practice".

Curt:

Just really helping us student know more about other cultures. And they can talk to us about ... what [the] challenges are going to be and this is how you sort of try to figure things out, but actually meeting more people from other cultures and giving us those opportunities to meet them, I think would be the most helpful thing... (Curt, June 8, 2011).

#### Summary of Chapter 4

The MAKSS Form-T survey findings revealed that prospective teacher's view themselves as being competent. Overall on the three subscales,

multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills, the respondents rated themselves “high”. On the Awareness subscale, 72% of the respondents self-selected “3” or “4” (3 = Good, 4=Very Good). The Knowledge subscale indicated that 55% of the respondents self-selected “3” or “4” and on the Skills subscale 84% of the respondents self-selected “3” or “4”. The overall results indicate that prospective teachers are multiculturally aware, have knowledge of other cultures and skills to teach diverse students.

The survey findings are in alignment with the interview findings which demonstrated that prospective teachers are being prepared to teach diverse student populations in their teacher education programs. Interview findings indicated that prospective teachers are being prepared to teach diverse student populations and are competent in multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills. The results of this study are contrary to the literature which states that prospective teachers are “resistant” to become knowledgeable about Multicultural Education, need “cross-cultural experience” and “hold a limited view of what constitutes diversity” (Silverman, 2010).

Teacher education programs are preparing prospective teachers in multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills. While teacher preparation programs offer two to three stand-alone courses in Multicultural Education, having exposure and experience would make it easier to scaffold Multicultural Education in course work and content areas. The multicultural competence of the prospective teachers indicated by the survey and interview findings does not

guarantee that these prospective teachers will indeed practice Multicultural Education strategies and pedagogy, it is hoped that prospective teachers would. The best estimates of the results were the interviewee findings in which the interview respondents felt that Multicultural Education was germane to teaching diverse student populations.

CHAPTER 5  
DISCUSSIONS AND RECOMMENDATIONS

Discussion

NCES (2012) predict between 2008 and 2020, enrollment in public elementary and secondary schools are projected to:

- Decrease 1% for students who are White
- Increase 1% for students who are Black
- Increase 25% for students who are Hispanic
- Increase 36% for students who are Asian/Pacific Islander
- Increase 17% for students who are American Indian/Alaska Native

If this trend (prediction) comes to fruition, approximately 69% of the students attending public schools in the United States will be non-White by 2020.

In this study I analyzed the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills, attitudes and beliefs of prospective teachers who were in their final year. Prospective teachers in their final year of course work had completed all course work and teaching practicum or had completed all course work but not teaching practicum for the 2010-2011 academic school year.

The initial premise for the research was brought about by Howard's (2006) *We Can't Teach What you Don't Know* which ask the question, "How is it possible, with so much research and information available about multicultural

issues today, that prospective educators can complete their entire teacher education and certification program without gaining a deeper grasp of social reality” (p. 30)?

To answer Howard’s (2006) question, I resolved to research prospective teachers who were in their final year of coursework. Results from these research findings (quantitative and qualitative) contradict Howard (2006) and indicated that prospective teachers are being prepared in multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills to teach diverse student populations. The study findings also attested that teacher preparation programs are providing opportunities for prospective teachers to work with diverse student populations during teaching practicum and observations. One teacher education program requires that prospective teachers complete 1500 hours in observation and participation and submit papers reflecting upon the observations and participation activities. Another program offers prospective teachers opportunities to teach urban students. The findings from this study bring to light that prospective teachers are being prepared in their teacher preparation program to be multicultural competent. This shows awareness by academia and the need to be responsive to the changing demographics of American society NCES (2012).

In this study, overall, 70% of the survey respondents rated themselves “high” (self-selected “3” or “4”) in multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills. This rating is reflective of the efforts made to help prospective teachers become multiculturally competent. Seventy-two percent of the respondents rated

themselves “high” in multicultural awareness, 55% “high” in multicultural knowledge and 84% rated themselves “high” in multicultural skills. Although research literature suggest that prospective teachers were not being adequately prepared to teach diverse student populations, this research finding as limited as it was, contrasted the prevailing paradigm on multicultural education.

An issue for deeper examination was the need for opportunities in working with students with exceptionalities, which was not addressed in the interview findings. However, the survey findings indicated an overall “high” rating in the ability to “accurately access the behavior and educational needs of females, males, exceptionalities, homosexuals and lesbians as well as students with mental health disorders.

The interviewees were able to describe their view of multicultural education as meaning race and cultures. What was not taken into consideration was some of the other components of Multicultural Educations- gender, sexual orientation, exceptionalities to include mentally and physically challenged children. Adequate preparation in Multicultural Education awareness, knowledge and skills would incorporate the “holistic” view of the child not just socio-economics or culture.

Still persistent, is the need to educate diverse student populations in culturally responsive pedagogy. Literature indicated diverse student populations are still being educated by teachers whose beliefs, attitudes and practices are not in alignment with culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010).

While the findings describe prospective teacher's willingness to become multiculturally competent in all areas, culturally responsive pedagogy as an active practice in the teacher preparation program was not supported by the findings.

All interview respondents described their level of multicultural competence in awareness, knowledge and skills to varied degrees. Ben felt that everyone deserved an education. He believed "it's my job to get them just as prepared [as] the students from other cultures, just as prepared, just as educated as those who are from the American culture, that's my job as a teacher". Anna felt she needed to educate herself. "The teacher has to know something about that child's culture, whether...from another country or...maybe they are economically deprived...you really need to educate yourself and get to know your students". Curt believed he should be careful when teaching other cultures. "Careful that I'm...not trying to teach them how our culture is superior to their culture".

Prospective teachers' knowledge of other cultures must be united to the concepts, ideas and goals of Multicultural Education. Taylor and Quintana, (2003) specify that "teachers need to understand that all children, including White children, have much to gain from Multicultural Education programs" (p. 512). This is because children are socialized early in racial ideology and teachers need to realize that racism may have been implicitly communicated. Research

continues to demonstrate that children show marked pro-White/Anti-Black bias (Taylor & Quintana, 2003).

### Implications

The study findings uphold the need for teacher education programs to continue to provide multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills. The interview and survey findings indicated that prospective teachers were “prepared to teach diverse student populations”. In light of the fact that culture plays a significant role in teaching, teachers who develop positive personal and professional beliefs and attitudes toward other cultures exhibit a more powerful teaching approach (Knopp & Smith, 2005, Gay, 2010).

For schools to serve the needs and interest of all students, the U.S. educational system, must continue to prepare prospective teachers to teach diverse student populations. Prospective teachers who become knowledgeable about Multicultural Education develop the awareness, knowledge and skills to become competent in Multicultural Education. Castagno (2009) states “educating for cross-cultural competence requires prospective teachers to “have intimate knowledge of cultures other than their own” (p. 46). Unless prospective teachers are “cross-culturally competent [their], students will not become so” (Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol, 2001, p. 88).

This research findings support the continuation of preparing prospective teachers to become multicultural competent. Teacher preparation programs

should continue to prepare prospective teachers to use multiple perspectives, differentiated instructions and practices and employ methods to ensure the culture of the classroom is inclusive of all students (Villegas & Lucas, 2002a).

Both Ben and Anna were able to provide multiple perspectives, and a variety of practices to ensure the culture of the classroom was inclusive of all students.

Anna taught a lesson on Islam to a diverse classroom. She was able to make exceptions for the student who was a Jehovah Witness and was not allowed to participate in the religious celebration. Ben was able to help scaffold the language disparity for his Hispanic student by taking another course in Spanish to help with his ability to communicate with his students.

Taylor and Quintana (2003) suggest prospective teachers should be prepared in their teacher preparation program to:

1. Identify individual learning styles of all children.
2. Emphasis should be given on developing multiple instructional tools to accommodate differences.
3. Teach children sensitivity to all forms of individual differences.
4. Focus on teaching about the cultural history of major ethnic, or racial groups (p. 519).

Findings from this study indicated that prospective teacher were being prepared to identify individual learning styles, develop multiple instructional tools, teach children sensitivity to all forms of individual difference, and to teach about other cultures histories. Interview findings indicated that prospective

teachers were “meeting the needs of multicultural students,” “developing cultural awareness,” “identifying pedagogical approaches,” and “adjusting curriculum content” Banks (2005).

Interview findings suggested that prospective teachers’ opportunities to explore diverse societies during their teacher preparation programs, helped to prepare them to be multicultural competent. All teacher education programs should continue to provide field experiences early and often in the teacher education program. Providing opportunities for prospective teachers to work in diverse populations schools as “observers and participants” early in the program provides practicum experience working with diverse student populations and observing their behavioral characteristics in the classroom.

### Recommendations

Below I provide recommendations and suggestions for future research. Areas of considerations are recommendations for administrators of teacher education programs and avenues for further research.

#### Recommendations for Administrators of Teacher Education Programs

Preparing prospective teachers in Multicultural Education should include greater emphasis and opportunities to gain practical experience. Prospective teachers should engage in observations, field experiences and working within a diverse community early in the teacher preparation program. Academic

educational faculty should continue to integrate or infuse Multicultural Education in their coursework to prepare prospective teachers.

The recommendation for administrators of teacher education programs include: continuing to infuse Multicultural Education content (ideas, concepts and practices) throughout the teacher education program. Providing opportunities for prospective teachers to challenge and transform their personal and professional beliefs about Multicultural Education. Towards this end, attitudes of academic educational faculties should reflect a positive approach in regard to this discipline.

Further, recommendations are to continue to provide opportunities for prospective teachers to reflect on their experiences and to create an atmosphere that would allow them to transform their beliefs in a caring and supportive environment. Prospective teachers' attitudes and beliefs have significant impact on their willingness to be transformed by their participation in a Multicultural Education program. Garmon (2004) argued that students' attitudes and beliefs upon entering college, "serve as filters" for what they learn about Multicultural Education in their teacher preparation.

Teacher education programs should continue to incorporate social consciousness, affirming the views of diverse student populations and practicing the constructivist view of teaching (Villegas & Lucas, 2002b).

## Limitations

A significant limitation for this study was the small sample size of those who participated in the survey and interview. While the data was limited, survey (n=36) and three interviews, it was tenuous at best and could not be generalized to the population of prospective teachers. The findings from this study however, could benefit administrators, teachers and academic educational faculties in preparing prospective teachers to become multicultural competent. The lack of interviewees mandated interviewing two prospective teachers from the same university, in which the program of study was different for both. One was a secondary Music major and the other was an Elementary/Early Childhood major.

Another limitation was the inability to determine what university each survey participant attended or the racial demographics of the survey takers. There was no identifying information required for the participant to complete the survey because the researcher wanted respondents to remain anonymous. The rationale was to provide “anonymity” for the participant(s) to get a larger sample.

The lack of continuity for each teacher education program was also a limitation. Anna’s areas of certification were Early Childhood and Special Education. Ben’s certification was in Elementary Education and Curt’s certification area was Secondary Music Education. There was also a need for further follow-up on prospective teachers through their first year of teaching.

## Conclusion

Those in teaching education programs are predominantly white, middle-class, monolingual, female, and non urban. In order for public schools to continue educating diverse student populations, prospective teachers must continued to be educated in multicultural awareness, knowledge and skills to become multicultural competent. Prospective teachers' personal and professional attitudes and beliefs must continue to be challenged and transformed. Preparation in teacher education should continue to include opportunities in observation and participation to enable prospective teachers to become multicultural competent. The findings of this study are provisional and suggest a need for further study on the multicultural awareness, knowledge, skills and attitudes of prospective teachers. Additional studies should include studying awareness, knowledge and skills related to teacher preparation to teach culturally responsive pedagogy to students with exceptionalities.

APPENDIX A

SSIRB APPROVAL FOR THE STUDY

January 24, 2011

Rotha Perkins, IPh.D  
Omiunota Ukpokodu, Ph.D.  
School of Graduate Studies  
5100 Rockhill Road  
Kansas City, MO 64110

Dear Investigators:

Your protocol IRB #SS10-93e entitled, "Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge, Skills and Beliefs of Prospective Teachers" was given an expedited review by members of the UMKC Social Sciences Institutional Review Board.

This letter is to confirm that your application and revisions dated 1/17/11 is now fully approved. The following documents are now approved:

- Research protocol #SS10-93e revised 1/17/11
- Appendix #1 Sample letter date stamped 1/24/11
- Appendix #2 Informed Consent Form (survey) date stamped 1/24/11 to 1/07/12
- Appendix #3 Informed consent form (interview) date stamped 1/24/11 to 1/07/12
- Appendix #4 Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills Survey date stamped 1/24/11
- Appendix #5 Interview protocol date stamped 1/24/11
- Appendix #6 Approval Letter to conduct research at UMKC-SOE date stamped 1/24/11

You are granted permission to conduct your study as most recently described effective immediately. The study is subject to continuing review on or before 1/07/2012, unless closed before that date. It is your responsibility to provide a progress report prior to that date to avoid disruption of your research.

Please note that any changes to the study as approved must be promptly reported and approved. Some changes may be approved by expedited review; others require full board review. Please feel free to contact me if you have any questions or require further information.

Sincerely,

Sheila Anderman, CIP, CIM  
Research Protections Program Manager  
UMKC Social Sciences  
Institutional Review Board

APPENDIX B

MULTICULTURAL AWARENESS, KNOWLEDGE

AND

SKILLS SURVEY FORM - T

## Multicultural Awareness, Knowledge and Skills Survey for Teachers (MAKSS Form-T)

There are four options to use when responding to the survey. The options are ranked on a Likert-type scale from 1-4. A response of 1 indicates "Very Limited", 2 indicates "Limited", 3 indicates "Good" and 4 indicates "Very Good". The reverse coded items are designed to decrease socially desirable responses.

### Multicultural Awareness Subscale:

VL = Very Limited      L=Limited      G = Good      VG = Very Good

1. At this point in your life, how would you rate yourself in terms of understanding how your cultural background has influenced the way you think and act?
2. At this point in your life, how would you rate your understanding of the impact of the way you think and act when interacting with persons of different cultural backgrounds?
3. In general, how would you rate your level of awareness regarding different cultural institutions and systems?
4. At the present time, how would you generally rate yourself in terms of being able to accurately compare your own cultural perspective with that of a person from another culture?
5. How well do you think you could distinguish "intentional" from "accidental" communication signals in a multicultural classroom situation?
6. Ambiguity and stress often result from multicultural situations because people are not sure what to expect from each other.
7. Teachers need to change not just the content of what they think but also the way they handle this content if they are to accurately account for the complexity in human behavior.
8. How would you rate your understanding of the concept of "relativity" in terms of the goals, objectives, and methods of working with culturally different students and families?

### Multicultural Knowledge Subscale

How would you rate your understanding of the following terms?

VL = Very Limited      L = Limited      G = Good      VG = Very Good

- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| 1. Culture                 | 9. Contact hypothesis  |
| 2. Ethnicity               | 10. Attribution  |
| 3. Racism                  | 11. Trans cultural   |
| 4. Mainstreaming           | 12. Cultural encapsulation   |
| 5. Prejudice               | 13. The difficulty with the concept of "integration" is its implicit bias in favor of the dominant culture |
| 6. Multicultural Education |  |
| 7. Ethnocentrism           |  |
| 8. Pluralism               |  |

### Multicultural Skills Subscale

VL = Very Limited

L = Limited

G = Good

VG = Very Good

1. How would you rate your ability to teach students from a cultural background significantly different from your own?
2. How would you rate your ability to effectively assess the needs of students and their families from a cultural background different from your own?
3. How well would you rate your ability to distinguish "formal" and "informal" teaching strategies?
4. In general, how would you rate yourself in terms of being able to effectively deal with biases, discrimination, and prejudices directed at you by students and/or their families?
5. How well would you rate your ability to accurately identify culturally biased assumptions as they relate to your professional training?
6. How well would you rate your ability to discuss the role of "method" and "context" as they relate to teaching?
7. In general, how would you rate your ability to accurately articulate a student's behavioral problem when the student is from a cultural group significantly different from your own?
8. How well would you rate your ability to analyze a culture into its component parts?
9. How would you rate your ability to identify the strengths and weaknesses of standardized test in terms of their use with students from different cultural-racial-ethnic backgrounds?
10. How would you rate your ability to critique multicultural research?
11. In general, how would you rate your skill level in terms of being able to provide appropriate educational services to culturally different students and their families?
12. How would you rate your ability to effectively consult with another professional concerning the educational and behavior needs of students who cultural background is significantly different from your own?
13. How would you rate your ability to effectively secure information and resources to better serve culturally different students and their families?
14. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of female students?
15. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of male students?
16. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of older students?
17. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of boys who may be homosexual?
18. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of girls who may be lesbians?
19. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of students with mental health disorders?
20. How would you rate your ability to accurately assess the behavioral and educational needs of students who come from very poor socioeconomic backgrounds?

APPENDIX C

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

## Interview Protocol

(1) Tell me your definition of Multicultural Education. The participant's definition of Multicultural Education helped to guide the interview process and remaining questions.

(2) Tell me about your awareness of other cultures.

(3) Tell me about your knowledge of other cultures.

(4) Tell me about your Multicultural Education skills used in teaching.

(5) Tell me how you would teach a content course using your knowledge of Multicultural Education.

(6) Tell me your beliefs about teaching students from other cultures.

(7) Tell me what you believe is the best way to teach diverse student populations.

(8) Tell me how your personal beliefs affect your teaching of diverse student populations.

(9) Tell me about your professional beliefs about students from other cultures.

(10) Compare your own cultural experience with that of your students from other cultures.

(11) Tell me how you would interact with families from other cultures.

(12) Tell me how your teacher education program prepared you to teach diverse student populations.

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## VITA

Rotha Montez Perkins was born in a rural Missouri town. At the age of two her family moved to Kansas City, Missouri where she attended predominately African American elementary schools. Upon entering high school, her family moved farther south and she spent the last five years in predominately White Junior and Senior High Schools. Following graduation from high school, Rotha begin attending junior college, Penn Valley Community College. After two failed marriages, Rotha joined the U.S. Air Force Guard out of Rosecrans, Missouri. When initial enlistment was up, she returned to Penn Valley Community College, completed her AA degree and transferred to UMKC. In 1980 Rotha was hired by the Kansas City, Missouri School District as a Substitute teacher. She graduated with a BA degree in Communication Studies from UMKC in 1982. Rotha continued her Air Force career as a Reservist and earned her Secondary Education lifetime certification in Speech and Drama from UMKC in 1986. In 1988 she returned to UMKC and earned a teaching certification in Early Childhood and Elementary education.

In 1997, Rotha left the Kansas City, Missouri School District to work for the Hickman Mills School District. In 2001, she received her Master's degree in Curriculum and Instruction, also from UMKC. Due to her husband's chronic illness, she left the Hickman Mills School District and retired from the U.S. Air Force Reserves after 26 years of service. Retirement was disappointing and

staying at home with husband encouraged her to return to UMKC to take some classes. She enrolled in the IPh.D program with the School of Graduate Studies and was accepted into the program in 2007. While working on her doctoral degree, Rotha taught as an adjunct instructor from 2007 to 2009 at UMKC School of Education. She was awarded the “Chancellor’s Fellowship” for the 2009-2010 and 2010-2011 academic school years.

Upon completion of degree requirements, Rotha plans to teach on the academic level at a two year or four year college. During her doctoral program, Rotha had opportunities to present papers at the National Association for Multicultural Education, the Missouri Council for Social Studies and the Midwest History of Education conferences. Rotha served as the secretary for Interdisciplinary Doctoral Student Council for three years, and in 2008 was published in the Journal of Interdisciplinary Research: *An Oreo Ain’t Nothing But A Cookie: An Analysis of Identity Struggles of African Americans in Desegregated Public Schools from 1950 to 1968*. Rotha has traveled the world with the U.S. Air Force Reserve and has also taught elementary, early childhood and secondary education for more than 30 years.