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A Quantitative Study of Preschool Teachers' Beliefs and Attitudes toward Diversity, Diversity Experiences, Ideal Vision of a Diversity Curriculum and Implementation of a Diversity Curriculum in their Classroom

ABSTRACT

This quantitative study with forty respondents, examined preschool teachers' beliefs towards diversity, diversity experiences, ideal vision of a diversity curriculum, and implementation of a diversity curriculum in their classrooms. The study examined the kinds of curriculum (traditional or multicultural) that preschool teachers use throughout the year and what are the factors that serve as barriers to their use of a diversity curriculum with a focus on race/ethnicity, if any. This study will show the impact of cultural diversity not being taught in preschool and how this is the potential of teachers skewing their perceptions of preschoolers from other cultures. In the long run, this perception increases a high potential development of prejudices against other cultures and discriminatory practices towards them. This study showed that when cultural diversity toward particular groups of children, and minimizing the significance of

round, not only on particular holidays, such as Christmas, Cinco de Mayo, and Chinese New

culturally appropriate ways. This lack of diversity in schools sets a stage of bringing up children who will end up supporting racial hierarchy in the society in that they have not had enough exposure or learned about a different culture apart from their home (Branche, 2007, p. 97). Thus, this paper will discuss the relevance of schools having more diversity in their

classrooms so that in the long run children will have mutual respect and knowledge regarding different races and ethnicities globally so that negative stereotypes can diminish away from the society.

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

Background

The world of early childhood education is changing rapidly. Now more than ever, we are living in a multicultural society. According to the U. S. Census Bureau (2010) this increase in diversity will reach as high as 50% by the year 2020. Currently, preschool teachers are seeing an increase in racial/ethnic diversity in their classrooms and as a result they have come to understand the significance of incorporating a that multicultural education in their classroom. It is important to note that schools have to adopt a new educational system that will incorporate all the diverse races in the US. According to the US Department of Commerce (2013), “ more than 54% of teachers taught students who were culturally diverse or had limited English proficiency and 71% taught student with disabilities. Only 20% of these teachers felt that they were very well prepared to address their student needs and 80% of teachers indicated that they were not well-prepared to address many of the diversity-related challenges in their classrooms.” This shows that few teachers have little experience to handling a diverse group of

people. Pre-school teacher do not know how to handle different children of different races because their professionalism is inadequate. Teachers must implement multicultural education in the classroom with activities to show their students how important it is to value and respect others, no matter what their background is (Yates 2013).

It is essential to implement a curriculum that meets each preschooler's needs so that all children will have the opportunity to reach their full potential. This change in diversity has forced teachers to ask themselves if they have the necessary skills, training and experience for all of their preschoolers. This rapid increase in diversity students causes preschool teachers to look at their pre-service and in-service diversity training and to ask themselves if they are well-prepared to meet the diverse needs of all of their students. Most teachers admit feeling inadequate when working with racially and ethnically diverse students. (Aguido, Ballesteros, & Malik, 2003, Parsad, Lewis, & Farris, 2001).

According to the National Survey Data (2002), " more than 54% of teachers taught students who were culturally diverse or had limited English proficiency, and 71% taught students with disabilities. Only 20% of these teachers felt that they were very well prepared to meet their of the diversity-related challenges in their classrooms." This lack of training and experience is apparent to their students. As students are developing their identity, they are also observing and learning about the differences and similarities in people, as well as what

teachers say and what

they do not say. Thus, it is ideal for pre-school teachers to integrate cultural adversity into their curriculum because we do not live in a homogenous nation thereby, making it significant for children to learn at a tender age so as to gain knowledge on other different ethnicities apart from their own.

Banks writes that multicultural education is significant so as to create ties among the human race, to accentuate the relevance of diversity and through supporting other ethnicities, and to wipe away any form of racial or ethnic conflicts in the larger society (Banks, 2001, p. 78). When preschool teachers support the cultural diversity needs of all children, then children will be able to learn and have knowledge regarding different races, which will help reduce prejudice and discrimination.

Problem Statement

A persistent problem in early childhood education is the lack of diversity experience and

preparedness in multicultural education among preschool teachers. As a result, preschool

highlight these issues and to offer solutions for a multicultural student population. While there is a host of research on multicultural education from Kindergarten through 12th grade, there is a lack of available research in the field of early childhood education on multicultural practices of preschool teachers. Organizations such as Head Start, Universal Preschool, and the National Association for the Education of Young Children provide various statistical information on the demographics of teachers and students in

preschool classrooms, ensuring quality of preschool programs by lowering the student/teacher ratio, focusing on developmental domains, the education and experience of teachers, and the provisions of services to families from low socio-economic backgrounds.

Professional organizations recognize the centrality of diversity in school curricula and

instructional practices. In addition, most educators conceptually agree with the importance of

diverse curricular practices in preschool classrooms. However, little of the information and

ideology is translated into classrooms. Within most preschools, the valuation of diversity is not

readily apparent in teacher beliefs, instructional practices, curricula and school policies.

Although the demographics of the United States society is rapidly changing and issues of

diversity and equity are apparent throughout the United States, teachers give little or no

substantive attention to race and ethnic issues that mediate teaching and learning in an

increasingly diverse world.

Researchers report that when cultural diversity is not taught in preschools, there is the

potential for teachers to skew their perceptions of preschoolers from racial/ethnic cultures.

Thereby increasing the likelihood of discriminatory practices toward children from minority

groups. Moreover, experts maintain that issues related to cultural diversity are primarily taught

on a limited basis, such as during the holidays of Christmas, Cinco de Mayo, and Chinese New

2006 reminds us that, “ Diversity is not a trend; rather it is the reality that everyone lives with” (p. 197). Therefore, there is a need to extend past research especially to examine whether

multicultural activities are being taught in all areas of curricula through the year in preschools,

especially focusing on race/ethnic diversity.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine statistically significant relationships between

preschool teachers and the four areas of study: beliefs toward diversity, experiences with

diversity, ideal vision of a diversity curriculum, and implementation of a diversity

curriculum in their classroom. Attitudes toward diversity will also be

examined. Factors that serve as barriers to the use of a diversity curriculum with a focus on race/ethnicity, if any, is examined as well.

Research Questions

The following questions guide the proposed research study:

Research Question #1: Are there statistically significant relationships among the sub-scales

Diversity Experiences, Ideal Vision of a Diversity Curriculum, Implementation of a Diversity

Curriculum and Attitudes Toward Diversity in the Multicultural Efficacy Scale?"

Research Question #2: " Are there statistically significant relationships between items within

the sub-scale, Diversity Experiences (DE)?"

Research Question #3: Are there statistically significant relationships between items within

the sub-scale, Ideal Vision of Diversity Curriculum (VDC)?"

Research Question #4:“ Are there statistically significant relationships between items within

the sub-scale, Implementation of a Diversity Curriculum (IDC)?"

Definition of Terms

The following terms are defined to specify their meaning as they were used in this study.

Multicultural Education: Although the definition of a multicultural education includes

diversity in other areas such as socio-economic-status, religion, gender, sexual orientation, and

physical abilities (Gollnick& Chinn, 1998) the term multicultural education will be limited to

diversity of race and ethnicity only, and defined as the educational strategy.

Students cultural

backgrounds are used to develop effective classroom instruction and school environments. A

Multicultural Education is designed to support and extend the concepts of culture,

differences, and equality in school settings.

Traditional Curriculum: A traditional curriculum in preschools focus on areas of

development, such as fine motor skills, gross motor skills, cognitive/language skills, and

social/emotional skills. Such a curriculum does not address the diversity-related issues in a

meaningful manner (California Department of Education, 2010).

Multicultural Curriculum: A multicultural curriculum is a curriculum that enables every

child to construct a positive self-identity, carry out comfortable, empathic, and just interactions

with diverse groups of people, and nurture critical thinking skills to stand up for oneself and

others in the face of injustice (Derman-Sparks1989).

Race: humanpopulation distinguished as a more or less distinct group by a

common ancestry and genetically transmitted physical characteristics which usually come from

one geographical location in the world.

Ethnicity: Ethnicity applies to people, who share a common culture that usually includes

language, customs, and religion. It is an orientation towards the shared national origin, religion,

race, or language of a people. It is also a person's ethnic affiliation, by virtue of one or more of

these characteristics and traditions. Ethnicity is a powerful determinant of an individual's

patterns of feelings, thinking, and behaving (Baker, 1999, p. 160).

Culture: Culture refers to any group if individuals who share usually the same language,

customs and usually religion.

Cultural Pluralism: Cultural pluralism is the notion that groups should be allowed, even

encouraged, to hold on to what gives them their unique identities while maintaining their

membership in the larger social framework (Gonzalez-Mena, 1993).

Multiculturalism: The state or condition of emphasizing pluralism, confronting racism and

biases, and seeing reality from a variety of perspectives (Nieto & Bode, 2008).

Critical Cultural Consciousness: An understanding of and respect for one's own identity and

cultural values, as well as for those of others (Gonzalez-Mena, 1997).

Significance of this Study

It is hoped that the finding of the study will help teacher educators and

leaders in the field of early childhood education comprehend how

beliefs/attitudes, training and classroom

experiences can impact their decision in adopting a multicultural curriculum

focusing on

race/ethnic diversity. This study will also assist the field of early childhood

education in understanding the kinds of curriculum (traditional or

multicultural) that preschool teachers use throughout the year and the

factors that serve as barriers to the use of a curriculum that focuses on

race/ethnicity diversity.

This study's findings may highlight the need for devising policy-directives on adopting

race/ethnic diversity as a framework for preschool program designing and curriculum framing. It is hoped that the results will encourage preschool programs and early childhood education programs to strengthen the teacher training component of their programs so as to enhance teachers' knowledge and skills in addressing the needs of children from various race/ethnic backgrounds.

CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

The purpose of this chapter is to highlight research regarding preschool teachers'

attitude towards diversity, their experiences with diversity, their ideal vision of a

diversity curriculum and their preparedness to implement a diversity curriculum with a focus on

race and ethnicity in their everyday curriculum.

Theories of Multicultural Education

Theories have become important because they explain certain aspects of the society that we live in today. Theories give one a systematic way as why different events have occurred or why certain aspect have been embedded in our daily life. Theories in multicultural education explain why is important to adopt a new educational curriculum that encompasses all cultures in that the US is a multicultural society. Thought there are some theories that are

liberal in terms of the societal dynamic change, there are other theories that are conservative in that they were adopted in times when racism was part of the US culture including the education system, Thus, these theories will explain why multicultural education should be or should be not integrated into the system.

Anti-Bias curriculum theory

The theory of multicultural education is embodied in the anti-bias curriculum. The anti-bias curriculum presents teachers with a theoretical framework that includes having a critical cultural consciousness (self-awareness, examination of one's own beliefs and attitudes), an internalized dialogue (reflection) and field-based practices (which integrates anti-bias attitudes and practices into all aspects of daily classroom life). Teaching cultural diversity includes enabling every child to construct a confident self-identity, to develop comfortable, empathic and just interactions with diverse groups of people, and to develop critical thinking skills in standing up for oneself and others in the face of injustice.

Socially based theory

The Socially Based Theory, as it pertains to diversity education and the anti-bias curriculum, is a theory that can guide teachers in their knowledge and

interactions with

diversity students. This approach includes how children, learning as a joint activity,

learning self-awareness and learning diversity in a social setting (Souto-Manning, 2009, p. 274).

Children learn through discussions, self-reflections, role playing and daily life interactions. The role of the teacher is to facilitate group learning by encouraging self-reflection, discussions, offering open-ended questions and suggestions to assist in learning.

Critical race theory

The Critical Race Theory (CRT) is a legal theory that developed during the mid-1970s as a response to some of the advances of the Civil Rights Movement that were being eroded. In

essence, the CRT is a response to subtle and deeply entrenched racism present in society

(Delgado, 1995). The Critical Race Theory asserts that (1) racism is a normal part of American

society; (2) culture constructs social reality in ways that promote its own self-interest, and (3)

“ interest convergence” asserts that White elites will tolerate or encourage racial advances for

Blacks only when they also promote White interest (Delgado, 1995). When dealing with race

sensitive issues, CRT argues that it is the details of minorities’ lives that

should become a factor

used in the decision-making process of the judiciary.

Theory into practice

In Banks' (2001), Theory into Practice, he describes various aspects of equity pedagogy as being an essential component of multicultural education. One of the ways Banks describes

equity pedagogy is as being the cornerstone of multicultural education in the classroom.

reflective activities. It is the teacher that sets the classroom environment with a feeling of

acceptance. It is not enough to simply teach students how to read, write and study mathematics.

Education must become personal where students can identify with the various aspects of subject

matters.

Challenges to Teach Cultural Diversity

Lack of awareness

One of the challenges that preschool teachers face in teaching cultural diversity is their lack of awareness and understanding of diversity and therefore addressing students' needs becomes challenging. Knowing how to respond to students of racial/ethnic diversity requires training and experience with students of diversity. One solution in meeting student's needs is for preschool teachers to discuss their parents' goals, values, culture, heritage. With this awareness, and understanding, parents and

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teachers will be able to meet students' needs in culturally appropriate ways.

Critical decisions

Another challenge that preschool teachers face is making some critical decisions in teaching cultural diversity in all areas of curricula year round. In order to do this, they must ask themselves such challenging questions as: Will we honor diversity in our early childhood education settings or will they continue to create and implement policies that disregard differences? Will they continue to allow mismatches between the culture of the family and the culture of the childcare center? Are they willing to do the hard work of facing their own biases and discriminatory practices to develop a self-awareness of culture, and are they willing to examine the effects of their beliefs, attitudes and expectations of preschool children? While many early childhood teachers recognized that children's behaviors are regulated through culturally-relevant ways and rules, according to Pappamihel(2004) most teachers were not likely to exhibit reactions indicating they understood cultural differences through the interaction with children from various cultures or nurture their students in a

culturally

appropriate manner.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

The reality is that the majority of teachers are White, middle-class, and female, and their

Ladson-Billings (2000) gives insight into the effectiveness of modeling behavior of values to

African-American students. She writes that as teachers demonstrated such behaviors as respect,

recognition of culture and responding appropriately in an intellectual, social and emotional

manner, students began to model such behaviors. Landson-Billings observed that when students

were part of a more collective effort designed to encourage academic and cultural excellence,

expectations were clearly expressed, skills taught, and interpersonal relations were exhibited.

Banks indicate that in most cases, these women teaching in preschool may have been brought up in a segregated community where diversity lacked.

This illustrates that as a teacher, she lacks the image of a multicultural society because she did not have prior experience before her profession (Gurung, 2009, p. 67). Thus, their professionalism is diminished because she does not know how to talk or handle kids who are not of her race in that she gets a culture shock. Through this study, it is significant to note that diverse

teachers are needed in the education sphere so that children can learn more about other races (Gurung, 2009, p. 68). Training is also a crucial thing that would help shape the teacher's attitudes and increase their knowledge on how to include all the children in the classroom by making them learn about the different races in the society.

Diverse teachers in schools will aid the children to learn and be educated about not only their ethnic background but also that of another race. Given that 90% of the teachers employed are of white race, they have faced the challenge of having had little or no experience with

diverse students. Without this experience and awareness teachers are unable to meet the diverse

needs of all their students (Gurung, 2009, p. 71). More importantly, teachers must understand that teaching diversity is not trendy. Teaching cultural diversity in preschools is a daily life style, in meeting diverse needs through language, dress, books, foods, dance, and activities.

Pre-service and in-service diversity training

Pre-service and in-service diversity training is necessary for teachers, students and parents. (Garmon, 2004; Siwatu, 2006; Sleeter, 2001;

Ukpokodu, 2002; Zollers, et al, 2000, Cushner, McClelland & Safford, 2003).

While many universities require pre-service teachers to take a course in multicultural education or diversity, few teacher education programs weave multiculturalism into all coursework thus limiting opportunities for students to engage in their

own self-examination (Zollers, et al, 2000, (Hyson, 2003, p. 31). Teacher

educators need to assure that pre-service teachers understand the significance of helping children maintain their cultural differences within the classroom setting while learning about others. It is important for children to maintain their connection to their cultural community and participate in the larger national community. Nieto (2000) clearly states that this is a challenge for both college they may seem, have an impact on the lives and experiences of our students. This is true of the curriculum, books, and other materials we provide for them. What is excluded is often as telling as what is included (p. 316).” Beyond not engaging in culturally appropriate or responsive ways of interacting with children, teachers’ responses and stances in early childhood classrooms were at odds with those children who hadn’t been acculturated to the dominant US culture (c. f.

Espinosa 2005; Gay 2000; Lahman and Park 2004).

History of Multicultural Education

The multicultural education focuses on the manner in which teachers deliver material to

writes, “ Equity pedagogy is defined by the teaching strategies that are used

in the classroom

environments that help students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups attain the

knowledge, skills, and attitudes needed to function effectively within, and help create and

perpetuate, a just humane, and democratic society.”

Equity pedagogy emphasizes the relationship between the teacher and the student and how knowledge is dispense in a classroom environment. Does the teacher deliver information with all of the chairs in the classroom

facing the students and student input is not welcomed? Conversely, are all of the chairs in a circle and do students have the opportunity to ask questions, debate, construct their own interpretations and perspectives and create new understandings? In the latter example, Banks describes equity pedagogy as student-focused (p. 155). Teacher characteristics within equity pedagogy are those involving knowledge and experience of cultural diversity, values and attitude towards students that are culturally, racially, and ethnically different from themselves (p. 156).

Banks (2010) emphasizes the necessity to transform multicultural education to include

others’ cultures within the traditional mainstream education. Banks understands that such a

change will take time because it took 300 years to build the current curriculum structure (p. 29).

Piecemeal by piecemeal, there can be an inclusion of other cultures into the traditional

curriculum in various areas of the curriculum (language, books, dress, foods, music, etc. is

suggested. The overall goal is to help kids function in their home community (which is their

ethnic community) and in the mainstream world (which includes their classroom). Both are

necessary to help kids function. In this article, Banks includes his views of teaching strategies

and equity pedagogy, “ Changingteaching strategies so that girls and kids of color will learn

more effectively” (p. 29). Adding othercultures to the mainstream curriculum, celebrating and

appreciating other cultures just as with traditional cultures is Banks recommendation. An

inclusion of all cultures in the curriculumis the goal.

Curriculum Tourism and Diversity Education

Teaching cultural diversity is more than celebrating holidays where this style

of preschool teaching is known as curriculum tourism. However, taking a

curriculum tourist approach is viewed by many teachers as beneficial to

students Other teachers regard differences as important and take an ethnic

studies approach toward acknowledging them. They accept and promote

differences in an attempt to increase understanding and acceptance of them.

When taking a “ multicultural tourist” approach, these teachers may

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emphasize ethnic holidays, serve ethnic foods, and teach about customs, history, art, or artifacts of assorted cultures. This approach can make some children feel accepted who wouldn't otherwise feel that way, as well as broaden the view and experience of all the children in the classroom.

A difficulty is that studying cultures in bits and pieces tends to trivialize them. Here a multicultural tourist approach is combined with a multicultural education, where teachers may also focus more on foreign cultures than on how those cultures have evolved when transplanted to the United States.

This approach represents an add-on to the curriculum, rather than a change in it. The classroom reflects the multicultural tourist curriculum by having pictures displayed and books available that show, for example, African tribespeople, Balinese dancers, and Chinese New Year's celebrations. A typical theme for December in a multicultural tourist curriculum is "Christmas Around the World" or the broader "December Holidays," showing celebrations of Hanukkah, Christmas, the Santa Lucia Festival of Lights, and Kwanzaa. Yet, some teachers approach diversity in the classroom by looking at commonalities in the everyday world rather than just celebrations.

Teachers recognize with this approach that everyone is a cultural being, and so we are all different and we all share some commonalities as well.

Many teachers have negative perceptions, biases, and racist attitudes about the students they teach. These biases extend to students' families, cultures, and communities (Ang, 2010). Another factor that contributes to teacher biasness is that teachers are required to teach in classrooms where they have neither knowledge nor understanding of cultures about their children.

Many teachers have not experienced sustained contact with people of diverse backgrounds. In

addition, teachers have not learned about people different from themselves in other ways (Nieto, 2005). White teachers may not be accustomed to thinking of themselves as cultural or ethnic.

This experience is likely rooted in their training and socialization, both direct and indirect, which

have been mono-cultural in nature. The mainstream perspective presented through schooling is

often an Anglo-European perspective. This often results in an Americanized education

(Banks & McGee Banks, 1989). It is necessary for teacher education programs to help pre-

service teachers learn a broader definition of diversity. While many universities require

pre-service teachers to take a course in multicultural education or diversity, few teacher

education programs weave multiculturalism into all coursework, thus limiting opportunities for

mandates issued by the state, teacher education discourses are centered on need, practice,

“ commonsense,” classroom management, efficiency, and achievement for legislative

accountability, and worker education (Brache, 2007; Agnello, 1998; Banks 2001).

Completed works by Nieto and Banks (1995) includes some of most influential and

definitive work on multicultural education with the objective of transforming traditional learning

and teaching with multicultural reconsiderations of what the curriculum is and should be if all

cultures were mutually informed about each other and consequently striving for equity through

representation in the curriculum aimed at social transformation. Recognizing diversity and its

implications for education has been recognized by the state as a primary goal of teacher

education (Gonzalez-Mena, 2010). However, what happens in teacher education courses and

field experiences does not guarantee that pre-service teachers who are conscious of the needs of

diverse learners will alter the curriculum accordingly. Neither can we be certain that their

experiences in various educational settings do not produce the opposite of the intended effect by

promoting more emphasis on discipline, knowledge, rigor for accountability

sake, and focus on classroom management rather than promoting good instruction to meet individual students' needs and interests. Research suggests that multicultural education for culturally diverse classrooms is necessary (Bank, 2006). It is no panacea for social and educational problems because often pre-service teachers do what their cooperating teachers expect. The outlook is not much better for inexperienced in-service teachers who are focused on survival and classroom control.

Summary of the Major Points

Throughout the literature review there is a gap that resonates. The lack of cultural diversity training from preschool teachers. According to the literature review, preschool teachers received little or no prior training in multicultural diversity (Banks, 2006). The lack of pre-service diversity training includes interaction with students of other races, nationality, socio-economic backgrounds.. It is no surprise that teachers report feeling inadequate and unprepared when working with students of diversity (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Due to the mandates issued classroom management.(McWilliam, 1994; Agnello, 1998; Kahne, 1996.)

Nieto and Banks

(1995) have done some influential and definitive work on multicultural education with the

objective of transforming traditional learning and teaching.

Multicultural reconsiderations are made of what the curriculum is and should be if all cultures were mutually informed about each other. Striving for equity through representation in the curriculum is aimed at social transformation.

Recognizing diversity and its implications for education has been recognized by the state (Texas Education Agency, 1994) as a primary goal of teacher education. However, what happens in teacher education courses and field experiences does not guarantee that pre-service teachers who are conscious of the needs of diverse learners will alter the curriculum produce the

opposite effect by promoting more emphasis on discipline, knowledge, and classroom management rather than promoting good instruction to meet

individual students' cultural needs and interests. This outlook is not much better for inexperienced in-service teachers who are focused on classroom

control. Teachers need instructional leadership to implement curricular

changes. Now more than ever, schools are more diverse and teaching staff is

White, middle-class and female. It is imperative that attention is given to

educating teachers to teach diverse cultures. Chavez &

O'Donnell(1998)writes that since most of our teachers are white and have been exposed to a mono-cultural education, they need more than a few

workshops to prepare them for how to teach students who are from different

backgrounds. Better training will allow teachers to understand students of

different values and different experiences other than their own. The overall

significance of the literature emphasizes the necessity that pre-service teachers become adequately prepared to teach culturally diverse students. They must be culturally responsive to meet the needs of all students. It is when teachers receive such learning and experience that they are able to fulfill their responsibility to all of their students, parents, and the community.

CHAPTER 3

METHODOLOGY

Introduction The purpose of this study was to examine statistically significant relationships between preschool teachers' beliefs/attitudes toward diversity, experiences with diversity, ideal vision of a multicultural curriculum, and implementation of a multicultural curriculum in their classroom.

Factor that serve as barriers to the use of a multicultural curriculum with a focus on

race/ethnicity, if any, was examined as well.

Research Questions

The following research questions guided this study:

Research Question 1: " Are there statistically significant relationships among the sub-scales

(Diversity Experiences (DE), Ideal Vision of a Diversity Curriculum (VDC),

Implementation of

a Diversity Curriculum (IDC) and Attitudes Toward Diversity (ATD)) in the

Multicultural

Efficacy Scale (MES)”?

Research Question 2: “ Are there statistically significant relationships between items within the sub-scale Diversity Experiences (DE)?”

Research Question 3: “ Are there statistically significant relationships between items within

the sub-scale Ideal Vision of a Diversity Curriculum (VDC)?

Research Question 4: “ Are there statistically significant relationships between items within

the sub-scale Implementation of a Diversity Curriculum (IDC)?”

Site

This study was conducted in two large urban counties in Southern California. Participants

for the study were selected from Head Start programs (with teachers from multiple sites) in

Long Beach, California and from a Master’s in Early Childhood Education program in a large

public university in Long Beach California (an inner city of Los Angeles, California). These two

counties house a host of immigrant and minority communities. The population of Los Angeles

county is 12, 536, 426 (US Census Bureau, 2012). Long Beach County, which is a city situated in

Los Angeles County is the 3rd largest city in the nation and the 7th largest city in California. With

a population of 467, 892 people, Long Beach is the 7th most populated city in the state of

California, out of 1, 494 cities (US Census Bureau, 2012). In 2010, the median household income

of Long Beach residents was \$51, 173. Long Beach households made slightly more than

(\$51, 094) households (\$51, 094). However, 19. 1% of Long Beach residents live in poverty. The

median age for Long Beach residents is 33. 2 years young. The largest Long Beach racial/ethnic

groups are Hispanic (40. 8%) followed by White (29. 4%) and Black (13. 0%) (US Census Bureau,

2012).

Research Participants

The demographics of this study includes 40 female teachers who serve children from low-income to middle-income families in Southern California.

Participants in the study were in the age range of 25- to 35-years of age, with more than 5 years of experience with diversity.

The relative frequencies of the ethnicity includes preschool teachers: 95% Hispanic,

2% Caucasian, 2% African-American, and 1% Asian. The average ratio of preschool teachers to

African-American, and 2% Asian (US Census Bureau, 2012).

Procedures/Design

Following approval from the University Institutional Review Board (IRB), consent forms (See Appendix B) were distributed to potential participants at their respective site. Collection of these forms took approximately one week due to the multiple sites of participants from the Head Start Teachers.

Permission letters from the directors of both programs were obtained to administer the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES). After all the consent forms were returned, the MES was administered to preschool teachers who provided their consent to participate in the study.

Data Collection Methods and Instruments Used

This quantitative study utilized a purposive sampling technique to collect data because the

researcher had access to the preschool teachers in both organizations. A standardized survey

questionnaire was developed by Guyton (2005), the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES), was

the instrument that was used for this study. The MES consists of 4 categories: Category 1-

Diversity experiences (DE), with 7 items/subscales, Category 2- Ideal vision of a diversity

curriculum (VDC) with 7 items/subscales, Category 3- Implementation of a Diversity

Curriculum(IDC) with 20 items/subscales, and Category 4 - Attitudes toward diversity (ATD),

with 1 tem/subscale. The Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) introduced participants to the

purpose and procedures of the study and their role as participants. To identify the correlations

used to answer the research questions, items in each category was correlated with items in other

categories, identifying the correlations that were and were not statistically significant.

The measure for this survey instrument showed the subscales as follows: experience

section . 77, general knowledge . 55, efficacy . 93, instructional knowledge . 39 and attitude . 85.

These results validate the internal validity of the total MES and its subscales. The data showed

that the sub-scores were relevant in the MES study regarding multicultural education. It also

showed that the MES can be a useful instrument in further research on the multicultural teacher education.

As a measure of its internal reliability as a survey instrument, Chronbach's alpha of . 83 for the initial 80-item MES was computed. This internal validity is improved when the items are

reduced from 80 items to 35 items. Chronbach's alpha is also called the coefficient of internal consistency. With all items/subscales, there was no missing data in my data set. This allows Chronbach's alpha to be a good measure of internal validity. Subscale alphas were as follows: the experience section was .77, the general knowledge section .55, the efficacy section was .93, the instructional knowledge section was .39, and the attitude section was .85. These results tend to support the deletion of the two knowledge subscales. Alpha for the 35-item MES was .8, with subscale alphas of .78 for experience, .72 for attitude, and .93 for efficacy. These data support the internal reliability of the total MES and its subscales.

Data Analysis

The results of this quantitative analysis was generated from the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES). The 35 questions were analyzed by totaling the responses. The items within each of the four categories were also analyzed using a correlation analysis to gain insight in the relationships between each one. A correlational analysis was also used to compare categories with other categories. The categories include the following: Diversity

Experiences (DE) which

asks about diversity experiences from childhood to teenage years. Ideal

Vision of a

Diversity Curriculum (VDC), focuses on preschool teachers providing a diversity classroom

environment. Implementation of a Diversity Curriculum (IDC) survey

questions asks

if preschool teachers can develop, implement, and recognize diversity

materials. And Attitude s

Toward Diversity (ATD) has one question which asks preschool teachers to choose the position

that most closely reflects their strongest beliefs about teaching.

The Pearson-r correlation design was used to locate the statistical significance between

categories. Percentages were calculated to address the research questions in

the MES. The

means and the standard deviations was presented based on the 40

participants' responses in the

four categories and the 35 items/subscales. The results of the questionnaire

answers the research

questions raised in Chapter 1.

Limitations of the Study

This study is limited geographically to one Head Start school in southern California. It is also limited to one University-based Master's program in southern California. The teachers represent a school population that is limited to children of from low economic family backgrounds. Participants' honesty and integrity may affect the accuracy in answering the question which may pose limitations. Considering only participants of a certain age range (25-years to 35-years) may also pose limitations. Participants from this study were drawn from only two counties in Southern California- Long Beach County and Los Angeles County. Therefore, the sample of this study may not represent the population of preschool teachers in Southern

California; hence, the findings of the study may not be generalized to preschool teachers in other

counties in Southern California. Because there are no male teachers in this study, the results of the study may be different and generalizing may produce different results. Because most of the participants (95%) in the study are of Hispanic background, this may limit

the generalizability of
the study to other groups.

CHAPTER 4

RESULTS/FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this study was to examine preschool teachers' beliefs/attitudes toward diversity, experiences with diversity, ideal vision of a diversity curriculum, and the implementation of a diversity curriculum in their classroom. y curriculum, and the implementation of a diversity curriculum in their classroom. There were 40 participants for this study who were selected from the Head Start program (with teachers from multiple sites) in public university in Long Beach, California (an inner city of Los Angeles, California).

Participants' data was collected using the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (Guyton, 2005). The 35

categories (Diversity Experiences (DE), Ideal Vision of a Diversity Curriculum (VDC),

Implementation of Diversity Curriculum (IDC), and Attitudes.

Toward Diversity (ATD) were analyzed using a correlation analysis to gain insight in the relationships between each one.

There were 40 participants for this study who were selected from the Head Start program

(with teachers from multiple sites) in Long Beach, California and from a Master's in Early

Childhood Education program in a large public university in Long Beach, California

(an inner city of Los Angeles, California).

Results

Relationships between the Multicultural Efficacy Scale

Research question 1 asked, “ Are there statistically significant relationships among the sub-scales Diversity Experiences, Ideal Vision of a Diversity Curriculum, Implementation of a

Diversity Curriculum and Attitudes Toward Diversity in the Multicultural Efficacy Scale?” To

answer this question a Correlational Analysis was done to test the significance of the Pearson-r

Correlation Coefficient.

The results were shown in Tables 1-2

Descriptive Statistics for Question 1

Relationships in Diversity Experiences

Research question 2 asked, “ Are there statistically significant relationships between items within the sub-scale, Diversity Experiences (DE)?” To answer this research question the Pearson-r Correlation method was used. The results were shown in Tables 3-4.

Descriptive Statistics for Question 2