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Developing Pre-Service Teacher Identity with Respect to Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

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Developing Pre-Service Teacher Identity with Respect to Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

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Abstract

This thesis will discuss how the development of teacher identity is a necessary component of pre-service teachers schooling. Through social foundations of education, dialogue about systemic oppression and teachings on historical ramifications of the educational system, pre-service teachers can develop a deeper understanding of the students around them. Current teacher education programs focus on a limited exposure to Culturally Relevant Pedagogical ideologies. Pre-service teachers can choose whether to address inherent biases or to remain unaware of their inherent dysconscious biases. Developing teacher education programs that help foster critical consciousness through reflection, action, and dialogue are all important issues that should be addressed in teacher education.

Acknowledgments

Table of Contents

Chapter One: Introduction

Introduction

Within schooling, we are taught particular ways of thinking. Teacher candidates are expected to learn the process to teach students in primary and/or secondary schools based on a standardized curriculum. Within this traditional form of teacher education, pre-service teachers, whether they be interns or student-teachers, may choose to wrestle with deeper connotations of what it means to be any student of color within our American educational system, or they can ignore this all together. The problem lies within the curriculum and pedagogy itself, in particular within teacher education programs (Hooks, 1998; Sleeter, 2012). Hooks (1998), Ladson-Billings (1995), and Sleeter (2012) state that because the majority of teachers entering the teaching profession are white females, teacher education programs need to offer a more in-depth and critical dialogue around the social inequities that plague the educational system today. Hooks (1998) states that professors choose to look at injustices that are not directly related to the students within the classroom. By doing so, it separates the realities of injustices by keeping an arm's length distance of the difficult conversations that are needed to help shape a pre-service teachers identity.

The dialogue then becomes about everyone else, rather than the pre-service teacher. The development of their identity is hindered through this process. Lowenstein argues that teacher education which focuses around the White pre-service teachers as lacking valuable knowledge and understanding of multicultural education develops an assumption that they are unable to develop a critical mindset around the social educational inequities (2011). Teacher educators within this model continue the cycle of ignorance and allow pre-service teachers to carry their

biases and inherent privilege without ever critically questioning how those privileges and biases might affect the students as to which the pre-service teachers will or are working with.

Research has shown that pre-service educators resist the claim that the education system is exclusionary and deny that a problem resides in a discourse of whiteness (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Schick, 2000). The denials of these injustices are problematic because it limits and excludes multiple perspectives and often views diversity as a deficiency (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Terwillger, 2006). Pre-service teachers tend to teach their own discourse, and generally it is a discourse of whiteness and middle-class-ness.

Within education, the teacher's role has been viewed as a portal for passing on or reproducing (consciously and unconsciously) the status quo in the hope of creating productive citizens that live without challenge to traditions and social virtues (Lowenstein, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter, 2012, Terwillger, 2006). Levine-Rasky (2000) and Terwillger (2006) argue that teacher education programs often provide simplistic discourse on diversity by creating "multicultural field experiences;" however the opportunity to engage in guided reflection for making sense of their experiences is greatly ignored. If teacher education programs do not offer this guided reflection, pre-service teachers will exit the program with the same preconceived notions around race that they inherently are already equipped with. Hooks (2003) suggests that if teacher educators do not address this missed opportunity of self-actualization and reflection discourse, then the Multicultural curriculum initiatives in "teacher preparation programs risk undermining their intended goal of developing culturally and racially inclusive dispositions, and instead, reinforcing racial stereotypes" (Lowenstein, 2011; Terwillger, 2006).

In order to understand the relationship between teacher identity and the creation of a deeper Multicultural pedagogy within the pre-service teacher classroom, it is imperative to follow White teachers in their journeys through their own reflective practices and pertinent discourse that they are exposed to during their pre-service assignments. Analysis of the teacher education program curriculum and the discourse around diversity will be examined. A cohort of White teachers will be developed and a process of examining the inherent biases and preconceived notions of inequalities within the educational system will be analyzed. During the course of the teacher preparation program, the cohort of teachers will be surveyed, observed, and interviewed. A critical dialogue around the immediate inequities will be addressed in hopes to develop a deeper more critical teacher pedagogy and dialogue. The process will happen over the course of the teacher education program and will lend itself to a deeper understanding of the cognitive processes that are expected from pre-service teachers and the reality of those cognitive processes during that the program.

Problem Statement

The development of identity within the teacher education program is critical in creating teachers who are aware, empathic and humble to their differing student's needs. However, current research has articulated that learning how to teach has been focused on the confined aspects of teacher education which is formed around a specific length of time and surfaced level dialogue (Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012). By confining teacher education to specific quantitative measures, teacher education hinders the development and understanding of the immediate value of student-teacher relationships within the classroom, in particular in terms of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) Ladson-Billings, 1995; Sleeter, 2012).

Because race and identity have been intertwined in education for many years, the specific achievement gap can be dated as far back as the development of the educational system in America, but specifically can be connected to Brown v. Board of Education in the 1950's (Brwon-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Teachers of different races were expected to work collaboratively with students of differing races overnight. The problem soon escalated into effecting not only the teacher-student relationship, but also the community as a whole. Teachers were not given the proper education on how to adequately intertwine aspects of differing cultures into their curriculum (Levine-Rasky, 2000). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, which was developed in the early 1990's by Gloria Ladson-Billings, was not directly acknowledged until decades later and is just now starting to surface within teacher education programs today (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Lowenstein, 2011).

As Culturally Relevant Pedagogy is being introduced into the teacher education program, pre-service teachers are exposed to a dialogue around race, culture, and the systemic injustices for a short period of time. Even more importantly, the dialogue is only surface level and may only be addressed in a politically correct way (Lowenstein, 2011; Sleeter, 2012; Sexton, 2008). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, in relation to teacher identity, is imperative within teacher education programs. It also needs to be directly related to developing pre-service teachers understanding of their own identity, specifically White teacher identity, in relation to the students they are working with and in unison with the curriculum expected to be implemented (Levine-Rasky, 2000). By understanding the direct impact of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) within the classroom, it becomes clear that the rising rate of students of color to the ratio of teachers of color is dwindling (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Leer, 2009; Sleeter, 2012). As the number of students of color to grow, the student-teacher gap of understanding differences in culture begins to

decrease, due to the fact that a majority of teachers are White females (Sleeter, 2012). The

problem occurs both in teacher education programs, which then trickles down into teacher

pedagogy.

The literature review for this study grounds, informs, and supports the problem statement

by analyzing how the deeper implications of the historical ramification of race within our

educational system and society influences pre-service teachers ability to develop deeper, more

empathic and humble teaching approach to specific curriculum. This eventually leads to the

narrowing of the student-teacher relationship gap that is affecting the students in our society so

greatly (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lowenstein, 2011; Terwilliger, 2006). The development of

curriculum within the teacher education program is at the forefront of shifting from a very

privileged standpoint (white privilege meaning that White individuals are given inherent

privilege based on a long line of historical events that provide specific advantages to those who

are White and disadvantages to those of color, in particular to socio-economic status' based on

race) to more of a critical consciousness of teachers, that is needed within the growing

demographics of the students population today (Lowenstein, 2011; Terwilliger, 2006). Teachers

who are not properly prepared during teacher preparation will most likely be unable to properly

create and development pedagogy that is culturally relevant to students as individuals, therefore

it is necessary that teacher education programs focus on a developing a curriculum that will

provide context as to which pre-service teachers will be able to work critically within the societal

inequities that hinder the educational system (Hooks, 2003; Sleeter, 2012).

Purpose of the Study

The current study investigates the relationship between pre-service educators

development of identity, specifically in terms of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and how teacher

preparation programs either help or hinder that development. By examining how Culturally Relevant Pedagogy works in relation to the development of teacher identity within teacher preparation programs, I will be able to determine whether or not the development of teacher identity is hindered or developed during the teacher preparation and possibly how that dialogue and exposure might create/eliminate a pre-service ability to critically reflect on their own teaching practices.

It is also imperative to understand how Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) is directly related to developing pre-service teachers understanding of their own identity in relationship to the students they are working with. By understanding how CRP work in unison with the curriculum being implemented, I can then analyze how student engagement either increases or decreases and whether the teacher-student gap of non-cultural awareness increases or decreases. By understanding the gap between teacher awareness of CRP, I will be able to determine whether CRP is a necessary entity that needs to be addressed and implemented within teacher preparation programs.

The research will analyze the in-depth nature of the exposure of CRP and also the dialogue around the social inequalities pre-service teachers are wrestling with while in the teacher education program. The research will also synthesize how teacher identity develops in order to utilize Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) within the classroom and how pre-service teachers within teacher education programs would benefit from being required to immerse themselves throughout the program in dialogue around race, culture, and the systemic injustices that still exist today.

Research Questions

1. How does teacher identity develop within teacher education programs?

2. Does pre-service teachers' own identity influence the ways in which they interact and instruct diverse, racial, ethnic, and linguistically diverse students?

Theoretical Framework

According to Ladson-Billings (1995), curriculum within teacher education programs should be derived from the students' own personal backgrounds. However, most teacher education programs offer a limited amount of exposure and dialogue around the deeper implications that race has on systemic oppression, in particular to education (Hooks, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Lowenstein, 2011; Sleeter, 2012). Therefore, development of identity through understanding and decontextualizing the inherent biases of the educational systemic oppressions needs to be discussed in a deeper more profound way during and after teachers leave their pre-service education.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) provides an insight into developing a deeper understanding of pedagogical strategies that question the societal "norms" (white Eurocentric curriculum with "surface" amounts of culture tied into the curriculum) of education as it is seen today (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson-Billings (1995) explains CRP as:

> …pedagogy of opposition not unlike critical pedagogy but specifically committed to collective, not merely individually, empowerment. Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria: (a) Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural consciousness; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the correct social order. (p. 160)

Within the realm of CRP, Critical Race Theory must also be addressed. In order to develop a deeper more profound understanding of the social inequalities that the educational system inherently possesses, pre-service teachers must have strong grounding on what it means to live in a system of oppression, specifically for students of color, while the oppressor (White upper class males) still controls those of the oppressed (Scott & Mumford, 2007). According to Ladson-Billings & Tate (1995) CRT recognizes that:

> Racism is ingrained in the fabric and the system of the American society. The individual racist need not exist to note that institutional racism is pervasive in dominant culture. This is the analytical lens that CRT uses in examining existing power structures, CRT identifies that these power structure are based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of people of color. (p. 48)

Through understanding the deeper implications of the historical ramification of race within our educational system and society in general, pre-service teachers will be able to create a deeper, more empathic and humble teaching pedagogy.

Research within this paper is founded on the theory of CRP and CRT. Critical Race Theory illuminates three themes within the formation of teacher identity; development of teacher identity within teacher preparation through long-term exposure, dialogue around the development of teacher identity within the theoretical framework of CRP and CRT and understanding of how to develop CRP within the specific context of CRT as critical modes of teaching. The focus will also illuminate how these theories work interchangeably with each other in the formation of teacher identity during teacher preparation programs.

Researcher Background

I can remember the day when I realized that I was white. Terms came flying at me like bullets that I could not dodge; racism, homophobia, xenophobia, dysconscious racism, white privilege, whiteness, and color blindness. How could I possibly ignore these realities after I had spent my whole life living them? Frustrations, turmoil, guilt, apprehension, anger, disgust, are all feelings that I felt that day and from that day forward, my life has not been the same.

Liberal Studies 394: Children's and Young Adults Multicultural Literature was the class. Going into the class I was completely underprepared for the amount of work (mentally, emotionally, and physically) that I was going to have to do. Peers of mine were convinced that my professor was racist and that he hated all white people. Going into LS 394, I was prepared for an angry and racist professor. However, I found a compassionate and a caring Latino male that was willing to throw all the harsh realities of social inequalities in all of our faces, regardless of the course reviews or reputation that would come of it in our very white ruled curriculum and societal norms that we hold. This class changed my perceptions of my morals, ethics, and overall being.

My white privileged identity was challenged. I had the option of walking away after the course was over, because there were no other course that I had taken previously that pushed me out of my comfort zone, or I could choose to emerge myself in the hard work that was needed to ensure that my own inherent biases and privileged did not seep into my everyday teaching practices. I chose the hard road. I chose to work within the difficult discourse around social inequality and I also chose to challenge my preconceived notions of race and culture to deepen and broaden my understanding of the students and community I would soon be working with.

Through this struggle, conversations with my white peers ended in turmoil. My heart yearned for a class and/or professor who would push me to critically challenge the educational reform and norms that our students are surrounded by every day. It is six years later and I still wrestle. The wrestle is no longer guilt. It is strength to fight for what I believe in. It is opportunity to grow through reflective practices as I teach AND learn from my students every day. It is a struggle working with colleagues who are unaware and happy with not having to work within that struggle. I can remember trying to analyze how someone might be so blinded to the inequalities that entrench our educational system and not WANT to fight to correct them.

I am reminded of a time where one of my fellow peers, who is pursuing a life in teaching, mentions that she is so sick and tired of the "Multicultural crap" that her University keeps "force feeding" her. She mentions that she also has a culture, a white culture, that deserves to be addressed and questions why she doesn't have a day to celebrate her whiteness. Whiteness. She realizes she is white, but doesn't realize that she is speaking in a classroom, with other peers who are of all colors, with a Black professor who has spent most of his life fighting with these types of ignorant ideologies. The realization that she could choose to walk out of the classroom with blatant disregard to her peers and her professor opened my eyes to the necessity of the discourse and engagement needed to prepare pre-service teachers for working with students of color. Hooks states that teachers need to be able to work within their own individual "growth" and "self-actualization" (1998). The process of reflecting and dialoguing makes the pedagogy both physically and emotionally challenging, however this is where growth of teacher identity happens.

Definition of Terms

- **Critical Race Theory (CRT):** A critical examination of society and culture, especially within the infrastructures of race, law, and power (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

- **Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP):** Culturally relevant pedagogy is a pedagogy grounded in teachers' displaying cultural competence: skill at teaching in a cross-cultural or multicultural setting (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

- **Curriculum:** The subjects that complete a course of study in a school or college. Curriculum can shift and take many forms based on the community in which it is developed and whom it is meant to serve.

- **Pedagogy:** Pedagogy is the method or the way in which teaching is implemented within the classroom.

- **Pre-service Teachers:** Pre-service refers to the students who are matriculated into a teacher-credentialing program after receiving an undergraduate degree through an accredited university. Pre-service simply refers to a teacher candidate as serving within a school system beside a group of students for a specific period of time prior to receiving their preliminary credential from the California Teacher Credentialing Commission. This also refers to pre-service teachers who are serving as an intern throughout their schooling within the credentialing program.

- **Social Foundations of Schooling:** The basic ways of thinking about schooling and formal process of education along with the social influences on social which typically refer to the politics, social structure, culture, history, and economics that make up the base and the structure of American schooling itself.

- **Social Inequity:** The existence of unequal opportunities and rewards that are not limited to but based on someone's differing social positions, socioeconomic statuses, language abilities, ethnic backgrounds, religious beliefs, sexual preferences, and/or race.

- **Student Achievement Gap**: The student achievement gap within the United States refers to the overwhelming gap in knowledge in means of educational measures between the performances of groups of students, in particular groups of students as defined by socioeconomic statues, race/ethnicity, and/or gender.

- **Teacher Education:** Teacher education refers to the education that pre-service teachers receive in their teacher preparation and credentialing programs. The students within the teacher education program are referred to as pre-service teachers.

- **Whiteness:** Whiteness is a social construct in relation to other people of color. "The power of Whiteness, however, is manifested by the ways in which Whiteness becomes transformed into social, political, economic, and cultural behavior" (Henry & Tator, 2006). Through the social constructs of race, White values, norms, and culture all become the normative value that is placed on general expectations of attitudes, language, and abilities. The overall notion of racism is then based on the preconceived notion of whiteness, which can be enforced through violence and hatred. These become the standards that other cultures, groups, and individuals are compared against and valued (Henry & Tator, 2006; Kivel, 1996).

- **White Privilege:** White privilege is based on the notion that people who are "white" inherent certain innate privileges just based on his/her skin color. The boundary of whiteness is constantly shifting by separating people with inherent privileges (white folks) and exploiting those who are vulnerable by having differing skin pigmentation

(Henry & Tator, 2006; Kivel, 1996). White privilege gives certain societal privileges to white people beyond the common experiences of people of color within the same realms and context of social, political, and/or economic circumstances.

Chapter Two: Review of the Literature

Introduction

Learning how to teach within a classroom supported by multicultural curriculum depends on the interpersonal relationships among many parts such as the development of teacher identity, student-teacher relationship, and an overall understanding the critical development of a culturally relevant pedagogy (Hooks, 2003; Lowenstein, 2011). Pre-service teachers (students currently in the teacher education program) who do not share similar backgrounds with their students, such as culture and/or race, are not expected to develop their own identity prior to entering the classroom, specifically within the realms of multicultural education (Scott & Mumford, 2007). This in turn, hinders the pre-service teachers own critical and cognitive development of the curriculum and develops a significant gap of student-teacher relationships (Sleeter, 2012).

Development of identity within teacher education programs is critical in creating teachers who are aware, empathic and sensitive to the needs of individual students. However, current research articulates that learning how to teach has become focused on the confined aspects of teacher education (e.g., specific methods course), which is formed around a specific length of time (such as a quarter or semester) and simplistic curriculum (Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012). Sexton (2008) argues that by confining teacher education to specific quantitative measures, such as a curriculum course for one semester, the teacher preparation system hinders the development and understanding of the immediate value of student-teacher relationships within the classroom, in particular in terms of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) and Critical Race Theory (CRT).

Because CRP is crucial in the teacher education programs, pre-service teachers need to be exposed to all aspects that it entails, prior to entering the classroom. Ladson-Billings (1995), Leer (2009), and Sleeter (2012) state that the rising rate of students of color to the ratio of

teachers of color is dwindling, causing the teacher-student relationship gap to widen. As the number of students of color begins to grow, the student-teacher gap of understanding and connecting culture in the classroom begins to decrease (Terwilliger, 2006). This is due to the fact that a majority of the population of teachers are White who have little training or depth of knowledge around issues of injustices and inequalities within education (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Gay, 2010; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012; Terwilliger, 2006). Pre-service teachers within the teacher education programs need to be exposed and required to emerge themselves throughout the teacher education program in dialogues around race, culture, and the systemic injustices that are still prevalent today (Gay, 2010; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012; Terwilliger, 2006).

This literature review provides an overview of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) in relation to the development teacher identity within teacher preparation programs. It will focus on how teacher identity develops within teacher education programs and how the pre-service teachers (interns included) own identity influences the ways in which they interact and instruct diverse, racial, ethnic, and linguistically diverse students.

Critical Race Theory and Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Teacher education programs should implement means in which to develop pre-service teachers' identity prior to entering the classroom, especially because race and culture are a significant piece of education and curriculum. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), curriculum should derive from the student's own personal backgrounds. However, teacher education programs offer a limited amount of exposure to the deeper implications that race has on systemic oppression, in particular to education (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lowenstein, 2011). To develop a deeper understanding of culture within a teacher's own identity, Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

(CRP) must be implemented throughout the entirety of the teacher education program and follow the pre-service teacher as they start their journey as an educator (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Hooks, 2003; Spatt , Honigsfield & Cohan, 2012). This particular process of reflecting, dialoguing and connecting should never end (Duncan-Andrade, 2009).

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) provides an insight into developing a deeper understanding of pedagogical strategies that question the societal "norms" (white Euro-Centric curriculum with "surface" amounts of culture tied into the curriculum) of education as it is seen today (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Gay, 2010; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012; Terwilliger, 2006). Ladson-Billings explains CRP as:

> Pedagogy of opposition, not unlike critical pedagogy but specifically committed to collective, not merely individually, empowerment. Culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria: (a) Students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and/or maintain cultural consciousness; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the correct social order.
>
> (160)

Through understanding what CRP is within teacher education programs and development of one's own identity in terms of previous notions of race, pre-service teachers can begin to make a deeper connection to the curriculum at hand. To accomplish this goal, teacher education programs would likely have to extend past the expected one semester requirement (Sexton, 2008). Within the realm of CRP, Critical Race Theory should also be addressed, due to the fact that pre-service teachers must have strong grounding on what it means to live in a system of oppression. This is pivotal in light of the gap between the growing number of students of color and the still high number of white teachers (Brown-Jeffy &Cooper, 2011; Leer, 2009).

Issues of importance in this area focus on the use of particular curriculum and standardized testing to maintain a status quo that features the oppressor (White upper class males) still in control those of the oppressed, students of color and women (Scott & Mumford, 2007). According to Ladson-Billings & Tate (1995) CRT recognizes that:

Racism is engrained in the fabric and the system of the American society. The individual racist need not exist to note that institutional racism is pervasive in dominant culture. This is the analytical lens that CRT uses in examining existing power structures, CRT identifies that these power structure are based on white privilege and white supremacy, which perpetuates the marginalization of people of color (p. 48).

Because Whites are part of the dominant culture, the obvious institutionalized disadvantage of people of color is invisible to Whites themselves. In particular, White Americans need to be exposed to the explicit dialogue about institutionalized oppression; especially in terms of how White Privilege plays out within the classroom and in society in general (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Gay, 2010; hooks, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012; Terwilliger, 2006).

Because of these systematic inequalities within the educational system, the demand for a more aware population of pre-service teachers is at an all-time high. According to Cochran-Smith (1995) and Sleeter (2012), the ratio of students of color outnumbers the population of teachers of color. A rising rate of predominately White female teachers are entering the field of education; concurrently a large number of students of color are entering the educational system as well (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Lowenstein, 2011; Sleeter, 2012). Because of this unequal ratio of students of color to teachers of color, pre-service teachers, who are predominately White, can choose to abandon the dialogue around CRT and CRP when the semester ends, while others

(mostly pre-service teachers of color) continue to work within their own reflections to develop a

deeper critical consciousness (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Sleeter, 2012; Terwilliger, 2006).

According to Scott & Mumford (2007), this is why social foundations of education

should extend throughout all of the teacher preparation programs and accompany dialogue

around the systemic inequities that have been perpetuated throughout the entirety of the

American school system. This process does not happen overnight and pre-service teachers need

to learn how to "interrogate White privilege themselves and understand societal racism (and how

it is more insidious than initial racism) before they will be able to share these concepts with their

students" (Leer, 2009). Such qualifiers like "I am not racist but…" and "I have friends who are

black" are only simplistic ideologies that perpetuate erasing a person's (students) identity all

together (hooks, 2003). Pre-service teachers, in particular, White pre-service teachers, need to be

given the opportunity to wrestle and internalize these systems of inequalities throughout the

teacher education program before entering the classroom, while being encouraged to continue

the dialogue and wrestling of identity throughout their teaching careers (Cochran-Smith, 1995;

Leer, 2009; Sexton, 2008)

Teacher identity is a significant factor in developing a pre-service teachers own

ideologies and pedagogical practices. A pre-service teachers own race and backgrounds directly

impact their own understanding of CRP and CRT, as can be seen above. Cochran-Smith (1995)

and Leer (2009) focus on how teacher educators open discourse around race and how the teacher

educators themselves perpetuate differing notations of race through their own pedagogical

understanding.

In turn, teacher educators can portray differing messages based on personal biases

without realizing those biases leak into the curriculum itself. Cochran-Smith (1995) and Leer

(2009) also suggests that teacher educators need to wrestle with their own ideologies prior to integrating differing ideologies within their own pedagogy, which is directly related to the importance of the exposure and dialogue around social inequities. If pre-service teachers do not focus on the overall notion of wrestling with their own identities within the realm of their pedagogical practices, it is unlikely they will achieve the goals set out within the curriculum due to their own internalized biased and misinterpretations of their own ideologies (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012; Terwilliger, 2006).

Another aspect to creating a deeper identity around race lies within the teacher preparation programs curriculum, which needs to develop a deeper understanding of the implications of the historical ramifications of race within our educational system (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Sleeter, 2012). Through this process "pre-service teachers will then be able to create a deeper, more inclusive pedagogy" (Leer, 2009). This can eventually lead to a smaller gap within the student-teacher relationship gap that negatively affects the students in society so greatly (Ladson-Billings, 1995); Leer, 2009). The development of more culturally relevant curriculum within teacher education programs has the potential to shift from a very privileged [White Privilege meaning that White individuals are given inherent privilege based on a long line of historical events that provide specific advantages to those who are White and disadvantages to those of color, in particular to socio-economic status' based on race (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Terwilliger, 2006)] stand point to a more critically conscious stance for young teachers, which is needed within the growing demographics of the students population today (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Terwilliger, 2006).

Extending the time and dialogue spent on Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) within teacher education programs might lead to three themes within the formation of teacher identity; development of teacher identity within teacher preparation through long-term exposure of CRP, dialogue around the development of teacher identity within the theoretical framework of CRP and CRT and understanding of how to develop CRP within the specific context of CRT as critical modes of teaching (Leer, 2009; Scott & Mumford, 2007; Sexton, 2008; Spat, 2012; Sleeter, 2013).

Development of T**eacher** I**dentity**

Researchers have shown a dramatic increase of developing multicultural curriculum and the relationship of increased pre-service teachers awareness within teacher preparation programs when CRP is directly related to the development of a teachers own identity (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Sexton, 2008; Spat & Cohan 2012). With a shift away from teacher education from creating "lesson plans" to a deeper understanding of the societal inequalities within the education system, then the historical ramifications of the development of race is challenged and teachers own identity is questioned (Hooks, 1998; Scott & Mumford, 2007). Sleeter (2012) and Brown-Jeffy & Cohan (2011) both provide a historical context that gave rise to the predetermination of standardized testing within the United States and provides a context into which CRP theory are of utmost importance in the new age of Neo-liberalism.

According to Sleeter (2012), education has moved from a place of learning and critical analysis within the 1970's and 1980's into a place of "neo-liberal business" through "standardized testing" (No Child Left Behind legislation). As teacher preparation programs move towards preparing teachers for a new wave of standardized tests (Common Core State Standards), schools will continue to be run like businesses with a new wave of teachers being prepared to act as

"robots" within their discipline (Sleeter, 2012; Spatt et al., 2012). Teachers will continue to teach new forms of standardized curriculum without any given thought into one's own understanding of themselves or the students within the classroom (Scott & Mumford, 2007).

In order to provide a deeper and fuller context into CRP during teacher education, programs should incorporate opportunities for pre-service teachers to work with a demographic of students that are different from their own demographics (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Levine-Rasky, 2000). This would ensure an ongoing dialogue around specific experiences in relation to CRP. It can also provide an insight into what CRP would look like in the classroom based on those prolonged experiences and dialogues (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Gay, 2010; Leer, 2009; Levine-Rasky, 2000)

Research shows that there are three specific factors that contribute to the oppression of culturally relevant pedagogy within the current state of teacher preparation programs: "(a) a persistence of faulty and simplistic conceptions of what culturally relevant pedagogy is, (b) too little research connecting its [CRP] with student achievement, and (c) elite white fear of losing national and global hegemony" (Sleeter, 2012). These factors suggest that systematic norms that have perpetuated cycles of oppression for years continue to contribute to the student achievement gap between students of color [Blacks, Latinos/Latinas and Native Americans] and those of students of European descent [White] (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Sleeter, 2012).

Sleeter (2012) and Levine-Rasky (2000) discuss how CRP is feared curriculum within teacher education programs because it can disrupt the already structured social order within our country. They also argue that fear of CRP is why standardized testing and "high achievement" is seen throughout the states as a societal "norm," in terms of expecting all students to achieve at

the same rate (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Levin-Rasky, 2000). However, the research articulates that it is impossible to expect pre-service teachers to teach so "every" student (students of color) can become proficient at the same rate as other students (white middle-upper class students), due to the fact that every student learns differently within different societal upbringings and contexts (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Scott & Mumford, 2007). In terms of teacher education, the over-all ideology of high-stakes testing seen as the "norm" needs to shift to the concept of CRP as the "norm" (Ladson-Billings, 1995). This then will lead to higher student achievement because teachers will be taught to teach to individual student needs, not to the test (Leer, 2009; Scott & Mumford, 2007, Sexton, 2008).

Through changes in teacher education, pre-service teachers can be exposed to experiences that can also challenge their already built ideologies. Leer (2009) and Sleeter (2012) both suggest that the current curriculum within the teacher education program provides teachers with placing cultures within one overarching ideology. Sleeter (2012) coins this as "Essentializing;" a belief that every culture holds to one specific stereotype that is the "essential" thriving of that culture itself. Leer (2009) suggests the same, as placing "all cultures into one box." Current teacher education programs develop the notions that differing cultures learn the same based on the preconceived notions of what culture is, without any reflection into culture as an abstract ideology (Leer, 2009; Sleeter, 2012). Both Leer (2009) and Sleeter (2012) agree that this ideology is continuing to be perpetuated during teacher education programs and thus hindering the development of teacher identity that would progress student achievement and close the student-teacher relationship gap.

Without the proper exposure to CRP, once pre-service teachers enter the classroom, they are more likely to struggle making connections between students actual cultural backgrounds and

students actual understanding of the world (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Hooks, 2003; Lowenstein, 2011). This relates directly to the dominant White Euro-Centric knowledge that has been passed on since before the New Educational Movement in the 1980's (Leer, 2009; Levine-Rasky, 2009; Sleeter, 2012). A clear example of this can be seen during the integration movement of the South after the Brown V. Board Of Education (1954) Supreme Court case (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). The case decided that "separate is not equal" but did not take into consideration the fact that moving a student of color to a school full of White students would in fact, put the student of color at risk and create a student-teacher culture gap that would be trickled down for generations (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Because of this history, teacher education programs need to create a viable environment for pre-service teachers to "wrestle" with these inequalities and explore the historical events that have perpetuated inequalities throughout the educational system through history and today (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Lowenstein, 2011, Terwilliger, 2006).

      Within the student-teacher gap, researchers also state that teacher education programs have been providing the stereotypically societal "norms" since before the New Educational Movement of the 1980's, while other research suggests that there are certain ways to engage pre-service teachers and development of their understanding of how pre-service teachers build their own bias prior to entering the classroom (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Leer, 2009; Sleeter, 2012; Terwilliger, 2006). Both Leer (2009) and Sleeter (2012) explain that within the realm of CRP, teachers will be able to turn this system "on its head by being educated within the realm of CRP during their professional schooling, prior to entering the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

As pre-service teachers develop an understanding of CRP within the classroom, they can begin to build a foundation of their own identity by reflecting on their personal experience of schooling. Leer (2009) and Sleeter (2012) also provide evidence that within the current system of teacher preparation, teachers just do not have the time to continue their own cultural growth of identity because they are so busy trying to meet state standards and high stake testing deadlines. Sleeter (2012) specifically states that once a pre-service teacher enters the classroom, they have "less time to research and develop curriculum that students can relate to. Non-tested curriculum then disappears under pressure to raise test scores and teachers are increasingly patrolled to make sure they are teaching the required curriculum," which makes it that much more difficult to work within the realm of CRP.

Creating Dialogue and Developing Teacher Identity

Paradigm shifts within the pre-service curriculum, such as shifts in understanding the power structure and how a White teacher might give up his/her hierarchal power, can provide a deeper and well-rounded engaging curriculum that will directly reflect student's cultural (hooks, 2003; Scott & Mumford, 2007). This will in turn develop the cultural backgrounds with a deeper understanding of curriculum in general. According to Cochran-Smith (1995), in her own case study of pre-service White teachers, she analyzes how a majority of her pre-service teachers were never aware of the implications that their own skin color holds within and out of the classroom. Cochran-Smith (1995) explains how:

> Many White students struggle to rewrite their autobiographies [a project that is to determine how oppression of identity and culture was perpetuated through the pre-service teachers own schooling] by shifting the story from one that was morally neutral to one [that is] structured by unearned privilege that also disadvantaged others. Some students of

color wrote about how they had consciously tried not to think about race in their lives, attempting to assimilate into mainstream culture by 'acting White' and shunning people and events of their own race (p. 549).

Through exploration and narrative, White pre-service teachers can start to reconstruct their own ideologies through their own narratives along with the narratives of their fellow peers who are students of color who specifically need to work within recognizing their internalized oppression (Cochran-Smith, 1995).

Through development of this type of discourse around race and social injustices, pre-service teachers can begin to work critically through the inequalities that surround their teaching practices (Cochran-Smith, 1995). However, teacher education provides curriculum to pre-service teachers in terms of pedagogical development within the current state of curriculum standards (hooks, 1998; Sleeter, 2012, Sexton, 2008). The development of systematic inequalities within the educational system are only addressed at a surface level for a minimal period of time with no regard to the important discourse that is needed to unpack the institutional racism that is still persistent today (Sexton, 2008).

According to Scott & Mumford (2007), shifts in teacher education are needed to develop a critical and aware population of teachers prior to entering the classroom. Curriculums focused around dialogue are seen in courses such as Social Foundations of Education. These types of courses provide a deeper insight into the interrelationship of CRP that is necessary in developing a pre-service teachers identity within a multicultural background of students (Scott & Mumford, 2007). Brown-Jeffy & Cooper (2011) analyze how CRT and CRP are necessary aspects of schooling as con-current realties. The problem arises when the dialogue occurs only during one semester with no transcendence into beyond the semester and into the pre-service teachers

careers once they leave the teacher preparation program (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Scott-Mumford, 2007).

Ladson-Billings (1995) explains "there needs to be a shift in teacher education programs towards a CRP conceptual framework over a longer period of time." These shifts need to be addressed throughout the process of developing identity and encouraged to continue even after the program ends (Sexton, 2008). These shifts need to be focused around identity and achievement; what specifically happens between the development of one's own identity and their personal achievements, equity and excellence; how race plays an important role in utilizing the deeper understanding of excellence within schooling, teaching the whole child; recognizing that that is more to the student rather than what is on the surface, and student-teacher relationships; building a relationship with students in necessary in fostering a caring community in the classroom where ideas can flourish and racial barriers can be broken (Brown-Jeffy and Cooper, 2011; Sleeter, 2012; Sexton, 2008).

By these utilizing each one of these shifts within teacher education, pre-service teachers can then analyze the ways in which each of these themes work within the theoretical framework of CRP (Brown-Jeffy and Cooper, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Sleeter, 2012; Sexton, 2008). However CRP doesn't obviously address the negative implications of race which are inherent in understanding culture, which is why CRT is essential in developing teacher identity within the teacher preparation programs (Lowenstein, 2011; Scott & Mumford, 2007). CRP and CRT can foster a deeper understanding of teaching students of diverse needs and backgrounds, which will in turn develop student achievement (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Gay, 2010; Scott & Mumford, 2007; Sleeter, 2012). Within teacher preparation programs, this

form of curriculum needs be offered to ensure the development of pre-service teachers understanding of CRP and CRT (Scott & Mumford, 2007).

According to Scott & Mumford (2007), to develop CRT and CRP interchangeably within a teacher education program, there needs to be a specific reoccurring theme of understanding the social foundations of education through the lens of CRT. If approached in this fashion, it would likely increase the cultural competencies of teachers during a time "when No Child Left Behind (NCLB) is encouraging teachers to push students to achieve equally without any concerns to the cultural sensitivity in utilizing CRP" (Scott & Mumford, 2007).

Social Foundations of Education can be seen with undergraduate programs, but is approached in a "safe" manner (Scott & Mumford, 2007). The curriculum focuses on how education developed in a traditional Euro-Centric sense, but can ignore the negative implications of those changes (Scott & Mumford, 2007). By creating a critical dialogue around the analysis of state standards and deepening the understanding of the development of systemic oppression in education, teacher education programs can develop pre-service teachers' identity and development of culturally relevant pedagogical practices (Scott-Mumford, 2007). Because of the critical analysis of these system of inequalities, pre-service teachers will be able to reflect longer and be provided the chance to create a discourse among their peers around the issues of race and culture to further develop their own identity (Brown-Jeffy and Cooper, 2011; Sleeter, 2012; Sexton, 2008; Scott & Mumford, 2007).

Along with CRT and CRP, dialogue around the social foundations of education is also necessary, in particular to developing notions around No Child Left Behind (NCLB) and the upcoming Common Core shift, as it was implemented to "cover" the ability of the diverse students in the United States to learn at an advanced and critical level. However, NCLB was

mandated with the "blind hopes" to advance "student achievement" (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Because CRP focuses on bringing in curriculum to the classroom that will be directly relevant to the demographic of students, student achievement should rise due to the fact that students are directly impacted with the culturally relevant material at hand (Ladson-Billings, 1995). CRP can be used to drive the standardized movement from test score achievement to students being entitled to learn within their own cultural and racial construct, as long as the teacher education programs utilize the availability of creating and fostering dialogue around developing a deeper teacher identity prior to pre-service teachers entering the classroom (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Scott & Mumford, 2007).

Developing CRP and CRT through R**eflective** P**ractices**

The development of teacher identity is explored through developing a teacher's own understanding of themselves and their students (Ladson-Billings & Tate; 1995; Spatt et al., 2012). To develop a deeper and more profound analysis of pre-service teachers' identity, teacher education programs should focus on developing a teacher's identity within the pre-service classroom. This would entail the "hard work" being done through deeper personal reflection on one's own biases and understanding of the education system.

When teachers are able intellectually to do the hard work that is necessary to teach students within a culturally diverse classroom, then the teaching of CRP becomes relevant (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011). Research shows that pre-teachers' inherent biases and ideologies are part of the pre-service teacher's culture and identity that directly influences their pedagogical practices (Hooks, 1998; Hooks, 2003; Leer, 2009; Sexton, 2008). Pre-service teachers should be given the opportunity prior to entering the classroom to reflect on inherent biases that they might hold. This reflection process is necessary in developing a critical consciousness (Cohran-Smith,

1995; Landson-Billings, 1995; Leer, 2009; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Sleeter, 2012). According to Cochran-Smith (1995), as pre-service teachers started to reflect and dialogue amongst each other, they were able to offer a specific discussion that showed development of racial identity (teacher identify), "…in response to Tatum's (1992) discussion of the development of racial identity, both White students and students of color also examined their own prejudice…"

To be able to teach to students of diverse backgrounds, teachers need to be able to partake in their own re-constructing of ideologies and racial tendencies, which is directly tied into the social and historical foundations of systematic oppression. Brown-Jeffy & Cooper (2011) suggest that "pre-service teachers can work within CRT and CRP to help develop their own self-identity which [CRT] forces teachers to critique liberalism and challenge the dominant ideology…[and CRP] teachers [then] advocates for and perform a paradigm shift." Reflection is a key element in creating a place for teachers to develop their understanding of their own inherent biases (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Leer, 2009; Lowenstein, 2011). Pre-service classroom should provide the safe place needed for pre-service teachers to reflect on pedagogical practices (Spatt et al., 2012).

Scott & Mumford (2007) and Cochran-Smith (1995) note that the habits of reflection and deliberative inquiry will guide teacher candidates towards becoming critical and moral thinkers, which will in turn contribute the development of a critical consciousness within societal norms. According to Cochran-Smith (1995), Scott & Mumford (2007), and Spatt et al. (2012), reflection is necessary and is critical in forming a culturally and critical pedagogy within teacher education programs. Reflection moves schooling from a "how to" to a "why" and it helps move learning from methods to analysis and synthesis. Scott & Mumford (2007) also argue that social

foundations of education challenge the NCLB laws within the states, due to the fact that

multiculturalism and meaningful engagements are almost non-existent within NCLB curriculum.

By developing an understanding of the social foundations of education, teacher

candidates will be able to develop their knowledge of schooling and its social foundations, which

will help foster the development of history and critical consciousness (Scott & Mumford, 1995).

The research also suggests that self-reflection of pre-service teachers own ideologies

within their pre-service assignments will help develop a more critical consciousness of the pre-

service teachers own ideologies (Hooks, 2003; Leer, 2009; Levine-Rasky, 2000). Along with

self-reflection, developing critical consciousness specific to racial, ethnic, and cultural diversities

are necessary in developing teacher identity within the realm of CRP (Leer, 2009). Leer (2009)

argues, "pre-service teachers must engage in continual critical analysis of their own curricula and

pedagogies, as well as of the structures and practices of their institutions." Pre-service teachers

should be encouraged to live in multiculturalism, not to "do" multiculturalism (Leer, 2009;

Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012, Terwilliger, 2006). Pre-service teachers should also be asked to live

in self-reflection, specifically within developing a critical consciousness (Cochran-Smith, 1995;

Leer, 2009; Sexton, 2008, Sleeter, 2012). These are all necessary components in creating a CRP

identity (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Scott & Mumford, 2007).

Scott and Mumford (2007) and Cochran-Smith (1995) suggest that through self-

reflection, dialogue and community based experiences; teacher candidates can help become a

"cultural voyeur" within their communities, which then moves pre-service teachers to wrestle

within their development of critical awareness. However, a semester long course of CRP within

social foundations of education can impede the development of pre-service teacher identity due

to the limiting time spent reflecting within this critical discourse, in particular among pre-service

teachers who are predominately White (Cochran-Smith, 1995; Hooks, 2003; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012). This is why it is necessary for teacher education programs to promote the necessity of working within these constructs past the program itself and into the pre-service teachers own pedagogical practices on a daily basis.

Conclusion

Teacher identity is a necessary component of pre-service teachers schooling, but it is an overlooked necessity within the teacher educational system (Sleeter, 2012). Through social foundations of education (which focus on CRT and CRP), dialogue around the systemic oppression, and development of understanding the historical ramifications of the educational system, pre-service teachers can begin to wrestle with notions of injustice within their communities (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Cochran-Smith, 1995, Duncan-Andrade, 2009; Hooks, 1998; Leer, 2009; Sexton, 2008; Sleeter, 2012). However, the teacher education curriculum needs to be provided throughout the course of training and pre-service teachers need be to encourage wrestling with these injustices even after they the program (Gay, 2010; Scott & Mumford, 2007).

With that said, a sixteen week course on the development of education within a Euro-centric ideology will not change perceptions of pre-service teachers who are unwilling to work within that "uncertainty" (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Cohran-Smith, 1995; Levine-Rasky, 2000). Because current teacher education programs focus on a very limited amount of course work that addresses CRP and/or CRT ideologies, pre-service teachers can choose whether to address inherent biases or to remain "ignorantly blissful" (Scott & Mumford, 2007). Developing teacher education programs that help foster critical consciousness through reflection, action, and

dialogue are all important issues that need to be addressed through CRT and CRP throughout the whole teacher education program and beyond.

Pre-service teachers construct their meaning of the world and social equality through their already preconceived notions of what society is. It is what the teacher candidate decides to do with that knowledge that really makes that difference in their work as a teacher. It is up to the teacher preparation program to develop that understanding of identity. Cochran-Smith (1995) states that teacher education programs can develop teacher candidates' critical consciousness by transcending CRP and CRT throughout the entirety of the teacher education program. This process needs to start with the teacher educator as well. Through developing a deeper understating of what Cultural Relevant Pedagogy is and how Critical Race Theory inhabits the mindset of teaching CRP, then teacher preparation programs can begin to develop and foster a more critical teacher work force of pre-service teachers in general.

Chapter Three: Methodology

Introduction

This action research will include a mixed method design specifically related to respondent driven sampling, as surveys will be incorporated, along with in depth interviews and focus groups. The research will serve to answer the question as to how teacher identity develops within teacher education programs, specifically in terms of developing Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) in a diverse community of students. Pre-service teachers (interns) will provide information; dialogue and analysis on what they believe to be integral pieces of their curriculum in regard to teaching within the realms of CRP.

Overall Research Design

Utilizing both qualitative and quantitative measures will complete the action research. The qualitative measures will focus on the in depth interviews and focus group discussions with each participant. The use of audio recording will ensure that I am able to be present with my participants during the time of the conversations. By completing the research in this way, it will mitigate against factors that could potentially compromise the results ensuring that participants will have enough time to think and digest critical questions proposed. Qualitative measures will also take place during the focus group discussion. After the initial in depth interviews take place, a chart will be created that will analyze the specific themes that were introduced into the conversations during the interviews. The themes will then be discussed during the focus group conversations.

Quantitative measures will be used to determine initial participants. An online survey will be created once permission is received from the head of teacher education. The survey includes

questions that will help create statistical data on specific information such as the race, gender and socioeconomic status' of the possible participant pool.

At the end of the research, the group of participants will analyze their credentialing program in the form of a survey. Participants will respond to questions that ask them to rate their experience of their time in the credentialing program. From the responses, data will be collected to provide a correlation or mismatch between how the participants believed they developed and what was actually developed in terms of identity and CRP.

Setting

The setting of my research will take place at a centrally located California State University. The research will be conducted in specific areas of the campus that are comfortable and familiar to the participants. The university is located in an agriculturally rich area of central California. The city is surrounded by small and upcoming businesses, as the beach is only a short 5-minute walk from the school and the agriculture fields are only a twenty-minute drive on the freeway. Trees, vegetation, wildlife, and marine life all flourish within the immediate area of the California State University.

Community. The city is home to over 33,000 residents. Ten-thousand of which are not United States citizens and 14,000 of these residents are of Hispanic or Latino descent. The other 19,000 makes up a population of non-Hispanics, which range between 39% White, 8% African-American, 10% Asian, 2%, 1% American Indian, and 4% of two or more races. The median household income estimates around $58,000. 28.9% of the residents have an education of 12th grade or less, while only 7% have an education with a graduate or professional degree. Within the city, there are five public elementary schools, one public middle school, one public high school, five private K-12 schools, and two public and private colleges/universities. Out of the

entire population, 8% are enrolled in nursery and/or preschool, 5% are enrolled in Kindergarten, 29% are enrolled in elementary schools (grades 1-8), 21% are enrolled in high school, and 38% are enrolled in some form of college or graduate school. The city comprises of 28 city parks, 50 acres of city parkland, 943 acres of habitat conservation land, and the one public city library consists of over 350,000 printed books (U.S. Census Bureau, 2010).

School. The California State University the only four-year public college located within the county. The university consists of more than 5,700 students. The university serves a diverse population of students, which range from 39% White, 34% Latino, 6% Asian American, 7% African American, 1% Pacific Islander, 1% Native American, 7% two or more races, and at least 5% chose to decline to state their ethnicity. 62% of the students enrolled are female and 38% of the students enrolled are male.

The university offers small class sizes and twenty-three undergraduate majors along with seven graduate majors. Former educators and community leaders founded the university in 1994 on an old military base in hopes to empower the county's economy. Due to this, 37% of the undergraduates at the university come from the immediate tri-county area. 75% of the current student body falls within the first generation to attend a higher education. 72% of students are on some form of financial aid. 50% of the student body also lives on campus, which makes the university one of the most residential universities within the California State University system.
Participants

The research participants will are respondent driven as they are chosen from a specific group of students, intern teachers, within the teacher education program. The subjects will be selected on their race (ideally, White) and gender (Female). This will provide insight into the

majority of the teaching profession, as a majority of the teachers entering education are White

females (NEA, 2014).

Data Collection Procedures

The community or group that helped to inform the creation and implementation of the

project includes the Intern Program at the University. With relation to the Literature Review,

multiple researches have been done on how CRP intertwines with teacher-student relationships

to form a critical pedagogy within the classroom.

The first step is to contact the internship coordinate at the California State University for

permission to survey who would be interested in working with me through next semester. The

surveys will be reviewed, themes will be pulled out from the respondent driven questions and e-

mails will be sent to the individual interns who expressed interest in meeting with me.

The one-on-one interviews will constant specifically of how the individual teacher

utilizes their understanding of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy within their own classroom and

how the teacher education program provides time allotted during class to explore issues around

social inequites. As the interview progresses, I will continue the list of details/themes that come

across during the interview.

The interviews will be extensive in understanding the pre-service teachers notions around

these different areas. The focus group is to be conducted after the initial interviews are

completed. It will focus around gathering all pre-service teachers to have a deep conversation

around their pedagogical practices and how they influence students of differing backgrounds in

relation to how they might identify or see themselves in relationship to their students.

The research will come to an end by having participants answer another online survey

which addresses whether they feel that the credential program taught them the necessary

material, skills and pedagogical practices to be able to work within a culturally diverse classroom and properly teach curriculum that is relevant to their specific group of students.

Data Analysis

Throughout the whole process I will be collecting themes that tend to surface throughout the surveys, interviews and focus group. I will keep notes and data as to how the themes might shift and/or change as the conversations between myself and the participant's and the participant's themselves move forward. As the participant's works through their answers, I will also take note on themes that emerged in previous conversations and make correlations to what the participant's believe and how they come across articulating those beliefs. I will also note whether those beliefs can be harmful or beneficial within the classroom based on the literature review issues that emerged.

Limitations

The limitation of the research includes the specific time period of when the research will be conducted. The research will only include a minimal amount of time and exposure with the participants, 6-8 weeks to be exact. To really be able to gauge changes within the participants, the research would need to be conducted over a longer period of time, preferably from the beginning of the participant's teaching career to three to four years beyond. The critical work needed to develop a deeper more cognitive awareness of Multiculturalism and identity is ongoing. An extended goal of the primary research to be conducted is to follow the cohort of pre-service teachers throughout their initial year/semester of teaching. The process of developing a critical identity around social inequities within Multicultural teaching practices needs to be developed throughout the span of the teaching career; not just during a preconceived time period. Another limitation of the study could be the possibility of pre-service teachers/interns not

working with me throughout the semester, misunderstanding or misinterpretation of material and/or questions that are being asked, the cohort itself might have issues amongst the participants, creating a safe environment for critical dialogue to foster growth and identity development could be difficult to do with a group of three-five strangers.

Chapter Four: Findings

Introduction

This chapter presents the results of my action research study that focused on the following questions: (a) How does teacher identity develop within teacher education programs? and (b) Does pre-service teachers own identity influence the ways in which they interact and instruct diverse, racial, ethnic, and linguistically diverse students?

Qualitative data was collected for this action research in forms of open-ended research questions and respondent driven interview questions based on responses to survey questions. After analyzing the data sources, multiple themes emerged. The following themes derived from my first research question:

- Pre-service teachers felt that they did not have enough dialogue and/or exposure in the credentialing program that would have helped better prepare them to work with students who differ in ethnicities, race, learning abilities, and/or socioeconomic statuses.

- There was little to none interaction with the teacher educator and the per-service teacher (mentorship) to imply the development of the pre-service teachers identity prior to entering the classroom.

The following theme derived from my second research question:

- All participants expect one; felt that their own backgrounds did not influence their own teaching practices. All participants suggested that they were aware of their differences with their students, but felt that they understand how to keep those biases out of the classroom.

Participant Selection and Backgrounds

Participants were selected through intentional sampling (Appendix A). The focus of the

research rested solely on pre-service teachers, which included teachers who worked as interns while finishing their credential. E-mail was sent to the director of the intern program at the University that included open-ended questions (Appendix A). The few who opted to work with me were contacted. Three altogether offered to be interviewed. The other four offered sampling through their specific responses to the open-ended survey questions.

All participants will be referred to base on the order in which they responded to the survey. I will not use names to keep participants identities safe. All participants who were interviewed agreed to be recorded during the time of the interview and completed a release form (Appendix B). Please see Figures 1 and 2 for types of credentials each participant is currently working to obtain and reasoning behind choosing this specific university.
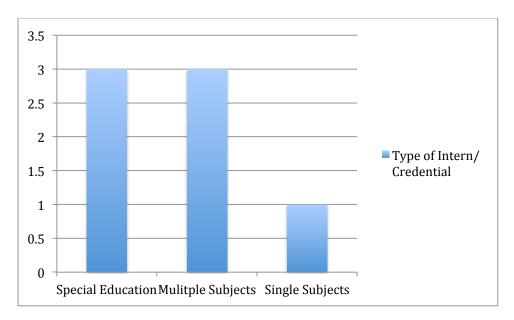

Figure 1. Types of credentials or intern credentials that the per-service teachers hold.
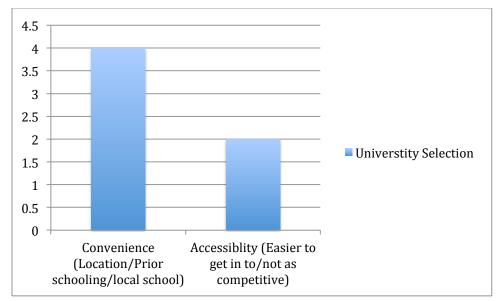
*Figure 2. R*easoning for choosing the specific University in the study.

The following are participants provided information needed to conduct the study:

Participant #1. Identifies as a Caucasian female with origins from Eastern Europe and

Anglo-Saxon. Participant #1 is 62 years old and is currently finishing her credential in Special

Education. She worked as an intern during her credentialing program. Prior to that, she worked

in business. Her current teaching position is in a resource English Language Arts 6th/7th combo

class. She chose to do her credentialing at the University because of convenience. Participant #1

chose to be interviewed.

Participant #2. Participant #2 identifies as a Native American/White female with Native

American/Scottish-Irish origins. She is in her early 30's. She teaches Resource in grades 1-6

along with reading, writing, math and social studies. She decided to go to the University for

convenience. Participant #2 chose to be interviewed.

Participant #3. Participant #3 identifies as a Caucasian female with origins from Swiss

Germany and Russia. She is in her early 50's and in currently teaching English Language Arts

for 9th and 10th graders. She chose the University due to accessibility and that she enjoyed her

undergraduate work at the university as well. Participant #3 chose not to be interviewed.

Participant #4. Participant #4 identifies as an Asian female with origins from Hmong. She is 30 years old and teachers in Special Education. She chose to attend the University because of convenience. She also received a scholarship to attend the University, which required specific years of service, which the University requires their undergraduates to complete as a requirement for graduation. Participant #4 served as a contrast to the other participants due to her differing experiences and backgrounds. Participant #4 chose to be interviewed.

Participant #5. Participant #5 identifies as a Caucasian female with origins from Eastern Europe. She is in her early 60's and teaches preliminary education as a recourse specialist. She also chose the University due to convenience. Participant #5 chose not to be interviewed.

Participant #6. Participant #6 identifies as a Caucasian female in her mid-twenties. She teaches preliminary education and right now is placed in a first grade classroom. She chose the University due to the fact that she received her bachelor's degree at the same institution. Accessibility played a role in why she chose the University. Participant #6 chose not to be interviewed.

Participant #7. Participant #7 identifies as a Caucasian female with origins from White America. She is in her mid-twenties and teaches in a fifth grade intervention classroom. She also chose the University due to its accessibility. Participant #7 chose not to be interviewed.

Limited Dialogue and Exposure in Credentialing Program

Through the research, I found that pre-service teachers felt that they did not receive enough background or dialogue around race to help support them in their own understanding of race itself and how to address it in the classroom. The question strived to have pre-service teachers to examine deeply what it meant for them to teach with a diverse population of students. One of the survey questions focused around whether the participants felt that the way they view

the world directly affects the way they teach, which directly correlates with research question #2.

Table 1 provides an overview of the question asked and the seven responses received.

Table 1

Personal Views and Pedagogical Practices

Do you think the way you instruct or the way you see the world impacts the way you teach? Why or why not? Please be specific in your response.	
Participant #1	"I know that my experience in an 'advantaged' culture affects my outlook and teaching in ways."
Participant #2	"Yes. I try to incorporate a lot of social justice and scientific awareness into my core content instruction."
Participant #3	"My background is business and I try to keep them on track and relate lessons to real life skills."
Participant # 4	"One of my main things for my students is 'All or Nothing.'"
Participant #5	"I see every student and every human for that matter, as unique and needed a program of instruction that meets their individual needs."
Participant #6	"I suppose one way that may influence my teaching is my beliefs on community and communication. I push for my students to use kindness and respect, no exceptions."
Participant #7	"Everyone has personal biases. Personal worldviews can impact the way a class is taught, the way curriculum is explained, what is emphasized, what is silenced, and what different opinions are shared."

The question was left open for participants to provide a specific response to their own

ideologies. What I found when reading through the responses is that many of the participants

didn't know how to fully respond to the question that asked them to reflect on their own teaching

practices. Six of the participants answered vaguely and danced around answering the questions

specifically; such as participant #3's response of "my background is in business and I try to keep

them on track and relate lessons to real life skills." Participant #3 is in a special type of

classroom working with special need students. However, she didn't give an explicit answer as to

whether her own understanding of the world influences the way she teaches.

During our interview, I asked her to expand on her response. She mentioned that "growing up in the ghetto of New York" helped her realize that she was "different" from all the rest of the children around her, but she never had to "question" why. I also then asked her "why she felt that she never had to question her differences" and she didn't have a response. I found the same thing happened when I interviewed participant #1. She mentioned that she is of an "advantaged culture," but when I asked her to expand during our interview, her advantage came from her educational experiences, not from her race or ethnicity.

Within this survey question itself, I found that the participants have complete unawareness that the way they instruct is directly impacted on how they see the world. In contrast to participant #1 and #3, participant #7 stated that she recognizes that everyone has personal biases. She also mentions that, "personal worldviews can impact the way a class is taught, the way curriculum is explained, what is emphasized, what is silenced, and what different opinions are shared." This type of awareness was something that I did not receive from all the other participants. Participant #7 also stated that she felt that the credentialing program at the University did not help her "develop connections with the curriculum" as can be seen in Table 2. Participant #7 mentions that she developed her understanding of her White identify through her undergraduate work at her University.

In contrast, participant #6 was vague in her response. She mentioned that her credentialing class helped her "tailor" her teaching to form the needs of her students. However, she did not provide specifics as to what that exactly was and what that looked like. I found the same to be true with the other participants as well, expect participant #1 who felt that the credentialing program did not prepare her at all to develop the curriculum due to the fact that someone else "develops the curriculum." Participant #5 mentions that she was able to learn how

to differentiate the curriculum, which helped bridge the gap between what was being taught and

what her students could relate to.

Table 2

Credentialing Program and Curriculum Connections

What are some aspects of the credentialing program that inform your ability to make deeper connections within your choice of curriculum that you implement within the classroom. Please be specific in your response.	
Participant #1	"The curriculum I implement in the classroom is largely chosen by others in the school where I am teaching, has nothing to do with the credentialing program."
Participant #2	"My credentialing program was big on integrating as many academic areas as possible into one project and that really requires a lot of deep thinking between the connections between math and science or reading and social studies."
Participant #3	"The technology class was good. I think the assessment class is over the top."
Participant #4	"There are so many components to being a SPED teacher, that there is a different approach to everything. I have learned to take precaution when deciding what is right for the students, rather than following a guideline of a general curriculum."
Participant #5	"Learning how to differentiate between the specific needs of the learning styles of each child through scaffolding helped me make connections to the curriculum."
Participant #6	"I learned so much more about how to tailor my teaching to my students from being in the classroom than in a credential course."
Participant #7	"I don't feel that the credentialing program helped me make connections to my curriculum. However, I feel that the Liberal Studies major courses have helped me recognize my white privilege and equip me with the tools to look through my "white gaze."

The pre-service participants also mentioned in the interviews and in the survey responses

that they wished they were able to dialogue more about necessary issues that students face.

Participant #4 stated in her interview that as she grew up, she always fit in because she knew

how to "act White." This helped her feel more at place and fit in with her "White" colleagues. I

asked her if she could expand on what she meant and she stated that she would "feel comfortable

teaching in California," but would "be scared to move to another state" due to the fact that she is "of color." She than correlated that statement to that of her students. She also mentioned, "None of her students have traveled outside of their city." The school that she teaches at is located right along the coastline, but none of her students have ever seen the ocean. She mentioned that:

> The very fact that a majority of our students come from backgrounds of poverty and have no exposure to their natural surroundings is something that is never discussed in the credentialing program. I wish that there were more dialogue around the socio-economic statues of our students and how that affects them when they leave the classroom. My credentialing program never touched on these issues. If they were brought up in class, it was hushed. Like it was bad luck to talk about issues that would affect the students we teach every day (Participant 4, Interview, 2015)

Table 3 shows the differing responses and what the participants wish they were exposed to in the credentialing program to better have prepared them with the deeper implications of race in schools and in society.

Table 3

Instruction Needed in the Credentialing Program

What do you wish could have been added to help you better understand the deeper implications of race in schools and in society?	
Participant #1	"I have lived among a predominantly Latino population for 25 years and gleaned a bit."
Participant #2	"There are no courses or topics about this in the SPED credential."
Participant #3	No Response
Participant #4	"What could have been better for me to understand the implications of race in schools and society are to bring up the topic more throughout the courses, rather than just in one course. We deal with different problems every day, but were some of the problems due to the racial background or lower socio economic status. I also think that I had enough personal

	experience to understand the different situations of the students at my school. It helped me become more aware."
Participant #5	"This is a complex question. I am not sure how to answer this. I think it is a travesty (or can be) how the lack of awareness of racial backgrounds on behalf of teachers and administrators can profound affect a child's life and ability to succeed."
Participant #6	"I think visiting a variety of schools in different neighborhoods with different demographics would have been helpful. I would have seen how different the more and less diverse schools were, and how it impacted the education of students."
Participant #7	"I hope more teachers take race seriously and that they talk about it as passionately as my mentor. He, so far, has been the only one that has prepared me to understand the deeper implications of race in school and society."

I found that participants #1, #2, and #3 didn't respond to the question. I specifically asked about race in schools and what could have been added, and they didn't even mention what they felt would have benefited them in the long run.

Participants #4, #5, #6, and #7 all mention that there needs to be more dialogue in the credentialing program around race and equity. Participant #6 mentions visiting schools and having exposure to differing backgrounds, while participant #7 states that she hopes teachers take "race seriously."

Lack of Mentorship in Credentialing Program

While analyzing the data, another theme surfaced. Many participants felt that there was a lack of mentorship within the credentialing program.

During my interview with Participant #1, she mentioned that she felt "alienated" in the credentialing program because of her age. She felt that she was unable to make connections to many of the concepts and current curricular practices due to the fact it has been such "a long time" since she last attended school. When I asked her what could have helped her feel more comfortable in the credentialing program she stated "that there was a lack of mentorship within the program" and that she wished her advisor would have been more available to her. She

mentioned that her advisor would take up to two –three weeks to respond to e-mail. This made her feel even more "alienated" within the program itself. She mentioned that if her advisor would have been "more of a mentor" to help "guide" her through the process of becoming a "NEW/OLD" teacher, she would have had more success her first year in the classroom.

I wanted to know more about what she would have looked for in a mentor role. I asked participant #1 to provide some qualities that she wished her advisor had had during her credentialing experiences. She mentioned that she would have appreciated someone who would have taken the time to "get to know" her and "understand in full" who and where she came from. This reflects back to the findings within the literature that focuses on how teachers need to develop their own identity prior to entering the classroom through mentorship and guidance. Participant #1 lacked this in her credentialing program.

I also saw this correlation with Participant #2 and #4. Even though both participants are of differing races and ages, they both felt that their program "lacked the necessary staff" to help guide them on a journey of self-reflection. Participant #2 stated that she received must of her mentorship from her support provider that was assigned to her at her placement during her internship, not from an advisor or professor in the credentialing program. Participant #4 expressed their concern that teachers of color are dwindling and not enough White teachers are having the ability to have someone guide them through understanding "issues around race and equity."

In contrast to participants mentioning lack of leadership and mentorship, participant #7 received just that. As can be seen in Table 3, participant #7 mentions having a mentor to help guide her through the struggle of finding her own identity. Participant #7 shows an understanding of developing identity, however the other participants lack this in their

experiences. The data shows that in order for pre-service teachers to work within their own

struggles in search for their own identity, they need a mentor to help guide them along in the

process. As for participant #7, deeper understanding on race and how it directly influences the

way she thinks, acts and teaches is a direct result of her mentor. The mentor she describes was

not one that was provided in the credentialing program, but one she worked with in her

undergraduate work.

Background Influences and Pedagogical Practices

Throughout the research process, I found this question, located on Table 4 to be the most

insightful into developing teacher identity within a credentialing program. All seven respondents

had something to say about this particular question. When I interviewed Participant #1 and asked

her to respond on her initial response to her survey question, she mentioned that she grew up in

the early 1960's in Bronx, New York. She stated that she was aware of the different burrows and

ghettos that surrounded her village. She also mentioned that she was located in a very White

community where there was no differing of races. I asked her if she felt like her experience

growing up in a sheltered community as such would have an impact on the way she teaches her

students today. She responded by stating that even though she grew up in a white community,

she was exposed to different "cultures." Each area of New York had different communities due

to migration from Europe. She mentioned the Jewish community and the Irish community, but

never really any others.

Table 4

Reflection on Pre-Service Teachers Own Identity

Please take a moment to reflect on your own identity (race, ethnicity, gender etc…) and your experience with education in general. Do you feel that you were treated a certain way by your peers and/or teachers because of how you identified yourself in relationship to others?	
Participant #1	"Unfortunately, I was in schools with NO diversity at all, so I have nothing to compare my experiences with. I was treated well by peers and teachers because I was a classic 'good girl/smart girl' and was comfortable with that identity."
Participant #2	"I went to an elementary school with 60% migrant population in the town where my family had worked in the agriculture industry since the early 1900s. My elementary school embraced differentiation and I was often so ahead that I went to a higher-grade classroom for academic instruction. As a girl of mixed race, I was often the closest thing to a 'white girl.' I was acknowledged as G.A.T.E. from a very early age."
Participant #3	"I went to school and graduated in 1971. I had friends of all races but we never even considered it in our friendships. We were all well-educated and performed well in school. When I returned to college in 2008, I felt age discrimination and a very elitist environment as a heavy disregard for white people."
Participant #4	"When I attended school in Chicago, there were not a lot of Asians in the school. It was mostly made up of African-Americans, so I often felt left out and different. When I moved to Wisconsin, there were mostly Caucasians at my school. I felt a little less out of place, but it was mostly because no one seemed to care about race. When I moved to California, I was anxious to attend school. However, after a few years, I realized that it did not matter what racial background people identified themselves with, because there were so many people who were a mix of lots of racial backgrounds. I began feeling more and more comfortable with identifying myself as a person, rather than being 'Asian.'"
Participant #5	"I am a 62 year old, NEW, teacher. That did factor in a bit. For the most part it is not my identity that has factored in to my treatment in my placement setting as I am in the majority, it is being n Special Education teacher that has affected this. I teach students in a mod severe setting. I find that all of us, the classroom as a unit are treated not only

	differently but often excluded and the assumptions of our abilities are quite inaccurate. I have experienced the consequences of Albeism in two local public elementary schools."
Participant #6	"I don't recall any differences in treatment towards others or myself throughout my program. I felt I was treated the same as in all other areas in my life. I felt connected to all groups I was involved in during my education. There was also a great lack of diversity in my program and university overall, so that could be a factor."
Participant #7	"I feel that being white put me at an advantage in my education. I feel like my race allowed me to identify with much of the curriculum and literature. Many of my teachers were white. Many of my friends were white. Racism was not really discussed and neither was diversity except for "world culture day"- one single day to celebrate 'everyone else'"

This is directly impacted by participant #1's initial statement that "she was comfortable with her identity," which can be found on Table 4. I then asked her if she thinks that her students are comfortable with their particular identity and she mentioned that it would be "hard to tell." The student's she is directly working with are moderately to severely disabled with limited capabilities of communicating. Participant #1 did stress however, that she doesn't take their differences lightly. She stressed how she wished that the credential program would have "had more dialogue around student differences and how we, as teachers, can work with ourselves to understand, modify, and compassionately teach each and every one of the student's we come across." I found this to be common among participants #1, #3 and #5 due to the differing age factors and placement factors as well.

Conversely, when I interviewed participant #4, I found that she felt that her background did in fact influence the way she teaches. She mentioned that the assessment class in her credentialing program discussed issues around race and equality and how to address them in the classroom. She also mentioned that her teacher made the classroom a safe place to have these conversations. However, once the semester ended, the conversations never started again.

Participant #4 made a connection then back to her students. She mentioned in our interview that her parents would always push her to succeed in anything that she does. She realized that her students parents, who are 90% Latino, also want to push their children to succeed, but struggle knowing how to do so. She mentioned that it would "have been nice if the credentialing program would have offered information on resources in the community that parents could use and refer to."

Participant #7 proved to be the only participant who mentioned the difference that her whiteness holds within the classroom. She mentions that she feels like being "white has given" her advantage. She has been able to make connections to the curriculum due to it being very Euro-Centric and many of her teachers were White so she was able to relate. She also mentions that "racism was not really discussed" nor "diversity except for 'world culture day,'" which can be found on Table 4.

Focus Group

One aspect of the research I did not have time to complete within the given time frame of this study was the focus group. Due to conflicting schedules and time commitments in job related activities of the participants, I was unable to meet with the three participants who offered their time to be interviewed following the initial survey. I feel that this is a valuable piece to the research that will need to be addressed in a subsequent action research.

Summary

This chapter revealed my findings qualitatively. Several themes surfaced from my two research questions including the need for more dialogue and exposure to issues around social justice and equity in the teacher education program, mentorship is needed in the teacher education program and a deeper cognitive understanding of how the pre-service teachers own

backgrounds and experiences directly impact the material they choose to teach their students. The subsequent chapter will present a discussion of the overall study and results. It will also provide limitations that may have impacted the study as well as an action plan to further refine the study.

Chapter Five: Discussion

Introduction

This chapter provides a discussion of the overall study focused on the following research questions: (a) How does teacher identity develop within teacher education programs? (b) Does pre-service teachers own identity influence the ways in which they interact and instruct diverse, racial, ethnic, and linguistically diverse students? The study analyzed a mixed group of pre-service teachers, specifically credentialing teachers on an internship, over a one-month period of time where intentional sampling and respondent driven interviews were conducted. I will summarize the purpose of the study and main ideas from the literature that relate to my study as addressed in Chapter 2. The overall findings and my personal thoughts based on the data will also be shared. I will conclude this chapter with the limitations discovered as the study was being performed. I will also offer an action plan to be implemented at the University teacher education program.

Summary

The focus of this study was to determine how teacher identity is developed in the teacher education program and whether pre-service teachers identity influences the ways in which they teach their students and development curriculum. Additionally, the study examined how pre-service teachers understand their own background influences and how they might impact their pedagogical practices. One of the biggest challenges A significant challenge for educators involves learning how to make connections with students from differing backgrounds, especially when teachers have limited exposure to their own backgrounds and ideologies. The dialogue around race and equity in the teacher education program ensures that pre-service teachers are prepared to work within their own inherent biases to create curriculum that is meaningful to their

specific group of students. This investigation examined the effectiveness of the teacher education program in regards to developing pre-service teachers own identities and pre-service teachers developing a basic understanding of their own inherent biases.

Previous literature has shown that pre-service educators, who are mostly White and female, resist the claim that the education system is exclusionary and deny that a problem resides in a discourse of whiteness (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Schick, 2000). The denials of these injustices are problematic because it limits and excludes multiple perspectives and often views diversity as a deficiency (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Terwillger, 2006). Pre-service teachers tend to teach from their own perspective and the discourse can focus on their own ethnic centric (whiteness for example) worldview. The discourse, explicitly or implicitly usually revolves around their limited experiences with difference in general. There then becomes a need in teacher education to refocus efforts on challenging privilege and perspective so that pre service teachers can begin to fully grasp the concept of the inequities that plague or school system today.

Findings Restated

Using intentional sampling and respondent driven interviews, my findings revealed that pre-service teachers lack the ability to respond to questions that revolve around race and equity, especially within the classroom, which is directly related to the fact that they do not receive a substantial amount of time during their credentialing experience to develop a deep and critical conversations around notions of equity, justice, privilege, etc.

My research also proved that pre-service teachers lack the mentorship within the teacher education programs that could influence and develop their identity in multiple ways. Many of my participants found that there were little to no interaction between teacher educators and the pre-service teacher. (Note: There was a difference between the University advisor and the school

assigned master teacher). I found that multiple participants struggled even reaching their

assigned university advisor. Many of the participants mentioned that it could take up to two

weeks prior to someone from the University to contact them to address questions or concerns

that the pre-service teacher might have had in the classroom.

      The last finding that was relevant to the study was that all participants expect for one, felt

that their own background experiences did not directly influence the ways in which they teach.

However, the participants felt that they understood that there could be inequities in the

classroom. Most of them felt that they understand how to keep them at bay by keeping their

personal biased out of the curriculum. However, when participants were asked to clarify, many

of them did not know how to respond.

      The data gathered from this study reinforced preconceived notions that pre-service

teachers lack an exposure to research and literature and instruction the multiple ways in which

someone would even to develop a deeper understanding of inequities that surface in classrooms

and schools.

Personal Thoughts of Findings

      Although various data sources were utilized, the study yielded a mixture of analysis of

survey response and interview responses. The qualitative data deemed to be the most valuable as

it provided me with a deeper insight into participant understanding of their own educational

experiences and understanding of background biases. I found that it is important that the

credential program imbed culturally sensitive pedagogy in courses and possibly offer seminars

wherein students can dialogue, reflect, and critique and analyze their own understanding of their

own personal backgrounds. Many of the participants had limited deep recollection of their own

educational experiences and how their own race might have been influenced in a negative or

positive way. Participant #4 and participant #7 were the only participants who recognized that their race directly influenced the way in which they learned and what they taught. Participant #4 also mentioned that she never felt like she "connected to the curriculum," while participant #7 described that her inherent biases will directly impact her pedagogical practices.

The pre-service teachers' responses to the surveys and the interviews corroborated prior research. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), it is imperative that pre-service teachers understand that their reflective practices will help develop a deeper more rich pedagogy. Also, it is important that pre-service teachers are exposed to discourse within the teacher education program to develop a deeper understanding of inherent biases that can transcend into curriculum. This dialogue needs to be addressed throughout the program and encouraged to be continued beyond the credentialing program into the teacher's career (Brown-Jeffy, S., & Cooper, J. E., 2011; Gay, G., 2010; Spatt, I., Honigsfeild, A., Cohan, A., 2012). Because of this, pre-service teachers will be able to continue their work on developing their own identity even after they leave the program.

Consistent with the research and extant literature, White teachers need to be expected to examine their inherent biases and preconceived notions of inequalities within the educational system, which the current study explicated. There also needs to be a critical dialogue around the immediate inequities to develop a deeper more critical teacher pedagogy and dialogue. For example, Participant #7 shared how a pre-service teacher can work within and from their own bias prior to entering the classroom and then is able to break down barriers so students and teachers have a safe place to learn and engage.

For all of the above to work, it is necessary that pre-service teachers engage with mentors in the teacher education program that are actively involved with all aspects of the pre-service

teachers experiences. Times need to be set up to have discussions around issues that arose either within the program itself or the teaching assignment all together. These discussions then need to be brought to the attention of other peers so a dialogue can emerge and growth can happen.

The process of learning about yourself will not happen overnight, and participant #7 mentioned many times that she was "wrestling" with these concepts of race and privilege. In order for pre-service teachers to grow and develop their own understanding of inherent biases, there needs to be a consistent exposure to mentorship that will "push" pre-service teachers out of their comfort zone. For pre-service teachers to flourish within the program, these aspects must all be in play.

Limitations

A major limitation of this study was the length of time allocated to complete the study. Results of the study conducted where limited to a specific time frame and I was unable to complete the last piece of the methodology, the focus group. Trying to come up with a time to even meet to have an interview was challenging in itself, let alone trying to get all three participants together to meet as a focus group.

I also feel that to truly grasp and understand the development of a teacher's identity within the credentialing program, the pre-service teacher needs to be followed for the duration of the credentialing program. In this case, it would have been ideal to have had started to work with the three participants at the beginning of the school year all the way to the end. This would have yielded a more accurate representation of the pre-service teachers personal development within the classroom in relation to what was being learned in the credentialing program. It would have also provided me with a chance to observe the pre-service teachers within their placements and have them analyze my findings on their instruction.

Because it was hard to coordinate a time to meet with all participants, I was only able to interview two participants face-to-face and one participant was interviewed over the phone. Technology failed on multiple times. I was unable to record the interviews and had to take notes during the process, which put me at a disadvantage to be fully engaged in the conversation due to having to take notes.

Lastly, not being able to have a larger response from my survey initially put me in a stand still. I had to ask the intern director to send out my survey multiple times. I received responses from seven people max. Of those seven, the three who offered to be interviewed where working within the Special Education Credential Program. Because their assignment is so unique, it took me multiple questions and responses to really have them answer the questions I was asking. Not having a larger range of "regular" education teachers to interview made the interviewing process more difficult.

Action Plan

This project yielded significant findings, as they were apparent through my respondent driven interviews and intentional sampling survey. As shared by my participants in multiple ways, they felt a lack of mentorship within the program. They also provided a very surfaced understanding of how race and culture is even addressed within the classroom. This was due to the unawareness of the pre-service teachers own inherent biases as educators. Some participants even shared that they wish they had more mentorship within the program along with dialogue around issues that are pertinent within the classroom. Participant #3 mentioned that the program holds "too much theory and not enough modeling."

As a plan of action, I feel that it would benefit the Universities teacher education program if they were to implement a mentorship program. By implementing a mentorship program, pre-

service teachers would have someone to go to during, before and after class to ask for specific guidance. The mentor would focus solely on developing the pre-service teachers identity within the terms building a more cohesive curriculum to better suite the needs of their students.

Plan significance. This plan will ensure that every aspect of the teacher education program holds some form of exposure to differing population of students, dialogue around those experiences, and reflection on the pre-services inherent biases that were address during the exposure and dialogue. These experiences can be shared within the classroom as well as with the mentors. Mentors should be professors with background in social justice and Multicultural Pedagogy who understand the importance of developing a more cognitive approach to the teacher education program.

Conclusion

As the researcher and teacher who previously has gone through a personal journey of my own of developing my own teacher identity, I have found that this study has allowed me to reflect and improve on my own teaching practice. I also have been able to develop professionally and personally. I have also been able to develop a deeper cognitive understanding of the importance of continuously implementing Culturally Relevant Pedagogical practices within my own classroom. I know that it can be difficult as an educator to make a deeper connection with students within the classroom. That is why it is so important to start that process prior to entering the classroom. Being able to understand inherent biases that transcend into curriculum will help a teacher become more aware of what they are asking their students to do. Having the opportunity to interview and survey my fellow soon-to-be educators, I was able to share my passion and commitment to continuing the fight for a more in-depth and critical teacher education program.

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Appendix A

Survey: Teaching Identity and the Credential Program
I am a current Masters student at CSUMB and a former Single Subject Credentialing student as well. Through my course of study at CSUMB and in the Master's program, I found that the development of teacher identity is something that is a must prior to entering the classroom at any teaching level. I also found that many times pre-service teachers (students and interns in the teacher education program) receive little to no time being able to reflect on their own ideologies and how those ideologies influence their pedagogical practices. To conduct my research on this very topic, I need some help. Please answer the following questions thoughtfully and thoroughly. Thank you for your time.

* Required

Please choose one: *

What race would you identify yourself as? *

What ethnicity would you identify yourself as? *

What is your age? *

What credential are you currently studying for or what credential do you currently hold? *

What grades and subjects are you currently teaching? *

Please take a moment to reflect on your own identity (race, ethnicity, gender etc…) and your experience with education in general. Do you feel that you were treated a certain by your peers and/or teachers because of how you identified yourself in relationship to others? Be sure to address how you saw yourself in connection to the teachers and peers as a singular unit, the school as a whole and the community at large. *

> *There is no right or wrong answer here. I just want you to be honest on how you felt during your primary and secondary school years as you were coming into your own identity.*

Please explain your reasoning behind why you chose CSUMB to receive your teaching credential. Please be specific in your answer. *

What are some aspects of the credentialing program that inform your ability to make deeper connections within your choice of curriculum that you implement within the classroom. Please be specific in your response. *

Where do you believe there might be a mismatch within the curriculum in the CSUMB teacher education program and what you are expected to teach at your site? Or do you

feel that the curriculum in the teacher education program is properly aligned to what you are expected to teach. Why or why not? Please be specific in your response. *

How prepared do you feel in the subject you are currently teaching? Do you feel that the CSUMB teacher education program properly trained you to work within your specific field of study and demographically diverse population of students? Why or why not? Please be specific in your response. *

Do you think the way you instruct or the way you see the world impacts the way you teach? Why or why not? Please be specific in your response. *

How do you know that the material you chose to teach is directly relevant to the students lives? Please provide specific examples to help support your answer. *
Do you feel that the program helped you understand and conceptualize race? Why or why not? *

What do you wish could have been added to help you better understand the deeper implications of race in schools and in society? Why do you feel this would have been a necessary component to your education? Conversely, was there something in the program that you feel DID prepare you? What was it? How did it prepare you? *

For me to further gauge the importance of your training in the CSUMB teacher education program, I would like to meet with a group of intern teachers. Please indicate below if you would be interested to meet with me to discuss your answers and have a dialogue around current pedagogical practices within the CSUMB credentialing program and how they affect your own teaching practices? *

o   ⚪ Yes
o   ⚪ No

If yes, please provide the following contact information: First and last name and e-mail address

Appendix B

AUDIO SUPPLEMENTARY CONSENT FOR
HUMAN SUBJECT RESEARCH PARTICIPANTS

PROJECT TITLE: Developing Pre-Service Teacher Identity with Respect to Culturally
Relevant Pedagogy

As part of this project, I will be making audiotape recordings of you during the research. Please indicate what uses of these tapes you are willing to permit by putting your initials next to the uses you agree to and sign the form at the end.

This choice is completely up to you. I will only use the tapes in ways you agree. In any use of the tapes, you will not be identified by name.

The tapes can be studied by the research team for use in the research project.   _____

The tapes can be used for educational purposes.   _____

The tapes can be posted to a website.   _____

Consent Statement

I have read the above descriptions and give my consent for the use of the tapes as indicated by my initials above. My questions have been answered to my satisfaction and I freely agree to participate in this study. I know that I can stop taping at any time.

I have been given a copy of this Consent Form.

_____   _____
            Signature   Date

Signature of Researcher

In my judgment, the participant is voluntarily and knowingly giving informed consent and possesses the legal capacity to give informed consent to participate in this research study.

_____   _____
Signature of Researcher   Date