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A Phenomenological Investigation into the Experiences and Perceptions of Teachers Education Program Graduates at Public Historically Black College and Universities in Louisiana

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A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE EXPERIENCES AND
PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM GRADUATES AT PUBLIC
HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN LOUISIANA

A Dissertation

Submitted to the Graduate Faculty of the
Louisiana State University and
Agricultural and Mechanical College
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requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy

in

The Department of Educational Leadership, Research, & Counseling

by

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August 2017

This dissertation is dedicated to Sandra Ann Shaw.

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The LORD is my strength and my shield; my heart trusts in Him, and he helps me. My heart leaps for joy, and with my song I praise Him. Psalms 28:7 NIV

I give honor and praise to GOD because truly He is my rock and my salvation, especially during my time of anxiety and dubiety.

I thank GOD daily for giving me the best sisters I could ever ask to have: Eboni and Herselle have been my support, my motivation, and my voice of reason. A nurse, an educator, and a businesswoman- our personalities and approaches couldn't be more different, but each of us is destined to do great things. To the rest of my family, I intend to instill pride for some and motivation for others. Little cousins, nieces, and nephews, let my accomplishments inspire you to do greater things. I am especially excited to see and play a big hand in ensuring that Angel, Lee, JaLeah, and Jayla further their education and maximize their fullest potential.

I would also like to acknowledge those with whom I surround myself to lift me higher- my friends, Sherise, Elaine, Dareece, Shalonda, Lindsey, Runell, Red, and Joy. Whether you were a part of this journey from the beginning, or you joined the last lap of the mile, I am truly grateful for your love and friendship.

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ABSTRACT

As a growing number of students from racially and culturally diverse backgrounds enter United States' public schools, fundamental changes in our educational system are essential to ensure the educational equity and academic achievement of all students. Historically, students from diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds perform lower on multiple indicators of school success than their White counterparts (Howard, 2015; Ladson-Billings, 2000, 2009). Scholars and theorists attribute the low academic performance of students of color to two obtrusive and related factors: the disparity between the demographic profiles of teachers and student, and the absence of multiculturalism and culturally responsive pedagogy in K-12 public schools. Education reform initiatives, however, have responded to these related factors with separate efforts. The intent of this study was to contribute to an insufficient body of research that focuses on the preparation and development of Black teachers. The study was designed to investigate the experiences of public HBCU teacher education graduates and gain an in-depth understanding of how they perceived their development and preparation to facilitate academic achievement for students of color.

CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

The “Browning of America” as described by scholars and popular press (Suarez, 2013; Sundstrom, 2008) signifies that the presence of racial and ethnic minorities among the United States’ population has drastically increased over the past 30 years and has caused a demographic transformation. According to the U.S. Census Bureau (2015), the United States’ population is expected to become a majority-minority nation by 2044. Demographers predict that by the year 2060, minorities will make up 57% of the nation’s population, compared with 38% in 2014. This demographic shift has already divulged in the faces of the students sitting in our public schools. A 2014 report from the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) showed that the population of students of color in public schools increased from 39% in 2001 to 48% in 2014. Reports further estimate that students of color will represent 64% of public school children on the 2060 census (Colby, & Ortman, 2015). As students of color become more prevalent in public schools, fundamental changes in our educational system are essential to ensure the educational equity and academic achievement for all students. First, scholars and theorists insist that teachers reflect students’ diversity (Banks, Jackson, & Harper, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1995). Though all teachers, regardless of race, can be taught and trained to be effective teachers for students of color, Booker (2007), King (1993), and Myers, Kim, and Mandala (2004) identified a correlation between the low academic achievement of students of color and the lack of teacher diversity. These findings suggest that a broader pool of highly qualified teachers of color can change the academic achievement disparities between students of color and their White peers. Studies have shown that students of color benefited (i.e. achieve more academically) from having teachers who understand their culture and are of the same racial background (Cummins, 1986; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Peske, & Haycock, 2006). Pitts (2007)

insisted that the presence of teachers of color improved the performance of students of color directly and indirectly because they served as role models, mentors, advocates, surrogate parent figures, disciplinarians, counselors, and overall advocates for their academic, social, emotional, and moral development. More specifically, Cross and Donovan's (2002) study of the significance of Black teachers in the classroom found that, when Black teachers were more prominent, the suspension and expulsion rates decreased for students of color in special education classes, and the rates of students of color in gifted and talented programs, and the percentage of students of color graduating from high school, increased considerably.

Recognizing the critical role they play in ensuring equity in our education system, scholars have extensively focused on the recruitment and retention of Black teachers. Less attention, however, has concentrated on the preparation and development of Black teachers to teach students of color. The preparation of teacher candidates for effective teaching of racially and culturally diverse students is a contentious topic for education policymakers and practitioners. College and university-based teacher education has been charged with adequately preparing future teachers for the demands of the contemporary school, by providing them with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to address the unique and varying needs and learning styles that racially and culturally diverse students bring into the classroom. This implies the need for college and universities to alter their prevailing philosophies of the traditional program model and consider new paradigms for teacher training. The reconstructed purpose of teacher education is to create competent, caring, reflective individuals who are committed to building a democratic society that promotes equity and cultural pluralism (Cochran-Smith, & Power, 2010). In other words, the primary focus of teacher education programs should be to develop teachers whose educational philosophies and instructional goals and practices are geared

towards maintaining the success of generations to come. Criticisms of traditional teacher education programs focus on the discontinuity of best pedagogical practices to address diverse learners (Lasley, Bainbridge, & Berry, 2002).

Statement of the Problem

Few topics in education have captured as much attention from scholars and practitioners as the connection between teacher quality and student achievement. The conviction that high-quality teachers have enriching effects on their students' educational success remains undisputed. Studies have also suggested a correlation between teacher preparation quality and student achievement (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2009; Goldhaber, Liddle, & Theobald, 2013). Now, as America's public schools fill with students from diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds, preparing teachers to teach these students effectively has captured the attention of scholars and practitioners (Ullucci & Howard, 2015). Howard (2015) and Ladson-Billings (2000, 2009) found that students from diverse racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds perform lower on multiple indicators of school success than their White counterparts. Scholars and theorists attribute the low academic performance of students of color to the obtrusive and related factors of the disparity between the demographic profiles of teachers and student, and the absence of multiculturalism and culturally responsive pedagogy in K-12 public schools (Boser, 2011). Education reform initiatives have responded to these related factors with separate efforts.

First, teacher education and preparation programs across America have been charged with equipping future teachers with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively teach students of differing learning, racial, cultural, linguistic, and economic backgrounds (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Gay, 2004; Howard, & Milner, 2014; Ladson-Billings,

2006; Sleeter, 2001; Whipp, 2013). Research suggests that it is imperative that future teachers acquire, content, and pedagogy knowledge to foster a holistic multicultural education (Darling-Hammond, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Lasley, Bainbridge, & Berry, 2002), and the skills and dispositions to go beyond stereotypes associated with teaching, learning, and curriculum policies and practices (Ronfeldt, Schwartz, & Jacob, 2014); this implies the need for schools and colleges of education to alter their prevailing philosophies of the traditional program model and consider new paradigms for teacher training.

Second, education reform efforts have responded by making national calls to increase the number and proportion of teachers from racially diverse backgrounds (Villegas & Irvine, 2010). These efforts have been fueled by research that shows that a broader pool of highly qualified teachers of color alleviates academic disparities between students of color and White students (King, 1993; Meier, 1984). Policymakers and educators advocate increasing the racial and cultural diversity of the teacher workforce to serve the educational needs of students of color under the premise that they are especially suited to understanding the cultural experiences of these learners and engaging in instructional practices that support students from non-dominant communities (Haycock 2001; Irvine 1988; Villegas, & Irvine, 2010; Villegas, & Lucas, 2004).

Since the disparity between the demographic profiles of teachers and student, and the development of multiculturalism and culturally responsive pedagogy for future teachers are addressed as separate topics, little is known about the multiculturalism and culturally responsive pedagogy preparation and development of teachers of color, more specifically Black teachers. Perhaps, the scarcity in substantial data-driven or research-based best practices for the development and training of Black teachers is due to the assumption that they instinctively know how to address the needs of students of color; or, because of their cultural backgrounds and

experiences, they automatically embrace multiculturalism and culturally responsive teaching practices and can implement them into the required mainstream curriculum. Either way, the lack of discussion in regards to Black teachers' preparation for teaching students of color has resulted in the lack of educational literature that foregoes any efforts to engage in the conversation about how to support and foster learning experiences that will develop Black teachers into proficient and culturally responsive educators.

Purpose of the Study

The intent of this study was to contribute to an insufficient body of research that focuses on the preparation and development of Black teachers. The primary purpose of the first Historically Black College and Universities (HBCUs) was to train and educate future teachers for Black students (Fairclough, 2009). As these institutions continue to produce high volumes of Black teachers, the inquiry of their current model of teacher training can provide rich descriptions of the development and preparation of their graduates. The study was designed to investigate the experiences of public HBCU teacher education graduates and gain an in-depth understanding of how they perceived their development and preparation to facilitate academic achievement for students of color. The central research question that guided this study was: How do graduates of public HBCU teacher education programs perceive their development and preparation for teaching students of color?

In addition, the following subsidiary research questions added clarity to the central research question:

- 1) How do graduates of public HBCU teacher education programs (TEP) perceive their acquisition of knowledge, pedagogical skills, and dispositions for facilitating the academic achievement of students of color?

- 2) What specific experiences, curriculum models, and pedagogical practices contributed to their development and preparation?

Theoretical Framework

The theoretical framework for this study is rooted in the social constructivist philosophical worldview and guided by critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970), and culturally relevant pedagogy (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995). These theoretical frames shape the understanding of knowledge and learning within a social and cultural context. Social constructivism approach is used in qualitative research that offers an explanation of the nature of knowledge and how human beings learn. It maintains that individuals create or construct their new understandings or knowledge through the interaction of what they already know and believe, and the ideas, events, and activities with which they come in contact (Cannella & Reiff, 1994; Richardson, 1997). Simply, our experiences shape our ideologies; we make meaning of our experiences based on our ideologies.

Critical pedagogy approach critiques the methods, applications, and the organization of educational theory and curriculum that maintains oppressive learning contexts and environments (Giroux, 2004). It provides teachers with a way to question the material being taught and initiates the investigation of the long-held social and political factors that impact education. Critical pedagogy was essential to framing this study because it is necessary for teacher educators to foster teacher candidates' critical view of the world, themselves, their practice, and the institutions in which they operate, to encourage such attitudes in their students.

Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) has emerged as a theoretical and pedagogical approach that addresses a major goal of critical pedagogy, which is to rethink the oppressive learning contexts and environments and give students an equal chance to experience educational

success (Banks, 2004). Ladson-Billings (1995) defined CRP as a “pedagogy that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools perpetuate” (p. 469). CRP goes beyond acknowledging the disparities in the schooling experiences and provides a guide for creating opportunities for all students. CRP was significant to this study because teachers must see the inconsistencies and the inequities, and bridge home and school cultures to the learning environment (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Critical pedagogy and culturally relevant pedagogy are means through which teachers make meaning as they interact with each other and students in the context of race and culture, and in how they make decisions about their instruction. These theoretical frameworks emphasize the concept that knowledge can and should be socially constructed, as well as create change. These concepts were appropriate for this study because the goal of said ideologies is that the analysis be linked in some way with race, cultural, historical, or institutional factors (Wertsch, 1993). To make sense of new concepts, teachers ground their thoughts in concrete experiences of the social world. How Black educators understand and think about culturally responsive teaching changes as teacher education programs provide more meaningful experiences.

Significance of Study

In response to the nation’s changing demographics, educational literature has addressed its severe implications on teaching and learning in classrooms. Realizing the dangers of the teacher-student racial and cultural mismatch, literature has highlighted recruiting and retaining efforts of teachers of color, the development of cultural competence of White educators, and the necessity of multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching practices in elementary and secondary education. Teacher education has also become a target of reform efforts as

scholars, theorists, and critics deem multicultural teacher education and the development of pedagogical skills as necessary components of an effective teacher preparation program. In many aspects, this vast body of literature fails to outline any data-driven or research-based best practices for the development and training of Black teachers who teach students of color. Additionally, there have been virtually no investigations into how teacher education programs at HBCUs respond to the changing nation by preparing teacher candidates to facilitate the academic achievement of students of color.

This study is significant in several ways. First, it can provide teacher education programs with recommendations for a contemporary teacher training curriculum. This study provides data that documents teachers' perceptions of what is most pertinent to their acquisition of the necessary pedagogical skills to address the academic needs of students of color. The findings inform teacher educators about the type of experiences that could be incorporated into teacher education programs to help sensitize students to cultural diversity (Howell, 1997). Second, this study invites conversation with regards to the understanding of instructional practices, curriculum models, and conceptual frameworks utilized in teacher education programs at HBCUs, and how these critical components of effective teaching impact the development of Black teachers. Often, there is a presumption that teachers of color possess pedagogical skills that benefit students of color, particularly race- and culture-related practices aimed at addressing social inequities in schooling (i.e., culturally grounded pedagogy); however, there is limited research on the underpinnings of culturally relevant pedagogy among Black teachers. Finally, disregard of the historical and current contributions of HBCUs in preparing Black teachers has raised questions concerning their centrality and necessity in "post-racial" America when majority institutions have extended educational opportunities to minorities (King, 1993). This study

brings attention to the continued relevance of HBCUs by highlighting the contributions they make in K-12 and higher education through teacher education. The survival, maintenance, and advancement of teacher education programs at HBCUs are critical to strengthening the corps of K-12 Black teachers, and to the educational equity and academic achievement for students of color.

Definitions of Key Terms

The following definitions are provided to ensure uniform understanding of the use of these terms throughout the study.

Academic Achievement – Students’ success in meeting short- or long-term goals in education.

Culture – The values, norms, and traditions that affect how individuals of a particular group perceive, think, interact, behave, and make judgments about their world (Freire, 1970, p.12).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy – A curriculum, a methodology, and instructional materials that are responsive to all students’ values, cultural norms, learning, emotional, and social needs (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p.160).

Culturally Responsive Teaching – The practice of integrating the experiences, perspectives, and histories of students from different cultural backgrounds into teaching practices (Gay, 2010, p. 19).

Dispositions – The attitudes, values, and beliefs that impact the teachers’ interactions with others (Ros-Voseles & Moss, 2007, p. 90).

Diversity – The dissimilarities in traits, qualities, characteristics, beliefs, values, and mannerisms in self and others.

Education Equity – The educational policies, practices, and programs necessary to (a) eliminate

educational barriers based on gender, race/ethnicity, national origin, color, disability, age, or other protected groups; and (b) provide equal educational opportunities and ensure that historically underserved and underrepresented populations meet the same rigorous standards for academic performance expected of all children (Bitters, 1994).

Highly Qualified Teacher – Under the provisions of NCLB (2008), a teacher is determined to be highly qualified if he or she (1) has a bachelor's degree, (2) holds full state certification or licensure, and (3) proves that he/she knows each subject taught.

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCU) – An institution that was established prior to 1964, whose principal mission was, and is, the education of Black Americans (U.S. Dept. of Education, 2015).

Multicultural Education – Teaching that incorporates the histories, texts, values, beliefs, and perspectives of people from different cultural backgrounds.

Novice Teachers – Teachers who have taught 2-5 years (Pogodzinski, 2012, p.988).

Teacher Candidate – A teacher education student who has completed all prerequisites and has been accepted into the professional school.

Pedagogy – The art, science, or profession of teaching; all the aspects of educational practice that come together in the realities of what happens in a classroom.

Assumptions and Limitations

- 1) It is assumed that the participants responded openly, honestly, and to the best of their abilities in answering interview questions.
- 2) It is assumed that the sample of participants chosen for the study was adequate in size for findings to have value.
- 3) The study included a very select group of HBCU TEP graduates; as such, results of this

study may not generally be applicable to graduates of other HBCU TEPs.

Chapter Summary and Organization of Study

This chapter introduced the statement of the problem and purpose of the study. It also included the research questions, the significance of the study, a brief overview of the study design and theoretical perspective, the definition of terms, the assumptions, and the limitations. Chapter Two provides a review of related literature. Chapter Three describes the design of the study and presents a description of the methodology used in the study. Chapter Four presents the results of the data analysis and findings. Finally, Chapter Five contains a summary of the study with a discussion of the findings, the researcher's suggestions for HBCU TEPs, further research, and the researcher's concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER II: REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Introduction

This chapter presents a review of literature related to the identified problem, research questions, and theoretical framework described in Chapter One. The first section contains a summary of the literature that addresses the educational needs of students of color, including diversifying the teacher workforce and enhancing multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching practices in K-12 schools. The following section reviews literature relevant to teacher education program. The final section includes literature of the role of Historically Black College and Universities in the educational equity and academic achievement for students of color, including their historical context and student outcomes.

Educational Equity and Academic Achievement for Students of Color

The notions of quality and equitable education are multilayered and encompass the interests of students' backgrounds and cultures, their educational environments, their educational outcomes, and the political and sociocultural context of the education system. The goal of educational equity in America's public schools is to implement practices, policies, and programs that eliminate educational barriers based on gender, race, disability, etc. (Carlisle, Jackson, & George, 2006). Educational equity for students of color is about providing fair and inclusive educational opportunities and ensuring that historically underserved and underrepresented populations of students meet the same rigorous standards for academic performance expected of all children.

While often used interchangeably with the related principles of equality, equity encompasses a wide variety of educational models, programs, and strategies. Equity strategies are planned, systematic, and focus on the core of the teaching and learning process (i.e.

curriculum, instruction, and school environment/culture). Educational equity activities promote the real possibility of equality of education for each student and among diverse student populations. Thus, equity is the extensive process with the desired outcome of equality. The literature on educational equity focuses on three major topics: (a) equity of inputs, in terms of student access to schooling and resources available; (b) equity of outcomes, which generally compares student achievement in terms of test scores and long-term indicators such as graduation rates; and (c) equity of adaptable educational variables, such as instructional approaches, program design, and curriculum (Murphy, 1988). Ladson-Billings (1995) and Darling-Hammond (2000) argued that for students of color to have a truly equitable education experience, it is imperative that teachers reflect their diversity, have a comprehensive understanding of multicultural education, and possess culturally responsive pedagogical skills.

Cultural Matching

As the United States' population, and, in turn its student body, has grown more diverse, the teaching force has not kept pace. The "demographic divide" (Banks et al., 2005; Gay, 2010; Renzulli, Parrott, & Beattie, 2011) describes one of the many interrelated challenges facing public education that resulted from demographic shifts in student populations over the past several decades, contrasted with the constant demographic characteristics of public school teachers. America's teachers and prospective teachers are traditionally and continuously from White middle-class backgrounds (Banks, 2004; Cochran-Smith, 2004). The growing mismatch in the racial and cultural diversity among students and the teachers is believed to be a major stumbling block on the path towards greater academic achievement for students of color (Dilworth & Coleman 2014; Quirocho & Rios, 2000; Villegas & Lucas, 2010). This disparity is problematic because the majority of White, middle-class teachers have limited understandings

about differences related to culture, class, and race, and how they influence the overall learning process; they lack the pedagogical content knowledge to meet the needs of racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students, and often harbor resistant attitudes about working with them (Chapman, 2011; Delpit, 1995).

Though heavily emphasized that students of color (SoC) perform significantly lower than their White classmates on standardized tests (Borman & Kimball, 2005), academic achievement does not pertain only to test scores. SoC are also overrepresented in special education programs, vocational curricular tracks, drop out of school more frequently, and enroll in post-secondary education at lower rates (Artiles, Palmer, & Trent, 2004; Rothstein, 2004; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Though all teachers, regardless of race, can be taught and trained to be effective teachers for SoC, Booker (2007), King (1993), and Myers, Kim, and Mandala (2004) identified a correlation between the low academic achievement of SoC and the lack of teacher diversity. These findings suggested that having a broader pool of highly qualified teachers of color can potentially change the academic achievement disparities between SoC and their White peers.

Studies indicate that SoC benefit (i.e. achieve more academically) from having teachers who understand their culture and are of the same racial background (Cummins, 1986; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Peske & Haycock, 2006). Pitts (2007) insisted that the presence of teachers of color improves the performance of SoC directly and indirectly because they serve as role models, mentors, advocates, surrogate parent figures, disciplinarians, counselors, and overall advocates for their academic, social, emotional, and moral development. More specifically, Cross and Donovan's (2002) study of the significance of Black teachers in the classroom found that when Black teachers were more prominent, the suspension and expulsion rates of students of color in

special education classes decreased, and the rates of students of color in gifted and talented programs and graduation from high school increased.

Recognizing the critical role that teachers of color play in ensuring equity in our education system, numerous initiatives at the national and program-based level have aimed at the recruitment of teacher of color (Sleeter, 2001). For example, Teach.org (a partnership between the Department of Education and several companies, teacher unions, and other groups) strives to recruit the “next generation” of teachers, emphasizing the need to build a more diverse teaching force. In addition, former President Obama issued an executive order to launch the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for African Americans, and the White House Initiative on Educational Excellence for Hispanics. The fundamental objective of both initiatives was to ensure high-quality education for both Black and Hispanic students, which included supporting efforts to improve the “recruitment, preparation, and development” of successful Black and Hispanic teachers and school leaders. School districts, universities, alternative teacher preparation programs, and community groups have also responded to the call to increase the racial and cultural diversity of our nation’s teaching force. Unfortunately, however, for decades there has been a fixed shortage of Black teachers (Ingersoll & May, 2011).

Reports indicated that of the estimated 3.1 million teachers in U.S. public K-12 schools, teachers of color represent only 18% of the profession (NCES, 2014; Albert Shankar Institute, 2015). Current demographic data suggest that the shortage of teachers of color is particularly critical among Black teachers, and this same subgroup has shown the slowest growth among all racial and ethnic groups (Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012). The underrepresentation of Black teachers in America’s public schools is a problem that has deep roots that are entrenched in the

history of race relations in American society, from the free public common schools in the late 1700s to the era of court battles over equitable education (Fairclough, 2009).

Despite national calls for diversity, the number of Black educators remains stagnant due to factors including racial gaps in access to and completion of college degrees, lower (than Whites) interest in teaching careers, personal educational experience, low retention, and federal, state, and district school reforms (ASI, 2015; U.S. Department of Education, 2011; Snyder & Dillow, 2015). School reform efforts, such as school turnarounds, are tied to national high-stakes accountability policies that are intended to improve low-performing schools through top-down prescriptive mandates. These reforms often involve school closures, mass layoffs, and charter conversions (Trujillo & Rénee, 2012). These turnarounds often result in scores of teachers being fired or removed from their jobs, particularly Black teachers who work disproportionately in schools serving low-income students and students of color (Buras, 2015). In some cases, the underrepresentation of teachers of color is due to the barriers to employment in newly created charter schools. This unbalanced opportunity is evident in the low rates of Black teacher hires and disproportionately high rates of White teacher hires in charter schools (ASI, 2015).

Frequently lost in broader debates concerning the underrepresentation of Black teachers are the unintended consequences of landmark civil rights cases. For example, the *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* (1954) decision was intended to promote diversity and equity in education. However, it worked against diverse learning environments due to the dismissal of thousands of teachers of color (McNeal, 2012). Following *Brown*, 38,000 Black teachers and administrators were demoted, dismissed, or displaced (Fultz, 2003; Hudson & Holmes, 1994; Tillman, 2004). Furthermore, while schools were later mandated to desegregate the student body, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the subsequent federal desegregation

guidelines of 1966 neglected to establish provisions to transfer and integrate Black teachers, administrators, and staff into the schools (Karpinski, 2004; Milner & Howard, 2004). In the 1970s and 1980s, further reduction of Black educators occurred as more desegregation orders were enacted and new teacher-certification requirements imposed (Tillman, 2004). It is possible that the systematic policies and practices stemming from the *Brown* decision led to fewer Black teachers in the force. According to McNeal (2012), “the unintended consequences of education reform on Black educators in the 1950s mirrors the disparate impact of discrimination occurring in today’s schools through the implementation of NCLB reconstitution” (p. 1120).

In recent years, Black teachers have been more likely to move from school to school, district to district, or leave teaching altogether (Ingersoll & May 2011). Though there is a continued and uneven distribution teachers of color in schools serving high-poverty and minority communities, studies rescind ideas that student poverty or race are factors shaping attrition teachers of color (ASI, 2015). Research also suggests that factors such as salaries, classroom resources, and professional development opportunities have little to do with Black teachers leaving the classroom. Instead, low rate of attrition among Black teachers is attributed to their dissatisfaction with working conditions in their school settings (ASI, 2015; Crocco & Costigan, 2007). According to Crocco and Costigan (2007), Black teachers often become frustrated with the “shrinking space” for classroom-based decision making. McNeal (2012) tied these experiences to outcomes related to the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2002, referencing the “curricular and pedagogical impositions of scripted lessons and mandated curriculum” (p. 512). In keeping with historical patterns of disenfranchisement during earlier periods of school restructuring and the implementation of desegregation policies and mandates, the impact of reconstitution following NCLB fell more heavily on teachers of color (McNeal, 2012; Rice &

Malen, 2010). According to McNeal (2012), reconstitution mandates make Black teachers a vulnerable population because such orders result in the involuntary turnover of Blacks due to the closure of schools where they work.

National calls for improving the number and proportion of teachers from racially diverse backgrounds is fueled by the recognition that teacher diversity is helpful in improving overall school quality, including student outcomes on standardized test, increased rates of school attendance and enrollment in advanced courses, higher rates of representation in gifted and talented programs (Boser, 2011), and reduction in discipline and special education referrals (Meier, 1984). Policymakers and educators advocate increasing the racial and cultural diversity of the teacher workforce to serve the educational needs of students of color because teachers of color are especially suited to understanding the cultural experiences of these learners and engaging in instructional practices that support students from non-dominant communities (Haycock 2001; Irvine, 1988; Villegas & Irvine, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2004).

Literature specifically related to Black teachers suggests that Black teachers carry experiences and perspectives that historically have been (and in many cases remain) silenced and marginalized in the discourse about teaching and learning, and embody distinctive goals, missions, decision-making, and pedagogical styles that are critical to the development of students of color (hooks, 1994). Literature also describes how the increased number and proportion of Black teachers positively influences the educational equity and academic achievement for students of color. According to Villegas and Davis (2008), Black teachers positively impact public education because they: (a) hold high expectations for students of color, (b) have first-hand cultural knowledge and experiences similar to those of students who are overwhelmingly present in public schools, (c) bring Afrocentric perspectives and pedagogical practices into the

often Eurocentric environment, (d) serve as role models for all students, and (e) are more personally motivated to work in schools serving majority-minority students (p. 284-285).

Expectations. Researchers have found that Black teachers have higher expectations than White teachers for students of color (Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Davis, 2008). Ferguson (2003) reported that many White teachers' expectations, perceptions, attitudes, behaviors, and biases negatively affected the academic performance of students of color and children of low socioeconomic status. Low expectations perpetuate the cycle of low academic performance, which influences students of color educational outcomes (e.g., dropout rates or college-bound rates) (Gordon, 2000; Irvine, 1990). In her study with Black teachers, Gordon (2000) found that Black teachers had consistently high expectations for all students and embraced a philosophy of empowerment, motivation, and nurturing toward students of color. Children tend to live up or down to their teachers' expectations (Kober, 2001). Thus, maintaining high expectations and the belief that all students can and will learn (Watkins, 2002) is an important quality of Black teachers.

Cultural Knowledge. Black teachers' firsthand knowledge about the cultural backgrounds and experiences of students of color is valuable to public school systems. Research suggests that Blacks are more aware of and sensitive to the needs, experiences, and challenges of students of color (American Association of Colleges of Teacher Education, 1989). The concept of a cultural mismatch as described by Brown (2009) is a disconnect between European-American teachers' personal and professional experiences with those of students of color, which may adversely impact academic achievement. This disconnect, or lack of cultural knowledge and empathy, can exacerbate many academic issues and classroom management problems. For example, the overrepresentation of Black males in special education and disciplinary actions can

be partially attributed to a cultural mismatch between the teacher and student (Irvine, 1990).

Bakari (2003) conducted an investigation of 415 pre-service teachers' attitudes toward teaching Black students as compared to White students. The study found Black pre-service teachers were more willing than their White counterparts to teach Black students, and they embraced cultural competence toward teaching Black students.

It is particularly important for a teacher to view the tasks of planning and implementing lessons through the lens of the cultural diversity that exists in his or her classroom. If students do not feel the content they are learning is relevant to their lives, their intrinsic motivation to learn is diminished. Foster (1995) asserted that Black teachers understand and use familiar cultural patterns and communication to build a strong sense of cultural solidarity and cultural connectedness. Black teachers utilize speech “repetition, call and response, variation in pace, high emotional involvement, creative analogies, figurative language, vowel elongation, catch phrases, gestures, body movement, symbolism, aphorisms, and lively discussions” to engage Black students (Irvine, 1990, p. 60).

Attrition. Scafidi, Sjoquist, and Stinebrickner (2007) found substantial evidence that schools with large percentages of minority students have much higher teacher turnover rates than schools serving majority middle-class populations. The authors also found that minority teachers are often more motivated to work with minority students or in high poverty and racially segregated schools. Increasing the pool of qualified minority teachers ultimately reduces the rates of teacher attrition in hard-to-staff schools.

Role Models. Research has shown that Black teachers also play important roles in the sociocultural conditions of learning in classrooms, by serving as role models for all students, and as cultural brokers for culturally and linguistically diverse students (Irvine, 1989; Quirocho &

Rios, 2000; Villegas & Irvine, 2010). Gibson (2007) maintained that there is a critical need for quality Black teachers because, a “teacher’s role is not only to teach, but also to inspire and serve as an example. After all, teachers are the first group of professionals with whom children interact” (p. 59). Students need to see individuals who look like them in professional and leadership roles. Milner (2006) stated that students can visualize the possibilities for their lives when they see individuals who look like them in the teaching profession. This illustrates that success is possible despite the many challenges that students of color may encounter. For all students, having Black teachers creates a more realistic representation of the society in which they live. This argument builds on the idea that beyond transmitting academic knowledge, schools function to shape students’ values in subtle but profound ways. Recognition of the powerful socialization function of schools led early supporters of teacher diversity policies to question the practice of exposing public school students to an overwhelmingly White teaching force (Graham, 1987). The racial and ethnic composition of the teaching force sends strong messages to students about the distribution of power in our society. If students do not see adults of color in professional roles in schools and instead see them over-represented in non-professional positions, they implicitly learn that White people are better suited than people of color to hold positions of authority in society.

Boser (2011) suggested that early exposure to teachers of color can help to debunk preconceived prejudices. In the 2016 “The State of Racial Diversity in the Educator Workforce” report released by U.S. Department of Education, Secretary of Education John B. King Jr. said:

A diverse teacher workforce isn’t just a nicety—it’s a real contributor to better outcomes in our schools, workplaces, and communities... It’s important for students of color to have role models who look like them and share common experiences. It’s just as important for all students to see teachers of color in leadership roles in their classrooms and communities. We must work together to support states and districts as they work to prepare, hire, support, and retain a more diverse teacher workforce. (p. 1-2)

Curriculum and Instruction

The lack of classroom-based decision making, due to what McNeal (2012) called “curricular and pedagogical impositions of scripted lessons and mandated curriculum” (p. 512), invites an examination of our nation’s public education system and reveals that educational hegemony, or ethnocentrism, pervades its structure, curriculum, and practices. The knowledge presented in our schools is based on Eurocentric values (Marri, 2005); curricular activities and materials often benefit those students whose cultural backgrounds most closely align with Eurocentric norms (Jenks, Lee, & Kanpol, 2001). Consequently, SoC are at an educational disadvantage due to cultural or linguistic differences that have been overlooked or ignored.

Banks (1991) described a Eurocentric approach to curriculum as one that “refines the status quo, makes students passive and content, and encourages them to acquiescently accept the dominant ideologies, political and economic arrangements, and prevailing myths and paradigms used to rationale and justify the current social and political structure” (p. 130). Haberman (2005) referred to Eurocentric teaching as basic instruction that is rigid and doesn’t allow for differentiation based on students’ individual background and needs. Through these practices, students are being required to assimilate the ideologies of their teachers and norms that their teachers value, as opposed to being instructed in a manner that allows their background and experiences to be catalysts for the acquisition of their new knowledge.

With a Eurocentric approach to curriculum, the cultural differences of SoC are often ignored or discontent. Consequently, SoC are likely to experience what Irvine (1990) described as cultural discontinuity. Tyson (2003) explained this concept as a lack of cultural synchronization or connectedness, which occurs when teachers and students bring different and perhaps conflicting cultural experiences into the classroom. Cultural discontinuity is the result of

teachers' misinterpretations of cultural styles different from their own, teachers' lack of understanding about how cultural patterns influence learning, teachers' negative expectations in regards to behavior and academic progress among diverse student, and teachers' lack of providing multicultural learning experiences (Downey & Pribesh, 2004; Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). The result of this cultural discontinuity is an in-school cultural socialization process where ethnically and culturally diverse students are exposed to instructional practices and learning activities that do not reflect their cultural-laden modes of learning and knowing. In addition, if one considers Boykin's (2001) argument that schooling consists of more than just reading, writing, and arithmetic, as it also influences a particular worldview and way of interpreting reality, the adverse effects of Eurocentric curriculum and instructional practices impact all students.

Multicultural Education. Sociocultural theories explain that learning, as it normally occurs, is a function of the activity, context, and culture in which it is situated, and student learning occurs through interacting in an environment that is purposeful (Lave & Wenger, 1991). This contrasts with most common classroom activities that involve knowledge that is abstract and out of context. Lave and Wenger (1991) indicated that to make learning meaningful, knowledge requires social interaction and collaboration, and should be presented in relevant settings and application. This implies that students require a context that connects to their lives and community culture, and that teachers must be capable of providing a rich and meaningful context for learning to take place.

Within the past few decades, multicultural education has become a popular catchphrase used throughout the American educational system with the intent of providing students contexts

that are personally meaningful and relevant. Banks and Banks (2001) defined multicultural education as:

An idea, an educational reform movement, and a process with the major goal to change the structure of educational institutions so that male and female students, exceptional students, and students who are members of diverse racial, ethnic, language, and cultural groups will have an equal chance to achieve academically in school (p. 1).

According to Gay (2004), the objective of multicultural education is to increase the educational equity for all students, and it strives to remove barriers to educational opportunities and success for students from different cultural backgrounds. In practice, teachers may modify or eliminate educational policies, programs, materials, lessons, and instructional practices that are either discriminatory toward or insufficiently inclusive of diverse cultural perspectives. Instructionally, multicultural education may entail the use of texts, materials, references, and historical examples that are understandable to students from different cultural backgrounds or that reflect their particular cultural experience (i.e. teaching students about historical figures who were minority, female, disabled, or LGBTQ).

To ensure educational equity, Banks (2004) proposed five dimensions of multicultural education: (a) content integration, (b) knowledge construction, (c) prejudice reduction, (d) empowering school culture and social structure, and (e) equity pedagogy. Although the five dimensions of multicultural education are interrelated, each requires deliberate attention and focus. Content integration refers to how teachers use examples and content from a variety of cultures and groups to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline. The perspective from which content is viewed and the nature of the content is important. Multicultural education is more than just teaching about heroes and holidays, goes beyond teaching tolerance of differences, and is deeper than studying or celebrating Black History Month in February. Banks (2004) indicated that a curriculum should

be transformed to integrate exemplars from diverse groups to highlight different perspectives on key themes, issues, concepts, and theories. Teachers and other educators may learn about the cultural backgrounds of students in a school, and then intentionally incorporate learning experiences and content relevant to their cultural perspectives and heritage.

The related strand of knowledge construction involves a transformation that helps students to recognize that knowledge is socially constructed and reflects the ideology of its creators (Banks, 2004). This level is different than content integration because here teachers help students to understand, investigate, and determine the implicit cultural assumptions and frames of reference and perspectives of the discipline they are teaching. The structure of a curriculum that incorporates knowledge construction and transformation should center on concepts, events, and issues that are presented from the perspectives of diverse groups (Banks, 2004).

Regarding prejudice reduction, Banks (2004) asserted that instruction should decrease the tendency to stereotype and increase the affinity to see all individuals as valuable, contributing members of society. This dexterity enables students to understand and accept cultural differences. Students must learn to interact appropriately with culturally diverse individuals in school and the workplace and as they become adults. According to Adams and Bell (2016), the effective implementation of multicultural education has the potential to reduce racism, reduce crime, increase social justice, and eliminate stereotyping and prejudice.

The implementation of the fourth dimension of multicultural education requires that the total environment of the school be reformed, including the attitudes, beliefs, and actions of teachers and administrators, the curriculum and course of study, assessment and testing procedures, and the styles and strategies used by teachers (Banks, 2004). Students who are culturally and linguistically diverse often receive negative feedback in the classroom.

Multicultural education is designed to value the students and give them skills to stand up for themselves. Empowering school culture and social structure requires the promotion of social action of students by encouraging them to research and reflect on social issues, select and justify a stance, and take action on this position (Banks, 2004).

Finally, equity pedagogy refers to the modification of teaching techniques, methods, and strategies to conform to the diverse learning styles and needs of students. Banks and Banks (1995) defined equity pedagogy as the strategies used to provide the skills and knowledge that culturally diverse students need to successfully navigate through the social challenges they face. Equity pedagogy also assumes that the cultures of students are valid, teaching must reflect the lives and the interest of students, and that students must be provided opportunities to construct meaningful knowledge (Ladson-Billings, 1990). Banks (2004) emphasized that equity pedagogy is integrated into the other dimensions of multicultural education, and requires the dismantling of existing school structures that foster inequality. Multicultural education theorists have argued for reforms addressing teaching materials, curriculum, methods, and pedagogy that restructure education to be responsive to equity concerns (Cochran-Smith, 2004). There is growing evidence that strong, continual engagement among diverse students requires a holistic approach, that is, an approach where the how, what, and why of teaching are unified and meaningful.

Critical Race Theory Perspective and Multicultural Education. Critical race theory (CRT) has been applied within the context of education to examine the role race plays in a number of areas, including curriculum. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) and Solorzano (1997) were some of the first academics to apply CRT to the field of education. Since the 1990s many scholars have adopted this framework to examine racial inequity within higher education and in K-12 schools. According to Solorzano and Yosso (2001):

CRT in education is defined as a framework or set of basic perspectives, methods, and pedagogy that seeks to identify, analyze, and transform those structure, cultural, and interpersonal aspects of education that maintain the marginal position and subordination of African American and Latino students. CRT asks such questions as what role do schools, school processes, and school structures play in the maintenance of racial, ethnic, and gender subordination? (p. 42).

CRT in education provokes the educators to see the reality of racism, to question themselves, and to develop a new consciousness on a path towards anti-racist pedagogy. Critical race theorists in education assert that before any advancement can be made towards educational equity, educators must absolve the current majority perception that we live in a post-racial world. Post-racial refers to the belief that the nation has surpassed systemic racial oppression so that there is no need to acknowledge or see race when making legal, political, or educational decisions (Bell, 2004). Instead, the reality and extent of racism and racist structures must be realized.

CRT has grave implications for teacher education through a commitment to social justice, and the prioritization of voices of SoC (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 2006, p. 16). Critical race theory encompasses the pursuit of social justice through activism. Social action refers to the steps taken to create a more socially just world. Each achievement made towards an end goal of social justice is considered a social change. When applied to education, Solorzano and Yosso (2001) stated that the overall goal of critical race theory in education is to:

develop a pedagogy, curriculum, and research agenda that accounts for the role of race and racism in U.S. education and to work towards the elimination of racism as a part of a larger goal of eliminating all forms of subordination in education (p. 3).

Critical race theorists emphasize the need to expose the systemic nature of racial oppression in a nation that professes to be in the midst of a post-racial era. As such, critical race theorists in education prioritize voices of color by recognizing the life stories they tell as legitimate, appropriate, and critical to understanding, analyzing, and teaching about racial

subordination (Hayes & Juarez, 2012). Whereas systemic inequities in education generally marginalize the experiences of students of color, critical race educators suggest that teachers use “storytelling, narratives, chronicles, family history, scenarios, biographies, and parables to draw on the strength of lived experiences students bring to the classroom” (Solorzano & Yosso, 2001, p. 3), concepts that relate to the principles of multicultural education and culturally relevant teaching.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. Culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) has emerged as a theoretical and pedagogical approach that advocates for the central goal of multicultural education, to give students an equal chance to experience educational success (Banks, 2004). CRP is grounded in educational research that recognizes that children learn best in an interactive, relational mode rather than in an education model that focuses on rote instruction (Ladson-Billings, 2009). CRP is, “...a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes” (Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 20). This pedagogy approach fosters a learning environment that produces students who can achieve academically, can demonstrate cultural competence, and can understand and critique the existing social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 474).

In educational literature, CRP is often used interchangeably with terms such as: culturally responsive pedagogy, culturally relevant and responsive teaching, culturally appropriate, and culturally congruent (Bank, 2004). Though there are many variations of terminology, all focus on culture and pedagogy. The coupling of culture and pedagogy represents a multifaceted and elaborate set of processes that many practitioners and researchers suggest enhance student learning. According to Ladson-Billings (1994), culture is central to learning and plays a role not only in communicating and receiving information but also in shaping the thinking process. Thus,

CRP is continuously addressed and evaluated for its effectiveness for helping culturally diverse students improve academically.

Coupling of culture and pedagogy to teach diverse students can be challenging and requires a shift in what and how educators choose and delivered content. During instructional planning, teachers should ensure to connect the content being taught to the interests, backgrounds, and personal frames of reference for their students, to increase student engagement and improve academic success (Gay, 2010). Gay's (2010) term culturally responsive teaching outlines the essential components of culturally responsive teaching. Many scholars have contributed to the literature of culturally responsive and relevant teaching (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Foster, 1995; Howard, 2003; Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002), but each list of traits can be compiled into three broad themes: (a) relationship, (b) curriculum, and (c) theory.

Culturally responsive relationships include teachers' ability to develop a knowledge base about cultural diversity and demonstrate and build caring learning environments. Research has shown that if educators do not have some knowledge of their students' lives outside of their classrooms, then they cannot accurately know their students' strengths and weaknesses (Gay, 2010). Gay (2010) described knowledge about cultural diversity as knowing the cultural characteristics and contributions of different ethnic groups, including factual knowledge about the achievements and contributions of different disciplines; Gay suggested that teachers need to create caring learning environment and have an "...ethical, emotional, and academic partnership with their students, rooted in respect, honor, integrity, resource sharing, and a deep belief in the possibility of transcendence" (p.109). In other words, to build culturally responsive relationships teachers must learn about their students' cultures, and develop a connection with students.

Once teachers have gained an understanding of students' cultural backgrounds and developed connections with them, they should incorporate ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum. Gay (2010) used the term symbolic curriculum to refer to visual representations of cultural diversity such as posters in different languages and images of people from different ethnic, social, and cultural backgrounds. While an important element for a multicultural classroom, the symbolic curriculum should complement transformative curriculum designs and instructional material, because culturally responsive teaching is more than the atmosphere of the classroom. Willms (2003) suggested that teachers considering children's life experiences and interests in the development of curricula results in a higher level of student engagement and in an increase in autonomy, and they will be able to understand and succeed in the traditional curriculum. Culturally relevant teachers also recognize ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction. This is accomplished by acknowledging the cultural communication patterns ethnic students have, inviting them into conversation with learning in the classroom, and accommodating the different learning styles in each of the subject areas that can create a connection between student engagement and academic success (Gay, 2010).

Teacher Education and Preparation

Research indicates that teacher preparation (i.e. knowledge of teaching and learning, subject matter knowledge, and experience) influences teacher effectiveness (Banks, Jackson, & Harper, 2014; Darling-Hammond, 2012). Scholars also suggest that well-prepared teachers are more likely to remain in teaching and produce higher student achievement (Darling-Hammond, 2010, 2012; Goldhaber, Liddle, & Theobald, 2013). While these concepts are not new, they take on a renewed impetus in the contemporary education context (Boyd, Grossman, Lankford, Lobe, & Wyckoff, 2009; Brown, 2014). In efforts to reform teacher education in the interest of the

overwhelming representation of SoC in K-12 classrooms, accreditation agencies have designed standards for preparing teacher candidates to better instruct students from racially diverse backgrounds.

Knowledge, Skills, and Dispositions

Teacher capacity, according to NCATE (2008), involves pedagogues “knowledge, skills, and dispositions,” with disposition linked to professionalism in working with students, families, and communities to, “help all students learn (p. 16).” It is the responsibility of each unit or colleges and schools of education to determine and impart the appropriate knowledge, skills, and dispositions that teachers need to facilitate the academic achievement of students of color. These teacher dispositions are typically influenced by professional and state standards, rather than by the culture of the teacher candidates and universities. In university-based teacher education programs, teacher candidates receive a broad spectrum of theory, content, and pedagogy that allows them to develop a foundation of the education system and teaching methods.

Pedagogical knowledge. Pedagogy is the how the teaching and learning occurs, and effective teachers encompass an array of pedagogical knowledge because no single, universal approach suits all situations or students (Hegarty, 2000). The National Board for Professional Teaching Standards (1998) defined pedagogy as follows:

Skills teachers use to impart the specialized knowledge/content of their subject area(s). Effective teachers display a wide range of skills and abilities that lead to creating a learning environment where all students feel comfortable and are sure that they can succeed both academically and personally. This complex combination of skills and abilities is integrated into the professional teaching standards that also include essential knowledge, dispositions, and commitments that allow educators to practice at a high level (p. 1).

Pedagogical knowledge is accrued by teacher candidates through required courses that focus on the history and philosophy of education, educational psychology, curriculum development,

instructional design, classroom management, and effective teaching methods (Bullough, 2001; Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008).

Content knowledge. Teachers cannot teach what they do not know; teacher candidates must have a comprehensive knowledge of the subject matter that they plan to teach. Teacher candidates should have the ability to explain important principles and concepts delineated in professional, state, and institutional standards. NCLB required all teachers in core academic subjects to be highly qualified by the end of the 2005–2006 school year (Wang, Odell, & Schwille, 2008). According to the National Commission on Teaching and America’s Future (NCTAF) (2003), one of the requirements to being a good teacher was having a deep knowledge base of the subjects they teach to effectively work with students.

Disposition. While content knowledge and pedagogical skills are fairly easy to define, cultivate, and assess, dispositions are often more abstract and difficult to measure. Disposition has been defined as, “professional attitudes, values, and beliefs demonstrated through both verbal and non-verbal behaviors as educators interact with students, families, colleagues, and communities. These positive behaviors support student learning and development” (Ros-Voseles & Moss, 2007, p. 91). Research on teacher dispositions has shown that teachers with positive professional dispositions tend to act in ways that elevate the profession of teaching (Gallavan, Peace, & Thomason, 2009; Gorlewski, Gorlewski, Hopkins, & Porfilio, 2014; Ros-Voseles & Moss, 2007). Gallavan, Peace, and Thomason (2009) identified the four most important dispositions for teachers in general as respectful, reliable, responsible, and honest. They also stated that individuals cited passionate, compassionate, fair, and flexible as the four most important dispositions for themselves individually.

Models and Practices

General models of teaching methods or instructional strategies are guides for designing educational activities, environments, and experiences. Instructional strategies depend on factors such as the developmental level of students, goals, intent, and objectives of the teacher, content, and environment including time, physical setting, and resources (Reigeluth, 1999).

Transformative Teaching and Learning. Miller (2007) insisted that these specific methods could be classified in three models of instruction, transmissive, transactive, and transformative, with the latter being the most effective. Transmissive teaching is a model of direct teacher-centered instruction. The teacher delivers content through methods of lecturing or demonstrating, and evaluates the final level of learning (Miller, 2007). Didactic methods are those that are verbal and typically in the form of a lecture or presentation. In contrast, modeling methods are visual and typically in the form of demonstration and practice. Transmission is an adequate approach when teachers are looking to convey a lot of information to students. The one-way flow of information from teacher to students means, however, that this strategy is largely based on the traditional 'banking method' of teaching whereby students are viewed as mere receptacles of information.

Transactive teaching is a model of indirect and interactive instruction whereby students can interact with the material to be learned to construct knowledge. In this model, the teacher sets learning objectives but does not teach directly, allowing the students to make meaning for themselves through transactions and dialogue. The students interact with each other and with the information and materials while the teacher acts as an organizer and facilitator. This model includes managerial methods, which involve facilitation, individualization, and group management; and dialogic methods, which encourage Socratic technique of dialogue, questions,

and thought provocation. Transaction is an important strategy to consider when eliciting more interaction and group work within a class. It would be ideal when discussing or debating current topics or controversial issues such as diversity. It requires, however, that the teacher has strong classroom management and facilitator skills.

Transformative teaching implies a combination of direct and indirect instruction and enhances teaching to create conditions that have the potential to transform the learner on many different levels (i.e. cognitive, emotional, social, intuitive, creative, and spiritual). In this model, the teacher and students reject status quo content and focus on a transformation of themselves or their world. Adult learning theory– andragogy– suggests that adults learn the things that are most relevant to them and connect to what they already know (Knowles, 1973). Murray (2014) described four characteristics associated with andragogy: adults are self-directed and are active leaders in their learning; adults can and should take responsibility for the outcomes of their learning process; adults require more intrinsic motivation than extrinsic motivation; adults value relational mutuality which views the relationship between the teacher and the student as cooperative and equal (p. 319). This is often done with experiential learning methods in which the students experience, feel, and understand that they are actively involved. Independent study is another common transformative teaching methods that allow the students to interact with the content more or less exclusive of external control of the teacher. Though considered by many to be the strongest model of teaching (Curran & Murray, 2012), one of the shortcomings for transformational learning is that it does not apply to all types of learners and as such has the potential to ‘turn off’ some students to the learning experience.

Multicultural Teacher Education. The role of teacher education programs has traditionally been to prepare future teachers with content knowledge, and understanding of

cognitive, psychological, and linguistic development, as well as the current and historical pedagogical theories and methodologies. More recently, multiculturalism and diversity have been added to the curriculum of teacher preparation programs (Cochran-Smith & Power, 2010). NCATE declared multicultural education as a critical component of teacher education and issued standards that required all teacher education programs seeking accreditation to show evidence that multicultural education was planned and implemented by 1981 (NCATE, 2008). Since then, colleges and universities have worked to implement coursework, field experiences, and other learning opportunities designed to prepare future educators to work more effectively within culturally diverse school systems (Banks, 2004). Scholars and evaluators of teacher education have identified common desired outcomes of multicultural teacher education and developed guidelines for teacher education programs seeking to meet NCATE's standards.

Considering the key aspects of teaching and learning of diverse students, Villegas and Lucas (2002) summarized the desired outcomes of teacher education programs seeking to adhere to accreditation standards and prepare future teachers for working with diverse populations. They explained that first, prospective teachers should be challenged to expand their social consciousness by understanding that "one's worldview is not universal but is profoundly shaped by one's life experiences as mediated by a variety of factors, especially race/ethnicity, social class, and gender" (p. 27). As a second desired outcome, teacher candidates need to develop a positive and encouraging attitude toward students from diverse backgrounds. As noted by Rubie-Davies, Hattie, and Hamilton (2006), teachers' expectations affect student outcomes, and negative or stereotypical biases can influence teachers' expectations for students of color. Villegas and Lucas (2002) also suggested that prospective teachers develop the commitment and skills to act as agents of change, that they function as more than deliverers of content knowledge

and develop warm relationships and carry high expectations for all students, becoming “moral actors whose job it is to facilitate growth and development of other human beings” (p. 53). Prospective teachers should also embrace the constructivist foundation of culturally responsive teaching, rather than viewing students as empty vessels to which objective truths are transferred (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). A constructivist approach to education acknowledges, “that what can be known about this world is always filtered through the knower’s frame of reference” (Villegas, & Lucas, 2002, p. 72), and is enriched by multiple perspectives. The overarching role of the teacher is to help “students build bridges between their prior knowledge and experiences and the new ideas to be learned” (Villegas & Lucas, 2002, p. 79). To accomplish this, teachers must learn about their students and their communities (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Encouraging these philosophies in teacher candidates will ensure they cultivate the practice of culturally responsive teaching.

Even teachers with a comprehensive understanding of the content can encounter difficulty with conveying information to their students. Teachers who are pedagogically well prepared can incorporate teaching strategies and respond to students’ needs and unique learning styles. Darling-Hammond (1999) cited two studies of newly certified teachers that indicated the graduate's strongest recommendation for the intense quantity of subject-specific teaching methods include pedagogy and information on motivating students, development, and cognition. In other words, teacher candidates want ideas on the best ways to teach the curriculum. Goldhaber, Liddle, and Theobald (2013) suggested that the kinds of curriculum and instructional techniques that are modeled in teacher education courses have great influence on what teacher candidates do when they have their classrooms.

Gay (2004) and Ladson-Billings (1994) suggested that teacher education curriculum must develop a theoretical and practical connection between cultural relevance and the academic success of culturally diverse students. According to Nieto (2000), it is essential that teacher education programs design education paradigms that reflect a holistic multicultural education if teacher candidates are to develop the knowledge, skills, and multicultural perspective needed to implement all five dimensions of multicultural education. Teacher educators have used various approaches (e.g., standalone multicultural course(s), integrated multicultural education, and field-based immersion) and different pedagogical strategies (e.g., autobiography, cross-cultural letter exchange, simulation, lecture, debate) to incorporate issues related to race, ethnicity, and culture in teacher education (Sleeter, 2001).

Some college and university teacher education programs respond to increased diversity in classrooms by providing one or more required or optional standalone multicultural education courses (Sleeter, 2001; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). One benefit to using a standalone model is the opportunity to address deeply issues of diversity. Another advantage is that the whole course can be focused specifically on diversity issues with no concern of crowding out subject area content. Standalone multicultural courses have been shown to reduce teacher candidates' levels of prejudice and bias regarding race and ethnicity and to raise awareness of the lived experiences of people of color (Hollins & Guzman, 2005). However, Banks (2004) asserted that it is important to incorporate the components of multicultural education under a coherent vision of multicultural teacher preparation to better prepare teacher candidates to more effectively teach diverse student populations. Coherent experiences connecting theory to practice present opportunities for teacher candidates to consistently apply knowledge and to develop understanding (Hammerness, Goldhaber, Liddle, & Theobald, 2013).

Another critical component of teacher education programs is the field experience (Sleeter, 2001), which has been widely accepted as a meaningful method of preparing teachers to meet the needs of diverse students. These experiences range from brief to full-scale immersion experiences including the required completion of practicum and student teaching experiences in schools serving minority students. Studies have shown that field placements in urban settings increased cultural awareness and sensitivity of teacher candidates (Hollins & Guzman, 2005).

Historically Black Colleges and Universities

Historically Black Colleges and Universities (HBCUs) have a unique chapter in the history of American postsecondary education (Davis, 1998; King, 1993). Despite the tremendous obstacles that these institutions face, they have persevered and currently represent approximately 4% of America's higher education institutions (U.S. Department of Education, NCES, 2014). While there was a period when HBCUs had fallen from the academic literature, researchers and scholars have developed a renewed interest in these institutions. This renewed interest stems in part from the vital role these institutions play in higher education, particularly in the development of Blacks who pursue careers in education, and science, technology, engineering and mathematics (STEM). To understand why these institutions have been the subject of educational literature, it is imperative to acknowledge their historical roots and evolution (Davis, 1998; Roebuck & Murty, 1993).

Historical Overview

Before the Civil War, higher education for Blacks was virtually nonexistent. Public policy and certain legislative provisions prohibited the education of Blacks in various parts of the nation. Founded in 1837, the Institute for Colored Youth (later Cheyney University of Pennsylvania) was the first higher education institution for Blacks. Two other Black institutions

followed it, Lincoln University in 1854, and Wilberforce University in 1856 (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). Although these institutions were called “universities” or “institutes” from their founding, a major part of their mission in the early years was to provide elementary and secondary schooling for students who had no previous education. Much like Sabbath Schools (African American church sponsored schools in the 1800s) they providing basic literacy instruction for people of color (Anderson, 1988).

In the early to mid-1800s, the support of the American Missionary Association (AMA), the Freedmen's Bureau, and African Americans themselves was responsible for educating Blacks. African American churches ran their own elementary and secondary education programs for southern African Americans, preparing them for vocations or advanced studies. This created a demand for higher education, particularly for institutes to train teachers for work in Black schools. Between 1861 and 1870, the AMA founded 7 Black colleges and 13 normal schools. Many of these institutions became the backbone of Black higher education, producing Black leaders for multiple generations (Franklin, 1980).

In the years following the Civil War and the 13th Amendment’s abolition of slavery and reconstruction in the South, education began to change across America. In 1862, Senator Justin Morrill organized a movement to improve the state of public higher education throughout the United States (Franklin, 1980). This movement put an emphasis on the need for institutions to train Americans in the applied sciences, agriculture, and engineering. The Morrill Land-Grant Act gave federal lands to the states for the purpose of opening colleges and universities to educate farmers, scientists, and teachers. Although many such institutions were created, few were open or welcoming of Blacks, particularly in the South. In fact, it was not until the passage of the subsequent legislation known as the Second Morrill Act of 1890 that African Americans

were able to attend land-grant institutions in many states. The Second Morrill Land-Grant Act of 1890 specified that states using federal higher education funds must provide an education to Black students, either by opening the doors of their public universities to African Americans or by establishing schools specifically to serve them. Rather than integrate their public institutions, many Southern states created a separate set of institutions serving African Americans. This resulted in the founding of many of the South's public Black colleges (including Southern and A&M College) (Jones, 1974). Historically Black colleges and universities increased from 1 in 1837 to more than 100 in 1973.

Plessy v. Ferguson and Brown v. Board. Although legislative acts (i.e. Land-Grant Colleges Act of 1862, Freedmen's Bureau, and The Second Morrill Act of 1890) prompted a change in higher education, it was the segregation movement in the South that provided the motivation for Black higher education. *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) gave legal sanction to the doctrine of "separate but equal". Although the case involved transportation, not education, it ultimately established by law the right for segregation in public higher education. At the time of the *Plessy* decision, a pattern of segregation in public higher education in the South had been established by policy, but not by law, as state requirements for racial segregation in elementary and secondary schools did not apply to higher education. This led to the expansion and growth of HBCUs out of state desires to avoid admitting Blacks to existing White institutions (Fleming, 1985; Fultz, 1995).

The precedent of *Plessy v. Ferguson* slowly was challenged and over time weaknesses in defense of the separate but equal doctrine emerged. In 1954, the Supreme Court ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas* that separate education for Blacks in public schools was unconstitutional because separate facilities were inherently unequal. Although specifically

directed toward the nation's K-12 schools, the decision also impacted higher education, as states were required to dismantle dual systems of higher education. This required predominantly White institutions (PWIs) to open their doors to Black students, who before this time could not attend these institutions (Freeman, 1999; Fultz, 2003).

As scholars have examined the impact that the *Brown* decision had on the education system, enrollment trends of the nation's colleges and universities showed different outcomes than in the K-12 schools. At the time of the *Brown* decision, segregation was as pervasive in the nation's colleges and universities as it was in the K-12 systems, and nearly all Black students received their undergraduate education in the nation's HBCU. By the end of the 20th century, however, the majority of these students were enrolled in postsecondary institutions that were predominantly White. Student enrollment trends suggest that racial integration was more extensive or effective at the collegiate level than at the K-12 level. Some would describe the *Brown* decision as "a double-edged" sword for HBCUs; while it required states to fund these institutions better, it also drew many Blacks away from these institutions, leading to a decline in enrollment (Anderson, & Byrne, 2004).

Higher Education Act of 1965. The Higher Education Act of 1965 was a legislative document developed to “strengthen the educational resources of American colleges and universities, and to provide financial assistance for students in postsecondary and higher education.” It was followed by another important Supreme Court decision, *Adams v. Richardson* (1972), which found ten states (including Louisiana) in violation of the Civil Rights Act for supporting segregated schools (Westmeyer, 1985). The states were ordered to work actively to integrate institutions, as long as that integration was not carried out at the expense of HBCUs, which were recognized to play an important and unique role in the education of Black and higher education in general (Fultz, 2003). The amendment also legalized the federal funding of HBCUs through the Title III program. Title III is the federal governing body that sets the standard for providing funding for HBCUs.

Curriculum

When most HBCUs were established, they were known as “normal schools” or “teacher colleges” designed to prepare those who had limited sources of educational training to be teachers and ministers, the primary occupations of Black men and women (Baskerville, Berger & Smith, 2007; Williams, 1997). Though during the late 19th century and early 20th century most of the public and private Black colleges had an academic focus on preparing students to become teachers and ministers, this specific time in the education of Blacks involved a philosophical debate over different curricular approaches that should be instituted at Black colleges and universities. At the core of the debate was determining which type of curriculum would be better suited for Black students and benefit them the most, an industrial curriculum or a classical curriculum (Gasman, Lundy-Wagner, Ransom, & Bowman, 2010).

From the outset, the Whites who founded the first HBCUs determined that the primary purpose of the institutions of higher learning was to impart practical knowledge and to teach industrial skills. Booker T. Washington, a freed slave from Virginia and a graduate of Hampton Normal and Agricultural Institute, founded The Tuskegee Institute, a Black school in Alabama devoted to training teachers. The school endorsed and advocated the idea that Blacks should gain vocational skills and prepare for a life working with their hands (Franklin, 1980). Washington believed the best way for freed slaves to attain equality in the United States was through the accumulation of power, wealth, and respect using hard work in practical trades (Franklin, 1980). Washington's Hampton-Tuskegee model quickly became known for its practical curriculum and focus on preparing African Americans for agricultural and mechanical trades.

A graduate of Fisk University and the first African-American to receive a Ph.D. from Harvard University, W. E. B. Du Bois countered this viewpoint. Du Bois strongly advocated that Black students, like their White counterparts, should target areas of study that were a match for their interest and aptitude (Allen & Jewell, 2002). He believed it was essential that African Americans receive training not only in vocational fields but also in the liberal arts (Roebuck & Murty, 1993). Du Bois openly disagreed with Washington about the proper strategy for educating Black university students (Lucas, 1994). Du Bois felt strongly that Washington's universal vocational training only perpetuated the servitude of slavery, and relegated students to academically second-class citizenship. Du Bois believed equality and a sense of purpose would come only if Blacks were allowed to study the arts and sciences (Lucas, 1994).

The underpinnings of the industrially focused curriculum were directly linked to the need to control Blacks by funding sources upon which HBCUs were dependent (i.e., wealthy Whites, corporate philanthropists, and White-dominated agencies) (Allen & Jewell, 2002). Blacks who

desired to study in an academic setting outside the industrial and vocational structure had the option to attend a small number of African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church HBCUs. These religious-based institutions implemented Du Bois' model by adapting the approach of matching ability with interest. AME HBCUs motivated other HBCUs to adopt liberal arts curricula and instigated a split among Black intellectuals (Allen, & Jewell 2002). Despite their differing curricula, HBCUs were consistent on three major fronts: (a) they educated Black youth, (b) they prepared teachers, and (c) they perpetuated the Anglo-Saxon missionary tradition (Gasman, Baez, & Turner, 2008).

Student Experiences and Educational Outcomes

In a post-racial American society, many argue that HBCUs are redundant and irrelevant. However, research indicates that although Black students now have access to a broader range of higher education institutions, their experiences remain uneven (Turner, & Fries-Britt, 2002). Studies of the postsecondary educational experiences of Blacks indicate that students who attend HBCUs are more successful than their counterparts who attend majority institutions. Definitions of student success typically include graduation and retention rates and are arguably the primary goal for all higher education institutions (Reason, 2003). One description that is applied to student success and retention is phrased as a "persistence rate". Many scholars and practitioners prefer the term persistence instead of retention, as it goes beyond the idea of simply keeping students enrolled, and focuses directly on student success and enhancing their ability to graduate. Habley, Bloom, Robbins, and Robbins (2012) described retention as the percent of entering students graduating or persisting in their studies at an institution. For this study, persistence describes the success of Black students at HBCUs and expands upon literature that indicates that

engagement and academic success influence the persistence of college students (Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, & Whitt, 2011; Pascarella & Terenzini, 2005).

Engagement. In their book *Student Success in College: Creating Conditions That Matter*, Kuh, Kinzie, Schuh, and Whitt (2011) explained that the persistence of students in higher education largely depends on students' engagement with their institution. They wrote that students who persist in higher education typically feel connected to their institution, are invested in their education, and believe their institution is equally committed to their success. Fleming's (1985) key study of Black student engagement compared academically talented postsecondary Black students attending HBCUs with their peers at comparable majority institutions. Students were surveyed on their academic confidence and career aspirations during their freshmen year in college and again in their senior year. Based on the results of these surveys, Fleming concluded that HBCUs were more effective than majority institutions at promoting student engagement of Black students. Fleming found that high-achieving students in HBCUs reported a more positive self-image and adjusted better to college life than did their counterparts who attended majority institutions.

Literature exploring strategies and initiatives for increasing student engagement includes suggestions for increased faculty involvement. In an examination of the degree to which Black students interact with members of the faculty both inside and outside the classroom, Guiffrida (2005a) found that Black students perceived Black faculty as far more likely to provide them with personalized advising and active support; students also noted that Black faculty demonstrated a higher level of confidence in the students' abilities than did White faculty.

Academic Success. In general, Black students at HBCUs show better intellectual adjustment and academic success than their Black counterparts at majority institutions. Studies

confirm the important contributions of HBCUs to the education of Black college students because of the educationally powerful environments they provide. Allen (1992) suggested that campus racial composition has a significant influence on outcomes for Black students. Black students who attend majority institutions do not fare as well as their White counterparts regarding academic achievement (Fleming, 1985). Davis (1998) suggested that the structures of HBCUs benefit Black students because they generate and represent the Black culture. More specifically, Davis argued that the cultural content and the cultural context of HBCUs have a positive effect on Black students because HBCUs are vehicles for the production and transmission of Black cultural knowledge, as well as for the generation of new life-enhancing cultural resources such as networks, attitudes, and behaviors.

Research has indicated that HBCUs provide a more welcoming racial climate for Black students, a climate in which they experience a lower level of on-campus racial tension. Traditionally, these institutions have provided Black students with a strong academic foundation while sheltering these students from negative images of Blacks and replacing them with a sense of pride in the Black culture. The need for such nurturing is as important today as ever, as Blacks strive to overcome a preponderance of stereotypically negative depictions and expectations regarding the educational prowess of people of color.

Chapter Summary

This chapter expounded on the research problem identified in Chapter One through review of literature that covered the educational equity and academic achievement for students of color, teacher education, and HBCUs. This chapter also expanded upon the theoretical frameworks that shaped this study.

CHAPTER III: METHODOLOGY

Introduction

This study utilized a qualitative methodology to examine the experiences of HBCU TEP graduates and to gain an in-depth understanding of how they perceived their development and preparation for teaching students of color. Presented in this chapter are the researcher's philosophical lens and position, and a description and rationale for the research design including data collection and analysis methods. This chapter also addresses validity concerns and ethical considerations for the study, including the study's delimitations and limitations.

Philosophical Assumptions

To ensure a robust research design, researchers should choose a research paradigm that is “congruent with their beliefs about the nature of reality” (Mills, Bonner, & Francis, 2006, p. 2). Paradigms or philosophical worldviews (Creswell, 2013) refer to a patterned set of assumptions concerning reality (ontology), knowledge of reality (epistemology), and particular ways of learning about these realities (methodology). According to Creswell (2013), ontology is the claim researchers make regarding knowledge and epistemology of how individuals have arrived at that knowledge. To this end, the researcher held the ontological belief that multiple, context-specific realities are co-created; the epistemological belief that knowledge is a human construction and that research findings in empirical research will also be subjective in nature. The researcher approached with a constructivist lens that positioned learning as an active, constructive process in which people create their subjective representations of objective reality, and claims that new information is linked to prior knowledge (Cohen & Manion, 1994). According to Creswell (2013), the constructivist researcher relies on the “participants’ views of the situation being studied” (p. 8) and recognizes the impact on the research of their background and experiences.

Rationale for Qualitative Methodology

The purpose of qualitative research is to emphasize processes and meanings by focusing on the context of a phenomenon (Lichtman, 2013). In qualitative inquiry, the researcher values the participants' views of reality and is interested in the essence of the entity to be studied (Libarkin & Kurdziel, 2002). To understanding the relationship within a setting, the interaction between the researcher and the participants occurs through rich dialogue. The researcher must be aware of personal ones bias and beliefs throughout the research process. The researcher strives to develop a deep understanding of the participants' situation and condition without passing judgment. Qualitative data is rich in details and context, and interpretations are tied directly to the data source. Research validity and reliability are based on the logic of the study's interpretations (Patton, 2015). Creswell (2013) asserted that data is presented in words in the form of comments and statements and its aim is to discover people's feelings and experiences from their point of view. Qualitative data analysis is unique to each case, is rich in details and context, has interpretations tied directly to the data source, and its research validity and reliability are based on the logic of the study's interpretations (Patton, 2015). The researcher focused on discovery rather than confirmation and ended with a synthesis of the data. Researchers do not make broad application of the findings because the findings may only relate to a particular locale, individual, or groups. To conduct and present a fair and unbiased investigative study, the researcher is reflective, self-analytical, and balances the subjectivity and objectivity of the study.

Research Design

Since the intent of this study was to explore the experiences of the participants in teacher education programs, a phenomenological approach to qualitative inquiry was the most appropriate approach. A qualitative research approach is appropriate when the study aims to

encompass “an inquiry process of understanding a social or human problem, is based on building a complex holistic picture, formed with words, reporting detailed views of informants, and conducted in a natural setting” (Creswell, 2013, p. 1-2). More specifically, a phenomenological research design is ideal when the researcher seeks to describe a particular phenomenon and to deduce a common or unifying principle, as experienced by several individuals (Hatch, 2002). According to Eddles-Hirsch (2015), a key characteristic of phenomenological research is a rich description of the phenomenon being investigated to relay “what” the participants experienced and “how” they experienced it, and is usually gathered and accomplished through interviews. This design allows the researcher to describe the phenomenon using the participants’ experiences, perceptions, and opinions. The fact that this approach relies on individual experiences means that the stories are told from the participants’ voices and not those of the researcher or from individuals reporting studies in the literature. It allows researchers to develop an objective “essence” through aggregating subjective experiences of a number of individuals. This study was exploratory and thus this research design was appropriate. Little research has been done on this topic and, therefore, it is not well understood.

Participant Sampling

Purposive sampling method (also known as judgmental, selective, or subjective sampling) utilizes a subset of an entire population of individuals to represent the larger group (Creswell, 2012). Using purposive sampling requires the researcher to narrow the sites and participants to those that will best help the researcher understand the phenomenon and the research questions (Creswell, 2012). To frame this study, the researcher solicited participants who graduated from institutions and met the following criteria: (a) public, 4-year, baccalaureate degree granting HBCU, (b) located in the Southeast Region of the United States, and (c) had

NCATE or CAPE accredited Elementary Education program. From the 22 institutions that met these criteria (Table 3.1), three were chosen and assigned the following pseudonyms: Field State University, South Pike University, and Prestige University.

Participant Recruitment and Selection

This study utilized snowball sampling for participant recruitment. Snowball sampling (also known as chain-referral sampling) is a non-random sampling method that is used by the researcher when characteristics required of the samples are rare or difficult to find. According to Miles and Huberman (1994), snowball sampling “identifies cases of interest from people who know people who know what the cases are information-rich” (as cited by Creswell, 2012, p. 158). This sampling method involves primary data sources nominating other potential primary data sources to be used in the research. In other words, snowball sampling method is based on referrals from initial subjects to generate additional subjects. When applying this sampling method, members of the sample group are recruited via chain referral. In this study, the first subjects whom the researcher recruited to the sample group provided multiple referrals. Each new referral was explored until primary data from sufficient amount of samples were collected.

Table 3.1
 NCATE Accredited Public, 4-year HBCU Teacher Education Programs in Southeast Region

Alabama	Alabama A&M University, Alabama State University
Arkansas	The University of Arkansas at Pine Bluff
Georgia	Albany State University, Fort Valley State University
Kentucky	Kentucky State University
Louisiana	Grambling State University, Southern University and A&M College, Southern University at New Orleans
Mississippi	Alcorn State University, Jackson State University
North Carolina	Elizabeth City State University, Fayetteville State University, North Carolina A&T State University, North Carolina Central University, Winston-Salem State University
South Carolina	South Carolina State University
Tennessee	Tennessee State University
Virginia	Norfolk State University, Virginia State University
West Virginia	Bluefield State University, West Virginia State University

This study also utilized a homogeneous sampling strategy for participant selection. Hatch (2002) described homogeneous samples as, “made up of participants who share common characteristics, and these selection strategies are useful for studying small subgroups in depth” (p. 50). Participants for this study were identified through the application of specific criteria as self-identified on a participant inclusion questionnaire.

The criteria were as follows:

1. Received a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from a public HBCU in the Southeast Region of the United States. A traditional teacher preparation program is a four-year Bachelor of Arts or Science degree program that includes general education courses, a certification area of focus, professional education, and field experiences.

Elementary Education (grades 1-5) degree program is completely situated in the school or college of education. These programs integrate content knowledge, professional knowledge, and pedagogical knowledge.

2. A classroom teacher certified in the content area in which they teach. Certification is a licensing process whereby qualified professionals become legally authorized to teach in K-12 schools. In December of 2015, the U.S. Department of Education launched the Every Students Successes Act (ESSA), in part to end disparities in students' access to effective teachers. By requiring states to submit a new state educators equity plan to the USDOE describing the steps they will take to ensure equitable educational experiences for all students, that the ESSA maintained true to the provisions of NCLB. According to NCLB (2008), a teacher is determined to be highly qualified if he or she (1) has a bachelor's degree, (2) holds full state certification or licensure, and (3) proves that he/she knows each subject taught.
3. Two to five years of teaching experience. Research shows that 30%-50% of novice teachers leave the profession within five years (Rones, 2011). Furthermore, research on the retention and turnover of Black teachers shows they disproportionately leave the teaching profession high rates (Achinstein, Ogawa, Sexton, & Freitas, 2010),
4. Employed in a school with a majority-minority student population. The new collective majority has seen a decline in the White population, large growth in the Latino population, steady growth in the Asian-Americans population, and mostly level growth in the Black population (Snyder & Dillow, 2015). According to the National Center for Education Statistics, minority students typically end up on the

adverse side of the advisement gap. It is significant to understand the development of teachers who specifically work with this population.

Data Collection

In qualitative research, the researcher becomes a key instrument in the research process and does not rely on questionnaires or instruments developed by other researchers (Creswell, 2013). Qualitative data is typically descriptive and explanatory in nature and results are often given in narrative form (Creswell, 2013). To fully understand and explain the experiences of HBCU teacher education graduates, the researcher must understand how participants “perceive it, describe it, feel about it, and talk about it with others” (Patton, 2015, p. 116).

Interviews

Qualitative data was primarily collected through in-depth interviews. Interviews are necessary when it is not possible to view behavior, feelings, or how people see the world around them (Northcutt & McCoy, 2004). The importance of interviewing is to describe the phenomenon for a small number of individuals who have experienced it, by giving rich details about the perspectives of participants as they respond to questions (Creswell, 2007). According to Seidman (2006), “at the root of in-depth interviewing is an interest in understanding the lived experience of people and the meaning they make of that experience” (p. 9). Merriam and Tisdell (2015) explained that when a less structured question arrangement is used, individual respondents describe the world in a personal and distinct manner. Seidman (2006) continued that semi-structured interviews provide the opportunity for researchers to deviate from the structured set of interview questions, allowing the researcher to gain a better understanding of the perception of the topic and the individuals being interviewed.

To fully understand the experiences and perspectives of HBCU TEP graduates, a semi-structured interview protocol with open-ended questions was developed. Interview questions were developed to gain insight of teachers' experiences and perspectives of their preparation to teach students of color based on the essential content and pedagogical skills identified in the review of the literature. The interview question categories were multicultural education knowledge base, culturally relevant pedagogy, disposition, curriculum models, instructional practices, and institutional culture (Table 3.2).

Pilot interviews. Before interviewing the case study participants, a pilot interview was conducted. The pilot interview participant was identified using the same criterion as participants who were included in the study findings. The purpose of the pilot interviews was to ensure validity and appropriateness of the interview protocol. The pilot test helped the researcher create questions that led to understanding individual experiences, as well as eliminated any hint of the researcher's biases and expectations. As a result, some modifications were made to the initial interview protocol.

Documents

Additional data were obtained through the curriculum content analysis. In qualitative research, documents are a vast array of sources that vary in how they are presented: personal documents in written or visuals formats; state documents, such as inquiries containing statistical information; private source documents, which may be created by organizations or foundations; mass-media outputs, such as information found in newspapers, magazines, journals, or films; and virtual documents as would be found on the internet (Bryman, 2008, p.90). The researcher evaluated the curriculum covered in each elementary education program using a program requirement analysis guide (see Appendix C); two areas were researched to assess the amount of

multicultural curriculum that was integrated into each course: the course description, and the primary learning objectives of the course.

Table 3.2
Interview Protocol

Research Question(s)	Guiding Questions: Interview Protocol
<p>How do graduates of public HBCU TEPs perceive their development and preparation for teaching students of color?</p> <p>Corresponding Guiding Questions: 1, 2, 10</p> <p>How do they perceive their acquisition of knowledge, pedagogical skills, and dispositions for facilitating the academic success of students of color?</p> <p>Corresponding Guiding Questions: 3, 7, 8, 9</p> <p>What specific experiences, curriculum models, and pedagogical practices contributed to their development and preparation?</p> <p>Corresponding Guiding Questions: 4, 5, 6</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Tell me about yourself as a teacher. 2. Why did you choose to attend an HBCU for your teacher education and training? 3. Tell me about your teacher education and training experience at [HBCU]. 4. Do you recall any strengths and weaknesses of the teacher education program? 5. How would you describe the strategies and methods most frequently used during instruction across the teacher education program? 6. Which of these experiences do you believe had the greatest impact on your development and preparation? 7. In what ways, if any, did the teacher education program address topics of racial and cultural diversity? 8. How would you describe your preparation and development for teaching students of color? 9. What are you currently doing in your classroom that is a reflection of your education and training at [HBCU]? 10. Now that you have [year] years of teaching experience, is there anything that you feel could have been provided by the program and the institution to enhance your preparation and development for teaching students of color?

Data Analysis

Data analysis entails organizing what has been read, heard, and seen throughout the study to understand what has been learned (Glesne, 2016). All interviews were conducted via Skype or Facetime and were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher. To ensure accuracy, the researcher utilized member checking by emailing interview transcriptions to participants and

requesting that they verify or add to their interview transcripts if they thought any information was missing or misunderstood. Once participants verified interview transcriptions, significant statements were extracted to conduct a thematic analysis. Creswell (2007, p. 159) prescribed a six-step process that he described as a simplified version of a method discussed by Moustakas (1994):

- 1) Describe personal experiences with the phenomenon under study.
- 2) Develop a list of significant statements – the researcher finds statements from the interviews about how the participants have experienced the topic and give them equal worth.
- 3) Group significant statements into larger units of information – these are called “meaning units” or themes.
- 4) Write a description of “what” the participants in the study experienced the phenomenon – a “textual description” of the experience. Including verbatim examples from the interviews.
- 5) Write a description of “how” the experience happened – called a “structural description.” The researcher reflects on the setting and context in which the phenomenon occurred.
- 6) Finally, composite description is then written, combining the textual and structural descriptions – called the essence of the experience. It represents the culminating aspect of the phenomenological study (p. 193-194).

Ethical Considerations

Part of ensuring trustworthiness in data collection and analysis is safeguarding the ethical nature of research throughout the study. In qualitative research, ethical issues arise because of the complexities of researching private lives and placing accounts in the public arena. Thus, ethical

concerns must be continuously considered at each stage of the inquiry. According to Creswell (2012), researchers must present themselves authentically, and inform all participants about how the data will be used and analyzed throughout the research process. The design of the research study did not pose any known risks to the participants. Still, participants' identities were kept confidential.

Subjectivity

The subjectivity statement expresses the researcher's proximity to that which she is examining (Glesne, 2016; Husserl & Moran, 2012). As a graduate of public HBCU pursuing a phenomenological study of the experiences and perceptions of other HBCU TEP graduates, the researcher utilized bracketing or Epoche (Husserl & Moran, 2012). The study's subjectivity statement follows.

My interest in the development and preparation of teachers of color who teach students of color stems from my own experiences of training and development at Grambling State University (GSU). Although I am a Black female, my knowledge and understanding about how culture, class, and race influenced the teaching and learning process was limited before my enrollment into the early childhood education program at GSU. Growing up in and receiving my elementary and secondary education in a middle-upper class neighborhood in Sacramento, California, introduced me to a rainbow of racially and ethnically diverse people. However, it is my declaration that I lived in a "melting pot" in which different customs, beliefs, and cultures were assimilated into one, allowing for no distinction of equity commitment or weakness within the education system.

While studying at GSU, I completed a course called Multicultural Education, which helped me formulate an idea of what multicultural education means, and how it looks in schools.

I remember professors sharing anecdotal stories about multicultural issues during discussions to broaden our perspectives about teaching. Most of the professor in my TEP taught at predominantly Black public schools and they often talked about the differences in students' home lives that could affect our daily classroom. They shared ways they showed respect instead of thinking and teaching the mainstream culture as superior. I was pushed to understand where students come from instead of teaching them to assimilate. While these teacher educators and courses shaped my understanding of how culture, class, and race influence the teaching and learning process, my student teaching experience best prepared me for success with students of color; however, both allowed me to conceptualize ways to build rapport and to realize its benefits. Student teaching allowed me to experience, firsthand, the struggles many students of colors face; teaching those students the importance of education and how it can be used to overcome challenges allowed me to recognize my own biases as a teacher of color from California.

Though I attribute that my time at GSU increased my knowledge of multicultural education and helped me to recognize and address the academic and social needs to students of color, I do not assert that the TEP was the sole source of this development. There were aspects outside of the TEP that also facilitated this development. For example, social interactions with other students of diverse backgrounds inside and outside of the TEP guided my socio-cognitive and democratic outcomes. According to (Dwyer, 2006), many educational outcomes are associated with interactions between students with diverse backgrounds including leadership skills, social and cultural awareness, and prejudice reduction (p. 40).

Also, I believe that the courses within the TEP equipped me with the knowledge to teach students in general. The competencies and pedagogical skills focused on best practices, not

explicit preparation for students of color. Thus, based on my experiences, I cannot affirm that TEP at HBCUs are adequately equipping teachers with the competencies and pedagogical skills that literature suggests are critical for teachers of students of color.

Chapter Summary

In this chapter, a proposed study design was introduced and supported by the relevant literature, including instruments, data collection, and analysis. This chapter also identified the participant sampling, criteria, recruitment, and selection procedures. The findings of this study are presented in Chapter Four and discussed in Chapter Five.

CHAPTER IV: RESEARCH FINDINGS

Introduction

The purpose of this qualitative study was to investigate the experiences of public HBCU TEP graduates and to gain an in-depth understanding of how they perceived their preparation and development for teaching students of color. To ensure the educational equity and academic achievement for students of color, it is imperative that teachers acquire knowledge, skills, and attitudes to effectively implement a culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1999; Ware, 2006). The purpose of this study was not to assess participants' application of culturally responsive pedagogy, but, instead, this study sought to understand if and how participants believed their HBCU TEP experiences influenced their abilities to facilitate academic achievement for students of color. During discussions with the six participants, the terms culturally responsive pedagogy or teaching were never used, and participants were never directly asked their opinions regarding their development of a culturally responsive pedagogy. In keeping with the structure set out for this study, the phrases *meet the academic needs of students of color, knowledge, skills, and dispositions* were used.

Institution Information

To frame this study, the researcher solicited participants who graduated from TEPs that met the following criteria: (a) within a public 4-year HBCU, (b) located in the Southeast Region of the United States, and (c) NCATE accredited Elementary Education program. From the list of 22 institutions meeting these criteria (Table 3.2), three were chosen and assigned the following pseudonyms: Field State University, South Pike University, and Prestige University.

Participant Information

The six participants in this study were identified through the use of specific criteria as self-identified on a participant inclusion survey. Each participant in this study: (a) received a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from a public HBCU in the Southeast Region of the United States, (b) was a classroom teacher certified in the content area in which they taught, had (c) two to five years of teaching experience, and was in (d) a school with a majority-minority student population. The four females and two males in this study self-identified as Black. Participants are referred to by pseudonyms, which they chose at the time of the interviews (Table 4.1).

Table 4.1
Participant Information

Name	Race/Gender	HBCU	Years of Experiences	SoC Population
Elijah	Black/Male	South Pike University	2	59%
Jo	Black/Female	South Pike University	5	100%
Keisha	Black/Female	Field State University	2	68%
Lori Lee	Black/Female	Prestige University	4	81%
Lynn	Black/Female	Field State University	3	77%
Robert	Black/Male	Prestige University	5	90%

Elijah

Elijah attended South Pike University because he wanted to be in an environment that would relate to his heritage and embrace his future. The researcher was unaware before the interview that Elijah's TEP experience was unique because he minored in music education while pursuing his Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education. Throughout his interview, Elijah noted the differences in how culture and diversity were emphasized in the general education and the music education departments. After two years of teaching experience, Elijah believed he had a handle on classroom management, and he planned to embrace a more student-centered teaching style in the upcoming year. He also intended to incorporate the values and contributions of diverse musicians and genres into his social studies curriculum. Elijah was employed at a public PreK-6th-grade elementary school that had a 59% student of color population.

Jo

Growing up in the small rural town, Jo had only considered the two nearby universities for furthering her education. One of those schools was an HBCU, the other a Predominately White Institution (PWI). From her research, Jo found that both schools had highly accredited and rigid teacher preparation programs. Since most of her family members had attended South Pike University, she followed suit. Jo's education and training experience at South Pike University was "life-changing". The university had recently implemented a new virtual learning system that enabled her to email teachers, submit assignments, communicate daily, and have rigorous, in-depth classroom discussions. For Jo, this was "all-too-new" and somewhat "intimidating", but with the help of teachers and peers, she learned to use the system effectively to her advantage. After earning her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, Jo began teaching English Language Arts at a school where 100% of the student population was children of color. In each

of her five years of teaching, Jo has received her district's highest teacher evaluation rating in the areas of classroom observations and student growth. Jo believed in providing a learning environment that was "physically, emotionally, and academically safe [with] inclusive, rigorous learning opportunities that assess students conceptual understanding and mastery of standards." Noting the substantial changes and innovations in the field of education, Jo declared it necessary for teachers to be knowledgeable, flexible, and willing to teach "like their hair is on fire".

Keisha

Keisha's pursuit of a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Field State University was preordained. She explained:

My parents went there; my grandparents went there, my mother and my father met at Field State University. I was just destined to go there. And my grandmother was a teacher, and she received her teacher education at Field State University. So, I really didn't have a choice; it was in my bloodline. As long as I have lived, I have never wanted to be anything more than a teacher.

Keisha was a second-year teacher, employed at a school with a 68% student of color population. She believed that "all children can learn at their own capabilities if given the opportunity".

Lori

Lori chose to go to an HBCU for her teacher education and training because she liked the feel of camaraderie and wanted to be a part of the "Black college experience". She also noted that she specifically chose Prestige University because, "it has a popular history of offering African American students a world-class education," and a "one-of-a-kind opportunity to explore African American history and experiences". Lori received her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Prestige University and was in her third year of teaching. Lori taught at the same elementary school she attended. The school's student body was 81% children of color.

Lori had a passion for the enhancement of the community in which she grew up and was serving. With that passion she pushed her students to think beyond their current situations and look toward their futures. Lori recalled how meaningful the relationships she built with her schoolteachers were to her emotional and academic development. She now strove to build those same types of relationships with her students.

Lynn

Lynn knew in high school that she wanted to become a teacher, but she did not actively pursue a teaching career nor obtain her Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from Field State University until she had children of her own. She said her teacher training and development at Field State University helped her to attach technical terms to what she was seeing in her everyday life. She explained, “I think my experiences made things click for me faster than other students. I was able to visualize what the text was saying about child behavior and recall the emotions that accompanied each step of their development.” After three years of teaching at a school with a 77% student of color population, Lynn thought it was her responsibility to continuously learn new ways to serve her students and to help them to learn and retain information. She said:

I seek to become more effective by increasing my knowledge base, and I strive to be more efficient as I develop more teaching strategies and attempt to understand students with respect to their needs and learning styles. I never give up on any student that is struggling in any area because every student is able to perform at their special level in order to achieve learning goals.

Robert

Having attended an historically Black high school, there was never any doubt that Robert would choose an HBCU for his higher education endeavors. Likewise, coming from a family of schoolteachers, it was inevitable that he would join the family business of educating children. It

was a natural choice for Robert to pursue his Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education, but it was the “very warm, community-oriented feeling” of Prestige University that drew him there. He had five years of experience as a math and science teacher at a school with an 87% student of color population.

Emergent Themes and Subthemes

Interviews provided rich and detailed narratives to understand participants’ experiences, how they described those experiences, and the meaning they made of those experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2012). During the interviews, the participants were asked questions that were designed to address specific research questions and were developed by reviewing literature pertaining to pedagogical practices for effectively teaching students of color and comprehensive teacher education program models. The nature of the semi-structured interview protocol allowed for the use of follow-up and probing questions. Significant statements extracted from participants’ responses revealed interrelated themes and subthemes (Table 4.2).

Table 4.2
Emerging Themes and Subthemes

Themes	Subthemes
Prepared, But Not Prepared	Teacher for All Students Intuition (Un)developed
Those Who Can, Teach	Meaningful Relationship Informal Curriculum
Hands-On, Hands-Down	Experiences Reflections

Theme One: Prepared, But Not Prepared

The first major theme that surfaced as participants reflected on their teacher education and training suggested discrepancies in participants’ individual perceptions of their experiences. Each participant expressed that his/her teacher education and training was adequate preparation for the current careers as classroom teachers. Likewise, each participant expressed that their education and training did not explicitly prepare them for their current roles as teachers of students of color. This theme includes three subthemes: Teacher for All Students, Intuition, and Undeveloped.

Teacher for All Students

Participants began their reflections by describing their overall perceptions of their TEPs, and the impact they believed their experiences had on their teacher self-efficacy or belief in their ability to influence students’ learning (Petchauer, 2016). Each participant assertively described his or her preparation for the teaching profession as adequate and believed that they had been equipped with necessary competencies for effective teaching. Elijah, for example, credited the education department for ensuring that he was highly qualified by NCLB (2002) and state

standards. Identifying what he believed to be an asset for some and a deferment for others, Elijah said:

A major strength would definitely be in that all education majors are required to be 100% certified in the state prior to graduation, but this qualification did cause many students to leave the department and change majors. The education department strongly pushed all students to pass Praxis I. There is even a lab dedicated specifically to it, where students can study and take practice tests.

Jo also noted the rigorous qualifying standards. She explained that because of the “extremely high expectations” within the TEP, all teacher candidates were well prepared. For this reason, she recommended that other inspiring teachers attend South Pike University.

Robert described his TEP as a “comprehensive program”. He thought that the program communicated all pertinent knowledge and skills needed to be an effective teacher. Robert stated, “Offhand, I cannot call out any weaknesses.” Elaborating on the programs’ strengths he said:

Honestly, I had a great experience at Prestige University, and I feel that my education there was well rounded. I’m sure there is room for improvement, as in any academic program, but I cannot say that I’ve encountered anything in my professional life as a teacher that I could say was not at least alluded to during my time at Prestige University. I feel that most of what I’ve seen and experienced was properly addressed or taught by my professors.

Keisha’s enthusiastic description of her preparedness can be used to appreciate the essence of experiences from the other participants. She stated:

I feel like I was overwhelmingly prepared. I was very confident when I left Field State University about what I learned, and how to apply it to my own class of students. It’s a great program. Very practical. It’s produced a lot of teachers that I know. And they are all good teachers. So, yeah, I was definitely prepared, nervous and anxious too, but I knew that I knew my stuff, as far a content knowledge, classroom management, how children develop and learn.

Though each participant in this study considered himself or herself a well-prepared pedagogue, when asked to describe preparation for meeting the academic needs of students of

color, all six participants asserted that their programs had little or no formal instruction that specifically addressed the academic, social, and emotional wellbeing of students from racially and culturally diverse backgrounds. Lynn admitted that before this study, she never contemplated the absence of this component, but she did not think that it hindered her preparedness. “I never thought of it like that,” she said. “I always thought of my teacher preparation as applicable for all children. We were taught how to teach all children.” Keisha, who had so much pride in her experience, also believed that the lack of regard to specific pedagogical knowledge and practices for addressing students of color had no bearing on her overall preparedness. She commented, “I really didn’t go to school to learn how to teach Black students or students of color; I went to school to become a teacher. I don’t recall that being a focus of the school [of education].”

Still affirming his confidence in his teaching abilities as a result of his TEP, Robert also indicated that he did not receive any explicit instruction for competencies specific to teaching students of color. He stated:

I feel that my time at Prestige University prepared me in an academic and professional sense, but I don’t feel there was an overt agenda to prepare me to teach students of color specifically, but more so to educate any student. To be specific, I remember having a Child Psychology class where we were taught the various stages of learning and different aspects of assimilating information. Along with these constructs and philosophies, we were taught to assess our environment and adapt. We were also taught to use understanding and compassion for whomever we encounter. So I would say that Prestige University somewhat prepared me for teaching student of color in a standard way, or like I would teach all students regardless of their race, or gender for that matter.

Elaborating on the distinction between diversity and differences, Robert remarked:

The subject matter for diversity was really not, it was more about developing an awareness of each student’s differences, not really the cultural differences, but the difference in abilities and behavioral concerns. I think, of course, it being an HBCU the implication was that we’re going to be working with a lot of inner city schools and we’re going to be dealing with a lot of Black kids. So I think it was more of an implied thought process.

Unlike the others, Elijah, Jo, and Lori expressed disappointment in the lack of focus on addressing students of color during their training and development. Elijah described the “oversight” as a weakness of his TEP. Regarding how his TEP prepared him for teaching students of color, Elijah commented:

None! Isn't that sad? I mean you would think there would be an emphasis on teaching Black students. Especially because they know that most of us in the program planned to teach in Black schools. Most of us I guess. I guess you can't assume that everyone would teach Black kids, but surely the majority. I'm not saying that I went there expecting it to only be about teaching Black kids, or students of color, but now that you are asking me, and I think back, it is really sad. I honestly can't say that I remember really learning about teaching Black kids.

Jo also deemed the lack of focus on teaching students of color a weakness her of TEP. However, she quickly rationalized the deficiency, seeming not to want to reduce her statement of the program's effectiveness. Jo commented:

Ironically, I can't recall much discussion in my education courses as it relates specifically to the academic needs of students of color. I mean, the need for Black students to have great Black role models in their teachers was mentioned, but not as far as the actual teaching of Black students, in relation to their other counterparts. Possibly, it could be because the different strategies, philosophies, and pedagogies that we are taught in our teacher education programs can be applied to students of any ethnic background. But, yeah, it does help to be able to relate to Black students and to know how to handle the different situations that you may be faced with in educating Black students, but how to do that wasn't a focus for me, I mean of my program.

Intuition

Though participants noted their TEPs lacked any intentional focus and did not identify any specific considerations for teaching students of color, they maintained confidence in their abilities to facilitate desired learning outcomes for the students of color. Participants insinuated that teaching students of color requires teachers to have content and pedagogy knowledge, as well as the ability to understand how students think and feel about certain subjects and ideas.

Five of the six participants explained that they began their teacher training with preexisting knowledge and attitudes that enabled them to promote student success.

Three participants referred to statements they made in response to their teaching philosophies, which are highlighted in participant profiles. Lori and Lynn reiterated their understanding of differentiation, meeting the specific needs of all students, and creating supportive, caring, and nurturing environments. Keisha discussed having high expectations for students and taking responsibility for their successes and their failures. She believed that cultural diversity was not a hindering factor. She insisted that maintaining high standards and scaffolding instruction promoted high levels of achievement for all students. She considered the standard of high expectations to be complimentary to her student-centered approach to teaching. Further explaining her teaching style, Keisha said:

I try to provide an organized structure, student friendly and safe environment making students more susceptible to learning by their own efforts and willingness. I think when you tell them where you are coming from and you tell them what you want for them, they will decide for themselves. And they know what I expect, so they perform, usually.

Jo also communicated a message of high expectations for all of her students. She explained that it was her desire to see her student of color success, which is why she worked, “diligently to help them achieve their full academic potential”. Jo sincerely believed that all students were capable of learning at high levels; therefore she created a sense of urgency in her classroom around the importance of mastering the necessary content. Jo stated:

My job is to prepare my students for wherever life takes them, be that college, career or trade. I continually try to empower my students to question and develop critical-thinking skills that will extend beyond the classroom... I have pretty high expectations for all my students whether they are on-level or below, 504 or Special Education, Black, White, Blue. I expect them all to achieve mastery. Even if that looks different for some students. The objective for them all is exactly the same, but the manner in which they get there is based on the needs of the students.

Elijah and Robert believed their successes or failures in fostering academic growth for students of color was a reflection of their abilities to connect to students and reach them on a personal level. Elijah specifically attributed his ability in reaching Black male students to connecting with them. He said, “I know what it’s like to be a Black boy in school, I know what is going on in their heads.” Familiarity with current trends, movies, songs, and other things that are important to Black culture were what Elijah thought helped him to effectively connect with them. He believed that having an understanding of various dialects or nonmainstream vernacular was significant. He said, “You have to speak their language.” Elijah described having the ability to utilize a modern version of code-switching, in which he changed his communication style based on the context and with whom he was talking at the moment. He said he knows when to, “switch it up to get their attention”. The Black male students responded to him with respect and admiration, which resulted in their willingness and desire to work hard to make him proud.

Robert described how he encouraged his students to develop and acknowledge their own voices (Gay, 2010). He used the following analogy to describe his attempt to become effective and efficient in imparting knowledge and understanding across to his students:

In a manner of speaking, I tend to throw my students into the water. Metaphorically, I guide them best I can while they are splashing around looking for answers. This leads to an Aha! moment when I empower them by saying, ‘Hey! You’re in two feet of water; stand up!’ Thereby showing them the subject matter or whatever they are attempting to learn is not as overwhelming as they initially thought. Imagine how small a challenge seems when it is pointed out to you that you are in control on a level you were previously unaware of.

Robert said this disposition was not one that could have been taught in a class or understood from the perspective of others. It is a philosophy that he developed from his personal education experience, and how he navigated through the challenges he faced.

(Un) Developed

Though participants thought that they were equipped and proficient with knowledge and dispositions for teaching students of color before beginning their teacher education and training, they insinuated that their awareness and attitudes were not adequately developed by their TEP experiences. Elijah and Jo both attended South Pike University, and had similar accounts of how their competencies for teaching students of color remained mostly undeveloped. Elijah explained that his TEP lacked a multicultural perspective, and questioned the continued use of a monocultural society perspective. He remarked, “A lot of our program is based on the Anglo-American point of view; you would expect teaching programs not to follow that viewpoint, but to change would require a change in the minds of whoever makes the curriculum.” Elijah indicated that topics of diversity were rarely addressed throughout course content. He noted a single instance when cultural diversity was directly mentioned during his training.

The most we ever discussed it in classes would have only been in my Educational Psychology class. And, what I mean by discuss is that the teacher mentioned maybe in one class day, while we were studying one unit, the fact that, um, men of African-American heritage have a common way of greeting each other no matter where we are in the world. And that’s about it. She would always mention how we had a professor who taught the graduate program, she taught one of the courses in the graduate program, how she was just this world-renowned educator on multicultural issues but none of that ever trickled down to undergrad. Ever. In any class. Not at all.

Elijah explained how the music education department addressed diversity. He believed that topics of cultural influence were inevitable for music content. He explained how music encourages varying cultural perspectives:

There’s no way that I could study music and not be immersed in other cultures. The music, its Western culture music. It’s European, it’s, um, I even study African music, European music, Asian music, South American music, and the history of that music and how it spreads. I remember a class, the history of African Music, and that opened my mind a lot about, about, the history of Africa. So as far as the music department is concerned, I had to learn about other cultures. I had to be culturally aware of other cultures. We actually had foreign exchange students in my department, other music students that were from Brazil. So, you know that was pretty cool.

Elijah did not think that the overall campus environment enhanced his awareness, beliefs, and attitudes about multicultural issues. He thought he was only exposed to the same culture that he had been accustomed to his entire life. Elijah stated:

Obviously, it's an HBCU, the majority of the students were of African American heritage, um, but it didn't really have that huge of an impact on my awareness or beliefs because culture really wasn't emphasized. I walked away knowing everything I knew before. There was nothing new, nothing. And maybe that's another reason why. The fact that I grew up in this culture my entire life. So it's really nothing that, well, a lot of things didn't have to be taught to me because I inherently knew. But as far as the institution I can't I think of any ways how it would have impacted my awareness and knowledge about culture.

Jo also discussed her program coursework. She indicated that the general courses such as basic reading, mathematics, and science that were required before admission into the college of education did not address diversity in any way. Jo expected topics of student diversity to emerge once she began her education classes, but thought that they focused more on traditional education approach. Jo suggested that the required courses were designed to prepare her for license exams. She explained:

There are required educational standards that have to be included in the curriculum. They really pushed to make sure that we passed the Praxis and the first time. So we had to get all the basics of learning theory, um, educational law, child development, and things of that nature. I don't recall there being anything that would be specific to teaching students of color on the Praxis. So that wasn't their main focus.

Jo stated that the only reference to student racial and cultural diversity was in a required course that was specific to multicultural education. Jo considered the course content to be nominal and thought that it was mainly about the reconditioning of the obvious cultural differences. In describing the course, she said:

It was surface level as far a cultural diversity, and what that means now. Or what it means in the educational sense. It was more about being aware of culture, rather than how to address it. Not to say the information was not important, I just would have expected it to be more, have more implications for practice.

Jo depicted attending classes with a group of peers and professors who looked like her and came from the same background as her as a strength and a weakness of her experience. She said, “Likewise, one weakness is a stark contrast to the strengths. There were rarely any instances where I was able to commune with peers of different ethnicities to get a different an alternative view of education.” However, she was able to recall one additional course that focused on diversity. In describing the experience of that class she said:

I was enrolled in an African American History class in which I learned so much about the events that shaped the past, present, and future of African Americans. In that class, we talked about NATO and NAACP and their importance in paving the way for African Americans. Although there was only one, maybe two, courses in multicultural education throughout the entire program, many discussions, assignments, and observations were focused on students of different cultural backgrounds.

According to the course catalog from South Pike University, the Elementary Education Program requires candidates to take course called Multicultural Education. The course description outlines the objectives of the course to be: 1) implement instructional strategies and materials that focus on students’ understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural groups in a pluralistic society, enable students to analyze, evaluate, and propose solutions to contemporary social problems; 2) correct misrepresentations of any cultural group according to diversity factors; 3) address issues of racism, bias, and prejudice; 4) identify strategies that encourage students’ valuing their own heritage throughout the world; 5) develop awareness and sensitivity to individual differences within cultural groups; and 6) identify stereotypes related to diversity factors. Neither Elijah nor Jo referenced any of these objectives when describing their experiences. Themes related to cultural diversity were evident only in one other course outlined in the minimum course requirements. A course in elementary science methods described an objective to be to, “heighten the awareness that science is a human enterprise to which all

cultures have contributed.” Neither Elijah nor Jo mentioned this particular course in their descriptions.

Lynn and Keisha both attended Field State University. The course catalog obtained from Field State’s public website indicated that teacher candidates pursuing certification in elementary education were required to take a course titled Multicultural Education. The course was described as focusing on the educational, sociological, and psychological principles of teaching diverse learners; an objective of the course was to manage and evaluate learners in diverse classrooms. Themes related to cultural diversity were also highlighted in the description of one other course: a children’s literature course, in which teacher candidates focused on activities and presentations in diverse teaching and learning settings. Lynn and Keisha recalled the required multicultural education course, but neither recalled any specific learning outcome. Keisha referred to the children’s literature course and described going on “galley-walks” of children with books from around the world. She described it as a “nice activity” that relayed the idea of different cultures and text. In addition to this photo display of children from different countries reading books, she was required to go to the public library to find books that reflected children from varying cultures. Though Keisha had vague details of the specific learning outcome for the course, it inspired her love for children’s books, and she enjoyed buying books with “Black faces” for her classroom library.

Lynn also described the campus environment. Like Jo, who attended a different HBCU, she found the campus to represent multiple cultural groups. She thought that the campus environment somewhat increased her cultural competence. She explained:

Field State University is an HBCU, but the environment is very diverse. There are people from all over the world on a campus that ultimately have the same common goal. That allowed me the opportunity to encounter different cultures that I may not have encountered had I not attended Field State University. I must admit that I had some

negative thoughts about some cultures that I didn't know anything about first hand, but I was open to learning about them, and once I did, thanks to opportunities at Field State University, my attitude was changed for the better.

Lori and Robert attended Prestige University and used terms such as “differentiate,” “adapts,” and “student-centered approach” throughout their interviews. They indicated that they had interactions with people of different cultural backgrounds while on the campus of Prestige University. Robert elaborated on the experience by saying, “We had Asian students, we had students from India, we had students from Nigeria, Jamaica by way of Canada.” Robert described his interactions with professors of different cultural backgrounds and admitted that the experience challenged him to understand different cultural beliefs; he did not seem to make a connection, however, to how what he experienced could translate to ensuring his students were not faced with similar barriers that could hinder their educational experience. In reference to his professors, Robert said:

Some of the professors were African. I had a Chinese political science professor at one point, so it was kind of like by proxy. You know, it was about their culture too. So they may have mentioned things about it, and it was just interesting, you know. Their philosophies of education and how people thought of education in their home countries verse in the U.S. A lot of times for me learning their cultures was about learning about how to communicate with them. A lot of times even understanding their vernacular, to make sure I wasn't misunderstanding. And trying not to be offensive. And making sure I was understanding their methods because I also had to get a grade in their class. Remember that.

The Prestige University's course catalog indicated that teacher candidates were required to take a course titled Multicultural Education. Some of the course's learning objectives were to: 1) implement instructional strategies and materials that focus on students' understanding and appreciation of diverse cultural groups, 2) correct misrepresentations of any cultural group, 3) address issues of racism, bias, and prejudice, and 3) identify strategies that encourage students' valuing their own heritage. Neither Lori nor Robert referred to any of these learning objectives,

but both referred to their Educational Psychology class, the course description for which did not directly mention racial and cultural diversity of students. Lori thought this class helped to make connections between her personal experiences and her current teaching practices. Lori said, “I’ve always been intrigued by how the mind works. So a good bit of what I learned about children and human beings, in general, has factored greatly into how I run my class. I never demand that my students focus on anything for more than 20 minutes.”

In describing how the same course helped to develop competencies, Robert used the term multiple modalities, which opened the conversation to addressing students’ unique learning needs. Elaborating on and describing specific strategies and ideas he acquired, Robert stated:

It made me realize that certainly the subject matter is important but can be revisited and broken down many ways, but being able to truly think and synthesize information is paramount, and the sooner a person can grasp those concepts, the better their quality of life will be in my opinion. So, I constantly probe students to think further about topics by asking them questions, and letting them know it is okay to have the wrong answer. Or not even wrong, but one that may be different from someone else’s. I expect them to explain their thinking, why they feel a certain way. I tell them, ‘Use your own brain; no one can think for you.’ Just like no one has the exact same knowledge or interpretations of events. How do you feel about? and What do you think about? are not questions that they are used to answering in school. But I expect everyone to be able to form their own options, beliefs, and understanding.

Theme Two: Those Who Can, Teach

The second major finding of this study highlighted the value participants placed on learning from educators who had success with teaching students of color. Participants implied that their preparation and development were enhanced from these experiences more than by the formal curriculums of the programs. This theme includes two subthemes, Meaningful Relationships and Informal Curriculum.

Meaningful Relationships

There were many indications of positive faculty-student relationships; each participant thought professors positively influenced their development. In Lynn's words, "The professors were outstanding in every way. I had tremendously positive experiences with professors both in and outside of the classroom." Nurturing and caring were the most common values used by participants to describe their professors and their professional practice of teaching. To Elijah, the TEP faculty was easily accessible and approachable. He thought that his professors were completely invested in his learning, and he appreciated that they provided him with the motivation he needed, while still holding him to high expectations. Specifically, he said, "They supported me a lot, but still held me accountable for my own learning."

Jo and Robert both described their teacher education department as "small communities" in which they made connections with faculty members in ways that would not have been possible on larger campuses. Jo was able to "get one-on-one attention from professors and administrators", creating the sentiment that her education was their number one priority. Likewise, Robert believed that his professors valued him and his opinions because they always welcomed his office visits despite their workloads. He said, "Now, that's not to say they weren't busy. I'm sure they had many moving pieces to their days." Still, he was able to interact with faculty members outside of the classroom. In describing his interaction with a particular professor, he described a relationship in which student became teacher and teacher became the student. Robert realized how these positive teacher-student interactions influenced his current teaching practice. As a result of these relationships, he was more open to hearing his students' voices and welcomed their interpretations. He made the connection while describing his relationship with his Educational Psychology professor.

I would just stop by Dr. ____ office, and we'd engage in conversations...we would talk about current events, what's going on in the world of education today? (Laughs). These were conversations in which we both took something away from; he heard my thoughts about things, and I heard his positions. And we didn't always align (laughs). The amazing thing was that was okay. I think I challenged his thinking just as he challenged mine. And you know what, sometimes my students do the same thing to me. A lot of times. They honestly make me rethink my, my thinking sometimes.

For Lori, the nurturing and caring practices of her professors transpired into a form of informal mentoring relationships or othermothering (Guiffrida, 2005b). She stated:

Like I said, we were like a family. They were aware of my scores and my grades. As I walked down the hall, they would call me by name. And literally, stop in the hall to talk to me about my progress. It was like how your mom would fuss at you, and say, 'I'm doing this because I love you'. So I constantly had someone push me.

Like Robert, these relationships influenced on way Lori interacted with her students. She continued:

Which is why I push my students the way I do. Sometimes they don't have a person in their household... I had a student who always told me he didn't have his homework done because his mom didn't have a pencil. Okay. You didn't do your homework because your mom didn't have a pencil? Don't worry; you can stay in with me and do it during P.E. Honestly, it was a punishment; it was me trying to get him to be responsibility for his own work. Some mornings, soon as he walked in, he would ask if he could come in and do his homework with me during P.E.

Informal Curriculum

These meaningful faculty-student relationships as described by participants were not the only source of influence from the faculty. Professors also provided a glimpse of what it was like to be an educator who primarily taught students of color. They did this by sharing their own experiences. Their testimonies gave the participants realistic ideas of the catalyst and barriers they might one day face. Lori explained that all of her education professors had taught in public schools for years before becoming faculty members. As a teacher candidate, Lori learned much from hearing about their classroom teaching experiences.

Lynn developed a more realistic idea of how she would need to interact with students of color in her classroom to support them in their academic journeys. According to Lynn, these were subjects that were “not touched by the textbooks used in the college [of education]”. Lori made a similar comment, “It was like okay, here is what the book says, and here is real life”, and explained why she believed there was a disconnect between the course materials or texts and instruction from the professors:

I’m sure there certain textbooks that are required as part of any teacher ed. program. Even in my [district], we are required to use a certain curriculum. They even go as far as to do walkthroughs to make sure I am using the novels. Which, I don’t like all of the novels. I’ve asked to use other novels that I do like that cover the same standards. They don’t flat say no, but they might as well. They say we can add other novel studies, but we are still required to use the ones from the scope and sequence. But I don’t ever have time to get to anything else.

Jo made a similar comment regarding the difference between the information presented in textbooks and information presented during instruction, and shared what she believed to be the cause of the disconnect. Her response echoed Lori’s explanation and referenced to her previous comments regarding “high expectations” and licensure exams. But she noted the professors’ desire to share their knowledge. She said, “But since most of them [professors] taught low SES student in their careers, they were able to describe, in relation to all of that. They just couldn’t make that the focus of the entire class.” Robert had a parallel explanation to those of Lori and Jo. In his rational of the disconnect, he referred to the high expectations and using prior experience and knowledge to make connections with students backgrounds. He stated:

I believe that it [course content] was given to us so that we could compete in the market. And then I think it was again, there was an implication, they knew where we chose to go to school, and what kind of students we were. And they knew that we were going to step outside and talk about different things. So it was quote-unquote, off the record. They were kind of like, hey, yeah, we are giving you the standard education, so you can compete in the market, and this is the knowledge that is going to get you higher. But it is up to you to be a revolutionary as you go out.

Robert recognized his professors as nurturing and caring, and recalled the attitudes they held toward students of color and how they encouraged him to have a similar nurturing and caring approach as he teaches students of color:

Then we a professor or two that refer to them as “our babies”, you know. So when we talked about Black kids, they would say, ‘This is who you are going to go out and teach, so you know, you want to make sure that you are understanding that, they may not have had sleep last night.’ Basically, the message was that teaching Black kids at times was so much more on a personal level. I mean, I guess that family thing comes in again. And too, truly taking time to understand where your kids are coming from and their backgrounds.

Though participants thought that addressing the needs of students of color was presented as “additional knowledge” relative to what was vital to their development as effective teachers, they were appreciative of the efforts to include it into their instruction. Elijah said, “I like how some of the professors tried to make meaningful connections during discussions.” Robert, Keisha, and Jo described meaningful discussions during classes that they viewed as not planned, but that transformed their attitudes about the differences in teaching students of color. Lori again described these discussions by saying:

I recall a lot of random discussions about Black students more than anything else. And the discussions would get deep. And we got a lot of practical knowledge from the professor. But then like I said, it may have just so happened that we had an open discussion about whatever the professor just lectured about, that somehow led to talking about Black kids.

Robert described these discussions as “off the cuff”. The discussions helped him to realize the need to go beyond the formal mandated curriculum, and he described how meaningful this was during his experience.

Prestige University was very, you had a lot of burgeoning and staring revolutionaries on that campus. And, um, the history of Prestige University is very much about the students standing up for what they think is right dealing with the state. And so, some of the staff, you know, that come from that were the former students. So we had a teacher that put it in perspective for us, that George Washington Carver knew Thomas Edison. See I didn't know that growing up. So when that was told to me in class, and then I think I saw it on

TV later, it was like, okay, I would have paid attention in history had people kind of put the puzzle together.

Keisha also recalled a specific discussion that had a lasting impression on her attitudes about teaching students of color. She described how a professor referred to the disproportion of Black male students getting into trouble in public schools.

I remember Dr. ____ would always tell us to be cognizant of our students' differences because a lot of teachers won't. She did not give an outline or any direct instruction of how to do that, but she always gave examples of things, if that makes sense. Like for instance, I had her for classroom management. And I remember her saying that Black boys have more disciplinary issues in school than other kids because they are naturally more active. Right. And I've actually seen this to be true myself. If I think about my class now, I have a room full of active Black boys. [Student name] has no impulse control what so ever. He has to say what's on his mind. I have to remind him to 'Raise your hand, [student name].' He gets his clip pulled sometimes in my room, but he always tries really hard to move it back up. Most of the times he does. But when he goes across the hall for math, he stays on red. I don't want to say; she don't have patience, she just, you know. I get it, blurting out and getting out of your seat is distracting to other students. But I understand [student name]. And I really remember Dr. ____ saying that in class one day.

Lynn described how her awareness of cultural influences in education increased. She came to this awareness by engaging in the informal discussions of which Jo, Keisha, and Robert spoke. She was pushed to reflect on her experiences in grade school. Throughout her K-12 education, Lynn had mostly White teachers, and could recall having only two African American female teachers while in high school. Lynn insisted that her K-12 teachers had limited or no awareness about her culture, and did not make any efforts to embrace or highlight it. She explained that none of the literature to which she was exposed referred to the cultural mismatch between teachers and students. A comment made by a professor helped her to make the connection.

Theme Three: Hands-On, Hands-Down

The third and final major theme that emerged as participants' described their education and training experiences represented what participants believed to be the most critical component

for their preparation and development for teaching students of color. All six participants indicated that hands-on practical experiences were the most influential. This theme includes the two subthemes of Experiences and Reflections.

Experiences

Fieldwork was an integral part of the participants' experiences. Each discussed classroom observations and student teaching during their interviews. Robert described these experiences as, "eye-opening" and "authentic". He insisted that field experience was critical because teaching methods and content are often presented to depict the "joys of teaching". Robert said an image was unrealistic in the classrooms he had been in throughout his career. Of these experiences, he said, "It taught me what challenges and successes students were really having, as well as the constant negotiation between expectations and the needs of the students."

Three participants indicated that student teaching experiences enhanced their awareness of how socioeconomic status impacts education experiences for children. Lynn described how her involvement in urban schools decreased her tendency to stereotype based on appearances, and increased her desire to give back to the community. She had two very different observation experiences, the first of which she described was in a predominantly African American, upper-middle class neighborhood. The other was at a school she described as "high-poverty". She said, "Overall that field experience gave me, just some background information on just how to deal with parents that I would have to really deal with. So I try to reach out more to the parents and help in the community."

Lori also spoke of how her experience increased her cultural awareness and beliefs. She explained:

Student teaching is what showed me that students come to school with different backgrounds, sets of experiences, cultural contexts, and worldviews. Also, student

teaching impacted and played a role in how I viewed the importance of the classroom and what should happen there. For example, assumptions about what a typical student should know, the resources they have and their prior knowledge are extremely important

Jo thought the opportunity to observe and practice in an authentic setting helped her to gain a realistic picture of the urban community and to establish classroom routines and community relationships. She explained:

For instance, even before student teaching, I was required to complete observation hours, I didn't get to pick the schools; the college assigned us. The dynamics of the first school, it ranged 90 plus percent free and reduced lunch. Then at another school, where the student population was majority White. Just from going to those schools, I got the opportunity to see students from all walks of life and observe their behaviors and attitudes about education. And during my observations, it was evident that schools in low-poverty areas received less resources, had larger class sizes, and had extremely high levels of classroom management issues. That was eye opening. To read an article about that then actually seeing it. Seeing was what made me aware.

Expanding on how these experiences influenced her practice, Jo said:

It taught me classroom management first of all. How to deal with different types of students, and my response to students as opposed to just coming in and being a leader in the classroom.... And most importantly the community relationship. My God, you can see the differences in the White community with the parent involvement than with a Black parent involvement. So I made that a mission to always keep those parents involved in their child's education. Now, South Pike University didn't have a class for that, but because of that experience, I learned about making sure that the parents and the community were involved. Because you see that impact in the White community and you would like to see that also in the African-American community as well.

Keisha also credited her student teaching experience with preparing her for the realities of the classrooms. Her experiences during student teaching differed from the expectation her coursework had imparted. She explained:

It was so very important to learn how to teach using the bare necessities first, then integrating technology afterward. I say that because we had a whole course on integrating technology into the classroom. We had to do a project, and I prepared a lot of lessons for the interactive board. Got to the school and there was one interactive board in the whole school. In the library. That's important, because you don't know what school system you will land a job in and what resources you will not be provided, and Lord knows that your teacher salary doesn't allow you to go out and buy all of the materials that your parents or district fails to provide.

Elijah recalled his student teaching experience to be both informative and awkward. The students in the class were Black, and the cooperating teacher was White. Elijah described a situation in which his cooperating teacher reprimanded him for being “too friendly” with the student.

I would talk to them about video games and basketball, during free time of course. I was just trying to relate to them and get to know them. Clearly, she never tried to get to know the students as individuals. I couldn't believe she really called me out.

Elijah described the White teacher's disposition toward her class of mostly Black students as “cold”. He said, “She was always sharp with them. It made me feel bad because I felt like they just needed a little attention.” This experience led Elijah to consider that perhaps he was better prepared to promote success for Black students than a White teacher was.

Reflections

Each participant found significance in the opportunities for self-examination and self-reflection. They found these opportunities to be processes of holding themselves accountable for improving the quality of their teaching and challenging themselves to make meaningful connections. Reflection, like curriculum, can be categorized as formal or informal, depending on the context. Participants indicated there were multiple forms of formal reflection by way of reflective journaling, giving and receiving written and oral feedback, writing position and research papers, having conversations with professors, peers, and cooperating teachers, and evaluating themselves during student teaching.

Three participants thought that the seminar courses that were linked with their student teaching requirements were critical to their reflective practice and development. During those courses they connected theory to practice, as well as explored the ways in which the two did not connect. For Robert, the student teaching seminars not only exposed the connections between

theory and practice, but also gave him a sense of validation. Realizing that he was not the only teacher candidate to experience challenges during their student teaching made him realize that he was not ineffectual. Robert described the experience as:

We would sit down, and somebody would mention, oh, this kid did this today, this kid did this today. And then we would talk about what could have been done to change the situation. So it was, you know, kind of like an informal town meeting a lot of times. Where we might have class, but then the professor would throw something out there that one or us or two of us may have experienced that day actually. We were kind of going at it and talk about it so it was really a nice little clinic or also a therapy sometimes. Because the kids were already driving us crazy, but we were just sticking in there because we knew that that demographic, Black students, you know, they need, I was always told they need males in the classroom. They need Black males in the classroom, you know.

Two participants referred to their development of professional portfolios as a form of reflection that helped them to monitor their own developmental growth of content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Robert and Lynn referred to their portfolios in their closing remarks of their interviews. Robert commented that he had not thought as much about his experiences in the TEP since completing his portfolio; he said that he learned a lot about himself while completing the assignment. Lynn described the process as “filling”. She elaborated:

I realized how much I had learned. I still have it. We had to write our philosophy of education, and we had to explain how we met each standard. It made me think about all the classes, all the observation, and just how far I had come.

Jo discussed her formal reflection on her teaching practices during her TEP. She described the process of self-examination:

We had to video ourselves teaching a lesson and critique it in front of the class. I think we had to write a paper about it too. But nothing was like seeing yourself teaching. I thought I had a rock solid lesson, then watching myself I realized my model was horrible. I went through it too fast, and students looked lost, on the video. I didn't realize it during the lesson. I'm mindful now to make sure I have a clear, concise model, and I constantly check for understanding along the way.

Similarly, Lori described specific instances of self-examination and self-reflection during student teaching. She explained that her student teaching obligations included weekly journal reflections and evaluation.

Participants also described instances of spontaneous or informal reflection at multiple points in their interviews. As mentioned in the participant introductions, Keisha and Elijah constantly reflected to improve their teaching skills. Keisha explained that this practice began while in her TEP. She stayed up long hours rewriting lesson plans as a result of reflecting on the delivery of her lesson and students' performance. "Did I do that the best way possible?" she would ask herself when deciding if modifications needed to be made. Elijah referred to his reflection during the TEP as "spot checking", which he did to ensure he had not missed opportunities for learning.

Summary of Findings

Participants did not believe their TEPs had an intentional focus on addressing or embracing students' cultural diversity. They did, however, consider themselves to be well prepared and proficient. Combining their personal experiences and knowledge with the content and pedagogical skills they acquired from the TEPs enabled them to facilitate success for students of color. Participants were appreciative of the skills they developed, but they thought their skills for teaching students of color remained undeveloped.

Study participants believed that a part of their preparation for teaching students of color was a reflection of learning from those who had experience with teaching that population of students. First, they indicated their professors, who had caring and nurturing dispositions towards them and students of color, encouraged them to have similar characteristics in their teaching

approach. They also indicated that they learned from their professors sharing their experiences as classroom teachers in majority-minority settings.

Participants thought that their awareness of differences in culture and class are reflected in the education system, as they were required to observe in multiple settings. They also thought that a critical component of their development and preparation was the opportunities to practice and reflect.

Recommendations From Participants

Each interview concluded by asking the participant what would have enhanced their preparation and development, considering the challenges and successes they had experienced as practicing teachers of students of color.

Elijah

Elijah considered the “lack of useful and meaningful experiences out in the actual field from day one” to be the biggest weakness of his TEP experience. Thus, his recommendation was to include, “more meaningful, necessary, engaging, relatable, content rich, and use hands-on in-classroom field experience”. He explained that he valued the coursework, but he believed he would have benefited with more hands-on fieldwork related to each course. He closed by saying, “I have to admit that I would have still preferred even more in classroom hands-on experience.”

Jo

Jo’s first recommendation for HBCU TEP was to provide more opportunities for observations and practical experience. Typically, teacher candidates select their content or certification area before completing fieldwork, observations, or practical experience. Jo believed she would have benefited from observing multiple grade levels before having to declare her content area. In addition, she suggested extending student teaching to a full academic year,

giving teacher candidates a holistic picture of what a teacher endures, how children develop over the course of a year, and seeing how routines and classroom management are established and maintained throughout the school year.

Her second recommendation was for HBCU TEPs to sponsor teacher candidates to attend professional conferences to learn from experts in specific areas. She explained why she thought this was important.

My first couple of years of teaching were a little stressful because I did not have good classroom management. I feel that if we were given the opportunity to attend workshops or conferences geared toward classroom management, I would not have struggled in the beginning. It was easier to present a lesson to a class of your peers because they were always focused and behaved. I didn't learn attention getters until well into my teaching career.

Keisha

Keisha's recommendation for HBCU TEP was to include more observational hours early in the program. Keisha realized the value of observing other teachers after she began teaching and was required to do peer observations. Seeing the teaching styles and different approaches to material helped Keisha strengthen her instructional practices. She believed that giving teacher candidates the opportunity to observe more classroom teachers would help them to develop their skills in teaching students of color.

Lori

The suggestions that Lori had for HBCU TEPs were not related to her personal struggles, but, rather, were based on some of the challenges she witnessed some of her colleagues combat. The first was related to classroom management. Lori said that teachers from her cohort struggled their first year of teaching in urban schools. She suggested that her TEP include a course to help teacher candidates develop culturally sensitive classroom management practice. Lori's second recommendation referred to her statement that her TEP presented pedagogical skills in a manner

that suggested that no consideration should be given to the unique academic, social, and emotional needs of Black students. She said:

One of the most important skills teachers need, what is important for me is, being able to build on the knowledge that students bring into classrooms, particularly that knowledge which is shaped by their family, community, and cultures.

She suggested including an additional courses in multicultural education. Her final recommendation was to extend field experience. She reiterated that her student teaching experience was the most critical part of her preparation for interacting with and teaching students of varying cultural backgrounds. In addition to extending the student teaching requirements, she suggested that the student teacher supervisors frequently observe and monitor the teacher candidates, and provide constructive feedback.

Lynn

While offering her recommendations, Lynn stated:

If I must think of something, I would say maybe they could incorporate more *real life* thinking situations for the students to have to figure out how to solve, given minimal materials and a little time. So that they can have opportunities to see how someone else would take the same information, and resources and present it in possible a different way. Because often time, districts don't allow teachers the opportunity to see other teachers teaching, so we only get to know how we do it.

Robert

Robert did not have any recommendations.

Chapter Summary

This chapter presented the findings of this phenomenological study on HBCU TEP graduates' experiences regarding the development and preparation for teaching students of color. Data were analyzed using thematic reflection (van Manen, 1990). The three themes that emerged from this data analysis were: (a) Prepared, But Not Prepared, (b) Those Who Can, Teach, and (c) Hand-On, Hands-Down; a summary of the themes is presented in Table 4.2. These themes

emphasize how, in discussing their development and preparation for teaching students of color, participants perceived that they were not adequately prepared, that the knowledge they brought with them remained undeveloped by the HBCU TEPs, and that the most significant aspect of their experience within the HBCU TEP were the opportunities for experiential learning. Chapter Five is the summary and discussion of the data analysis and findings, recommendations for HBCU TEPs recommendations for future research, and concluding thoughts.

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION, RECOMMENDATIONS, AND CONCLUSION

Summary of the Study

The purpose of this study was to investigate how graduates of public HBCU TEPs perceived their development and preparation for teaching students of color. As discussed in Chapter Three, the study utilized a phenomenological methodology, which allowed the researcher to focus on how the six individuals perceived their experiences, and consciously spoke about them (Patton, 2015). This study adds to a very limited body of research that focuses on the preparation and development of Black teachers to facilitate academic achievement for students of color, more specifically, Black teachers who obtained their teacher education and training at HBCUs. The central research question which guided this study was: How do graduates of public HBCU TEPs perceive their development and preparation for teaching students of color?

In addition, the following subsidiary research questions added clarity to the central research question:

- 1) How do graduates of public HBCU TEPs perceive their acquisition of knowledge, pedagogical skills, and dispositions for facilitating the academic achievement for students of color?
- 2) What specific experiences, curriculum models, and pedagogical practices contributed to their development and preparation?

After obtaining permission from the Institutional Review Board (IRB), the researcher used a homogenous sampling strategy (Hatch, 2002) to identify participants. Each participant in this study: (a) received a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education from a public HBCU in the Southeast Region of the United States, (b) was a classroom teacher certified in the content

area in which they taught, had (c) two to five years of teaching experience, in (d) a school with a majority-minority student population. As an HBCU TEP alumna and public school educator, the researcher reached out to other HBCU TEP alumni; the researcher then utilized snowball sampling methods, in which individuals identified by the researcher recommended other potential participants. Solicitation emails sent to each potential participant included an introduction to the researcher, a description of the study, a copy of the informed consent, and a participant inclusion survey. The researcher identified a total of 10 potential participants based on survey results. One participant was chosen to conduct a pilot study. From this pilot study, the research modified the initial interview protocol. To get an in-depth understanding of participants' perceptions, the researcher selected six participants to conduct one-on-one, semi-structured interviews. The interviews provided rich and detailed data for understanding participants' experiences, how they described those experiences, and the meaning they made of those experiences (Rubin & Rubin, 2012).

All interviews were conducted via Skype or Facetime and were audio recorded and transcribed by the researcher. During the interviews, the participants were asked questions designed to address specific research questions and developed by reviewing literature pertaining to pedagogical practices for effectively teaching students of color such as culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 1994), and Villegas and Lucas' (2002) framework for preparing culturally responsive teachers. The nature of the semi-structured interview protocol allowed for the use of follow-up and probing questions. To ensure the accuracy of the data, the researcher utilized member checking by emailing interview transcriptions to participants, requesting that they verify or add to their interview transcripts if they thought any information was missing or misunderstood. Once participants verified interview transcriptions, the significant statements

relevant to each subsidiary research question were compiled, analyzed, and presented by emerging themes and subthemes (Table 4.2).

Discussion and Interpretation of Findings

The discussion and interpretation of the research findings are scaffolded by each subsidiary research question to understand and answer the central research question.

Subsidiary Question One

How do HBCU TEPs graduates perceive their acquisition of knowledge, pedagogical skills, and dispositions for facilitate the academic achievement of students of color?

The six participants in this study did not believe that their HBCU TEPs communicated specific competencies relevant to teaching students of color. Participants overwhelmingly agreed that their program plans or minimal course requirements lacked significant, intentional focus on students' racial and cultural backgrounds. They stated there were no indications or recommendations of how they should address the racial or cultural backgrounds of their students in their instructional practices. For example, Elijah stated, "A lot of our program is based on the Anglo-American point of view." Robert also remarked, "The subject matter for diversity was really not, it was more about developing an awareness of each student's differences, not really the cultural differences, but the difference in abilities and behavioral concerns."

Participants indicated that their TEPs comprised a single course model, which required them to take one class specific to multicultural education and diversity topics. They also indicated that while these individual courses concentrated on multicultural education, there were no ideologies or pedagogical skills conveyed regarding facilitating learning for students of diverse racial and cultural backgrounds. Five of the participants named this as a weakness of their TEPs. They thought that the programs should: 1) embed more courses that covered topics of

cultural diversity, and 2) deliver specific strategies for embracing student diversity in the set curriculum. Lynn described the required multicultural education course as “informative and practical”, yet she also described it as “basic”. Likewise, Jo described the required course in multicultural education as “service level”. Participants did not think that these courses influenced or enhanced their abilities to facilitate learning opportunities for students of color.

Educational accountability. Participants concluded that the lack of multicultural infusion in their program curriculum was due to rigid standards and certification requirements. Four participants specifically referred to their preparation for taking the Praxis examination. Jo and Lori each stated that the main focus of their TEPs was to expose them to materials that they would see on the certification exams. They believed the intense focus on preparing them for the exam was the reason topics of racial and cultural diversity were omitted. Additionally, Robert commented that the TEPs were structured to ensure that the graduates were highly qualified and “marketable” upon graduation. Thus, it was critical that they obtained strong basic competencies.

Subsidiary Question Two

What specific experiences, curriculum models, and instructional practices contributed to their development and preparation?

Though participants in this study thought that their TEPs had no explicit focus on developing their competencies for facilitating academic achievement for students of color, they did think that some experiences enhanced their preparedness. Just as students in public K-12 schools learn from their interactions in the hallways and classrooms with peers, with teachers, and with administrators, participants thought that their preparation was largely influenced by personal and informal sources. Assertion that teachers teach as they were taught, and imitate the instructional and interactional styles of their teacher educators, has been a recurring topic of

study, and has been coined informal curriculum (Carroll, 2005). Participants indicated that they had many informal experiences in the form of meaningful relationships, discussions, and campus the environment.

Meaningful Relationships. Nurturing and caring were the most common value words participants used to describe their professors and their professional practice of teaching. All participants indicated positive faculty-student relationships. Lynn, for example, said, “The professors were outstanding in every way. I had a tremendously positive experiences with professors both in and outside of the classroom.” Elijah, who described the TEP faculty as easily accessible and approachable, thought that his professors were completely invested in his learning. Elijah appreciated that they provided him with the motivation he needed, while still holding him to high expectations. Jo and Robert described their teacher education department as “small communities” in which they were able to make connections with faculty members in ways that would not have been possible on larger campuses. Jo received “one-on-one attention from professors and administrators”, creating the sentiment that her education was their number one priority. Likewise, Robert indicated that his professors valued him and his opinions because they always welcomed his office visits despite their workloads. For Lori, the meaningful relationship and nurturing and caring practices of her professors emerged as a form of informal mentoring relationships.

Discussions. In addition to meaningful faculty-student relationships, the informal curriculum was also recognized through unplanned discussions, which participants valued as lessons. These lessons were taught as professors shared their experiences and provided examples or rationales for how and why particular things happen in public schools. Their testimonies gave the participants a glimpse of the realities, catalysts, and barriers that they and their future

students of color might face. Lori and Lynn explained that their professors in the college of education had taught in public schools for years before becoming faculty members. Lynn found that she was given insight on subjects that were not represented in course texts. Lynn said, “It was like okay, here is what the book says, and here is real life.”

The attitudes and beliefs professors held toward teaching students of color influenced the participants' dispositions. Robert, for example, recalled how his professors encouraged him to have a similar nurturing and caring approach in his teaching. He explained that his professors repeatedly referred to Black children, as “our babies”, and suggested that teaching Black students was “much more on a personal level”.

Though participants thought that addressing the needs students of color was often presented as supplementary knowledge in relation to what was vital to their development as effective teachers, they were appreciative of the professors’ efforts to include their personal knowledge instruction. Elijah said, “I like how some of the professors tried to make meaningful connections during discussions.” Robert, Keisha, and Jo each described meaningful discussions during classes that they felt were not planned, but transformed their attitudes about the challenges for teaching students of color. Robert described these discussions as “off the cuff” but often “in-depth”. Keisha, too, believed that discussion had a lasting impression on her disposition for teaching students of color.

Campus Environment. The overall campus environment had implications for two of the participants’ competencies. Jo, for example, described being exposed to and valuing different cultural groups and observing the role those cultural differences play in learning experiences. Likewise, Robert discussed being surrounded by many different cultures and developing awareness and sensitivity.

Direct and applied experience has been identified as a valuable component of teacher training, and is traditionally a core portion of teacher education programs (Burn, & Mutton, 2015). Each participant regarded these experiences as the biggest influences in their preparation and development and all participants mentioned observations and student teaching experiences during their interviews. Elijah stated, “The best preparation I received in facilitating the academic achievement of students of color was during my student teaching where I was teaching and interacting with them on a daily basis.” Robert described his student teaching experience as “eye-opening” and “authentic”. Keisha also described how her student teaching experience helped to prepare her for the realities of classrooms, and how that experience differed from the expectation her coursework had imparted. Participants also indicated that student teaching experiences enhanced their awareness of how culture and socioeconomic status impacted schools and education. Lynn described how student teaching helped to decrease her tendency to stereotype based on appearances, thus reducing prejudice (Bank, 2004). Lori spoke of how her experience increased her cultural awareness and beliefs. Jo thought that, because she was able to observe and practice in an authentic setting, she was much better equipped to establish her classroom routines and community relationships.

Reflection. Each participant found significance in the opportunities for self-examination and self-reflection. They used reflection as means of holding themselves accountable for improving the quality of their teaching to challenge themselves and make meaningful connections between theory and practice. Reflection, like curriculum, can be categorized as formal or informal, depending on the context. Participants indicated there were multiple forms of formal reflection by way of reflective journaling, giving and receiving written and oral feedback, writing position and research papers, having conversations with professors, peers, and

cooperating teachers, and evaluating themselves during student teaching. Participants also thought that the seminar courses that were linked with their student teaching requirements were critical to their reflective practice. It was during that time that they connected theory to practice, as well as saw ways in which they did not connect. For Robert, the student teaching seminars not only exposed the connections between theory and practice, but also gave him a sense of validation. Realizing that he was not the only teacher candidate to experience challenges during their student teaching made him see that he was not ineffective.

The use of portfolios helped participants to monitor their developmental growth of content knowledge and pedagogical skills. Two participants referred to their development of professional portfolios as a form of reflection; Robert and Lynn referred to their portfolios in their closing remarks. Robert commented that he had not thought as much about his experiences in the TEP since completing his portfolio. He said that he learned a lot about himself while completing the assignment. Lynn described the process as “filling”. Similarly, Lori described specific instances self-examination and self-reflection during student teaching; she explained that her student teaching obligations included weekly journal reflections and evaluation.

At multiple points in their interviews, participants described instances of spontaneous or informal reflection. As mentioned in the participant introductions, Keisha and Elijah constantly reflected to improve their teaching skills. Keisha explained that this practice began while in her TEP. She stayed up long hours rewriting lesson plans as a result of reflecting on the delivery of her lesson and students' performance. She asked herself, “Did I do that the best way possible?” when deciding if modifications need to be made. Elijah referred to his reflection during the TEP as “spot checking”, which he did to ensure he hadn't missed opportunities for learning.

Central Research Question

How do graduates of public HBCU TEPs perceive their development and preparation for teaching students of color?

As aforementioned, the results of the subsidiary questions helped to answer and understand this overarching research question. The overarching theme that encompassed all study findings was Prepared, but Not Prepared. This theme reflected the participants' overall perceptions of their development and preparation for teaching students of color, and the influence of their TEP experiences. Each participant assertively described his or her preparation for the teaching profession as sufficient. Specifically, Jo noted that because of the "extremely high expectations" within the TEP, all teacher candidates were well prepared. For this reason, she recommended that other aspiring teachers attend South Pike University. Robert described his TEP as a "comprehensive program" that provided the all relevant knowledge and skills needed to be an effective teacher. Robert continued, "Offhand, I cannot call out any weaknesses." Keisha enthusiastically described her preparedness by saying, "I feel like I was overwhelmingly prepared. I was very confident when I left Field State University about what I learned, and how to apply it to my own class of students. It's a great program. Very practical." Although each participant in this study considered himself or herself a well-prepared pedagogue, when asked to describe their preparation for teaching students of color, all six participants asserted that their programs had little or no formal instruction specific to meeting the academic, social, and emotional needs of students from racially and culturally diverse backgrounds. Lynn explained that before this study, she never contemplated whether the absence of this element hindered her preparation. She said, "I never thought of it like that. I always thought of my teacher preparation be applicable for all children. We were taught how to teach all children." Keisha, who had so

much pride in her experience, also thought that the lack of regard to specific pedagogical knowledge and practices for addressing students of color did not hinder her overall preparedness. She stated, “I really didn’t go to school to learn how to teach Black students or students of color; I went to school to become a teacher. I don’t recall that being a focus of the school.” While still affirming his confidence in his teaching abilities as a result of his TEP, Robert indicated that he did not receive any explicit instruction or competencies specific to teaching students of color. He commented, “I feel that my time at Prestige University prepared me in an academic and professional sense, but I don’t feel there was an overt agenda to prepare me to teach students of color specifically.” Jo and Elijah immediately regarded the lack of formal reference to teaching students of racial and cultural diversity as an oversight and weakness of their TEP.

It was important to the participants that two things were clear: First, that they were well-prepared pedagogues as a result of their TEPs, and second, though their TEPs did not directly focus on preparing them to educate students of color, they were very confident in their capabilities to produce the desired learning outcomes for their students. Participants believed that they entered their TEPs with the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to meet the academic, emotional, and social needs of students of color. Each participant emphasized the use of differentiation, meeting the specific needs of all students, allowing and encouraging students to use their voices, and creating supportive caring and nurturing environments. Elijah attributed his success with his students of color to his ability to connect with them. He said, “ I know what it’s like to be a Black boy in school, I know what is going on in their heads.” He said, “You have to speak their language,” and “Switch it up to get their attention.” Lynn thought that her experiences as a mother, aunt, and older sister taught her how to be compassionate towards all children.

Implications

The results of this study do not represent the perceptions of all graduates of HBCU TEPs. In addition, this study was bounded by several limitations. These things considered, the results of this study yielded several implications for colleges and schools of education at HBCUs. First, the findings indicated a need for an intervention in the form of carefully constructed and multiple course offerings in the area of multicultural education. Participants perceived disconnect between the multicultural education courses and other required program coursework. They also believed that diversity existed on a very basic level, and did not develop their knowledge and skills for teaching students of color.

Villegas and Lucas (2002) suggested six attributes that teacher education programs should integrate throughout their curriculum to prepare culturally responsive teachers to be successful in culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The sixth characteristics highlight the need to provide teacher candidates with culturally responsive teaching strategies to support the constructivist view of knowledge, learning, and teaching. Substantial research suggests that truly equitable education for students of color requires teachers to not only mirror their diversity, but also to possess culturally responsive pedagogical skills (Darling-Hammond, 2000). Though participants thought that they inherently assumed the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to meet the academic, social, and emotional needs of students of color, none of them used terms such as culturally responsive, relevant, or sustaining. Their descriptions of their implementation of relevant competencies were related more to accommodating students' different learning styles and levels by differentiating instructional strategies and making accommodations. Furthermore, they appeared to be defeated by their inability or lack of knowledge of how to expand their curriculum due to barriers such as standardized test, state

standards, and ridge curriculums. Challenges facing educators in meeting the needs of students of color include identifying pedagogical approaches and adjusting the curriculum content (Taylor, 2010; Banks, 2010). HBCU TEPs should more intently support teacher candidates' preexisting knowledge to build on their personal and cultural strengths and examine curriculum from multiple perspectives. It is necessary to encourage teacher candidates' critical view of the world, themselves, their practice, and the institutions in which they operate to critique the methods, applications, and organization of educational theory and curriculum that maintain oppressive learning contexts and environments. Providing teachers with a way to question the material being taught and to initiate the investigation of the long-held social and political factors that impact education have been termed as critical pedagogy (Giroux, 2004).

Recommendations for Future Research

The preliminary findings of this study should be pursued more thoroughly in future research. Since little is understood about how Black teachers perceive their preparation for teaching students of color and their development of culturally responsive pedagogical skill, future researchers should consider the findings of this study to set the foundation for a larger-scale, quantitative study. This study was limited in that it included a small number of participants from three public HBCUs in the Southeast Region of the United States. Expanding the scope of the study might yield varying result. A phenomenological study that includes a larger sample of participants from a wider selection of public HBCUs is recommended.

Second, this study primarily utilized one source of data, the perceptions of practicing teachers who had completed their teacher education and training at least two years before the study. Future research might consider investigating the perception of preparedness of teacher candidates before the completion of their program, and before or during clinical practice. This

might result in more accurate reflections and descriptions of how Black teachers experience their preparation for teaching students of color during their education and training.

Third, future research should consider comparative qualitative investigations to determine whether Black teachers experience different preparation for teaching students of color in HBCUs and non-HBCUs. Additional comparative study might investigate differences in how Black teachers experience preparation in public and private HBCUs.

Finally, future researchers may also consider studies that directly link the effectiveness of teacher education programs to a candidates' success implementing culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom. This study only investigated participants' perceptions of preparedness, not their effectiveness. Observing and comparing the instructional practice of Black teachers who received their education and training at HBCUs vs. non-HBCUs, and between those who received their education and training at public HBCUs vs. private HBCUs, will add significantly to literature related to the preparation and development of Black teachers. This additional research can inform schools and colleges of education (HBCU and non-HBCU) of best curriculum models and instructional practices.

Concluding Thoughts

The participants' initial responses regarding the preparation they received for teaching students of color lead to the assumption that they were inadequately prepared to perpetuate educational equity and academic achievement for students of color. At the time of this study, each participant was a classroom teacher at a school with a majority-minority student population, namely Black students. Five of the six participants stated that it was their desire and choice to teach in schools serving Black youths. The lack of direct, intended focus on specific competencies for facilitating academic achievement for students of color was not immediately

alarming and disappointing for all participants. For some, their experience was not devalued. With respect to the absence of this preparation, each participant held high self-efficacy and they understood that race, ethnicity, social class, and language influence how a person thinks, behaves, and makes meaning of experiences; they each held affirming attitudes towards teaching students of color, and most participants articulated their commitment to act as agents seeking to make educational experiences more equitable of students for color. The concern is that the participants did not recognize their overall experiences as teacher candidates at HBCUs as having developed their ideologies. In other words, participants believed they were successful in teaching students of color because it was something that they knew they had to do, rather than something they were taught to do.

The findings in this study can be situated in literature that underscores the promises of culturally matching teachers and students. Research on the educational equity and academic achievement of students of color highlights two main promises. First, the literature suggests that Black teachers perceive themselves as role models for their students, as motivators for them to attain and maintain higher academic achievement, while also challenging society's negative cultural stereotypes (Gershenson & Papageorge, 2016). The second promise is that Black teachers utilize cultural resources in themselves and their students in their teaching practice and support boundary crossing across multicultural contexts (Delpit, 1995; Foster, 1995; Irvine, 1988; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This study does not undermine these research findings, nor does it suggest less emphasis be placed on recruitment and retention efforts for Black teachers. It does, however, caution the blind assumptions that because of the perceived cultural match, Black teachers will automatically have competencies to penetrate the mainstream curriculum and to create learning environments in which culture is used as the main

element, instead of a secondary thought. Though multiple studies have found that exposure to just one Black teacher during elementary school raises long term educational attainment for Black students (Gershenson, Hart, Lindsay, & Papageorge, 2017), being Black, or a person of color, is not enough. Black teacher candidates need to be developed and prepared for teaching students of color.

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APPENDIX A
APPROVAL OF INSTITUTIONAL REVIEW BOARD



ACTION ON EXEMPTION APPROVAL REQUEST

TO: La'Quita Magee
Ed. Leadership and Research

FROM: Dennis Landin
Chair, Institutional Review Board

DATE: April 10, 2017

RE: **IRB#** E10444

TITLE: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL INVESTIGATION INTO THE EXPERIENCES AND PERCEPTIONS OF TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM GRADUATES AT PUBLIC HISTORICALLY BLACK COLLEGES AND UNIVERSITIES IN LOUISIANA

Institutional Review Board
Dr. Dennis Landin, Chair
130 David Boyd Hall
Baton Rouge, LA 70803
P: 225.578.8692
F: 225.578.5983
irb@lsu.edu
lsu.edu/research

New Protocol/Modification/Continuation: New Protocol

Review Date: 4/10/2017

Approved **Disapproved**

Approval Date: 4/10/2017 **Approval Expiration Date:** 4/9/2020

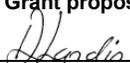
Exemption Category/Paragraph: 2b; 4b

Signed Consent Waived?: No

Re-review frequency: (three years unless otherwise stated)

LSU Proposal Number (if applicable):

Protocol Matches Scope of Work in Grant proposal: (if applicable)

By: Dennis Landin, Chairman 

PRINCIPAL INVESTIGATOR: PLEASE READ THE FOLLOWING –

Continuing approval is CONDITIONAL on:

1. Adherence to the approved protocol, familiarity with, and adherence to the ethical standards of the Belmont Report, and LSU's Assurance of Compliance with DHHS regulations for the protection of human subjects*
2. Prior approval of a change in protocol, including revision of the consent documents or an increase in the number of subjects over that approved.
3. Obtaining renewed approval (or submittal of a termination report), prior to the approval expiration date, upon request by the IRB office (irrespective of when the project actually begins); notification of project termination.
4. Retention of documentation of informed consent and study records for at least 3 years after the study ends.
5. Continuing attention to the physical and psychological well-being and informed consent of the individual participants, including notification of new information that might affect consent.
6. A prompt report to the IRB of any adverse event affecting a participant potentially arising from the study.
7. Notification of the IRB of a serious compliance failure.
8. **SPECIAL NOTE: When emailing more than one recipient, make sure you use bcc. Approvals will automatically be closed by the IRB on the expiration date unless the PI requests a continuation.**

* All investigators and support staff have access to copies of the Belmont Report, LSU's Assurance with DHHS, DHHS (45 CFR 46) and FDA regulations governing use of human subjects, and other relevant documents in print in this office or on our World Wide Web site at <http://www.lsu.edu/irb>

APPENDIX B INFORMED CONSENT

Informed Consent

Research Study Title: A Phenomenological Investigation of the Experiences and Perceptions of Teacher Education Program Graduates at Public Historically Black College and Universities in Louisiana

Investigators: Primary Investigator: La'Quita M. Magee, Doctoral Candidate, ELRC, (916) 752-5296, lmaya2@lsu.edu Co Investigator: Kenneth Fasching-Varner, Associate Professor, ELRC Dissertation Chair, (225) 578-2918 varner@lsu.edu

Description: This study is an attempt to examine how HBCU Teacher Education Program graduates experience and perceive their development and preparation to facilitate the academic development of Black students.

Benefits and Risks: While there is no compensation or immediate/direct benefit from study participation, subjects will add to literature on the preparation and development of HBCU teacher education program graduates. There are no anticipated risks concerning participation in the study.

Voluntary Participation: Participation in this research is completely voluntary. There will be one audio taped semi structured interview held. Interviews will be transcribed and quotations from the interviews may be included in the dissertation, however no identifying information will be included. Interviews will take place either in person (as travel permits) or via Skype or FaceTime.

Confidentiality: Results of the study may be published, but no names or identifying information will be included in the publication. To maintain your confidentiality, you will be assigned a pseudonym. Your actual name will only appear on this consent form and will not be linked to your responses. Interviews will be recorded in private and the recordings will not be shared. Your responses will be transcribed anonymously and all information will be kept confidential to the extent allowed by law and University policy. Your responses will serve as data for this study.

Right to Refuse: You may choose not to participate or to withdraw from the study at any time without any consequence.

Informed Consent: I, _____, have read in full the description, including the purpose of the study, the procedures to be used, the potential risks, the confidentiality, as well as the option to withdraw from the study at any time. The investigator has explained each of these items to me. The investigator has answered all of my questions regarding the study, and I believe I understand what is involved. My signature below indicates that I freely agree to participate in this experimental study and that I have received a copy of this agreement from the investigator.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

If you have questions or concerns about this study, you may contact La'Quita M. Magee at (916) 752-5295 or by email at lmaya26@lsu.edu, or Dr. Kenny Varner at (225) 578-2918 or by email at varner@lsu.edu For questions or concerns about your rights as a research participant, please contact Dr. Dennis Landin, Chairman, Institutional Review Board at Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, LA 70803 at (225) 578-8692 or irb@lsu.edu.

APPENDIX C
PROGRAM REQUIREMENT ANALYSIS GUIDE

Course Description/Primary Learning Objectives:

Does the course indicate integration of multicultural curriculum and instruction? Explain.

Does the course indicate development of cultural competence for teacher candidates? Explain.

Does the course indicate preparing teacher candidates for culturally diverse classrooms? Explain.

APPENDIX D
PARTICIPANT INCLUSION QUESTIONNAIRE

This questionnaire is designed to assess whether or not you meet the criteria to be a participant in this research study. Please answer each question below.

- 1) Undergraduate Institution
 - Field State University
 - South Pike University
 - Prestige University
 - other: _____

- 2) Undergraduate Degree Program _____

- 3) Completion Date (MM/YYYY) _____

- 4) Certification Area(s)
 - Early Childhood PK – 3
 - Elementary Education 1 – 5
 - Middle School Education 4 – 8
 - Secondary Education 6 – 12
 - Specific Content _____
- 5) Subject/Grades taught during the 2015-2016 School Year

- 6) Total Years of Teaching Experience _____

- 7) District and School of employment during the 2015 – 2016 school year

- 8) School Demographics
 - % White, non-Hispanic _____
 - % Black _____
 - % Hispanic or Latino _____
 - % Asian or Pacific Islander _____
 - % Native American or Alaskan Native _____

- 9) 2015 – 2016 Compass Information System Rating
 - Highly Effective
 - Effective: Proficient
 - Effective: Emerging
 - Ineffective
 - did not receive or do not know 2015 – 2016 Compass Rating

VITA

La'Quita Maya Gaffney Magee is a native of Sacramento, California. La'Quita received a Bachelor of Science in Early Childhood Education in 2007 from Grambling State University. In 2008, La'Quita received a Master of Education in Human Resource Development from The University of Minnesota. She returned to Louisiana, where she taught in public elementary schools for five years. La'Quita is now a NIET Master Teacher, supporting and coaching classroom teachers in grades PreK- 6. Upon graduating from LSU with her Ph.D., La'Quita intends to further engage in research focusing on teacher education and preparation and Historically Black Colleges and Universities.