Teachers' Educational Beliefs and Culturally and Linguistically Diverse Students within Response to Intervention

Anabel Espinosa
University of Miami, a.espinosa6@umiami.edu

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TEACHERS’ EDUCATIONAL BELIEFS AND CULTURALLY AND LINGUISTICALLY DIVERSE STUDENTS WITHIN RESPONSE TO INTERVENTION

By

Anabel Espinosa

A DISSERTATION

Submitted to the Faculty of the University of Miami in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Philosophy

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The purpose of this dissertation study was to examine teachers’ sense of efficacy and epistemological beliefs using a mixed methods research design. Part 1 used linear regression to analyze participant \((n=115)\) responses to the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES). This study determined practicing teachers’ multicultural efficacy using the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) and its relationship to demographic (gender and race/ethnicity) and teaching (degree level and certifications) variables. Study results for Part 1 revealed a significant relationship between teachers’ race and their experiences with diversity and as well as their experiences with diversity and degree level. In addition participants reported average levels of multicultural attitudes and efficacy which had no significant relationship to demographic and teaching variables. Part 2 of this dissertation study used the Pathognomonic-Interventionist (P-I) Interview to ascribe perspectives of ability/disability to a subsample of participants \((n=6)\), through the use of an Interview Coding Form designed specifically for deductive coding of the P-I Interview. Study results for Part 2 revealed that 5 of the 6 teachers held perspectives of ability/disability considered pathognomonic. Results suggest that overall teachers’ views of ability/disability do not align with their self-reported multicultural efficacy and support the call for more explicit diversity training and increased collaboration amongst general and special educators.
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Chapter 1

Introduction

Disproportionality has been defined as “the extent to which membership in a given (ethnic, socioeconomic, linguistic or gender) group affects the probability of being placed in a specific disability category” (Oswald, Coutinho, Best & Singh, 1999, p.198) and the disproportionate representation of students of color in special education has been a widely discussed topic of educational inequity for over four decades. This issue was first acknowledged by scholars in the late sixties (Deno, 1970, 1994; Dunn, 1968) and continuously reaffirmed by scholars well into the new millennium (Artiles, Kozleski, Trent, Osher & Ortiz, 2010; Artiles & Trent, 1994; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Skiba et al., 2008).

Examination of the 30th Annual Report to Congress on the Implementation of IDEA, Parts B and C (2008) reveals persistent disproportionality. In particular there is an overrepresentation of students who identify as African American, Hispanic and/or Native American in the high-incidence categories of mental retardation (MR), emotional behavior disorder (EBD) and specific learning disabilities (SLD). In this paper I will refer to this group of students collectively as culturally and linguistically diverse in place of the terms minority or students of color because it is the most inclusive, representing students who are racial/ethnic minorities and/or linguistic minorities (Klingner, Artiles & Mendez-Bartletta, 2006).
Specifically the 30th Annual Report on the Implementation of IDEA, Parts B and C (2008) states that African American students are 2.75 times more likely to receive services under the Individual with Disabilities Act (IDEA) for intellectual disabilities (ID), formerly known as mental retardation (MR), and 2.28 times more likely to receive services under IDEA for Emotional Disturbance (ED). Native American students are 1.81 times more likely to receive services under IDEA for Specific Learning Disabilities (SLD) and 1.63 times more likely to receive services under IDEA for ED. And while the federal risk ratio for Hispanic students in the category of SLD is seemingly negligible at 1.19, examination of district data reveals variability in regards to Hispanic overrepresentation of the SLD category (Klingner, et al., 2006).

Proposed explanations for disproportionality have rendered much debate, primarily divided along two central ideas, the role of teachers’ beliefs and assumptions of CLD learners on the referral and placement process and the perceived impact of culture and poverty on disability. The cultural deficit model, originally proposed as an explanation for academic achievement discrepancies between CLD learners and their white peers, has been suggested as an explanation for disproportionality (Artiles et al., 2010). The cultural deficit model hypothesizes that limited cultural capital offered in homes and communities of CLD learners, particularly those considered to be low income (Gay, 2010) negatively impacts schooling where said cultural capital is valued. Akin to the cultural deficit model, the culture of poverty hypothesis, most notably proposed by Payne and Blair (1991), attributes the academic struggles of poor students to their families’ socio-economic status and the innate values and beliefs of such.
Differentiating between the *culture of poverty hypothesis* and the *cultural deficit model* is difficult because the variables of race and poverty are interwoven. Students, who are CLD, because they are more likely to live in poverty, are more likely to be exposed to variables considered to be environmental stressors and developmental threats (Macmillan & Reschley, 1998). Brown (2004) describes a perspective that attributes this information regarding poverty to disproportionality as the socioeconomic perspective. The socioeconomic perspective follows this logic: Students who grow up in low income communities are more likely to belong to culturally and linguistically diverse groups, consequently increasing their risk for exposure to the detrimental effects of poverty or the *culture of poverty*, which in turn makes them less likely to succeed academically. Not surprisingly, they are more likely to require the individualized instruction, attention and resources associated with Special Education in order to succeed. According to the socioeconomic perspective, if poverty (and/or its representative variables) correlates with deficits in academic performance then it not only explains the over identification of minority students in special education, it also serves as the most appropriate placement to ameliorate the cognitive detriments related to poverty.

Although literature examining disproportionality has traditionally favored the *culture of poverty/cultural deficit hypothesis*, there has been steady critique from scholars who believe a reexamination of the views and beliefs of culture are necessary to truly understand disproportionality (Artiles et al, 2010). Hosp and Reschly (2003) stated that teacher bias, stemming primarily from cultural differences, is an often cited explanation for disproportionality and examining teacher bias in beliefs systems is particularly important because teacher referral for assessment or intervention is considered to be one
of the strongest predictors of future special education eligibility/placement. The likelihood of teacher referrals resulting in special education placement falls between 75% and 90% (Algozzine, Christenson & Ysseldyke, 1982). Hosp and Reschly’s (2003) meta-analysis also reported that referral rates were higher for CLD students when compared to Caucasian students, lending credence to the suggestions made by several researchers that the assessment of CLD students’ academic ability and behavior is strongly influenced by the cultural beliefs and values of educators and administrators (Artiles et al. 2010; Harry & Klingner, 2006).

However, delving into the construct of educational beliefs can be difficult based on the challenges of accurately measuring and describing a construct that is so “broad and encompassing” (Pajares, 1992, p. 316). Clark (1988) described teachers’ beliefs as “eclectic aggregations of cause and effect propositions from many sources, rules of thumbs, generalizations, drawn from personal experiences, beliefs, values, biases and prejudice” (p. 5). Beliefs and belief systems are so broad in fact, that for the purposes of his research, Pajares (1992) distinguishes between several educational beliefs about: teacher efficacy, confidence to affect student performance, epistemological beliefs, the nature of knowledge, attributions beliefs, the causes of teachers’ or students’ performance, self-concept beliefs, perceptions of self and self-worth, self-efficacy beliefs, the confidence to perform a certain task. Notwithstanding, Pajeres (1992) believes that examining the distinct components in isolation of one another is dangerous. Two educational beliefs I believe to be of significant importance within the context of disproportionality and special education are epistemological beliefs, beliefs about the
nature of knowledge, ability/disability and teacher efficacy beliefs, beliefs about teachers’ confidence to affect student performance.

Beliefs about ability and disability form part of a larger construct of epistemological beliefs defined as teachers’ beliefs about “knowledge, knowing and how knowledge is acquired” (Jordan, Glenn & McGhie-Richmond, 2010). Jordan and Stanovich (2003) use the term epistemological belief structures as differences in teachers’ propensity to subscribe to one set of beliefs over another set of assumptions or beliefs about the nature of disability “(p.37). Wilson & Silverman (1991) describe the dimension of disability belief systems as continuum with two extremes, on one extreme there are “assumptions that portray problems as residing within the pupils and give rise to teachers’ actions along the lines of medical management of difficulties” (p.198), and termed this extreme “restorative”. The other extreme end of this dimension was termed by Wilson and Silverman (1991) as “preventative” and describes exceptionality/disability as resulting as “interaction of children with their environment…people in the environment have a responsibility to attempt to meet the needs of the pupil by reacting to difficulties in learning by modifying instructional methods and materials” (pg. 199).

Measures used to assess the epistemological beliefs of teachers distinguish between two ends of the belief continuum. Originally Jordan, Kircaali and Diamond (1993) examined epistemological beliefs using the Elementary Teacher Interview using the restorative-preventative framework defined by Wilson and Silverman (1991). A revision of the Elementary Teacher Interview, the P-I Interview (1997), defines the ends of the continuum as pathognomonic and interventionist. Beliefs described as pathognomonic, similar to the restorative, describe disability as an “internal, fixed and
pathological condition of the individual, unnamable to instruction” (Jordan et al., 2010, p. 262). Teachers with beliefs that are predominantly pathognomonic blame students and/or families for students their academic difficulties (Jordan et al., 1993). Interventionist beliefs are at the other end of the continuum corresponding to the term preventative. Teachers with interventionist beliefs view disability as socially constructed by people without disabilities. In the classroom teachers with interventionist beliefs take responsibility for making the classroom accessible to students who are having difficulty learning. Traditionally, special education has interpreted disability as fixed, innate, inherently belonging to the individual (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987) and rooted in pathology (Skritic, 1991) very similar to epistemological beliefs that are pathognomonic.

There are significant concerns with subscribing to pathognomonic views of ability/disability, a cultural deficit model and the culture of poverty hypothesis. The first is that such views place disability within the child, family or community, blaming the victim instead of allowing for a more critical examination of the larger societal structures that govern both the notion of disability and poverty (Harry & Klingner & Hart, 2005; Pugach & Seidl, 1998). The second reason is that these beliefs could potentially influence teachers’ sense of efficacy with low income and CLD learners potentially impacting special education referrals and decision making.

Teachers’ sense of efficacy, their confidence to affect student performance, mediates teachers’ knowledge and action according to Bandura (1977). High sense of efficacy amongst teachers has been associated with student achievement (Armor, et al. 1976; Ashton & Webb, 1986; Moore & Esselman, 1992) and teachers’ likelihood to persist longer with students who are struggling (Guskey, 1988; Tshanannen-Moran, Hoy
& Hoy, 1998). It also plays a significant role in special education referral and placement (Podell & Soodak, 1993). Ashton and Webb (1986) speculated that early research on the effects of socioeconomic background and student achievement, which claimed schooling, had little effect on the academic achievement of students who were living in poverty, had a discouraging effect on the efficacy beliefs of current educators and aspiring teachers by strengthening deficit (pathognomonic) beliefs of poor students, their families and communities.

Research has also shown that teachers’ self-efficacy beliefs differ based on the instructional content area and/or the needs of their students (Goddard, Hoy & Hoy, 2000; Knoblauch & Hoy, 2008). Thus, teachers’ sense of efficacy should be examined with specificity in regards to content and context (Bandura, 2006, Labone, 2004; Tschannen-Moran et al., 1998). Content and context are particularly significant when assessing teachers’ sense of efficacy in relation to struggling students. At a pre-service level general education and special education have co-existed albeit segregated and divided by pedagogy (Robinson & Buly, 2007). Within schools similar separateness exists. The division dates back to the Civil Rights Movement which ignited litigation that consequently extended students with disabilities the right to attend school with their same age peers (eg. Pennsylvania Association of Retarded Citizens (PARC) v. Commonwealth & Mills v. Board of Education).

In 1987, Gartner and Lipsky acknowledged that while special education programs had been successful in providing students with disabilities access to public education they had been widely unsuccessful in dismantling the segregation which existed within schools. Nearly three decades later schools and training programs continue
to struggle with mindful integration (Pugach, Blanton & Correa, 2011) and teachers feel unable to meet to the needs of diverse learners within the context of the general education classroom (Cavendish & Espinosa, 2013)

Pugach and Blanton (2012) urge us to examine issues of cultural diversity when broadly examining diversity in schools which have traditionally centered on students with diverse abilities. A student population that is increasingly culturally diverse (Banks, 2006; Sleeter, 2000) compounded by the continued presence of disproportionality demands that teachers deliver culturally responsive instruction. In addition to delivery of culturally responsive instruction teachers should possess high self-efficacy beliefs in culturally responsive settings, confidence that their instruction can affect CLD students (Siwatu, 2009).

Teachers, both general and special educators, express an overall lack of preparedness in regards to teaching diverse learners (Ford & Quinn, 2010; Milner, 2010; Trent, Kea & Oh, 2008). Not surprisingly, one of the most challenging tasks faced by teacher training programs is preparing teachers to work with culturally and linguistically diverse students (Cavendish & Espinosa, 2013; Irvine, 2003; Milner, 2010). Feeling unprepared to meet the needs of CLD learners can be reflected in perceptions of self-efficacy amongst educators. Pang and Sablan (1995) provide one example of this statement with findings from their study in which teachers’ self-efficacy scores revealed that they did not feel as though they were influential or efficacious when teaching African American students. Teachers who completed the self-efficacy measure also participated in follow up interviews. After analysis of the follow up interviews, Pang and Sablan
attributed teachers’ self-efficacy scores with African American students to negative beliefs and assumptions of the students’ home, discipline and family life.

**Frameworks (Theoretical & Instructional)**

The research questions were analyzed using the theoretical framework of teachers’ sense of efficacy. The study took place within the instructional framework of RtI. Both the theoretical and instructional frameworks emphasize the importance of the teachers’ role in improved educational experiences of students. Self-efficacy was chosen specifically for its empirical strength in regards to teacher behavior and decisions (teacher practice) while RtI (Donovan & Cross, 2002; Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006) has been posited as necessary reform in an effort to improve the quality of education for all students.

**Self-Efficacy.** Current definitions of self-efficacy, while varied, are rooted in the psychological research of Heider (1958) and White (1959). Barfield and Burlingame (1974) were the first to reference teacher efficacy defining it as “a personality trait that enables one to deal effectively with the world (p.10).” Shortly after, RAND researchers redefined teacher efficacy as “the extent to which a teacher believes he or she has the capacity to affect student performance (McLaughlin & Marsh, 1978).” However, the definition of teaching efficacy referred to most to date is that of Ashton (1985) in which teacher efficacy is “teachers’ belief in their ability to have a positive effect on student learning” (p.142).

Ashton and Webb (1982, 1986) developed a multidimensional model of teaching efficacy based largely on social cognitive theory (Bandura, 1977, 1978). In social cognitive theory Bandura (1978, 1986) defines sense of efficacy as “the beliefs in ones
capabilities to organize and execute the course of action required to manage prospective situations” (p.2). Bandura (1986) also noted that sense of efficacy is a context-specific construct in which behavior is affected by both outcome expectations and efficacy expectations. Guskey and Passaro (1994) describe outcome expectations as “judgments individuals make about the consequences of specific behaviors in particular situation or context” (p.629). In contrast, efficacy expectations are described as “individuals’ beliefs about his or his/her own capability to achieve a certain level performance in that situation or context” (Guskey & Passaro, 1994, p.629).

In their model of teachers’ sense of efficacy Ashton and Webb (1982) provided extensions of the two dimensions, outcome expectancies and efficacy expectancies, by making them applicable to the context of teaching. Efficacy expectations, which focused on an individuals’ (teachers’) ability to execute the actions needed to achieve specific outcomes was referred to as personal efficacy. Teachers can differ on the dimension of personal efficacy if they differ on what they perceive to be the effects of 1) family background 2) community factors and 3) believed student ability on learning. Teachers’ outcome expectations about the consequences of specific behavior in a particular context (teaching) were termed teaching efficacy. Ashton and Webb (1986) also describe teaching efficacy as “individuals’ assessment of their own teaching competence” (p.4). This dimension is most closely linked to teachers own classroom management techniques and instructional planning. Ashton and Webb (1986) add that avoidance of situations, students or classrooms which create doubt in a teachers’ competence is common in regards to this dimension. In contrast, teachers who feel like their instruction has the
capacity to impact student learning are more likely to persist with students using a varied instruction and activities that are appropriate (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Bandura listed four self-efficacy forming experiences: mastery experiences, vicarious experiences, social persuasion and physiological factors. As the most influential source of information, according to Bandura (1977), mastery experiences provide evidence that one can complete a task successfully. Tschannan-Moran, Hoy & Hoy (1998) applied mastery experiences to the context of teaching and similarly believe teaching experience to be the most influential in forming confidence in ability to teach. Vicarious experiences are also believed to be influential sources in the formation of self-efficacy, particularly in situations where individuals do not have the prior experience by which to assess their mastery (Bandura, 1977). Lee (2002) summarized that pre-service teachers build their self-efficacy beliefs through vicarious experiences composed of what they have read, discussed in their courses and what they have observed in classrooms.

Ashton and Webb (1986) also developed the definition of teaching efficacy that emphasized the importance of context, “the situation specific expectation that they (teachers) can help students learn” (Ashton & Webb, 1986, p. 3). Gibson and Dembo (1984) provided their own version of personal efficacy and teaching efficacy. They defined personal efficacy as teachers’ beliefs about their own ability to bring about desired student outcomes and teaching efficacy as teachers’ beliefs that teaching (as a profession) can supersede the impact of external variables (Gibson & Dembo, 1984).
**Response to Intervention.** Response to Intervention (RtI), an instructional framework, has been offered as means to address disproportionality (Donovan & Cross, 2002). The foundational tenants of RtI, evidence-based instruction, ongoing progress monitoring and tiered supports allow for data based decision making with the potential reducing inappropriate special education referral and identification (Fuchs & Fuchs, 2006).

Federal legislation was enacted to address the issues of misidentification in special education. Amendments to the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) in 1997, followed by the monitoring and identification of disproportionality in the 2004 reauthorization of IDEA (2004) were enacted as a possible means to addressing misidentification in special education. Two of the nine provisions predicated on the house bill *(H.R. 1350)* as the overarching goals of RTI have been heralded as promising solutions to disproportionality. The first, improving early intervening services, allows states to use a percentage of IDEA funds to support pre-referral services as needed. The second, reducing the misidentification/inappropriate placement of children without disabilities, specifically calls for the implementation of pre-referral programs as an alternative to the IQ discrepancy criterion criticized for its “wait-to –fail approach”(Berkley, Bender, Peaster & Saunders, 2009). Cartledge and Kourea (2008) believe that CLD students with and at-risk for disability have the greatest need for quality instruction for several reasons, 1) continued academic under achievement among CLD learners, 2) disproportionate special education referrals and 3) the disproportionate recipients of disciplinary action.
An in-depth examination of RtI however, reveals that its potential to improve the quality of education for all students and reduce disproportionality rests in the provision of evidence based instruction that is particularly evidence based for the population on which it is applied (Klinger & Edwards, 2006; NCCREST, 2005). In fact, Klinger and Edwards (2006) outline the most effective reading instruction for ELLs comes from teachers with sophisticated knowledge of reading and second language instruction.

The implementation of RtI also calls into question the role of both the general education teacher and the special education teacher. Significant changes to the roles and responsibilities of general educators urge us to address the historical divide between general and special education introduced earlier.

Little evidence supports the notion that teachers who deliver evidence based supports will in fact be less biased or have epistemological beliefs of ability/disability that are not rooted in deficit. This dissertation study addressed this issue by examining the epistemological beliefs and teachers’ sense of efficacy in multicultural settings within an RtI framework. The examination of the relationship between teachers’ beliefs (epistemological and self-efficacy) and decision making within an RtI framework provided a more detailed analysis of the intersection of culture and disability within the context of educational reform such as RtI.
Chapter 2 Literature Review

The disproportionate representation of culturally and linguistically diverse students in special education is a multifaceted, long standing issue in education. Negative assumptions and beliefs about CLD students, their families and communities have been presented as explanations for the problem. In an attempt to address two components of the elusive construct of educational beliefs, epistemological beliefs and teaching efficacy beliefs, the following investigation demands a detailed review of both. Therefore the purpose of this review of the literature is to further delineate relationship between, potential bias in special education referrals, epistemological beliefs and teachers’ sense of efficacy in regards to CLD learners.

Teachers and CLD Learners

Teacher expectations are the single most influential characteristic affecting teaching behavior, and expectations are shaped by beliefs and values about learning (Ashton & Webb, 1986). Good (1987) defines teacher expectations as “inferences’ that teachers make about the future behavior or academic achievement of their students, based on what they know about students now” (p. 32). Much of the research on teacher expectations has demonstrated that gender (Good & Brophy, 1974), student social class (Downey & Pribesh, 2004; Rist, 1970), and race (Jussim & Harber, 2005) strongly influence teacher expectations of student performance.

Research has shown that teachers in schools serving students who are low income and/or CLD have lower expectations of student performance (Diamond, Randolph & Spillane, 2004; Hallinger, Bickman & Davis, 1996; Wiggan 2007) and while teachers’
expectations are not the same as teachers’ sense of efficacy, teaching students one already perceives to have poor academic abilities poses barriers to teachers perceived capacity (Stipek, 2012). Consequently the self-efficacy beliefs of teachers are unfavorably low for low-income, CLD students, a group of students with an increased risk for failure (Sirin, 2005; Stipek & Ryan, 1997).

Alexander, Entwisle & Thompson (1987) suggested that unfavorable teacher valuations of the academic performance and/or behavior of CLD learners occurs most frequently in classrooms where the teachers social status differs significantly from that of her students. Using data from the Beginning School Study (BSS) researchers compared the teacher valuations of 825 first grade students enrolled in Baltimore city schools. The BSS, a longitudinal study situated in Baltimore City Elementary Schools focused on first grade students in 20 randomly selected 20 schools, after controlling for schools racial composition. The 825 student participants were representative of the school system both racially and in regards to socioeconomic status. The student participants’ teachers were also asked to participate in the study and 50 of the 56 provided demographic data, responses to a Climate survey and valuate of student maturity. The results of descriptive comparisons reveal that teachers’ responses and perceptions/evaluations of their students are strongly related to their own social background and students’ racial background. Even after controlling for student ability levels student race and student SES continued to interact with teachers’ attitudes and evaluations, particularly for teachers with High SES backgrounds. Further analysis reveals that student race strongly impacts the attitudes and evaluations of teacher from high SES. Specifically, evaluations from high SES teachers (white or black) rate black students as less mature and contain more negative attitudes. In
addition, high SES teachers also have poorer performance evaluations of black students in comparison to their peers.

**Potential Bias in Referrals**

As noted above, the demographic differences between the American teaching force and its increasingly diverse student population can set the stage for instances of cultural dissonance. The belief that teachers’ special education referral decisions may be influenced by student characteristics such as race or SES, and may ultimately result in biased special education referrals, is not farfetched. It has however, been heavily debated in academia. Shinn, Tindal and Spira (1987) noted that the dependence on teacher referral for appropriate special education identification is riddled with two types of errors, bias and teacher accuracy and both error types have been examined in the literature. Some researchers have concluded that the ethnic biases of school personnel significantly contribute to the misidentification of CLD students in special education (Lanier, 1977; Zucker & Prieto, 1977). In contrast, others have suggested that the increased incidence of disability amongst CLD students is explained as a by-product of the less adaptive behavior (Abindin & Robinson, 2002; Low & Clement, 1982) and poor achievement (Bahr & Fuchs, 1991). The former implies misidentification sets the stage for disproportionality while the latter suggests that identification is indeed accurate.

Low and Clement (1982) affirmed the belief that teacher referral was an accurate assessment of student behavior. They examined the relationship between race, SES and special education referral. After recruiting 109 fourth grade males (consisting of an equal distribution of white, black and Hispanic) Low and Clement (1982) rated 12 discrete
classroom behaviors as adaptive, maladaptive and neutral. The students’ academic achievement was assessed using the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (Form S) normed in 1973. Results from this study indicated that although the minority students (black and Hispanic) were not observed to be “more unruly, disruptive, defiant aggressive or conduct disordered than white children” (p. 108) they did score lower on achievement test with SES moderating the effect of race on achievement. Researchers concluded that race and SES were not significant predictors of special education referral. Special education referral according to their prediction model was influenced mainly behaviors such as non-attention, negative verbal behaviors and talking to peers.

Teacher accuracy defined as “the extent to which appraisal of pupil performance or behavior is confirmed by objective criteria” (Shinn et al., 1987, p.33) and used as potential reason for disproportionate placement in special education was supported by Abidin and Robinson (2002). Researchers asked thirty elementary school teachers to identify three students in their classrooms. The three students were observed by the researchers at random time points and their behavior was coded. Teachers where then asked to rate each of the three students individually, on the likelihood of special education referral. Their findings revealed that teachers’ judgment of the students’ behavior (assessed through adjustment and social skills) were consistent with the classroom behavior observed by researchers. In addition the likelihood for special education referral was strongly related to teacher judgments regarding the presence of behavior problems. Based on these findings, Abindin and Robinson (2002) concluded that teacher judgments were accurate depictions of student behavior and academic competence thus referral to special education was warranted and unbiased. However,
both Abindin and Robinson (2002) and Low and Clement (1982), did not address the structural factors related to quality of schooling/instruction, such as teachers behavior management, nor did they establish that the assessment(s) used to rate behavior were free of cultural bias.

Teacher bias defined as “different degrees of tolerance for specific student behaviors and prejudicial judgments influenced by naturally occurring pupil characteristics such as ethnic background, sex, and physical attractiveness” (Shinn et al., 1987, p. 33), may influence the interactions of teachers and students, particularly CLD learners. Many believe that bias is most likely to occur in classrooms where the teacher and student body represent different cultural/ethnic backgrounds and classrooms in which the teacher is unfamiliar with the cultural norms of students’ families and communities (Banks, 2001; Ford, 2012) and serve a catalyst for inappropriate special education referral and placement (Harry & Klingner, 2006).

Shinn, Tindal and Spira (1987) acknowledged the potential disadvantages to using teacher referrals as sufficient eligibility criteria for special education. In their investigation regarding the role of accuracy and bias in special education referral rates, Shinn and colleagues assessed student achievement in reading. Student performance was compared to their likelihood of referral into the special education category of mild mental retardation. Shinn et al (1987) recognized evidence of teacher bias alongside a high level of teacher accuracy. A disproportionate number of black students were referred for special education in comparison to white students. However, the performance of black students was lower than that of their white counterparts. One possible suggestion offered
by the researchers for these findings was that tolerance for the performance standards for referral could be affected by student race.

Hosp and Reschly (2003) also acknowledge a potential for racial bias in special education referral rates. They conducted a meta-analysis in which they compared the frequency counts of students in districts (population) and students referred for intervention or assessment (referral rates) in these same districts, researchers then desegregated the results by race/ethnicity (Caucasian, African American and Hispanic). They also compared said rates of referral to eligibility rates reported by the Office of Special Education. A total of 10 studies were included in the review which yielded 44 comparisons. Their hypothesis was that trends in referral rates would be similar to trends in eligibility, with increased referral rates for African American when compared to whites and Hispanics. Their findings confirmed their hypothesis. From their investigation they concluded that the increased certified special education placements of CLD learners was a likely result of increased teacher referrals for intervention among CLD learners. One explanation they offered for their findings called for the exploration of variables such as, teacher bias and beliefs, differential behavior and academic performance expectations and cultural conflict between the home and school.

Using data from the 1992 Office of Civil Rights Survey, Oswald and colleagues (1999) investigated the effects of race on the probability of placement in the categories of mild mental retardation (MR) and severely emotionally disturbed (SED). Their findings revealed that in regards to SED placements, degree of poverty (high, low, medium), which usually correlated with the percent of African-American membership in the school, was a strong predictor of disproportionate placement. In other words, in low poverty
areas (usually having lower African American membership) disproportionate placement of African Americans was greater than in high poverty (predominantly African American membership) schools. A lower tolerance for behaviors considered inappropriate in schools with lower African American membership was an explanation suggested by Oswald and the research team for the direction of these findings. In regards to the MMR category the reverse was true, as poverty increased so did the placement of African American students and they were consistently overrepresented when compared to all other students after controlling for income. In conclusion, poverty was a strong predictor of MMR and/or SED placement and after controlling for the effects of poverty, race/ethnicity significantly influenced placement.

The role of potential teacher bias has been examined in depth by Harry and Klinger (2006) who documented the influence of teacher and administrator beliefs on special education referrals and eligibility determinations with data collected through observations, interviews and case studies. Their findings indicated that cultural beliefs, particularly beliefs that student ability/disability was an inevitable result of student characteristics (e.g. socio-economic status, culture, race) accounted for numerous referrals of CLD students. This supports Brown’s (2004) interpretation of socioeconomic perspective to explain disproportionality where predispositions (or bias) regarding CLD students; held by general education teachers, influence what behaviors are considered problematic. These same predispositions may also determine what behaviors are worthy of special education referral and placement and disadvantage CLD students.

Researchers explain differences in the interpretation of student development and behavior as resulting from a lack of knowledge and/or awareness for the impact of
race/cultural membership has on schooling (Hosp & Hosp, 2001) and contributes to increased special education referral rates for CLD students to this lack of awareness (Pugach & Seidl, 1998). In their overview, Hosp and Hosp (2001) outline behavioral styles typically associated with white and black students offering comparisons and demonstrating how these differences could potentially result in bias, conflict and misunderstandings between teachers and students. The belief that misinterpretation of behavior styles contributes to differential behavior ratings of CLD students is echoed by several other researchers (Allen & Boykin, 1992; Ferguson, 1998; Heath, 1983; Langsdorf, Anderson, Waechter, Madrigal & Juarez, 1979).

Silos within General and Special Education

The medical view of disability, described previously as pathognomonic, positions disability as inherent in the child and served as rationale for both separate groups of children and separate programs/schools by which to serve them (Gartner & Lipsky, 1987). It also upheld any feelings of inadequacy general education teachers may have felt when and if they were presented with the needs of students with disabilities (Skritic, 1991). Woodward and Montague (2002) reference the difference between general education and special education as largely rooted in foundational distinctness. In response to standards based education reform general education has adopted constructivists perspectives of teaching and learning while special education remained heavily rooted in behaviorism. Winn and Blanton (2005) further describe this divide as differing perspectives of teaching and learning. These differing perspectives are evident in both teachers beliefs and teacher training programs..
An investigation of teachers’ beliefs in relation to inclusion was conducted by Fuchs (2010) using focus groups and individual interviews. Ten general education teachers participated in the focus groups and 5 were selected to participate in one on one interviews. Teachers’ perceived lack of support from special educators and support staff was amongst the three themes which emerged from focus group and interview data. Overall the general educators who participated in this study expressed frustration over what they perceived as an unequal distribution of duties and power struggle related to limited access to student information and student ownership.

Cavendish and Espinosa (2013) evaluated the changing roles of school personnel within the context of Response to Intervention using data from qualitative research (Cavendish, Harry, Menda, Espinosa & Mahotiere, 2012) that examined the beliefs and attitudes of educators implementing RtI in two schools. Classroom observations and staff interviews revealed that not only were general education teachers uncertain about their role with RtI they also expressed beliefs that “the general education classroom was not the appropriate setting for struggling students” (p. 198). This statement highlights two findings 1) general educators continue to believe that there is a significant different between what they are able to provide a struggling student and that which can be provided by a special educator 2) a change in placement is the best option for struggling students even within the context of RtI.

**Teachers’ Epistemological Beliefs and Sense of Efficacy**

teachers’ sense of efficacy and teachers’ epistemological beliefs. They reasoned that teachers’ epistemological beliefs (whether *restorative* or *preventative*) could be related to the level of responsibility teachers’ felt towards students learning challenges. They hypothesized that teachers with a higher sense of efficacy would be ready to confront and tackle student learning challenges, thus suggesting that they may fall on the preventative/interventionist end of the epistemological belief continuum.

Focusing specifically on students who were at risk or already designated as exceptional learners Jordan et al. (1993) examined the relationship between teachers’ epistemological beliefs of disability in regards to students who are at risk or exceptional and teachers’ sense of efficacy. Twenty-six, regular elementary teachers across 13 schools in mid-northern Ontario participated in this study. The research team administered the *Elementary Teacher Interview* to assess teacher beliefs, the *Questionnaire of Teacher Preferences* to solicit their opinions on what services resource teachers should provide, and the *Teacher Efficacy Questionnaire* (Gibson & Dembo, 1984) to rate teachers’ sense of efficacy. The researchers found that teachers with beliefs labeled as *preventative* had higher self-efficacy scores than teachers with beliefs labeled as *restorative*. Pajares (1992) adds that an exploration of the relationship between teachers’ beliefs and instructional decisions using the combination of self report measures and interviews, similar to the P-I Interview is an important step in identifying teacher characteristics that are related to effective teaching.
Teachers’ Sense of Efficacy and Bias

Teachers’ sense of efficacy has been shown to predict different type of student-teacher interactions (Hoy, Hoy & Davis, 2009). Persistence and increased effort with challenging students are examples of student-teacher interactions that have specifically been associated with high teacher efficacy (Ashton & Webb 1986; Bandura, 1997), a relationship that is of particular importance for students who pose learning challenges as a result of diverse needs. Podell and Soodak (1993) found a relationship between teachers’ self-efficacy and special education referral rates. Specifically, they reported that teachers with higher levels of personal efficacy were less likely to refer students who were experiencing ‘mild’ learning or behavior difficulties for assessment or intervention.

Interactions, relationships and knowledge of student factors are mediated by teaching efficacy beliefs (Ashton & Webb, 1986). For example, having knowledge of a students’ racial/ethnic background or socio-economic status may activate preconceptions (bias) of the students ability resulting in low expectations of a the CLD students’ ability to master a specific reading goal, this expectation will influence just how effective the teacher believes teaching such goal to similar CLD students will be now and in the future (self-efficacy) and likely influence her teaching practice. In fact, Good (1987) and Smith (1980) found that when teachers questioned the innate ability of a Black students teachers prepared less and were less responsive and enthusiastic towards them than they were towards their white counterparts.

Meijer and Foster (1988) explored the relationship between all three factors: bias, teacher self-efficacy and special education referral. The teacher self-efficacy of 260
Dutch teachers was assessed using an adapted version of the Dutch Teacher Self Efficacy Scales (Span, Abbring, & Meijer, 1985). The likelihood of special education referral was assessed by asking the participants to read a case study of a second grade student experiencing academic, behavioral or both academic/behavior difficulties in the classroom. Included in the case study was a description of the student’s gender and socio-economic background (SES). While the case studies varied on the characteristics of problem type, gender and SES, the student’s brief educational history remained the same in all the case studies. There was a significant correlation between students SES and their chance for special education referral in that higher SES was associated with a lower chance of special education referral. The likelihood of referral increased as the students SES in the case study decreased. The student’s problem was also rated as more likely to pose a threat to instruction as SES decreased.

Similar to the Meijer and Foster’s (1988) findings, Soodak and Podell (1993) found that students from low SES backgrounds were more likely to be referred; however the teachers’ personal efficacy mediated this effect. Teachers with high personal efficacy were more likely to think that the general education classroom was the appropriate setting for this student and refrained from recommending special education referral, while the opposite was true of teachers who scored low on the personal efficacy. This effect was not the same for students with high SES backgrounds as referral decisions were not significantly related to teachers’ personal efficacy. Participants in this study consisted of 240 general education teachers from New York and teachers’ sense of efficacy was assessed using Gibson and Dembo’s (1984) Teaching Self Efficacy Scale. Referral rates were assessed with a hypothetical case study where the featured student was well-
behaved but was experiencing difficulties in reading. The case study given to participants was identical except for variation in the students SES (high or low) and etiology of reading difficulty (medical, environmental or unspecified). Soodak and Podell (1993) concluded that students from low-income backgrounds are at a considerable risk for bias in placement decisions if their teacher believes they do not have the capacity to teach them.

Tucker and colleagues (2005) investigated the impact of teacher self-efficacy with culturally diverse students after participating in a community based program grounded in culturally sensitive theory and research. After receiving the Model Program participants reported increased knowledge of African American students and scored higher the self-efficacy measure, *Culturally Sensitive Teaching Self Efficacy* (CTSE). To understand the role of self-efficacy forming experiences on teachers culturally responsive teaching efficacy, Siwatu (2009) analyzed the self-efficacy forming experiences (mastery experience and vicarious experiences) of pre-service teachers and the perceived role that said experiences had on the development of self-efficacy in regards to teaching culturally and linguistically diverse students using a structure interview format. Siwatu examined the relationship between pre-service teachers culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and self-efficacy forming experiences (mastery experiences and vicarious experiences) using sequential mixed methods. In the sequential mixed methods design the phase (quantitative) of data collection is used to inform the second the phase (qualitative).

In the Phase 1, Siwatu (2009) asked participants to rate their confidence in executing teaching practices that have been characterized as culturally responsive using a 0-100 scale. In Phase 2 summed scores from CRTSE, were used to identify two groups
of teachers, those whose summed scores were on the high measure continuum and those whose summed scores fell on the lowest end of the measure continuum. Siwatu (2011) interviewed four teachers from each end of the continuum. In addition to asking them to rate their confidence with culturally responsive practice using the CRTSE in Phase 1, in Phase 2, participants were asked to evaluate the opportunities they had to develop knowledge of culturally responsive teaching practices. His findings suggest that both mastery experiences and vicarious experiences contribute to the development of self-efficacy. Most of the interviewees believed that mastery experiences, involving culturally responsive teaching practices, occurring mostly during practica, after-school programs, summer camps and mentoring programs, influenced their CRTSE beliefs. Interviewees also shared a belief that, vicarious experiences, exposure to culturally responsive teaching practices, influenced the development of their self-efficacy in regards to culturally responsive teaching.

Nadelson and colleagues (2012) investigated the relationship between multicultural attitudes and sense of efficacy among pre-service teachers. Participants in the study, 88 undergraduate education majors, were surveyed using the Multicultural Efficacy Scale, MES, (Guyton & Wesche, 2005). The MES (Guyton & Wesche, 2005) has three subscales, attitudes towards in multicultural settings, experience with diversity and efficacy for teaching in multicultural settings. Survey responses to the MES and personal characteristics drawn from a demographic instrument (age, educational history, SES, primary community, college major/minor, religiosity and political philosophy) were included as variables in the regression analysis. The regression analysis revealed that as political philosophies become more liberal participants’ levels of multicultural attitude
increased. Political philosophies significantly correlated with the subscale multicultural attitude. A separate regression analysis using the subscale of multicultural experience as the independent variable and the subscales of multicultural attitude and multicultural efficacy and dependent variables revealed a significant relationship between multicultural efficacy and personal experiences multiculturalism. Multicultural efficacy amongst pre-service teacher increased as personal experiences with multiculturalism increased.

Therefore, this study examined the following questions:

1. Do teachers’ experiences with diversity, attitudes towards diversity and multicultural efficacy differ on the basis of demographic variables (gender, race/ethnicity) or teaching variables (degree type and certifications)?

2. What is the relationship between teachers’ experiences with diversity, attitudes towards diversity and multicultural efficacy?

3. How do teachers describe their epistemological beliefs and sense of efficacy beliefs using the P-I continuum in regards to CLD learners within an RtI framework?
Chapter 3 Methodology

The study followed a mixed-methods design. Mixed methods studies are defined as “studies that combine qualitative and quantitative approaches into the research methodology of a single study or multi-phase study” (Tashakkori & Teddlie, 1998, p. 17-18). Anita Woolfolk (as cited in Shaughnessy, 2004) stated that mixed methods designs are not only appropriate for examining the construct of teachers’ sense of efficacy, qualitative methods are particularly necessary for understanding role of culture and cultural contexts on efficacy development and efficacy belief construction.

Setting

The large urban school district in which this study took place employs a total of 8,698 elementary teachers distributed across 320 elementary schools (MDCPS Public Schools Staff Survey, 2011). Participants were recruited from 25 elementary schools that were targeted by the Response to Intervention office in the district for differentiated supports, otherwise known as RtI support.

In accordance with state law (Rule 6A-6.03018, Florida Administrative Code), Miami Dade County Public schools (M-DCPS) has adopted the Problem Solving/Response to Intervention (PS/RtI) framework to guide service delivery. Much like the federal model offered by IDEA (2004) the PS/RtI framework uses “evidenced based instruction and interventions, progress monitoring, and evaluations for ongoing tracking of individual students in making informed decisions about the student academic and behavioral needs” (M-DCPS, 2013). In the first tier of support universal screening is used to identify students who may be at risk. Universal screening is followed by core
which expected to target the whole class. In addition, the teacher is responsible for differentiating core instruction to meet the various needs of the students in the classroom. Data is gathered and used to determine students’ risk for academic failure, initially using the universal screening tool the Florida Assessment of Instruction in Reading (FAIR) at three time points throughout the year. In addition to the FAIR, teachers monitor responsiveness to core instruction using methods of ongoing progress monitoring. Progress is monitored regularly and assessed to determine movement into a more intense Tier 2, supplemental intervention. Students who do not demonstrate levels of desired growth or rate of progress while in Tier 1 are provided supplemental intervention (Tier 2), which the district has designated as standard protocol of Voyager intervention, in addition to Tier 1’s core instruction. Once in Tier 2, progress is monitored more frequently and data is used to determine movement into Tier 3, intensive supports, where the state support manual recommends intervention/supports be provided in groups to no more than 3 students and ongoing progress monitoring occurs much more frequently than in Tier 1 or Tier 2.

The district (M-DCPS) expects each school to create a team of teachers and administrators to carry out the Problem Solving (PS) model to address the academic/behavioral needs of all students at each of the tiers. The team is often referred to as the RtI team. The RtI team targets the effectiveness of the research based interventions occurring at each of the tiers by reviewing progress monitoring data. The team also meets with increased frequency for students in Tiers 2 and 3. Federal recommendations for implementation of RtI explicitly address the need for culturally
responsive Tier 1 supports. District specific RtI material and documents also reference the need for intervention that is culturally responsive.

The elementary schools that participated in this study were identified as receiving RtI supports from the district. Limiting sampling to this group of schools reduced the variability within the district in regards to service delivery and decision making by limiting participation to teachers who are received administrative supports for RtI implementation. In the past two years (2010-2012), schools targeted by the district for differentiated support were selected from a larger pool of low-performing schools known to have high proportions of culturally and linguistically diverse students and an increased proportion of students that are considered low income (determined by eligibility for free and reduced lunch).

**Procedures**

**Data collection: Part 1.** After obtaining District, Region and School approval, I extended an invitation to the principals at the 25 differentiated support (RtI) schools in the district via email. A total of eight principals responded to that invitation email and scheduled to meet with me to discuss the details behind their participation and teacher involvement. The remaining 16 principals were sent two follow up emails. In addition I attempted to establish contact with principals via telephone calls to the school. I made a minimum of 3 telephone attempts and left messages with several different office employees at each of schools but was unsuccessful in reaching principals via telephone. Two principals responded to follow up email attempts and agreed to meet with me to discuss the study further. The remaining 14 schools were divided into groups according
to their geographic location and I sent one final email to the principals in these schools informing them that I would be visiting the schools and hoped to have a few minutes to talk to them in person during my visit. These impromptu visits resulted in meetings with an additional 8 principals from the 14 schools.

I prepared packets with IRB approved recruitment flyers, copies of the IRB Study Approval Letter, the District Research Approval Letter, and a bulleted summary of the study along with a separate document which detailed the degree of involvement I would have in the schools during the recruitment process. I took these packets to all of my meetings, shared them with principals who met with me and asked office staff to please deliver them to the principals who did not have time to see me. With permission from each school principal, all grade level content area teachers (i.e. language arts/reading, math, social studies & science) at each of the participating schools were invited to participate. The invitation was presented in two ways. First, all teachers received an email invitation from a principal designated liaison (i.e. reading coach, professional development coordinator, school counselor) on behalf of the researcher containing the attached IRB approved flyer. Second, IRB approved flyers were placed in teachers’ mailboxes and posted in teachers’ lounges and the school main offices. The invitation included a description of the study with an embedded link to the consent form located on the survey website Qualtrics. The consent form page consisted of a detailed description of both Part 1 and Part 2 of the study. The description of Part 2 informed participants that a total of 6 teachers would be invited to participate in a follow up interview. By selecting “Agree” participants were granted access to the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) on the secured data collection website, Qualtrics. By choosing “disagree” participants were
taken to an end of survey page where they were thanked for their time. After providing consent via acknowledgment on the Qualtrics website, Part 1 participants were able to access the MES. The introduction of the MES consists of a demographic questionnaire, and all subscale sections were structured such that participants had the option of declining to answer questions. Once all sections were complete all participants were directed to an end of survey page and were thanked for their participation. An unanticipated low response rate through the use of electronic surveying resulted in an alternative assessment delivery and collection. Towards the end of survey data collection I requested additional time at five faculty meetings to administer paper versions of the survey to teachers who were interested in participating immediately after the meeting. Teachers who expressed interest were given the informed consent form and I reviewed said form and its entire components with them in detail. In addition they were given the opportunity to ask questions or decline further participation.

Electronic survey responses were downloaded from the secure website, Qualtrics.com, into statistical survey software on a secured hard drive creating an SPSS database. Paper survey responses were entered manually into the same SPSS database.

**Data collection: Part 2.** In the interview, participants were encouraged to narrate their experiences with one or more students over the previous school year: usually a student with a disability included in the class (Student A) and a student whom the teacher considers to be at risk of academic failure (Student B). Using semi-structured interview teachers are asked probes addressing the five topics. An example question for the first topic, pre-referral and assessment is *are there any students you are concerned about?* The second topic, programming/monitoring student progress (modifying curriculum,
making accommodations in instructional and evaluation techniques), has questions like, what do you do to accommodate the child prior to seeking help from others? Review of the intervention response with team (provisions for formative evaluation, working with the in-school team) is the third topic and asks questions like, what methods do you use for evaluating and monitoring student progress? The fourth topic, communication and collaboration (whether and for what purpose the teacher collaborates with colleagues and resource staff about the student, whether programs are coordinated with those offered by resource personnel), asks questions like, how does the team work together? And are you satisfied with the process? The fifth and final topic, communication with parents (how often and for what purpose the teacher communicates with/reports to the student's parents), is assessed with questions like, when were parents first contacted...how often do you have contact with them?

Interviews were tape recorded and transcribed. Items were scored independently and coded deductively using the Interview Coding Form created by Wilson and Silverman (1991) which distinguishes between teacher perspectives that are considered pathognomonic from those considered interventionists by deductively analyzing interview questions.

Participants

Twenty five schools, located within a large urban school district in the southeastern United States were used to draw a purposeful sample of study participants.

The most recent Public Schools Staff Survey (2011) reported that the school district sampled for this study was a uniquely composed of an ethnically diverse
elementary instructional staff with 26.7% that identified as white (non-Hispanic), 26.1% that identified as black (non-Hispanic), 45.6% that identified as Hispanic, and 1.5% that identified as Asian/American Indian (Public Schools Staff Survey, 2011).

The final sample size was dependent on self-selection of the total number of Pre K-5 grade level teachers and grade level coaches (i.e. language arts/reading, mathematics, social science and science) within the 25 targeted elementary schools and K-8 centers receiving differentiated support. Using faculty/staff data from the schools most recent historical profile an average of 43 eligible staff per school was established and the estimated target $N$ was 648 (See Table 1).

**Response rate and final sample characteristics: Part 1.** The original school recruitment sample included a total of 25 schools (18 elementary schools and 7 K-8 centers). Sixteen of the 25 principals agreed to participate. The non-participation of the remaining 9 principals was due almost exclusively to an inability to reach principals on the telephone or via electronic correspondence (email). Fifteen of the 16 participating principals provided me with an email and contact information for a liaison who served as a contact person and who also distributed the IRB approved flyers to teachers via their school email listserv. In some cases I was given the opportunity to meet the liaison and invited to speak to teachers at faculty meetings. I attended a total of seven faculty meetings. There were varying $N$’s across both demographic and teaching variables as not all participants answered all the items on the MES.

Demographic characteristics for the teacher participants were not representative of the district differing in regards to race/ethnicity. The racial and ethnic representation
within the targeted 25 schools and the final sample of 16 schools \( N = 115 \) was very different from that reported by the district. The sample in this study contained a much larger proportion of teachers who identified as Black (non-Hispanic) and a smaller proportion of teachers who identified as Hispanic which was expected as the racial/ethnic composition reported by the targeted schools demonstrated a similar pattern. Specifically, 65.2 % of participants \( n = 75 \) identified as Black, and 20.9 % identified \( n = 24 \) as Hispanic. The proportion of teachers who identified as White non-Hispanic, 13.9 % \( n = 16 \) was also much lower than that reported by the district (Public Schools Staff Survey, 2011). See Table 2 for more detail regarding racial/ethnic characteristics of the district, targeted schools and final sample.

The gender variable with a total \( N \) of 115, contained 85.2\% \( n = 98 \) of participants who identified as female and 14.8 \% of participants who identified as male \( n = 17 \). Participants varied in regards to Special Education certification and English Language Learner (ELL) endorsement \( N = 114 \). Several participants, 36.8 \% \( n = 42 \) did not have a Special Education certification or ELL endorsement. Teachers with an ELL endorsement comprised 39.5 \% \( n = 45 \) of the sample while teachers with a Special Education certification comprised only 7 \% \( n = 8 \) of the sample. A total of 19 participants had both a Special Education certification and ELL endorsement comprising 16.7\% of the sample. Participants also represented a range of educational backgrounds \( N = 115 \). The majority of participants, 73.9 \% \( n = 82 \) had degrees in the field of education. Participants with degrees outside the field of education comprised 26.1 \% \( n = 29 \).

**Response rate and final sample characteristics: Part 2.** A stratified purposive sampling technique was used to select participants for Part 2 of the study. According to
Gall, Gall and Borg (2007) the use of stratified purposive sampling allowed the development of both insights and variations that may exist amongst teachers as well as insight into characteristics of each type. Participants were selected from the Part 1 survey sample based on their composite score on the MES. Participants were then selected from a smaller pool of participants at the extreme ends of the MES composite score continuum. In addition, these participants scores differed most their predicted scores on the line of best fit after controlling for the all the variables. Initially 12 participants were targeted for Part 2 but the target N was reduced to 6 after several weeks of failed communication attempts. Finally, three participant scores from either end of the continuum were selected, resulting in 6 participants, each with a corresponding match at the opposite end of the MES composite score continuum.

Potential participants who met the criteria for Part 2 selection were sent an email notification in which they were notified that they were selected for Part 2 of the study. The email notification also provided participants the opportunity to schedule their interview at the date, time and location of their choice or decline further participation. Every three days reminder emails were sent to each potential participant. An inability to contact participants via email during the summer was challenging as many participants provided their public school email address for contact purposes on their MES survey.

The teachers who participated in Part 2 completed a confidential semi-structured interview that took between 45 minutes to an hour to complete. The participant face to face interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. Of the six Part 2 participants, one was a male. Five of the six participants were Black and one was Hispanic. Four of the six participants had graduate degrees in education and the remaining two had undergraduate
degrees, one of which was outside the field of education. In regards to certifications and/or endorsements four of the six participants had an endorsement for teaching English Language Learners (ELL). One of the six participants had both an ELL endorsement and Special Education certification. See Table 3 for Part 2 participant demographics.

Measures

Two distinct measures represent each part of the study. The Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) corresponds to Part 1, while participant responses to the Pathognomonic-Interventionist (P-I) Interview provide data for Part 2.

Multicultural Efficacy Scale. Guyton and Wesche (2005) based their construction of the Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) on the four dimensions of multicultural education as outlined by Bennet, Niggle and Stage (1990): knowledge, understanding, attitude and skill. While instruments have been created to measure each of the four dimensions described by Bennet et al. (1990), the MES was the first scale to measure all four dimensions. Rooted in Bennet’s et al. (1990) multicultural framework the MES assesses the following concepts: 1) multicultural settings, 2) intercultural experiences, 3) minority group knowledge, 4) attitudes about diversity and 5) knowledge about teaching skills in multicultural settings.

After piloting the scale with 665 undergraduate and graduate teacher education students representing multiple geographic regions, religions, race/ethnicities across the United States, Guyton and Wesche (2005) conducted a confirmatory factor analysis. The factor analysis revealed three factors, 20 efficacy items loaded onto factor 1, seven experience items loaded onto factor 2 and eight attitude items loaded together onto factor
3. The general knowledge and instructional knowledge items did not hold together in any identifiable factors thus, were deleted from the scale. The scale was reduced to 35 Likert-type items located within three subscales: experience with diversity, attitudes towards teaching in multicultural settings and efficacy for teaching in multicultural environments.

The MES consists of two sections. The first section elicits demographic information from the participants. Questions in the first section ask participants to identify their gender, age and birthplace. Participants are also asked other demographic questions such as their, highest level of education of obtained, additional professional certifications, and racial/ethnic background. Participants also identify their approximate socio-economic status as a child and as an adult.

The second section consists of three subscales (A, B and C) each targeting one subscale domain. Subscale A: Experiences with Diversity contains 7 items. Each item on this subscale is anchored with a four point Likert scale ranging from never to frequently. An example of a question in Subscale A is “I went to school with diverse students as a teenager”. According to Guyton and Wesche (2005) the purpose of this subscale to compare participants experiences with diversity and is unrelated to efficacy. Subscale B: Attitude Towards Teaching in Multicultural Settings also contains 7 items and uses a 4 point Likert scale ranging from agree strongly to disagree strongly in which participants respond to items such as “children should be taught mostly by teachers of their cultural and ethnic background”. Subscale C: Efficacy for Teaching in Multicultural Environments includes 20 items aimed specifically at assessing participants efficacy for teaching in multicultural environments. Items like, “I can help my students to examine
their own prejudices” are rated on a 4 point Likert scale ranging from *I do not believe I could do this very well* to *I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do*.

Guyton and Wesche (2005) provide scale scores for each of the subscales. Scores of 1 or 2 on all items across subscales are considered low, scores of 3 are considered average and scores of 4 are considered high. Based on this suggestion score ranges for Subscale A are 0 to 15 (below average), 16 to 24 (average) and 25 to 28 (above average). Score ranges for Subscale B are 0 to 15 (low), 16 to 24 (average) and 25 to 28 (very positive). For Subscale C ranges are 0 to 54 (low), 55 to 66 (average) and 67 to 80 high (high). Guyton and Wesche do not provide a range for the composite score (summed score of all subscales). Scores for study participants in this study ranged from 56 to 134.

The reliability estimates, for the total (or composite) 35-item MES was reported as Cronbach’s alpha .89 and alphas of .78 for the Subscale A: Experience with Diversity subscale, .72 for the Subscale B: Attitude towards Multicultural Education subscale and .93 for the Subscale C: Efficacy subscale were reported indicating medium to high levels of subscale stability (Guyton & Wesche, 2005).

Internal reliability of the three MES subscales and composite instrument accross the participants in this study sample revealed that Subscale A: Multicultural Experiences had a Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability coefficient of .77, which is consistent with the value reported in the instrument validation study (Guyton & Wesche, 2005). Subscale B: Multicultural Attitudes had a Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability coefficient of .60, which is lower than the .72 reported in the validation study. The Cronbach’s alpha for Subscale C: Multicultural Efficacy was .95 which was consistent with the coefficient
reported in the validation study. The Cronbach’s alpha internal reliability coefficient for the composite instrument, or the MES scale, was found to be .89 which is the same value that was reported by the authors instrument validation study (Guyton & Wesche, 2005).

**The Pathognomonic-Interventionist (P-I) Interview.** The P-I interview is designed as an explanatory narrative in which the account explains why a situation or event occurs according to the interviewee (Polkinghorne, 1988). In the P-I interview teachers are probed for descriptions of their “recalled experiences, their perceptions of the students’ characteristics, the decisions they made, their intentions and reasons for doing so, and their judgments about the results, in relation to their understanding of their roles and responsibilities in meeting the needs of their students with disabilities” (Jordan & Stanovich, 2003, p.3) The scores from the P-I Interview are used to evaluate teachers somewhere on the P-I continuum. Based on their scores teachers perspectives are described as pathognomonic, interventionist or mixed. A perspective described as *pathognomonic* describe disability as an “internal, fixed and pathological condition of the individual, unchanged by instruction” (Jordan et al., 2010, p. 262). On the other end of the continuum perspectives that are described as interventionist describe beliefs that view disability as socially constructed by people without disabilities and malleable by appropriate intervention/instruction.

The P-I Interview, is intended to be analyzed deductively through the review of critical statements embedded throughout the interview. Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991) specifically examines critical statements related to five themes/topics: 1) pre-referral, referral and assessment 2) programming, monitoring student progress, individualization and accommodations 3) review of intervention
response with team 4) communication and collaboration and 5) communication with parents. The 20 items on the coding form are given a score of 1 to 3 in which 1 represents a pathognomonic perspective and 3 represents an interventionist perspective. A score of 2 represents a perspective that is mixed.

A previous study (Jordan, Lindsay & Stanovich, 1997) used the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991) to analyze and code the P-I Interview and they reported an inter-rater reliability of .88. Independent scoring of the six interview transcripts in this study by two raters achieved an inter-rater reliability of .86. Correspondence between Anne Jordan and I revealed that prior to reaching reliability of over .80 a number of reliability meetings were held between raters. These meetings resulted in the final version of the coding form. Anne Jordan shared all the information her team had regarding the construction of the coding form and confirmed that there was no additional guidance regarding the use of the Interview Coding Form outside of the instructions embedded in the instrument. After having reviewed the six interviews independently another rater and myself had disagreement regarding the numerical codes. We did not feel that the examples provided in the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991) captured all possible instances therefore we established additional criteria based on our pool of responses that would more accurately reflect the data that emerged in our interview and that answered some of our uncertainties between the numerical codes.

Additional criteria for the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991) were established for three of the five sections, Programming, Collaboration with Assistants and Collaboration with Parents. In general additional criteria elaborated the
already established codes. These specific additions guided raters in the decision making process by increasing or decreasing specificity.

During the coding process we experienced confusion with the Programming – Monitoring Progress sub section because we were uncomfortable coding some of the teachers at either extremes. For example, several teachers did monitor progress outside of the formally reporting times (i.e. report cards, parent teacher conferences) and while it was systematic it was not necessarily meaningfully guiding instruction, therefore we added the following language to the Interview Coding Form, Programming section code 2, “Attempts to monitor student progress using 1 additional (informal) reporting method that is not used for instructional purposes nor is used in meaningful ways to inform practice. It was also specifically noted that this section/question would only apply to “formal and regular reporting of academic progress” as many times teachers regularly reported misbehavior/inappropriate behaviors. Collaboration with Parents was another section of the Interview Coding Form for which criteria was added. We added criteria the subsection of Parental Roles that would allow code 1 to include instances in which the teacher sees parents as “victims” of their current situation (SES, culture) or helpless/incapable of supporting their child’s learning because of language barrier or own level of education/literacy. We also made changes to the subsection of Parental Responsibility. Specifically we changed the ending of a code 2 statement from, “Teacher sees herself as responsible for informing the parents through notes home in a student agenda, emails, etc. when their student’s performance is notable to notably positive or negative”
Finally we clarified that a teacher could obtain a 3 under the subsection of Parent Responsibility if they believed that he/she had the responsibility to involve the parents in meaningful way that related to the students’ progress (invitations to participate in decision making, frequent meetings or phone contact. *Even if per teacher, parent does not respond in meaningful ways to her attempts.* The accompanying notes outlining the additional criteria are included as Appendix D of this document and have been shared with creators of the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991).

**Research Design**

This study follows a mixed method design in which quantitative data from Part 1 was used to inform subsequent data collection in Part 2. I hope to provide more insight into the quantitative results from Part 1 using a qualitative lens in Part 2. The rationale for this design is that while the quantitative data explicitly answered research questions 1 and 2, the qualitative data via qualitative case studies, helped explore and contextualize the quantitative results from the first part (Creswell, 2002; Iankova, Creswell & Stick, 2006). Thus, the in-depth interviews of Part 2 participants (N=6) addresses the final research question.

In regards to measuring teaching efficacy in diverse settings Landson-Billings (1995) argues against the use of one sole measure. Guyton and Wesche (2005) caution against the use of the MES in isolation. Instead they advocate for the use of qualitative measures such as interviews and observations to draw rich perspectives on teaching CLD learners and teachers sense of efficacy in multicultural settings (Guyton & Wesche, 2005). Gall, Gall and Borg (2007) detail several advantages to the use of interviews in data collection. First, interviews are described as “highly adaptable”. Second interviews
have the capacity to elicit information from participants that would unavailable to researchers using any other data collection method (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2007).

Data collection and analysis occurred in two distinct parts designed specifically to address the research questions. In Part 1 participant responses to the MES were analyzed using descriptive statistics to obtain means and standard deviations, analysis of variance (ANOVA) to assess group differences and a correlation matrix and multiple regression model were used to determine the relationship amongst variables well as identify extreme values and outliers. Part 1 also provided a sampling frame for Part 2 data collection; the follow-up interview. Part 2 of this study consisted of 6 follow up interviews examined using a deductive analysis to identify participants perspectives along the pathognomonic-interventionist continuum.

Quantitative data collection and analysis - Part 1. In order to meet study inclusion criteria participants had to be general grade level teachers (i.e. math, science, language arts, social studies) and/or coaches in elementary schools that were identified as receiving differentiated supports from the district for the 2009-2011 academic year. An online survey was chosen as the data collection tool for Part 1 and the web-based commercial development program, Qualtrics.com, was selected for posting survey questions on the internet so that participants both consented via acknowledgment and completed the scale electronically.

After being informed of the study procedures, risks, benefits, compensation, and voluntary nature of the study via email invitation, those who provide informed consent via acknowledgement were given an electronic link to a secure website (i.e. Qualtrics).
Completion of the consent, questionnaire and scale took approximately 15-20 minutes. Participant completion of the 35 item Multicultural Self Efficacy (MES) scale required teachers to rate their degree of experience in diverse settings, their attitudes towards teaching in multicultural settings and their confidence in their ability to execute multicultural teaching practices. The raw data collected on Qualtrics.com was securely stored where it was downloaded to Microsoft Excel and statistical analysis programs (i.e. SPSS) for further analysis. Participant data was de-identified after Part 2 selection to ensure confidentiality.

**Categorical variables.** The first section of the MES request demographic information from study participants. Participants are given the opportunity to select the option with which they identify on all the demographic questions. Participants may also decline to respond to any question in section 1 of the MES.

The following variables were included in the analysis of the MES data; gender, race/ethnicity, level of education and certifications/endorsements. In regards to gender participants self-identified as either male or female. Study participants identified as White (non-Hispanic), Black (non-Hispanic), Asian, Pacific Islander, two or more races and other. Participants then identified as either Hispanic or non-Hispanic under the ethnicity variable. Section 1 of the MES asked participants to differentiate their level of education based on undergraduate and graduate degrees in the field of education and outside the field of education. This variable was separated into two separate variables type of educator training (distinguishing between degrees in and outside the field of education) and degree level (undergraduate and graduate). Participants were also asked if they
possessed Special Education certification and/or an English Language Learner endorsement in regards to the certification/endorsement variable.

Prior to analyzing the quantitative data from Part 1 of the study I had to manipulate some of the variables. Risk for discrepancies in the analysis was the rationale for such manipulations. Specifically, including numerous variables in the analysis could result in the masking of potentially significant variables. Therefore, previous literature in the constructs of race and education in social research was used to substantiate the manipulations.

**Race and ethnicity.** The variables of race and ethnicity which were collected separately were collapsed and recoded to create one variable race/ethnicity. This was done for several reasons. The first, the school district from which participants were recruited use a combined race/ethnicity variable in their data collection. The collapsing of this variable is also supported by practice where much of the data collected (included the data for this study) is done through self-report and many study participants believe the terms race and ethnicity to be synonymous (Kaufmann & Cooper, 2001).

Within the race variable participants who identified as biracial were recoded into the Black category. This coding rationale was based on research from Brunsma and Roquemore (2002) who surveyed a sample of college students in the metropolitan Detroit area who had one black parent and one white parent. They were given the opportunity to identify their racial identity. The majority of respondents who identified with a singular identity considered themselves exclusively black. In contrast, research examining the existence of biracial people who identify as white is scarce (Bowles, 1990; Root, 1990;
Root, 1996). The two participants who identified as Asian were removed from the dataset as the group was too small to include as a meaningful variable.

**Analysis of variance.** Univariate analysis of variance (ANOVA) was used as an additional preliminary analysis. Analysis of variance was used to compare three or more means to see if there were any statistically significant differences among them as “analysis of variance evaluates the differences among means relative to the dispersion in the sampling distributions” (Tabachnick & Fidell, 2007, p. 37). T-tests were used to compare differences in groups with two means. Eight t-tests and eight analysis of variance analyses were conducted to assess the mean differences between gender, race/ethnicity, degree type and certifications/endorsements and the composite scale and subscale scores of the MES.

**Regression analyses.** Preliminary ANOVA analyses were followed by four multiple regression analyses. A multiple regression allows for an easier incorporation of multiple independent variables, whether categorical or continuous variables (Keith, 2006). In addition, within a multiple regression we have the capacity to “examine the effect of each variable, with the other variables in the equation held constant” (Keith, 2006, p. 110). Therefore, rather than comparing means across four categorical variables in relation to the dependent variables (Experiences with Diversity, Attitudes towards Diversity, Multicultural Efficacy and the composite MES in several ANOVAs, four regression analyses that included all the variables were conducted to answer the first question.
Prior to answering the first question the participant data had to be recoded. All four of the independent variables selected for the analysis were categorical variables (gender, race/ethnicity, certifications/endorsements and type of educator training). They were dummy coded to create variables that could regressed onto the various outcome variables (experiences with diversity, attitudes towards diversity, multicultural efficacy and MES summed score) using four separate regression analyses.

Race/ethnicity was coded into two separate variables where White was the reference group. Type of educator training was also recoded into separate variables where degrees in the field of education were the reference group. Additionally, certifications/endorsements was recoded into separate variables where no certification/endorsement served as the reference group.

In summation the variables were represented as follows; $X_1 =$ mean difference between females and males, $X_2 =$ mean difference between Black and White, $X_3 =$ mean difference between Hispanic and White, $X_4 =$ mean difference between a degree in education and a degree outside the field of education, $X_5 =$ mean difference between Special Education certification and no certification/endorsements, $X_6 =$ mean difference between ELL endorsement and no certification/endorsements and $X_7 =$ mean difference between having both Special Education certification and ELL endorsement and no certification/endorsement. The corresponding equation is below:

Prediction of $Y$:

$$Y_i = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \beta_5 X_{5i} + \beta_6 X_{6i} + \beta_7 X_{7i} + \varepsilon_i$$
Sum of Squares:

\[
\sum_{i=1}^{N} (Y_i - Y'_i)^2
\]

To purposively sample participants for Part 2 of the study an examination of the unstandardized residuals obtained from the regression model with the MES composite score as the outcomes variable (Unstandardized residual = Actual response - Predicted response) or one form of the regression equation where residuals are equal to \( e \), \( Y \) reflects the actual score and \( Y' \) reflects the predicted score, \( X_1 = \) mean difference between females and males, \( X_2 = \) mean difference between Black and White, \( X_3 = \) mean difference between Hispanic and White, \( X_4 = \) mean difference between a degree in education and a degree outside of education, \( X_5 = \) mean difference between Special Education certification and no certification/endorsements, \( X_6 = \) mean difference between ELL endorsement and no certification/endorsements and \( X_7 = \) mean difference between having both Special Education certification and ELL endorsement and no certification/endorsement. The corresponding equation is below:

\[
Y = \beta_0 + \beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \beta_5 X_{5i} + \beta_6 X_{6i} + \beta_7 X_{7i} + \beta_8 X_{8i}
\]

\[
-Y' = +\beta_1 X_{1i} + \beta_2 X_{2i} + \beta_3 X_{3i} + \beta_4 X_{4i} + \beta_5 X_{5i} + \beta_6 X_{6i} + \beta_7 X_{7i} + \beta_8 X_{8i}
\]

\[
Y - Y' = \varepsilon
\]

Keith (2006) noted that residuals “are useful for diagnosing problems in the regression, such as the existence of outliers and extreme values” (p.49) and “residuals are equivalent to the original dependent variable (summed MES score) with the effects of the independent variables removed” (p.49). Therefore conducting a regression allowed us to
obtain a regression line with predicted outcomes and residuals that when examined on a continuum offered extreme values at both ends.

The second research question was answered using an evaluation of correlations between Experiences with Diversity, Attitudes towards Diversity and Multicultural Efficacy.

**Qualitative Data Collection and Analysis- Part 2.** As mentioned previously a multiple regression analysis using MES composite scores as the dependent variable was conducted to determine selection for the second part of the study. The six participants whose composite MES score differed most from their predicted MES scores were drawn from both ends of the residual continuum. Participants selected for Part 2 were not matched on gender, race, ethnicity, type of educator training or certifications/endorsements as these variables had no significant individual effects after holding all other variables constant, within the regression analysis where the composite MES score served as the dependent variable.

Teacher responses to the P-I Interview reveal two important sets of information; the first is their beliefs in regards to student ability and disability. Using the Interview Coding Form teachers beliefs are coded as either Pathognomonic or Interventionist. Teachers interview responses also revealed their beliefs on particular practices that align with foundational components of RtI through the reporting of specific case knowledge on a particular student that implicitly addresses foundational components of RtI such as universal screening, data based decision making, evidence based interventions, increasing levels of support.
Participants were asked to use the terms Student A and Student B to identify two students in their classroom. Participants were asked to identify Student A as student who was having either behavioral or academic challenges and was eligible for Special Education services as evidenced by an Individualized Education Plan (IEP). Student B was identified as a student who was considered a behavioral or academic concern but was not eligible for Special Education services via an IEP. As per the suggestions of Smith and Shepard (1988) the researcher asked teachers to share their views on their practice with regards to these particular students, also referred to as “case knowledge” (Feiman-Neismer & Floden, 1986, p. 506) that are meant to reveal underlying beliefs instead of asking questions.

I conducted the interviews but an independent contract typist was contracted to complete the word-by-word transcription of the interviews. Two raters, myself and another colleague, read each of the six interview transcriptions independently. We focused specifically on the identification of codable units as identified by the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991). Three specific kinds of statements were designated by the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991) as codable units, 1) attributes to self or others characteristics such as attitude, ability, motivation, as causes to explain behavior, achievement, learning difficulties 2) Judgment statements about student characteristics and 3) rationalization statements about teachers’ actions including reasons and explanation for the actions. Each interview was analyzed separately using the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991). Raters continued to review until they achieved an inter-rater reliability of .80.
Chapter 4: Results

First, I report the results for Part 1 of the study which includes a quantitative analysis of teacher responses to the MES: descriptive statistics, analysis of variances and regressions. Part 1 of the study answers the first two research questions. Next, I report the results for Part 2 of the study which focuses specifically on the qualitative analysis of the P-I Interview. Part 2 of the study answers the third research question in two aspects. The first aspect differentiates teachers’ perspectives of ability and disability as either pathognomonic, interventionist or mixed through the use of the Interview Coding Form. The second aspect, informed by results from the first, involves analysis of the interviews in aggregate in reference to the processes and procedures associated with RtI.

Quantitative analysis- Part 1

Analysis for Part 1 of the study is presented in three sections; descriptive statistics, t-tests, analysis of variance (ANOVA) and regressions. As mentioned previously Part 1 of the study answered my first two questions:

1. Do teachers’ experiences with diversity, attitudes towards diversity and multicultural efficacy differ on the basis of demographic variables (gender, race/ethnicity) or teaching variables (degree level or certifications)?

2. What is the relationship between teachers’ experiences with diversity, attitudes towards diversity and multicultural efficacy?

Preliminary analysis. The composite mean for Subscale A: Experiences with Diversity was 21.09 (n =115, SD = 4.37). Based on the Guyton and Wesche (2005) score
guide, participants reported an *average* amount of experiences with diversity growing up. It is important to note that Subscale A is not intended to measure efficacy. The composite mean for Subscale B: Multicultural Attitude was 24.41 ($n = 114, SD = 2.97$). According to Guyton and Wesche (2005) scoring guidelines the mean multicultural attitudes of my participants was *very positive*. The analysis was repeated to obtain the composite means for multicultural self-efficacy (Subscale C) and found the average to be 64.77 ($n = 115, SD = 10.60$). The results indicate my participants held an *average* level of multicultural efficacy. In reference to the MES composite score, or overall rating, the mean was 110.27 ($n=114, SD=12.74$). See Table 4 for descriptive statistics on MES.

The second research question examined the relationship between teachers’ experiences with diversity, attitudes towards diversity and multicultural efficacy? To answer this question I conducted a correlation analysis between all three subscales. The analysis revealed a significant correlation between participants’ scores on Subscale A and Subscale B, $r = .21$, $p < .05$ and between Subscale B and Subscale C, $r = .20$, $p < .05$. Therefore, teachers experiences with diversity were significantly correlated with their multicultural attitudes and their multicultural attitudes were significantly correlated with their multicultural efficacy. See Table 5 for details.

**T-Tests.** A t-test was conducted to examine group differences between degree type (education vs. non-education) and participant scores on Subscale A and it revealed that group differences were close to significant, $t (107) = -1.94$, $p = .055$. However, t-tests examining group differences between degree type and participant scores on Subscale B, C and the MES composite were not significant (or close to significance). An examination
of group differences, via t-tests, between gender and participants scores on Subscale A, B, C and the composite score were not significant either.

**Analysis of variance.** A one-way between subjects ANOVA was conducted to examine differences between race/ethnicity (White, Hispanic and Black) and participant scores on the Experiences with Diversity (Subscale A). An analysis of variance showed that the group differences amongst race/ethnicity and experience with diversity was significant. Post hoc analyses using the Tukey HSD post hoc criterion for significance indicated that mean participant scores on Subscale A: Experiences with diversity were significantly lower for black teachers \((M = 20.30, SD = 4.46)\) than for Hispanic teachers \((M = 23.04, SD = 3.65)\), \(F(2,110) = 3.76, p = .026\). However the mean participant scores on Subscale A for White teachers were not significantly different from the means scores of Black or Hispanic teachers. Further the effect size value, partial eta squared \((\eta_p^2 = .064)\) suggests that 6% of the variance in experiences with diversity is related to participants race/ethnicity.

All ANOVA tests of differences for Subscale B: Multicultural Attitudes and Subscale C: Multicultural Efficacy and each the race/ethnicity variable and the certifications variables were not significant. Similarly the ANOVA tests of differences between the composite MES and each of the demographic and teaching variables were not significant.

This suggests that our participants MES composite score, their multicultural attitudes and their multicultural efficacy did not vary based on differences in teaching variables or demographic variable and that participants’ scores on the Subscale A did
vary based on race/ethnicity and were close to significant based on degree type. Therefore a decision was made to limit the variables in the regression analysis to gender, race/ethnicity and degree type.

**Regression analysis.** To answer the first research question I ran four separate regression analyses. Each regression examined the mean differences of gender, race/ethnicity and degree type when regressed onto one of the dependent variables Subscale A: Experiences with Diversity, Subscale B: Multicultural Attitudes and Subscale C: Multicultural Efficacy and Composite MES Score. Please note $R^2$ statistic is reported in models with a negative adjusted $R^2$ and an examination of the regression assumptions for all the regression analyses demonstrated that both tolerance and VIF levels amongst the variables were appropriate.

Subscale A: Teachers Experiences with Diversity, was the dependent variable in the first hierarchal regression. The model had an adjusted $R^2 = .10$, indicating that the variables of gender, race/ethnicity and degree type accounted for 10% of the variance observed in teachers experiences with diversity. The model was significant, $F (4,104) = 3.85, p = .01$. See Table 6 for specific details.

The multiple regression analysis was repeated for dependent variable Multicultural Attitudes (Subscale B). The model which contained all the variables, gender, race/ethnicity and degree type, had an $R^2 = .02$, indicating that demographic variables accounted for 2% of the variance observed in teachers multicultural attitudes. The model was not significant, $F (4,103) = .55, p = .70$. See Table 7 for specific details.
The multiple regression analysis was repeated for the dependent variable Multicultural Efficacy (Subscale C). The model containing all the variables, had $R^2 = .03$, indicating that the variables accounted for 3% of the variance observed in teachers multicultural efficacy. The model was not significant, $F (4, 104) = .76, p = .55$. See Table 8 for specific details.

Teachers’ composite MES score was used as the dependent variable in the last regression that addressed the first research question. Model 1 had an $R^2 = .02$, indicating that demographic variables accounted for 2% of the variance observed in teacher composite MES score. The model was not significant, $F (4, 103) = .46, p = .76$. See Table 9 for specific details.

**Qualitative analysis- Part 2**

The qualitative analysis answered my third research question, examining how teachers describe their epistemological beliefs and sense of efficacy beliefs in regards to CLD learners within an RtI framework. First, teacher profiles are described in detail as either high or low MES in accordance to the sampling followed by deductive analysis of the P-I Interview data through the use of the Interview Coding Form. Partic

Next, the P-I Interviews are analyzed inductively in reference to the processes and procedures associated with RtI.

**High MES.** Participants’ composite scores on the MES ranged from 56 to 134. Participants grouped as High MES had reported scores between 89 and 104 and made up the 87th percentile (top 13%) of the MES composite score continuum. On the high end of
the MES score continuum the three teachers whose actual MES differed most from their predicted MES were Sarah, Tatiana and Penelope.

A science coach and member of the RtI data based decision making team, Sarah was a Hispanic female. She was a trained teacher with an undergraduate degree in education and she was also endorsed by the state to teach English Language Learners (ELL). Tatiana was a Black female with over 5 years of teaching experience and currently served as a 2nd grade teacher. Her school had been departmentalized and she was responsible for delivering the English/Language Arts and Social Studies curriculum to the entire 2nd grade. Tatiana had graduate degree in Education as well as state ELL endorsement. Tatiana was currently in the process of completing her doctoral degree. Penelope was a black female who had just completed her 5th year of teaching. She was responsible for delivering math instruction and also served as part of the athletics department as a coach. Penelope had both a state issued ELL endorsement and Special Education certification.

**Low MES.** Participants grouped as Low MES had reported scores between 122 and 129 and made up the 25th percentile (lowest 25%) of the MES composite score continuum. On the low end of the MES score continuum the three teachers whose actual MES differed most from their predicted MES were Liv, Aaliyah and Jason.

Liv was a Black female with several years of teaching experience. She was a 5th grade science teacher and served as the schools science coach as well. Liv had a graduate degree in Education. Liv did not possess any additional state endorsements or certifications. Aaliyah was a Black female who taught 5th grade math. Similar to Liv,
Aaliyah had a graduate degree in Education and did not possess any additional state certifications or endorsements. Jason was a 1st grade math teacher. He differed most from all the other interview participants in both the high and low MES groups. Unlike the other 5 interview participants Jason was a Black male. In regards to teaching variables Jason was also different from the other 5 participants. Jason became an educator via an alternative certification program; he did not possess any additional state certifications or endorsements and, at the time of our interview, had just completed his first year of teaching. The school Jason taught in, like many of the schools where the study participants taught, had been departmentalized.

**Deductive analysis.** Amongst this particular group of teachers perspectives of disability were predominantly pathognomonic. Deductive scoring of the interview data, using the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991) revealed that five of the 6 teachers held perspectives that were pathognomonic with scores that fell between 1 and 1.5. These teachers MES scores varied and both High and Low MES teachers were represented among the 5 teachers with perspectives of ability and disability that was considered pathognomonic. The remaining teacher, Aaliyah, who had scored in the lowest 25% on the MES, scored on the opposing end of the P-I Interview continuum with an average score of 2.8 where a score of 3 represents an interventionist perspective. The limited variation amongst 5 of the 6 participants on the P-I Interview influenced a review of the interview data in aggregate. See Table 10 for Part 2 participant scores on both measures.

**RtI process and procedures.** Teacher participants were asked to identify two students. The first student would present behavioral or academic concerns whilst
receiving special education services, as evidenced by an IEP (Student A). The second student would also be one which presented behavioral or academic concerns however he/she would not have an identified disability (Student B). A series of probing questions were used to elicit information on the identified students that revealed the process by which each of the students’ difficulties were addressed. The interview coding form organized teacher responses to the P-I Interview questions into five categories, 1) entry phase, 2) programming, 3) collaboration with staff, 4) collaboration with assistants, and 5) collaboration with parents and allowed for a secondary coding aspect that mapped teacher responses onto the processes and procedures associated with RtI; pre and post special education identification described in the district manual for the RtI/PS Model (MDCPS, 2012).

**Entry phase.** Codable units that were used to rate the Entry Phase category of the P-I Interview provided information about each individual student, specifically how and if the teacher went about obtaining information about the identified student upon entry in their classroom, the role of formal assessment in disability determination and the identification of an academic entry point for the identified students.

Surprisingly Student A and Student B did not differ significantly during the Entry Phase. In fact four of the six teachers did not know that Student A had a disability upon their initial entry into the classroom and three out of six did not seek out additional information (IEP or cumulative files) after learning of the student’s disability. When asked what, if any records she examined after she first had concerns about Student A, Tatiana, a 2\textsuperscript{nd} grade language arts teacher said, “*To be honest, that’s something I need to*
start doing...there is too much pressure at the beginning of the year to get all these cumulative files and say, let me see what is going on with this child.”

Ten of the 12 students that were identified by teacher participants were identified due to behavior concerns. Participants communicated frustration, over their lack of training and experience in managing challenging behaviors. Liv shared that her identified Student A was so difficult to manage that “Behavior wise he would not allow me to conduct a lesson, like finish a lesson, so to me that (pull out) was the best thing to do”.

During discussions about Student A, 4 of the 6 teachers reinforced two things, 1) the need for the student to be medicated to access the curriculum and 2) their inability to teach the student when they suspected the student had not been medicated.

Four out of six times Student A was identified as having Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder (AD/HD) and was also taking medication to manage some the behaviors associated with AD/HD. The first question on the P-I Interview asked teacher participants to share background information on the identified student that they deem significant. Penelope’s opening sentence regarding student A, “Very athletic, on medication, parents are involved” is telling of the characteristics she deemed most important regarding this student.

Interview participants who discussed their experience with Student A and his/her ADHD reflected contradictory statements, particularly when discussing medication. They described their medicated student as “A vegetable” yet they preferred them in this vegetative state because students’ behavior when they were not medicated was too difficult to manage. In particular, Penelope had this to say about Student A regarding his
behavior on and off medication, “When he is off the medication, he very defiant but when he is on his medication, you don’t know he is the room, like a vegetable. You don’t have to let him know to pay attention or constantly remind him to listen...he’s doing what you say...he is in order”.

One participant, Jason, bothered by the students’ behavior during the day even went as far as probing a student about the look and taste of their medication in order to confirm that he had in fact taken it. Jason concluded that the student was being given a placebo, “a Flintstones vitamin” before school by the parent so that the child could be medicated at home. Jason seemed extremely offended by his own assumption because he believed that the student should be medicated during school hours and that his mother should be able to manage his behavior at home.

Teachers had the given the opportunity to identify Student B as student without and IEP who presented academic or behavioral concerns, however 6 out 6 times teachers identified a student who was a behavioral concern, “She is the worst behavior problem ever, anger problem, beats up kids (Aaliyah)...He had such an anger problem, this student stood there and punched me (Tatiana)...I had to almost throw him out he was too much and to be like look, get security because I do not want to put my hands on him (Penelope)...This child, she has bullying tendencies (Sarah)...He will touch everything you have, he will not wait for instruction (Liv)...She tried to hurt someone with scissors, with a pencil, she would pee on the floor on purpose (Jason)”. On all six occasions behavior problems occurred alongside academic problems however, teachers expressed the most frustration with students’ behavior.
**Programming.** The Programming category was used to rate the teachers’ use of goals and objectives for each of the two identified students, teachers awareness of the identified students social needs, teachers understanding of the accommodations identified students needed to access the curriculum, parameters by which teachers judged performance of identified students and teachers reporting and monitoring practice.

In general teachers had very little knowledge of the programming needs of the student they identified as Student A. All the following units were examples of statements that reflected a pathognomonic perspective in relation to programming. Sarah shared that as a member of the RtI team she analyzed student data and used this to drive decisions. Her role was not probed further but her responses to many of the P-I interview reflected that she had more knowledge of the identified student’s performance on statewide assessments and screening tools than his individual needs. When she was first asked to share information about the Student A’s academic background her response only focused on the portion of his IEP which detailed accommodations during standardized testing, “He is on an IEP, has his own plan, the tests get to be read to him, except for the reading tests, so math and science are read”. In fact, when asked specifically about the disability category for which he received services she responded, “I would probably say varying exceptionalities” a response that reveals her lack of familiarity with the IEP document for this particular student. Jason, the kindergarten teacher echoed these statements with one of his own, “I didn’t even know he had an IEP until we were preparing for some tests and his name just came up with a star next to it, you know. A lot of times they don’t tell us anything”. Liv, the 5th grade science coach stated that the Special Education teacher was responsible for monitoring Student A’s progress toward IEP goals and while she
expressed familiarity with accommodations on the IEP these were only in relation to
testing, “I’ve noticed that students with an IEP have accommodations where the person
in charge of Special Ed. (Special Education teacher or Resource teacher) read the test to
them, that kind of helps in Science”. Not surprisingly Jason said he did not monitor
progress toward goals on the IEP for the student with a disability. When asked who did
he replied, “I would assume the homeroom teacher did” and Penelope, the math teacher,
confessed to not reviewing Student A’s IEP because she does not like to “pass judgment
on any child, I like to give them a chance”. It is important to note that whatever
knowledge or awareness is exhibited is done so only in relation to state assessments.

On the opposite end of the continuum, some teacher participants revealed a strong
use of data to inform instruction for both Student A and Student B. When asked what she
does to help students (both A and B) meet curriculum goals Liv responded, “Within the
assessment I disaggregate the data for mastery. If they didn’t master I have a primary
and secondary benchmark, the secondary benchmark is for remediation. So I know that if
he didn’t get this one I need to do something else.” In fact when asked what they did to
monitor Student B’s progress three of the six teachers shared their cycle of assessment,
data, remediation and reassessment. Jason, Tatiana and Penelope had difficulty getting
Student B to complete assignments and assessments.

**Collaboration with staff.** In the third category, codable units within each of the
interviews were used to rate teacher participants on their collaboration with staff,
specifically special education teachers and/or colleagues, distribution of responsibility in
regards to identified students and whether or not they valued such collaboration.
Overall collaboration with staff in relation to Student A was varied. Jason revealed no communication with the Special Education teacher in reference to Student A, he was not aware of the students eligibility status until midway through the academic year and he had never been invited to participate in Student A’s IEP meetings. Other teachers depended so much on the support provided to them by the Special Education teacher that they disassociated themselves completely from any instructional responsibility with Student A. When asked about the work Student A did on the days the Special Education teacher did not pull him Tatiana responded, “What I would do with him, because I’m not trained to really...with the strategies that he really need, I would put him on a program that was on his level, on the computer. Star Fall something of that nature”. Rather than provide one on one instruction to the student with a disability or include them in whole class instruction he is put on the computer to work independently on a random language activity. Liv described collaboration with the Special Education teacher as “useful” because the pull out of Student A from her class allowed her to complete a lesson. She also added that if the Special Education teacher was able to facilitate testing and “the student passed the tests that means she was useful”.

Collaboration with Staff regarding Student B usually translated to instances involving the special education referral process. Very few teachers reached out for support with Student B and when they did so it was solely to address behavioral concerns. Tatiana reported little to no support from other teachers in regards to Student B. She mentioned that she was strongly discouraged from reaching out to Student B’s previous teacher(s) because usually their response to her concern was that they had the same thing happen to them with Student B the year before. She admitted that these
situations upset her because these teachers did not take the necessary action to get this child additional support, “the teachers that I work with, know there is a problem, but they don’t write up the SST, don’t conference with the parent, and just let it go passing the child with a failing grade”. In other words, Tatiana did not seek support or advice from Student B’s previous teachers because on occasions she would find out that the previous teacher had similar concerns yet they had not brought it to the attention of the RtI team or begun special education referral process instead they promoted the child.

Collaboration with assistants. The Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991) included a fourth category, collaboration with assistants, to include volunteers and student teachers. However none of the teachers who participated in the interviews had volunteers or student teachers who provided support for the identified students.

Collaboration with parents. The final category, Collaboration with Parents, scored teacher participants using codable units that reflected their beliefs on parent’s role in reference to the identified students program and their own responsibility communicating and collaborating with parents. Sadly many of the teachers interviewed saw parents as part of the identified student’s problem, interfering, neglectful or having nothing to contribute. On the Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991), collaboration with parents, defined statements that do not appear to respect parent’s knowledge and role in supporting the child’s learning as a perspective that is pathognomonic. Seeing parents as part of the problem, interfering, neglectful or having nothing to contribute are examples of statements (codable units) that would be considered pathognomonic. Included in these set of examples were codable units where teachers describe parents as victims of their situations. These examples described parents as
helpless, almost victims, of their limited education, their cultural background, their language background and their personal history with teachers and schools. When discussing teachers' collaboration with the parents of identified students, all six teachers described a parent they viewed as a helpless whether or not they were describing Student A or Student B. One teacher, Aaliyah, reached out to parents to share positive news in reference to both Student A and Student B and four teachers stated that they only reached out to parents when a students’ behavior or academics was concerning.

Sarah described Student A and Student B as students who she had worked with closely throughout the year as a science coach but she explained that as a science coach her level of involvement with the student and the family was not comparable to that of the classroom teacher however this did not stop her from sharing her frustration with parents at her school. She believed many of the children’s parents at her school discouraged their child from succeeding, “a lot of the times it’s Mommy, Daddy, Grandma telling students ‘they can’t’, I think maybe they are geared towards discouraging their child because they themselves were unable to achieve and possibly for the same reasons, their parents thought they couldn’t. It is just a cycle, a mental thought cycle. No one is really poor, there is a saying passing on opportunity repeatedly (P.O.O.R.)...opportunities are there you just have to take advantage of them”. This statement is an example of the teacher’s negative attitudes towards parents as well as her belief that poor communities/individuals do not exist rather it is communities/individuals that pass up opportunity (i.e. the myth of meritocracy).

Jason believed that it was parents lack of agency which resulted on inadequate or nonexistent support services for their identified student(s), “I mean I think it’s her
responsibility to really keep asking the school what’s going on, you know like we would tell her, ‘go to the office and go to the principal and ask why is his plan no being implemented...why does he not have the accommodations because we (teachers) are asking the same questions, but if you aren’t putting pressure then there is very little we can do’. He did not realize he was blaming the parent for their inability to advocate. He did not consider this may be a skill she needed, he assumed that this was a skill she should have.
Chapter 5: Discussion

This study has been the second to apply the MES in research since the instrument’s development and validation by Guyton and Wesche (2005). The first study, Nadelson and colleagues (2012), used the MES to examine pre-service teachers multicultural attitudes towards diversity and multicultural efficacy in relation to personal characteristics such as race, gender, language, political ideology, religion and spoken and college level coursework in multicultural education. Similar to the previous studies this study analyzed the self-reported multicultural efficacy of participants using the MES and examined their experiences with diversity, attitudes towards diversity and multicultural efficacy. Unlike the previous studies (Guyton & Wesche, 2005; Nadelson et al., 2012) this study sampled practicing teachers instead of pre service teachers and explored the epistemological beliefs of a select six practicing teachers using qualitative interview methods. Initial MES scores were used to select interview participants and informed a deeper exploration of participants’ beliefs within the context of an RTI framework.

Teachers’ Multicultural Self Efficacy

Previous studies examining the multicultural self-efficacy beliefs of teachers (Guyton & Wesch, 2005; Nadelson et al, 2012) reported high-average level of attitudes towards diversity and average levels of multicultural efficacy even when taking personal characteristics into consideration. Nadelson et al. (2012) explained their findings as resulting from increased attention teacher training programs have placed on multicultural education and perspectives and the increased diversity in the media and society in general. The practicing teachers in this study held attitudes towards to diversity and levels
of multicultural efficacy that were very similar to the ones found by Nadelson et al., (2012). The finding was expected even though the sampled group of teachers (who were culturally diverse) was unlike those sampled in prior studies (Guyton & Wesch, 2005; Nadelson et al, 2012) because research literature on the multicultural perspectives of student teachers has reported that student teachers who are themselves culturally and linguistically diverse have an increased commitment teaching issues of social justice (Rios & Montecion, 1999, 2006) as well as an awareness and knowledge of multicultural issues and perspectives ( Ladson-Billings, 1991). Such findings would lead me to expect the CLD teachers in this study to self-report as efficacious in regards to multicultural topics.

Unlike previous studies, I included Subscale A, Experiences with Diversity, in my analysis because preliminary analyses revealed differences between Black and Hispanic teachers’ scores on this subscale. Specifically, Black teachers scored significantly lower than Hispanic teachers in relation to experiences with diversity growing up in the ANOVA. A possible reason as to why the Black teachers in this study reported less experiences with diversity than Hispanic teachers in our sample is the racial/cultural segregation experienced by blacks across the nation but specifically those living in metropolitan areas. Massey (2004) reported that in the year 2000 a majority of blacks who lived in metropolitan areas did so under conditions of segregation (Massey, 2004). Braddock and Gonzalez (2010) reported that experiencing early racial segregation predicted self-segregation in adulthood supporting perpetuation theory and possibly explaining the continued racial isolation of faculty and staff in racially segregated schools/communities. Participants in this study represented 16 schools drawn from a pool
of schools located in communities known to have high proportions of culturally and linguistically diverse students, specifically a large proportion of students who identify as Black non-Hispanic. In fact, an investigation of re-segregation of school districts since the late 1980’s revealed that the school district in which the study took place was dually represented amongst districts with largest increases of White exposure to Hispanics (or Latinos) and amongst the districts with the lowest Black exposure to Whites (Frankenberg & Lee, 2002).

The multiple regression analysis conducted using Subscale A, Experiences with Diversity, as the dependent variable also revealed differences between teachers with degrees outside the field of education and teachers with degrees in the education field. More specifically teachers with degrees outside the field of education scored significantly higher in relation to their experiences with diversity than the teachers with degrees in the field of education. This finding was surprising as it demonstrates that non-traditionally trained teachers report more experiences with diversity than traditionally trained teachers. Explanation for these findings is not conclusive for several reasons, first demographic data did not make a clear distinction between the teachers highest level of education. Some of the teachers who had entered the field through non-traditional certification routes and had undergraduate degrees outside the field of education went on to obtain graduate degrees in education. This was specifically the case for several of the teachers who were part of Teach for America Corps who had been disbursed throughout the 16 target schools sampled for this study. Second the questions in the section of the MES specifically ask participants to report on their experiences with diversity growing up.
making it very difficult to conclude that participants used experiences from their training program (traditional or non-traditional) to answer these questions.

The first research question examined the effect of demographic and teaching variables on teachers Multicultural Efficacy Scale scores. Demographic and teaching variables did not predict teachers’ scores on the composite scale score. When each subscale score was examined individually neither Subscale B nor Subscale C scores could be predicted by demographic or teaching variables. Participants multicultural perspectives, as measured by the MES were not influenced by participants’ unique demographic characteristics or individual differences related to teaching experiences. This finding was also consistent with that of Nadelson and colleagues (2012). However it was inconsistent with previous research in which multicultural perspectives were associated with gender (Pettus & Allain, 1999) and race/ethnicity (Kyles & Olafson, 2008). It is possible, as Nadelson and colleagues (2012) rationalized, that an increased focus on issues of cultural diversity in teacher training programs and society as whole have influenced more positive multicultural perspectives reducing the influence of demographic variables.

The second research question called for an examination of the three scales that composed the MES. The analysis revealed that increased experiences with diversity (Subscale A) were likely to result in more positive attitudes towards diversity (Subscale B). This was surprising as previous research (Nadelson, 2012) did not find a relationship between the two subscales. This study also found that teachers’ attitudes towards diversity were related to their multicultural efficacy a finding that was also in disagreement with that of Nadelson et al., (2012). It is possible that the increased
exposure to diversity issues in teacher preparation programs, provided previously by Nadelson et al. (2012), could also explain to this finding. However, there are several other possible explanations for these findings. One possible explanation for these findings is that practicing teachers in this study differed in regards to their experiences with diversity. These differences mostly likely impacted the analysis as a distinction related to participants’ experiences with diversity was more apparent. In addition practicing teachers in this study self-reported experiences with diversity that align well with the historical segregation of the communities in which they taught and this may have influenced their attitudes towards diversity and multicultural efficacy. Another possible explanation is that my sample had a restricted range of participants that differed demographically from those in the previous study (Nadelson, 2012). Not only were they practicing teachers instead of pre-service teachers but they were composed primarily of ethnic minorities teaching in highly segregated ethnic enclaves in minority-majority schools.

**Teachers Perceptions of Students with and without Disabilities**

The second part of this study asked teachers to differentiate their perspectives between two students, Student A and Student B. Responses to the interview questions were scored deductively and these scores were used to answer the third research question. However deductive coding of the teacher interviews revealed that the 5 of the 6 teachers held perspectives of ability/disability that were rooted in deficit and pathology (pathognomonic). These findings led me to review the interview responses in aggregate and report emergent themes. An interpretation of the interview data revealed themes specific to Student A and Student B as well as overlapping themes that encompassed both
students. Interpretations of the interview data differentiate between Student A and Student B to distinguish between post label and pre-referral issues within an RTI framework.

**Special education label.** The six teacher participants were asked to identify Student A as a student whom they taught or worked with closely that was eligible for Special Education services, had a documented disability and a corresponding IEP. Five of the six teachers identified a student receiving services under the category of Other Health Impairment (OHI) specifically for Attention Deficit/Hyperactivity Disorder (ADHD).

**Programming, supports and compliance.** Early in the interviews all of the teachers were asked to share how Student A came to their attention, how they became familiar with Student A’s needs, what (if any changes) they made to their instruction to support Student A’s access to the curriculum and how they tracked Student A’s progress. Five of the six teachers shared that they had little to no knowledge of the programming needs specific to their respective Student A. Most teachers stated they had never read Student A’s IEP. However, one frequent reference was made to testing accommodations for Student A. These accommodations were found in the IEP. This heightened focus on testing over the instructional programming needs of students with disabilities is indicative of a conflict described as Campbell’s Law. According to Nichols and Berliner (2008) Campbell’s Law states “the more any quantitative social indicator is used for social decision making the more subject it will be to corruption pressures and the more apt it will be to distort and corrupt the social processes it was intended to monitor” (pp. 672) In the context of this study Campbell’s Law might explain the impact of high stakes testing on the intended goals of IDEA. Compliance within the high stakes testing culture may
have distorted the IEP process so that teachers in this study were removed from its intended goal of providing access to the general curriculum in accordance with individualized needs and focused more on providing the appropriate testing accommodations. In addition, all six interview participants were general education teachers and five of the six teachers shifted accountability for the instruction of Student A to a Special Education teacher or a Resource Teacher. Such a response is reflective of the continued divide between general education and special education (Cavendish & Espinosa, 2013) and it is inconsistent with one of the foundational beliefs espoused by the PS/RtI model designed by the district, “every student is every one’s responsibility” (MDCPS, p. 3).

**No label, little supports.** Teacher participants also identified a student who was not eligible for Special Education services but presented either academic or behavior concerns as Student B. Without the programming supports available via special education (for Student A), Student B was perceived to have few instructional supports or accommodations available, even within the context of RtI. Teachers specifically stated that Student B’s special education ineligibility made it “nearly impossible” for them to provide support services. Instead, progress monitoring for Student B revealed a cycle of standardized assessment and remediation. Teachers collected significant amounts of student data from standardized assessments and curriculum based measures in accordance to foundational tenets linked to RtI, however there was little problem solving to address students individual needs. Instead of reflecting on the appropriateness of instruction/intervention students were tested and remediated using the same tools, interventions and instructional strategies. Again the process, this time in the case in
which RtI was intended to increase instructional quality and supports, resulted in rote compliance.

**Deficit perspectives.** No patterns emerged between teachers’ multicultural self-efficacy and their epistemological beliefs of ability and disability. When comparing teachers on either end of the MES continuum similarities outweighed the differences. Most held pathognomonic views of ability and disability, difficulty with behavior management, limited knowledge of the program needs of students with disabilities and deficit views of students’ culture.

While the practicing teachers in the study self-reported high average MES scores their perspectives of ability and disability suggested inconsistent references to a child who presented academic or behavioral challenges (Student A or B) as even the teachers with the highest levels of multicultural efficacy resorted to expressions of deficit attitudes (e.g. *its parents responsibility to ensure that their child is clean, loved and encouraged at home. Most of the children I teach have none of that*). Teachers’ responses to interview questions identified them as predominantly pathognomonic suggesting that they attributed students’ academic/behavior difficulties to intrinsic factors. There was a pervasive reference to cultural deficit embedded in discussions for both Student A and Student B. Teachers described parents of both learners as deficient and victims of their cultural background, limited English language proficiency and poverty. Aaliyah described working with Student A’s mother as “pointless” mainly because could not help with homework because “*she doesn’t know how to read and doesn’t care much about the value of reading*” When asked what types of supports she felt Student B would benefit from Tatiana said that removal from his home would be the best alternative because
“a lot of these children are going through this because of their environment” This deficit perspective was used specifically when teachers discussed their collaboration with parents which contradicts findings from Part 1 of the study that suggest that teachers’ average to high levels of multicultural efficacy resulted from an increased understanding and awareness of culture.

**Focus on behavior vs academic needs.** Teachers shared frustration in regards to behavior management for both Student A and Student B. When Student A was concerned teachers were hyper aware of the students use of medication. Five of the six students who had been identified as Student A were receiving medication to manage their behavior. Four of the six teachers shared concerns regarding parents’ inconsistent administration of the medication and these same teachers shared negative feelings regarding inconsistencies in medication. This is not surprising considering recent studies have reported that teachers not only feel unprepared to meet the academic needs of children who exhibit difficulties with attention/behavior (Belke, 2004; Westling, 2010) it is unlikely that they will receive meaningful training that will aide them in addressing the needs of students with ADHD (Martinussen, Tannock & Chaban, 2012).

Student B received no behavior supports outside of an inconsistent use of tangible reinforcers, (e.g. “I always made him the line leader”) the promise of long term rewards (e.g. “Oh your birthday is coming up if you want a gift, you need to do your work”) and empty praise unrelated to the students’ actual performance (e.g. “I would say you are a really fast runner, even if he was really slow, just to make him feel like he could...or just reiterating you’re so smart”). Again this was in direct contrast to the district’s published protocol for the behavior specific component of RtI, RtIB which describes a tiered system
of behavior supports consisting of explicit instruction of expected behaviors, engaging and rigorous instruction, and inclusion of families as educational partners” (MDCPS, pg. 3).

In spite of a need for more effective behavior management strategies all six teachers shared information regarding Student B’s personal lives that is worth noting. Student B in five of the six cases was experiencing some type of turmoil at home, “mom is not around, she lost custody, dad has full custody (Sarah),…the student and his siblings were removed from the mother by DCF during school hours (Penelope)…mom lost custody of her and her other six kids due to domestic violence (Jason)…she has a mom who is unstable, who comes in and out of her life, she is one of eleven (Aaliyah)…he watched his mother fight the boyfriend, DCF was called (Tatiana). Several of the teachers expressed a need for increased social emotional supports in their schools in general but especially for the students mentioned above as they seemed to be manifesting their frustration in ways that were negatively impacting their schooling. While I do not think that the circumstances justify or explain ineffective behavior management strategies I do believe that the teachers in this study felt that their schools were under resourced in regards to social emotional supports and this should not be ignored.

Limitations

There were some notable limitations to this study. Assessing multicultural perspectives through the use of the MES alone likely resulted in a superficial examination of the construct of multicultural efficacy as most participants positively self-reported.
Instead interview questions which targeted teachers’ multicultural perspectives would have allowed for the critical examination of the construct of multicultural efficacy. Additionally Part 2 of the study would have benefited from a larger sample of interview participants by increasing the depth of the qualitative data providing more insight into teachers’ instructional practices in the context of RtI. Third, although the recruitment of teacher participants for this study was purposeful it limited the generalizability of the study to racially segregated urban school districts therefore confirmation of any trends and patterns would have to include a similar group of teacher participants. Lastly, changes to the methodology in future studies could examine the differences between participants using a purposively sampling method similar to the one used in this dissertation study. The purposive sampling method used to select Part 2 participants used the best fit line to draw cases of outliers. These cases differed greatly from their own individual predicted MES score not necessarily from one another. It would be beneficial to instead compare participants who differed greatly from their predicted MES score (outliers) and those who scored closely to their predicted MES score as this would provide the research with more information regarding participants’ responses.

Implications for Practice

Rather than drawing conclusions which suggest that increased exposure to diversity in our schools and society may be improving our awareness of multicultural issues, the findings from this study support two primary recommendations followed by additional recommendations. Two primary recommendations include: 1) addressing gaps in teacher training programs that specifically address diversity in ways that increase cultural competence amongst education professionals and university training programs
and 2) bridging the divide between special education and general education by increasing collaboration between special education and general education. Additional recommendations include focusing on meaningful compliance of IDEA and RtI and embedding all aspects of teaching with practices that are culturally responsive.

Milner (2010) pulls from recent literature to outline five critical concepts that in diversity education for student teachers; 1) colorblindness, 2) cultural conflict, 3) myth of meritocracy and 4) deficit perspectives of children and adults 5). Assertions associated which each of these concepts include “If I acknowledge the racial, or ethnic background of my students or myself, then I may be considered racists” (colorblindness), I must teach students based on how I teach my own biological children or based on how I was taught as a student, not based on my students cultural ways of knowing and experiencing the world” (cultural conflict), “All groups of people were born with the same opportunities”(myth of meritocracy) “I am being sensitive to culturally and linguistically diverse students when I feel sorry for them” (deficit perspectives) and “Those poor student students cannot meet high expectations because they do not have the resources to do so” (expectations). Five of the six teachers in this study expressed one or more assertions very similar to ones mentioned above. Explicitly addressing the assertions teachers may sometimes enter education with may help create a more culturally competent teaching force (Milner, 2010).

Culturally responsive instruction is believed to be at the heart of improved academic outcomes for CLD students (Klingner & Edwards, 2006) and is believed by many to be the key to effective teaching in diverse settings (Heath, 1983; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Milner, 2010) because it addresses the gaps in teacher knowledge
regarding culture that could possibly be fueling the development of biased beliefs and expectations. Culturally responsive pedagogy and culturally responsive instruction was introduced as a response to cultural deficit paradigms that reinforced many stereotypes and bias of CLD learners (Gay, 2012). Gay (2002) emphasized that “teaching is contextual and situational process. As such, it is most effective when ecological factors, such as prior experiences, community settings, cultural backgrounds and ethnic identities of teachers and students are included in its implementation” (p.21). Therefore, a culturally responsive pedagogue creates linkages between instructional content and students lived experiences (Villegas, 1991; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Cavendish and Espinosa (2013) addressed the need for improved collaboration between special education and general education in teacher training programs and schools as the implementation of RtI has only exacerbated the pedagogical divide between the two camps. New challenges in defining roles and responsibilities for instruction and intervention delivery push us to reexamine notions that the needs of struggling learners can only be met in special education settings and demand increased collaboration between professionals (Cavendish & Espinosa, 2013) necessary for the successful implementation of RtI (Nellis, 2012).

It is also important to consider meaningful compliance with IDEA and RtI. If teachers in inclusive settings are unable to monitor progress toward IEP goals or reflect on the effectiveness of their instruction through the use of RtI their compliance with both these mandates is meaningless and may potentially hinder the academic outcomes of students who present academic or behavioral difficulties whether or not they have a label. Meaningful implementation and compliance with IDEA and RtI must also take culture in
consideration if these mandates truly intend to address the issue of disproportionality in special education.
Table 1.

*Total Number of Grade Level Teachers at Differentiated Support (RtI) Elementary Schools in Miami Dade County Reported by Schools Historical Profile (2006-2007)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Elementary School Name</th>
<th>Teachers PreK-5</th>
<th>Estimated Total</th>
<th>Target N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Arcola Lakes Elementary School</td>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Colonial Drive Elementary School</td>
<td>24</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comstock Elementary School</td>
<td>61</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethel Beckford/Richmond Elementary School</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frederick Douglass Elementary School</td>
<td>45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Golden Glades Elementary School</td>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Holmes Elementary School</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jesse J. McCrary Elementary School</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kelsey L. Pharr Elementary School</td>
<td>33</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Laura C. Sanders Elementary School</td>
<td>74</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leonora B. Smith Elementary School</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liberty City Elementary School</td>
<td>27</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nathan B. Young Elementary School</td>
<td>39</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Olinda Elementary School</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Orchard Villa Elementary School</td>
<td>41</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Phyllis Wheatley Elementary School</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pine Villa Elementary School</td>
<td>56</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>West Homestead Elementary School</td>
<td>66</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Benjamin Franklin K-8 Center</td>
<td>48</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charles Drew K-8 Center</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coconut Palm K-8 Center</td>
<td>44</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Edison Park K-8 Center</td>
<td>47</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henry Mack/West Little River K-8 Center</td>
<td>35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mandarin Lakes K-8 Center</td>
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<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>North County K-8 Center</td>
<td>31</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Total</td>
<td>994</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

μ 43.21 1080 648

*Note:* Total and μ computed from a total of 23 schools who had available data on district website.
Table 2.

**Part 1 Participant Demographics (N=115)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>District</th>
<th>% White</th>
<th>% Black</th>
<th>% Hispanic</th>
<th>% Native American/Asian</th>
<th>% Male</th>
<th>% Female</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Target Schools (25)</td>
<td>26.7</td>
<td>26.1</td>
<td>45.6</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Participating Schools (16)</td>
<td>21.5</td>
<td>48.9</td>
<td>27.2</td>
<td>2.4</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>85</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Final Sample</td>
<td>20.5</td>
<td>49.7</td>
<td>27.1</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>16.2</td>
<td>83.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: District and School Data was pulled from 2006-2007 Historical Profile*

Table 3.

**Part 2 Participant Demographics (N=6)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>Gender</th>
<th>Race/Ethnicity</th>
<th>Highest Degree Level</th>
<th>Certifications/Endorsements</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Undergrad- Education</td>
<td>ELL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liv</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>Black (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>Graduate- Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatiana</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>Graduate- Education</td>
<td>ELL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penelope</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>Black (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>Graduate- Education</td>
<td>ELL/SPED</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason</td>
<td>male</td>
<td>Black (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>Undergrad- non Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaliyah</td>
<td>female</td>
<td>Black (non-Hispanic)</td>
<td>Graduate- Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.

**Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES) Descriptive Statistics**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean</th>
<th>Standard Deviation</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>A Total</td>
<td>21.09</td>
<td>4.37</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>B Total</td>
<td>24.41</td>
<td>2.97</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>C Total</td>
<td>64.77</td>
<td>10.60</td>
<td>115</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Composite</td>
<td>110.27</td>
<td>12.74</td>
<td>114</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 5.

*Correlations Between Subscales*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Experiences with Diversity (A)</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2. Multicultural Attitudes (B)</td>
<td>.206*</td>
<td>-</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3. Multicultural Efficacy (C)</td>
<td>0.046</td>
<td>.202*</td>
<td>-</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Correlation is significant at the *p* < .05 level (2-tailed)*

Table 6.

*Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Related to Teachers Experiences with Diversity – Subscale A (N = 109)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE (b)</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>0.73</td>
<td>1.11</td>
<td>0.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Black</td>
<td>-1.5</td>
<td>1.15</td>
<td>-0.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>1.41</td>
<td>1.27</td>
<td>0.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Degree type</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outside_Edu</td>
<td>-2.32</td>
<td>0.92</td>
<td>-0.23</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Adjusted $R^2$ : 0.095

$R^2$ : 0.095

*Note: Race Ethnicity was represented by two dummy variables with White serving as the reference group. Degree type was represented by two variables with degree in Education Field as the reference group.*

*p < .05.  **p < .01.
Table 7.

*Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Related to Teachers Multicultural Attitudes – Subscale B (N = 108)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE (b)</th>
<th>B</th>
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</thead>
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<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
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<td>Hispanic</td>
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<td>0.86</td>
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<td>Degree type</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>Outside_Edu</td>
<td>-0.064</td>
<td>0.62</td>
<td>-0.01</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjusted $R^2$</td>
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<td></td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>0.02</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* Race Ethnicity was represented by two dummy variables with White serving as the reference group. Degree type was represented by two variables with degree in Education Field as the reference group.

*p < .05. **p < .01.
Table 8.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>B</th>
<th>SE (b)</th>
<th>B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Gender</td>
<td>-3.5</td>
<td>2.7</td>
<td>-0.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Race/Ethnicity</td>
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<td>3.1</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degree type</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
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<tr>
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<td>$R^2$</td>
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<td></td>
<td>0.03</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Race Ethnicity was represented by two dummy variables with White serving as the reference group. Degree type was represented by two variables with degree in Education Field as the reference group.

*p < .05. **p < .01.
Table 9.

*Summary of Regression Analysis for Variables Related to Teachers Composite MES Score (N = 108)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Variable</th>
<th>$B$</th>
<th>$SE (b)$</th>
<th>$B$</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic</td>
<td>-2.03</td>
<td>3.73</td>
<td>-0.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>Degree type</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
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<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$R^2$</td>
<td>0.02</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Race Ethnicity was represented by two dummy variables with White serving as the reference group. Degree type was represented by two variables with degree in Education Field as the reference group.*

*p < .05. **p < .01.*

Table 10.

*Part 2 Participant Scores (MES and P-I Interview)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Participant</th>
<th>MES</th>
<th>P-I Rating: Student A</th>
<th>P-I Rating: Student B</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sarah</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.125</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Liv</td>
<td>91</td>
<td>1.16</td>
<td>1.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tatiana</td>
<td>122</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Penelope</td>
<td>129</td>
<td>1.46</td>
<td>1.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jason</td>
<td>104</td>
<td>1.35</td>
<td>1.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Aaliyah</td>
<td>89</td>
<td>2.75</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: MES score reflects composite score*
Appendix A

Multicultural Efficacy Scale from Guyton & Wesche (2005)

DIRECTIONS:

Step 1: Demographic Information

Complete the demographic information. This information is necessary to the research study, and it will be kept strictly confidential.

Step 2: Item and Response Selection

Using your mouse select the response that best describes you.

TO THE RESPONDER: The demographic information requested below is necessary for the research process. Please be assured that this information and all of your responses on this instrument will be kept strictly confidential. Data will be reported in such a way that identification of individuals will be impossible. Once all data is collected participant names will be removed from data.

Name (last, first): _______________________________________________________________

Email :_______________________________________________________________________

Gender (Check One): □ Male □ Female

Age (Check One)
□ 18-25
□ 26-34
□ 35-54
□ 55-64
□ 65 and older

Birthplace: City ____________________________ State/Province _______________

Country
______________________________________________________________________
Highest Degree Completed (check one)

In Education, Teaching and Learning or Curriculum
☐ B.A. or B.S  ☐ M.S., M.A. or M.Ed,  ☐ Specialist, ☐ Ed.D or Ph.D

In other academic field
☐ B.A. or B.S  ☐ M.S., M.A. or M.Ed  ☐ Ed.D or Ph.D

Years Teaching:
☐ 0-3 years
☐ 4-6 years
☐ 7-9 years
☐ 10 or more years

Certifications/Endorsements

Select one: Are you Special Education Certified  ☐ yes ☐ no
Select one: Do you have ESOL endorsement  ☐ yes ☐ no

Racial Background:
☐ White
☐ African America/Black
☐ Asian
☐ Native America/Alaskan Native
☐ Pacific Islander/ Hawaiian Native
☐ Some other race (not including Hispanic)
☐ Two or more races

Are you Hispanic?
☐ Yes
☐ No

Approximate Socio-Economic Status (Please Check One in Each Column)

Corresponding Annual Household Income

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>As a Child</th>
<th>As an Adult (Current)</th>
<th>Corresponding</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Annual</td>
<td></td>
<td>$0–$19,999</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>Lower</td>
<td>$20,000–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lower Middle</td>
<td>Lower Middle</td>
<td>$40,000–</td>
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<tr>
<td>$39,999</td>
<td>Middle</td>
<td>$60,000–</td>
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<tr>
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<td>Upper</td>
<td>$80,000+</td>
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<tr>
<td>$59,999</td>
<td>Upper Middle</td>
<td>$80,000+</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$79,999</td>
<td>Upper</td>
<td>$80,000+</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Section A

Definition: The authors intend the terms “diversity” and “people different from me” to include people of different races, ethnic groups, cultures, religions and socio-economic classes.

Directions: Please choose the word that best describes your experience with people different from you by filling in the corresponding oval on your NCS answer sheet.

1) As a child, I played with people different from me.
   A) never B) rarely C) occasionally D) frequently

2) I went to school with diverse students as a teenager.
   A) never B) rarely C) occasionally D) frequently

3) Diverse people lived in my neighborhood when I was a child growing up.
   A) never B) rarely C) occasionally D) frequently

4) In the past I chose to read books about people different from me.
   A) never B) rarely C) occasionally D) frequently

5) A diverse person was one of my role models when I was younger.
   A) never B) rarely C) occasionally D) frequently

6) In the past I chose to watch TV shows and movies about people different from me.
   A) never B) rarely C) occasionally D) frequently

7) As a teenager, I was on the same team and/or club with diverse students.
   A) never B) rarely C) occasionally D) frequently

Section B

Directions: Respond to each statement by choosing one answer that best describes your reaction to it. Since we are simply trying to get an accurate sense of your opinions on these matters, there are no right or wrong answers.

Key: A) agree strongly B) agree somewhat C) disagree somewhat D) disagree strongly

8) Teachers should adapt lesson plans to reflect the different cultures represented in the classroom.
   A) agree strongly B) agree somewhat C) disagree somewhat D) disagree strongly

9) Teachers should provide opportunities for children to share cultural differences in foods, dress, family life, and beliefs.
A) agree strongly  B) agree somewhat  C) disagree somewhat  D) disagree strongly

10) Discussing ethnic traditions and beliefs in school leads to disunity and arguments between students from different cultures.
A) agree strongly  B) agree somewhat  C) disagree somewhat  D) disagree strongly

11) Children should be taught mostly by teachers of their own ethnic and cultural background.
A) agree strongly  B) agree somewhat  C) disagree somewhat  D) disagree strongly

12) It is essential to include the perspectives of diverse groups while teaching things about American history that are common to all Americans.
A) agree strongly  B) agree somewhat  C) disagree somewhat  D) disagree strongly

13) Curricula and textbooks should include the contributions of most, if not all, cultural groups in our society.
A) agree strongly  B) agree somewhat  C) disagree somewhat  D) disagree strongly

14) The classroom library should reflect the racial and cultural differences in the class.
A) agree strongly  B) agree somewhat  C) disagree somewhat  D) disagree strongly

Section C

Directions: To the best of your knowledge, self-assess your own ability to do the various items listed below.

Key:  A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
      B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
      C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
      D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

15) I can provide instructional activities to help students to develop strategies for dealing with racial confrontations.
A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

16) I can adapt instructional methods to meet the needs of learners from diverse groups.
A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

17) I can develop materials appropriate for the multicultural classroom.
A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

18) I can develop instructional methods that dispel myths about diverse groups.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

19) I can analyze instructional materials for potential stereotypical and/or prejudicial content.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

20) I can help students to examine their own prejudices.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

21) I can present diverse groups in our society in a manner that will build mutual respect.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

22) I can develop activities that increase the self-confidence of diverse students.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

23) I can provide instruction showing how prejudice affects individuals.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

24) I can plan instructional activities to reduce prejudice toward diverse groups.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.
25) I can identify cultural biases in commercial materials used in teaching.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

26) I can help students work through problem situations caused by stereotypical and/or prejudicial attitudes.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

27) I can get students from diverse groups to work together.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

28) I can identify school practices that may harm diverse students.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

29) I can identify solutions to problems that may arise as the result of diversity.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

30) I can identify the societal forces which influence opportunities for diverse people.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

31) I can identify ways in which various groups contribute to our pluralistic society.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.
32) I can help students take on the perspective of ethnic and cultural groups different from their own.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

33) I can help students view history and current events from diverse perspectives.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

34) I can involve students in making decisions and clarifying their values regarding multicultural issues.
   A = I do not believe I could do this very well.
   B = I could probably do this if I had to, but it would be difficult for me.
   C = I believe that I could do this reasonably well, if I had time to prepare.
   D = I am quite confident that this would be easy for me to do.

Note: The following item is different from the others in this section.

35) Choose the position which most closely reflects your strongest beliefs about teaching:

   A = If every individual learned to accept and work with every other person, then there would be no intercultural problems.

   B = If all groups could be helped to contribute to the general good and not seek special recognition, we could create a unified America.

   C = All cultural groups are entitled to maintain their own identity.

   D = All cultural groups should be recognized for their strengths and contribution
Appendix B

Pathognomonic-Interventionist Interview adapted from Wilson and Silverman (1991)

Interview Protocol

P-I TEACHER INTERVIEW

Teacher ____________________  Interviewer _____________________

School _____________________

Date of interview ______________

Introduction:

Today I'd like to talk about a couple of your students. We will trace your experiences with them from the point that you first learned that they would be in your class to the present time. I will ask you about what happened over the past year with these students, your opinions about what happened, and the reasons you have for making the decisions and taking the actions that you did. There aren't any right or wrong answers – we are just interested in your experiences and your perspectives about these students.

First I would like you to select a couple of students from your class list for us to talk about. Would you pick one who might be recognized as having special needs, who is working from an IEP, and perhaps has had a number of special education provisions put in place. The second student is one about whom you have some concerns -, not necessarily having been formally recognized as exceptional, but who is having difficulties and whom you think may not reach his or her potential.
1. Let's talk about each student in turn.

What is (student A- name)'s background? Tell me a bit about him or her. How is he/she currently doing?

2. Tell me what happened when (student A) first came to your attention.

What happened?

- What records did you check?
- What steps did you take to learn about him/her?
- Did you actively seek to familiarize yourself with him/her?
- Assessment – did you request/conduct any?
- How did you establish what entry point in the curriculum he/she was at?

What else did you do?

Who was involved?

- With whom did you confer? – parents, resource, previous teacher? – how many times? When?

Why did you do that?

- What did you hope to find out?
- Was that what you expected?
- What did you decide to do?

2a. Did you do anything special for this student in your program?

- What did you try? – why did you do that?
How did you deal with curriculum expectations?

Did you do instructional accommodations? – what did you hope he/she would achieve?

What do you think are the kinds of accommodations that (student A) needs?

Did you accommodate for other areas? – how, how often?
  - Social needs? Self concept?

2b. How do you keep track of (student A)'s progress?

Do you do anything to keep track of his/her individual progress?

*Why do you do that?* -For what purpose? How often?

Do you monitor progress on the IEP? - Who else is involved? –

3a. Do you work with any other teachers on staff? – Resource Teacher/ Special Education Teacher or interventionist? (not paraprofessional – they are next)

How does that happen? – fit with program?

Why do you do that? – can you explain how it works?

How useful did you find this for (Student A)? –

- for you – as a source of advice? Support?

Who keeps track of the IEP part of Student A’s progress?

Who else do you work with?

3b. Do you work with a paraprofessional for (student A)?
How does that happen? – fit with program?

Why do you do that? – can you explain how it works?

How useful is this for your work with student A?

What else do you do?

4. How do you work with (Student A)'s parents (guardians, family)?

When did you meet the initially? – for what purpose?

Did you or the parent initiate the meeting?

How often do you meet them now? - for what purposes?

Who initiates these meetings?

What do you see as the parents' responsibility in working with you? Why do you think that is so?

Now let's turn to (student B).

(Follow protocol from 1 to 4 – if same information, confirm similar patterns – So you do pretty much the same things for (student B) as you've described for (Student A).

How are they different?

Do you do anything individually for student B that you don't for student A? – accommodations? Expectations? Keeping track of progress? Working with other staff to implement - monitor IEP, keep track of progress?

Working with parents?)
Many thanks for taking the time to discuss these students. I hope you found the experience positive – we don't often get time to reflect on what we do.

Is there anything else you'd like to tell me about how inclusion/delivering services to students with IEP's works here?

Interviewer tips:

1. BEFORE the Interview - Get to know the delivery model and school norm in the school. Get to know the terminology used for – resource teachers, special education classes/placements, the withdrawal room, student labels if used (e.g. MID= Mild intellectual disability)

2. ALWAYS check the tape recorder, and mike are on and past the leader. Record the interviewee name, date, school and time, and your name, and rewind to check that recorder is functioning.

3. LABEL the tape as well as the tape box, with date, names school, before you leave the school.

4. DURING the interview, establish eye contact, smile, be open (Not arms folded). Relax and smile. Aim for open ended questions, lots of "why" "what made you think that…" "What were you hoping might happen?" "What did you have in mind when you did that?"

Be supportive – statements of support include empathy - e.g. "That must have been hard". "You really gave it a good shot" etc.
Appendix C

Interview Coding Form (Wilson & Silverman, 1991)

SET Project Pathognomonic-Interventionist Interview Scoring form.

Pseudoname of Child, School, Date of interview, Interviewer etc.

Coder ID. Date of coding, etc.

Codeable units are one of three types of statements:

1. Attributes to self or others characteristics such as attitude, ability, motivation, as causes to explain behaviors, achievement, learning difficulties etc.

2. Judgment statements about a student's characteristics

3. Rationalization statements about teacher's actions including reasons and explanations for the actions ('because' statements or equivalent).

Overall rating of Primary Attribution.

1. Teacher attributes cause of student's difficulties to characteristics internal to the student (ability, motivation, IQ, disability, designation/label)

2.

3. Teacher attributes student's difficulties to parental, cultural, second language and other exogenous factors.

4.
5. Teacher attributes student's difficulties to previous and/or current school and instructional factors and lack of opportunity to learn

**Overall rating of Responsibility.**

1. Teacher uses child's exceptionality designation to justify own non-involvement and exemption from responsibility.

2. 

3. Teacher accommodates student but limits it to activities associated with child's designation, not to needed functional objectives (e.g. accommodates time to learn, 'lowers expectations')

4. 

5. Teacher describes efforts to understand child's disability/difficulties and how they influence other aspects of learning. Justification/explanations of interventions seen as being own responsibility in order to meet broad set of individual student needs.

**I. ENTRY PHASE**

1. **Information about individual student:**

   **Teacher's priority for finding out about new student with a disability:**

   1. Teacher does not familiarize him/herself with the characteristics of the incoming student upon entry to the class

   2. Teacher reads/examines information routinely delivered to him/her (e.g. IEP, summary of information from previous grade)

   3. Teacher actively investigates characteristics of incoming student (e.g. OSR, IEP, Previous teachers, parents, resource teacher)
2. Formal assessment

1. Teacher understands purpose of formal assessment (psycho-educational, normative) to be to confirm student's disability category

2. Teacher vacillates between understanding assessment as confirmatory of deficit and as instructionally useful

3. Teacher expects formal assessments to uncover information that is useful for instructional planning and adaptation (e.g. learning characteristics and preferences, entry-level skills)

3. Grade level vs. functional level

1. Teacher does not identify individual student's entry point for learning but uses curriculum expectations set for the grade level

2. Teacher relies on information in the OSR or IEP information or regularly scheduled board-wide tests to identify student's entry point for learning (grade level identifiers)

3. Teacher relies on own and resource teacher's informal assessments and individual observations with formal assessment and IEP data to identify student's entry point for learning

Sub score for Section 1 = 

II PROGRAMMING.

1. Goals and Objectives
1. Teacher does not use individual goals and objectives in planning and implementing classroom instruction for the student.

2. Teacher occasionally but not systematically refers to individualized goals and objectives in relation to classroom instruction for this student

3. Teacher is systematic in incorporating individualized goals and objectives in planning for and implementing classroom instruction for this student

2. Social needs.

1. Teacher is not aware of the social/friendship needs of the student and does not do anything to assist the student to integrate socially in the class

2. Teacher is aware of the student's social needs but does not act to integrate the student socially in the class

3. Teacher believes that the social needs of the student are important and acts to integrate the student socially (e.g. arranging buddies, co-operative group roles, modeling acceptance and caring, including student in class routines and activities)

3. Accommodations.

1. Teacher understands instructional accommodations to mean "lowering expectations" (reducing quantity of work, lowering performance standards). In the case of modified objectives, teacher expects others will implement them (E.A., parents, resource or Special Education teacher)

2. Teacher makes accommodations for the student which lowers expectations but provides opportunities to work beyond the expectations
3. Teacher understands accommodations to mean maintaining curriculum expectations, and builds a variety of opportunities to learn through instructional and responding alternatives, supplemental technology, etc.

   1. Teacher judge’s student performance in relation to grade-level criteria set for total class, or grade level criteria set for modified program
   2. Teacher judges student performance by compromising between grade-level expectations and student's efforts to meet them
   3. Teacher judge’s student performance in terms of individualized achievement criteria designed in tandem with the student's IEP.

5. Formal vs. Regular reporting.
   1. Teacher believes that student's progress need only be reviewed at formal reporting times (e.g. when required to report to parents, report cards etc.)
   2. Teacher believes in ongoing monitoring of student progress, but does not do so systematically (too little time, too many to track, anecdotal records not kept up)
   3. Teacher believes that student progress needs to be regularly monitored and has a variety of ways of doing so (anecdotal records, check sheets, individual notes and communications with others)

Sub score for Section 2 =

III COLLABORATION WITH STAFF.

1. Individual vs. collaboration with Resource teacher, colleagues.
1. Teacher sees resource/special education (if student part-time in class) teacher as primarily responsible for working directly with student. Teacher does not integrate own program with others.

2. Teacher values collaboration with resource/Special Education teacher as useful and informative but does not integrate own program and expectations for this student with others.

3. Teacher values collaboration uses it to share common expectations, use resources to increase opportunity for student to achieve in class.

2. Tracking progress.

1. Teacher assumes resource teacher and/or others are keeping track of student's progress in their respective pieces of the student's program.

2. Teacher assumes resource teacher and/or others are keeping track of student's progress in their respective pieces of the student's program, and that checking in with each other is needed occasionally.

3. Teacher values frequent conferencing and planning with resource and other teachers and expects that resource will support student learning objectives in the classroom (e.g. pre-teaching vocabulary, concepts, scribing, helping with accommodations).

Sub score for Section 3 =

IV. COLLABORATION WITH ASSISTANTS. (E.A.s, volunteers, student teachers)

1. Planning and implementation.

1. Teacher views EA as primarily responsible for planning and implementing accommodations and learning objectives
2. Teacher views guiding the EA as important in designing and implementing instruction, but then leaves EA to implement.

3. Teacher views self as primarily responsible for instruction, engaging in ongoing planning, and implementation with EA.

2. Monitoring.

1. Teacher views EA as primarily responsible for monitoring student's progress, assumes that he/she will keep track and update program as needed. Checks in at formal reporting times

2. Teacher views guiding the EA as important but expects EA to monitor progress and work independently, checking in as needed.

3. Teacher expects to meet EA regularly, receive progress report and guide further development of intervention based on student progress.

Sub score for Section 4 =

V. COLLABORATION WITH PARENTS.

1. Parental roles

1. Teacher does not appear to respect parent's knowledge and role in supporting the child's learning. (E.g. sees parents as part of the problem, interfering or neglectful, having nothing to contribute).

2. Teacher values the parents' role but seldom or inconsistently draws upon it.

3. Teacher respects parent's role as a co-partner in supporting child's learning. Teacher believes that parents are part of the team and contacts them frequently.
2. Parental responsibility.

1. Teacher does not see self as responsible for involving parents beyond required reporting duties (report card times, getting signature on IEP).

2. Teacher sees self as responsible for informing parents through notes home, in student agenda, e-mails, etc. when student's performance is notable.

3. Teacher believes he/she has the responsibility to involve parents in meaningful ways that relate to the student's progress (invitations to participate in decision making, frequent meetings in school and by phone).

Sub score for Section 5 =

TOTAL SCORE:
Appendix D

Interview Coding Form with additions

I. Entry Phase
   1. Information about individual student: Teachers’ priority for finding out about a new student with a disability
   2. Formal Assessment:
      3. Grade level vs. functional level

II. Programming
   1. Goals and Objectives
   2. Social Needs
   3. Accommodations
   4. Monitoring Progress
   5. Formal vs. Regular Reporting
      i. We decided to add to code 2. Added to this code were attempts to monitor student progress using 1 additional (informal) reporting method that is not used for instructional purposes nor is used in meaningful ways to inform practice.
      ii. This question will only apply to Formal vs. Regular reporting of academic progress

III. Collaboration with Staff
   1. Individual vs. collaboration with Resource teacher/colleagues
   2. Tracking progress

IV. Collaboration with Assistants * does not include peer tutors
   1. Planning and implementation
   2. Monitoring

V. Collaboration with Parents
   1. Parental Roles: We added criteria to code 1 to include that teacher sees parents as victims of her current situation (SES, culture) or helpless/incapable of supporting child’s learning because of language barrier or own level of education/literacy
   2. Parental Responsibility: We added criteria to code 2 that replaces the word notable and reads, “Teacher sees herself as responsible for informing the parents through notes home in a student agenda, emails, etc. when students performance is notably positive or negative”
   3. Teachers may obtain a 3 if they believe that he/she has the responsibility to involve the parents in meaningful way that relate to the students’
4. progress (invitations to participate in decision making, frequent meetings or phone contact. *Even if per teacher, parent does not respond in meaningful ways to her attempts.*

- If at any point there is no documentation to support a particular score raters agreed to score as N/A (not applicable). This is very common in regards to Student B who does not have an IEP or noted accommodations.
References


