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**Cultural Classroom Competencies:
White Female Social Studies Teachers' Preparedness and Support to Interact with,
Engage, and Teach the Global Majority**

by

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Dissertation

2023

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to examine White female social studies teachers' experiences of how they were prepared to engage, interact, and teach students of the global majority. Teachers who identified as White and female and teach any social studies discipline served as the five participants for this study. Data were collected using semi-structured interviews and an online survey. The data were analyzed using the Atlas AI software to identify and record specific codes and themes within the data. Overall, the data showed that the participants were not highly prepared for the cultural diversity of the public school classrooms with students of the global majority. This study highlighted a need for more experiential learning opportunities for preservice teachers along with a foundational understanding of culture and the recognition and implementation of various pedagogical strategies such as Culturally Relevant Pedagogy, Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy for the teaching of students of the global majority.

Dedication

This dissertation is dedicated to all my students, past and present, who have impacted and shaped me as an educator. This is for all the Black girls and boys in need of a teacher who cares, understands, advocates, and teaches to and for them! This is dedicated to the Black students across the world who feel misunderstood and not seen in the academic setting—I see you, and I am you! I also dedicate this to my ancestors who preceded me; I know I am living their wildest dream! I am blessed and grateful beyond measure for their sacrifices! Lastly, this is dedicated to all the Black men and women, too many to name, that were taken from us and starved of a future full of light, joy, achievement, and so much more simply for daring to be born Black!

Acknowledgments

First and foremost, I would like to acknowledge God. It is only through Him that I can do all things.

I would like to acknowledge my parents, family, and friends. I am forever grateful for my amazing support system, for all your love, understanding, and encouragement along this journey. To my parents, Pamela and Gary Sr., thank you for always being an example of determination and hard work, you made me believe that all things are possible. I appreciate all the sacrifices you made to support my college education, and I am grateful to you for instilling in me a passion and desire for education. To my sister and brother-in-law, Akila and John, who are also fellow educators, thank you for lending a listening ear during the writing of this dissertation, inquiring about my process and progress, and cheering me on every step of the way. Next, to my brother Gary Jr., thank you for your encouragement and my niece Zoey, thank you for the love and joy you bring to my life. To my best friend Cachet, your funny and kind words were always there. Thank you for listening to my rants and believing that I could do it!

To the love of my life and the best husband, Kelby, thank you! I was able to admire and support you during your doctoral process, and being there for your experience really gave me the courage to pursue my doctoral degree. I appreciate your advice, encouragement, understanding, and unwavering support throughout this process. You were my blueprint, and I am honored to be able to spend my life with you. Snooka, even when self-doubt crept in, you were there to uplift and reassure me! Thank you for helping me see my capabilities and strength even when I could not.

I would also like to acknowledge and thank Dr. Megan Adams. You have been an amazing dissertation chair, professor, and mentor. Your feedback and guidance built my

confidence as a scholar and researcher! You were the first person I met at Kennesaw, and I instantly felt that you would become my chair—thank you! To my committee members, Dr. Ford and Dr. Rodriguez, thank you for your time and willingness to help me grow as a scholar.

Lastly, I would like to acknowledge Dr. Jim Garrett for being the first person who planted the seed of pursuing a doctorate in my mind. You told me that a doctoral degree would give me the depth and breadth I needed to think. That is the perfect description of the journey to this terminal degree.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

Background

Education in the United States has an unjust and complicated history with students who are a part of the global majority because the system was created and nurtured in Whiteness. From the conception of the United States as a country, Whiteness was the standard for who could be seen and treated as people, granted rights as citizens, and deemed worthy of being taught and learned. However, Whiteness is more than skin color: it was used to construct race, a social construct meant to divide and control, and steps should be taken to interrupt the normalized Whiteness plague within schooling (Zembylas, 2018). According to Zembylas (2018), Whiteness is described as a normalized way of being that extended to the education of students in the United States. It has become so normalized that students of the global majority must culturally assimilate to Whiteness in order to succeed academically. By having to assimilate to a way of being and thinking that is foreign to their own nature, students of the global majority are made to feel that who they authentically are—their family, their community, their language—is not enough.

Centuries following the establishment of schooling, with the passing of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision in 1954, neither equality nor equity was genuinely granted to any student who happened to not be White. With the disillusionment of the dismantling of systemic and structural racism in public education by the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, vulnerable student populations, such as students of color, poor students, etc., remain disadvantaged in the public school classroom (Ashford-Hanserd, 2020). According to Ashford-Hanserd (2020), the needs of Black students have been overlooked and ignored when creating reform and paths toward equality in education because of the myth that the *Brown v. Board of*

Education decision accomplished equality in schools. Ashford-Hanser (2020) also states, “African-American students have not experienced significant equitable access to education and upward mobility from 1954 to present” (p. 419). For almost 70 years, *Brown v. Board of Education* has remained a landmark Supreme Court decision. However, its effect on public education has not lived up to the same standard for Black students as part of the global majority.

Striking down the “separate but equal” doctrine of the time did not go as far as intentionally and explicitly telling, showing, or reviewing how to enforce such a decision. A critique of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by Onwuachi-Willig (2019) is that it caused harm by narrowly describing and defining discrimination, and a significant unintended consequence was “unchecked White privilege” (p. 347). With the court’s rapid decision and limited research to rely on, the focus became on how harmful racial discrimination was to the development of global majority students and how it caused them to feel inferior. However, no attention was given to how racial discrimination supports White superiority (Onwuachi-Willig, 2019). Onwuachi-Willig (2019) also highlighted how the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision missed an opportunity to address racism and how Whites benefit from structural racism. Thus, classrooms with students of the global majority are in schools that are part of the education system of a country that, for an extended period of time, did not recognize dark-skinned people as human beings, let alone students and learners, and even when allowed to correct this perspective with the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, the target was missed. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision failed to create long lasting, explicit paths to educational freedom and equality for students of the global majority by not acknowledging racism and eliminating legal racial discrimination. Consequently, this failure created an educational space that supports Whiteness, and other students are still unable to operate as their most authentic selves in the

learning environment. In this case, how can students of the global majority realistically measure up to a set of visible and invisible standards of school success and student achievement?

Pervasive Whiteness in schools is the foundation upon which educational opportunity and academic success are built. According to Love (2019), for students of the global majority to find their place in schools, it is necessary that “educators understand and recognize America and its schools as spaces of Whiteness, White rage, and White Supremacy, all of which function to terrorize students of color” (p. 13). The places and spaces for dark bodies (as Love [2019] refers to students of color) to feel wanted, celebrated, accepted, and given ample opportunity to learn and grow are limited in schools. Like the other authors of literature critiquing the shortcomings of the *Brown v. Board of Education* decision, Love (2019) argues that educational reforms have focused solely on the struggles and issues of dark students but have not tackled the injustice of Whiteness and its impact on education and schooling. The *Brown v. Board of Education* decision and many more subsequent decisions and educational policies have not addressed the source of dark students’ pain and suffering (Love, 2019). Indeed, a solution cannot be found and then expected to succeed if the cause of the problem is ignored. The refusal and inability of the U.S. education system to acknowledge and address Whiteness creates places and spaces where dark students are not free to be themselves (Love, 2019). Schools and classrooms should be where “dark students have to enter the classroom knowing that their full selves are celebrated” (Love, 2019, p. 120).

Abolitionist teaching is offered as a strategy to tackle the pervasive Whiteness that permeates the U.S. education system. According to Love (2019), abolitionist teaching gives educators the opportunity and tools to “examine the root causes of the educational survival complex, teaches from a place of sharp criticism of the United States of America and anti-

darkness aboard, and activism” (p. 104). The movement toward abolitionist teaching is urgent because, for centuries, what matters to and for those living in dark bodies in the United States has been muted and diluted (Love, 2019). All students, especially dark students, deserve to be valued for their ability to learn and seen for all they offer to a classroom through their language, history, experiences, sexuality, and more. Love (2019) admits that the work of abolitionist teaching is hard work, but also urges that any strong pedagogy should be; she argues that all students deserve nothing less. Students are the future, and they deserve to be taught, valued, and loved in a way that promotes justice. Abolitionist teaching should be a way through which educators understand and affirm who students are and what they bring to the table (Love, 2019). This work can be done by all teachers, especially White teachers, who make up more than 50% of the teaching profession (Love, 2019).

When dark students cannot meet the White normative standard for success and are not celebrated for being themselves, they assimilate into the culture of Whiteness to survive rather than thrive (Love, 2019). No one speaks of the unknown trauma that students of the global majority must endure as they make conscious decisions to let go of a major part of who they are by assimilating and attempting to fit in and become successful in school. According to Saleem et al. (2021), race-based stress and trauma exist. They define the phenomenon as “a frightening, dangerous, or upsetting race-based event or discrimination that causes stress, death, or a threat to the physical or psychological” (Saleem et al., p. 3). Dark students not only deal with Whiteness in school but also experience and navigate race-based events outside school. These race-based events are extra baggage that dark students must navigate in and outside school to succeed. According to Saleem et al. (2021), schools do not do enough to recognize race-based trauma as a treatable trauma. Thus, many dark students dealing with race-based trauma often go unsupported

and untreated. Again, there is a theme of awareness of the ills that affect dark students, but not enough strategy and action to fix the problem and support students. No student should be forced to compromise who they are and their life experiences in an attempt to fit into a system that never wanted them to thrive. Admitting that structural racism is explicitly and implicitly woven throughout schooling and education in the United States is the first step in acknowledging the real problem.

Problem Statement

Although race and ethnicity are only parts of a person's cultural identity, they impact their experiences, access, and educational opportunities. Therefore, if teachers are of a different race and ethnicity than many of the students they teach, they can face more challenges in finding common ground (Paris, 2012). Course curriculum and strategies rooted in culturally relevant and culturally sustaining pedagogies and practices can be implemented to discover the cultural common ground between most White teachers and non-White students (the majority) in public schools around the state and country (Paris, 2012). The current problem is that most of the teaching profession (as well as most of the incoming preservice teachers) are White and female. Therefore, their background conflicts with the knowledge, histories, languages, and experiences of the rapidly growing racially and ethnically diverse student populations in their public school classrooms (Ingersoll, 2008). In addition, teacher education programs and school districts inconsistently prepare and support teachers for the cultural diversity they will encounter. This lack of preparation and support makes it challenging for teachers to know which perspectives and behaviors they should divest themselves of and which they should invest in (Paris, 2012). Culturally relevant and sustaining pedagogies are asset-based pedagogies used to first debunk

deficit thinking pedagogies and then create a space for students' culture, history, language, traditions, and much more to be at the center of teaching and learning (Paris, 2012).

Research Questions

1. Do White female social studies teachers feel they have been prepared through teacher education to engage and teach students who are a part of the global majority?
2. Do White female social studies teachers feel they have been supported by their school and school district to engage and teach students who are a part of the global majority?
3. Do White female social studies teachers understand the academic needs of students from the global majority?
4. Do White female social studies teachers come to know, understand, and process the cultural differences among their students and how they themselves are different from the students?

Purpose and Significance of the Study

State and local student demographic data highlight the increase in the global majority and other marginalized populations among student populations, thus supporting the need for culturally relevant and sustaining practices (Love, 2019). For example, in Georgia's 2021–2022 school year, most enrolled students classified as non-White, with 62.6% of the student population comprising of those who identify as Black, Hispanic, Asian, American Indian, and other (Georgia Department of Education, 2021). Since only 37.4 % of Georgia's student population is made up of White students, it would suggest that the schools' personnel and curriculum should reflect the majority of the student population. However, according to the 2020 GA K-12 Teacher and Leader Workforce Status Report, most teachers in Georgia are White, making up approximately 68.3% of the teacher workforce for the state (Flamini & Pelfrey,

2020). Therefore, the racial and ethnic diversity among the students in Georgia's public schools is not representative of the teacher population serving those same students. That disparity is where the cultural divide between students and teachers lies, and why culturally relevant and culturally sustaining pedagogies are needed to bridge the gap.

At the local level, I teach in a mid-sized school district in Southwest Georgia, Shawnee (pseudonym) County, and the student demographics are similar to those of the state of Georgia. Based on FTE counts in 2021, Shawnee County School District (SCSD) had 29,774 students. Approximately 79% of those students were non-White, with most identifying as Black (Flamini & Pelfrey, 2020). The trend of having a diverse student population is not a new trend in SCSD. Comparing the 2012 and 2022 FTE data shows that the student population has grown increasingly racially and ethnically diverse. For example, in 2012, the total student population was 31,947, 71% of whom were non-White (Flamini & Pelfrey, 2020). Although the overall student population decreased, the percentage of non-White students increased by nine percent. My local and state student demographics are following national trends, where the public school classrooms are becoming more diverse. The need for more growth in diversity among the teachers in the country and the state matches this. Also, 54.5% of all new teachers in Georgia in 2020 were White, which supports the trend that the teacher workforce in Georgia will continue to remain majority White, unlike the student body (Flamini & Pelfrey, 2020).

Due to the difficult history the global majority has had with the U.S. education system, the model of success in school is based on the dominant White culture. As student demographics change to include more culturally diverse students, this model of success needs to be updated (Love, 2019). Over time, schooling in the United States has continued to try to get students of the global majority to conform to a system that was not intended for their success; Ladson-Billings

(1995) describes this as “academic success at the cost of cultural wellbeing” (p. 475). Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP) and culturally responsive teachers allow for a student’s home/community culture and school culture to be synergized instead of separated (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Students should not be forced to give up a part of themselves to feel successful in the classroom; they are already enough, and school should help them grow. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), exemplary teachers of Black students were observed in a study on teaching multicultural students. Several of those teachers’ “conceptions” then determined what culturally responsive teaching should look like. Teacher participants in the study focused on and formed genuine student-teacher relationships and helped students to harness their cultural competencies from home as a part of their academic success in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995). For example, in a school, CRT or CRP could look like not correcting a student’s speech or implying there is the only way to speak or communicate appropriately within academia. Instead, teachers can find ways for students to participate using their native vernacular, teaching authentically, and demonstrating other ways of speaking, writing, or communicating without subtracting value from the other. For instance, I have encountered many students in the last decade who think they must alter their speech and expression through dress and hair to be successful or seen as professional and educated. As a teacher who is a part of the global majority, I struggle with how to prepare those students for the White normative standard in our society versus dismantling those outdated and White ideals of professionalism and success.

The demographic data highlights the disparities between the cultural makeup of teachers and students in public school classrooms. This study aims to shed light on the way teachers are educated and prepared for the realities of the classroom and their awareness of cultural differences between themselves and their students. As the authority figure in a classroom,

teachers impose their ways of being and thinking as classroom norms and may unconsciously leave out students who do not fit those norms. Teachers should be more aware of all the knowledge and skills students bring to class, which may need to be more readily visible or seen as helpful to teachers in the classroom.

Personal Connection to the Study

My connection to the study is rooted in my experiences as a Black student and my experiences as a Black social studies teacher of students of the global majority. In middle school and high school, I sometimes felt unseen or that my White teachers had low to no expectations of me. I also had a few interactions with my White peers where they insinuated that I was less intelligent or that my spot in specific academic programs was only due to my race. As a student, I often felt the need for cultural assimilation in order to be accepted among my peer group and present what I thought was my best academic self while in class. Reflecting on my schooling experience in the United States (related to the study), I can see how my urge to change and conform was rooted in Whiteness. According to Love (2019), I was ultimately deprived of the Black joy to be found in learning and living. I am driven by the possibility that students of the global majority will not have to have the same secondary academic experiences I did and that they can learn in a system and classroom meant to implement social justice, culturally relevant pedagogy, and a host of other asset-based pedagogies.

As a Black teacher of students of the global majority, I often feel the pressure of teaching them social studies and sympathizing and empathizing with their experiences as dark people in the United States, including the hardships and inequalities that are often present. I attempt to help my students navigate through the tragedies of more and more police brutality, as well as guide them in how to best address and engage with teachers if there is a cultural and social disconnect.

However, as a Black person who is also racially salient, I am still navigating and figuring out my feelings, thoughts, and actions with regard to being Black in the United States. Because I was a Black student and am now a teacher, I often hear, see, and understand my students' language, thinking, and actions in a way that White teachers in the same environment do not. I kept my students' past and present in mind when focusing on the work of this study because I want my students to feel safe, heard, and honored to be their complete selves in class, as well as have their unique characteristics harnessed for academic success in every teacher's classroom, or at least in a few more than just mine.

Professional Connection to the Study

In my 11-year teaching career, I have always been frustrated by the support and words of encouragement given to new teachers or lack thereof. During my first teaching job, I was coming in mid-year to replace a teacher, and I had some challenges with classroom management. I did not have a mentor teacher or any guidance; I was left to my own devices and told to hang on until the end of the year. I had a similar experience when I attempted to transition from teaching in high school to teaching in middle school. The more I have taught, the more frustrated I have become with how new teachers come unprepared from their teacher education program and the lack of consistent and intentional new teacher induction programs. It is unacceptable to simply advise new and novice teachers to make it to the end of the school year; it deprives teachers and students of quality learning and teaching and opportunities to grow and foster teacher-student relationships.

Teaching is a profession, and like many other professions, there should be a more consistent training and support system when new teachers arrive in the classroom. Most veteran teachers have gone through a teacher education program that did not do everything to prepare

them for the realities of the classroom. So, why do schools and districts continue to throw new teachers into an environment they know many of them cannot succeed in? My profession deserves more, and I know my students deserve qualified, willing, and supported teachers in the classroom.

Also, I have often been the only one or one of a few Black teachers in the social studies department, and I have struggled with witnessing and diffusing situations between White teachers and dark students. As I mentioned before, because of my background and identity, I can often interrupt the breakdown in communication between my White peers and our dark students. However, I struggle with whom to stand with. I want to support my fellow teachers, but I also do not want to uphold them in inappropriate and problematic language, actions, or ways of being. I empathize with my dark students because we can often relate on a social level that they cannot work with their White teachers. This study is a result of my desire to help my White peers see our students and acknowledge and process that their pedagogy conflicts with who their students are. I want my White peers to recognize that many dark students do not walk into their classrooms as themselves and to know that there are changes and shifts they can make to change this reality.

Intellectual Connection to the Study

According to Moll et al. (1992), teachers should be aware of what knowledge and skills students have and bring from their homes and communities and how to incorporate those funds of knowledge and skills into the learning and teaching that occurs in the classroom. The significance of this study is its potential to offer insight to teachers on how to acknowledge the knowledge and skills students obtain from their families and communities. This understanding can allow teachers to harness and apply such skills and knowledge in the classroom, which can

lead to students feeling successful and encouraged to achieve at high levels. Furthermore, a goal of this is to provide teacher education programs and schools with preservice teacher induction programs insight into the effectiveness of their training and support for teachers navigating the changing cultural landscape of the public school classroom.

Conceptual Framework

In the book *We Want to Do More Than Survive: Abolitionist Teaching and the Pursuit of Educational Freedom*, Love (2019) understands and affirms that schooling and education are complex ideas and practices for dark students in the United States. Those dark students are denied access to and the opportunity of an equal education and conditions that would allow them to thrive rather than just survive. The concepts of freedom dreaming, Black joy, and abolitionist teaching within Love's (2019) book have guided this study and my research interests. All three of these concepts are rooted in having love and compassion for dark students. To do that, teachers must be intentional in calling out the United States' past and current racist education system and committed to doing the work that shows that dark bodies matter (Love, 2019).

Unfortunately, dark students are positioned to desire and dream of educational freedom in which they are not traumatized by the pervasive Whiteness that exists throughout the country and within schooling and the education system. According to Love (2019),

Freedom dreaming gives teachers a space to methodologically tear down the educational survival complex and collectively rebuild a school system that truly loves all children and sees schools as children's homeplaces, where students are encouraged to give this world hell. (p. 102)

In essence, this is what I want to be able to do through this research and to learn if and how White female social studies teachers are equipped for freedom dreaming. By applying this

concept, teachers value and honor all the unseen cultural influences a student brings into a classroom and then create those classrooms and schools that are, as Love (2019) describes them, “homeplaces.” Freedom dreaming can be seen as a tool or strategy of abolitionist teaching in which anyone enacting it can begin the fight for educational freedom and justice for students of the global majority. Love (2019) defines abolitionist teaching as

The practice of working in solidarity with communities of color while drawing on the imagination, creativity, refusal, (re)membering, visionary thinking, healing, rebellious spirit, boldness, determination, and subversiveness of abolitionists to eradicate injustice in and outside of schools. (p. 2)

Abolitionist teaching is a lot of work. It involves more than just a singular teacher, but leads to the reward of educational freedom and having generations of dark children thriving rather than just surviving in school and the world (Love, 2019). The concept of abolitionist teaching provides meaning to and courses of action for how teachers can begin to address Whiteness and structural racism in education and take the first steps to ameliorate them.

It is essential to keep joy at the center of the struggle through the fight for justice. As I have come to know through my personal and professional experiences as someone dark, there is a constant awareness of the fight for justice, even just one’s existence as a dark body, and finding moments of joy to provide light along the way. According to Love (2019), “joy provides a type of nourishment that is needed to be dark and fully alive in White spaces, such as schools” (p. 120). Schools should be places where children can feel safe and supported, but for dark children, that is often not the case, and Black joy gives these children the space to celebrate their identity as people of color (Love, 2019). Black joy, freedom dreaming, and abolitionist teaching provide places and spaces for the “understanding and affirming” of dark children. These concepts guide

why I want to know how White female social studies teachers feel prepared and supported in engaging and teaching students of the global majority.

Review of Relevant Terms

Global Majority

This describes people who have previously been racialized as ethnic minorities, such as Black, Latine, indigenous groups, etc., that are characterized by the majority of the people in the world.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy (CRP)

An asset-based pedagogy that uses a student's cultural characteristics and experiences in the classroom.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (CSP)

An asset-based pedagogy that places a student's history, language, and whole cultural identity at the center of the learning and teaching.

Asset-Based Pedagogy

A pedagogy that focuses on the capabilities and positive attributes that diverse students bring to the classroom.

Dark Bodies

Description of darker-skinned people in the world that are often marginalized because of their skin color (Love, 2019).

Abolitionist Teaching

“The practice of working in solidarity with communities of color while drawing on the imagination, creativity, refusal, (re)membering, visionary thinking, healing, rebellious spirit,

boldness, determination, and subversiveness of abolitionists to eradicate injustice in and outside of schools” (Love, 2019, p. 2).

Summary

It seems impossible to imagine how transformative the experience of education and then the world could be for students of the global majority if they were allowed to exist and supported in learning environments that allowed them to thrive. This study has the potential to assist the intellectual knowledge that could impact how dark students, like myself, are seen, taught, and loved. At the center of this study is the desire and longing for students of all cultures, ethnicities, and races to be allowed to exist and thus, learn as they are and not be forced to culturally assimilate or change. An extremely critical eye is required to transform the current structures and procedures in place in teacher education and the education system in the United States. This study can begin to evaluate and reflect on where new White teachers are in the process of changing the educational experiences of students of the global majority.

CHAPTER 2: Literature Review

Over time, students in the United States and U.S. public school classrooms have become more racially, culturally, and ethnically diverse, while the teaching population has remained majorly White and female (Ingersoll, 2017). The backgrounds and experiences of these students and teachers differ, and it is the teachers' duty to be prepared and supported to close the cultural gap that exists and grows. This literature review explores the works of various seminal and contemporary researchers that examine the issues with schooling in the United States, such as Whiteness, and where and how strategies like CRP can be used to address such problems.

Section One

Teacher Preparation in the United States

Teacher education programs in the United States are meant to prepare and train individuals to be qualified teachers. Over the years, teacher education programs have become aware of the growing demographic disparities between teachers and students. It is acknowledged that teachers need to be prepared for the many cultural differences they will face (Darling-Hammond, 2006). This awareness is essential in structuring how preservice teachers are prepared for the realities of the classroom. According to Darling-Hammond (2006),

Schools of education must design programs that help prospective teachers to understand a wide array of things about learning, social and cultural contexts, and teaching profoundly and be able to enact these understandings in complex classrooms serving increasingly diverse students. (p. 3)

To prepare teachers for the cultural complexities they may face in a classroom, Darling-Hammond (2006) suggests that universities must look beyond the classrooms and incorporate a more extensive network of the local community and align with local school districts. Utilizing

the resources within the community is a way to give preservice teachers opportunities to develop specific cultural competencies that will serve them in the classroom. Teacher education and training programs in the United States could do more to intentionally give their preservice teachers opportunities to interact with diverse students and communities to merge the theory into practice (Darling-Hammond, 2006). However, it is crucial that preparing preservice teachers for various student groups does not turn into teacher education programs sending preservice teachers, especially those who are White, into racially and ethnically diverse and poor communities and schools as a field trip. Diversity is not a monolith, and just because preservice teachers have an opportunity to visit and tutor poor students of the global majority does not mean that they will know what those students and their communities need or that they have the skills and dispositions to best meet those needs.

Teacher Education and Preparation for Cultural Diversity

Teacher Preparation Through the Lens of Whiteness

Teacher education programs typically refer to the specific undergraduate- or graduate-level collection of preparatory coursework and fieldwork a student completes at a college or university to become a teacher. As the racial, ethnic, and cultural demographics of students in public school shift quickly—unlike the demographics of teachers—teacher education programs are tasked with adequately preparing preservice teachers for those culturally diverse classrooms.

The theme of Whiteness as the root and structure of education in the United States is present throughout the research on preservice teachers' preparedness for the diversity of the schools and communities they serve. For example, while reviewing research examining teachers' preparation for schools with underserved multicultural student groups, Sleeter (2001) determined that Whiteness is a theme throughout the research. The bulk of the reviewed research was clear

about the need for teacher education programs to better prepare White, predominantly female preservice teachers to address their own bias as well as how to get them ready for historically underserved multicultural communities and their students in school (Sleeter, 2001). Although this is an essential and pervasive issue in teacher education and training because most of the teachers in the teaching profession are White women, centering the focus on Whiteness in this manner results in the silencing of the voices and experiences of preservice teachers of color, especially those in mostly White teacher education programs (Sleeter, 2001). According to Sleeter (2001), since the bulk of the research on educating preservice teachers has been done to meet the needs of those underserved multicultural populations related to Whiteness as well as the needs of the White preservice teachers, teacher education programs are mainly built and adjusted to best meet the needs of White teachers, thus effectively leaving teachers of other cultures, races, and ethnicities out. Preservice teachers of color are not inherently prepared to teach multicultural student populations; they can also have bias and a lack of awareness of the knowledge and skills needed to address the demographic changes in public school classrooms. Therefore, their needs, as well as voices, must be considered in teacher education.

After reviewing over 80 studies on teacher preparation for teachers in underserved communities, Sleeter (2001) found that strategies to prepare preservice teachers to be strong teachers were missing. A solution suggested by Sleeter (2001) that can help better meet the needs of the growing culturally diverse student populations in public schools is improving the recruitment of teachers of color. Having a more culturally diverse teaching population can impact schools and classrooms while also being an opportunity for teacher education programs to be more inclusive of who they prepare and train as teachers and how (Sleeter, 2001). Another solution is more community immersion for preservice teachers based on where they are and

potentially will be teaching (Sleeter, 2001). These community immersion experiences for preservice teachers could include but are not limited to community service projects and extended student teaching internships. Allowing preservice teachers to have more opportunities to engage with the families in the communities whose schools they will be serving in provides them with chances to learn about and from the various cultures in the community (Sleeter, 2001). Usually, preservice teachers receive only outside classroom experience through short practicum hours to observe and assist, followed by a student teaching experience. Being required and allowed to be involved in the community may provide preservice teachers with a greater context to begin understanding the cultural characteristics that impact and shape their students and what they may lack.

In 2010, Droppert examined how preservice teachers at a small liberal arts college in Iowa are trained to address the needs of the growingly diverse student population, as well as how realistic it is for those preservice teachers to be able to meet those needs. In addressing what may be missing from teacher education programs in Iowa and around the country, Droppert (2010) says that preservice teachers are a product of where they come from and their experiences, which means that in Iowa, most education majors will be White and from primarily rural communities, which is not representative of some of the communities and schools they will teach at (Droppert, 2010). According to Droppert (2010), preservice teachers must be aware of the changing demographics of students in public schools to ensure they are ready to interact and teach all students in a meaningful way. Specifically, teacher education programs are challenged with providing preservice teachers opportunities to “experience and reflect on diversity” so that they are best prepared for the diversity they encounter in the classroom (Droppert, 2010, p. 322). To provide those opportunities and experiences for preservice teachers to experience and reflect on

variety, the institution at the center of the study, Central College, included a service-learning experience as a part of the required Human Relations course for education majors (Droppert, 2010). The service-learning experience component was meant to give the college students an initial opportunity to interact, serve, and help students from various diverse backgrounds as well as to be a model of what other teacher education programs can do to assist their preservice teachers in gaining those diverse experiences (Droppert, 2010). Droppert's (2010) study reinforces Sleeter's (2001) assertion that there is a theme of Whiteness in teacher education and is an example of research that tackles how White preservice teachers need to prepare to teach diverse student populations.

In the preservice teachers' reflections on their service-learning experiences, they discussed how before that service-learning experience, they needed more experience with people from other races, religions, or socioeconomic standings (Droppert, 2010). They seemed to believe that their one service-learning experience had prepared them to either teach a diverse student population or for future interactions with people different from them (Droppert, 2010). In reality, the service-learning experience allowed these isolated and naïve White preservice teachers to become more aware that diversity exists and how unprepared their current life background and experience would be to face such diversity.

Droppert's (2010) assertion that teachers need to be better prepared for the growing diversity in the classroom, especially when it is drastically different from the teachers' background, as in Iowa, aligns with other research but seems to focus more on the lack of diversity among the preservice teachers in the study. Analysis reveals almost a coddling of the White and naïve preservice teachers and how it is not their fault they do not know. The responsibility to learn and prepare for diversity in the classroom should be solely on teacher

education programs. Although most people are not in charge of the upbringing that shapes their identity, like the White education majors in Droppert's (2010) study, individuals must be active participants in shaping their thinking and actions once presented with new information if they are vested in change. Like those wishing to engage in asset-based pedagogy, one must be willing to reflect on one's dispositions and ways of being to begin. The same is true of preservice teachers who are preparing to teach diverse students.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy in the Teacher Preparation Standards

Within teacher education and preparation programs, some set standards are implemented to address what preservice teachers should know and how they should be prepared. These standards also provide accreditation to an Educator Preparation Program (EPP). The Council for the Accreditation for Educator Preparation (CAEP) is a national entity with standards that U.S. universities and colleges with EPPs should use to ensure their preservice teachers are prepared for the classrooms (CAEP, 2015). Unfortunately, although some national standards are in place, more research needs to be done to support any direct expectations of how EPPs should implement them to ensure their preservice teachers are prepared, especially for the diverse schools and classrooms they will enter. The CAEP standards make mention of diversity 29 times, for example, "diversity must be a pervasive characteristic of any quality preparation program" (CAEP, 2015, p. 21). In its section devoted to diversity, it does explicitly state what teachers or candidates that leave the EPPs should be able to do with regard to diversity in the classroom. One of the CAEP's tenets on diversity addresses how culturally relevant pedagogy can be embedded in teacher education, such as "communication skills that demonstrate respect for and responsiveness to the cultural backgrounds and differing perspectives learners and their families bring to the learning environment" (CAEP, 2015, p. 21). The alignment between the culturally

relevant pedagogy and national standards highlights the awareness of the need to prepare preservice teachers for the culturally diverse students they will encounter and how best to do that.

Yet, while referring to diversity and its importance in a quality EPP, the CAEP standards do not offer a clear and objective way in which EPPs should embed diversity education and culturally relevant pedagogy in their preservice teachers' education. The standards acknowledge and cite that the racial and cultural makeup of students in public school classrooms continues to become more diverse. At the same time, only 20% of the teacher profession mirrors that student diversity (CAEP, 2015).

How much standardization within EPPs should exist to ensure preservice teachers are adequately equipped for the cultural and learning diversity they will encounter among their students once in the classroom? Of course, some standardization should be implemented, as done by the CAEP, but teacher educators should be given some range of flexibility in implementing those diversity standards. In *Developing Culturally Competent Preservice Teachers*, Lewis Chui (2017) provides a collection of activities that teacher educators can use throughout their EPPs to help their preservice teachers meet the diversity tenets of the CAEP standards. The activities, such as "Diversity Dialogues," "Monopoly in a Stratified Society," "Exploring Microaggressions," and more, all have a description of how to implement them in the classroom and the diversity tenets they address (Lewis Chui, 2017, p. 49). These activities provide tangible examples of how teacher educators can facilitate preservice teachers to challenge their own biases and ways of thinking and begin to find ways to engage and value all the cultural and learning diversity that awaits them in their future classrooms.

Teacher Preparation Standards for Diversity

Regarding teacher preparedness, the diversity of learners and students encompasses ethnicity and race, student disabilities, English language learners (ELL), and more. As the students in public schools have grown more ethnically and racially diverse, there has also been an increase in the percentage of students with disabilities (Anderson et al., 2022). With this increasing cultural and ethnic diversity of students in public schools, the primarily White teachers that staff the classrooms need to be equipped with the tools and strategies to manage such a diversity of learners (Anderson et al., 2022). According to Anderson et al. (2022), surveys of new teachers and in-school supervisors indicate that preservice teachers may need more preparation for classroom diversity and differences. This study surveyed preservice teachers before and after their first year of teaching. Before teaching, their responses indicated that they felt they needed to be adequately prepared for the diversity they would later encounter in the classroom (Anderson et al., 2022). This research supports how crucial it is for teacher education programs to prepare preservice teachers for diversity in their future classrooms; it is also a means of addressing the reality that such preparation cannot be solely up to teacher education.

According to Anderson et al. (2022), teacher education programs should be expected to teach preservice teachers about the diversity they will encounter in the classroom and the best skills to teach diverse learners. Most importantly, “new teachers should not be expected to graduate from a preparation program completely prepared for the intricacies of diverse classrooms” (Anderson et al., 2022, p. 61). This research supports the notion that teacher education or alternate teacher preparation programs cannot and should not be the end of preservice teachers’ education, training, and support. Once in the classrooms, preservice teachers should have access to professional development, mentorship, and other forms of support to guide

them through the realities of what they had been trained for during their teacher education programs (Anderson et al., 2022).

In preparing teachers for the expanding cultural diversity in their classrooms, a way for teacher education programs to develop necessary cultural competencies is to use human-centered design projects and community involvement (Bogard & Lawless, 2022). Unfortunately, research shows a disconnect between preservice teachers and understanding sociocultural impacts on education (Bogard & Lawless, 2022). More is needed for preservice teachers to be aware of the cultural differences between them and their students and to know, be concerned, and act on how those sociocultural issues impact education and their students. A way to help preservice teachers bridge the gap in understanding sociocultural impacts is to provide them with opportunities to interact with the community as well as the social issues affecting their students to build empathy (Bogard & Lawless, 2022). Then, the preservice teachers can use those empathetic feelings to gain insight into the social justice issues that may impact their students, thus allowing them to teach more appropriately.

Preparation Standards and Multiculturalism

There is a plethora of evidence to suggest that preservice teachers do not have access to the knowledge and skills needed to teach students from racial, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds other than their own. For preservice teachers to have such limited contact with a curriculum and opportunities to interact with different cultures is an injustice to them and their future students. According to Lehman (2017), teacher education programs often offer isolated courses on multicultural education with no chance to use that limited knowledge in the field. Lehman (2017) collected data from preservice teachers to assess their perceptions of multicultural competence when working with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The data suggested that

preservice teachers felt they lacked and needed to have the multicultural competencies of multicultural awareness, multicultural knowledge, and multicultural skills (Lehman, 2017).

According to Lehman (2017), multicultural awareness refers to the need for more understanding of the diverse student groups that these preservice teachers would face in the public school classroom setting and their needs. Preservice teachers disclosed that they were unaware and needed to consider the growing cultural diversity in their classrooms. They realized their cultural background could be different from that of their students (Lehman, 2017). As the demographics of students in public schools grow increasingly racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse, and the world grows increasingly globalized (Lehman, 2017), it continues to be imperative for preservice teachers to acknowledge the cultural uniqueness that exists among diverse student groups as well as learn and understand alternative ways of being and thinking to support and teach among that uniqueness. This lack of multicultural awareness also refers to the preservice teachers acknowledging that they were unaware of their cultural bias and its potential to affect how they would teach and impact their students from different cultural backgrounds (Lehman, 2017).

Most of the participants in this study were White, which aligns with the demographics of the majority of teachers in the United States. Ignorance of the power and bias White preservice teachers possess as they enter public school classrooms filled with students from traditionally marginalized groups, such as Black and Latine, could have disastrous effects on the student outcomes for those students. Since education and schooling in the United States are rooted in and built on Whiteness, preservice teachers need to be keenly aware of the message about academic achievement they are teaching and instilling in their non-White students, especially White preservice teachers. Although teachers of color can also perpetuate the White normative standard

of success in their classroom, White teachers can often be unaware of their inherent privilege and how operating in that privilege could harm the learning and growth of their students of color. So, the fact that the preservice teachers in the study reviewed by Lehman (2017) were willing to admit their ignorance as well as their need for knowledge and skills to increase their multicultural competence in this area is a sign that we are heading in the right direction.

The other two multicultural competencies of multicultural knowledge and multicultural skills are related. Multicultural knowledge refers to preservice teachers learning about the culture of the students and communities they will serve (Lehman, 2017). According to Lehman (2017), multicultural knowledge is gained by forging relationships with families and other community partners to learn about cultural distinctions. Students bring knowledge, skills, and experiences to the classroom, and teachers cannot begin to honor and harness that if they cannot be invested enough to learn what they are. Moll et al. (1992) coined the term “funds of knowledge” to refer to the specific knowledge and skills students possess and hone at home and how those can be used in the classroom to improve student learning and achievement. It seems as though the preservice teachers in this study knew they were unaware of their potential students’ “funds of knowledge” and how they access that knowledge. According to Lehman (2017), multicultural skills are the tangible strategies and tools used to best meet the needs of students with diverse backgrounds. The preservice teachers disclosed and discussed their inability to identify the needs of students from other cultural backgrounds, which is related to accessing multicultural knowledge from the students and communities (Lehman, 2017). It would be difficult for preservice teachers to learn and practice teaching strategies and methods that would meet the needs of diverse student groups without first investing in learning more about their cultural distinctions, which can inform them of which multicultural skills to implement.

Preparation Standards and Mentoring

Preservice teachers also noted the importance of mentorship as a part of developing the multicultural competence of multicultural skills (Lehman, 2017). The value of quality mentorship of preservice teachers is a trend within the research on the education and training of new teachers. Intentional and well-aligned mentor and mentee partnerships can be used to model the necessary skills and strategies for a classroom of diverse students. According to Lehman (2017), preservice teachers believe that differentiated instruction is one of the multicultural skills they could utilize once they have better assessed the needs of their diverse students. It is worth noting that multicultural skills do not suggest that students from multicultural backgrounds, like the Black, Latine, or indigenous communities, can be taught specific skills to succeed or achieve in the same way as their White counterparts. However, it does acknowledge that students from such marginalized groups may have cultural nuances that are worthy but have not been traditionally supported by the White normative structure of education in the United States. Teacher education and training programs can do more to prepare teachers to first identify those nuances and then practice a skill set that will meet the challenges they may present if trying to assimilate to the Whiteness embedded in schooling.

Teaching Diversity in Teacher Education

When examining how teacher education programs are structured, one aspect that is clearly lacking is cultural diversity. To date, teachers have yet to be educated and trained to adequately meet the needs of students from backgrounds different than their own in the communities in which they teach. Many teacher education programs, as well as state school boards, only offer and require diversity courses. When used in regard to teacher education and training, diversity is a loaded term and can have several meanings. For example, the National

Center for Education Statistics publication contains a survey report examining teacher training to meet diverse student needs. Still, diversity is divided into three categories: lower socioeconomic backgrounds, students with exceptionalities and special needs, and English language learners (ELLs; Merlin, 2021). Based on this report and its diversity specifications, the data from teachers indicates that teachers need more education and preparation to best serve diverse student groups. Furthermore, public school teachers are more likely to have taken courses to address the needs of those two groups than private school teachers (Merlin, 2021).

The data from surveys taken by public and private school teachers from all 50 states showed that the newest teachers, those who had recently graduated from a teacher education program, were more likely to have taken a course or courses on diversity (Merlin, 2021). According to a graph by Merlin (2021), tracking the occurrence of teachers taking undergraduate and graduate courses on students who are ELLs, low SES, and special needs increased from the teachers educated in the 1980s to those educated in 2016. This demonstrates that teacher education programs have attempted to adjust their curriculum to better prepare preservice teachers to best serve and teach the diverse students they will encounter. Although this is encouraging, the survey results still show a gap in the knowledge and skills of teacher education programs and the ability to meet the needs of those diverse student groups. The highest percentage of reported courses taken among the three diversity groups was only 70% in the exceptionalities or special needs category. Since this data was collected from teacher representatives from all 50 states and the District of Columbia, an array of higher education institutions is also represented (Merlin, 2021). Therefore, it can be inferred that the preparation of preservice teachers for poor student groups with special needs and ELLs has improved in teacher education programs across the country and over the past decades, but a gap remains.

Also, this report and its data are limited because it the teachers were only asked about their studies, courses, preparation, and practice regarding those specific student groups. There are many other facets of diversity that preservice teachers need to be exposed to in order to prepare for the diversity of the classroom.

More recently, LaCroix and Kuehl (2019) developed and shared a framework to help teachers create and reform programs to produce teachers who can teach all students effectively. The framework focuses on what knowledge and skills preservice teachers will need in the classroom to best prepare the increasingly racially and ethnically diverse student population. These researchers also confirm the ever-increasing racial and ethnic diversity in classrooms and that teachers must be ready to meet those changes and differences (LaCroix & Kuehl, 2019). This supports the consensus in the research on teacher education that there is a need to focus on how teachers are prepared to engage and teach the diverse student population they will encounter. However, a gap exists in how teacher education programs and even alternative teacher preparation programs will meet that challenge in a meaningful and consistent manner, yielding a high number of quality teacher candidates that will then impact and influence high levels of student achievement.

Through a review of literature on teaching about diversity in teacher education, LaCroix and Kuehl (2019) discovered the themes that make up their framework for exploring racial and ethnic diversity in teacher education: awareness, knowledge, attitudes, collaboration, and experiences. These themes have understandings presented as “I understand” statements and skills and “I can” statements associated with each that preservice teachers should be able to implement in their classrooms to teach students who are racially and ethnically diverse (LaCroix & Kuehl, 2019). These themes all seem reminiscent of previous research that suggest one or more of these

themes as something preservice teachers need more of. In contrast, this research and the subsequent framework focus on how teacher educators can best teach and prepare preservice teachers with regard to these themes (LaCroix & Kuehl, 2019). This practical work is necessary to give preservice teachers tangible strategies to use in the classroom.

LaCroix and Kuehl (2019) also charge teacher educators with remaining reflective in their research and practice, especially since the bulk of the diversity education in these teacher preparation programs is provided by White teacher educators to mostly White education students. The reflectiveness and reform in teacher education programs should provide experiences for preservice teachers that push their perspectives so they are not reproducing and contributing to the Whiteness that already exists in education (LaCroix & Kuehl, 2019). The ideas, theories, and examples provided by teacher educators are often the first formal imprint of what teaching is and should be for education majors. Therefore, teacher educators bear the burden of being the first role model for preservice teachers before they are provided with any practical and field experience. If they are not reflective in their practice, new teachers' preparedness and quality will stagnate. Lastly, LaCroix and Kuehl (2019) poignantly stated, "addressing the needs of a racially diverse society is a non-negotiable component of today's teacher preparation programs" (p. 44). The reality is that public school classrooms, the country, and the world are becoming more and more racially and ethnically diverse places. Therefore, it would be more than a disservice to preservice teachers to not prepare them for that reality.

Pathways to Teacher Preparation

It is worth discussing not only the what of teacher education programs but also the where and how. There are many pathways to becoming a teacher, and research suggests different ways to impact a teacher's experience and willingness to stay in the teaching profession. For example,

according to Darling-Hammond (2002), teachers who matriculated through a traditional teacher preparation program versus those who sought alternative teaching paths felt more prepared for the classroom and had lower attrition rates. Although teacher education programs in the United States are not without fault, teachers produced through a more traditional college teacher education program saw only 14% of teachers leave the profession within five years versus 49% of teachers who took an alternative teacher preparation route leaving the profession (Darling-Hammond, 2010). In addition, research indicates that teacher education programs have made strides and improvements in how they teach and train preservice teachers, thus improving the quality of new teacher candidates (Darling-Hammond, 2010). This supports the notion that teacher education and training matter and are also correlated to and impactful on how and why teachers remain in the profession.

Research also shows that teachers who chose alternative teacher preparation programs are less prepared before they begin teaching and are often those who are preparing and serving students who are poorer and culturally/ethnically diverse (Darling-Hammond, 2010). These vulnerable populations of students would greatly benefit from highly qualified and trained teachers. For example, Teach for America teachers in Houston, Texas often have high attrition rates after their two-year teaching commitment, which correlates with the little to no teacher preparation those candidates receive before they enter schools and classrooms (Darling-Hammond, 2002). In addition, these alternative teacher preparation programs, like Teach for America, often provide multiweek teacher training to individuals with little content or pedagogical education. This brief training, coupled with a limited teacher induction and the “sink or swim” spirit of the first year of teaching, does not produce many teachers of quality.

Furthermore, the historically underserved communities that may already be facing teacher shortages are now faced with a constant stream of new and highly underprepared teachers (Darling-Hammond, 2002), which is unfair to those students and communities. As previously discussed, many teacher education programs are lacking in their ability to produce preservice teachers who are ready to meet the demands and needs of racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse student groups; therefore, how can these alternative teacher preparation programs expect to meet the same markets, especially considering the racial and ethnic makeup of those historically underserved communities? However, even though some alternative teacher education programs present challenges to preparing quality teachers, they are acceptable; some offer a solid amount of education, support, and mentoring before allowing individuals to enter the profession.

Section Two

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Culturally Responsive Teaching

I was once a Black student in an urban city in a neighborhood deemed poorer, proof of what Ladson-Billings referred to as “Black and Brown students being undertaught” (Will, 2022). It was not until I was purposely sent to a school in a wealthier neighborhood that I realized that different types of education were occurring within the same city. Questions about those differences back then, coupled with my experiences as a Black female teacher, have led me to research culturally relevant, culturally responsive, and culturally sustaining pedagogies. Even as a child 20 years ago, I could feel a divide between my White teachers and myself, but I did not know how to describe or name it. I am a racially salient being, meaning my racial identity as a Black female is always present and on my mind in all that I do. So, as a Black teacher, I attempt to be intentional in my ways of being with my students to honor and respect who they are and

what they bring to the classroom. Unfortunately, my experience as a social studies teacher in schools where student demographics were mostly those of the global majority has been replete with White peers who are unaware or uncaring of how their own cultural bias affects how they engage and teach culturally diverse students, especially global majority students. Professionally, I want to encourage my White peers to see the differences between their students and themselves. A White teacher acknowledging the cultural, ethnic, and/or racial differences between them and their students is not wrong, but how the teacher proceeds with that knowledge is the challenge. All students, especially those from historically underserved and vulnerable populations, like global majority students, and those with lower socioeconomic statuses, deserve to be able to preserve their authentic ways of being, speaking, thinking, etc. from home while mastering the cultural landscape of school. Culturally relevant, culturally responsive, and culturally sustaining pedagogies all provide an avenue for teachers to examine and reflect on their ways of being and then begin to show their students that they value and respect the cultural differences that exist among them as well as use them to promote academic success (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Culturally Responsive Teaching

The United States continues to grow increasingly racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse, which can be seen in the shifting student demographics in public school classrooms (Ingersoll, 2018). At the same time, the demographics of public school teachers remain majority White and female, particularly in schools with the most vulnerable populations (Ingersoll, 2018). One way to ensure teachers can serve and teach diverse student populations is by using culturally relevant pedagogy/practices (CRP) and culturally responsive teaching (CRT). According to Gay (2002), “Culturally Responsive Teaching is defined as using the cultural characteristics, experiences, and

perspectives of ethnically diverse students as conduits for teaching them more effectively” (p.106). The cultural distinctiveness students bring to the classroom through their language, traditions, and general ways of being can and should be harnessed in the classroom. Utilizing CRT or CRP makes students feel included in the learning environment and allows them to know the value they bring to the school while learning. Based on the difference in student and teacher demographics, this also points to a difference in culture. It is instinctive for educators to impose their own culture in their classrooms. Still, educators must be aware of their own cultural biases and how they affect students from diverse backgrounds. Like with content, culture cannot be taught without knowing it, meaning that teachers must be aware of other cultures in order to teach them (Gay, 2002). Teachers within the dominant White culture must learn and continually practice ways to be culturally open and aware of their students.

There are some limitations or issues with enacting culturally responsive teaching (CRT) in the classroom. According to Achinstein (2012) new teachers of color get caught in a “double bin” because they find it challenging to infuse cultural distinctions like language in the classroom while also preparing students for the standardization of the current education system’s expectations. It seems like these teachers find it challenging to be culturally responsive to the needs of their diverse students in a meaningful way that does not undermine how they were evaluated and expected to operate.

Also, considering more controversy and current policies against critical race theory, many states and school districts have begun to ban curriculums, words, materials, and even books that make mention of race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, and more. These policies directly undermine some teachers’ ability to provide CRT. Many of our diverse students find themselves a part of one or more cultural groups that have historically been marginalized, and bans on what states and

school districts perceive to be critical race theory further limit teachers' ability to offer relevant course material or speak to students in a manner that may make them feel included and seen. Teachers may find themselves in a precarious situation in choosing between being culturally responsive to their students or continuing to invest in the Whiteness of schooling to remain employed.

Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

There is evidence to suggest that CRP should be integrated into the education and training of preservice teachers (Ladson-Billings, 1995). According to Ladson-Billings (1995), teacher education programs should be restructured to focus more on social justice and equity. Culturally relevant practices and pedagogy go beyond including diverse perspectives in the curriculum and valuing students' cultural experiences. Still, CRP also involves a complete overhaul of an educator's thinking and understanding of the purpose of education. In the United States, schooling and education are not and have not been an equitable experience for all people, particularly minority students who have been denied a complete education. Thus, teacher education programs have attempted to reform their "preparation of prospective teachers in ways that support equitable and just educational experiences for all students" (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 466). Pedagogy is the method and practice of teaching, and to be more inclusive of the growing and changing cultural demographics of students in public education, CRP provides an avenue for educators to reflect on and adjust their methods and practices to the needs of all their students.

Due to the difficult history minorities have had with the education system in the United States, the model of success in school is based on the dominant White culture. As student demographics change to include more culturally diverse students, this model of success needs to

be updated (Love, 2019). Over time, schooling in the United States has continued to try and get minority students to conform to a system that was not created for their success. Ladson-Billings (1995) describes this as “academic success at the cost of cultural wellbeing” (p. 475). Culturally relevant pedagogy and CRT allow for a student’s home/community culture and school culture to be synergized instead of separated (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Muhammad, 2021). Students should not be forced to give up a part of themselves to feel and know success in the classroom, they are already enough, and school should help them grow. According to Ladson-Billings (1995), exemplary teachers of Black students were observed in a study on teaching multicultural students. Several “conceptions” of those teachers then determined what culturally responsive teaching should look like. Teacher participants in the study focused and formed genuine student-teacher relationships and helped students to harness the cultural competencies from home as a part of their academic success in the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995; Muhammad, 2021). For example, CRT or CRP in a school could look like teachers not correcting a student’s speech or implying there is only one way to speak or communicate appropriately within academia. Instead, teachers can find ways for students to participate by using their native vernacular; teaching authentically; and demonstrating other ways of speaking, writing, or communicating without subtracting value from the other.

Literature and research on culturally relevant pedagogy and practices are still evolving and growing, especially in terms of making the theoretical more practical for implementation by teachers. As early as 1995, Ladson-Billings suggested that teachers need to understand “culture as it functions in education” (p. 483). Culturally relevant pedagogy encourages teachers to reflect on and question the status of schools, curriculum, and society and to facilitate students doing the same. To do that successfully, culturally relevant teaching must include three major components:

“an ability to develop students academically, a willingness to nurture and support cultural competence, and the development of a sociopolitical or critical consciousness” (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 483). The growing cultural gap between teachers and students and how culturally relevant practices could be used to address those gaps was something that Ladson-Billings (1995) predicted more than a quarter of a century ago:

I predicted the need for a culturally relevant theoretical perspective on the growing disparity between teachers’ and students’ racial, ethnic, and cultural characteristics and the continued academic failure of Black, Native American, and Latino students. (p. 482)

Students must still be held to a high standard of academic success, even those whose cultural backgrounds differ from those of their teachers. Culturally relevant pedagogy allows teachers to facilitate students leveraging the personal “social power” they bring to school as a means of academic success (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160). Furthermore, as students achieve academic milestones, CRP supports them in maintaining a connection to their cultural background. In contrast, they do not have to relinquish their cultural identity to learn and be academically successful (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The language, traditions, religions, and other shared experiences that make up a student’s cultural identity are just as important as learning to read and write. All these facets can work together to help students find their place in the world and make meaning of it. Lastly, CRP promotes students taking a critical view of the outside society and institutions and analyzing the why and how. This is especially important to the racially and ethnically diverse student populations that often inherit an inequitable education as well as other social and political systems that govern society; the education system will not be the only sphere in which they will have to navigate such inequities (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Focusing on the three components of CRP, Ladson-Billings (2021) recently discussed how the third component, critical consciousness, is the one that practitioners often ignore. Critical consciousness is the “so what” piece of the CRP puzzle, which will encourage students to find and see the real-life applications of what they are learning. More importantly, it will allow students to defend what they know and believe, not just simply what the teacher believes (Ladson-Billings, 2021; Will, 2022). In the same discussion and interview, Ladson-Billings, who is the preeminent scholar on CRP, also discussed what she would alter or include in her groundbreaking work on CRP to broaden the scope of culture. Specifically, she would focus more on youth culture, highlighting students making music, fashion, etc. (Ladson-Billings, 2021; Will, 2022). Then, decades after this, Ladson-Billings would share her thoughts and ideas on how to improve the critical work of CRP so that educators can be actual practitioners and take CRP beyond simple theory.

The theory of CRP is sound, but what does the corresponding teacher training look like? How does CRP translate into practical classroom application, and how do we reach all children? To implement CRP, teachers can engage in CRT, and according to Manns (2021), the culturally responsive education model (CREM) that she created is a circular model that starts and finishes with self-reflection and the culture of belonging. Culturally responsive teaching and education challenge educators to reflect on their cultural identities and how these can affect how they see, engage, or disengage with students, especially those of a different cultural identity (Manns, 2021). The most challenging part of bridging the cultural divide between teachers and students will be teachers’ preparedness and willingness to be more self-aware and acknowledge that their cultural identities and ways of being can potentially affect how they understand, treat, and teach their students. It is a practice that is less about how to train teachers on CRP or CRT and more

about whether the teachers are ready to accept why it is needed. All the theories and research on what culturally diverse students need and how their authentic and cultural ways of being can be harnessed and supported in the classroom would be for naught if teachers, especially White teachers, are not willing or ready to acknowledge that those students need more and something different.

Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy

According to Paris (2012), there was and is substantial value in introducing culturally relevant practices and CRT put forward by researchers like Ladson-Billings. However, Paris (2012) challenges whether the terms “relevant” and “responsive” are inclusive enough “to ensure the maintenance of language and culture” (p. 94). As previously mentioned, students should be allowed to be comfortable enough to be their authentic selves in the academic school setting, which includes teachers and schools respecting their cultural characteristics. According to Paris (2012), “culturally sustaining” better represents the goal of the constantly evolving actions of teachers and the education system to continue valuing and leveraging students’ cultural distinctiveness in academic achievement. Utilizing the term “culturally sustaining” reflects the nature of the process needed to continue being culturally relevant or culturally responsive as educators, mainly if we are vested in making this a priority in the classroom (Paris, 2012). Teachers recognizing their students’ cultural backgrounds and differences to support academic achievement is only a part of culturally sustaining students; teachers must then use strategies, including inclusive curriculum materials, to truly incorporate the cultural differences they observe. Valuing and utilizing the nuances of students’ cultural differences in the classroom should be a priority and a standard baseline for teaching and interacting with student populations that are racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse. Continuous effort is needed to maintain such a

standard, thus supporting Paris' (2012) coining of the term “culturally sustaining” pedagogy and practices.

Culturally sustaining pedagogy and culturally relevant and responsive pedagogies and practices are asset-building and strength-based pedagogies (Alim & Paris, 2014). According to Alim and Paris (2014), “the pedagogies repositioned the linguistic literature and cultural practices of working-class communities—specifically poor communities of color—as resources and assets to honor, explore, and extend” (p. 87). These pedagogies and practices are rooted in research and were created to challenge and change the prominent deficit thinking approaches in education. It is important to note that when Paris (2012) coined the term and future framework of CSPs, it was a respectful extension of the groundbreaking and foundational research on CRP by Ladson-Billings. These asset-based or strength-based pedagogies are fundamental and necessary for meeting the growing challenges of racial and ethnic diversity in the current U.S. education system. So, while CSP and CRP are different, they are both used to help teachers focus on the experiences, languages, histories, etc. of their students of color and other underrepresented populations in order to better serve them.

As the world changes, so should education systems and their structures, and frameworks like CSP are crucial in pushing for a new vision of education. These asset-based and strength-based pedagogies are necessary because they also acknowledge and accept the fallacy that all students of color and poor students need access and equity (Alim & Paris, 2014). This false and deficit thinking narrative is flawed because giving marginalized student groups access and equitable opportunity does not attempt to alter the inequitable and racist foundation the education system is built on. Having more access to a broken system will not put students of color in a position where they feel and know their original languages and histories. Ways of being are

upheld, centered, and valued in an educational setting. Students of color should be free to exist while learning and not be expected to assimilate to the status quo of academic success, which would look like conforming to the dominant White culture of schools (Alim & Paris, 2014).

There is more than one way to achieve success in and out of the classroom, and students of color need to know and see that there are multiple paths to success that can also include the various languages, literacies, and cultural skills within their communities (Alim & Paris, 2014). For example, I have encountered many students in the last decade who think they have to alter their speech and expression through dress and hair in order to be successful or seen as professional and educated. I struggle with preparing those students for the White normative standard in our society versus dismantling those outdated and White ideals of professionalism and success.

Those students and many more need to be taught and see that they are capable and worthy of achieving and learning all things as they are in their unique ways of being. As a teacher, I must come to terms with the fact that genuinely implementing and practicing any asset-based pedagogy requires my full participation in the dismantling of the current educational structure.

Alim and Paris (2014) offer gentle but serious critiques of asset-based pedagogies, including their own, to highlight the importance of growing the necessary research and ensuring these practices meet the needs of students and communities of color. The learning and teaching that many asset-based pedagogies facilitate do more than push for the reform of the educational system. If implemented intentionally and with purpose, asset-based pedagogies will look like a complete overhaul of the system. These pedagogies are also intended to challenge social justice issues that plague our country and schools. Asset-based pedagogies allow educators to attempt to bridge the cultural gap between teachers and students. Still, the critiques provided by Alim and

Paris (2014) remind us that intentional, purposeful, and nuanced work and learning are involved in implementing these asset-based pedagogies.

According to Alim and Paris (2014), researchers and practitioners of asset-based pedagogies must realize and prioritize the fact that race, ethnicity, languages, and ways of being are not unidirectional. For example, students who are a part of the global majority are not monolithic, nor is the way they engage and practice their cultural traditions. This means asset-based pedagogies can use more than just African American language; hip-hop; or just one piece of cultural course associated with their race, ethnicity, or culture in the classroom. People, especially youths, practice their cultural ways of being through language, literacies, food, traditions, etc., which are ever-evolving (Alim & Paris, 2014). Alim and Paris (2014) warn that if researchers of asset-based pedagogies need to be mindful of how they present and discuss how students of color use their race, ethnicity, language, etc., then there can be an oversimplification of such pedagogies. To address this potential issue, “heritages practices” and “community practices” are offered to showcase that communities are dynamic. For example, the traditional understanding of what it means to be of the global majority is essential, yet young people may be evolving and shifting what that means and how it is practiced (Alim & Paris, 2014).

These critiques are valuable when addressing and demonstrating the need for asset-based pedagogies like CSP to address the needs of students because doing so is not a small or simple task. Teachers will need to be committed to learning and continued teaching as the research progresses. In addition, these pedagogies may require teachers, especially those from the dominant White culture, to relinquish what they may define as educational success. The critiques are also important because they acknowledge the flexibility and evolving nature of these pedagogies as solutions to the pervasive Whiteness of the education system. Lastly, Alim and

Paris (2014) believe that a critical gaze should be used internally within historically marginalized communities as a part of asset-based pedagogies. This means that culturally specific things can still be used to focus and center a cultural group while learning and teaching; however, within that, potentially problematic attributes should be dissected and analyzed, as culturally specific things are valid and culturally distinctive, but imperfect.

An example of this would be hip-hop as a part of the global majority culture. Although it is distinctive and can be seen as a branch of literacies, language, and expression, the global majority community must tackle the sometimes misogynistic and homophobic tones in hip-hop (Alim & Paris, 2014). An asset-based pedagogy like CSP would encourage and show students how to analyze lyrics, highlight what is socially and politically inappropriate and why, and possibly discuss the context of why the songs may be the way they are. That critical view would need to come from within, but analysis, observation, and communication skills are all useful and necessary to succeed academically. This highlights how doing the work of CSP and other asset-based pedagogies is not going to be easy, but just because it may be different or even perceived as controversial does not mean educators should shy away from understanding and attempting to implement culturally relevant, responsive, and/or sustaining pedagogies.

Reflecting on the purpose of education and schooling in the United States is crucial to better understand why such principles of culturally relevant, responsive, and sustaining pedagogies are necessary. According to Paris (2012), the current assessment of the goal and purpose of education in the United States is that it “has the quite explicit goal of creating a monocultural and monolingual society based on White, middle-class norms of language and culture being” (p. 95). Employing and applying the tenets of culturally sustaining practices is a way to actively resist the current trajectory of school norms; without such resistance, students are

at risk of losing who they are culturally in order to achieve academically (Paris, 2012). Students who find themselves not a part of the dominant, everyday culture of White and middle-class should not be put in a position where they have to choose between their heritage and connections to their lineage and cultural community in order to learn and achieve in school. There is a definite disconnect between what schooling and schools in the United States look like, represent, and teach and what the student populations in those schools look like and represent. Instead of promoting the idea that those students should culturally assimilate and conform to a standard way of being that is palatable to those who are White and middle-class, schools should acknowledge and embrace the reality that there is a plurality, as Paris (2012) puts it, of who students and people are. Schools and teachers can embrace this plurality in small ways, for example, by allowing and supporting students to speak in their native language or acknowledging all religious or cultural holidays related to them (Paris, 2012). Although not directly tied to instruction or achievement, these small gestures allow students to see and know that the various parts of their identities are respected and supported in the classroom. This can then increase a student's level of comfortability and give them the opportunity and space to be vulnerable enough to be challenged, learn, and thus, achieve academically.

It is important to note that CSPs and the previous work on CRPs go far beyond the needs of global majority students and the relationships between them students and their White teachers. Students of the global majority are simply one marginalized group that CSPs are meant to help. More specifically, CSPs are intended to put various communities, such as Black, Asian, Latine, indigenous, Pacific Islander, and others, at the center of learning and teaching (Paris, 2021). Culturally sustaining pedagogies entail much more than including culturally significant and relevant knowledge and content in a lesson, unit, or course; they should encompass “critically

centering dynamic communities” in the teaching and learning of those student groups (Paris, 2021, p. 366). This clarification of how CSPs should work further exemplifies why using the term “sustaining” versus and in conjunction with “relevant” and “responsive” is needed. Students should be actively and consistently engaged in the work of thinking critically as it pertains to their histories, languages, and ways of being.

Also, as previously mentioned, CSPs were presented to acknowledge, honor, and use the pluralism that exists in us all (Paris, 2012). This pluralism is more than the concept that students encompass plural ways of being, whether in terms of their racial identity or being multi-lingual: it also involves where and how CSPs can be used. For example, CSPs can and do exist along multiple intersections that also include multiple locations; culturally sustaining pedagogies and practices can occur beyond the formal classroom setting. To be successful and meaningful practitioners of CSPs, one should include various community members, stakeholders, and the classroom teacher (Paris, 2021). Also, CSPs remind us that students are people as well as that the intersectionality of who they are encompasses more than just their race and ethnicity; CSPs acknowledge the intersection of culture with a disability, gender, sexuality, migration, and much more (Paris, 2021).

According to Paris (2021), those wanting and willing to implement CSPs can use some questions to guide the work in creating settings conducive to the creation of CSPs, such as “Do we critically center dynamic communities, their valued languages, practices, and knowledge? Are student and intergenerational community agency and input built into the setting?” (p. 368). Educators can use these questions and their answers to gauge how and if their teaching practice is culturally sustaining. It will take the continuous and consistent work of educators and community members to ensure that those communities remain focused and at the center of

teaching and learning. Teachers, especially those who are a part of the dominant White culture, will need to rely on those community investments and partnerships to ensure that the way culture and community of the global majority, for example, are put at the center of the teaching and learning is done in a manner that is respectful, responsible, and meaningful. This exemplifies why Paris (2021) refers to culturally sustaining pedagogy and practices as a collective: it is far too large and complex to be a monolith. A collection of research and resources can be used to address dynamic communities' various needs and nuances (Paris, 2021).

Alim, Paris, and Wong (2020) explicitly state how the collection of work that makes up CSPs is in direct opposition to Whiteness and what it represents, and they specify Whiteness as the problem which CSPs are meant to tackle. The foundations of education and schooling in most parts of the world, specifically the United States, are centered on colonial and imperialist ideas perpetrated by White people. Whiteness created numerous marginalized groups, like Black, Latine, Asian, various indigenous groups, and others, to experience oppression in the form of racism, slavery, genocide, colonialism, and imperialism; these forms of oppression have had a direct impact on the values and structure of schooling (Alim, Paris, & Wong, 2020). Culturally sustainable pedagogies can be used to dismantle such oppressive structures and tackle the problematic deficit thinking associated with the abilities and capabilities of marginalized student groups (Paris, 2021). The status quo of education and schooling does not suffice if it does not meet the needs of the growingly diverse student population of the country.

Section Three

Global Teacher Induction

Teacher induction programs outside of the United States look very different. According to Darling-Hammond (2017), to change the narrative of the teaching profession, Ontario, Canada

revamped its teacher preparation to include an intensive 4-year induction program. Their induction program includes some previously mentioned components, such as intentional mentorship, observations with discussion and debriefing, and continuous professional development based on the new teacher's needs and wants (Darling-Hammond, 2017). In Singapore, mentor teachers are trained and supported to specifically mentor and help new teachers as they transition into the classroom, and novice teachers receive reduced workloads and are paired with a buddy teacher in the same subject area (Darling-Hammond, 2017). New and novice teachers in countries like Singapore, Finland, Australia, and Canada are treated like they are in transition, and induction programs have been developed to support that transition. Furthermore, new teachers in these countries are not expected to be able to manage and perform like veteran teachers in their first year, and why would they be? These countries with well-organized, funded, and supported teacher induction programs have also reported lower new teacher attrition rates and higher overall teacher retention rates, with even a teacher surplus in some areas (Darling-Hammond, 2017). This demonstrates that when new and novice teachers are and feel supported as they learn in their new profession and are treated like any other new professional, they want to stay and continue working. Unlike the "sink or swim" method used in the United States, new teachers in other countries are given swimming lessons, floaties, a life vest, a lifeguard, and a raft if things gets too much.

Teacher Induction Programs

The education, training, and support of teachers in the United States seem flawed compared to the realities of U.S. public school classrooms and other countries. The current structure of many teacher education programs consists of content-specific knowledge and lots of pedagogy theory. Perspective teachers are exposed to the realities of the classroom through

practicum, student teaching, and internship opportunities (Darling-Hammond, 2006). New teacher induction programs have become the bridge by which to improve the transition of preservice teachers to the workforce. In tracing the history of professional development and training for new and novice teachers, it is clear that the research on teacher education and the school induction and training of new teachers needs to be more consistent. Ingersoll and Strong (2011) describe induction programs as “support, guidance, and orientation programs for new employees.” Unlike other professional jobs, this is not standard practice for most teaching professionals (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011, p. 201). Unfortunately, new teachers are often left to fend for themselves during their first year in the classroom and are not given much support to be successful. The last couple of decades saw an increase in new teacher induction programs in the United States from 40% in the 1990s to around 80% in 2008 (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). There seems to be a correlation between the existence and quality of teacher induction programs and the high teacher attrition of less than five years (Ingersoll & Smith, 2004). Teaching can be tricky, challenging work, and without the proper training and support, teachers are unable to do the job and choose to leave the profession.

The gap between completing a teacher education program and teaching in the classroom is where the need for an induction program arises (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). Hopefully, by providing more support and bridging this gap, induction programs can improve teaching strategies and classroom environments and increase student learning and achievement (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). In addition, induction programs can be a tool to support new teachers and an opportunity for veteran teachers to mentor and help preservice teachers succeed. With most teaching positions being occupied by new teachers, serious attention is needed to determine how best to support them as new professionals in the hopes of retaining them. Purposeful teacher

induction programs highlight how schools and districts feel about and value their faculty, which could ultimately influence new teachers with regard to whether those are places where they can learn and grow as teachers.

Cultural Diversity Embedded in Teacher Induction

The existence of more teacher induction programs is growing around the country, and there is great variety and diversity in the components of these programs. In a study by Ingersoll and Smith (200), teacher induction included varying levels of mentoring, joint planning, and everyday activities for most new teachers who participated in induction programs. Teacher induction can include but is not limited to meetings with supervisors, professional development, orientation sessions, classroom assistance, and reduced workloads (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). This diversity of induction program components leads to inconsistent teacher induction across states and districts. According to Ingersoll and Strong (2014), mentorship between new and veteran teachers is the most common component of teacher induction. Mentorship can be a valuable tool in teacher induction, but only if the mentee and mentor are paired with intention. More inconsistencies exist in how schools and districts in the United States select their mentors because the quality of the mentor-mentee relationship can be affected if the mentorship is not given voluntarily and if the mentor doesn't have a vested interest in the mentee.

In their review of 15 empirical studies on new teacher induction programs since the 1980s, Ingersoll and Strong (2011) state that

Overall, the studies we have reviewed provide empirical support for the claim that induction for beginning teachers and teacher mentoring programs, particularly, have a positive impact. Almost all of the studies we examined showed that beginning teachers

who participated in some induction had higher satisfaction, commitment, or retention. (p. 225)

The conclusion of this study, which examines several other studies regarding new teacher induction, provides proof that induction programs work; however, their type, implementation, and consistency can be improved. This study also shows that the achievement of teachers in the various induction programs spanning decades and states also increased (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011). There is empirical data that proves having some induction programs for new teachers improves new teacher retention. However, it is up to school districts to determine how to fund and implement such programs. According to Ingersoll and Strong (2011), teacher induction programs like mentoring are an investment in human capital, and induction programs should be considered an extension of a preservice teacher's education, except that the investment comes from the schools and not the individual. After conducting a critical empirical review of those 15 studies on induction programs for new and novice teachers, Ingersoll and Strong (2011) suggest, "the object of these support programs is to improve the performance and retention of beginning teachers, that is, to enhance and prevent the loss of investments in teachers' human capital" (p. 225).

Research shows that before the 1980s, induction programs were rare, but their creation and growth over time, especially in the 1980s, was related to an impending national teacher shortage (Addison, 2007). Even four decades ago, teacher educators, researchers, and school leaders understood that more was needed to ease the transition of new teachers to the classroom and ensure the best-trained and qualified candidates were successful there. Therefore, instituting induction programs for new teachers could be the solution. However, while tracing the history and trajectory of new teacher induction programs and other training and professional

development for new and novice teachers, there still seems to be a discrepancy in how teacher education programs prepare preservice teachers and how school districts and schools support those same teachers. Some research suggests that this difference is connected to the budgetary limitations of state and local school boards (Addison, 2007). Should the bulk of the cost to create, maintain, and assess induction programs for preservice teachers be the burden of schools and school districts, or should it be shared with the new professionals and even their teacher education program? The continued use of and research into new teachers' induction programs demonstrate their value. Still, the challenge lies in the concrete action plan of creating and executing meaningful new teacher induction programs.

With all the research on and discussion of what induction for novice teachers is, what it can look like, and why it is needed, more research needs to be done on the actual effects of induction programs. Specifically, induction programs impact new teachers' teaching practices, thus affecting their teaching practices and student achievement (Wang et al., 2008). In their critical review of the literature before 1997, Wang et al. (2008) analyze how teacher induction programs affect the teaching practice of novice teacher participants and their student achievement outcomes. Prior studies and research look at the effects of teacher induction programs on how new and novice teachers feel and think about the teaching profession and their respective school culture and climate (Wang et al., 2008). Then, Wang et al. (2008) suggest that a novice teacher could adjust to the school culture with the help of a teacher induction program; however, that does not translate into them being able to teach. Teacher education programs at the undergraduate and graduate levels focus primarily on the theory of pedagogy and the content-specific knowledge and skills preservice teachers need. Therefore, upon graduation, preservice teachers are not as prepared for the daily practical work of being a classroom teacher, and

induction programs are intended to provide on-the-job training for the art and skill of teaching (Wang et al., 2008).

In focusing on the effects of teacher induction programs on the teaching practices and student achievement of novice teachers, the effects of mentorship as a part of new teacher induction programs were examined (Wang et al., 2008). To do this, Wang et al. (2008) found a few studies in which mentorship during or as teacher induction was researched to discern its effect. Mentorship is a component that is often included in teacher induction programs, but in some spaces, mentorship has become synonymous with induction. While mentorship can be provided in many ways, it usually involves pairing new or novice teachers with a veteran teacher. Their interactions can range from observations, discussions, check-ins, etc. For example, in one study, a veteran teacher with 30 years of experience supervised 14 new teachers as their mentor in an induction program (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b; Wang et al., 2008). The mentor was observed giving the new teachers opportunities to group think and brainstorm instead of being the sole expert in the room, which may have provided the new teachers with the space to grow and improve in their teaching practice (Feiman-Nemser, 2001b; Wang et al., 2008). Wang et al. (2008) also uncovered that the researchers of another study (Athanases & Achinstein, 2003) had found that new teachers who had mentors who assisted them in understanding how students learned had higher outcomes of being able to have student-centered instruction. This means that the mentor teachers were able to help new teachers leverage student learning styles to create a more student-centered classroom, thus strengthening the teaching practice of those new teachers.

Following this, Wang et al. (2008) reviewed research that examined how new teachers who participated in teacher induction programs reported their own experiences. The takeaway was that the new teachers liked being observed by their mentor, observing their mentor's

practice, and then having lesson-based discussions. For the new teachers, there was value in seeing excellent and sound pedagogical approaches and getting feedback on their teaching practices. That way, the new teachers could adjust their teaching practice as they progressed through the school year, which usually affects student achievement positively; however, in these studies where new teachers participating in the induction programs self-reported their experiences, Wang et al. (2008) suggest that there is not enough information and details about the induction program as a whole to accurately determine its effect and impact. Without those necessary details, other schools and districts may be unable to replicate the induction program. For example, how were the mentor and preservice teacher pairings made, and how often did the observations and lesson-based discussions happen?

Overall, Wang et al. (2008) provide a critical look into how induction programs work and how they can affect a new teacher's teaching practice. Induction programs are indeed used to ease and guide the transition of preservice teachers to the classroom, but they should also be about what kind of instruction is taking place and how it can help the new teachers learn and grow in their new practice. Induction programs, especially mentorship, can be highly beneficial in molding new teachers. Research suggests that a teacher's experience within their first year of teaching will set the trajectory for whether they will stay or leave the teaching profession (Wang et al., 2008). Lastly, Wang et al. (2008) recommend future research on teacher induction programs. They concluded that at the time, in 2008, a substantial body of research that would allow for the generalization that teacher induction programs influenced the teaching practice and potential student achievement of novice teachers did not yet exist. Amid a national teacher shortage, high teacher turnover, and low retention rates, attention is needed to create and implement induction programs that will ultimately support teaching practices best suited for

student achievement and success. Researching teacher induction programs to continue the education and training of teachers seems to place much focus on how to produce better prepared teachers who will stay in the profession rather than attempting to tackle some of the structural issues present in most school districts across the United States.

Summary

The literature highlights the growing racial, ethnic, and cultural divide among students in U.S. schools and their teachers as well as the inadequate and inconsistent ways that teacher education and teacher induction programs are preparing and supporting new and preservice teachers for the culturally diverse classrooms that await them. Teacher education and teacher induction programs have room to include more opportunities for new and preservice teachers to interact and engage with students from various cultural backgrounds and provide intentional mentorship throughout the transition into full-time teaching. In addition, asset-based pedagogies, CRP, CRT, and CST inform teachers and teacher educators of how they can recognize the cultural characteristics of their students and harness them as means for academic achievement.

CHAPTER 3: Methods

Selecting the appropriate research design is imperative for a well-planned study. This chapter describes what methods were used to meet the goals and purpose of this study. In addition, this chapter describes the research design, research questions, participant demographics, data collection procedures, and data analysis.

Research Design and Methodology

This research study had a qualitative research design, which allowed me to observe people and processes to better understand them in their natural settings. Following this, I was able to analyze those observations to make meaning of things, predictions, and recommendations. The qualitative research design of this study allowed me to observe, discuss, and reflect on how White female social studies teachers are prepared for culturally and racially diverse classrooms. This is because a qualitative research design is associated with human nature (Creswell, 2013) and incorporates “personal experience and intuition” along with the empirical nature of research (Stake, 2010, p. 11). The research methodology that guided my research design was phenomenography, which is the study of how various people and groups understand and experience a particular phenomenon (Marton, 1981). The purpose of this study was to discover how White female social studies teachers (the people/group) understand and experience their training and preparation to teach students of the global majority (the phenomenon).

My identity as a Black female social studies teacher and my connection to the research methodology of phenomenography provided an extra layer of validity because this methodology is a second-order approach, and I did not seek to interpret my understanding (Lunn & Ross, 2021). According to Lunn and Ross (2021), a second-order approach centers

on the participant's reflections and interpretation of the phenomenon. This helped to ensure that my intentions and thoughts were not at the center of the study. As a research methodology, phenomenography also calls for deliberate documentation of the choices within the survey for procedural validity (Lunn & Ross, 2021). This includes preparing the interview questions and refraining from any data analysis until the interviews have been completed and all data have been collected (Lunn & Ross, 2021). This allows the researcher to be fully present during the interview and other data collection methods. Waiting to analyze the data keeps the researcher from making assumptions, changing the subsequent interview questions, or probing. Phenomenography is about uncovering the participant's collective experiences and contextualization of a phenomenon, so the data should be examined and analyzed as a collective as well as individual comments and quotes to be compared and contrasted while extracting and supporting the description of categories (Lunn & Ross, 2021).

Since I know that the interpretation of the world and reality is subjective, I ascribe to the ontological paradigm of relativism, meaning that I think my existence is constructed and impacted by my experiences, and someone else's reality could be different from mine based on how it is built. More importantly, I recognize the injustices and inequalities created in society by our realities, such as racism, police brutality, and inequities in education, and I wanted my research to change or transform those issues (Mertens, 2021). This informed my epistemological assumptions, which are transformative, thus taking the constructivist view a step further. I know that my desire to uncover knowledge as a researcher cannot be disconnected from those I am studying, nor can I understand how someone's history is socially constructed. Therefore, this paradigm allowed me to seek out the research participants' views on the research questions because worldviews and perspectives are varied

and complex (Creswell, 2007). My work in uncovering my participants' ideas contributes to the strategies and tools that can be used to address the inequalities and inadequacies that currently exist in schooling and the education system in the United States. I agree with Boda's (2021) assertion that while using phenomenography, people's experiences can influence and change their responses to the phenomenon. My worldview aligns with this concept that people's life experiences or lack thereof shape how they interpret the world around them. In this case, the way White female social studies teachers understand and experience how they were educated, prepared, and trained to teach global majority students, coupled with their background, impacted how they perceived their ability to do so effectively.

Since its inception, phenomenography has been used in research for teaching and learning (Lam, 2022). According to Lam's (2022) interpretation, phenomenography allows the researcher to analyze learners' ways of seeing an object of learning. In the context of my study, the learners are the White female social studies teachers. So, what are their ways of seeing or understanding their preparation to engage and teach students of the global majority? By investigating the learners, White female social studies teachers, and methods of seeing, the results of this study can be implemented in the future for instructional purposes (Lam, 2022) such as the establishment of a series of professional developments or support systems for teachers or revisions in how White female social studies teachers are prepared to teach global majority students. In addition, applying a phenomenographic approach allows for developing solutions that expose the "learners" to new ways of seeing and understanding the phenomenon (Lam, 2022). Implementing a phenomenographic study suited my research because the intention, as Lam (2022) describes it, was to build a collective awareness of different ways of seeing among learners and teachers. The responses and data of the participants can lead to a

change in how certain White female teachers conceptualize global majority students and their learning and achievement.

Phenomenography is a methodology usually categorized as a descendant of the phenomenology research methodology. Phenomenology as a research methodology was first associated with Husserl at the turn of the 20th century. The methodology was first developed and used as descriptive psychology (Stolz, 2020). According to Stolz (2020), phenomenology is mainly concerned with clarifying how the world comes into existence. It is also known as research in the first-order perspective, which centers on the researcher's understanding of the phenomenon. In his critique of phenomenography as a research methodology, Stolz (2020) argues whether there is enough distinction between phenomenography and phenomenology to constitute a separate research methodology. Stolz (2020) suggests that phenomenography picks and chooses which parts of phenomenology to follow and then rebrands it as something it is not. Based on my understanding of phenomenography, enough evidence of why it was suitable for my research study exists. Still, the contention within recent research is worth mentioning.

As previously mentioned, my worldview is based on my experiences, and as a Black social studies teacher, I value students' cultural distinctiveness in the classroom. I have had the unfortunate experience of witnessing the mistreatment and ignorance of my White female social studies colleagues with regard to students of different racial and cultural backgrounds than them. Therefore, I see my position as a social studies teacher as more than that of an instructor of curriculum; I am a facilitator in helping students make meaning of the world around them. This world contains issues of injustice as well as cultural differences. Throughout my teaching, I have struggled with managing the trauma of being Black in the

United States and helping my students of the global majority work through the same trauma, which often begins in school. These feelings of hopelessness and frustration led me to this research topic because I want more teachers of all colors to be better equipped to help students navigate the world outside of school and acknowledge and support students in their cultural authenticity.

My identity as a Black female social studies teacher and my subsequent worldview could have threatened the study's validity. The structure of phenomenography as a research methodology reminded me as the researcher that the study was not about me or what I sought to understand, but about how the participants experienced and understood the phenomenon (Stolz, 2020). The second-order perspective of phenomenography required that I ensured my own experiences and assumptions as a researcher were kept out of the way and I didn't allow them to guide the analysis of the data. Although Marton (1981) did not think it necessary because of the data analysis structure of phenomenography, utilizing bracketing or phenomenological reduction helped me to acknowledge my positionality in the study. According to Stolz (2020), bracketing allows researchers to suspend all their natural attitudes, beliefs, assumptions, and opinions related to the research topic. Bracketing can keep the researcher focused and present on the subject and not on their own biases or interpretations.

The focus of this study was to highlight the various ways in which White female social studies teachers have experienced being prepared to interact with, engage, and teach students of the global majority. As individual participants and a collective, what are the different ways through which they have been able to make sense and meaning of teaching students of the global majority, and how were they educated, prepared, and even supported to do so successfully? As previously discussed, there is much research surrounding the fact that most

current and future teaching professionals are White women, with a consensus that teacher education and induction should be focused on their needs and gaps, especially surrounding cultural competencies. Therefore, a way to support the current research was to investigate a subset of those teachers and uncover how they have been experiencing and making sense of their teacher preparation experiences, particularly with regard to engaging and teaching global majority students. The choice of phenomenography as the research methodology for this study allowed for the discovery and explanation of qualitative categories based on the responses of the participants. These provided insight into if and how the focus of teacher education and support is working for the White female teachers studied.

Phenomenography also happens to be a research method forged from research about student learning and understanding. Therefore, evidence exists for its suitability to be used within education research, specifically with topics related to teaching and learning (Lam, 2022). The discoveries made in a phenomenography study can be used for instructional purposes in the future. With regard to this study, the White female social studies teachers' experiences of their preparation for teaching global majority students may reveal ways to better prepare future preservice teachers. Also, the methodology recognizes that people can think and experience a phenomenon in various ways, which in this case, extended to how a student and a teacher learn. In agreeing with the phenomenography concept that students or subjects think—and thus, learn—differently, it was necessary to question how or why those students or subjects are taught in the same way with the expectation of similar results.

According to Lam (2022), phenomenography studies strive to build a collective awareness or knowledge base of different ways of seeing the world.

It is worth noting that desiring to uncover how White female social studies teachers experience and conceptualize their teacher preparation for teaching global majority students through the research methodology of phenomenography is aligned with the belief that students, including teachers, have funds of knowledge that affect how they see and experience the world (Moll et al., 1992). As previously discussed, phenomenography allows the researcher to experience the world or the phenomenon through the lens of the participants. Therefore, it is essential to acknowledge all the life experiences and cultural backgrounds of the participants in a phenomenographic study. Undoubtedly, those funds of knowledge, or the knowledge and skills students and people bring with them, may color their conceptualization and understanding of the world around them.

Problem Statement

The demographics of students in U.S. public schools are rapidly changing in terms of cultural and racial diversity, while most teachers in U.S. public schools remain White and female (Ingersoll, 2017). These inverted statistics fuel a growing cultural divide among minority students and their teachers in the United States. This divide can lead to inequitable learning environments and limited access to equitable education opportunities for students of the global majority, along with the biases of their White teachers (Henfield & Washington, 2012). Such a divide may also impact the emotional and psychological well-being of minority students if they are made to feel their natural ways of being are less than that of the majority in an academic setting (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Historically, schools and education were not intended for students of the global majority (Paris, 2012). Although the times have changed, the culture of what it means to be successful in school has often been connected to the language, actions, and opportunities of Whiteness, which the global majority or other

culturally and racially diverse students have been deprived of (Delpit, 1995). Therefore, I want to know how White female social studies teachers have experienced being prepared to meet the growing cultural changes in public school classrooms, especially regarding global majority students.

Amid increased visibility of racially motivated injustices like the deaths of George Floyd, Ahmaud Arbery, and Breonna Taylor and the subsequent protests, the content of social studies bears a unique connection with how to teach and address those issues, especially to students of the global majority. This study explores and seeks to understand the experiences of White social studies teachers regarding their education, training, and support in cultural diversity and their assessment of and reflection on their ability to teach and engage with global majority students in a meaningful way in the public school setting. Research shows that teacher education programs have lacked and continue to lack adequately culturally relevant pedagogy and practices (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Are White social studies teachers challenged with tackling racially and culturally significant events in class self-aware of a cultural divide between themselves and their global majority students, and how does that translate into their instruction? (Ladson-Billings, 1995)

Phenomenography was an appropriate methodology for my research because it is often used throughout education to investigate and study learners' experiences and perceptions of learning (Nyamapfene, 2021). In this study, the learners were the teachers, and their experiences of their teacher education and preparation was studied. Phenomenography is also appropriate because research results within this methodology can be used for instructional purposes in teaching and learning (Åkerlind, 2008). For example, in phenomenography, there is a revelation of different variations of student experiences relative to how they understand

something, which can be very useful for teachers and researchers to gain a deeper understanding of how and what students experience and understand (Åkerlind, 2008). These understandings and variations can then be used to create lessons and a learning environment suited to how those students process and experience the content. My research topic and the subsequent study can be used to examine how teacher education and new teacher induction programs are created, monitored, and implemented. Since a phenomenographic study focuses on the participants' experiences, data from the perspective of White social studies teachers may inform teacher educators of how their current content and methods translate into the reality of the classroom. As a phenomenographic study, this research topic intentionally gives its participants the breadth and depth to reflect on and share their experiences of an object or phenomenon.

Research Questions

Keeping in mind the purpose and intent of phenomenographic studies, below are the research questions that guided this study:

1. In what qualitatively different ways did White female social studies teachers experience cultural competencies during their teacher preparation?
2. What are the ways through which White female social studies teachers understand students of the global majority?
3. What are the ways through which White female social studies teachers understand asset-based pedagogies such as CRP, CRT, and CSP?
4. In what qualitatively different ways have white female social studies teachers experienced implementing and being supported in asset-based pedagogies such as CRP, CRT, and CSP?

The format and structure of the research questions are intended to specifically demonstrate what the research is meant to uncover. The focus of each research question is the participants' experiences, understandings, and conceptualizations. This aligns with the research method of phenomenography because, from a second-order perspective, the study is all about the participants' experiences of the world around them and a specific phenomenon. These research questions helped to clearly define the purpose of the study and guided the development of the interview questions and journal reflection prompts.

Context of the Study and Participant Demographics

The research setting was small since there were several limitations on the potential participant pool. First, there has been and continues to be a shift in the cultural and racial demographics among students in public schools in the United States. At the same time, the teacher population remains White and female (Ingersoll, 2017). As this shift has been documented throughout the country, my focus for this study was for my current school district in the Southwest region of Georgia to serve as a sample of the more significant cultural and demographic shift in public education and then school districts throughout the same state. The racial and ethnic makeup of students and teachers in this school district setting and the state are representative of the national trends: the majority of the school district's students are categorized as non-White and of the global majority, and the majority of the teachers are categorized as White.

The inclusion criteria for this study were teachers who have taught for 1–10 years in total and are currently teaching in a public school district in Georgia, identify as White, female, and teach a social studies course. Only teachers who met all the criteria were included in the study. The years of experience were critical because the study focuses on how those teachers feel they

have been prepared relative to the newer demographic trends in students. One to 10 years of experience was still recent enough for the participants to be able to reflect directly on their teacher education program as well as any new teacher induction program or training they assume time vested in the school district and profession; they may be more willing to reflect on their experiences as well as admit to knowledge. The participants were identified as females based on how they chose to identify themselves demographically. Finally, social studies was defined as any variation of the subject area, including Advanced Placement United States History, World History, Economics, American Government/Civics, or Geography for Grades 6–12. Content is important because issues of race, culture, and diversity are explicitly embedded in the social studies curriculum. The recent visibility of incidents of police brutality, racially charged protests, and the recent controversy of critical race theory bans in schools along with more injustices are shaping students' experiences and world view, especially those from marginalized racial groups. These social issues and movements are related to and interconnected with the content of social studies and how White female social studies teachers are equipped, trained, and supported to teach, engage, and support global majority students in general, but especially amidst such growing tension.

Participants also had to have students of the global majority in their classrooms to be included in the study. The school district and the state have culturally diverse student demographics, which suggests that most secondary school classrooms will have several global majority students. The participants selected for the study were asked to provide the student demographic breakdown of their classrooms at the beginning of the study. The participants were also asked to reflect on their previous teaching experiences with global majority students, including during their student teaching program or internship. Since the study examined how

White female social studies teachers interact with, engage, and teach students of the global majority, it was necessary that the participants were teaching or had experience with teaching and engaging with global majority students.

The participants were recruited by word of mouth, solicited emails, flyers sent to schools, and social media posts on various platforms (Facebook, Twitter, and Instagram) detailing the research study and inclusion criteria. My first step in recruiting participants was using my professional relationships within the school district to isolate the teachers in the school district who met the inclusion criteria. Then, emails and inter-office mail were sent out to solicit participation. The school district for the research setting has seven high schools and 12 middle schools, which I hoped would serve as a comprehensive base to get at least 6–10 participants who met the inclusion criteria. If the participant response was too small, a concession on the number of years of experience would have been made in the case that the prospective participants were still White female social studies teachers.

The study was limited to secondary school social studies teachers. Since teacher preparation experience can vary based on grade level, I wanted to focus on this specific category of social studies teachers. To obtain the participants' informed consent, each participant signed a waiver acknowledging their participation in the study as well as the scope of the research and questions. The participants also heard a verbal disclaimer similar to the written informed consent, and each participant voice recorded their approval.

Data Collection

To collect data for this research study, I conducted open-ended interviews and managed a series of reflective journal writing sessions with the participants. The research study was shown during the Fall of 2022 or Spring of 2023. The duration of the study was nine weeks. This

duration was chosen to accommodate the schedules and availability of the participants. The participants were interviewed in a secure environment where they could answer and reflect openly. Because the research setting was the school district that both the participants and researcher work for, the interviews were held in an off-campus location to ensure privacy and protect against any repercussions for negative or disparaging comments.

Each participant was interviewed twice at different times during the study period. Each interview lasted about 30–45 minutes of the scheduled time. Then, there was a third round of interview times. Hence, each participant could check their prior interview transcript and recording and clarify or answer follow-up questions. The participants were also asked to keep a reflective journal for a specified period of time during the study. The journal entries dealt with what and how they teach, what cultural barriers or differences they recognize with their students, their experience with diversity, and culturally relevant practices as a part of their teacher education program. The participants were provided with specific journal prompts related to some of the interview questions and had the opportunity to reflect on their feelings, thoughts, and practices with their global majority students. The journal entries served as a place for the participants to reflect on their practice and allowed them to share their feelings or thoughts about the interview that they may not have had an opportunity to share during the discussion. The participants were given the journal prompt at the end of each of their respective interviews. The prompt was related to a particular question from the interview. Participants had to type up their responses and return them within 48 hours. Microsoft Forms was used to collect all the participant responses; only I had access to the responses and a digital copy when the data analysis began.

An interview protocol was created and tested before the actual interviews were conducted. All the participants were read the same script describing the research and interview scope, and the same questions were used. Each interview was recorded for later analysis for themes and the creation of categories. The software Otter.ai was used to record the audio and transcribe the recordings, and the transcriptions are ably editable if accents or interpretations need to be corrected. The participants' reflective journals were scanned into Atlas AI as a means of organization and for later analysis with their interview transcripts.

The structure of the data collection aligned with the prescribed procedure for a phenomenographic study. A semi-structured, open-ended question interview protocol is most readily used when conducting a phenomenographic study (Lam, 2022). Although this protocol is the main method used, phenomenography is flexible with the data collection methods used, for example, observations and document collection are often used to collect data (Lam, 2022). To illustrate, Lam (2022) used phenomenography to study how teachers in Hong Kong see ethnically diverse students. Lam (2022) used interviews with 81 kindergarten teachers and the collection of documents showing teaching and practice as the data collection methods. The interviews were semi-structured and open-ended questions were asked, which allowed for probing during the 45-minute interviews, and among the documents collected were lesson plans and teacher reflections (Lam, 2022). An open-ended interview structure allows the participant to guide the interview and better explain their experiences of the phenomenon under study (Stolz, 2020). Along with an open-ended structure, the researcher should keep the questions short so that their own bias does not direct the participant's responses (Stolz, 2020), as the focus of collecting data in a phenomenography is the participant's experiences of the phenomenon and not what the phenomenon is or the researcher's understanding of those experiences.

My plan for the semi-structured interviews and journal reflections aligned with other recent phenomenography studies. To examine the extent to which science education graduate students embraced disabilities studies perspective in a diverse course, Boda (2021) also used in-depth interviews and bi-weekly reviews to collect data. Although Marton (1981) describes the preferred method of data collection in a phenomenography study as semi-structured interviews, including the collection of reflective journal entries from the participants allowed for triangulation. My journal reflection prompts followed the open-ended nature of the interviews to provide the participants with the space and opportunity to reflect. Some of the participants may have been more comfortable responding and sharing their thoughts in writing, especially in the case of the sensitive topic of race and interactions surrounding race. I also acknowledged that as a Black female social studies teacher, a White female social studies teacher may feel more comfortable sharing her thoughts in writing instead of being candid and relaxed with me in person. Also, conducting more than one interview fostered comfort and thus, the vulnerability for the participants to share their thoughts freely and without judgment.

Data Analysis

After all the interviews were conducted, each interview was transcribed. Otter.ai was used to record and transcribe each participants' interview. This software records audio, automatically transcribes it, and identifies multiple speakers. Therefore, after each interview recording, an editable transcript was available within the software. I corrected any errors in the transcription as I listened to the recorded interview, and the changes were noted. All the participant recordings and transcripts were saved and stored on the Otter.ai software.

Every interview was listened to and read multiple times to pull out or identify reoccurring themes with manual coding. After listening to and reviewing the interviews, codes were placed.

In phenomenography, this stage is called data reduction, which entails the researcher going through the data and determining what is relevant and what is not (Stolz, 2020). Following this, the codes were grouped based on similarities, and each group became a theme or category of description. These categories represented how the participants experienced or conceptualized the phenomenon based on their statements and responses from the interview transcripts (Stolz, 2020). At this stage, it was essential to look at all the participants' interview transcripts for themes that appeared and examine the interviews as a collective to see whether there were any overlaps in the participants' experiences of the phenomenon, and if so, what they were. According to Stolz (2020), Marton (1981) referred to the first layer of grouping and categorizing of the data as the "pool of meaning." This first layer represented sentiments that all the participants expressed in their responses. Then, a further reduction was made by categorizing individual meanings. According to Marton (1981), phenomenography results in a limited number of descriptions or ways a person can experience or conceptualize a phenomenon.

The data analysis was conducted in a private and secure location to protect each participant's identity and responses. On one document, the transcript, the first layer of codes and the next layer of themes were visible in order to track the analysis. Then, the Atlas AI software was used to produce a second layer of coding.

To begin with, the interview transcripts were uploaded to Atlas AI. The transcripts were edited for any errors or inconsistencies with the audio recording, and those edits were documented in the study. Then, the previously identified codes were added along with comments on transcript quotes. The codes were also divided into positive, negative, and neutral sentiments within Atlas AI. Next, the participant's reflective journals were copied into Atlas AI and connected to the participants' interviews. Each journal was read and reread while identifying

significant themes or categories. Also, the journal themes were compared to those identified in the interviews to see if any overlaps could be identified. The overlapping themes that arose from the participants' interviews and journal entries made up the limited categories that describe their experiences. If appropriately reduced or correctly analyzed using phenomenography as a research method, the data would reveal how the participants had experienced the phenomenon. The categories discovered from the data had to be logically related based on the quotes and comments of the participants. In phenomenography, those relationships among types of data are referred to as "outcome spaces" (Stolz, 2020).

Summary

For this study, a qualitative approach was used as it allowed the researcher to gain a depth of understanding into the experience of White female social studies teachers and how they felt they had been prepared and supported to interact with, engage, and teach students of the global majority. Furthermore, phenomenography was the most appropriate research methodology for this study as it focuses on the participants' experiences. Data was collected through open-ended questions in semi-structured interviews and participants' responses to journal prompts.

CHAPTER 4: Findings

Chapter 4 is divided into three sections. The first section re-establishes the purpose of the study and the research questions. The second section provides the full context of the study and its focus, as well as a short synopsis of each participant and their teacher preparation background. Lastly, the third section presents a discussion of several themes that developed through the analysis of the data.

Section One

Purpose and Research Questions

This study sought to examine the experiences of how White female social studies teachers were prepared to interact with, engage, and teach students of the global majority. Six themes or phenomena emerged through semi-structured interviews and journal entry responses involving five participants. A flyer advertising the criteria and purpose of the study was sent to numerous schools and colleges and a corresponding social media post was posted on Facebook and Instagram. Seven teachers originally signed up for participation, but one teacher did not identify as White, and the other teacher did not respond when scheduling for interview times began. After in-depth data collection and analysis, the researcher developed a list of codes utilizing the Atlas AI software. From those codes, six themes emerged. The original research questions of this study were as follows:

1. Do White female social studies teachers feel they have been prepared through teacher education to engage and teach students who are a part of the global majority?
2. Do White female social studies teachers feel they have been supported by their school and school district to engage and teach students who are a part of the global majority?

3. Do White female social studies teachers understand the academic needs of students from the global majority?
4. Do White female social studies teachers come to know, understand, and process the cultural differences among their students and how they themselves are different from the students?

Section Two

Context and Participants

Information and data were collected individually through two methods. The first was via semi-structured interviews in person or via Zoom, depending on the distance and the participants' preference. During the semi-structured interviews, the participants were asked probing questions about their teacher education background and to share their feelings, thoughts, and experience of being trained and prepared for the realities of culturally diverse classrooms, with a particular interest in students of the global majority. Because of my identity and presentation as a woman and teacher of the global majority, I wanted to offer the participants an opportunity to share without my physical or visual presence. I know being of the global majority and asking White teachers about their training, preparation, and teaching of students of the global majority could potentially impact what and how the participants responded.

Therefore, after the interview, participants were asked to respond to several journal prompts related to the purpose of the study via Google Forms. The journal entries after the interview would allow the participants to think over the questions and topic and give them the privacy and time to respond thoughtfully and in as much detail as possible. The journal entries did offer insight on and support of how the participants responded in person.

Context is everything; providing some background information on each participant and their teacher education process and experience will provide valuable context to who each of the teacher participants is and help us to understand their responses better. Also, biographical information about each teacher participant offers insight into their cultural awareness and exposure leading up to their teacher education program and their preparation for building relationships and teaching students of the global majority. The teachers who participated in the study had various teaching experiences, content areas, and geographical locations. These varied characteristics combined with their unanimous identity as White women worked together in framing their teacher preparation and teacher induction program experiences. Therefore, the following teacher participant backgrounds are provided chronologically based on the newness of their teaching experiences, from the most minor to most significant among the group.

Kathy

Teaching was a second career path for Kathy. Her initial degree and background were in public relations, but she had always had a passion for history, and when she became a mother, she wanted a change. Kathy is a first-year middle school teacher, a wife, and a mother of three children, all under the age of six, and although teaching is a second career for her, she is in her mid-thirties. She pursued her Master in Arts of Teaching to gain initial certification. The local institution of higher education has guaranteed job placement for all its students graduating from their teacher education programs.

Kathy identifies as a White woman, and for most of her educational experiences as a student, she had limited interactions with students of the global majority. Her first career involved public relations for a public university, and she had many experiences and interactions with people of culturally diverse backgrounds, including those of the global majority. However,

before she was inside classrooms for practicums and internships, Kathy had limited exposure to students of the global majority and hence, an ignorance of the cultural nuances among students of the global majority. Kathy's current classroom is very diverse: most of her students can be best described as Latine, and many are ELLs. The next largest demographic is students of the global majority, followed by a few White students.

To be a first-year middle school teacher, Kathy was very vocal about her desire and constant aspirations to “de-center” Eurocentricity from her lessons, course materials, and sources. Her interest and passion in history and social studies as an entire subject area allowed her to realize the perspective that most curriculums and standards come from: Whiteness. I thought her multiple uses of the phrase “de-center” when describing her relationship with her content and relatability with her students was telling of her willingness to learn and adapt her teaching. Although her responses in the interview and the journal entries do not denote a direct awareness of the instructional needs of students of the global majority, she acknowledges and is aware of the fact that schooling and education in the United States are rooted in Whiteness (Ingersoll, 2017). I believe that awareness is more than half the battle because she can begin to see that schools and the education system in their current form have not been created to be spaces for students of the global majority. As a first-year middle school teacher, Kathy seemed candid and swift in her responses. She was very open about admitting what she realized she did not know and acknowledging that she had not been teaching long enough to understand what she did not know completely.

Lisa

This participant is a third-year middle school teacher, and teaching was also a second career choice after her work in healthcare. She is the mother of one adolescent son. Similarly to

Kathy, Lisa has an avidity for history, and the desire to help people that she had while pursuing her nursing degree led her to become a social studies teacher. She went back to school and earned a Bachelor of Arts in History Education from the same institution as Kathy and another participant, where she was able to act on their partnership with the local school district and received a job immediately upon graduation. Lisa teaches multiple social studies content courses at a high school whose students are primarily of the global majority.

Lisa was raised in a small town near the city where she went to college and now teaches, so she describes herself as a local. In her responses, she was very vocal about her rural upbringing and her limitations with different types of people when she was young. However, Lisa shared that her journey in healthcare and working at a front desk of a factory gave her the opportunities to work with people of the global majority. Lisa described having various opportunities to interact and teach students of the global majority during her practicum and student teaching. Unfortunately, Lisa's student teaching experience was impacted by COVID-19 and came up short. She only spent a few weeks actually teaching because of the onset of the pandemic in March 2020.

Jasmine

Jasmine is the first participant whose first career choice was teaching and who was interested in the profession since high school. She also obtained her Master of Teaching at the same institution as Kathy and Lisa. At the same time, at different times, she also received her first and current teaching position through a partnership with the university and school district. Jasmine has been a high school social studies teacher for six years and has taught chiefly all levels of United States History. Jasmine's interview was in person and in physical proximity. My

identity as a woman of the global majority and a teacher could have impacted how she responded to questions in person versus in her journal entry.

Jasmine's interview responses were focused and well-articulated. Still, in her journal entry responses, she was more vulnerable in her answers about her preparation to teach students of the global majority and her significant fear. In her interview, Jasmine kept relating her responses and examples given to her ELL students and students from lower socioeconomic backgrounds. She never fully addressed students of the global majority or prepared for those students specifically. She did acknowledge that there was a difference between her and her students of the global majority. Yet in her written journal responses, Jasmine expressed her constant concern as a White female teacher of mostly non-White students, "I am terrified of being called a racist." In her journal responses and at some point in her interview, she shared that she intentionally presents and teaches specific topics in class to avoid offending students and being mislabeled as a racist. Kathy shared similar sentiments. However, Kathy has younger students who, without knowing the full context of racism, freely accuse Kathy because she is White and they are not. Knowing that some participants shared their fears of being called a "racist" by their students of the global majority, this fear could have influenced how they responded to questions about students of the global majority.

Jasmine gives special attention to her social studies content and provided detailed responses about her student's experiences and histories and the ways that she has and will continue to honor those in her classroom. She mentions wanting all her students to feel welcome. She also notes that she is grateful that they feel comfortable sharing their personal histories as it relates to certain classroom content, for example, when teaching and learning about Japanese internment camps, a student raised their hand and shared that an elderly member of their family

was interred and then later thanked Jasmine for how she had chosen to handle that lesson and topic. Social studies contains many topics that White teachers might feel uncomfortable broaching in a classroom full of culturally and ethnically diverse students, such as American chattel slavery or the Holocaust. Jasmine is concerned about her teacher-student relationship and an appropriate representation of the content.

Anna

Anna is also a high school history teacher, and like Jasmine, it was also her first career. She began teaching immediately after graduating with her Bachelor of Arts in History Education. Anna's beginnings and trajectory as a teacher would be considered the traditional path to the classroom. Anna was raised in a small and primarily White suburban neighborhood, and her exposure to people of the global majority was limited. Anna's teaching career began in a high school with primarily students of the global majority. She thinks teaching students from a different background than her own in the beginning stages of her career allowed her to transition successfully into other school and classroom environments. Also, in her responses, Anna readily acknowledges that she is different from her students.

Anna met her current husband while they were both social studies teachers at her first school. She aspires to be a school administrator, and some of her responses in the interview gave the impression that she was trying to skate around directly referring to or discussing students of the global majority. However, her responses about how she was prepared for her teacher education program were more robust and positive than the those of the other participants. Although she acknowledges that her preparation program could have done more, she did recognize and appreciate how she was prepared to find and offer various perspectives within the social studies subject area. In her responses about understanding student differences and their

needs, Anna leaned more on the generational differences she has noticed over the years. Anna describes the age gap between her and her students and how that implies how they interpret the world.

Jamie

Jamie was the most seasoned participant in the study, with nine years of teaching elementary math and high school social studies. Jamie began her teaching career as a high school social studies teacher, briefly spent two years teaching fifth-grade math, and is now back to teaching high school social studies. Jamie began teaching while earning a Master of Arts in Teaching, so she had the unique experience of being trained and prepared to be a teacher as a first-year teacher. She communicated that her first year of teaching was highly stressful because, along with being in grad school, she did not know what she was doing. Although stressful, she did think it was helpful for her to have complete autonomy in a classroom while learning the theory and practice of teaching in her graduate program. Her experiences also allowed her to determine what was helpful from her teacher education program in real time versus most first-year teachers having to apply it afterward and then reflect. Also, because her program was in person, she got to have candid conversations with her professors and peers about what information, theory, and strategies were unpractical in a classroom.

Jamie's introduction to teacher education also started well before college. Her mother was an elementary school teacher for decades. Jamie recounts watching how her mother cared for and educated her students as one of the reasons she wanted to become a teacher. This experience also guided her on how to treat students and helped her create positive classroom environments. Jamie also had access to an experienced teacher to supplement and complement her teacher education program while entering the profession.

Section Three

Themes and More Themes

The analysis of the participant's responses and the emerging themes are connected to the vital need to offer experiences and opportunities for new and preservice White female teachers that allows them to engage with various cultures and their cultural traits. All the participant's interviews were listened to, transcribed, and then paired with their journal entries. Patterns identified from their responses were coded and grouped into themes.

Awareness

All the participants' responses had the reoccurring theme of awareness. As White female teachers who all had experience with teaching a classroom full of students of the global majority, they all seemed at least acutely aware of the differences that existed between them and their students. This awareness was more of an acknowledgment that their students of the global majority had a different skin color, and that visual distinction was where some of the awareness ended. For example, in response to being asked what differences they noticed between themselves and their students of the global majority, Lisa said, "There are obvious differences, you know, I learn a lot from them about a culture that's not mine." As a White female teacher, Lisa is aware that differences exist between her and her students, and she even goes as far as to admit to learning new things from those students' cultures. Another participant, Anna, responded to the same question by saying,

I mean, I feel like even working at Newton, like most of the kids that I had there, they came from different backgrounds, and what I knew and honestly, like, I think working at Newton is so different from even where I teach now. It opened my eyes to a different

kind of culture that I wasn't necessarily exposed to, even though I was familiar with the area.

Again, this is a reoccurring theme in which participants are aware that a difference exists between them and their students of the global majority. The awareness ranges from acknowledging the physical distinctions to connecting the awareness of a difference to a culture and how that is different. The participant with the most teaching experience, Jamie, with nine years, recounted that her first year teaching her students made it abundantly clear that she was different from them and that because of that difference, she would never understand them. Jamie says,

At first, when I started at Newton, for example, I was told, "I don't know anything cus I grew up in a big house with an iPhone," and that has really stuck with me. They were right. I knew nothing about their lives, and I think making that realization and adjusting my approach has helped me create a really good environment and relationship with my students of a global majority (and all students, really) in my teaching now.

Jamie was aware of the differences between her and her students, and she harnessed that realization to improve her teaching. Therefore, this theme of awareness was not always a conscious self-realization that differences between the participants, White female teachers, and their students of the global majority existed.

A part of Lisa's awareness of the differences between her and her students of the global majority is also becoming self-aware of her own Whiteness in contrast to her students. Lisa's grasp was that "I have rarely been in a position where I was consistently in the minority." Being in a school where most of the students are of the global majority, she was forced to

recognize that for the first time, she was not in the majority as a White woman. That realization made her aware of how different she was from her students.

Fear of Discussing Race/Avoidance

Although the participants' responses showed that they were aware that they were different from their students, they seemed afraid or nervous to discuss the differences regarding race. When allowed to discuss the differences between them as White women and their students of the global majority, the participants reverted to discussing students with learning differences and students from lower socioeconomic environments. Some participants shied away from discussing or referring to students of the global majority. If teachers are timid or unable to acknowledge and discuss the specific differences between the students in their classrooms, how can they create a path to best teach and support those students? In response to being asked what discrepancies she noticed between her and her students of the global majority, Lisa said,

Oh, well, I expect XYZ, and you don't realize that, you know, the socio-economic difference. Differences in the household, parents, you know, one's in, one's out. All that applies whenever you enter a more racially diverse and urbanized area.

She seems conflicted with the idea that students of the global majority will inherently also be poor and come from broken families. Her ignorance and only acute awareness of cultural differences among her students showcase how the training and preparation of White female social studies teachers may be missing the mark.

Another participant also talked about socioeconomic status or ELLs when asked about students of the global majority. Intersectionality allows for the existence of students of the global majority who may also be ELLs and/or poor students. The participants were aware and willing to acknowledge the differences between teachers and students but unwilling or unable to

acknowledge that the topic was students of the global majority. An understanding of the differences between White female teachers and students of the global majority means nothing if the teachers cannot name and address the difference. Race is a politicized topic, and for White women, it is a topic that can be avoided without consequence.

Cultural Acknowledgment

Although all participations responded that they were aware that they were different from their students, some of their responses did not signify that they acknowledged or understood that being a part of the global majority also has a cultural component, depending on how students identify, and that it requires nuanced knowledge and skills to interact with and teach those students effectively. At the same time, some participants acknowledged that they were aware that the differences they noticed between them and their students of the global majority were also connected to their students' culture and more. For example, in one of Jamie's journal entries, she shared a robust understanding that her students of the global majority are more than just a different color than her and, more importantly, what their differences are tied to. In addition, her classroom experience allowed her to acknowledge and learn "about each child's history, background, language, world view, and experiences..." Jamie was admitting that her students of the global majority and all her students have unique cultures that encompass and impact more than just skin color. Jasmine also demonstrated her ability to see her students by saying,

In social studies, you have to deal with a lot of different things that are very personal to people and are part of their culture and their heritage and their story. And you need to learn how to deal with that in a culturally appropriate manner...

Jasmine acknowledges not only the differences between her and her students but that those differences are connected to a broader culture.

While acknowledging her lack of training for culturally diverse student groups, Lisa suggested that teacher educators of the global majority teach and share their experiences. She explained,

Because our experiences are not the same. I mean, we can live next door to each other.

Both are the same parents with similar incomes and have wildly different experiences in life. It would be nice to be able to see that more. If the news portrays so much the negative, you don't see the positive. So, if you only listen to that source, and you're getting hard stereotypes that you are trying to fight against, I'm not prejudiced.

Lisa is aware that she is different from her students of the global majority and that she needs some fundamental training from her teacher education program. Yet her words demonstrate the absence of any cultural acknowledgment and a simplification of the intersection of culture, race, class, and more.

So, although the participants are aware and willing to acknowledge cultural differences between them and their students, there needs to be a clear realization that those differences may require a different way of thinking, teaching, and being in their classrooms. The cultural differences they notice in their classrooms are not combined with a consciousness that they can impact classroom teaching and learning. This theme highlights the desperate need for ongoing training and support for preservice teachers, especially those who are White and female, because they make up most of the teaching profession. After that, they then still need the opportunity and experience to explore and reflect on why they may need to be made aware or may be unwilling to push through to understanding and acting on how best to engage and teach those students.

Outside Experiences

When responding to what classes, experiences, and opportunities were the most impactful and helpful when learning and preparing to be a teacher, most of the participants pointed to outside experiences. However, it was significant that the participants felt without reservation that there were experiences, courses, and opportunities they received that were more beneficial in their teacher education than those designed to do so within their various teacher education programs.

The most potent outside experience came from Kathy, who attributed some of her best preparedness for a culturally diverse classroom to a “Moms Facebook Group.” Kathy said this social media group “encourages white women to take, like, a backseat and just listen and not always jump in with comments and just have self-reflection.” When probed as to why this group has been impactful and helpful in preparing her for a classroom of diversity, she explained that it reminds her to remove herself as a White woman from the center of things and to do the same with her social studies content, which is historically very Eurocentric. For someone completing graduate-level content and pedagogy courses to become a certified teacher, it was a random social media group of collected strangers that gave Kathy the space and time to acknowledge her Whiteness and privilege and then relate it to her classroom content. Another participant, Lisa, who had prior work experience in health care, attributed that experience to preparing her to interact with all types of people, which was helpful in a culturally diverse classroom.

Yet another participant, Jasmine, discussed her study abroad trip to Mexico and how it allowed her to see another perspective of what her students from marginalized groups might feel in schools. Jasmine recounted,

Studying abroad, studying abroad in Mexico for 28 days, really. I feel like it prepared me more than anything else. Because that is the most uncomfortable I have ever been in my

life as far as being in the minority... And to feel that isolationism I have, no one understands me, and I can't like and I feel like a lot of my kids, even if it's not language barrier, feel that way... But yeah, it also 100% helped me have empathy for my students who are different.

Jasmine's experience shows how the participants valued multiple experiences outside the classroom and their respective teacher education programs that brought them practical life experience to be used in their classrooms with culturally diverse students.

The most veteran teacher participant, Jamie, referred to seeing and experiencing her mother being a teacher for 25 years as the most impactful experience while going through her teacher education program. She said, "I was being trained before my teacher education program." Watching how her mother loved and supported her students throughout the years fueled her passion for teaching and gave her a small insight into the world of a teacher. All of the participants seemed to be able to recognize that complete teacher education and preparation included outside experiences and that there was more to be gleaned on how to be successful in a classroom full of culturally diverse students than their teacher education programs could teach them. Jamie also noted that

Learning different cultures and experiences and backgrounds from my students has helped me become a better teacher. Even though I do feel that my teacher education program did a good job addressing the teaching of students of all types, you learn so much more about each child's history, background, language, world view, and experiences in person.

Her outside experience came from in the classroom, meaning she did not think it realistic that her teacher education program would be able to prepare her for all the

differences and distinctions of students in the classroom. Jamie experienced the vast array of differences among her students and how they impact teaching and learning only once she could share them in real time. Teacher education programs focus on groups of students, but the reality is that more time should be taken to prepare preservice teachers for all they may face in the classroom.

Subject Area Perspectives

Most participants shared and referred to their social studies subject areas and how they were prepared as preservice teachers to present multiple perspectives and diversity of thought within their subject area by their teacher education program. In addition, the participants had several positive things to say regarding content-specific topics and experiences when questioned about their teacher education program. Also, this theme is essential because the participants focused on encompassing more diversity and perspective within their specific social studies subject areas to satisfy cultural diversity in their classrooms and schools, thus connecting being culturally relevant to offering multiple perspectives in the curriculum.

For example, in response to how her teacher education prepared her to teach students of the global majority, Anna wrote that even though there were no specific strategies set forth for teaching students of the global majority,

We talked a lot about multiple perspectives, especially in history, and how it is important to include the perspectives of other groups rather than of those of what we may have learned as the narrative when we were coming up.

Along with her vocal praises of all that her teacher program did get right, when allowed to share her experiences while being prepared for the classroom and lack thereof, Anna leaned on being trained in content-specific knowledge as a positive way to engage and

teach students of the global majority. In her interview, Anna mentioned her content-specific preparation again by saying, “There was a lot of teaching with, like, multiple perspectives...just with, like, really looking at, like, primary sources often.”

A part of the content-specific theme was the participants’ dialogue about textbooks and other classroom materials related to representation and perspective. During Jamie’s interview, she recalled a course and professor that caused her to think about and question the sources of the information she would use in class. Jamie recalled,

We talked a lot about kind of what’s missing from textbooks, things from textbooks... Definitely, like, critiquing the textbooks and noticing, like, who’s not there, who’s underrepresented, and how to bring that into the classroom. That was definitely something that we did discuss and we did talk about and, like, you know, views and I think that that’s kind of one of the reasons I’ve never really used a textbook, like, I’ve never looked at the standards, just how important it is for, like, kids to be able to relate and, like, be represented.

Jamie’s experience and preparation within this theme seemed to go beyond just offering students of the global majority a varied perspective of history. Instead, they provided a path for those students to see themselves within the content. Jamie and Anna matriculated through the same MAT program within a couple of years of each other; this could account for the more prevalent occurrence of them mentioning content-specific things in their responses.

The lone middle school teacher among the participants, Kathy, also highlighted learning about offering various perspectives within texts for students depending on their identity in a literacy course she took.

My literacy program really addressed, including text that not only addresses, like, diversity, not only have different texts about different topics but also written by, like, not having texts that are all written by white women, having texts that are, if it's a text about, you know, Mexico, that it would actually be written by somebody who is from Mexico.

In this quote, she described not only her learning to include author and text representation in her future classes, but this content-specific knowledge was also from a course outside her specific teacher education program; while seeking a Literacy Endorsement, she was introduced to these content-specific strategies. The participants' responses around this theme seemed to use alternative course materials, various historical perspectives, and representative texts to connect or relate to their students of the global majority and to make them feel represented in their specific social studies subject area.

CHAPTER 5: Discussion

This study was framed around a concern for how White female social studies teachers were and are being trained to engage and teach students of the global majority amid shifting student demographics in U.S. public schools. The focus of the study was the experiences of five White female social studies teachers and their experiences in their teacher education program and how they were supported as new and novice teachers. The study aimed to understand how the participants felt they were best prepared for the realities of the public school classroom. The study also aimed to determine how teacher preparation programs and schools can better prepare their preservice teachers for the cultural diversity present and growing among the students in public schools.

This chapter starts with a summary of the research. Then, the findings associated with the literature examined in Chapter 2 are discussed and emphasized. Following this, several implications for teacher education programs, induction programs, school districts, and students are presented. Lastly, the study's limitations and recommendations for future research are explored.

Study Overview

This study was designed to discover how White female social studies teachers came to experience their teacher education and preparation, specifically how their experiences prepared them to interact with, engage, and teach students of the global majority. The study aimed to understand how White female teachers, who make up most of the teaching profession, felt they were prepared to interact with, engage, and teach culturally diverse students, like those from the global majority. Also, to understand through the experiences of those White female teachers whether they recognized the cultural differences between themselves and their students and if

they were adequately prepared for a classroom of culturally diverse students. Several research questions guided the study:

1. Do White female social studies teachers feel they have been prepared through teacher education to engage and teach students who are a part of the global majority?
2. Do White female social studies teachers feel they have been supported by their school and school district to engage and teach students who are a part of the global majority?
3. Do White female social studies teachers understand the academic needs of students from the global majority?
4. Do White female social studies teachers come to know, understand, and process the cultural differences among their students and how they themselves are different from the students?

A qualitative study design and phenomenography methodology were used to examine the experiences of the participants as they pertained to the research questions. This study used semi-structured interviews and participant journal entries as data sets. Each participant participated in one-on-one semi-structured interviews and then, after the interviews, was given prompting questions and statements related to the research questions to respond to in writing. These journal entries gave the participants the space and time to add to or expand on related issues in a way they could not during the interview, which produced detailed and thoughtful responses compared to some of the responses given in their interviews.

Discussion of Findings

The discussion of the findings relates the collected and analyzed data and the resultant themes with the literature discussed in Chapter 2. This study reinforces the literature from and about teacher education programs that highlights the awareness that White teachers lack the

cultural awareness and education to cater to the diversity in public school classrooms. Overall, the data showed that the participants felt underprepared by their teacher education programs for the classroom. However, only some participants could articulate any specific preparation they had undertaken for students of the global majority. The findings from this study discuss a potential disconnect between preservice teachers, teacher education programs, public school classrooms, and the needs of students of the global majority.

Cultural Awareness

The data from the study shows that the participants, and thus, a larger pool of White female teachers, are aware of the differences between themselves and their students. The literature supports awareness of these differences because, according to Lehman (2017), White preservice teachers are aware of the cultural differences between themselves and their students. However, in this study, the awareness that they, as White female teachers, are different from their students of the global majority is limited to some level of acknowledgment of a physical difference. When acknowledging the difference between them and their students, they mainly referred to differences in class, age/generation, and English Language Learners. Still, they avoided responses and discussions of race, ethnicity, and culture. The struggle to attribute the differences between their students in this study and cultural distinctions or an inability to name the differences is supported by literature that says White teachers can admit their ignorance regarding cultural diversity and what they need to know for the classroom (Lehman, 2017).

Teacher education programs know that there is a lack of education, opportunities, and experiences for their White teachers to interact and engage with students of culturally diverse groups and that there should be a focus on preparing the specific teacher group of White females (Sleeter, 2001). However, the teachers in this study remarked that there was no particular

education or even a discussion on how the interactions with and the teaching of students of the global majority could be different from that of other students more connected to their own identity. The lack of diversity education for the participants in this study indicates the cause of the possible erasure of the concept of culture in their classrooms. By their own admission, the participants in this study did not get any specific education for teaching students of the global majority. That could account for their ability to avoid mentioning and understanding that students who are a part of the global majority have distinct cultural traits.

Culture is indicative of many cultural traits, such as someone's language, history, traditions, and more. Within the diaspora of people belonging to the global majority, there are many cultural identities, and each may have its own unique cultural traits. For a large percentage of the students of the global majority in the classrooms of the participants and other classrooms around the country, their race and culture are often closely connected because the history and brutality of American chattel slavery erased and minimized their ability to remain connected to their origin and culture. The presence of this theme indicates that White female teachers potentially perceive and understand a person's culture and its impact on their life and behavior differently than others and that more explicit education, training, and exposure to other cultures, histories, and more are needed as a part of their teaching education.

With the limited scope, expression, and understanding of the cultural differences that exist and persist among their students of the global majority, the participants were limited in their ability to harness those cultural differences as assets in the classroom. This data is consistent with Ladson-Billing's assertion that "Black and Brown students are being undertaught" (Will, 2022). One goal for the teaching profession, which mostly consists of White females, is to make the cultural differences among students' consistent contributors to academic growth and success

in the classroom. However, the data from this study highlights the reality that White female teachers are not aware of or actively participating in CRP, CSP, or CRT. Again, the data shows that these White female teachers did not perceive the differences between themselves and their students as culture-specific.

There is a distinction between noticing that students are different and realizing that those differences are to be respected and cultivated in classrooms and schools by teachers. This is consistent with the literature on CRT that teachers need to be aware of their students' cultures in order to best teach them (Gay, 2002). Unfortunately, the data shows that the participants were looking at their classroom, students, teacher training, and even their participation in the study through the lens of Whiteness, not allowing them to fully recognize the cultural diversity and its power in their classrooms and, according to the literature, unable to properly teach some students, like those of global majority (Gay, 2002).

Teacher Preparation

This study aimed to understand how White female social studies teachers felt best prepared to enter a culturally diverse classroom. The participants in the study all felt that they had been underprepared by their teacher education programs. This is consistent with the literature, which describes teacher education programs as inconsistent in their ability to best prepare White women for the growing cultural diversity of public school classrooms (Anderson et al., 2022). There were two teacher education programs among the five participants in this study, and both programs had one diversity course that teacher candidates had to complete. The participants described both the courses as a catch-all course that tackled all things from poverty, ELLs, and other learning differences. The literature supports this description of such courses from the institutions described in the study. According to Lehman (2017), teacher education

programs are notorious for offering an isolated course on multiculturalism and expecting that to be sufficient to prepare preservice teachers for the reality of the classroom.

The literature is clear that teacher education programs need to do a better job at preparing teachers: Sleeter (2001) calls for community immersion opportunities for preservice teachers, and there is no consensus from the governing bodies for teacher education program standards on how to implement more diversity education for preservice teachers (CAEP, 2015). In this study, the participants all felt that their teacher education program lacked in some way. Still, they needed help articulating fundamental ways their programs could improve after teaching. One participant, Anna, acknowledged that there is no way a teacher education program could or should be responsible for preparing her for all she needed for the classroom. While her sentiments are fair, even the literature suggests room for improvement. For example, it is promising that The Council for the Accreditation for Educator Preparation mentions diversity 29 times. Still, there needs to be an objective way for teacher education programs to address those diverse needs in the education and experiences of preservice teachers (CAEP, 2015).

Deficit Thinking

The data shows an underlying theme of deficit thinking in how the participants responded to questions and shared their experiences. Although they have an essential awareness of the differences between themselves and their students, some participants' responses indicated that they thought their students' differences were negative or something for them to overcome. For example, there were several examples of the participants assuming their students of the global majority were also from lower socioeconomic families and that they inherently face more obstacles in life. Even when addressing diverse student groups, their uniqueness was interpreted as otherness in the participants' responses. The literature suggests that deficit thinking

pedagogies are antiquated and that asset-based pedagogies, such as CRP and CSP, are more appropriate because they reject the notion that students from marginalized groups need access and equality to overcome (Alim & Paris, 2014).

Students of the global majority deserve teachers who are prepared to see them and their cultural distinctiveness as an extension of themselves that can be used and incorporated into the classroom. This unconscious deficit thinking is connected to the greater truth that schools and the education system in the United States are permeated by Whiteness (Love, 2019). For example, the participant Kathy mentioned learning and actively practicing “decentering Whiteness” in her class using curriculum content while wishing her teacher education program would have given her more classroom management skills. Acknowledging and “decentering Whiteness” cannot only be about the books and sources students are exposed to, but are also about unpacking how the behavior Kathy expected, like a student raising their hand to talk or remaining quiet during class, is rooted in the standard of Whiteness. Granted, there are no perfect teachers, and all educators actively participate in the education system and contribute to the same design built on Whiteness, yet teachers can also choose to divest their classrooms of portions of that system, like Kathy with her curriculum (Paris, 2012).

New Teacher Induction and Outside Experiences

In recalling the education, training, and experiences they were provided with to prepare to interact with, engage, and teach students of the global majority, the participants focused on their undergraduate or graduate degree programs and even outside experiences. Still, no focus was given to induction programs. This is not to say that the participants did not have or participate in an induction program when they began teaching. Still, it needed to be more relevant to mention during the interviews or in their journal entries. Moreover, the absence of a discussion of induction

programs from the data is inconsistent with the literature, which asserts that quality induction programs for preservice teachers are the extension of their teacher education with on-the-job training and mentorship (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

The interview questions in this study did not explicitly use the term “induction programs”. Nevertheless, the participants were probed and encouraged to share any experiences besides their college teacher education that prepared them for the realities of a diverse classroom. Some of the participants, like Jamie and Jasmine, did refer to having and using as resources teachers of the global majority in their environment. This could be seen as a quasi-mentorship to help those new White female teachers as they began their teaching careers; mentorship is a component of a quality induction program (Ingersoll & Strong, 2011).

This study did discover that most of the participants considered an outside experience as being significant in preparing them for the cultural diversity they found in their classrooms. For example, Kathy described how she learned to let “mothers of color be the experts” while a White mother was quieted in the space on the “Moms Facebook Page” she was a member of. She shared how being a part of such a space helped her to “decenter” her Whiteness, and that this was also helping her in the classroom. Another participant, Jasmine, described her time on a four-week study abroad trip to Mexico as an experience that helped prepare her for the classroom because it forced her to become someone in the minority. It broadened her perception of her students from historically marginalized backgrounds and potential experiences. This study highlights the value of opportunities and experiences that White female teachers need in their teacher education preparation, and these findings are consistent with the literature. According to Droppert (2010), preservice teachers need the opportunity to “experience and reflect on diversity.” In this study, the

outside experience the participants discussed served as those opportunities they could use to “experience and reflect” to prepare for the cultural diversity of the classroom.

Implications

The future implications of this study are both theoretical and practical in nature. Theoretically, asset-based pedagogies like CRP and CSP are slightly insufficient in practice to fill the cultural gaps that exist and persist among White female teachers. Practically, however, this study can impact how teacher education programs prepare preservice teachers as well as the creation and implementation of school districts’ new teacher induction programs.

Theoretical Implications

Although asset-based pedagogies provide a vehicle for the importance of valuing and honoring the cultural identities, languages, histories, and more of students of the global majority, they do not provide an explicit plan of execution. Models such as CRP and CSP examine the what and the why. However, this study indicates that White female teachers cannot identify the what or the why. Before White female teachers can begin to understand why valuing and honoring a student’s culture and natural way of being are essential to academic success, they may need to evaluate how their Whiteness has come to be. Potentially asset-based pedagogies need to debunk the inherently flawed deficit-thinking-based pedagogy by incorporating information that assists White teachers with understanding the concept that not only is pedagogy culturally relevant and sustaining, but it is also enriching. This study’s findings indicate that White female teachers may not be aware that the differences they notice in their students also enrich the learning environment by encouraging students to be themselves and giving them avenues to use their personal uniqueness to achieve high levels of academic success. The inclusion of enrichment makes recognizing and using culture actionable and practical, which is

what the study indicates White female teachers need in order to interact with, engage, and teach students of the global majority.

Practical Implications

This study shows that the current teacher education model, where preservice teachers are exposed to various culturally diverse groups through one catch-all diversity course, has not translated to adequately preparing White female teachers to be entirely successful in the culturally diverse classrooms of today. The teachers who participated in this study are mostly unaware that there are and should be a particular awareness and considerations when interacting with, engaging, and teaching students of the global majority. The findings of this study provide evidence that graduate and undergraduate teacher education programs need to include more practical and intentional experiential opportunities for their teacher candidates in order to better expose them to the cultural diversity present in public school classrooms and provide full education in asset-based pedagogies such as CRP and CSP. Also, the findings indicate an opportunity for school districts and schools to alter and improve their induction programs for new teachers.

Teacher Education Programs

The study indicates that the teacher education programs attended by the participants could all have done more to prepare them for the classroom. Based on the participants' responses, teacher education programs could match their awareness and desire to prepare White female student teachers for the cultural diversity they will encounter in the classroom, with explicit instruction on the national and local cultures, cultural characteristics, and school demographic trends. The literature states that teacher education programs are aware of the cultural understanding gap between White preservice teachers and culturally diverse students,

and paired with the findings of this study, colleges, universities, and even alternative teacher preparatory programs can create courses and opportunities for student teachers to explore other cultures in a meaningful way. Most of the participants in this study did not consider the “otherness” or differences in their students to be part of a separate culture. Again, this is evidence that preservice teachers need explicit education, training, and time to learn the many ways in which a culture can exist.

This study also has the potential to change how teacher education programs create, provide, and monitor experiential opportunities for preservice teachers. The data and findings of this study highlight that teachers get one to two opportunities to be in a real classroom before graduating, and sometimes, they are allowed to select the location. This indicates that preservice teachers need more practical opportunities to interact with, engage, and teach students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Teacher education programs could match preservice teachers in schools with culturally diverse student populations to best prepare them for their future reality. These matches should be intentional, and preservice teachers should be paired with cooperative teachers who are willing to model culturally appropriate teaching and facilitate a preservice teacher in their classroom. Opportunities to bridge the cultural gap of White female teachers can be had with community service outreach programs such as community tutoring. This would also allow preservice teachers to experience the fullness of a community’s culture that is represented within the school while also engaging in the educational practice of tutoring. The overarching theme is to provide White female preservice teachers with more intentional and authentic opportunities to engage with and learn from the various cultures they may encounter as teachers.

Asset-Based Pedagogy

This study also indicates that White female teachers need a richer education and understanding of asset-based pedagogies, such as CRP or CSP, to encourage them to see and understand that the cultural characteristics of their students of the global majority are assets and strengths in the classroom. This study found that the participants discussed students of the global majority and their ways of being as something they had to overcome to succeed academically in the classroom. This indicates a lack of knowledge or understanding of such asset-based pedagogies. White female teachers could use CRP and CSP to examine their ways of being around academic success in the classroom with students who are different from them and to help them create an environment where culturally diverse students, like those of the global majority, feel welcomed and supported. The study showed that the participants were acutely aware of the differences between them and their students, but there was a limited realization that those differences could be used to help those students feel and become successful in the classroom and school.

Induction Programs

Lastly, this study provides evidence that school districts and their schools can revamp or create new teacher induction programs to meet the gap in new teachers' cultural awareness and skills. Most of the participants in this study did not mention any specific forms of support that their respective school district or schools provided them with as new teachers that aided in their transition to full-time teaching. School districts and schools have an opportunity to create induction programs that act as a bridge from a teacher education program to a full-time classroom. These induction programs could include intentional mentorship relationships, dual observations, and regular debriefing sessions. New teachers would then have the breadth and

depth to learn, miss-step, then grow. Mentorship and school leadership would also have the opportunity to monitor and then model positive examples of culturally appropriate interactions and teaching for their new teachers to continue to close the gap in their cultural understanding.

Limitations

This study aimed to understand the experiences of White female social studies teachers' preparedness to interact with, engage, and teach students of the global majority. However, the scope of the study was limited to a small sample size, and all the participants teach in the same state spread across three school districts, thus, the sample was not fully representative of most White female social studies teachers. Furthermore, the participants represented two universities' teacher education programs within the same university system, which provides a limited view of the offerings and opportunities of teacher education programs in the United States. Therefore, the generalizability of this study is limited to the confines of one university system and one state.

Recommendations for Further Research

The effects of the immediate switch from in-person to virtual teaching caused by the onset of the Covid-19 pandemic on teacher preparation, the teaching profession, and student achievement are evident (Mutton, 2020). Additional studies on the effects of the Covid-19 pandemic on the cultural support of students could provide insight into whether students of the global majority and their cultural identities were neglected as schooling went virtual. Also, what effect did the even more limited version of teacher preparation received by preservice teachers due to the Covid-19 pandemic have on their ability to best serve students of diverse cultural backgrounds? Future research could also include interviewing students of the global majority to divulge their experiences of White female teachers.

Conclusion

The experiences and reflections of White female social studies teachers show that the current system for educating and preparing them for the cultural diversity present and growing among public-school children is inefficient and ineffective. These teachers are aware that they are different from their students, but there is an acute awareness that these differences are related to cultural traits, and then, an even smaller realization that those cultural traits are worthy of recognition and useful in the classroom. From novice teachers to veterans, there is an acknowledgement that something is missing from teacher education programs, but also that those missing components are not centered around learning more about cultural diversity and how best to teach those students.

Culturally relevant pedagogy, CRT, and CSP are all asset-based pedagogies that aim to help teachers see and allow students to be their authentic selves, then encourage them to debunk their own problematic ways of thinking and being. White female social studies teachers lack the ability to connect differences to culture and then equate culture to classroom value because their own status and identity as White fits safely into the standard of educational success: Whiteness. Along with broadened explanations of and education on the asset-based pedagogies, White female preservice teachers require more intentional and in-depth opportunities to interact with students and people of the global majority that they will later serve in the classroom. Then, school districts need to prioritize creating and sustaining high quality new teacher induction programs that act as an extension of their teacher education programs.

Implementing these crucial changes will benefit both the students and teachers because better prepared and supported teachers are a help to all. The students will start to have access to more teachers who see their differences as positive points. Then, they will feel safe to be

themselves in and out of the classroom. Teachers will be able to see and understand the wholeness of their culturally diverse students and then build an environment of teaching and learning that utilizes the entirety of a student and what they bring to the classroom.

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Appendix

KENNESAW STATE UNIVERSITY

CONSENT FORM**Title of Research Study:**

Cultural Classroom Competencies: White female social studies teachers' preparedness and awareness to teach and engage with students of the global majority.

Researcher's Contact Information:

Ashley Lamar
478-387-6220
alamar11@students.kennesaw.edu

You are being asked to take part in a research study. The information in this form will help you decide if you want to be in the study. Please ask the researcher(s) if there anything is unclear or if you need more information.

Description of Project

You are invited to participate in a research study to examine how White female social studies teachers are educated, prepared, and supported to teach, engage, and interact with students of the global majority. As the demographics of public schools in the United States become more racially and culturally diverse, the teaching profession remains overwhelmingly White and female, and the purpose of this study is to see if new White and female social studies teachers feel they have been prepared and supported to meet the needs of students from the global majority. How do these teachers understand the differences between themselves and their students; their assessment of how they are doing; and if their teacher education, training, and induction were adequate in their preparation for the realities of the classroom?

Explanation of Procedures

If you agree to participate in this study, you will be asked to reflect on the specific education and training you received as a preservice teacher and your experiences as a new teacher with students of the global majority via an interview and journal entries. The interview sessions will be audio recorded, and the tapes will be secured on a password-protected site (Otter.ai) during and after the study. Audio recordings will be destroyed approximately six months after the study's conclusion.

Your participation in a single session will take approximately 45–60 minutes. If a follow-up session is needed or requested, it will take up to 60 minutes. Your total participation in this study will be, at most, three hours. The journal will be sent via Google Docs immediately after each interview. Participants will be allowed to respond in writing to prompts related to the previous interview questions if they want to add to their responses.

Participation is voluntary. You can refuse to take part or stop at any time without penalty. Participation is anonymous and refusing to participate or withdraw from the study will not reveal or share your identity. Your employer and students will be unaware of your involvement or lack thereof.

Risks or Discomforts

The risks associated with this study are minimal. Participants' responses will be anonymous and coded with false names, so there is minimal risk that their employers or students might determine their identity and participation in the study. Participants may experience emotional or psychological discomfort because the reflection on their own experiences with students of a different race, culture, or background may uncover some uncomfortable truths.

Benefits

No associated personal benefits are expected from participation in this study. However, secondary benefits may help teacher education programs align their methods, content, and strategies to the reality of public school teaching needs and expectations. In addition, your responses and their analysis in this study may contribute to the intellectual knowledge about how preservice and new teachers can best be prepared and supported in racially and culturally diverse classrooms.

Compensation

There is no compensation associated with participation in this study.

Confidentiality

Several steps will be taken to ensure participant confidentiality, but there is a small risk that your information could accidentally be disclosed to people not connected to the research. To reduce this risk, we will use different code names for all participants when referring to their responses, and no personal identifiers will be associated with participants' responses. Each interview will be conducted in a private, secure location where the participants feel safe to respond to interview questions; so, their identity will remain anonymous. We will only keep information that could identify you on one copy of a master list that will be housed on Google Drive, a password-protected online cloud. Google Docs and all transcripts of the participants' interviews will be recorded and kept on Otter.ai, which is also password protected and only the researcher has access.

Six months after the completion of the study, all information on participants' identifiers will be permanently deleted from Google Drive as well as the recordings and transcripts from Otter ai. The data will not be used or distributed for future research.

Research at Kennesaw State University that involves human participants is carried out under the oversight of an Institutional Review Board. Therefore, questions or problems regarding these activities should be addressed to the Institutional Review Board, Kennesaw State University, irb@kennesaw.edu.

If you agree to participate in this research study, please sign below:

Signature of Participant or Authorized Representative, Date

Signature of Investigator, Date

PLEASE SIGN BOTH COPIES OF THIS FORM, KEEP ONE AND RETURN THE OTHER
TO THE INVESTIGATOR