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Principals' Perceptions about Multiracial Identity Development: A Phenomenological Study

Sherry L. Krubitch

PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MULTIRACIAL IDENTITY

DEVELOPMENT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

DISSERTATION

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of

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By

Sherry L. Krubitch, B.S., M.S.

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APPROVED BY:

Sister Phyllis Superfisky, O.S.F., Ph.D.
Chairperson, Dissertation Committee

Carmen McCrink, Ph.D.
Member, Dissertation Committee

Jeffrey Guterman, Ph.D.
Member, Dissertation Committee

Sister Evelyn Piché, O.P., Ph.D.
Dean, Adrian Dominican School of Education

This dissertation is dedicated to my mother

ROSLYN IRENE KRUBITCH

for her everlasting love, eternal light, and for

filling my life with all things wonderful.

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ABSTRACT

PRINCIPALS' PERCEPTIONS ABOUT MULTIRACIAL IDENTITY

DEVELOPMENT: A PHENOMENOLOGICAL STUDY

Sherry L. Krubitch

Barry University, 2006

Dissertation Chairperson: Sister Phyllis Superfisky, O.S.F., Ph. D.

According to the latest United States Census, estimates show that 4.5 million

children under eighteen in this country are multiracial. In some areas, one of six babies

born today is of two or more racial heritages, making multiracial youth one of the fastest

growing segments of the United States population. American public elementary schools

in general are not meeting the needs of multiracial students and improving their life

chances of having a healthy identity development. School principals in elementary

schools do not have an affirmative role in creating schools that are more inclusive and

that serve multiracial students effectively. Principals are subject to the same kind of

hidden curriculum about changing the school climate and learning environment to

accommodate diversity that teachers and students experience. The purpose of this

phenomenological study was to determine and describe principals' perceptions about

their students' multiracial identity development. Principals were interviewed about their

backgrounds, their knowledge and meaning of identity development as it related to their

students, and issues relating to multiracial identity development in the school

environment. Data were gathered through observations, an interview protocol, and open-

ended interviews. Five themes were identified that were consistent with the principals'

responses. These were the meaning and understanding of multiracial identity development; self-reflection on values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes; compliant thinking versus critical reflection; professional familiarization, and the increase of multiracial births and the future that lies ahead for multiracial students. Conclusions were discussed and recommendations for further research and professional development were proffered.

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BILL OF RIGHTS FOR RACIALLY MIXED PEOPLE

I HAVE THE RIGHT . . . .
Not to justify my existence in this world.
Not to keep the races separate within me.
Not to be responsible for people's discomfort with my physical ambiguity.
Not to justify my ethnic legitimacy.

I HAVE THE RIGHT . . . .
To identify myself differently than strangers expect me to identify.
To identify myself differently from how my parents identify me.
To identify myself differently from my brothers and sisters.
To identify myself differently in different situations.

I HAVE THE RIGHT . . . .
To create a vocabulary to communicate about being multiracial.
To change my identity over my lifetime - and more than once.
To have loyalties and identification with more than one group of people.
To freely choose whom I befriend and love.

Maria P. P. Root (1992)

CHAPTER I

THE PROBLEM

Introduction to the Study

According to the latest United States Census, estimates show that 4.5 million children under eighteen in this country are multiracial (U.S. Census, 2001). In some areas, one of six babies born today is of two or more racial heritages, making multiracial youth one of the fastest growing segments of the United States population (Nakazawa, 2003). Wardle (1999) states "that children of mixed racial or ethnic parentage have unique needs, but often the professionals who work with them in day care centers, schools, social service or health care settings lack the training or awareness to provide the best possible services, support, and encouragement to these children and their families" (p. 1). Morrison and Bordere (2001) state "that reasons for identity development problems for multiracial youth are more complicated than for monoracial youth, because families, peers, and society in general can exert strong and frequently contradictory influences on youth who are already struggling with internal conflicts" (p. 2). Other reasons for identity development problems are racism and prejudice, consequences of crossing ethnic lines to marry, a perceived rejection of pride in one's ethnic group, or the perceived reduction of political power of ethnic groups by blending (Kato, 2000).

Given the existence of these prejudices in society generally, it is likely that professionals may harbor some of them as well, even unconsciously. Inevitably, multiracial students will perceive such attitudes, and internalize a negative image that compromises their sense of self and ability to succeed.

Background of the Problem

As early as the 1400s, Europeans sailing to and from West Africa participated in slave trading that eventually resulted in slaves arriving in America by the early 1500s (Carson, 2003). From the time when slaves came to the United States there have been biracial (e.g., African American/White) children (Root, 1992). Even earlier, there were children of White/Native American heritage. Over the course of several centuries, the number of biracial and biethnic children has increased. For a short period of time, these children and adults were accepted within the fabric of a new, egalitarian, free, democratic, multiethnic, and multiracial society (Wardle, 1999). But as the issue of slavery increased, so did the taboo against interracial marriage. Many states passed laws strictly prohibiting interracial marriage. This caused the children born of mixed parentage to be given the identity of the minority parent. As a result, these biracial people lived in communities of their minority parent of color (Wardle, 1989).

In what she calls a "brief and serendipitous perusal in the history of American education" (p. 55), Riehl (2000) cites numerous experts in the field regarding key issues and challenges in providing appropriate education to students. Each represents a milestone in American education. For example, Riehl cites Kaestle (1973) regarding the challenges posed for immigrants and educational leaders due to the rapidly changing demographics (as cited in Riehl, p. 55). Riehl also cites Racine (1990) regarding the increased momentum of the Common School Movement where African Americans were educated privately in church-related schools (as cited in Riehl, p. 55). Finally, Riehl cites Montalto (1981) about the tolerance assemblies that were held in 1935 and were designed to familiarize students with different cultures and reduce intergroup tension and improve self-esteem (as cited in

Riehl, p. 55). Riehl (2000) states "that since the late 1990s rural school districts in the South worked to meet the needs of immigrant children whose primary language was not English and who came from families lured to factory and agricultural jobs" (p. 56). The U.S. Census (2001) says "that of the people who are currently living in the United States, about ten percent were born in other countries." (as cited in Taylor, 2004, p. 43). Taylor (2004) comments "that in an even greater percentage of United States households, about twenty percent, a language other than English is spoken" (p. 43). Taylor (2004) also states "that Limited English students may be at risk and alienated from the school environment that does not affirm his or her culture, language, or perspective" (p. 44).

During the struggles of the Civil Rights Movement in the 1960s, discriminatory practices in public institutions were openly challenged by many people of color, but particularly by African Americans. Those institutions that consistently advanced racial inequality through oppressive and hostile practices were especially targeted (Davidman & Davidman, 1997). Different factors increased the integration of people of different races within schools, colleges, and the work place. These were the 1967 Supreme Court decision outlawing prohibition of interracial marriage (Spickard, 1989); the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision eliminating the separate but equal doctrine (Blanchett, Mumford & Beachum, 2005); and the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s (Abraham, 1982);

Succeeding generations of administrators have espoused treating teachers and students equally, regardless of their social class, race, or ethnicity. However, complex tensions between the ideal of equality and the realities of control and stratification permeate American life, and these fundamental contradictions affect educational institutions and their administrators as well (Klein, 1985; Sadker & Sadker, 1994). The growing cultural

diversity of the United States makes it incumbent on educators and administrators to have a better understanding of the diverging values, customs, and traditions among all learners with different multicultural experiences as the minority thought or view may be just as legitimate and valid as the mainstream (Asimeng-Boahene & Klein, 2004). Thus, school leaders in every era have had to ponder both the rhetoric and the reality of how they address questions of diversity in schools.

<center>Statement of the Problem</center>

It has been suggested that American public elementary schools in general are not meeting the needs of multiracial students and improving their life chances of developing a healthy identity (Wardle, 1999). Principals, especially in elementary schools, do not have an affirmative role in creating schools that are more inclusive and that serve multiracial students more effectively (Riehl, 2000). In a study by Hart and Bredeson (1996) it was found that "principals serve more as mediators who reconcile sources of conflict embedded in pre-existing values, traditions, and beliefs" (as cited in Jason, 2000, p. 8). Jason (2000) states "that this approach is simply not adequate for solving problems and resolving issues involving equity and excellence in educating students from various backgrounds for democratic citizenship in the 21st century" (p. 8). Principals are subject to the same kind of hidden curriculum about changing the school climate and learning environment to accommodate diversity that teachers and students experience. Principals experience and reproduce conditions of hierarchy and oppression, in particular by fostering compliant thinking instead of critical reflection (Riehl, 2000). Principals who are committed to social change tend to experience conflict because they are expected to maintain institutions which they no longer see as legitimate. For example, Riehl cites Dillard (1995) in maintaining

"that principals are often observed and expected to be "change agents," but tend to monitor the political continuity of both institutions and society" (as cited in Riehl, 2000, p. 10).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study is to determine and describe principals' perceptions about their students' multiracial identity development. The researcher's goal is to investigate how principals perceive their understandings, meanings, and beliefs about developing a healthy identity development for multiracial students.

Research Question

The research question which serves as the basis for this study is: What do principals perceive to be the most important practices in creating an inclusionary, transformative, learning environment for their multiracial students in lieu of a traditional learning environment?

Theoretical Framework

This dissertation focuses on the phenomenon of what principals perceive to be the most important practices in creating an inclusionary, transformative learning environment for their multiracial students in lieu of a traditional learning environment. Denzin and Lincoln (1998) postulate that "the focus of a phenomenological study is to capture the lived experiences from the point of view of those who live it." (p. 221). In order to study this phenomenon, the researcher took the constructivist approach, which is predicated upon constructivism's transactional/subjectivist assumption that sees knowledge as created in the interaction between investigator and the respondents. Denzin and Lincoln explain "that the researcher and the object of investigation are assumed to be interactively linked so that the 'findings' are literally created as the investigation proceeds" (p. 207). Denzin & Lincoln

(1998) state "that realities are apprehendable in the form of multiple, intangible mental constructions, socially and experientially based, local and specific in nature. Further, these realities are dependent for their form and content on the individual persons or groups holding the constructions" (p. 206).

Principals who are committed to creating social change in their schools share similar experiences. Jason (2000) states "the principal is the key to school improvement and to providing a more humane environment responsive to the ever-changing demographics of schools" (p. 2). A principal's leadership actions, in this social context, support a social exchange based on his or her mental constructions and knowledge of the many different types of student cultures in the surrounding community that receive services from the school.

The theoretical framework directs this study toward the philosophical underpinnings of two major cognitive theorists, Jean Piaget and Lev Vygotsky. Each studied how human beings grow to construct and exchange theories about the world and about each other through social interaction and cognitive development. Piaget devised methods of inquiry and a theory appropriate to analyzing how children explain and how they justify their explanations, whereas Vygotsky required that we take into account their cultural and linguistic background and the context in which they find themselves (Bruner, 1990).

An examination of the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky is crucial to an understanding of a socio-cultural, cognitive theory and its relationship to identity development. Because of his great interest in how humans develop knowledge, Piaget (1974) developed a theory which came to be known as "genetic epistemology." Piaget's theory emphasizes cognitive structure and development. He viewed cognitive structures as patterns of physical or

mental action underlying specific acts of intelligence that correspond to stages of child development. According to his theory, the four primary cognitive structures, commonly known as developmental stages, are the sensorimotor, preoperational, concrete operational, and formal operational stages. While he identified characteristic cognitive capabilities for each stage, Piaget posited that the stages vary for every person. In general, in the sensorimotor stage which encompasses ages newborn to two years, intelligence is expressed through motor actions. In the preoperational period, which includes three- to seven-year olds, intelligence is intuitive in nature. Eight- to eleven-year olds are in what is known as the concrete operational stage in which the cognitive structure is logical but depends on concrete referents. In the final stage of formal operations, ordinarily twelve- to fifteen-year olds, abstract thinking is the norm.

During the developmental stages of Piaget's theory, the teacher and the school environment can play an important role in the healthy identity development of a child. In the sensorimotor stage, teachers should provide a rich stimulating environment with many different objects with which the child can play. On the other hand, with children in the preoperational stage, knowledge is intuitive in nature (Piaget, 1974). Children in the concrete operational stage should be taught to have healthy identity development with learning activities that should involve problems of classification, ordering, location, and conservation, using concrete objects (Piaget, 1974). In the final stage of formal operations, teaching methods should be used that actively involve students and present challenges due to the focus on abstract thinking (Piaget, 1974).

Vygotsky (1978) is renowned for his theoretical framework which he called the "social developmental theory." In his attempt to explain consciousness as the end product of

socialization, he described how social interaction played a fundamental role in the development of cognition. He coined the term, "zone of proximal development" (ZPD), to describe the idea that the potential for cognitive development is limited to a certain time span. This term encapsulated what can be considered the second aspect of his theory. Vygotsky believed that the ZPD was dependent upon full social interaction; that is, social development is dependent upon adult guidance or peer collaboration, and it exceeds what can be attained alone (Vygotsky, 1978).

Vygotsky's theory requires that if a child is to experience full cognitive development, social interaction is required (Vygotsky, 1978). In the learning of language, a child's first utterances with peers, adults, or teachers are for the purpose of communication, but once mastered they become internalized and allow "inner speech" (Vygotsky, 1978). Vygotsky felt that language, though initially used by children as a form of communication, is later used as a means to organize thought and to order the components of thoughts as an abstract symbol system (McMinn, 2001). In the preschool and elementary classroom settings, language is paramount to communication between teacher and student. This is where social and cultural factors will play a large part in the development of healthy identity development in children. As children are interacting with peers, teachers, and adults, it is the responsibility of the principal and the teachers to identify and affirm the ways in which students construct their role, status, and identity in diverse classrooms (Sheets, 1999).

Bruner (1997) highlighted similarities between the theories of Piaget and Vygotsky when he outlined how they described the role of adaptation, assimilation, and accommodation in changes in cognitive structures. Both Piaget and Vygotsky viewed cognitive development as a constant effort to adapt to the environment through either

assimilation or accommodation. Both theorists considered assimilation to be the interpretation of events vis-à-vis existing cognitive structures. In addition, they viewed accommodation as making a change to the existing cognitive structure to find meaning in the environment. Noting the combined theories of Piaget and Vygotsky, i.e., a cognitive socio-cultural theory in children's growth patterns as they develop their identity in their early stages of life and through elementary school, both felt that mind mediates between the external world and individual experience (Bruner, 1990). Street (2000) states "that both theorists felt that children construct their knowledge when their present level of thinking is challenged by new information that is somewhat discrepant from their current cognitive level. The challenge stems from social interactions with the environment – peers, parents, administrators, teachers, and the physical environment" (p. 1). Supporting this direction, in Creswell (1998), Polkinghorne (1989) states that "phenomenologists explore the structures of conciousness in human experiences" (p. 51). Furthermore, Dien (2000) states:

> If a child moves from one social group to another, such as immigrating from one nation to another, or moves from the family environment of a minority culture to that of mainstream society upon entrance to public school, that shift in cultural change might impact the child depending upon the child's state of mind at the time. The impact would depend on the child's intellectual capacity to grasp the meaning of the change and socio-emotional readiness for change, the developmental tasks for change, the developmental tasks at hand, and available support systems. (p. 6)

A principal's responsibility during these important times of change is to provide a sense of continuity in the educational environment and to provide the child with a feeling of self-worth despite change because individuals have a strong desire to maintain a unified

and coherent identity. The challenge for a principal in this important time of change for the child is to shape a school culture that helps the child understand that he/she is a capable, unique individual. Dien (2000) states "that this would depend on the specific patterns of behavior, attitudes, and values which enter into self definition that have been fostered and learned by the child through the family unit, preschool setting, and what has been further developed in the elementary school" (p. 3). Supporting this direction in Creswell (1998), Creswell states "that the 'intentionality of consciousness' is where experiences contain both the outward appearance and inward consciousness based on memory, image, and meaning" (p. 52).

Need For The Study

Elementary schools are the educational learning environments where effective early childhood programs need to be established to assist students with the cultivation of healthy identity development, and equity and access, through school leadership and practice. The principal is the key to school improvement and to providing what Jason (2000) calls "a more humane environment responsive to the ever-changing demographics of schools" (p. 2). According to Jason (2000), principals' leadership actions that are not grounded in understanding the perspectives of different student populations and communities served by the school will be rendered less effective by the stronger phenomenological influence in which different cultures and groups view their world and act accordingly. Principals face issues and challenges of providing education that accommodates diversity. According to the constructivist point of view "individuals construct knowledge and understanding within the social phenomenological context in which they find themselves" (Creswell, 1998, p. 53). Principals must learn the traditions, customs, beliefs, and social mores of the particular

student populations and communities they serve in order to accommodate the differing world views, including unique communication styles and patterns of interaction held by their student populations and communities (Butt & Pahnos, 1995). In a study by Combs and Snygg (1959) it was found "that since the perceptions a person holds govern his/her attitudes and behavior in a particular situation, learning how students and teachers from different backgrounds see the work of the school becomes a leadership priority" (as cited in Jason, 2000, p. 8). Jason (2000) purports "that without understanding the values, norms, beliefs, and experiences from which perceptions are formed, the difference between educators and those they educate is inevitably a problem whereby achieving instructional goals relies on varied forms of coercion" (p. 8). Jason (2000) cited Hart and Bredeson (1996) when he wrote that the principal has the potential to unify the school community by serving as celebrant and mediator. By fulfilling these roles, the principal legitimizes differences that actually enrich educational experiences for all.

<div align="center">Overview of Methodology</div>

This phenomenological study addressed a research question to the participants about their perceptions of their multiracial students' identity development. Perception is regarded as the primary source of knowledge (Moustakas, 1994). Kockelmans (1967) regards perception as the most original act of consciousness, enabling people to express singular judgments that end in universal judgments. The researcher conducted a thorough review of the literature. This literature review generated the development of the questions that were used in the interview protocol.

This study was non-experimental in nature. It described the meaning of experiences of a phenomenon or qualitative concept for several individuals (Moustakas, 1994). The

phenomenological tradition of qualitative inquiry searches for the essence of the intentionality of consciousness where experiences contain both the outward appearance and inward consciousness based on memory, image, and meaning (Creswell, 1998, p. 52).

This research study can best be described in the constructivist paradigm because the aim of inquiry is understanding and reconstructing of the constructions that people (including the researcher) initially hold, aiming toward consensus but still open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improve (Davis & Sumara, 2002). The criterion for progress is that over time, everyone formulates more informed and sophisticated constructions and becomes more aware of the content and meaning of competing constructions (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 21l). Consequently, this study aligned itself with the constructivist paradigm because it revealed underlying thematic issues that become apparent in the open-ended interviews during the data-collection process.

This study also aligned itself within the critical theory paradigm which articulates an ontology based on historical realism, an epistemology which is transactional, and a methodology that is both dialogic and dialectical (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 187). Critical theory focuses on how injustice and subjugation shape people's experiences and understandings of the world (Patton, 2002, p. 130). Critical theory seeks not to understand society but rather to critique and change society (Patton 2002, p. 131). This paradigm of critical theory rejects economic determinism and focuses on media, culture, language, power, desire, critical enlightenment, and critical emancipation. This framework embraces a critical hermeneutics (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 187). This leads to a version connected to critical ethnography, and partisan, critical inquiry committed to social criticism. Critical

theorists as bricoleurs, seek to produce practical, pragmatic knowledge, a bricolage that is cultural and structural, judged by its degree of historical situatedness and its ability to produce praxis, or action (Denzin & Lincoln, 2005, p. 187). Taking this ontological and epistemological diversity into account, bricoleurs understand there are numerous dimensions to the bricolage. As with all aspects of the bricolage, no description is fixed and final, and all features of the bricolage come with an elastic clause (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). Patton supports the use of the critical theory paradigm in qualitative research and defines an important characteristic as inductive analysis (Patton, 1990, p. 40). Patton (1990) states "that the researcher immerse him or herself in the details and specifics of the data to discover important categories, dimensions, and interrelationships. The researcher would begin by exploring genuinely open-ended questions with the participants in the study rather than testing theoretically derived deductive hypotheses" (p. 40). (See Appendix A).

Creswell suggests a long interview protocol with open-ended, semi-structured, questions (Creswell, 1998, p. 113). The participants' interviews were bracketed for researcher bias to set aside all preconceived experiences to best understand the experiences of the participants in the study (Moustakas, 1994). Horizonalization, a technique which is used in phenomenology, whereby the protocol questions were divided into statements, was used so the researcher could list every significant statement relevant to the topic and give it equal value (Moustakas, 1994). Clustering of statements into thematic units or units of meaning removed overlapping or repetitive statements (Moustakas, 1994). From the indepth interviews, the researcher wrote texturally rich descriptions of what was

experienced or a description of the meaning that individuals have experienced (Moustakas, 1994).

In order to seek trustworthiness, credibility, confirmability, dependability, and transferability, the researcher contacted the participants by mail for feedback on the analysis of their individual transcripts (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). In addition, another researcher with an understanding of qualitative research reviewed the procedures and read one of the interview transcripts and rated it to check for interrater reliability. This researcher also read all the transcripts and findings, to ensure trustworthiness and consistency.

The following are definitions of key terms as they relate to the study:

Definitions of Key Terms

Term	Definition
Ethnicity	Ethnicity is defined as the culture, customs, and traditions of a group of people Phinney & Rosenthal (1992), (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 2).
Identity Development	Identity development is the stages that individuals go through to recognize and gain knowledge of their uniqueness and how they fit into society (Poston, 1990).
Multiracial	A multiracial individual is one who has parents of more than one racial background. This includes all races. (Gibbs, 1987; Hall, 1980; Herman, 1970).
Race	Race is defined as a group of people united or classified together on the basis of common history, nationality, or geographic distribution (Tatum, 1992).

Chapter Summary

Chapter I introduced the study and provided an overview of the background of the study, the theoretical framework, the need for the study, the purpose of the study, the research question, and the philosophical perspectives as they relate to qualitative phenomenological research, and an overview of the research methodology. Chapter II will present a review of the literature and will explore the history of racial segregation in the United States as it relates to education, identity development, and multiracial identity development. The literature review will provide a context for this study while establishing benchmarks for comparing the results of this study with those of related studies.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Introduction

This review of the literature explores the history of racial segregation in the United

States as it relates to education, identity development, multiracial identity development,

and related studies. American public education differs from that of many other nations in

that it is primarily the responsibility of the states and individual school districts. Educators

and community leaders have always entered into debate about the optimal way for

government to fulfill its responsibility to educate the populace. A review of historical

movements in the United States will attest to this recurring pattern. Weinberg (1977)

identified three central ideas underlying every educational change and reform measure in

American history. The first pertains to the purpose of public education; the second is

concerned with the recipients of the services public education provides; and the third

involves the quality of the educational services that are provided by public education.

Formal education developed in the United States in the early 19th century. The review of

the literature further focuses on the history of racial segregation in the United States as it

relates to the significant occurrences and trends in our society that challenged and shaped

education for minority and multiracial individuals.

The History of Racial Segregation In The United States

Racial segregation in southern public schools dates from the 1860s (Landman, 2004).

Before the Civil War began in 1861, a number of northern states also allowed or required

segregated schools. During the earlier 19th century ninety percent of African Americans

lived in the south, so segregation affected a majority of the African American population.

After the Civil War ended in 1865, and especially after the end of Reconstruction in 1877, the South continued to segregate its schools and other facilities (Landman, 2004). By the early 1900s, the South was entirely segregated.

In the influential (1896) case of Plessy v. Ferguson the Supreme Court upheld the practice of segregation as long as the separate facilities were equal (Carson, 2003). The Supreme Court decided that a Louisiana law mandating separate but equal accommodations for African Americans and Whites on intrastate railroads was constitutional (Fireside, 2004). Homer Plessy, a citizen of New Orleans, Louisiana who was one-eighth African American decided to test the constitutionality of the Separate Car Law (Fireside, 2004a). In 1892, Plessy purchased a first-class ticket on the East Louisiana Railway from New Orleans. Once he boarded the train he informed the conductor of his actual racial lineage. He took a seat in the White section and was asked to vacate it and sit in the Blacks only section. He refused and was arrested.

Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) provided an impetus for further segregation laws. Since Plessy ruled that states could prohibit the use of public facilities by African Americans, schools and public places such as trains and buses were also segregated with separate facilities for African Americans and Whites. The decision in Plessy v. Ferguson served as the organizing legal justification for over fifty years (Fireside, 2004).

In 1909, African Americans, led by W.E.B. Dubois and Arthur and Joel Spingarn, formed the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP), an organization dedicated to fighting for racial equality and ending segregation (Payne, 2004). The NAACP worked individually and challenged segregation through its Legal Defense and Education Fund (Landman, 2004). From 1936 to 1950 the organization won a number

of cases leading to the desegregation of law schools and other professional schools at segregated universities in Mississippi, Maryland, Oklahoma, and Texas (Landman, 2004). The NAACP also had some success in forcing states to equalize public school funding and to pay teachers in African American schools at the same rate as those in White schools. But throughout the South, public education for African Americans remained terribly inadequate.

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas

Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas was the landmark court case of 1954 in which the Supreme Court unanimously declared that it was unconstitutional to segregate schools and other public facilities. Brown v. Board of Education laid the foundation for shaping future policies and movements such as the Civil Rights Movement (Blanchett, Mumford & Beachum, 2005). Landman (2004) states:

By invalidating the doctrine of 'separate but equal' in the field of public education, a doctrine that had been approved by the same court nearly sixty years earlier in Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), the Brown decision removed the legal foundation for the system of official segregation – the infamous 'Jim Crow' laws that dictated the structure of race relations across much of our nation. (p. 17)

In the early 1950s three states; Delaware, Kansas, Virginia, and the District of Columbia established cases that challenged racial segregation in public schools. Oliver Brown went to the NAACP and asked for legal assistance because his daughter Linda Brown walked several miles to school because she could not attend her neighborhood school due to her race (Blanchett, Mumford & Beachum, 2005). Oliver Brown filed suit against the Topeka Board of Education on behalf of his daughter, Linda Brown.

The Supreme Court heard arguments in the Brown case in 1952, but the justices did not decide the case that year. The justices were very divided over whether the court could rule over Plessy v. Ferguson (1896). The Chief Justice Frederick Moore Vinson who opposed reversing Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) died and the court rescheduled arguments in 1953. Saddler (2005) states "that the central question addressed by the Supreme Court in the Brown case (1954) was whether segregation of children in public schools solely on the basis of race deprives minority children of equal educational opportunities even when all else is equal" (p. 41). A new justice, Chief Earl Warren skillfully steered the court to its historical ruling on May 17, 1954. Blanchett, Mumford, & Beachum (2005) state "that the Supreme Court struck down the "separate but equal" doctrine of Plessy v. Ferguson for public education after sixty years of legalized discrimination by ruling in favor of the plaintiffs" (p. 2).

Comparatively, Plessy v. Ferguson (1896) was a law that separated African Americans and Whites as a matter of social policy, implying that there were adequate separate facilities for both races. Unfortunately, this was not the case. Schools, public transportation, and public facilities for African Americans were inherently unequal compared to schools, public transportation, and public facilities for Whites. Brown v. Board of Education (1954), in declaring that it was unconstitutional to separate these facilities by race, helped to legalize social, legal, and cultural factors in creating race and gender equality for African Americans.

The impact of the Brown decision on education helped launch the Civil Rights Movement and led to other court decisions that struck down all legalized forms of racial discrimination at that time. Shealey, Lue, Brooks & McCray (2005) state "that the promise

of Brown lies in pursuit of educational equality for students of color, and that current school reform initiatives must take into account the historical context that frames every aspect of public schooling" (p. 8).

The Civil Rights Movement

The Civil Rights Movement began as early as the 1800s and was a movement by many different individuals to bring civil rights and equality under the law to African Americans (Carson, 2003). The movement as it was referred to throughout time came to the forefront in the 1950s and 1960s when African Americans were fighting for equal rights for housing, voting access, use of public facilities and accommodations, equal educational opportunities, and economic opportunities (Davis, 2001). The movement has had a lasting impact on United States governance, as equity for all individuals remains a very prevalent issue in today's society.

In 1909, the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) was formed (Payne 2004). It was a principally northern association and the predominance of African Americans still lived in the South (Carson, 2003). The NAACP was created to assist African Americans in gaining equal rights in all aspects of life. Carson (2003) states "that its purpose was to secure for all people the rights guaranteed in the 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments to the United States Constitution, which promised an end to slavery, the equal protection of the law, and universal adult male suffrage" (p. 49). In the 1930s, the NAACP devoted its major resources to overturning Plessy v. Ferguson (1896), fighting for African Americans to have access to state colleges, equal pay for African American teachers, equal financial support for African American schools, and the elimination of "separate but equal" education (Davis, 2001). In early 1954, the NAACP's concerted assault on segregation in

public education culminated in Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, a United

States Supreme Court case. Thurgood Marshall an African American attorney, served as

the NAACP's lead counsel for the Brown case which outlawed segregation in the public

schools (Davis, 2001).

After World War II, many changes took place in the United States. Many African

Americans began leaving the South and moved to the North and West to share in the

wartime prosperity. This gave the minority problem a national rather than a sectional

character. With urbanization a crucial issue and the victory of Brown v. Board of Education

(1954), a new generation of Whites and African Americans were coming to maturity who

had known only the war and postwar years.

In 1957, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., a nationally prominent civil rights leader emerged

to the forefront. He became the founding president of the Southern Christian Leadership

Conference (SCLC) (Carson, 2003). His commitment to Gandhian precepts of nonviolent

struggle came from his trip to India in 1959 (Carson, 2003). Carson states "that until his

death, Dr. King remained steadfast in his commitment to the radical transformation of

American society through nonviolent activism" (p. 143). Even though through his actions

Dr. King proposed nonviolence, the increasing pace of civil rights protests in the early

1960s were met with a corresponding increase in violent response. In the spring of 1963,

President John F. Kennedy urged Americans by way of the media to guarantee equal

treatment to every person. In June of 1963, President Kennedy submitted a new civil rights

bill to Congress (Carson, 2003). After Kennedy's death, President Lyndon B. Johnson

signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 on July 2, 1964 (Carson, 2003). Carson states "that one

of its five components encouraged the desegregation of public schools but did not authorize

busing" (p. 271). As time went on, educational and economic opportunities were consistently brought to the forefront with relevant cases of discrimination being cited. Affirmative action came about as a means of overcoming the effects of past discrimination.

The term affirmative action was first used by President John F. Kennedy in a 1961 executive order designed to encourage contractors on projects financed with federal funds to racially integrate their workforces (Encarta Online Encyclopedia, 2005). The original goal of the Civil Rights Movement had been color-blind laws. However, many people believed that simply ending long-standing policies of discrimination was not enough. They believed that affirmative, or proactive, measures to increase equality were necessary. Affirmative action policies were the only way to ensure an integrated society in which all segments of the population had an equal opportunity to share in jobs, education, and other benefits (Encarta Online Encyclopedia, 2005).

The Equal Employment Opportunity Act was passed on March 24, 1972 (Carson, 2003). It prohibited discrimination against employees based on race, sex, or religion. This was of crucial importance to encourage the hiring of women and minorities. This was important for school principals because minority men and women could apply for the position of principal and minority representation was needed for the purpose of equity and access for diverse, minority, and multiracial student populations in the schools.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965 was passed into law under the presidency of Lyndon B. Johnson and its defining program goals were to provide better educational opportunities for economically disadvantaged, multiracial, and low income students (McDonnell, 2005). The Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s (Abraham,

1982); historical events such as the 1954 Brown v. Board of Education decision eliminating the separate but equal doctrine (Blanchett, Mumford & Beachum, 2005); and congressional pressures led to the enactment and implementation of this law in 1965. The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was the first law ever passed which provided monetary funds from the federal government to provide services to impoverished minority and multiracial students through such programs as the Title I program (McDonnell, 2005).

McDonnell (2005) states "that ESEA Title I operates like many other federal categorical programs. It is essentially a form of inducement through which the federal government seeks to change the institutional behavior of state and local agencies by offering them financial assistance on the condition that they undertake prescribed activities" (p. 21). Examples of these activities are specialized literacy programs, professional development for teachers, school technology, and parental involvement programs. McDonnell (2005) postulates that the Title I program has undergone many changes throughout the last forty years, but most notably in recent years it has aligned itself to the different states' educational priorities.

The Elementary and Secondary Education Act has undergone many name changes as it has been reauthorized throughout the last forty years being under the control of different presidents. In 2002, President George W. Bush signed the No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act into law. Fusarelli (2005) reveals "that although technically a reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), NCLB marked a significant shift in federal education policy, with heavy emphasis on increased accountability, eliminating the achievement gap, and expanded school choice" (p. 121). In addition, NCLB mandates state administered standardized testing.

Additional programs and initiatives which have been established due to the ESEA are Bilingual Education for Non-English Speaking students, Head Start for economically disadvantaged preschool students, research-based literacy programs for students and parents, a wide range of supplemental before-and-after-school tutorial programs, and individualized programs and funds for disabled students.

<div align="center">Identity Development</div>

Identity development assimilates itself within the constructivist perspective, maintaining that identity is a life story that one constructs and reconstructs throughout life by dialoguing with oneself and with others and experiencing different cognitive processes as a person reaches adulthood. Poston's (1990) definition of identity development comprises the stages of development that an individual goes through as he or she learns to recognize his or her uniqueness and gains knowledge of how he or she fits into society. Dien (2000) tells us "that identity development involves the gradual process of the development of a sense of self from early infancy" (p. 3). Erikson (1968) states "that identity development can be compared to a life story which is socially constructed and constantly being revised throughout the life span, and which provides a sense of continuity despite change" (as cited in Dien, 2000, p. 1).

In Erikson's (1968) model, The Eight Stages of Man, identity development consists of eight stages of development. His Eight Stages of Man model was created through his experimental work in psychotherapy, including extensive work with children and adolescents from all different levels of socioeconomic status (Myers, 1999). According to his theory each stage is considered a psychosocial crisis which arises and demands resolution before the next stage can be considered. While he identified characteristic

capabilities for each stage, Erikson postulated that the stages vary for every person. In general, in stage one which includes infancy- to-two years of age, learning basic trust versus basic mistrust is intuitive in nature. In stage two, which includes children from two-to-four years of age, children must learn autonomy versus shame. This stage is one in which a child would learn to have a will of his own. Four-to-five year olds learn initiative versus guilt in the third stage of development. A child immobilized by guilt in this stage becomes a fearful, dependent child. In stage four, which includes five-to-twelve year olds, industry versus inferiority, a child learns to master the more formal skills of life. Thirteen-to-twenty year olds, now adolescents and young adults, learn identity versus identity diffusion in the fifth stage of development. They will learn to answer the question of "Who am I?" The last three stages, stage six, intimacy versus isolation, stage seven, generativity versus self-absorption, and stage eight, integrity versus despair, all occur in adulthood. These three stages are assimilated with love, caring, and wisdom. Adults who have not resolved earlier psychosocial crises may view their lives with disgust, despair, or entitlement.

The educational field undoubtedly embodies these stages of identity development in many different ways. The principal of a school must create a supportive learning environment inclusive of curriculum, experiences, and opportunities for children that assist them in developing a healthy identity development. Teachers, parents, peers, extended family, and community members must also be involved in this process which begins in the preschool setting and continues on until children graduate from high school.

Multiracial Identity Development

Multiracial children are a growing population in society. Responding to the identity development needs of these children requires recognition of and sensitivity to historical and societal prejudices, governmental categorization, and cultural customs (Kato, 2000). Multiracial children also need to understand what it means to be multiracial, and acquire coping skills for the cultural and racial discrimination they may face in their lives. Because there are few racially sensitive, tension free communities in the United States, school principals in conjunction with teachers and school staff must learn to provide a supportive learning environment which builds healthy identity development for their students beginning in preschool. Helms (1990) states "that identity has both a racial and an ethnic side" (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 1). Katz (1987) and Ramsey (1987) emphasize "that ethnic and racial identity begins to develop during the preschool years and adolescence is an especially crucial period". (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 1) Rosenthal (1987) emphasized:

> Achieving a sense of identity is an important psychological task for children. Children's behavioral and psychological development suffers when they do not achieve a firm sense of identity. That sense of identity is based on certain social contexts, including gender, class, ethnic or racial group membership. Maintaining an ethnic identity of choice is particularly relevant when one's ethnic group is a minority group. (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 1)

Many times multiracial children have a very difficult time identifying with either ethnic group due to their dual heritage. Ethnic group differences have a major impact on children's social development. How multiracial children label themselves, and their

families is an extremely important factor in their lives. Morrison and Bordere (2001) state "that in addition to race, such factors as class, ethnicity, gender, and personality characteristics affect children's identity development. With regard to race, membership in a racial group is usually assumed by physical characteristics, such as skin color" (p. 2). Kich (1996) states "that the attitudes of multiracial children are mainly influenced by parents, teachers, peers, and extended family, all of whom play a major role in facilitating a child's acceptance and pride in their racial identity" (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 2). Phinney & Rosenthal (1992) state "that members of an ethnic group often share a common culture, traditions, values, and/or beliefs and that having positive feelings about ethnic identity, therefore, is a critical part of one's development" (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 2).

Since it is important for schools to foster universal respect for students, principals along with their staffs must make it clear that there will be no tolerance for racism and prejudice within the school environment. Principals should provide their staffs with professional development and accurate information on multiculturalism so they can correct misconceptions when they hear them from students or adults. Wardle (1998) proposes that the learning environment should provide professional development to its teachers and encourage parents to discuss their family's cultural ethnic/heritages and issues that face their children. Morrison & Bordere (2001) state "children from groups that have traditionally experienced prejudice associated with race, in particular, benefit from classroom experiences that focus on identity development. Principals who have an understanding of the importance of identity development are more likely to create a supportive learning environment" (p. 2). The key to the education of multiracial children,

just like all other children is enabling them to feel included in both the process and content. Wright (1998) states "that multiracial children who are emotionally nourished throughout their development preserve the resilience and optimism that most children are born with" (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 4). Parent-teacher conferences held at the beginning of the school year may be a strong forum in learning about a multiracial students' background. At this time a teacher can discuss with a parent(s) how they want their multiracial child identified and can bolster this ethnicity within the classroom environment. School activities can include the celebration of different ethnicities and heritages in multicultural activities, providing the Media Center with books on multicultural persons, and including multiracial persons as role models when selecting speakers and other resource persons. Principals and teachers can infuse the curriculum with positive images of multiracial people and their families and can inform their students that multiracial people have historically made intrinsic contributions to society. Morrison & Bordere (2001) explain that "principals, parents, and teachers have large roles to play in providing this support and nourishment, thereby bolstering healthy identity development" (p. 4).

<div align="center">Related Studies</div>

Amid the changing demographics of many urban and suburban school districts, principals, teachers, and other school staff find themselves thrust into dealing with racial or ethnic problems and may not have experience or training to rectify these problems. Principals, in addition to managing the school environment, forging a mission and a vision, guiding the process of school reform, and supervising staff, find themselves in these situations very frequently. In some cases they must also become a mediator for issues

dealing with racial tension and discrimination. Teachers and counselors who may not have had training or who have had minimal training in dealing with diversity issues find themselves in these situations also. As previously stated, there are a limited number of studies in the field about principals' perceptions about multiracial identity development and creating a transformative learning environment for their students. Due to this fact, some of the related studies will be mixed studies involving school principals, teachers, and or counselors who participated in professional development programs which enhanced their knowledge in working with diverse student populations.

Related Studies Involving School Principals

Henze, Katz, Norte, Sather and Walker (1999) conducted a three year case study of twenty-one schools across the United States where the principals had taken proactive steps to improve relations among different ethnic groups. The schools selected had to meet three criteria: (1) a diverse student population; (2) a history of racial or ethnic tensions in the school or surrounding community; and (3) a principal who was a proactive leader in improving racial or ethnic relations. Their research study found that the principal as a skilled leader who correctly envisions future needs and empowers others to share and implement that vision makes a very valuable and positive difference in interethnic relations in schools. The factors indicating the difference in a proactive leader were that these principals were adept at : (a) identifying the barriers; (b) assessing the nature of conflicts; (c) identifying the school's priority needs for the year; (d) developing a vision for diversity that is put into practice daily; (e) involving diverse stakeholders in the decision-making process; (f) identifying own leadership style and communicating this to staff; (g) creating an environment where all people can openly and safely discuss topics and issues related to

race and ethnicity; (h) developing a plan for how the school will address racial or ethnic conflicts to develop positive interethnic relations in the future.

Related Studies Involving School Principals and Teachers

A recently published report by Zeng (2005) using a large national sample of kindergarten teachers and administrators as measured by the Early Childhood Longitudinal Study, Kindergarten Class of 1998-1999 affirmed that a large percentage of kindergarten teachers and administrators were poorly qualified, which may account for the alarming rate of developmentally and culturally inappropriate practices and beliefs in United States kindergarten programs. Moreover, the data in this study was used to investigate the qualifications and backgrounds of the teachers and administrators, including their teaching experiences, specialized training, and certifications. This study found that many of the administrators and kindergarten teachers lacked the specialized training, certification, and in-depth knowledge of the unique characteristics needed to operate effective early childhood programs that were developmentally and culturally appropriate for kindergarteners. This study also indicated that many of the kindergarten students who were minority, Limited English Proficient (LEP), and multiracial, posed a challenge to these teachers and administrators due to their lack of training in providing a healthy learning environment to develop positive self-identity.

In a study addressing issues of multiculturalism and the importance of providing culturally sensitive pedagogy to meet the needs of all South Carolina students, Cozart, Cudahy, Ndunda and Vansickle (2003), instructors from the College of Charleston, were given the opportunity to offer an eight-day institute for fifty teachers and administrators who lived in different parts of South Carolina. These participants were teachers and

administrators who came from a variety of different ethnic backgrounds, and over half were African Americans. The goal of this institute was to challenge participating teachers and administrators to examine and question themselves about their beliefs concerning minority, multiracial, low socioeconomic, disabled or Limited English Proficient (LEP) students, to see whether they perceive all students as learners, irrespective of their race, gender, class, disabilities, or first language. The eight-day institute provided the participants with many different activities such as: reading pieces of literature and articles on diversity, observations, anti-racist, classist, and sexist dialogue and discussions, reflective journaling, film, lectures, and participation in problem-based learning. The instructors chose these techniques and activities designed for the teachers and administrators to participate in a form of transformative learning informed by constructivism, critical theory, and deconstructivism in social theory (Cozart, Cudahy, Ndunda and Vansickle, 2003). Transformative learning became the catalyst for the participants to clarify their feelings, recommit, and change. Cozart et al.'s results revealed that through the daily class discussions, evaluations of participants, and the presentations of their work using an inclusive pedagogy several months later, participants had been provided with the tools to begin to adapt and develop effective, culturally sensitive pedagogy.

Related Studies Involving Teachers and Counselors

Bhargava, Howley, Scott, Stein, and Phelps (2004) investigated the knowledge, attitudes, and experiences regarding multicultural education of one-hundred education and human services graduate and undergraduate teachers and counselors who were completing their last semester of course work. Bhargava et al. presented the participants with an online

survey to complete which also included demographic information, degree information, and open-ended questions. Bhargava et al.'s results revealed four themes which emerged from the four open-ended questions. These were professional role as a change agent in a diverse society, personal beliefs, professional development, and advocacy. More specifically, the participants provided suggestions for the School of Education and Human Services personnel to improve training regarding diversity including curriculum training, use of guest speakers, specific curriculum issues, field experiences, and the ethnic makeup of the academic community. Another result of this study was that preservice teachers and counselors felt that they should engage in curricular activities relevant to a variety of cultures which would provide them an opportunity to gain insight regarding the communities in which they teach. Bhargava et al. also reported that further study was needed to actually observe teachers and counselors in interacting with diverse populations in classrooms and clinical settings to see examples of appropriate transfer of theoretical knowledge in action.

Harris (2002) examined and investigated three-hundred and twenty-eight school counselors' personal perceptions of biracial individuals. The participants were male and female counselors from elementary, middle, and senior high schools from sixteen public school districts, ranging in size from less than one thousand students to more than seventy-five thousand students from the Southeastern region of the United States. Participants completed a twenty-five item researcher-created survey which covered a broad range of personal and social issues confronting biracial children. Harris found that school counselors' perceptions of biracial children indicated that school level, years of counseling experience, and gender influence certain perceptions. Harris also reported that school

counselors' perceptions were also affected by the presence of actively promoted cultural diversity and awareness programs in their schools.

Cruz-Jensen (2004) conducted a three-year study by examining two-hundred and fourteen written pre-and one-hundred and eighty post-course surveys in which participants described their preparation in an introductory multicultural course. Participants in this study were either seeking a bachelors' degree concurrent with teaching licensure, or were post-baccalaureate seeking licensure only. These participants in several courses completed anonymous surveys during the first and last week of each semester during the three years between 1997-2000. The instructors were ethnically mixed during this instructional period. When designing this study in conjunction with the faculty of this university, Cruz-Jensen (2004) felt that it was important for preservice teacher candidates to experience and reflect on appropriate multicultural education techniques in teaching diverse populations of students before entering the classroom setting. The coursework and activities designed for the preservice teachers enabled them to implement responsive instructional practices for diverse students.

Cruz-Jensen's results revealed three emergent themes in this study: (1) that participants encountered difficult challenges within themselves and their families and friends as their awareness of diversity and societal issues increased; (2) that if multicultural education courses were not taught effectively greater problems may be created; and (3) participants felt that having a diverse mix of instructors was a definite advantage. In addition, during the post survey results, many participants felt that they had emerged with more sociocultural understanding, a clearer sense of identity, an openness to new perspectives, and an awareness of the implication of multicultural education on their work as teachers.

An interesting note to this study was that participants who categorized themselves as White or members of only one racial group at the beginning of this study began to affirm their multiple heritages by the end of the study due to the broadening of their understanding of cultures and heritages. At the end of this study Cruz-Jensen (2004) commented that "clearly, with increased concerns about student achievement and school effectiveness, particularly cultural and language minorities and low socioeconomic students in urban schools, more research needs to be conducted to ascertain how to best prepare prospective and current teachers to work effectively with students from different backgrounds than their own" (p. 9).

In a study conducted by Lucas and Good (2001), the tournament mobility process of four different disaggregated racial-class groups, which were called analytic groups, was assessed. These analytic groups were: (1) upper-class Whites, (2) lower-class Whites, (3) upper-class "minorities," and (4) lower-class "minorities." The ethnic makeup of these groups were Whites, African Americans, and Latinos-Latinas. Lucas and Good (2001) describe the process of assessing tournament mobility as "attending to two analytically separate aspects of mobility: the pattern of mobility, through a series of ranked discrete locations, and the incidence of mobility, from lower to higher locations" (p. 139). The data was drawn from the sophomore cohort of High School and Beyond (HS&B) and focused on Mathematics and English mobility for three years in different high school settings. Lucas and Good's analysis of their study focused on two questions: (1) Do students of different types encounter similar or dissimilar mobility regimes?; and (2) Do students of different types have similar or dissimilar prospects for upward mobility? In the subject of English, they found that not only did all four analytic groups have the same mobility

regime, but they had the same regime. In the subject of Mathematics their findings revealed that Latinos-Latinas and African Americans appeared to confront different mobility regimes than Whites. Lucas and Good (2001) speculated that:

> Even though we obtained little evidence in favor of tournament mobility, our comparison of blacks and Latinos-Latinas, on the one hand, and Whites, on the other hand, was greatly enhanced by the analytic separative of pattern and incidence. What we found on the basis of that analyses is nonignorable upward mobility, adominance of downward mobility, and evidence that Whites appear to navigate a qualitatively different -not to say better track mobility regime than do Latinos-Latinas and blacks. (p. 152)

Contribution of Current Study

Despite the plethora of articles and books about the history of education and equality for minorities, multiracial individuals, and immigrants, there are very few resources available discussing the interplay of the history of education, perceptions of school administrators, and the multiracial identity development of their students in the United States until the early 1970s. The information and data collected from this study will contribute to the field of administration and education by increasing principals' perceptions about their students' multiracial identity development. Principals, teachers, counselors, and social service professionals can use this data to enhance school learning environments for diverse populations and can assist students and their families with techniques to be able to stress all forms of diversity with pride and celebrate and acknowledge all forms of diversity within the family unit. Enhancing understanding of the development of healthy identity development and equity and access through school leadership, practice, and professional

development may assist school administrators, teachers, and their staffs to more clearly understand the diverse student populations and communities they serve. This study suggests ways that principals can focus on legitimizing the value of differences in cultures to enrich educational experiences and opportunities for not only multiracial students but for all students.

Chapter Summary

The history of racial segregation in the United States, identity development, multiracial identity development, and related studies shaped this literature review. It is clear from the literature that, although public policy has sought to provide what it considers equality of educational opportunity for all Americans, not everyone has benefited equally from the educational system. Perhaps this is a result of the fact that policy makers have invested more energy on minimizing discrimination in schools rather than directly addressing challenges associated with educational quality or standards. The succinct theme that has emerged from the literature reflects that educational equality for all Americans, especially for minorities, Limited English Proficient (LEP) individuals, and multiracial individuals, has been an ongoing issue in our society for hundreds of years. Chapter III will provide an overview of the research design, and will describe the data analysis and methods used in this study.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

Context

Philosophical Paradigm

The philosophical paradigm or worldview provides a basic set of beliefs which guides the inquiries and actions of the researcher. These beliefs are related to the ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions. These assumptions are related to the nature of reality, the relationship of the researcher to what is being researched, and the process of the research.

Phenomenology falls within the constructivist paradigm. The constructivist paradigm aims its inquiry at "understanding and reconstruction of the constructions that people (including the inquirer) initially hold, aiming toward consensus but still open to new interpretations as information and sophistication improve" (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 211). Denzin and Lincoln (1998) propose the theoretical foundation that:

Transactional/subjectivist constructivism assumes that knowledge is created in interaction among investigator and respondents, which is essential in conducting qualitative research (p. 208).… The criterion for progress is that over time, everyone formulates more informed and sophisticated constructions and becomes more aware of the content and meaning of competing constructions. (p. 211)

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) further postulate that knowledge accumulates only in a relative sense through the formation of ever more informed and "sophisticated constructions" (p. 213). Ethics is intrinsic to this paradigm because of the inclusion of

participant values in the inquiry starting with respondents' existing constructions and sophistications in their constructions as well as the inquirer's construction.

Denzin and Lincoln (1998) also explain the constructivist paradigm based on ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions. The ontological perspective defines reality if a real world is assumed, that what can be known about it is "how things really are" and "how things really work." The epistemological perspective defines reality if a real reality is assumed, that the posture of the knower must be one of objective detachment or value freedom in order to be able to discover "how things really are" and "how things really work." The methodological perspective defines reality if a real reality is pursued by an "objective" inquirer that this mandates control of possible confounding factors whether the methods are observational or statistical.

Rationale for a Phenomenological Study

The phenomenological approach involves a return to experience in order to obtain comprehensive descriptions that provide the basis for a reflective structural analysis that portrays the essences of the experience (Moustakas, 1994). Since this study focused on principals' perceptions of their students' multiracial identity development and is a lived experience due to their daily jobs as school principals, the qualitative phenomenological approach was used in this study. The understanding of meaningful concrete relations implicit in the original description of experience is the primary target of phenomenological knowledge (Moustakas, 1994). The aim is to determine what an experience means for the persons who have had the experience and are able to provide a comprehensive description of it (Moustakas, 1994).

Silverman (2000) states that theory provides both a framework for critically understanding phenomena and a basis for considering how what is unknown might be organized. According to Creswell (1998), a researcher starts into the field with a strong orienting theoretical framework. The researcher in this study grounded this study in a theoretical framework which was addressed in Chapter I. The researcher entered the field informed as to what would be studied and how it would be studied. The researcher minimized the "distance" or "objective separateness" (Guba & Lincoln, 1998, p. 94) between herself and those participants being researched. Principals have students in their schools who are multiracial and share similar experiences when dealing with issues related to identity development. Participants in this study who are committed to creating social change in their schools had existing theories or mental constructions that are not more or less "true" in any absolute sense, but simply more or less informed and/or sophisticated (Denzin & Lincoln, 1998, p. 206). The researcher also had preconceived theories based on similar experiences as the participants due to the researcher's current job as a principal. The theories of Denzin & Lincoln (1998), Creswell (1998), and Silverman (2000), all guided this study in support of using the phenomenological tradition of research for this study.

Role of the Researcher

The researcher in this study served as interviewer and recorder of information. The researcher set aside all preconceived experiences to best understand the experiences of participants in the study (Moustakas, 1994). This is referred to as "epoche" and was used throughout the study. The researcher in this study acted as bricoleur. The bricoleur is adept at performing a large number of diverse tasks, ranging from interviewing to observing, to interpreting personal and historical documents, to intensive self-reflection and introspection

(Denzin & Lincoln, 1998). The product of the bricoleur is a bricolage, a complex dense, reflexive, collagelike creation that represents the researcher's images, understandings, and interpretations of the phenomenon under analysis.

Researcher bias. According to Creswell (1998), the researcher needs to understand the philosophical perspectives behind the approach, especially the concept of studying how people experience a phenomenon. The concept of "epoche" is central, where the researcher brackets his or her own preconceived ideas about the phenomenon to understand it through the voices of the informants. In addition to the concept of "epoche," the researcher participated in a form of social and human science research that is evolving and changing constantly.

The researcher employed several methods to eliminate bias. The participants in the study received copies of the transcripts by mail after they were transcribed by the researcher to ensure proper transcription. The researcher contacted the participants for feedback on the analysis of their individual transcripts. In addition, another researcher with an understanding of qualitative research reviewed the procedures and read one of the interview transcripts and rated it to check for interrater reliability. The researcher maintained a field journal to minimize bias (Berg, 2001; Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Silverman, 2000).

<div align="center">Data Generation</div>

Ten female elementary school principals in a public school system were chosen for this study. Selection of these principals was based on the researcher's access to these principals, and also their experience as principals of schools that have multiracial students. Each principal granted consent to participate in the study. It was important that each principal

understand the importance and relevance of this topic as it relates to the multiracial students attending their schools.

Participants

The participants were ten female elementary school principals in a public school system. The researcher chose female principals because there are a plethora of female elementary school principals who met the criteria to be participants in the study in the urban school district where this study was conducted. Furthermore, the researcher chose the elementary level to conduct this study because elementary schools are the foundation of social, emotional, physical, and academic learning, where teaching children to have healthy identity development and self-esteem is paramount. The participants were between the ages of forty and fifty-five years and had at least five years experience as a principal. The ethnicity of the principals were two White, two African American, two Hispanic, two Haitian, and two Multiracial. These ten principals were a purposeful sample to ensure that certain types of individuals displaying specific attributes were included in the study (Berg, 2001).

Instruments

The instrument for this study was an open-ended, semi-structured interview protocol developed by the researcher (See Appendix A). The researcher developed the research questions based on what surfaced in the literature review. Issues and events emerged throughout the process which required further study for more profound thought and investigation.

Data Collection and Processing

A purposeful sample of participants was chosen (Berg, 2001). Creswell (1998) states that the process of collecting information involves indepth interviews with as many as ten individuals. The important point is to describe the perceptions of a small number of individuals who have experienced the phenomenon under investigation. The face-to-face, semi-structured open-ended interviews lasted up to two hours with each of the ten participants. Self-reflection as a preparatory step for the researcher was part of the initial analysis (Polkinghorne, 1989).

The researcher requested permission from the Barry University Institutional Review Board and Miami-Dade County Public Schools Research Review Department to conduct the study. In this request the researcher asked permission to have access to the ten principals whom she invited to participate in the study. Informed consent letters were sent to the ten principals who met the inclusion criteria. Inclusion criteria for participation in this study were that the principal must be a female, elementary school principal, between the ages of forty and fifty-five, with at least five years experience as a principal. She also had to fall within the ethnic criteria of White, African American, Hispanic, Haitian, or Multiracial. The informed consent letter contained specific information regarding the purpose of the study, as well as information regarding confidentiality for those who chose to participate. Participants were informed that participation in this study would require a two-hour open-ended, semi-structured interview.

Data Record Keeping

The researcher adhered strictly to the record-keeping processes that Creswell (1998), Berg (2001), and Silverman (2000), suggest. Berg (2001) states that the researcher should

secure all data collected and maintain its anonymity and confidentiality. The interviews were audiotaped in addition to the researcher writing down responses and taking notes while the participants were answering the questions from the interview protocol. Once the audiotapes were reviewed and transcribed, they were kept in the researcher's office desk until the interviewees verified the accuracy of the researcher's transcription. The audiotapes were destroyed one month following the interview after the participants verified the accuracy of the researcher's transcription. The transcribed copies will be kept in the researcher's office for five years under lock and key and will be destroyed at the end of the five-year period (Creswell, 1998). Transcriptions were converted and maintained in ASCII file format into NUDIST (non-numerical unstructured data indexing, searching, and theorizing) analytic software (Silverman, 2000). The confidentiality of participants was maintained by the researcher who masked names of participants in the data (Creswell, 1998). In addition, the cover sheet of the interview protocol with the demographic data was separated from the questions. The actual responses to the questions were coded to further protect confidentiality and the code was known only to the researcher.

Ethical Issues

Ethical procedures were strictly adhered to in this study (Berg, 2001; Creswell, 1998; Denzin & Lincoln, 1998; Silverman, 2000). Consent to participate in this study was sought on the understanding that the confidentiality of all participants was strictly protected by concealing their names and other identifying information in this study or in reports or publications. In addition, consent to participate in this study was strictly voluntary on the part of the participants. All participants signed informed consent forms which contained a written statement explaining that there was no risk associated with participation in this

study and that this had been explained to them (Berg, 2001). There were no deceptive actions taken on behalf of the researcher if the potential participants declined to participate or chose to drop out at any time during the study. Participants were informed that they would be having confidential discussions about their background experience as principals and their perceptions of their students' multiracial identity development. The benefits to participants for participating in this study were minimal. However, participation in this study may help the participants provide a better learning environment for their multiracial students. The researcher in this study protected the interests of participants both during and following the actual study. Any published results of the research will be published in group responses only to ensure research confidentiality (Berg, 2001). Participants were informed that all transcribed interview protocols and notes would be kept in a locked desk drawer in the researcher's office and that the data would be destroyed five years after the study is completed. To further protect confidentiality, the audiotapes were destroyed one month following the interview after the participants verified the accuracy of the researcher's transcription.

<div align="center">Data Analysis</div>

Phenomenological data analysis steps are generally similar for all researchers. Once the original ten interview protocols were transcribed, the researcher began the process of hand coding the transcripts to look for clusters of meanings, themes, or patterns. The protocols were divided or transformed into statements or horizonalization. Finally, these transformations of statements were tied together to make a general description of the experience, the textural description of what was experienced, and the structural description of how it was experienced. Once these descriptions were developed, an essential, invariant

structure (or essence) of the experience, was recognized to show that a single unifying meaning of the experience exists (Creswell, 1998).

NUDIST analytical software was used to aid in data analysis and reporting of qualitative data. This software assisted the researcher by storing and organizing document files which consisted of information such as a transcript from one interview. This software also assisted the researcher in identifying themes in the transcripts or crossing themes by generating information in the cells reflecting the different perspectives. In the process of categorizing the information, categories were identified, and these were developed into a visual picture of the categories that display their interconnectedness. In NUDIST, this is called a tree diagram. The visual picture or tree diagram is a useful heuristic or visual template which advanced a preliminary visual picture of this study and the process of data analysis (Creswell, 1998).

Steps to Ensure Trustworthiness

Lincoln & Guba (1985) propose a set of criteria to resolve the internal and external validity issue through a process of verification rather than through traditional validity and reliability measures. These are the trustworthiness criteria of credibility which parallels internal validity, transferability which parallels external validity, dependability which parallels reliability, and confirmability which parallels objectivity.

Credibility. The researcher spent prolonged time in the field while interviewing the participants to develop an indepth understanding of the phenomenon under study and was able to convey details about the site and the participants to lend credibility to the interview protocol. The researcher clarified the bias she brought to the study. This self-reflection created an open and honest narrative that resonated well with people who read the study.

The researcher also maintained a field journal to record her thoughts and feelings throughout the study in relation to the participants' responses to the interview protocol and time spent in the field (Creswell, 1998). The researcher triangulated different data sources of information by examining evidence from the sources and used it to build a coherent justification for themes (Creswell, 1998). The participants were also given an opportunity through member-checking to review the transcripts to determine whether they felt the statements they made were accurate. In addition, one professor holding a doctoral degree with a knowledge of qualitative research reviewed the coding process and results of the findings in order to further credibility.

Transferability. To make sure the findings were transferable between the researcher and the participants, thick description was necessary (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Rich, thick description allowed the reader to make decisions regarding transferability because the researcher described in detail the participants and the setting being studied (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). With such detailed description, the researcher enabled the reader to transfer information to other settings and to determine whether the findings were transferred because of "shared characteristics" (Creswell, 1998, p. 203).

Dependability. Thick description plays two roles in this study. Thick description is not only used for transferability, it is also used as a basis for dependability. The researcher sought dependability so that the results were not subject to change and instability. Consistent and dependable findings are critical to qualitative research. In addition, the researcher used a coding procedure to analyze the transcripts of the interview protocol and qualitative software to ensure dependability (Silverman, 2000).

Confirmability. The researcher looked to confirmability in establishing the value of the data. Confirmability as well as dependability are established through an auditing of the research process (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Confirmabilty was reached by allowing an external consultant, the auditor, to conduct an external audit to examine both the process and the product of the account, accessing the accuracy. This auditor had no connection to the study. In assessing the transcripts of the interview protocol, the auditor examined whether or not the findings, interpretations, and conclusions were supported by the data. Lincoln and Guba (1985) compare this, metaphorically, with a fiscal audit and the procedure provides a sense of interrater reliability to the study.

Limitations

The following are limitations as they relate to the study:

1. The participants were limited to ten female elementary school principals from one urban school district.

2. This small sample of principals may be considered a limitation to transferability.

3. Findings may not be transferable to other school districts, male principals, or to secondary schools.

4. By using texturally rich description, where the researcher describes the meaning of what the individuals have experienced, readers may not understand the level of transferability of the research.

5. The researcher's own experience as an elementary school principal for thirteen years, may be perceived as researcher bias when creating the interview questions for the interview protocol and when conducting the interviews.

Chapter Summary

Chapter III provided an overview of the research design, describing the data analysis

and methods which were used in this study. This chapter provided the theoretical

assumptions, the factors that motivated the researcher to choose the particular data to be

gathered, and how the researcher analyzed the data to make generalizations. Chapter IV

reports the results and findings of the study.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS

The purpose of this phenomenological study was to determine and describe principals' perceptions about their students' multiracial identity development. Principals were interviewed about their backgrounds, their knowledge and meaning of identity development as it related to their students, and issues related to multiracial identity development in the school environment.

This study included ten female elementary school principal participants of different ethnicities who work in a public school system. Table 1 presents a demographic profile of the participants. All of the principals were interviewed in their office settings except for one who was interviewed in a high school library following a meeting. Table 2 reports a demographic profile of the schools of which the participants were principals at the time of the study. The data collection instrument consisted of a semi-structured, open-ended interview protocol in which the selected principals were asked about their definition of identity development, their values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that were consistent with ethnicity and issues relating to multiracial identity development in the school environment. None of the principals experienced any discomfort during the interview process.

The phenomenological approach of interpreting data was implemented to construct a broad and specific understanding of responses to the interview protocol. The researcher used phenomenological coding strategies, horizontalization, member checking, triangulation, and peer review strategies in order to interpret and verify findings. This chapter presents the findings of the data collection process. The findings are presented in

their thematic form to present the reader with the most understandable portrait of the

responses.

Table 1

Demographics of Participants

Participant	Age	Sex	Ethnicity	Years of experience	Interviewed in office setting?
P-1	55	F	White	14	Yes
P-2	53	F	Haitian	9	Yes
P-3	52	F	Haitian	5	No
P-4	54	F	Multiracial	15	Yes
P-5	45	F	Hispanic	9	Yes
P-6	45	F	African American	6	Yes
P-7	55	F	White	7	Yes
P-8	45	F	Hispanic	6	Yes
P-9	55	F	African American	16	Yes
P-10	47	F	Multiracial	10	Yes

Table 2

Demographics of Participants' Schools

School	Grade Configuration	African American	White	Hispanic	Asian/Indian/ Multiracial
		Ethnic configuration of schools by percentages			
S-1	PreK – 6	2	38	54	6
S-2	PreK – 5	68	2	26	4
S-3	PreK – 5	88	1	10	1
S-4	1 – 5	38	7	45	10
S-5	PreK – 4	19	19	49	13
S-6	PreK – 5	35	21	36	8
S-7	K – 5	11	38	46	5
S-8	PreK – 5	12	35	47	6
S-9	PreK – 5	68	7	20	5
S-10	PreK – 5	5	27	63	5

Emergent Themes

The emergent themes fell into five major themes. These are: (a) the meaning and understanding of identity development as related to students' social, emotional, and personal growth; (b) self-reflection of their own values, beliefs, attitudes, and opinions, as relates to their own ethnicity versus their students' ethnicities; (c) compliant thinking versus critical reflection as related to school issues concerning the principal, staff members, parents and families, and students; (d) professional familiarization with the changing identity of minority students as they become more multiracial; and (e) the increase of multiracial births and the future that lies ahead for these students concerning race and ethnicity. The five major themes are listed below with the interview protocol questions which generated the sub-theme topics.

Major Theme 1: The Meaning and Understanding of Identity Development as

Related to Students' Social, Emotional, and Personal Growth

This theme emerged from the following interview protocol questions: What is your definition of identity development? Do you feel assisting children with learning to have a positive, healthy identity development is the responsibility of the parents, the school principal, the school staff, or all of them?

Sub-Theme: Definition of Identity Development

Three of the principals interviewed stated that their meaning and understanding of identity development was being able to relate to a particular group of people based on their race and culture.

Seven of the principals interviewed stated that their meaning and understanding of identity development was the development of the child as he or she grows up and develops

throughout childhood. It is a venue to how people perceive themselves at a very young age through puberty. For example, one principal discussed her experience of going through the stages of identity development. She stated:

> Every child goes through identify development. I remember going through it myself, and my parents are from European descent and I grew up in a half Cuban and half Jewish neighborhood and I wondered as a child, "Who am I?" From this experience of wondering I learned that it is very important that we not answer what ethnicity we are but teach our students to feel comfortable with who they are as a human being.

Another principal noted: "To develop a good identity you have to have a good support system around you."

A third principal further noted: "Identity development is growing up and knowing who you are and the kind of person you want to be and the value system that you have."

Sub-Theme: Responsibility for Identity Development

Further bolstering this theme, all ten principals felt it was the responsibility of the parents, the school principal, and the school staff, to assist students with learning to have a positive, healthy identity development beginning in the preschool years.

Major Theme 2: Self-Reflection of Values, Beliefs, Opinions, and Attitudes, as Related to Own Ethnicity Versus Students' Ethnicities

This theme emerged from the following interview protocol questions: Which values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes do you hold that are consistent with your ethnicity, and which might be different from those of students in your school?; How should multiracial students identify themselves: minority only, multiracial, or whatever they choose to affirm

their multiple heritages?; Do you assume that multiracial students will have more school, learning, or behavioral problems than students who are monoracial?

Sub-Theme: Values, Beliefs, Opinions, and Attitudes

Eight of the principals interviewed stated that they hold values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that are consistent with their ethnicity and did not feel that their beliefs are any different from their students. These values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes are honesty, integrity, pride in their ethnicity, and respect for others.

Two of the principals interviewed stated that they hold values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that are consistent with their ethnicity and are different from their students' ethnicities. For example, one Hispanic principal stated:

I grew up and was raised with family values and the family staying together as a unit. In this day and age both parents work and not enough time is spent between parents and their children. As I was growing up in a Cuban household we ate dinner together as a family every night. This was a relaxed time together when all issues from the day could be discussed. I don't see this happening with my students and their families today.

Another principal of Haitian descent stated: "I think that certain values and beliefs belong to Haitians. The more I am involved with education I believe that Haitians are the only group that are looking for education as the answer to get out of poverty."

Sub-Theme: Identification of Ethnicity

All ten principals felt that multiracial students should identify themselves any way they choose from the choices of minority only, multiracial, or whatever they choose to affirm their multiple heritages.

Sub-Theme: School, Learning, and Behavioral Problems

Seven of the principals interviewed stated that they felt that multiracial students would not have more school, learning, or behavioral problems than students who are monoracial.

Three of the principals interviewed stated that they did feel multiracial students would have more school, learning, or behavioral problems than students who were monoracial. For example, one principal noted: "Multiracial students will have more problems in school because society as a whole views them differently because race is an issue in our society."

Another principal stated: "Yes, I do believe they are affected more and have behavioral problems because they are trying to defend themselves about who they want to be and are not accepted by others for who they are."

A third principal indicated: "I think they will have learning problems if their race is focused on. I think with a multiracial student race is the focus, not academics, especially in an environment where it is not handled properly by the school or the home environment."

Major Theme 3: Compliant Thinking Versus Critical Reflection as Related to School Issues

Concerning the Principal, Staff Members, Parents and Families, and Students

This theme emerged from the following questions: How would you respond if a parent, student, or faculty member, refused to fill out the ethnicity of the student on the student data card, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) form?; How would you respond if a multiracial student were being harassed by another student about his or her multiracial heritage?; How would you respond if a multiracial student were being harassed by a faculty member in your school (teacher, paraprofessional, social worker, school psychologist, etc.), about his/her multiracial heritage? (Harassment here is defined as e.g., insisting the child adopt his or her minority heritage; refusing to accept the child's own self-identity; being

critical when a child brings up the fact that many in Untied States history who were and are famous, are multiracial.); What would you do if interracial parents insisted that curricular content on multiracial people be included in the school's curriculum materials in order to encompass the individual identification process that multiracial children address by being in the classroom?

Sub-Theme: Refusal in Filling Out Office of Management and Budget (OMB) Form

Seven of the principals interviewed stated that if a parent, student, or faculty member refused to fill out the ethnicity of the student on the student data card, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) form, they would ask them why they refused, listen to their response, and not force them to do it. They stated that they would call the Miami-Dade County Public School district office that deals with the completion of this form and ask for guidance on how to proceed.

Two principals stated that they would not force the person to fill out the form and would record their ethnicity based on whatever they see in front of them.

Another principal stated: "I would probably have a private meeting with the person to talk to him or her and help them work through this to realize what their ethnicity is. Sometimes people don't know what their ethnicity is and you have to be empathetic and educate people when they don't know what to put down on the OMB form."

Sub-Theme: Harassment By Another Student

All ten principals felt that if a multiracial student were being harassed by another student about his or her multiracial heritage they would call the parents in for a conference with the school counselor present and the student who was harassing the multiracial student to discuss and reconcile the issue. One of the interviewees stated:

I would be very upset and bring in the parents and the counselor to have a conference to talk about tolerance and acceptance. I would most definitely bring in the parents with their child because children are not born prejudiced, unfortunately that is a learned concept that roots from the home or peer examples that students have around them and sometimes students may not realize that it is an unaccepted practice in our society. I would definitely recommend family counseling or counseling for the student who was harassing the other student.

Another principal noted: "I would involve the student who was doing the harassing in our school's ambassador program to promote character education. The student ambassador's mission is to bring peace to the school by having sensitivity and respect sessions with other students for the acceptance of all cultures."

Sub-Theme: Harassment By A Faculty Member

Nine of the principals interviewed stated that if a multiracial student is being harassed by a faculty member in the school (teacher, paraprofessional, social worker, school psychologist, etc.) about his or her multiracial heritage they would call the faculty member in for a conference, explain to them that this harassment would not be tolerated in the school setting, and try to enlighten the person on what a multiracial person is. All nine principals felt that if the faculty member did not follow through with appropriate professional behavior they would follow through with disciplinary action guided by the district guidelines of Miami-Dade County Public Schools.

One principal stated: "I don't think this would ever happen in Miami-Dade County Public Schools. Therefore, I cannot imagine that this could occur or what I would do."

Sub-Theme: Interracial Parents And Curricular Content

Seven of the principals interviewed stated that if interracial parents insisted that curricular content on multiracial people be included in the school's curriculum materials in order to encompass the individual identification process that multiracial children address by being in the classroom they would request to see the specific curricular materials, review them, and see if these materials could be introduced to the students in accordance with Miami-Dade County Public Schools curriculum guidelines.

Three of the principals interviewed felt that there were alternative methods that could be used to include curricular content on multiracial people in the school's curriculum to an interracial parent's satisfaction. One principal stated: "If the interracial parents feel this needs to be addressed there is nothing wrong with the teacher including it in the Social Studies lesson as part of a discussion group."

Another principal said: "If it is a big bone of contention with the interracial parents I would talk to the student's teacher and see if they were going to do oral presentations or projects in this classroom. If they were, I would ask the teacher if the student could choose to do something on the topic of multiracial people."

A third principal noted: " I would ask the interracial parents to be guest speakers in their child's classroom and present the curricular content so the teacher and other students could learn about the topic."

Major Theme 4: Professional Familiarization With the Changing Identity of
Minority Students as They Become More Multiracial

This theme emerged from the following interview protocol questions: What is your thought about monoracial/ethnic school activities/celebrations?; What could you do to

become more familiar with the changing identification of minority children as they become
more multiracial?

Sub-Theme: Monoracial Ethnic Celebrations

Six of the principals interviewed revealed that they believe monoracial
celebrations are acceptable and prefer them. One principal indicated: "It brings a
better understanding and brings people together highlighting one ethnicity at a
time."

Four of the principals interviewed stated that they felt that monoracial/ethnic
school activities/celebrations were not appropriate. One principal noted: "I really
don't think monoracial cultural celebrations are acceptable, nor do I promote them.
What I do as a principal is encourage my staff to be racially sensitive and receptive
to minority students, and we honor all cultures and ethnicities and celebrate them
together during a Cultural Arts Week celebration."

Sub-Theme: Changing Identification of Minority Children

Six of the principals interviewed felt that they could enrich their knowledge and
become more familiar with the changing identification of minority children as their
students become more multiracial by attending professional development activities.
These are educational conferences that pertain to this topic, workshops on culture,
reading articles on this topic, and doing research.

One principal stated: "I think I could create an awareness for myself and for my
staff by examining materials, doing research on multiracial people, and reading
different articles. These activities would familiarize us with issues affecting
minority students and multiracial students."

Four of the principals interviewed revealed different ways that they could enrich their knowledge and become more familiar with the changing identification of minority children as they become more multiracial. For example, one principal revealed: "Coming from my background as an African American woman I would interview my family and use my family experiences to know more about multiracial people."

Another principal noted: "I think I would be more sensitive to multiracial students' needs, and have more empathy and understanding, because many multiracial children have problems with identity and you have to be sensitive to that. I would have the counselor teach lessons to the staff and students on being sensitive to each other's cultures."

A third principal further noted: "I would try to meet and interview multiracial people and find out about their cultures."

Another principal revealed: "I would study the cultural changes in demographics in the community that I am the principal of for the last ten years and have constant dialogue with my staff about the changes in minority versus multiracial changing populations."

Major Theme 5: The Increase of Multiracial Births and the Future That Lies Ahead For These Students Concerning Race And Ethnicity

This theme emerged from the following interview protocol questions: What is your view of the role of race as it pertains to our society?; What can elementary children of all races learn about how race and ethnicity have shaped society by the increase of multiracial births?

Sub-Theme: Role of Race

Three of the principals interviewed stated that race plays an important part in our society. One principal discussed her opinion of the role of race in our society. She stated:

I would be foolish to think race doesn't play an important role in our society. Throughout our history the inequality of races and minorities has proven an integral role. History just bears it out with time. I wish people could live in an ideal world, judged on who they are and what they bring to the table. Their expertise or knowledge should be reflected in our society today but unfortunately that's not the case. People in minority groups feel less than, and this is very disturbing to me.

Another principal noted: "I think it's a very important factor. It's part of our society. People cannot run away from it."

Further bolstering this theme, a third principal stated: "Whatever your race is, is important. There is no choice, society has to be accepting of it."

Two principals felt that there are still racial issues and racism in our society even after the Civil Rights Act of 1965 was instituted. One principal indicated:

We still have racial issues in this country even after the Civil Rights Movement, it depends on the way the pendulum is swinging as to who is in power at the time. I think that we are definitely a segregated society when it comes to race.

Another principal revealed:

I think that if you look throughout history over the past four-hundred years or more race has come a long way but it still has a long way to go. If we look at the Civil Rights Act of 1965 we have seen some strides and many people have overcome their views of racism but I still think there are underlying areas of racism. I think it could

take another four-hundred years to overcome something like this that was developed over time.

Two of the principals interviewed noted that we all have a race that we come from and that society should be more open and accepting to all races. They felt that we should develop a high level of tolerance for each other so we can function together as one huge society accepting each other for who and what they are.

Three of the principals interviewed noted that they did not see race as playing a major role in our society. For example, one principal discussed her feelings about the role that race plays in our society. She revealed:

I think race is something that is overdone and overplayed. If I had my druthers race would be eliminated. We are all humans and the only race would focus more on cultures because we are from different cultures. As an African American woman I may not share the same things that another person shares. So race to me is something we should be past by now.

Another principal noted: "Race is only a word. I think multiple factors help us to achieve success. It is not just a racial factor, therefore race is just a term."

A third principal stated: "I don't see race as having a role. Race doesn't have a role it doesn't fit anywhere. People are people and the color of your skin has no basis when judging people. It does have a basis when it is discussed or used for criteria for different kinds of data."

Sub-Theme: Race And Ethnicity Shaping Society

Seven of the principals interviewed stated that they felt that elementary children of all races can learn that race and ethnicity have shaped society by the increase of multiracial

births by being taught that we are richer by having so many people of different ethnicities and nationalities in the same place. For example, one principal noted: "We must learn to respect each others' similarities and differences and embrace each other because we are really all the same. Multiracial children can share the positive and negative attributes of their culture."

Three of the principals interviewed revealed that elementary children of all races can learn that race and ethnicity have shaped society by the increase of multiracial births by understanding that we do not live in a segregated society anymore. One principal stated:

Elementary children can look at the prominent and famous individuals in our society who are multiracial such as Tiger Woods, Mariah Carey, and other athletes and stars. They can also look at people in history that were well known and multiracial such as W.E.B. Dubois. There are many examples of multiracial individuals who are famous and successful, past and present, that we can teach our students about.

Another principal noted: "In our global economy you are going to have more multiracial children and families because the world is one and people are moving all over throughout the world."

A third principal further noted: "I think the increase in multiracial births is a positive thing because our students can see that during past history these people would have been ostracized and are now accepted freely. There are now multiracial couples everywhere who are accepted. This is what America was founded on, a land for all kinds of immigrants."

Summary of Findings

Organized by major themes and sub-themes, a summary of the findings from this study are as follows:

Major Theme 1: The Meaning and Understanding of Identity Development as

Related to Students' Social, Emotional, and Personal Growth

Sub-Theme: Definition Of Identity Development. During the interview process, some principals discussed their meaning and understanding of identity development as being able to relate to a particular group of people based on their race and culture. Other interviewees discussed their meaning and understanding of identity development as the development of the child as he or she grows up and develops throughout childhood and as a venue at a very young age through puberty.

Other principals also discussed that in order to have a good identity development a person has to have a good support system. They felt that in the growing process one must recognize the kind of person he or she wants to be and the value system that one wants to have.

Sub-Theme: Responsibility Of Identity Development. All of the principals indicated that it was the responsibility of the parents, the school principal, and the school staff, to assist students with learning to have a positive, healthy identity development beginning in the preschool years.

Major Theme 2: Self-Reflection of Values, Beliefs, Opinions, and Attitudes, as

Related to Own Ethnicity Versus Students' Ethnicities

Sub-Theme: Values, Beliefs, Opinions, and Attitudes. Principals discussed that they had the values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes of honesty, integrity, pride in their ethnicity, and respect for others that are consistent with their ethnicities and didn't feel that their beliefs were any different from those of their students.

Other principals discussed the fact that they held values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that were consistent with their ethnicities and were different from their students' ethnicities. They discussed being raised in a household where the family unit ate dinner together every evening and used education as an answer to get out of poverty. These principals did not feel that these values were important to students and their families in this day and age.

Sub-Theme: Identification Of Ethnicity. All of the principals indicated that multiracial students should identify themselves any way they choose from the choices of minority only, multiracial, or whatever they choose to affirm their multiple heritages.

Sub-Theme: School, Learning, Or Behavioral Problems. Principals reported that their multiracial students would not have more school, learning, or behavioral problems than students who are monoracial.

Other principals indicated that they felt multiracial students would have more school, learning, or behavioral problems than students who were monoracial. Reasons for these feelings were that society views them differently, and they have to defend themselves about who they are. In addition these multiracial students have learning problems due to a focus on race, instead of academics.

Major Theme 3: Compliant Thinking Versus Critical Reflection as Related to School Issues

Concerning the Principal, Staff Members, Parents and Families, and Students

Sub-Theme: Refusal In Filling Out Office Of Management And Budget (OMB) Form. Many principals indicated that if a parent, student, or faculty member refuses to fill out the ethnicity of a student on the student data card, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) form, they would not force them to do it. They discussed that they would call Miami-Dade

County Public Schools district office that deals with the completion of this form and ask for guidance on how to proceed.

Other principals reported that they would not force the person to fill out the form but would fill it out for them based on what they perceived the person's ethnicity to be. In addition, they would have a conference with the person to educate him/her to help them work through their denial and realize what their ethnicity is so they could fill out the form.

Sub-Theme: Harassment By Another Student. All of the principals indicated that if a multiracial student is being harassed by another student about his or her multiracial heritage they would convene a conference with the parents, the student who was doing the harassing, and the counselor, to reconcile this issue. Additional findings indicated that family counseling would be recommended as well as involving the student who was the harasser in a character education school ambassador's peace program.

Sub-Theme: Harassment By A Faculty Member. Many of the principals indicated that if a multiracial student is being harassed by a faculty member about his or her heritage they would convene a conference with the teacher and explain to him or her that this harassment would not be tolerated in the school environment. Additional findings indicated that if the staff member did not follow through with appropriate professional behavior, further disciplinary action would be taken guided by Miami-Dade County Public School's district guidelines.

Sub-Theme: Interracial Parents And Curricular Content. Principals discussed that if interracial parents insisted that curricular content on multiracial people be included in the school's curriculum materials they would review the materials to see if they could be

introduced to students in accordance with Miami-Dade County Public School's curriculum guidelines.

Other principals indicated that alternative methods could be used to include curricular content on multiracial people to an interracial parent's satisfaction such as a Social Studies discussion group, a classroom project by the interracial student, or asking the interracial parents to be guest speakers in their child's classroom.

Major Theme 4: Professional Familiarization With the Changing Identity of Minority Students as They Become More Multiracial

Sub-Theme: Monoracial Ethnic Celebrations. Most of the principals reported that they believe monoracial celebrations were acceptable and preferred highlighting one ethnicity at a time.

Other principals felt that monoracial celebrations were not appropriate and felt that all cultures should be celebrated together during Cultural Arts celebrations held at the school site such as Cultural Arts Week.

Sub-Theme: Changing Identification Of Minority Children. Many principals indicated that they could enrich their knowledge and become more familiar with the changing identification of minority children as they become more multiracial by attending professional development activities such as educational conferences, workshops on culture, reading articles, and doing research on this topic.

Other principals revealed alternative methods of attaining knowledge on this topic by interviewing family members, having the school counselor provide workshops on racial sensitivity to students and staff members, and examining cultural changes in demographics for the last ten years in the community in which they serve as principal.

Major Theme 5: The Increase of Multiracial Births and the Future That Lies Ahead For

These Students Concerning Race And Ethnicity

Sub-Theme: Role Of Race. Several principals discussed their feelings on race and the

important role it plays in society. Other principals discussed the fact that there are still

racial issues and racism in society even after the Civil Rights Act of 1965 was instituted.

Principals further felt that everyone belongs to a specific race, and society should be more

accepting and open to all races. Interviewees also discussed that they did not see race as

playing a major role in society unless it was used for criteria for different kinds of data.

Sub-Theme: Race And Ethnicity Shaping Society. Discussions relating to this theme

focused on principals' various views that society is no longer segregated and that due to a

global economy, more multiracial children will be born as more ethnicities come together

to create children and families.

Chapter Summary

Chapter IV reported the results and findings of the study. Chapter V will discuss the

findings, conclusions, limitations of the study, and the implications of the study.

Recommendations for future research are also made.

CHAPTER V

DISCUSSION OF THE FINDINGS

Introduction

According to the latest United States Census, estimates show that 4.5 million children under eighteen in this country are multiracial. In some areas, one of six babies born today is of two or more racial heritages, making multiracial youth one of the fastest growing segments of the United States population. American public elementary schools in general are not meeting the needs of multiracial students and improving their life chances of having a healthy identity development. School principals in elementary schools do not have an affirmative role in creating schools that are more inclusive and that serve multiracial students effectively. Principals are subject to the same kind of hidden curriculum about changing the school climate and learning environment to accommodate diversity that teachers and students experience. The purpose of this qualitative phenomenological study was to determine and describe principals' perceptions about their students' multiracial identity development. The researcher's goal was to investigate how principals perceive their new understandings, meanings, and beliefs about developing a healthy identity development for multiracial students.

Principals who are committed to creating social change in their schools face common challenges. Principals will experience conflict as they are expected to maintain institutions which they no longer see as legitimate. They will serve more as mediators who reconcile sources of conflict embedded in pre-existing values, traditions, and beliefs. Principals in this social system of meaning, experience a social exchange based on his or her mental constructs surrounding creating an inclusionary, transformative, learning environment for

their multiracial students in lieu of a traditional learning environment. In order to appropriately understand and study this phenomenon, this dissertation was written from the constructivist paradigm guided by the epistemological perspective.

Chapters I through IV presented the background of the problem, a review of the literature, the methodology and procedures used to conduct the study, and the findings of the study. This chapter includes a discussion section, conclusions, limitations of the study, implications, and recommendations for future research.

<div style="text-align:center">Discussion</div>

The overwhelming majority of the findings in this study were congruent with the literature regarding the factors that contribute to and constrain principals; and educators; intentions of providing a positive, transformational learning environment to create healthy identity development for their diverse student populations. Schools, especially elementary schools, play a critical role in the healthy development of multiracial students. A child's sense of identity and self-image are formed during these early years, so it is extremely important that the educational programs provided are of a positive nature. This must be established by the principal.

In order to be successful, the principals' as the visionary leaders of schools, must be comfortable with whatever feelings they may have harbored internally about racism and prejudice. These feelings need to be dismantled during a period of critical reflection before they can commit themselves to having a truly successful cultural awareness program in their school. A principal's focus should be about promoting, implementing, and creating an educational program that covers issues of diversity, tolerance, acceptance, and social justice. This can only take place when the principal serves as the example and role model.

The principal must also provide teachers and staff members with professional development and instructional resources that assist in teaching equitably and provides them with an environment to explore their own biases. Principals also need to have a concrete plan of action when issues arise in the school environment concerning non-equity and issues of social injustice. This need to respect and recognize diversity among all individuals is crucial due to globalization and the ever-changing demographics of people within the United States.

Principals' Meaning and Understanding Of Identity Development

Interviewees discussed their meaning and understanding of identity development as related to their students' social, emotional, and personal growth. These discussions revealed that some of the principals understood identity development to be the development of the child as he or she grows up and develops throughout childhood. This is supported by Dien's (2000) supposition that identity development involves the gradual process of the development of a sense of self from early infancy. Principals also indicated that their meaning and understanding of identity development was being able to relate to a particular group of people based on their race and culture. This is consistent with Helms (1990) who asserts "that identity has both a racial and an ethnic side" (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 1).

Additionally, principals indicated that it was the responsibility of the parents, the school principal, and the school staff, to assist children with learning to have a positive healthy identity development. Kich (1996) indicates "that the attitudes of multiracial children are mainly influenced by parents, teachers, peers, and extended family, all of whom have a major role in facilitating a child's acceptance and pride in their racial

identity" (as cited in Morrison and Bordere, 2001, p. 2). This linkage of principals'

understanding the meaning of identity development and students developing their identity

as they grow through childhood is instrumental in the understanding that students' needs

must be addressed during the time they spend in the elementary school program.

Principals' Self-Reflection Of Their Own Values, Beliefs, Opinions, and Attitudes

Principals indicated that they had values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that are

consistent with their ethnicity and did not feel that their beliefs were any different from

their students' beliefs due to their ethnicities. These beliefs were honesty, integrity, pride in

their ethnicity, and respect for others. Additionally, all of the principals felt that multiracial

students should identify themselves any way they choose from the choices of minority

only, multiracial, or whatever they choose to affirm their multiple heritages. This is

consistent with Katz (1987) and Ramsey (1987) who state "that ethnic and racial identity

begins to develop during the elementary school years of preschool through adolescence and

is an especially crucial period" (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2001, p. 1). Rosenthal

(1987) emphasizes "that maintaining an ethnic identity of choice is particularly relevant

when one's ethnic group is a minority group" (as cited in Morrison & Bordere, 2000, p. 1).

The participants in this study appeared to be comfortable with their own feelings about

their values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that were consistent with their ethnicities as

compared to their students' values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes due to their ethnicities.

Any negative feelings they may have harbored internally about racism or prejudice toward

any ethnic group may have been reconciled during a period of critical reflection before or

during this study. Their beliefs that honesty, integrity, pride for their ethnicity, and respect

for others, that is shared by their students creates a sense of solidarity in their vision to create a transformative learning environment for their students.

Principals' Compliant Thinking Versus Critical Reflection

Several principals indicated that if there were racial issues in the school environment that involved students, parents and families, or staff members, they would contact Miami-Dade County Public School's district office for guidance and direction or simply follow district guidelines before proceeding with dealing with an issue. Hart & Bredeson (1996) concur with this by stating "that principals serve more as mediators who reconcile sources of conflict embedded in pre-existing values, traditions, and beliefs" (as cited in Jason, 2000, p. 8). This behavior on the part of the principals showed that principals who are expected to change the school climate and learning environment to accommodate diversity tend to monitor the political continuity of both institutions and society. Furthering this belief, Riehl (2000) explains that principals experience and reproduce conditions of hierarchy and oppression, in particular by fostering compliant thinking instead of critical reflection.

The major findings in this portion of the study imply that principals are compliant in following mandated guidelines rather than taking risks to solve problems that arise for multiracial students and their families. This may be due to the numerous responsibilities, problems, and challenges that principals face on a daily basis with not enough time available to reflect and act upon positive ways to be responsive in dealing with issues concerning isolation, curriculum, harassment or lack of support for multiracial students and their families. Central to this issue would be the principal's view on race and how this is

delineated to the other members of the school community including teachers, other staff members, students, parents, and members of the school's wider community.

Principals' Professional Familiarization With the Changing Identity Of Minority Students

Several principals discussed their choice of monoracial celebrations versus multiracial celebrations for their students. These principals voiced this preference based on highlighting one ethnicity at a time. Other principals who discussed this issue felt that all cultures should be celebrated together during Cultural Arts celebrations.

According to research in the field one of the difficulties of meeting the needs of multiracial students in our classrooms and schools is that most of the existing multicultural books and materials address the needs of monoracial students (Wardle, 1999). The problem that exists from this is that multiracial students may adopt the societal concept of choosing one ethnicity for their identity rather than choosing their multiracial identity. Multicultural lessons, activities, and celebrations for all students are more appropriate because they integrate all different cultures and ethnicities into the central school culture. All students especially multicultural students should be given the opportunity to celebrate all ethnicities and heritages to promote positive identity development and respect for all cultures.

The interviewees also discussed ways to enrich their knowledge and become more familiar with the changing identification of minority children as they become more multiracial by attending professional development activities such as educational conferences and workshops. They also discussed reading articles and doing research on this topic. Jason (2000) indicates that principals' leadership actions that are not grounded in understanding the perspectives of different student populations and communities served by the school will be rendered less effective by the stronger phenomenological influence in

which different cultures and groups view their world and act accordingly. Several principals discussed alternative methods of attaining knowledge on this topic by interviewing family members, having the school counselor provide workshops for staff and students on racial sensitivity to other cultures, and studying the cultural change in demographics for the last ten years in the community where they serve as principal. Furthering the propositions that Butt and Pahnos (1995) advanced, the literature indicates that principals must learn the traditions, customs, beliefs, and social mores of the different student populations and communities they serve in order to accommodate the different styles of communication, patterns of participation, and views of the world these student populations and communities hold.

Similar to the above-cited literature, the principals expressed appropriate professional development activities to enrich their knowledge and become more familiar with the changing identification of minority children as they become more multiracial. Furthering this proposition of professional development training, using a critical literacy approach may be advantageous to principals and their teachers. Cadiero-Kaplan (2004) tells us that "critical literacy has the potential to promote critical thinking and further transform curriculum and instruction to meet the interests of minority groups, which in many urban schools across our country actually reflects the majority of a school culture" (p.13). Professional development using the critical literacy approach may create social transformation ideology that will challenge the *status quo* in regular curricular instruction to encourage teachers and principals to examine alternative methods to encourage self and social development for themselves and their students.

Since most current curricula for teaching diversity are traditional and are based on stories, experiences, and perspectives of the dominant groups, professional development courses for preservice teachers as well as teachers already teaching in the field should include diverse curriculum strategies. These strategies would include hands-on, in-the-field activities as well as discussion topics including negative and positive aspects of race, ethnicity, and culture.

Principals' Views On Multiracial Births And The Future

Several principals discussed their feelings on race and the important role it plays in our society. Some interviewees discussed that there are still racial issues and racism in our society even after the Civil Rights Act of 1965 was instituted. Other principals felt that everyone belongs to a specific race and society should be more accepting and open to all races. Additionally, other principals felt that they did not see race as playing a major role in society unless it was used for criteria for different kinds of data. These responses all correlate with the current literature. Asimeng-Boahene and Klein (2004) indicate that the growing cultural diversity of the United States makes it incumbent on educators and administrators to have a better understanding of the diverging values, customs, and traditions among all learners with different multicultural experiences as the minority thought or view may be just as legitimate and valid as that of the mainstream.

Principals discussed the future that lies ahead for multiracial students focusing on various factors such as the fact that society is no longer segregated, that the economy is increasingly global, and that more multiracial children will be born as more people of different ethnicities come together to create children and families. This trend is supported by the literature and correlates with Nakazawa (2003) who indicates that in some areas, one

of six babies born today is of two or more racial heritages, making multiracial youth one of the fastest growing segments of the United States population today. This leads to the assumption that educational classrooms must initiate and include a global and multiculturalist perspective for diverse learners. Educators, through training and professional development, should focus on developing critical awareness for their students (Asimeng-Boahene & Klein, 2004).

Conclusions

    The findings of this study support the following conclusions:

1. Principals understood and were able to express the meaning of identity development as it relates to their students' social, emotional, and personal growth.

2. Principals felt that their students of different ethnicities shared the same values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes that they did that were consistent with their ethnicities: honesty, integrity, pride in their ethnicity, and respect for others.

3. Principals indicated that multiracial students would have more school, learning, or behavioral problems than students who were monoracial because society views multiracial people differently and multiracial students have to defend themselves about who they are. In addition, they felt there were more learning problems due to a focus on race, rather than academics.

4. Principals chose compliant thinking versus critical reflection when dealing with harassment and curricular issues in the school environment that deal with students, parents and families, and staff members.

5. Principals chose professional development activities such as attending educational conferences, attending workshops on culture, and doing research, as ways through

which they could enrich their knowledge and become more familiar with the

changing identification of minority children as they become more multiracial.

6. Principals chose monoracial ethnic celebrations versus multicultural celebrations

and preferred highlighting one ethnicity at a time at their school sites.

7. Principals felt that elementary children of all ages could learn that the increase in

multiracial births exemplifies the fact that people of all different races are coming

together in our global economy to create children and families.

8. Principals various ethnicities did not play a major role when answering interview

protocol questions.

Limitations

The participants were limited to ten female elementary school principals from one

urban school district. This small sample of principals is to be considered a limitation to

transferability. Findings may not be transferable to other school districts, male principals,

or to secondary school principals. By using texturally rich description, where the researcher

describes the meaning of what the individuals have experienced, readers may not

understand the level of transferability of the research. Finally, because the researcher is an

elementary school principal and has been one for thirteen years, possible researcher bias

may be perceived as a limitation.

Implications

This study contributes to the literature in that it enhances the understanding and

development of healthy identity development as well as equity and access for students

through school leadership and practice by school administrators. This study may also assist

school administrators to more clearly understand the diverse student populations and

communities they serve. This study contributes to a body of literature that focuses on multiracial identity development to provide a better awareness of the best possible services, support, and encouragement that can be given to these children, their families, and school personnel.

It is apparent from this study that these principals are very guarded in creating a transformative environment in lieu of a traditional environment which embraces diversity for their multiracial students. Principals in this study serve more as mediators and compliant thinkers who reconcile sources of conflict rather than using critical reflection in their decision making when there are issues concerning students, staff members, their families, and curricular content. This may be due to the fact that principals are expected to follow school board rules and regulations and district and regional guidelines when implementing curriculum or associated activities for their students. There are a plethora of constraints when implementing a curriculum on diversity due to the sensitivity of the subject and the issues that surround race, ethnicity, and culture. Insights gleaned from this study may be beneficial to principals who are prepared to transform their school environments to provide a healthy identity development for their students who are multiracial and provide an educational environment that accommodates and embraces diversity.

<div align="center">Recommendations For Future Research</div>

A review of the literature, as well as findings in this study, show the need for further research into school administrators' understanding and knowledge of the diverse student populations and the communities they serve. There are some important areas that can be recommended for future research. First of all, this study used a small sample of principals,

and all of the principals were from the same school district in the same state. Future studies might concentrate on a larger sample with participants from school district's from different parts of the country.

Another suggestion for further research should be a concentration on creating and providing specific professional development activities for principals and teachers that would focus on legitimizing the value of differences in cultures to enrich educational experiences and opportunities for all students. Examples might include: (1) multiracial identity development; (2) multicultural activities and celebrations; (3) understanding diverse student populations; (4) techniques for creating a transformative environment for diverse student populations; and (5) implementing culturally sensitive pedagogy for diverse student populations. A study could also be conducted to determine the impact of a professional development program which focuses on multicultural awareness, vis-à-vis using a critical literacy approach toward social transformation. In addition, future research should include those persons not equally represented in the current study. Included should be male principals, principals of secondary schools, teachers, and multiracial students as participants.

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APPENDIX A

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Name: _____

Age: _____

Ethnicity: _____

Years of Experience As a Principal: _____

Name of School: _____

Grade Configuration: _____

Ethnic Configuration: _____African American   _____White

                                    Asian/Indian/
_____Multiracial   _____Hispanic

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL QUESTIONS

1. What is your view of the role of race as it pertains to our society?

_____

_____

_____

_____

2. What is your definition of identity development?

_____

_____

_____

_____

3. Do you feel assisting children with learning to have a positive, healthy, identity development is the responsibility of the parents, the school principal, the school staff, or all of them?

_____

_____

_____

_____

4. Which values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes do you hold that are consistent with your ethnicity, and which might be different from those of students in your school?

_____

_____

_____

_____

5. How should multiracial students identify themselves: minority only, multiracial, or whatever they choose to affirm their multiple heritages?

_____

_____

_____

_____

6. Do you assume that multiracial students will have more school, learning, or behavioral problems than students who are monoracial?

_____

_____

_____

_____

7. How would you respond if a parent, student, or faculty member, refused to fill out the ethnicity of the student on the student data card, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) form?

_____

_____

_____

_____

8. What is your thought about monoracial/ethnic school activities/ celebrations?

_____

_____

_____

_____

9. How would you respond if a multiracial student were being harassed by another student about his or her multiracial heritage?

_____

_____

_____

_____

10. How would you respond if a multiracial student were being harassed by a faculty member in your school (teacher, paraprofessional, social worker, school psychologist, etc), about his or her multiracial heritage? (Harassment here is defined as e.g., insisting the child adopt his/her minority heritage; refusing to accept the child's own self-identity; being critical when a child brings up the fact that many in United States history who were and are famous, are multiracial.)

_____

_____

_____

_____

11. What would you do if interracial parents insisted that curricular content on multiracial people be included in the school's curriculum materials in order to encompass the individual identification process that multiracial children address by being in the classroom?

_____

_____

_____

_____

12. What could you do to become more familiar with the changing identification of minority children as they become more multiracial?

_____

_____

_____

_____

13. What can elementary school children of all races learn about how race and ethnicity have shaped society by the increase of multiracial births?

_____

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_____

Participant's Comments:

_____

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APPENDIX B

BARRY UNIVERSITY

LETTER INVITING PARTICIPATION AND INFORMED CONSENT FORM

Barry University

September 1, 2005

Dear Research Participant:

Your participation in a research project is requested. The title of the study is "Principals' Perceptions About Multiracial Identity Development: A Phenomenological Study." The research is being conducted by Sherry L. Krubitch, a doctoral candidate in the Adrian Dominican School of Education at Barry University, and is seeking information that will be useful in the field of education.

The aim of the research is to examine principals' perceptions of the most effective practices in creating an inclusionary, transformative, learning environment for their multiracial students in lieu of a traditional learning environment. The anticipated number of participants is ten elementary school principals.

If you decide to participate in this research, you will be asked to do the following: read and sign the informed consent form, and return it in the self-addressed and stamped envelope to the researcher within three weeks of receiving the said document. You will be contacted by telephone to arrange the interview and where it will take place.

Your consent to be a research participant is strictly voluntary and should you decline to participate or should you choose to drop out at any time during the study, there will be no adverse effects on your employment. Please note that you have the option not to participate.

There is no known potential psychological or physical harm involved in this research. There may be a minimal risk of discomfort related to sharing information about values, beliefs and practices about race/ethnicity. Although there are no known direct benefits to you, your participation in this study may contribute to understanding leadership styles of principals to further focus on legitimizing the value of ethnic differences to enrich educational experiences for all students. The results of the study may also provide valuable information to educators, politicians, parents, and others who are interested in the continued effort to provide appropriate educational environments for multiracial students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and possibly lead to a greater understanding of leadership and its relationship to creating appropriate educational environments for multiracial students.

Any information you provide as a research participant will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Any published results of the research will refer to group averages only and the names of the schools or the participants will not be used in the study. Data will be kept in a locked file in the researcher's office. Your signed consent form will be kept separate from the data in a locked file. The audiotapes will be destroyed one month following the interview.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study or your participation in the study, you may contact me, Sherry L. Krubitch, at (954) 963-7381, my supervisor, Dr. Phyllis Superfisky, at (305) 899-3633, or the Institutional Review Board point of contact, Ms. Nildy Polanco, at (305) 899-3020.

Thank you for your participation.

Sincerely,

Barry University

Informed Consent Form

<div align="right">September 1, 2005</div>

Dear Miami-Dade County Public Elementary School Principal:

      Your participation in a research project is requested. The title of the study is "Principals' Perceptions About Multiracial Identity Development." The research is being conducted by Sherry L. Krubitch, a student in the Adrian Dominican School of Education at Barry University, and is seeking information that will be useful in the field of education.

      The aim of the research is to examine principals' perceptions of the most effective practices in creating an inclusionary, transformative, learning environment for their multiracial students in lieu of a traditional learning environment. The anticipated number of participants will be ten elementary school principals.

      If you agree to participate in this research, you will be asked to do the following: read and sign the informed consent form and participate in an audiotaped interview which will last no more than two hours. You will be contacted by telephone to arrange the interview and the location of where it will take place.

      Your consent to be a research subject is strictly voluntary and should you decline to participate or should you choose to drop out at anytime during the study, there will be no adverse effects on your employment.

      There is no known potential psychological or physical harm involved in this research. There may be a minimal risk of discomfort related to sharing information about values, beliefs and practices about race/ethnicity. The types of questions that will be asked in the interview will be questions about your background experience as a principal and your perceptions of your students' multiracial identity development. Please note that you have the option not to participate. Although there are no known direct benefits to you, your participation in this study may help create an understanding for principals about how to create healthy identity development for their multiracial students. The results of the study may also provide valuable information to educators, politicians, parents, and others who are interested in the continued effort to provide appropriate educational environments for multiracial students in Miami-Dade County Public Schools, and possibly lead to a greater understanding of leadership in relation to creating appropriate educational environments for multiracial students.

      Information you provide will be held in confidence to the extent permitted by law. Any published results of the research will refer to group responses only and no names will be used in the study. Data will be kept in a locked desk drawer in the researcher's office and the data will be destroyed five years after the study is completed. To further protect anonymity, the audiotapes will be destroyed one month following the interview. Your signed consent form will be kept separate from the data in a locked file along with the demographic data. Your actual responses to the questions will be coded to further protect confidentiality and the code will only be known to the researcher. Enclosed is a copy of the interview questions.

If you have any questions or concerns regarding the study or your participation in the study, you may contact me, Sherry L. Krubitch, at (954) 963-7381, my supervisor, Dr. Phyllis Superfisky, at (305) 899-3633, or the Institutional Review Board point of contact, Ms. Nildy Polanco, at (305) 899-3020.

Voluntary Consent

I acknowledge that I have been informed of the nature and purpose of this study by Sherry L. Krubitch and that I have read and understand the information presented above, and that I have received a copy of this form for my records. I give my voluntary consent to participate in this study.

_____   _____

Signature of Participant   Date

_____   _____

Signature of Researcher   Date

APPENDIX C

ONE REPRESENTATIVE PROTOCOL

INTERVIEW PROTOCOL

DEMOGRAPHIC DATA

Name: _____P-1_____

Age: _____55_____

Ethnicity: _____White_____

Years of Experience As a Principal: __14_

Name of School: _____N/A_____

Grade Configuration:_____Pre-K – 6_____

Ethnic Configuration:___2___African American _____38__White

        Asian/Indian/
             _____6____Multiracial _____54____Hispanic

RESEARCHER:	What is your view of the role of race as it pertains to our society?
PARTICIPANT:	"[I would be foolish to think race doesn't play an important role in our society. Throughout our history the inequality of races and minorities has proven an integral role. History just bears it out with time. I wish people could live in an ideal world, judged on who they are and what they bring to the table. Their expertise or knowledge should be reflected in our society today but unfortunately that's not the case. People in minority groups feel less than, and this is very disturbing to me.]"
RESEARCHER:	What is your definition of identity development?
PARTICIPANT:	"[Never thought about it before. I could be totally off base but it's growing up and knowing who you are and the kind of person you want to be and the value system that you have. Usually it comes from your family, parents, and your background, how you are brought up, your self worth, what you feel about life in general. To develop a good identity you have to have a good support system around you.]"
RESEARCHER:	Do you feel assisting children with learning to have a positive, healthy, identity development is the responsibility of the parents, the school principal, the school staff, or all of them?
PARTICIPANT:	"[I think all of them play a role. Parents of course play the largest role.]"

RESEARCHER: Which values, beliefs, opinions, and attitudes do you hold that are consistent with your ethnicity, and which might be different from those of students in your school?

PARTICIPANT: "[I would like to think it's not just my ethnicity that makes my values system. I value honesty and integrity, being someone that people can rely on and trust, these are things that are very important to me. I would like to think my values system is about who I am as a person. I feel that whatever color I am or whatever background I come from is something that is not based totally on my ethnicity.]"

RESEARCHER: How should multiracial students identify themselves: minority only, multiracial, or whatever they choose to affirm their multiple heritages?

PARTICIPANT: "[I think anyone can describe themselves anyway they choose. This should not be something that's mandated.]"

RESEARCHER: Do you assume that multiracial students will have more school/learning/behavioral problems than students who are monoracial?

PARTICIPANT: "[Absolutely not. I truly feel students that come from multiracial families feel special and have something special to offer.]"

RESEARCHER: How would you respond if a parent, student, or faculty member, refused to fill out the ethnicity of the student on the student data card, Office of Management and Budget (OMB) form?

PARTICIPANT: "[I would think they had an identity problem because they chose

not to have an identity and also that they have issues with their

identity. This is probably a personal issue they would have to

work through.]"

RESEARCHER: What is your thought about monoracial/ethnic school activities/

celebrations?

PARTICIPANT: "[I don't feel good about that. Everyone should be celebrated

and all cultures should be celebrated so that we learn from each

other.]"

RESEARCHER: How would you respond if a multiracial student were being

harassed by another student about his/her multiracial heritage?

PARTICIPANT: "[I would be very upset about that. I don't want any student to

be harassed about race at all. Certainly when you are talking

about their family and their race it's personal and important. I

would get the parents in to sit down and discuss the issue, also

have the counselor involved. It usually comes from the home,

those are learned behaviors.]"

RESEARCHER: How would you respond if a multiracial student were being

harassed by a faculty member in your school (teacher,

paraprofessional, social worker, school psychologist, etc.),

about his/her multiracial heritage? (Harassment here is defined

as e.g., insisting the child adopt his/her minority heritage;

refusing to accept the child's own self-identity; being critical

when a child brings up the fact that many in United States history who were and are famous, are multiracial.)

PARTICIPANT: "[That staff member should be fired. There is no room for this in education or any place. This is against the code of ethics and discriminatory. I would take action against that individual to make sure it never happened again.]"

RESEARCHER: What would you do if interracial parents insisted that curricular content on multiracial people be included in the school's curriculum materials in order to encompass the individual identification process that multiracial children address by being in the classroom?

PARTICIPANT: "[First of all parents need to understand we have to follow Miami-Dade County Public School's and the Sunshine State Standards curricula that we utilize. There are many programs that include this. Topics should and could be included in the total curriculum, not as a separate unit.]"

RESEARCHER: What could you do to become more familiar with the changing identification of minority children as they become more multiracial?

PARTICIPANT: "[I would go to workshops on this topic. I could take coursework and attend conferences that pertain to this topic.]"

RESEARCHER: What can elementary school children of all races learn about how race and ethnicity have shaped society by the increase of multiracial births?

PARTICIPANT: "[Well, I guess as you teach from the curriculum and study other

races and topics, the topic of multiracial students and the

increase of multiracial births should be touched upon and

included in the curriculum. We would probably need direction

on how to discuss this.]"

PARTICIPANT'S
COMMENTS: "[I feel this interview was very enlightening. It made me do a lot

of indepth thinking about issues I have never thought about.]"