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Multicultural Curriculum in Rural Early Childhood Programs

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Multicultural Curriculum in Rural Early Childhood Programs

Cover Page Footnote

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Introduction

Key words: Culturally responsive; Curriculum; Curriculum planning; Early childhood; Early childhood education; Education, Rural; Multicultural; Multicultural education; Rural; Rural schools

More than fifty years after school segregation was outlawed in the 1954 *Brown vs. Topeka Board of Education* Supreme Court decision, public schools in the United States are still highly segregated along cultural and racial lines. Data from comprehensive studies by Orfield (2001) and Orfield and Lee (2004) showed that a majority of White students in K-12 public schools in the U.S. attended schools that were 80 percent White. Children of color were more likely to attend schools that included larger numbers of ethnic minorities (50-100%). More than a third (37%) of African American children attended schools that were 90-100 percent African American (Orfield & Lee, 2007; Frankenberg, Lee, and Orfield, 2003).

Rural schools are not exempt from cultural and racial segregation. The Rural School and Community Trust (2002) reported that children of color in rural America attended public schools that were 76 percent culturally and racially segregated. The report further indicated that many school settings lacked cultural and racial diversity among teachers as well. Other studies reported that the majority of educators in rural schools in Wyoming were White females teaching in schools that were predominately White. Even where there were pockets of children of color, the teachers were predominately White (Howard, 1999; Frankenberg & Orfield, 2007; Frankenberg, Lee, and Orfield, 2003). This reality plays out vividly in many rural early childhood programs.

Changing demographics in rural population

According Maher, Frestedt & Grace (2008) “although rural populations comprise one-fifth of the nation, they are often neglected in research studies and public consciousness (p. 2). The U.S. Census Bureau (2013) defines rural as census block or block not classified as urban areas or urban clusters. The 2010 census suggested that by the year 2020, the population of the United States will be very different from what it is today with possibly a majority-minority child population (Cooper, 2012). “The relative percentages will be non-Hispanic Whites 64 percent, Hispanics 17 percent, African Americans 13 percent, and Asians six percent.... Four states—New Mexico, Hawaii, California, and Texas—and Washington, D.C., will have a minority majority population” (Diller & Moule, 2005, p. 11). States located in the intermountain west—Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Utah, and Wyoming—are already experiencing these demographic shifts (Winkler, Field, Luloff, Krannich & Williams, 2007), particularly in areas impacted by rapid growth in industry, farming, and tourism. Like their urban counterparts, “rural communities all over the country are finding themselves with growing populations of racial and/or ethnic minorities. They are finding themselves having to deal with the same differences in culture, including religious, social, and linguistic, that urban schools have

been struggling with for years. Nor are they doing any better at it than urban or suburban schools have” (Yeo, 1999, p.7).

Predominately rural and sparsely populated, Wyoming has a majority White and working class population. According to U.S. Census estimates for 2013, 84.1% of the state’s roughly 582,658 residents were non-Hispanic Whites with 9.7% claiming Hispanic origin, 0.1% American Indian, 2.6% African American, 0.9% Asian, and those identified as two or more races accounting for 1.9 % (U. S. Census Bureau, 2013). Approximately 6.8% spoke a language other than English in the home. In 2007, U.S. Census estimates for non-Hispanic White population was at 87.3%, Hispanic at 7.3%, American Indian at 2.3 % and African American and others at 2.1% (Wyoming, 2008). Consequently, “data show Wyoming’s minority population grew by 17 percent from 2010 to July 2013” (The Associated Press, 2014). If predictions and current trends hold, rural Wyoming will continue to experience a significant increase in diversity in the coming decades, with growing numbers and concentrations of African Americans and people of Hispanic origin (Miller, 2008). These demographic shifts hold powerful implications for early childhood programs. Consequently early childhood educators should be culturally responsive.

Theoretical framework

This study draws on the literature on culturally responsive pedagogy (CPR). According to Ladson-Billings (1995), “culturally relevant pedagogy rests on three criteria or propositions: (a) students must experience academic success; (b) students must develop and maintain cultural competences; and (c) students must develop a critical consciousness through which they challenge the status quo of the current social order” (p. 160). Consequently, culturally relevant teaching requires that teachers attend to the academic needs of their students and respond to the sociocultural dimensions of learning through an examination of students’ realities (Howard, 2012).

Gay (2000) noted that culturally responsive teachers are critically conscious of the power of symbolic curriculum as a teaching instrument and use it to help communicate important information, values, and actions about ethnic and cultural diversity. Culturally responsive programs understand that the communication styles of different ethnic groups reflect cultural values and shape learning (Derman-Sparks & Olson-Edwards, 2010; Nieto, 2000). “They include knowledge about the linguistic structures of various ethnic communication styles as well as contextual factors, cultural nuances, discourse feature, logic and rhythm, delivery, vocabulary usage, role relationships of speakers and listeners, intonations, gestures, and body movement” (Gay, 2000, p. 111). In short, these programs help learners gain knowledge and skills that are key to modifying classroom interactions to accommodate culturally diverse learners. For the purpose of this study, I define *Culturally Responsive Pedagogy* (CRP) as a practice that incorporates knowledge of diversity with activities that integrate diverse perspectives into the curriculum, in which equity and respect for diverse cultures are developed and Western European dominance in the curriculum is deconstructed.

Culturally Responsive Early Childhood

Culturally responsive educators recognize the full education potential of each child and provide the necessary challenges to help children achieve that potential (Alaska Native Knowledge Network, 1998, Brown, 2007). Additionally, these educators reinforce the child's sense of cultural identity and place in the world. As they develop and use curriculum these educators also take into account how children develop racial and ethnic identity. By the age of 3, children are already aware of racial and ethnic differences. They "are sensitive to other children's attitude toward their skin color because they are already becoming aware of societal bias against dark skin" (Derman-Sparks & A.B.C Task Force, 1998, p. 32). Hair and eyes are also frequently the subject of pre-school comments (Derman-Sparks & Olson-Edwards, 2010). By age 5, children can make the connection between individual and family cultural identity and their larger ethnic backgrounds. These children can also understand people's struggles for justice (Derman-Sparks & Olson-Edwards, 2010; Derman-Sparks & A.B.C Task Force, 1998). Therefore, culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) should be integrated throughout all developmental stages. When CRP is integrated, children from all cultural backgrounds develop cultural sensitivity and understanding and see that they, too, are valued (Nganga, 2006, Laughlin & Nganga, 2009).

During one of my site visits to an exclusively White pre-school, a child indicated that the ethnic doll she was playing with had a brown skin because "somebody put it in the oven and left it in there for too long" (Author's Field Notes). A little boy in a similar monocultural and monoracial kindergarten asked why the researcher's skin color was different from his. A first grader in the same school commented about additional obvious physical differences she had noticed. The statements and questions voiced by these young children exemplify in many ways the kinds of questions that children ask in an attempt to seek credible and objective information about the physical differences they observe in people. Yet, many educators deny them the opportunity to learn by playing down physical differences with claims of color or cultural blindness.

While assertions of color blindness might be designed honestly to teach children to see people as "people," they can have unintended negative effects. Diverting children's attention away from the physical differences they observe in people could easily facilitate the invisibility of some groups while promoting the visibility of others (Melendez & Beck, 2010; Paley, 2000). Indeed, it might encourage some children to develop a perception that some racial and ethnic groups and some cultures are not acceptable or not worth noticing. Evidence exists that children with darker skins become sensitive to the attitudes other children have toward their skin before beginning kindergarten (Dave, 1977; Derman-Sparks 1995/96). Additionally, children at the age of two "may begin to show signs of pre-prejudices (the ideas and feelings in very young children that may later develop into real prejudices when reinforced by biases that exist in society). May show fear of approaching people that look different than themselves, or may only play with dolls or children that look like themselves" (Anti-Defamation League, 2006, n.p.). Thus, failing to address children's natural curiosity about differences might unintentionally confuse and mislead them. Consequently, educators should be culturally competent and pedagogically prepared to provide scientific explanations for existing physical differences.

The setting of the study

A predominantly mono-racial rural state (84.1% White, Non-Hispanic), Wyoming has one of the lowest percentages of ethnic minorities in the U.S. Many of Wyoming's early childhood educators were born, raised, and attended schools in Wyoming. Many of them have little or no exposure to cultural and global diversity. Upon completing high school, they attended local colleges and were later employed in their respective rural communities. Collin (1999) had a similar observation and also found that most educators in rural schools were raised close to where they now teach.

Meanwhile, although Wyoming is a predominantly White state, people of color are gradually migrating to different parts of the state (Liu, 2007). According to the 2006 U.S Census Bureau, for example, the minority population contributed over one-third of Wyoming's population growth from 2000 to 2006. Public schools in certain pockets of the state experienced an influx of children whose first language was other than English. This trend is expected to continue and to reach beyond the places where it is now manifest thus creating an additional impetus for preparing culturally and globally sensitive educators. With this in mind, the researcher conducted a study on multicultural curriculum uses in rural Wyoming early childhood programs.

Research questions

The following questions guided this study.

1. What multicultural curriculum goals, philosophies and guidelines exist, (if any), in the early childhood centers and to what extent are they implemented?
2. What materials and professional development opportunities are present to help early childhood educators develop and implement multicultural curriculum?
3. What is the nature of parental and community involvement in the early childhood centers/programs?
4. What variables including demographics, accreditation, funding and licensing affect the implementation of multicultural education programs in the early childhood centers?

Methods

A mixed methods approach was used to collect both quantitative and qualitative data. The post-positivist approach allowed for use of multiple measures and observations and triangulation of data in order to get the best reality of aspects of multicultural curriculum uses in early childhood. The interpretive research strategy was adopted because of the need to use non-numeric data derived from open-ended questions and interviews.

Methodologically, the study coupled survey research with qualitative interviewing. This allowed the researcher to take advantage of quantitative data collection and descriptive statistical analysis methods that can show patterns and themes across a relatively large sample, but also allowed the researcher to benefit from the in-depth, situated understandings that can be constructed with rich qualitative interview data. This

combination of data sources and analysis methods provided the researcher multiple opportunities to triangulate across data sets to identify and support major thematic findings.

Population

The population for this study consisted of randomly selected licensed and exempt early childhood programs/centers in Wyoming. It was expected that these programs would provide a balanced perspective on the nature of multicultural curriculum in early childhood centers in Wyoming. All counties (24) were represented in the study. Data from 72 participants are included. Interview participants were purposefully selected to allow the researcher to triangulate data and get a better understanding of what goes on in early childhood programs.

Study Design

The study was approved by the University of Wyoming Institutional Review Board. Addresses of childcare programs in the state of Wyoming were obtained from the Childcare Finder. A mailed survey and interviews were used to obtain data concerning multicultural curriculum uses in early childhood. A random sample of 200 programs was used for the purpose of this study. These centers were randomly selected from a list of 400 programs obtained from the childcare finder. A cover letter was included in the survey explaining the purpose of the study and seeking agreement to participate in the study. The survey and cover letters were mailed to the participating centers with a stamped envelope addressed to the researcher for mailing completed surveys (see Appendix A). There was a 30 percent initial response rate. One follow up was conducted. A total of one hundred surveys were returned for an overall return rate of 50 percent. However, only 37 percent (72/200) of the surveys were usable. The remaining had insufficient information. Of the 72 respondents, five were interviewed to obtain in-depth qualitative information. These interviewees were purposefully selected (See appendix B).

Demographic Information

The demographic profile included title of respondent, type of program, licensing, federal funding, numbers of years serving in early childhood, and qualifications needed for teachers and administrators. Respondents identified themselves as director/education coordinator (62.5%), lead teacher in charge of curriculum (18.1 %), and 19.4 % percent child/day care owner. The programs were either licensed or exempt. Data showed that 48.6 percent received some type of federal funding and 26.4 percent were nationally accredited. Less than two percent of the respondents were male. Gender was therefore, not used for statistical analysis. The results indicated that about half of the programs received federal funding and served children ages 0-6 years old.

Interviewing

Five purposefully selected respondents were interviewed. These were three directors and two lead teachers that were selected based on survey responses (see section Appendix B, interview questions). These interviewees were chosen for one or more of the following reasons: because they had given rich responses, because their answers were incomplete or needed clarification, and/or based on geographic proximity to the researcher due to work constraints. The researcher followed interviewing guidelines provided by Ary, Jacob & Razavieh (1996). The interviewees were contacted through telephone to set a time for face to face-to-face interviews. Consent forms were sent to the interviewees. The researcher explained the purpose of the interview. Interviews were done at the worksites of interviewees to provide for comfort and freedom to express views. To facilitate valid responses, interviewees were assured anonymity. A structured, open-ended interview schedule was used to facilitate collection of comparable data. In open-ended questions respondents are free to choose how to answer the questions (Ary, Jacob & Razavieh, 1996). In a structured interview, respondents are asked the same questions with the intention of getting the story behind participants' experiences and to help derive meaning of central themes in a research (Foddy, 1993, Patton, 2002). In this study, the same open-ended questions were posed orally to interviewees. Probes were used to investigate responses and to clarify information. Probing in interviewing involves rephrasing the question, restating what the respondent said and asking follow up questions as needed. Field notes were taken during interviews, and the recordings of the interview sessions were transcribed for analysis.

Data analysis

A One Way Analysis of Variance (ANOVA), for example, determined the relationship between variables. Specifically the ANOVA was used to help determine if there were significant differences among the groups of each independent variable on the group means. The ANOVA was performed on the following variables: Independent variables included; 1) Nature of the program; 2) Program Type; 3) Position of respondent; 4) Age group served; 5) Age group respondent works with; 6) Respondent's years of work in early childhood; 7) Qualifications needed for director; 8) Qualifications needed for lead teacher; 9) Qualifications needed for assistant teacher; 10) and Availability of materials and professional development. Descriptive statistics were used to analyses checklists and qualitative feedback using common themes, descriptors and words from respondents. Interview responses were analyzed by looking at emerging themes to help understand perceptions of early childhood educators about multicultural education.

Findings and Discussion

A majority of participating programs served children between 0-6 years old. Nonetheless, some programs also provided after school care for children ages 5-12. Responding administrators were overwhelmingly White female (98%). While 49 percent

of the programs received some type of federal funding, 28 percent were also nationally accredited. Only two programs were exempt from licensing because of their status as college lab sites. However, the two sites were nationally accredited. A positive correlation was found between national accreditation and the availability of multicultural curricula ($r = .446$, $p < .01$). There also was a positive correlation between federal funding and national accreditation (NAEYC accreditation) ($r = .360$, $p < .01$). Federal funding was, however, negatively correlated ($r = -.108$, $p = .368$) with encouraging teachers to use a multicultural curriculum.

The analysis of variance revealed significant mean differences between programs that were nationally accredited and those that were not on the item for teachers use curriculum materials that illustrate diversity even when everybody looks the same. Programs that were nationally accredited had a mean score, $M = 3.63$, $SD = .5$ and those that were not nationally accredited, $M = 3.2$, $SD = .76$. The ANOVA showed significant differences at $p < .05$, $F(1, 71) = 5.561$, $p = .021$. The mean score was higher for centers that were nationally accredited ($M = 3.63$, $SD = .495$), while the mean scores for centers not nationally accredited was $M = 3.12$, $SD = .760$. (See table 2 and 3 in the appendices).

Several ANOVAS were also performed with federal funding as the factor and multicultural curriculum (MC) goals (Q.4, section 2, survey). Only significant ANOVAs are reported. An ANOVA with federal funding as the factor and teachers required to teach MC was performed. The ANOVA was significant between the two levels of federal funding $F(1, 70) = 5.731$, $p = .019$ and teachers required to teach MC. The mean score of federally funded programs was ($M = 1.540$, $SD = .054$). The mean score for programs not federally funded was slightly higher ($M = 1.8$, $SD = .41$). These results were similar to those of nationally accredited programs and reflected the finding that programs that are neither nationally accredited nor federally funded had higher means on the item of teachers are required to teach using a multicultural curriculum. ANOVA's for the variables of years worked in early childhood, program type (day care, preschool or both), and qualifications needed for different positions did not show any significant differences.

Concerning curriculum implementation, 42 percent of the programs had written multicultural policies or guidelines, but only 33 percent required teachers to follow these guidelines. There were no differences between licensed and exempt programs. Having clearly defined multicultural education policies and guidelines is essential to curriculum implementation (Klein and Chen, 2001). Written guidelines provide direction on how to deal with cultural issues (Gollnick and Chinn, 2009). An examination of curricula indicated that 33 percent of the programs always introduced children to other cultures using multicultural books, posters and pictures, dolls, drama and musical items. Data from interviews regarding curriculum materials did not differ from that collected using the survey instrument. For example, interviewees indicated that they mostly used books and poster in their programs. One administrator however lamented on lack of enough multicultural materials in her program stating that "my program has very limited materials, we are a parent supported programs and often do not have the money to buy toys and other materials that represent a multicultural curriculum. We try to make do with what we have" (Author's filed notes). Nonetheless, cultures represented in the community did not appear to influence the process of preparing instructional curricula as recommended by Pulido-Tobiassen and Gonzalez-Mena (2004).

Community resources expose children to cultures other than their own. They also provide the opportunity to interact with people of different cultures. Such opportunities not only help learners to develop positive relationships with people from different cultures, but also encourage them to value differences.

This study also revealed that about 30 percent of the respondents had witnessed occurrences where children were unfairly treated due to cultural, gender or physical difference. The findings were consistent with previous research that found teachers rated lowest on items concerning bias (Quijing, 1995). Literature suggested that children form attitudes about race and other physical differences early in life. The adults in their lives are critical socializing agents. It is therefore important for educators to intervene immediately by addressing such situations. Regarding how to deal with bias, 55.6 percent of the respondents indicated that they would talk with the children and others concerned about it, 15.3 percent stated that they would consult parents, and 26.4 percent would look for other ways to solve the problem, and 3 percent did not respond to this question.

Lack of exposure to cultural and racial differences could easily lead to biased behavior. Programs in this study were apparently cognizant of this fact. As a result, 41 percent of them provided a variety of professional development activities and teaching materials to help teachers teach about cultural diversity. Data indicated that only 41.1 percent of the respondents reported having professional development and materials to prepare teachers in culturally appropriate approaches. Another 37.5 percent reported inadequate professional development. Meanwhile, 20.8 percent did not have any training available. For example, one respondent put it this way, “to be honest we have not had much training. At various times one of us attended at least one session on multicultural or anti-bias training over the past year.” These findings were consistent with Quijing (1995) who reported that teachers expressed a desire for more training regarding integrating and infusing appropriate multicultural activities into their teaching.

The importance of professional development to the successful implementation of multicultural curricula is well documented (Banks, 2009; Banks, 1996). Such professional development should provide educators with opportunities to learn their students’ culture, language, and learning styles in order to make learning meaningful and relevant (Howard, 1999, Nieto, 2005; Nieto, 2002). Additionally, it should help educators to improve their instructional strategies for working with students whose first language is not English, a critical factor in sustaining culturally responsive environments.

This study also found that teachers used several methods to affirm children’s backgrounds. One way that early childhood educators did this was through their choice of materials and toys. However, other findings showed that early childhood teachers also struggled with this issue. For example, one participant seemed to regard learning about the “new culture” as more important than the child’s own culture. In a response to an open ended question (Q. 2, Section 3, Survey), a participant noted the following, “I am a home care provider, I think children need to learn about the new culture not their old. I have a Spanish girl who comes to be with other children to learn the language” (Interviewee 4, p.7). Another participant had this to say regarding teaching children and affirming their background “I believe they need to understand how to get along in the culture they live in” (Interviewee 5). These findings are similar to those of Quijing (1995) who reported that some early childhood educators perceived multicultural

curriculum as less relevant and unrealistic for young children and thus did not see the need to teach it.

In conclusion, even though these teachers seemed to struggle with how to approach antibias multicultural curriculum, they were positive and supportive of multicultural professional development (Jae-kyung, 2000). Meanwhile, when participants were asked to identify additional measures to enhance multiculturalism, increased active forms of parental involvement were considered crucial.

Active Forms of Parental Involvement

The findings of this study are consistent with previous studies that showed that parents are most frequently involved as volunteers. Parents also participate in parental meetings including open houses. Previous research on parental involvement revealed a need for early childhood programs to create multiple ways of parental involvement. While examining issues of parental involvement in Headstart Programs, Castro, Bryant, Peisner-Feinberg and Skinner (2004), found that the common types of parent involvement were helping out in the classroom and attending parent meetings. Data analysis from the current study had similar findings. Evidently, passive forms of parental involvement were prevalent. Slightly higher than 70 percent of the participants indicated that parents were involved in open houses, picnics, and luncheons. A majority of programs (69.4 %) involved parents in the program activities as volunteers. However, only 25 percent indicated that their programs involved parents in surveys and policy making. Another 38.9 percent reported having parents make contributions to the curriculum.

This study, as illustrated by the data above, identified active forms of parental involvement and noted parents' relatively minimal involvement in them. These included activities in policy making, board membership, and contributing to curriculum. In addition to promoting these active forms of involvement, this study also identified other ways in which programs could better serve parents. Programs could serve as a primary referral point for needed social services, encourage parents who did not have a high school diploma to get a general education diploma (GED) and could provide child-care options to facilitate this. Education is an empowering tool for parents and can help them have a better understanding of child development and why it is important to be involved in their child's education. However, assumptions that target non-white parents as needing help are inappropriate. Nevertheless, a parent resource center where parents socialize and find useful information could be an important asset that encourages involvement. It is also important to display parenting information and resources suited to the age-level of the children. A bulletin board for parents to display news and information items can also be an important asset.

Limitations

The following limitations should be taken into account when interpreting results from this study. First, the study was limited to 1 early childhood programs in one state in the Rocky Mountain Region. Second, a limited population of 72 programs participated in the study. A more comprehensive study including all licensed and exempt childcare programs would provide more specific information about the implementation of

multicultural curriculum in rural early childhood programs. Additionally, only a small group of participants were interviewed due to limited research resources. The researcher would therefore recommend that future researchers use larger samples for more in-depth data. Finally, because of the above limitations, the study findings may not be generalizable to all early childhood programs but rather to rural states that have similar demographics as the one discussed in this work. The findings from this study provide evidence of the possible role of the availability of multicultural curriculum philosophies, professional development, administrative support and national accreditation in the implementation of a multicultural curriculum early childhood curriculum but additional research is needed to strengthen and expand these findings.

Conclusion

Findings from this study indicated that educators in participating Early Childhood programs were predominantly White, teaching in predominantly White communities. However, demographic shifts are underway and rural school and communities like other parts of the state, can expect to see more multicultural students and families. The author believes that in order for rural Early Childhood programs to address the learning needs of these new students, and to expand the perspectives of their current students, a more intentional approach to addressing diversity is warranted. Such an approach entails providing written multicultural curriculum policies and guidelines, recruiting multicultural and multiracial teachers, providing the necessary professional development activities and learning resources, and bringing communities into the school as well as taking programs into the community. In addition, community resources should influence instructional materials. These approaches to multicultural education could easily alleviate the cultural and racial isolation experienced in predominantly White rural Early Childhood programs, thus giving children the opportunity to acquire credible and objective information about the cultural differences they see.

An additional recommendation is for early childhood settings to provide opportunities for staff members to engage in curriculum dialogues as a means of exploring personal biases and attitudes concerning implementation of a multicultural curriculum. Opportunities to share perceptions and to give each other support help facilitate effective implementation of curriculum goals. Observations and mentoring can help also identify strengths and weakness in planning and executing multicultural activities. Such observations and feedback can promote teamwork among early childhood educators and help them overcome “fear of the unknown” (Author, 2006).

Finally, multicultural education in rural settings is a must for the children of the 21st century. According to Banks (2009) such an education recognizes and legitimizes the rights and needs of individuals as citizens of the United States while at the same time it helps them to develop a “global identification because cultural, national, and global identification are interrelated” (p. 23). Indeed, it is our responsibility as educators to provide children in such environments with the necessary cultural skills and knowledge to function productively in an increasingly multicultural and multiracial society.

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Appendices

Appendix A

Curriculum Issues in Early Childhood Education

Survey Instrument

Please complete (20-30 minutes) the following survey exploring curriculum development issues in Early Childhood Education. Your responses will facilitate development of essential recommendations for Early Childhood education. The survey has four sections.

Section One: Demographics

1. What is your title? _____
2. Is your program licensed? (1) Yes (2) No
Explain:
3. Is your program nationally accredited? (1) Yes (2) No
4. Does your program receive federal funding? (1) Yes (2) No
If yes, please explain what type/s of help.

If **no**, explain why.

5. Does your program serve as a (1) day care (2) preschool (3) both
(4) Other _____ (Explain) (**circle all that apply**).

6. What age group does your program serve?

Please **circle** all those that apply. (1) 0-2 year olds: (2) 3-5 year olds: (3) 4-6
year olds: (4) Other _____ (Explain)

7. What age group do you work with **most of the time**?

Please **circle one**. (1) 0-2 year olds: (2) 3-5 year olds: (3) 4-6 year olds:
(4) Other _____ (Explain)

8. How long have you worked in early childhood?

Please **circle one**: (1) 0-5 years: (2) 6-10 years: (3) 11-15 years: (4) 15 and over.

9. What qualifications does your program require for the director of the program?

Please **circle one**. (1) 4 year college degree (2) 2 year associate degree
(3) Other _____ (Explain)

10. What qualifications does your program require for the lead teacher?

Please **circle one**. (1) 4 year college degree (2) 2 year associate degree
(3) A high school diploma (4) Other _____ (Explain)

11. What qualifications does your program require for an assistant teacher?

Please **circle one**. (1) 4 year college degree (2) 2 year associate degree
(3) A high school diploma (4) Other _____ (Explain)

12. What is the ethnic and gender composition of your staff members? (Explain)

Ethnic composition _____

Gender _____

Section 2: Curriculum philosophy and goals

1. Please **circle the items** that best reflect your Early Childhood education curriculum.

- a) There are written curriculum guidelines that address diversity & multicultural education.
- b) Teachers are required to teach diversity & multicultural education curriculum.
- c) Teachers are encouraged to teach multicultural & diversity education curriculum.
- d) There are no curriculum guidelines that address diversity & multicultural education.
- e) Multicultural education curriculum is not currently a priority.
- f) Other areas of focus: _____

2. In your opinion what **are three necessary** components for a **successful multicultural & diversity curriculum** in early childhood?

3. Have you observed situations where children are treated unfairly because of cultural, gender or physical differences? Please **circle one**.

(1) **Yes**

(2) **No**

If your answer is yes, **how have you dealt with it?**

If **No**, **how would you deal with such a situation?**

4. Please circle the number (1-4) for each item that best reflects how each of the areas listed is taught/addressed in your Early Childhood education program.

Goal	1 = Never	2 = Rarely	3 = Frequently	4= Always
The program recognizes the beauty, value, and contribution of each child	1	2	3	4
The program encourages teaching children using their own cultural backgrounds	1	2	3	4
The program introduces children to other cultures	1	2	3	4
The program provides children with experiences to explore similarities and differences	1	2	3	4
Teachers use cultures represented by children in their classrooms to prepare instructional curriculum	1	2	3	4
Teachers use cultures represented by members in their community to prepare instructional curriculum	1	2	3	4
The program encourages children to talk and play with other children and adults in the classroom who are culturally different from them	1	2	3	4
Teachers use curriculum materials that illustrate diversity even when everybody looks the same	1	2	3	4
Teachers talk about sensitive diversity issues with the children in the classroom	1	2	3	4
Teachers talk with children about issues of what is fair and what is not fair	1	2	3	4
Teachers see themselves as important vehicles in making curriculum changes that promote multicultural education.	1	2	3	4

5. What **curriculum materials** do you have in your programs that **reflect diversity & multiculturalism**?

Section Three: Professional development activities

1. Please **check the box** (1-4 ✓) that **best describes your need for professional development related to each of the topics stated below** where ;

1= No need in our program, 2= Low need in our program, 3 = Moderate need in our program, 4 = High need in our program.

Curriculum Issues	1	2	3	4
How to build on strengths and experiences the children bring to class				
Ways to increase continuity between home and school experiences				
Activities that encourage children to retain their cultural identity				
How to acknowledge other ways children and their parents know, learn and contribute to society				
How to share contributions by other cultures				
How to use curriculum materials and activities that validate experiences of children from diverse cultures				
How to create classrooms where all children feel culturally safe				
Methods to find out family backgrounds and experiences of children				
Ways to provides opportunities for children to use multiple modes of expression				
How to incorporate home cultures in the classroom curriculum				
How to display and use inclusive learning materials				

- 2.** Are professional development **opportunities and materials available** to help teachers build a repertoire of diversity, culturally appropriate teaching approaches, differentiated learning styles and influence of culture in early childhood? **Circle the answer** that applies and explain your answer. **(1 =Yes, 2 = Some areas addressed, 3 = No)**

(1) Yes = all areas addressed

Explain how the professional development was then applied to your program curriculum.

(2) Some areas addressed: Explain

(3). No: Explain to what degree the above types of professional development would help your program.

Section 4: Parental and Community Involvement

1. In what ways has your center involved parents?
2. In what ways has your center involved community members?
3. In what ways would you like to involve parents in the future?
4. In what ways would you like to involve community members in the future?
5. Below are some possible ways in which parents and community members can be involved in

children's education. (1) **Please circle the items that tell ways you involve parents and/or community members.**

- a. Active participation of parents is encouraged
- b. Active participation of community members is encouraged
- c. Parents involved in problem solving
- d. Parents involved in program decision making
- e. Parents involved in curriculum development
- f. Parents are given opportunities to share their preferred parenting styles
- g. Parents are asked to share their feelings about their child's experiences in the school setting
- h. Multiple ways of supporting parents exist
- i. Teachers and parents meets regularly (not just for formal conferences)
- j. Parents are encouraged to share information from their own cultural perspective

Thank you so much for your participation in this study. Participation in this project is voluntary and refusal to participate will involve no penalty or loss of benefits to which you are otherwise entitled. Your program name will be kept confidential (Pseudonyms will be used in the summary and data will be coded). **A summary of findings based on all returned surveys will be sent to participants.**

Please mail your completed survey back in the self- addressed stamped envelope to researcher.

Appendix B

Interview Questions

1. How do you define a successful early childhood multicultural curriculum?
2. In your opinion what are the necessary components for a successful multicultural & diversity curriculum in early childhood?
3. What curriculum materials do you have in your programs that reflect diversity & multiculturalism?
4. What does your program do that reflects awareness of the components of multicultural education you mentioned earlier?
5. In what ways has your center involved parents and community members?
6. What else would you like to add?

Appendix C

Table 1

Mean Differences Between type of Program (nature of program) and Selected Multicultural Curriculum Goals

Curriculum goal/s	Nature of program	N	Mean (M)	S.D
Teachers required teach	Daycare	11	2.00	.00
MC education	Preschool	29	1.69	.47
	Daycare /preschool	26	1.50	.50
	Other mixed age	6	1.67	.52
Total		72		
Exposure to other cultures	Daycare	11	2.00	.00
And training important to MC	Preschool	29	1.62	.49
	Daycare /preschool	26	1.53	.51
	Other mixed age	6	1.83	.41
Total		72		
Opportunities and materials	Daycare	11	2.45	.68

Available for MC education	Preschool	29	1.65	.72
	Daycare /preschool	26	1.73	.724
	Other mixed age	6	1.50	.83
Total		72		

Table 2

Comparison of Mean Scores of Responses to Items Concerning Teachers Required to Teach using Curriculum Materials that Illustrate Diversity (MC) even when Everybody Looks the same and National Accreditation (Q. 4, section 2, survey)

Variable					
Teach Multicultural education	N		Mean		SD
even when all children were from a homogeneous population					
Accreditation					
Nationally accredited	19		3.6316		.49559
Not nationally accredited	53		3.1887		.76099
Total	72		3.3056		.7246
Analysis of variance summary					
	SS	df	MS	F	Sig
Between groups	2.744	1	2.744	5.561*	.021
Within groups	34.534	70	.493		
Total	37.278	71			

* $P < .05$