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Educating The Whole Teacher

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In a recent issue of *Educational Leadership*, dedicated to focusing on the whole child, Marge Scherer (2007), the journal's Editor in Chief, wrote "that Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development's (ASCD) whole child campaign is a way of stopping the waste of too much talent and the loss of too many kids" (p. 7). The purpose of that issue, she continued, was to "reclaim the idea that we teach, yes, skills, but above all, children" (p.7). It is the authors' contention, as teacher educators, and one that is the underlying premise of this study, that if the reader were to substitute the word "child" for "teacher" in Scherer's comment, it would be equally valid and meaningful. The phrase "educating the whole teacher" is particularly useful as a reminder that, in the process of helping to prepare effective teachers, it is necessary to "begin with the soul of the enterprise" (Intrator & Kunzman, 2006, p. 39). While the authors acknowledge the necessity of addressing learning outcomes related to pedagogical and content knowledge and skills, dispositional outcomes are equally important. In the words of Palmer (1998) "good teaching can not be reduced to technique; good teaching comes from the identity and integrity of the teacher" (p. 10). A holistic approach to teacher education is one that views the teacher candidate – the student – as a multidimensional, whole person. Teaching the whole teacher means dealing with, not only the cognitive dimension, but the moral dimension as well. It is helping teacher candidates enhance their moral literacy skills, the ability to recognize and address complex moral problems (Tuana, 2003), which requires "training and practice throughout our lives" (p.5). Providing opportunities for teacher candidates to gain self-knowledge is integral in the development of moral literacy. Self-knowledge is a prerequisite for understanding cultural values and beliefs, for gaining intercultural awareness and sensitivity (Leonard & Leonard, 2006), and for positive engagement with an increasingly diverse student population in American schools (Nieto, 2004). Such an approach to teacher education is one that would engage teacher candidates in activities that "cultivate their capacity to teach with greater consciousness, self-awareness, and integrity" (Intrator & Kunzman, 2006, p. 39). Accordingly, as teacher educators, the authors aim to integrate into their teaching a variety of instructional approaches -many of which have been written about

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elsewhere (e.g., Basinger & Leonard, 2006; Leonard, 2007; Leonard & Leonard, 2006) - in the interest of teaching the whole teacher.

In the summer of 2007 the authors, as teacher educator researchers, conducted a qualitative case study of a new instructional strategy implemented in two sections of a diverse learners course. The strategy was largely based on Branson's (2007) structured approach to introspection and reflection. Branson's structured approach for "nurturing a leader's moral consciousness" (p. 471) was adapted and implemented to facilitate teacher candidates' moral literacy through the exploration and (re)formation of their dispositions for culturally responsive teaching. The primary purpose of this paper is to share the findings of the field tested instructional strategy. This study of introspection and reflection for nurturing moral consciousness is grounded in the literature pertaining to dispositions, culturally responsive teaching, and critical self-reflection.

Dispositions, Culturally Responsive Teaching, and Self-Reflection

Dispositional expectations refer to the desirable values, morals, and ethics that teachers must meet to gain licensure in their respective areas. Increasingly teacher training programs are charged with the task of producing teachers who exhibit desirable dispositions, particularly those pertaining to the moral and ethical dimensions of teaching (Helm, 2006). In the interest of educational equity and the belief that all children can learn, teachers have a moral responsibility to be culturally responsive in their teaching. Culturally responsive teachers are those who build classroom environments leading to the holistic development of all students. Accordingly, teacher educator programs need to prepare teachers for holistic teaching. In order to help teacher candidates become culturally responsive teachers, critical reflection must be an integral part of teacher education and teacher educators need to cultivate an ethos of inquiry and moral purpose (Norlander-Case, et al. 1999). Critical self-reflection requires teachers to question their values, beliefs, teaching practices, and the influence of each of these components of self on educational outcomes. Facilitating a teacher's structured self-reflective process, the instructional technique field-tested in this study, addresses the moral dimension of teaching and "engage [s] teachers in activities that cultivate their capacity to teach with greater consciousness, self awareness, and integrity" (Intrator & Kunzman, 2006, p. 39). A critically reflective teacher should be able to "justify his or her decisions and actions in the classroom" (Norlander-Case, et al., 1999, p. 27). Consequently, professors of education have an important role in ensuring that the courses they develop include evidence-based instructional techniques that educate the whole teacher.

Conceptual Framework

Dispositions are defined in various ways; however, generally, they are believed to be affective dimensions of human personality that have a "consistency about them..., are characterized, exemplified or typified in human behavior" (Mullin, 2003, p. 5) and include "attitudes, values, interests, self-concept, and motivation" (Stiggins, 2001, p.101). Interestingly, this definition of dispositions includes domains that are very similar to those identified in Begley's (2003) presentation and discussion of a values syntax framework, an adaptation of Hodgkinson's (1991) earlier values typology. Begley uses an onion figure (see Figure 1) to illustrate the language or "syntax of values" (p. 5). Included in the layers, from the outer ring and moving toward the center are: action, attitude, value, knowledge, motive, and self. As Begley describes it, the outermost ring, action, represents the observable actions and speech of the

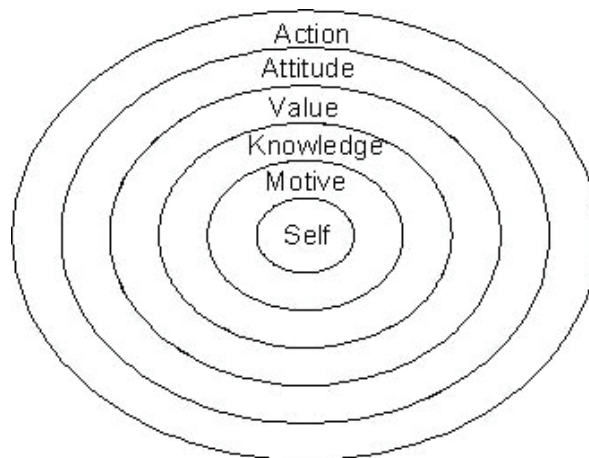
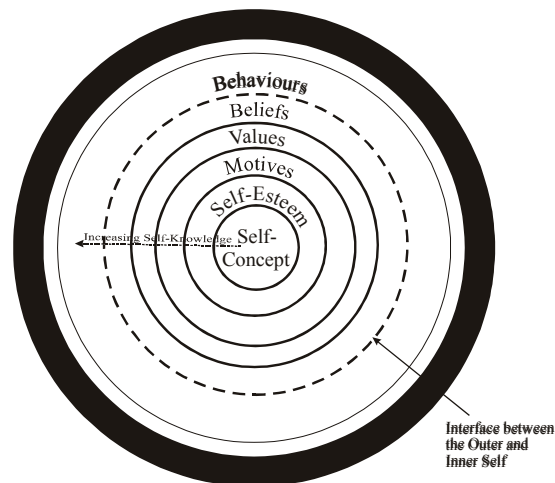


Figure 1. Values Syntax (Begley, 2003).

individual. The second ring, attitude, is defined as the predisposition to act specifically as a result of values. Moving toward the center, the third ring refers to value. Values are often defined as "concepts of the desirable with motivating force" (Hodgkinson, 1991, p. 101). The knowledge ring represents knowledge acquired through life experiences, training and reflection, which provide the link between motivations and values. According to Begley (2001), motivation, the next ring, "provides the key to understanding the nature and function of values" (p. 360). Finally, the innermost ring, the self is the essence of the individual, "which some may describe as the soul, the life-force or spark of life" (2001, p. 361). All of these elements of Begley's values model have implications for facilitating the critical self-reflective process, for gaining self-knowledge, and for developing moral consciousness, that is, for getting at the soul of the enterprise. Branson, in his study of moral leadership and the development of moral consciousness in six Australian principals used elements of Begley's (2003) values syntax framework to develop a conceptual framework (see Figure 2) to guide principals in a "deeply structured process of self reflection" (p.472). However, there are some differences between the two models that are worthy of note. For example, Branson places self-concept, not self, at the center of his layered model, stating that



The Self

Figure 2: A diagrammatical representation of the various component of the Self as presented by the literature, which shows how these components are able to interact in order to influence a person’s behavior (Branson, 2007)

“self-concept is at the heart of one’s self” (p. 476). Additionally, similar to Begley’s position regarding self, Branson asserts that people generally have little knowledge of their self-concept, but that as one moves outward toward behaviors, the degree of knowledge increases. Self-concept, according to Branson, is one component of self. It may be defined as “who and what we consciously and subconsciously think we are – our physical and psychological traits, our assets and liabilities, possibilities and limitations, strengths and weaknesses” (Branden, 1995, p. 15). On the other hand, self-esteem is the “disposition to experience oneself as competent to cope with the basic challenges of life and as worthy of happiness” (Branden, 1995, p. 27). As Branson (2007) puts it, the self is “constituted from the integration of one’s self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, and behaviors” (p. 476). He also emphasizes the interrelatedness and interactivness of all of the components of self. Interestingly, and important for the study addressed in this paper, the “seeking of self-knowledge about one’s self is not a natural process and requires a deliberate undertaking. It is this deliberate undertaking, through a structured self-reflective process based on Branson’s components of self that served as the focus of the study reported here.

Methodology

A constructivist-interpretivist paradigm informed this investigation of moral literacy development in higher education teaching. A qualitative case study design (Stake, 1994) was used to field test an instructional technique for its value in facilitating teacher candidates’ moral literacy. The purpose of implementing the instructional technique, based on Branson’s (2007) structured process of self-reflection, was to assist students in the exploration and perhaps (re)formation of their dispositions for culturally responsive teaching. An ancillary purpose was to qualitatively assess the effectiveness of the instructional technique for facilitating moral literacy development in candidates progressing through the teacher education program.

Context

The primary site for this study was a college of education in a small-town, public university situated in northern Louisiana. The majority of teacher candidates who enroll in the college are white females; however, these demographic data are not proportionately representative of Louisiana’s general population, where the vast majority of the college’s graduate teachers are employed and where most preservice teachers will eventually teach. For example, in the year 2000, 63.9% of Louisiana’s population was White, 32.5% was Black, 2.4% was of Hispanic or Latino origin, and the remaining percentage was Native American or Asian Pacific Islander (U.S. Census, 2000).

Participants

The 44 preservice and inservice teachers who participated in this study were purposively selected. Twenty-two of the participants were enrolled in each of the two sections of the diverse learners course. Participants were informed that the instructors were pilot testing an instructional technique, a structured process of self-reflection to assess its value in facilitating teacher candidates’ moral literacy development and that participating in the study would not have any impact on their grade. All students granted permission to use their work in the pilot test.

The diverse learners course was a requirement for all students. Twenty two of the students were undergraduates seeking teacher certification through the traditional route. The remaining 22 had baccalaureate degrees and were seeking teacher certification through either one of two alternative routes. The students in one section of the course represented greater diversity in gender, race, language, and age than did those in the other section. There is typically greater diversity among the alternative certification students than among those seeking certification through the traditional route. The difference in diversity between the two sections provided the opportunity to comparatively examine the data collected for each group.

Life Experience	Impact on Self-Esteem	Resultant Motives	Preferred Values	Beliefs Formed	Behavior Enacted
<i>Briefly describe a personal life experience.</i>	<i>As a result of this life experience I have</i>	<i>This experience mainly affected my Core Needs as follows:</i>	<i>From these Motives I have a preference for the following Values:</i>	<i>As a result of these Motives and Values I have created the following beliefs:</i>	<i>As a consequence of this life experience and it affect on my self concept, self-esteem, motives, values and beliefs, I have adopted the following teaching behaviors:</i>
“In Kindergarten I was hit on the head with a ruler whenever I picked up the pencil with my left hand. Although I knew how to read and write I stopped doing all in-class assignments and would have failed if my father had not met with the school superintendent.”	“Debilitating anxiety during writing. I have tremendous writer’s block and when I finally get something down on paper, I second guess every word. Since most tests (PLT_ these days are timed writing exercises I have self-doubt. “	<p>“I need to feel: - In control of the situation. - That I am being treated fairly. - That I had options.”</p> <p><i>As a consequence, I created the following motives (rules for life) to guide my life whenever I came across a similar situation:</i></p> <p>“- I tell myself that it’s not life or death.”</p> <p>“- I do it anyway as best I can-knowing that I will never be satisfied.”</p>	<p>Fairness</p> <p>Compassion</p> <p><u>Independence</u></p> <p>Respect</p> <p>Self- Confidence</p> <p>Open-Mindedness</p> <p>Effort</p> <p><i>Now circle those values that would always be help to you in your leadership and underline those values that have the potential t be unhelpful in guiding you as a teacher.</i></p>	<p>“ I believe that one person can affect another person’s life-either positively or negatively.”</p> <p>“I believe people have different abilities and a deficit in one area does not indicate a lack of “smarts.”</p>	“As a teacher I try to encourage students to value their successes. I try to teach them to “try” and that sometimes the process is more meaningful than the product.”

Figure 3: Sample Completed Visual Display Chart

Methods

The focus of the study was to field test an instructional technique for its value in facilitating teacher candidates’ moral literacy. The instructional technique was implemented during the summer of 2007 in two sections of a diverse learners course. The instrument directly reflected Branson’s (2007) conceptual framework which, as he stated, was designed to illustrate how a person’s behavior is influenced by the various components of self. Consequently, the original data display chart contained six columns, with the first column requiring one to identify a self-concept defining life experience. Corresponding columns required identifying how the life experience influenced the development of one’s self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, and behaviors. In order to better understand and prepare for implementing the instructional technique each of the authors, serving as teacher educator researcher in their respective classes, completed her own structured self-reflective process using Branson’s (2007) visual display chart. After completing their respective visual display charts, the authors discussed the process and prepared themselves for implementing it in the diverse learners course.

During the fifth week of the course, students were introduced to the visual display chart, instructed to critically reflect upon a negative or positive life experience, and to provide a brief description for the life experience column that would capture a moment in the student’s self-concept. After reflecting on and writing about their life experiences, students were provided with prompts to facilitate their addressing each additional component of self (see Figure 3 for an example of one student’s completed visual display chart). After completing the process students were invited to share. Some were enthusiastic about sharing which allowed for further discussion of the process and of the interconnections of all of the components of self. The visual displays for all students were collected. In total, there were 20 recorded negative life experiences and 26 positive, for a total of 46. Some students shared either a negative or a positive life experience, while some shared an example of each. The 46 visual displays provided rich data for later analysis.

Data Analysis

The researchers first independently examined all 46 students’ visual displays for themes and patterns, which were noted and subsequently shared. The next step in the process was to reduce the data to capture the essence of each life experience and its

resultant effect on self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, and teaching behaviors. The data were then presented in one visual display graphic allowing for a more manageable summary. At this point, major patterns emerged:

1. Needs and Motives: Through the examination of these data, the needs and motives were grouped and labeled drawing from three sources: Maslow's (1943) Hierarchy of Needs, Brown and Cullen's (2006) cognitive needs and Yang's (2003) interpersonal and nurturance needs. There was no attempt to hierarchically arrange these needs and motives.
 2. Values, Beliefs and Rules for Life: In the original visual display chart, rules for life, values, and beliefs were addressed in three separate columns. However, it became apparent that listing these in isolation did not illustrate necessarily how they were connected. Consequently, they were presented in one column identified as values and beliefs. However, students' identification of their rules for life, their values, and their beliefs were not changed in this process. The data were merely reorganized and presented in a modified display chart to more clearly present the findings.
- Categories of Life Experiences: In the analysis process, it became apparent that the life experience descriptions could be grouped according to eight categories which are identified and discussed in the next section.

Results

As stated previously, the data were examined, reduced, re-examined and re-organized through the data analysis process and the original visual display chart was modified to accommodate this process. The findings are discussed according to the following life experience categories: (a.) The Abandoned; (b.) The Awakened; (c.) The Empathizer; (d.) The Distressed; (e.) The Mentored; (f.) The Outsider; (g.) The Punished; and, (h.) The Recognized (see Figure 4 for a sample set of data for each category presented in the modified visual display chart). Four preservice teachers described negative experiences which related to *abandonment* or perceived abandonment. There were two negative experiences and two positive experiences reported that reflected aspects of an *awakening* or enlightenment of sorts. For example, one preservice teacher reported her very positive experience with becoming a Christian, stating that it changed her life. Additionally, another preservice teacher described his experience in an automobile accident and how he had come to realize what was important in life. Six preservice teachers and one inservice teacher described the *distress* they felt and, in some cases, the pain and humiliation they suffered, for being teased or ridiculed in their school years.

<i>Life Experience</i>	<i>Self-Esteem</i>	<i>Needs and Motives</i>	<i>Values and Beliefs</i>	<i>Teaching Behavior</i>
The Abandoned (sample) Temporary, accidental, abandonment	Feelings of insignificance	Love and Belonging	All people deserve to feel important and needed.	Cultivate one-on-one relationships with students to make them feel special.
The Awakened (sample) Time spent in England during college	Increased self-confidence and self-efficacy	Esteem, Self-Actualization	All I can do is try. Not everyone will like me or what I have to say. I have limitations, but it's okay.	Be open-minded, non-judgmental, and respectful to my students.
The Distressed (sample) Teased about appearance (weight)	Crushed, hated body, wanted to change herself	Physiological; Love and Belonging	Treat others as you want to be treated; Accept all types of people; Understand where others are coming from.	Be compassionate of children's feelings; Don't be fake with students or parents.
The Empathizer (sample) Birth of sister and brother	Increased self-worth	Love and belonging; Interpersonal	Have patience and be responsible.	Make sure all students are treated fairly, justly, and with respect.
The Mentored (sample) Supportive teacher when experiencing trouble with Algebra	Increased self efficacy when encountering problems	Esteem	You can anything if you try hard and stick to it. Ask for help if you need it. Finish what you start.	Motivate students to achieve academic success. Encourage them never to give up.
The Outsider (sample) Majority teacher in a predominantly minority, inner city school.	Feelings of not being taken seriously by parents	Esteem	All individuals should be treated with respect; Work together, not against each other.	Treat all students with the same amount of dignity and respect. All children can learn.
The Punished (sample) Physically punished for using left hand in school	Anxiety - writer's block	Esteem	People have different abilities and a deficit in one area does not indicate a lack of "smarts"	Encourage students to value their successes; The process is more meaningful than the product.
The Recognized (sample) First person in family to graduate from college	Increased self-efficacy	Esteem	Break the cycle. Don't be a quitter.	Promote and advocate success. Validate students' attempts to succeed.

Figure 4: Summary Display Chart -- Sample Data

The majority of the participants had experienced taunting from their classmates while two had experienced negative comments from their teachers for some perceived physical or cognitive "deficit." Two preservice teachers and two inservice teachers described positive experiences that seemed to have helped them to develop their abilities to *empathize* with others. All of the experiences were social in nature, having to do with giving birth, taking care of younger siblings, or playing with friends, and each participant reported an increased sense of self-worth or self-efficacy as a result of the experience. Three preservice teachers and two inservice teachers had experiences with positive role models or *mentors* in their elementary or secondary school years. As with those that were categorized as "The Empathizer," all these experiences were social in nature as well. However, they differed in that the participants did not describe themselves as nurturers but as recipients of others' acts of kindness, support, or wisdom. Three preservice and three inservice teachers reported negative experiences of having to move to another school or work location. In several of the cases, the individual had experienced for the first time what it was like to be a "minority," describing it as the "outsider" experience. They also reported feelings of anxiety, discomfort, insecurity, and discrimination during the transition period of relocating. One preservice and one inservice teacher reported negative experiences related to having been *punished*. For example, the inservice teacher, in her first years of schooling, stated that she had been slapped on her left hand whenever she used it for writing. She believed it was this experience with corporal punishment that caused her to have feelings of test anxiety, particularly when she was required to do a substantial

amount of writing. Finally, four preservice teachers and ten inservice teachers shared positive experiences about recognition and/or encouragement in their early lives for something they had achieved or a quality they possessed. Predictably, these experiences instilled an increased sense of self-worth, self-confidence, self-efficacy, and overall self-esteem in all.

Discussion and Implications

A number of interesting points can be made in relation to these findings. First of all, as previously stated, there were eight categories of life experiences reported. With the exception of one of those categories, “The Abandoned,” where only preservice teachers were represented, all categories were represented by both groups of teachers. The life experiences reported were varied in nature; however, the vast majority of the responses were ones that are typical of growing up in middle class America and of attending public schools in rural and small-town settings. Not surprisingly, all positive experiences were reported to have resulted in increased self-esteem while the majority of the negative life experiences resulted in a negative effect on self-esteem. However, two – those categorized as awakening experiences – purportedly induced an increased sense of self-worth and an understanding of others in each individual. One of these two experiences had to do with an automobile accident which had resulted in severe injuries causing cognitive problems and the other had to do with the death of a parent at a very young age. While it would require further probing of these two individuals to gain deeper insight as to why they believed they experienced an increase in self-worth as a result of their respective experiences, it certainly appears to speak to the resilience of each one of them.

Secondly, as depicted in Table 1, there were notable differences in the impact of life experiences on needs and motives. For example, the life experiences that preservice teachers reported appeared to have had the greatest impact on their *Love and Belonging* needs than on any other category of needs, with 16 of the 38, or 42.1%, being identified under that category. Alternatively, only 6 of the 31, or 19.0% of the inservice teachers’ needs were categorized as *Love and Belonging*; however, 15 of the 31, or 48.4%, were categorized as *Esteem* needs. It is also of interest that no inservice teachers’ needs were categorized as physical or safety needs and only a small percentage of the preservice group were categorized as such (02.6%; 10.5% respectively). All other categories of needs were marginally represented in both the preservice and inservice teachers.

Table 1: Categories of Needs and Motives and Number and Percentage of Instances

Needs and Motives	Preservice	Inservice
	N (%)	N (%)
Physical	1 (02.6%)	0 (0.00%)
Safety	4 (10.5%)	0 (0.00%)
Love and Belonging	16 (42.1%)	6 (19.0%)
Nurturance	0 (00.0%)	1 (03.2%)
Esteem	8 (21.0%)	15 (48.4%)
Cognitive	3 (07.8%)	4 (12.9%)
Interpersonal	4 (10.5%)	2 (06.4%)
Self-Actualization	2 (05.0%)	3 (09.7%)
Total	38	31

Note. Percentages do not add up to 100% because of rounding.

While it is important to resist generalizing this finding beyond the scope of the research, the preservice teachers’ focus on *Love and Belonging* needs versus the inservice teachers’ focus on *Esteem* needs may be related to the differences in age and experience between the two groups. For the most part, with the exception of those who were seeking certification through the alternative route, preservice teachers were younger, with the majority being under 25, while inservice teachers were older, with the majority being 26 or older and have had work experience. This would not mean that the inservice teachers did not have *Love and Belonging* needs, but that other life experiences related to *Esteem* needs may have had more significance for them at the time of completing the reflection process. If that is the case, then there may be implications for teaching, motivating, and supporting preservice teachers as they transition from the teacher candidate stage to the teacher stage. Certainly, it is known that many new teachers experience concerns of isolation and survival (Mandel, 2006) in their first year. If they are strongly motivated by needs of belongingness, then it is little wonder than some of them do not survive that first year. As Mandel (2006) reports, “help from a trained, caring mentor is a crucial ingredient in helping new teachers survive their first year” (p. 67). Additionally, in the effort toward preparing culturally responsive teachers, it is important to be cognizant of the special needs of teachers from mainstream cultures who are teaching in diverse school settings.

The most prevailing values and belief statements reflected in the visual display data were related to an *ethic of care* and an *ethic of work*. Other values were evident also, but less so, including honesty, mutual respect, perseverance, responsibility, respect for individual differences, and fairness. In terms of the ethic of care, participants made statements such as “all children need love,” and “all children should feel valued.” Also, participants’ statements indicated that many of the preservice and inservice teachers believed

that hard work and perseverance would bring about success for anyone. Several statements such as “all students have unique abilities” and “everyone is different” suggest that at least some of the participants valued or understood diversity. Additionally, some suggested that teachers need to treat students “equally” and to be fair “no matter their culture.” While there were few statements that directly reflected social justice values, particularly those that might have an impact on teaching behaviors related to addressing prejudice, discrimination, and marginalization in the classroom, it is encouraging to note that the research suggests that there is some correlation of the ethic of care and the ethic of work values with culturally responsive teaching. For example, as earlier stated, culturally responsive teachers believe that all children can learn and they appreciate and validate each student in their classroom.

In terms of the impact or potential impact of these values on teaching behaviors, there seemed to be consistency between values, beliefs, and reported behaviors. For example both preservice and inservice teachers whose values were coded as reflecting an ethic of care stated that they would or they do “cultivate one-on-one” relationships with students, “make sure all students are included,” “teach to all learning styles,” “love all students,” but would or do not “put limitations on any student because of an apparent disability.” Additionally, valuing hard work and perseverance was also reflected in stated behavior outcomes in that participants asserted that they “ensure all students have the chance to succeed,” “promote and advocate success,” “validate students’ attempts at success,” and encourage students to “practice hard to increase chances of performing well.”

Interestingly, although there were reports of positive and negative life experiences alike, all participants reported positive outcomes in terms of the effect or potential effect that these experiences had or would have on their teaching behaviors. For example, those who experienced distress because of teasing from their peers about a physical attribute indicated that they were more compassionate as a result and would be or are intolerant of bullying in their own classrooms. Also, the preservice teachers who experienced some sort of abandonment suggested they would work toward ensuring that their students felt special and included. This finding is important for several reasons. First of all, it suggests that the participants in this study who experienced negative life experiences were resilient and able to learn from those experiences. Secondly, it raises the question of whether or not these resilient individuals had a special set of qualities or characteristics that helped them to turn a negative into a positive. Or might their resilience be contributed to other factors? For example, many of the participants reported having had strong supportive social networks (e.g., family, friends, mentors, etc.) during their formative years. Finally, does examining one’s negative and positive life experiences and their impact on one’s development of self contribute to the development of intercultural sensitivity and awareness? Given that “more than one-third of the students in the nation’s schools come from ethnically, socially, economically, and linguistically diverse backgrounds” (Ukpokodu, 2003, p. 31) but that the majority of today’s teachers continue to come from mainstream, middle-class backgrounds (Pang, 2005), answers to this and other questions raised here have significant implications for teacher educators and teacher education programs.

Conclusion

The continued lack of cultural and ethnic diversity among graduates of teacher education programs necessitates our focusing on culturally responsive teaching. If future teachers are not prepared to address individual and cultural differences in addition to demonstrating content knowledge and instructional skills, then teacher education programs may be inadequately preparing the whole teacher to teach the whole student. As research indicates, teachers’ attitudes and perceptions are critical to student learning. Additionally, the notion of the reflective practitioner is very powerful in the process of cultivating whole teachers. Providing multiple opportunities for preservice and inservice teachers to reflect on their life experiences and to connect them to the formation of their respective self components (i.e., self-concept, self-esteem, motives, values, beliefs, and teaching behaviors) should not be underestimated. Branson’s (2007) deeply structured reflective process provides another avenue for preservice and inservice teachers to connect their life experiences to their stated teaching behaviors.

According to the findings in this study, both positive and negative life experiences appeared to have had positive teacher behavior outcomes. Future plans are to follow participants from this study into their internship or student teaching for the purpose of observing and mentoring them in the classroom. The ultimate goal is to better understand ways to cultivate morally literate, culturally responsive teachers by providing them with opportunities embedded in real-life classroom experiences for ongoing critical reflection on their values, beliefs, and teaching behaviors.

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