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ABSTRACT

THE RECOGNITION OF WHITE PRIVILEGE AND THE USE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES

by

Jennifer M. Knapp

In many parts of a mid-western state, the student population appears to becoming more diverse, while the majority of the teaching population appears to continue to be White. There also appears to be discrepancies in many of the achievement results between Whites and African Americans. Other apparent discrepancies between those two groups are gifted identification, discipline, and special education identification. The objective of my research will be to describe how teachers learn about their own white privilege and how that recognition contributes to their use of culturally relevant pedagogy. The use of this framework may be one way in which to close these gaps. With an assumption that the majority of the teaching population is White, teachers' recognition of their white privilege may be needed in order to employ these practices. Examining the use of culturally responsive pedagogy, and more specifically: how it has come to be used by White teachers, given the role white privilege might play, may be a way in which the gaps in achievement could be closed and equity in the classroom might be achieved. Teachers were identified as using those practices through a survey in which they agreed or disagreed with statements about students and the use of culturally responsive practices. Those identified were asked to be interviewed to explore, understand, and describe how they have recognized their white privilege and how that has influenced their pedagogy. This research may potentially help increase African American student motivation, interest, and achievement in that it would describe how teachers come to use these practices. It may also, potentially, offer guidance to White teachers on their journey to using these practices by learning about the various paths others have taken that enabled them to learn from others.

THE RECOGNITION OF WHITE PRIVILEGE AND THE USE OF CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING PRACTICES

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

DEDICATION vii
ACKNOWLEDGMENTS viii
Chapter 1: Introduction 1
Background 1
Conceptual Underpinnings 5
Problem Statement 6
The Problem of Practice 7
Purpose 9
Significance 9
Definition of Terms 11
Research Question 12
Limitations, Assumptions, and Design Controls 12
Organization of the Study 13
Summary 13
Chapter 2: Literature Review 15
Introduction 15
Self-Discovery 15
Historical Context 16
Theoretical Framework 17
Multicultural Education 20
Culturally Responsive Teaching 21
White Privilege 24
Summary 27
Chapter 3: Methodology 28
Introduction 28
Mixed Method Design 28
Type of Study 28
Overview of Process 29
Limitations and Delimitations 30

Data Collection Methods 30
Surveys 30
Interviews 33
Case Study Design 34
Participants 34
Population and Sampling 34
Criteria for Selecting Participants 35
Access to Participants 38
Researcher-Participant Relationship 39
Methods for Ethical Protection of Participants 41
Summary 41
Data Analysis- Chapter Four 43
Introduction 43
Overview 43
Demographic Data 45
Previous Research 46
Characteristics 47
Findings 48
Theme #1 – Personal Experiences 49
Theme #2 Learning Opportunities 52
Coursework and Professors 52
Books, Writers, and Documentaries 54
Theme #3 – A Reflective Journey 55
Critical Race Theory Themes 57
Permanence of Racism 57
Whiteness as Property 58
Interest Convergence 60
Critique of Liberalism 61
Additional Analysis 64
Summary 65
Chapter Five – Conclusions, Discussion, and Suggestions for Further Research 66
Introduction 66
The Why 66

Summary 67
Findings 69
Implications for Practice 70
Suggestions for Further Research 71
Conclusions 73
Closing Thoughts 73
References 75
Appendix A 81
Appendix B 84
Appendix C 86

LIST OF TABLES

Table 1: State Assessment Data - White Students……...2

Table 2: State Assessment Data - African American Students……2

Table 3: National Assessment of Educational Progress -
Reading – At or Above Proficiency Percentage…….....5

Table 4: National Assessment of Educational Progress -
Mathematics - At or Above Proficiency Percentage……5

Table 5: Characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teachers…….24

Table 6: Interview Location Responses……....37

Table 7: Breakdown of Respondents to Initial Survey…….46

Table 8: CoBRAS Data……..……61

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to all of the teachers who are on the constant journey to meet the needs of their learners every day. To the teachers that allowed me to interview them – you continue to renew my passion and faith in public education with the work you do. Thank you for sharing your stories with me.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

"White folks don't just control the America's institutions; they control the narrative. And the narrative, I believe, controls just about everything else.

- Debby Irving (2014, p. 67)

Background

I am interested in exploring how teachers learn about their own white privilege and how that privilege contributes to their use of culturally responsive pedagogy by using a mixed methods approach in a descriptive case study. More specifically, how White teachers in a suburban school district have come to understand their white privilege and how they include and support culturally responsive teaching in their classrooms. Glimps and Ford (2010) stated "Moreover, educators must recognize their own role in an education system that perpetuates social inequities through the passive action of merely being 'White' and not recognizing the privileges that accompany this status" (p. 41). It seems significant that teachers grow in their understanding of how to meet the needs of learners, particularly learners that have different backgrounds and experiences, and to then employ strategies that support their pedagogical beliefs of an equitable classroom, particularly given the current demographics of K-12 teachers and students.

In a large suburban school district in a Midwestern state, there were approximately 15,000 students during the 2017-18 school year. According to the Ohio Department of Education (ODE), the student population is 57.4 % White, 24% African American, 7.8% Multiracial, 6.5% Hispanic, and 4% Asian (2017). The most recent state assessment results illustrated that there continues to be an achievement gap between Whites and African Americans in mathematics, English language arts, science, and social studies. In mathematics and English language arts, the gap in achievement is approximately 20%, with Whites having a passing rate of 88% and 86.6%, respectively, while African American students' rate of passage was 66% and 65%. In science and social studies, that gap remained closer to 15%, with 88.4% and 92.6% of White students scoring at least proficient in science and social studies, respectively. In turn, African American students scoring at least proficient in science was 73.6%, and in social studies, it was 77.6%. This gap still appears to be considerable, possibly because English language learners, students with disabilities, and those that qualify for reduced or free lunch have been removed from the data (Ohio Department of Education, 2017b). Oftentimes, teachers and

administrators attribute the gap in the achievement data to more African American students being socio-economically disadvantaged, or identified as needing special education services, or in this particular district, as English language learners, and the belief that it was about race only should be discounted because of these three other factors. By removing the students that were socio-economically disadvantaged, identified as needing special education services, or English language learners from the data set, it appears that an achievement gap is evident, as shown in Tables 1 and 2.

Table 1: State Assessment Data - White Students

Content Area	All White students	Non-socio-economically disadvantaged only	Non-special education students only	Non- ELL students only	All White students with three criteria removed
Mathematics	80.61%	83.47	85.83%	80.81%	88.11%
ELA	79.10%	82.28%	83.91%	79.48%	86.68%

Table 2: State Assessment Data - African American Students

Content Area	All African American students	Non-socio-economically disadvantaged only	Non-special education students only	Non-ELL students only	All African American students with three criteria removed
Mathematics	47.33%	59.78%	51.96%	51.80%	66.67%
ELA	47.71%	59.14%	52.19%	53.67%	66.27%

The student population has continued to diversify racially in this suburb; it grew to 42.6% of the population in the 2015-2016 school year, up from 23.9% in the 2003-2004 school year, which was as far back as state data is maintained. This seems to follow the national trend as well. According to the National Center for Education Statistics, the White student population

decreased from 58.7% in 2003 to 50.3% in 2013 nationally, while this Midwestern state experienced a decrease from 79.4% to 72.6% during that same time frame (Snyder, de Brey, & Dillow, 2016). The teacher population in this district, for the 2017-2018 school year, was 91.5% White and decreased only slightly since the 2005-2006 school year, when the percent of White teachers was 96.5% (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). This can often result in schools, and specifically suburban schools, being framed in White, middle class values. As Michael, Coleman-King, Lee, Ramirez, and Bentley-Edwards (2017) stated, "teaching has historically been a profession that consisted mainly of middle-class White women. It was my school district's assertion that this demographic fact reinforces and promotes cultural practices in schools that reward students in possession of those cultural norms, and punish those who are not – largely students of color and students living in poverty" (p. 35).

Beginning in 2001 with No Child Left Behind (NCLB), the reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act of 1965, federal law required states, districts, and schools to report the academic performance of traditionally underrepresented students that included students from low income, students with disabilities, limited English proficient students, and students from major racial and ethnic subgroups. This legislation also included testing students in every grade 3-8 and once in high school in reading/English language arts and mathematics. For the first time, at a district and building level, the achievement of students was reported by demographic category. Being accountable for every group individually as well as for students overall was a shift for this state and for districts and individual buildings. Previously, districts and individual buildings only reported overall achievement.

Since first reporting achievement data for subgroups with NCLB, the achievement gaps between White students and African American students, in the local setting, have not closed substantially. This achievement gap continues to be defined as the difference between White and African American students in state testing data. According to the archived state data, in the 2003-2004 school year Reading achievement had a gap of 22.7%, while the gap in mathematics was just under 30% (Ohio Local Report Card, 2004). However, this was inclusive of students identified as needing special education services, English language learners, and socio-economically disadvantaged students. The historical data was unable to delineate the data by those subgroups as shown in Tables 1 and 2. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) also showed a gap in achievement in reading and mathematics, as shown in Tables 3

and 4. Another gap that is evident is the discipline gap. The U.S. Department of Education (2017) reported that while 5.8% of all students received an out of school suspension in the 2011-2012 school year, out of school suspensions for African American students was 11.8%. This is especially significant given that the African American population is not the majority of students but disproportionately the students who receive disciplinary actions.

The research of Gershenson, Holt, and Papageorge (2016) also suggested that teachers of color had higher expectations for students of color than do non-Black teachers. Their work focused on determining if "these 'expectation gaps' are evidence of biases in teachers' expectations or simply reflect accurate forecasts" (p. 210). Their research found that there is bias in teacher expectations based on race and that this impacted student motivation and future educational opportunities. One of the tenets of culturally responsive teachers continues to be maintaining high expectations for all students. Examining the use of culturally responsive pedagogy, and more specifically how it has come to be used by White teachers, given the role of white privilege, may be a way in which the gaps in achievement could be closed and equity in the classroom may be achieved.

Table 3: National Assessment of Educational Progress - Reading - At or Above Proficiency Percentage

Year	2005		2013	
Race	White	African American	White	African American
4th Grade	41%	13%	46%	18%
8th Grade	39%	12%	46%	17%
12th Grade	43%	16%	47%	16%

Table 4: National Assessment of Educational Progress - Mathematics - At or Above Proficiency Percentage

Year	2005		2013	
Race	White	African American	White	African American
4th Grade	47%	13%	54%	18%
8th Grade	39%	9%	45%	14%
12th Grade	29%	6%	33%	7%

Conceptual Underpinnings

Critical Race Theory (CRT) was developed in the 1970s and began by applying critical theory practices to the law as a result of not seeing results from the Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s (Delgado and Stefancic, 2012). Key figures in this movement included legal scholars Derrick Bell, Kimberle Crenshaw, Richard Delgado, Mari Matsuda, and Patricia Williams (Taylor, 1998). They began examining litigation and how the law continued to support the status quo of White power and cultural norms, which were the norms of Whites, regardless of the decisions made by courts at the local, state, or national level that attempted to provide equality to African Americans. Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) apply Critical Race Theory to education in several ways and apply it to explain reasons for educational inequity. They argue for "the need for a critical race theoretical perspective to cast a new gaze on the persistent problems of racism in schooling" (p. 60).

Over time and through various literature CRT had several established tenets, that included (a) the permanence of racism, (b) whiteness as property, (c) interest convergence, (d) storytelling, (e) race as a social construct, and (f) the critique of liberalism (Chapman, 2007; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Sleeter, 2017; Taylor, 1998; Wallace & Brand, 2012). Several of these components will be used in this study to identify themes and to

help explain teachers' recognition of white privilege and how those tenets have implications on their use of culturally responsive teaching practices.

According to Gay (2013), "culturally responsive teaching is a technique for improving the performance of underachieving ethnically and racially diverse students" (p. 67). Here are the tenets for the framework of *culturally responsive pedagogy*, as used in this research: (a) recognizes and acknowledges the diverse cultures, experiences, and backgrounds of all learners, (b) designs the curriculum to reflect the cultures of the students in the room, (c) high expectations for student learning for all students (d) sociopolitical consciousness to challenge the status quo (Ladson-Billings, 2006; Gay, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002, Hernandez, Morales, & Shroyer, 2013). This framework will be used to help identify participants as culturally responsive or not.

Problem Statement

Green (1983) explored the differences among equity, equality, and excellence from a policy perspective, and more specifically, helped to clarify how the first two may be misunderstood or incorrectly used interchangeably. Equality is often defined as being treated the same, with everyone getting approximately the same thing regardless of need. Equity, theoretically, means that everyone is getting what they need and what they need may vary from student group to student group and even from one student to the next. Equity recognizes, supports, and honors the differences in students and attempts to provide an equitable education. Equity, theoretically, uses those known differences to meet the needs of individual learners and groups of learners.

Over the past 75 years, the types students who were served through the public education system have grown, specifically to include students with disabilities and students from historically marginalized groups One could argue that the addition of these student groups provided equality, in that they were, theoretically, provided the same education as everyone else. Others would argue that there has not been equal access in that equity has not been provided to these students. In recent federal legislation, schools and districts have also been held more accountable for their achievement, specifically, in this mid-western state, with the reporting of achievement on state assessments by subgroup and the implications of those gaps in mathematics and English language arts, per NCLB and subsequent legislation.

In the landmark Supreme Court decision of *Brown v. Board of Education (1954)* that declared "separate is not equal," which began the desegregation of schools across the nation, the focus was on equality. While this case continues to be a significant part of the Civil Rights movement, what *Brown* did not do was to provide equity to African American students.

While *Brown* legally desegregated schools, it did not integrate schools. Because African American schools were considered "inferior" based on the sole fact that they were for African American students, a result of *Brown* was that African American students would attend the "superior" White schools, to be taught by White teachers using strategies that were supported and framed in White, middle-class values. This theoretical frame did not factor in African American students' learning needs. To a degree, the premise was that African Americans would be taught in a White school by White teachers, and since Whites were inherently better, then the education would inherently be better. *Brown* also did not desegregate society or address the larger issue of racism in the United States. In fact, the backlash of *Brown* brought to light how much racism existed in the United States at that time (Ladson-Billings, 2004). As this district began examining the achievement gap, this understanding was brought to light. "We desegregated schools without taking the time to consider the implications of or the specific learning needs of students of color. We simply placed them into White schools thinking that by placing students there that would be enough" (C. DeVese, personal communication, November 8, 2016).

There has been some research that supported some effects on teaching and learning when teachers couldn't relate to or are not of the same race, gender, or socio-economic background as their students. As a possible result, they may have had a harder time being able to meet the needs of students who are unlike them in a variety of ways. As McAllister and Irvine stated (2000), it was only when these teachers recognized their own worldviews and understood the worldviews of others were they more likely to meet the different needs of their students. These needs not only include academic needs, which is reflected in student achievement results, but also in expectations, as shown in the work of Gershenson, Holt, and Papageorge (2016), and student motivation and interest as Aronson and Laughter (2016) found.

The Problem of Practice

The problem of practice in my local setting continues to be an achievement gap between our White and African American students. Additionally, the number of suspensions, students

receiving special education services, and students receiving gifted services continues to be disproportionate.

Research around culturally responsive pedagogy has tended to focus more on what should be done in teacher education programs (Atwater, Freeman, Butler, & Draper-Morris, 2010; Hernandez, Morales, & Schroyer, 2013; Kea & Trent, 2013). Part of my research was to determine the level of influence these programs had in the development of their beliefs and teachers' use of culturally responsive pedagogy. Additionally, some of my research took age and number of years teaching into consideration and may align to the increased focus in this pedagogy and multiculturalism being taught in undergraduate or graduate teacher education programs. This research was conducted to uncover the ways in which teachers learned about their white privilege and the use of culturally responsive teaching practices. Their teacher education programs may have done that.

There appears to be a wealth of research on what culturally responsive teaching looks like. There are also many examples for teachers and the educational community to consider when employing these strategies. For example, Farinde-Wu et al. (2017) researched how teachers created culturally responsive environments and the teaching strategies that were used. Hernandez, et al (2013) developed a model of culturally responsive teaching. Morrison, Robbins, and Rose (2008) collected and analyzed 45 studies and articulated 12 actions that exemplified culturally responsive pedagogy. What is not as present in the literature is how teachers came to learn how to incorporate these practices. Several studies (Ukpokodu, 2011; Ebersole, Kanahele-Mossman, & Kawakami, 2015) have been published that offered an assessment of a course or professional development series in which pre- and post- tests were given or observations were done to determine the level to which the professional learning opportunity impacted teacher practice or belief systems. What could significantly contribute to the current body of research may be a better understanding of the journey White teachers take and how they begin to use culturally responsive practices.

The research supporting culturally relevant pedagogy has focused primarily on the urban setting, where a majority of students were African American (Brown, 2004; Farinde-Wu, et al., 2007; Ladson-Billings, 2009). Other studies also focused more on what could be done in teacher preparatory programs rather than practicing teachers (Atwater, et al., 2010; Hernandez, et al., 2013; Kea & Trent, 2013). Other studies also provide examples of culturally relevant teachers in

which the teachers were teachers of color (Hernandez, et al., 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2009). Aronson and Laughter (2016) reviewed the literature on culturally relevant pedagogy that identified and described several studies, which included studies that explored what culturally relevant pedagogy looked like in classrooms, how it was effective, and how it was taught in teacher preparatory programs.

However, I found very little research on how White teachers' beliefs developed in determining the use of those strategies. Also, there continues to be a gap in the research dedicated to exploring how White teachers in suburban districts learned to recognize white privilege and in turn used that knowledge to change or refine their pedagogical practices. According to Glimps and Ford (2010), "one key to educators becoming culturally responsive and practicing inclusive excellence, is the ability to recognize white power and privilege in all its forms" (p. 41). Throughout the research of both culturally responsive teaching practices and the recognition of white privilege, the focus was on teachers in urban settings or preservice teachers.

Through Jupp, Berry, and Lensmire's work (2016) of the review of second-wave white teacher identity studies, they articulate that the first wave "emphasized White teachers' articulation of race-evasive identities" (p. 1159). This research focuses on the opposite, which is how teachers come to recognize their identities and privileges of being White and how that supports their teaching practices, which would be a race-visible White teacher identity study that would align with their research of second-wave studies.

Purpose

As the school district under study – and suburban schools nationwide – continue to become more diverse, it appears that the teaching staffs remain overwhelmingly White. I felt that it was necessary to examine how White teachers are able to employ practices that met the needs of their diverse learners, and more specifically, the way in which they came to recognize their own place in the world. The purpose of this descriptive mixed-methods case study was to understand how teachers have come to recognize their white privilege and how that has impacted the way in which they, as teachers in a suburban school district, engage with students and make their pedagogical decisions, specifically how they used culturally responsive teaching practices.

Significance

This proposed descriptive mixed-methods case study is important because it may potentially help increase achievement and success of African American students, not only in test

scores, but as Aronson and Laughter (2016) noted, in many other aspects of the learning experience for students of color. It would appear logical that when students are motivated in the classroom, have more interest, and feel that they are active learners and contributors to the classroom, that behavior incidents would go down (2016).

According to Goldring, et al (2013), in the 2011-2012 school year, nationwide over 83% of teachers were White, and about 76% of teachers were women. However, as stated earlier, the White student population continues to decrease nationally and in this district (Snyder, et al, 2016). There appears to be a clear discrepancy between the demographics of students and teachers. While having more teachers of color may be an option to improve student achievement, engagement, and the use of culturally responsive teaching practices, the understanding of white privilege of our White teachers and the use of those practices may have greater potential for impact because the majority of teachers may continue to be White. In this setting, the percentage of White teachers is over 90% and this percentage has not changed significantly over time and has not shifted at the rate that the demographics of the students have. (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). Horsford, Grosland, and Gunn (2011) stated, "Thus, this growing racialized demographic divide between students and teachers, coupled with limited training in culturally relevant and anti-racist epistemologies and educational practices, has significant implications for student learning, engagement, and achievement in cultural and racially incongruent contexts" (p. 588).

White teachers have been afforded white privilege, and have limited understanding of the experiences of students of color. Their expectations of students and what is considered "good" behavior and the "right" way are constructed by their experiences as White people, which causes a racial mismatch in their classrooms. McGrady and Reynolds (2013) cited scholarly evidence that White teachers tended to view African American students' "behavior and academic potential more negatively than those of White students" (p. 3). Understanding white privilege can address the assumptions that support inequitable practices toward students of color, which include suspensions and special education referrals, which tend to be disproportionately high in relation to the population, as well as gifted identification, which tends to be disproportionately low (Snyder, et al, 2016).

Definition of Terms

Several of the phrases below have similar definitions and in some cases have been used interchangeably in other research. To provide additional clarity, this study provided definitions of these phrases and words as well as other important terms. Definitions were taken from leading researchers on the topics defined.

- Antiracist pedagogy – "makes provision for understanding the impact of race on opportunity as well as the cultural differences associated with the upward mobility patterns by focusing on the constructs of these inequalities. [It] also addresses the historical constructs that facilitate inequalities and seeks to create an anti-racist paradigm that in time will serve to historically condition a new anti-racist society" (Blakeney, 2005, p. 120).

- Culturally relevant pedagogy – "a pedagogy that empowers students intellectually, socially, emotionally, and politically by using cultural referents to impart knowledge, skills, and attitudes." (Ladson-Billings, 1995 p. 20).

- Culturally responsive instruction – "a pluralist approach [in which] schools first affirm and reinforce the cultural identity of students of diverse backgrounds[and] working from this basis of cultural identity, educators then give students access to mainstream content and interactional processes" (Au 2007, p. 8).

- Culturally responsive teaching – "using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them. It teaches *to* and *through* the strengths of these students." (Gay, 2010, p. 31).

- Culturally sustaining pedagogy – "requires that [pedagogies] support young people in sustaining the cultural and linguistic competence of their communities while simultaneously offering access to dominant cultural competence….[it] "seeks to perpetuate and to foster - to sustain - linguistic, literate, and cultural pluralism as part of the democratic project of schooling" (Paris 2012, p. 95).

- Multicultural education – "a field of study designed to increase educational equity for all students that incorporates, for this purpose, content, concepts, principles, theories, and paradigms from history" (Banks, 2001, p. xii).

- No Child Left Behind Act of 2001– Federal law enacted in 2002 that required states, districts, and schools to report achievement data on state assessments by race, socio-economic status, disability, limited English proficiency, and traditionally underrepresented students

- White privilege – "the 'invisible' power afforded to persons based on skin color" (Glimps & Ford, p. 41).

Research Question

Primarily qualitative data through the use of interview questions with some quantitative data, through survey and interview questions, including the CoBRAS survey were collected to answer the following questions:

1. *How do teachers learn about their own White privilege*
2. *How does that knowledge contribute to their use of culturally responsive pedagogy?*

Limitations, Assumptions, and Design Controls

One of the limitations to this study is that it focuses on only one suburban school district in a mid-western state. Therefore, the results may not be generalizable to other school districts or other suburban school districts. To determine participants, a survey was sent to all teachers in the district asking them to participate. Another limitation is that the teachers who may best fit the criteria to participate may have not chosen to complete the survey.

This study included a few assumptions, which were that the teachers that responded accurately and honestly to both the survey and interview questions. It was also assumed that as an employee of the district my non-supervisory position would not impact teachers' willingness or interest to be part of the study and that the questions on the survey were clear and easy to understand.

The design controls used by the researcher were determined by a desire to focus on classroom teachers and their use of culturally responsive teaching practices and their recognition of white privilege. Although there are several adults in the educational community, I only chose to focus on those that had been or were currently classroom teachers. Another design control was that while the survey was sent to all teachers, I only chose to interview White teachers to be able to understand how they learned and understood white privilege as a White person. I also limited the amount of time that the survey was open and only sent the survey out once. This enabled me to process the data more quickly and to get responses from those that chose to participate the first time they saw the survey.

Organization of the Study

This study is organized into five chapters. The first chapter includes the background of the study, the conceptual underpinnings, the problem statement, and the problem of practice, purpose, significance, definition of terms, research questions, limitations, assumptions, and design controls. The following chapter, chapter two, is the literature review, which includes the historical context, Critical Race Theory theoretical framework, white privilege, and culturally responsive teaching practices. Chapter three describes the methodology used for this research study. It includes an explanation of the mixed methods design and approach and the data collection methods used which include surveys and interviews. It also provides information about the participants: The criteria for selection, access, the researcher-participant relationship and the methods used for the ethical protection of participants.

Chapter four articulates how the data was analyzed and includes demographic information about the participants, the connection to previous research, the themes that were discovered as well as the themes that tied to the theoretical framework. This chapter also includes findings from the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS) and additional analysis. Chapter five provides a summary of the entire study, a discussion of the findings, suggestions for further research, and conclusions.

Summary

Our student population, within this particular suburb and nationwide, has continued to become more diverse while the teaching population remains largely White. Assessment data, both at the state and national level, have shown that there is a gap in achievement between African American and White students, even when other contributing factors, including socio-economically disadvantaged, English learners, and students identified as needing special education services, were removed. Research from Grissom, Kern, and Rodriguez (2015) and Gershenson, Holt, and Papageorge (2016) also supported that non-African American teachers do not have the same expectations for non-White students as they do for White students. One suggestion to close this gap has been the use of culturally responsive teaching practices.

The use of these practices by White teachers required them to recognize their own role as a White person and white privilege. The goal of the study is to determine how teachers come to recognize this and how they use that information in turn to use culturally responsive teaching practices. At the same time, this is a tension in and of itself. Recognizing white privilege and

meeting the needs of students of color to help them be successful in school is one piece of a larger issue in establishing and promoting equity. While culturally responsive teaching practices may help more students achieve, it cannot go unnoticed that how we measure achievement is from a White perspective.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

"We must begin to understand the way our theories and philosophies are made to manifest in the pedagogical practices and rationales we exhibit in the classroom."

- Gloria Ladson-Billings (2011, p. 34)

Introduction

This chapter presents a rationale for studying the gap in achievement between African American and White students, the use of various practices to address this gap, the role of white privilege, and culturally responsive teaching practices. Researchers have studied the gap in achievement and what might be done to close that gap in buildings and classrooms, particularly in urban settings. Researchers have also more recently begun to address the idea of white privilege and the role that it plays in White teachers being able to meet the needs of diverse learners. As stated previously, the student population continues to become more diverse while the teaching population remains largely White. With this mismatch, it would seem to be important to learn how White educators may be better able to address the needs of the students who don't look like them. In this descriptive mixed methods case study studied the relationship of culturally responsive teaching and white privilege and the differences between how White and non-White teachers interacted with African American students. I did so by interviewing teachers that had identified themselves as using culturally responsive teaching practices.

The following review of the literature represents information that is pertinent to my research. While it begins with a recent story of self-discovery and how that is a key element in understanding those that are unlike yourself, my research then focused on the historical context of African American students in school. It also includes the theoretical framework used, which was Critical Race Theory (CRT). After that, the review includes an overview of strategies used to address the gap in achievement, including multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching practices followed by research on white privilege. Chapter two concludes with the methods in which similar studies have been done and is organized into these seven sections.

Self-Discovery

Debby Irving (2014), the author of *Waking Up White, and Finding Myself in the Story of Race,* spoke to an audience about her journey on understanding racism and how her perspective has evolved from one of "white oblivion to white awareness." A significant take-away I had from her story was that the majority of Whites did not have a clear understanding of the history

that people of color have experienced. How many other people think that they understand others' perspectives of the world by what they read or the limited interactions that they have with populations that are unlike themselves? White people look through their own lens when they consider the life experiences of people of color. As norms are established by the dominant group, and as the dominant group in the teaching profession has been White, those that are "other" are typically educated in a way to conform to the norms established by the dominant group (Atwater, 2010).

Somewhat ironically, I heard Irving speak at a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast. I was moved by how those in education, including myself, may have been missing the point in our approach to helping to close the achievement gap with students of color, particularly African American students, which represent the largest minority group in this suburban setting. Having understood that I had privilege to a significant extent, I was curious how those that had yet to recognize that they had privilege felt about her speech. In addition, an African American colleague was appalled by the fact that he had to listen to a White woman speak on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Day. However, I realized that there was a larger issue facing us.

Irving had truly articulated that she felt she had the best intentions and had spent the majority of her life helping underprivileged youth, which were mostly children of color. She had taken classes about multiculturalism and had tried to educate herself on ways in which to help others best. However, her discovery of how differently she viewed the world and how much she had to learn from others and the recognition of the privilege she had had the greatest impact on her. In reading her book, there were understandings that I had previously had, but there were many historical and political facts that I did not know, which caused me to reflect on my role and the approach I take as an administrator and how we as educators approach students and student learning. This book, in conjunction with an assignment on multicultural education in curriculum studies, led me to focusing my research question not only on culturally responsive teaching practices, but also on the recognition of white privilege as I felt this recognition may be a building block to teacher practices and beliefs.

Historical Context

Ladson-Billings (2004) findings confirmed that the needs of students of color were not considered when she evaluated the impact of the Supreme Court case *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). The desegregation of schools was not the integration of schools, and it was

based more on the premise that White schools were inherently better and so African American students attending White schools would inherently get a better education. There was significant backlash to this idea and it took decades to go into effect and also led to de facto segregation in urban and suburban settings. As this research has shown, however, African American students in this setting are achieving substantially worse than their White peers, even when contributing factors such as socio-economic disadvantagement is removed. In 2001, with the passage of NCLB, the achievement of individual student groups was published at a state, district, and building level. In speaking with a colleague who had begun her profession before that time, she stated, "Before NCLB, we didn't focus on specific populations of students. We just looked at overall results which showed we were doing just fine" (K. Miller, personal communication, November 15, 2016).

Theoretical Framework

Critical race theory (CRT) recognized that racism has been endemic to American life. It expressed skepticism toward the dominant legal claims of neutrality, objectivity, colorblindness, and meritocracy, which has been what we state that our country and our school system was founded on (Delgado & Stefancic, 2012). This theory worked toward eliminating racial oppression as part of the broader goal of ending all forms of oppression (Matsuda, 1993). Over time and through various literature CRT has several established tenets, which include (a) the permanence of racism, (b) whiteness as property, (c) interest convergence, (d) storytelling, (e) race as a social construct, and (f) the critique of liberalism (Chapman, et. al, 2007; DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Delgado & Stefancic, 2012; Sleeter, 2017; Taylor,1998; Wallace & Brand, 2012). The tenets used in this study include the permanence of racism, whiteness as property, interest convergence, and the critique of liberalism. As Ladson-Billings and Tate (1995) first made the connection between critical race theory and education, the former later writes in 1998 the specific, yet not completely inclusive, areas that tie CRT to education. "Curriculum, instruction, assessment, school funding, and segregation [are my] exemplars of the relationship that can exist between CRT and education" (p. 21).

The benefits of the CRT are that it is multi-faceted. As shown through research, CRT has been applied using only the tenets that best match the problem of practice. For example, in Sleeter's (2017) study of how preservice teachers were prepared to teach students of color, interest convergence, storytelling, and colorblindness were used. In Pollack and Zirkel, (2013)

whiteness as property, colorblindness, and interest convergence were studied. DeCuir and Dixon (2004) studied whiteness as property, interest convergence, and the permanence of racism. Another strength derived from using CRT is that CRT recognizes whiteness and racism in a way that other theoretical frameworks do not. CRT brings into question the role of whiteness, color-blindness, the pervasiveness of racism. As Wallace and Brand (2012) stated, "an analysis of a sociocultural and political realities of color requires a framework that exposes the pervasiveness of social constructions of race" (p. 346).

The first tenet continues to be the permanence of racism; racism has always existed and will always be present in the United States. It may be explicit and easy to see, yet it may also be implicit and hard to recognize or discern. Another component in the permanence of racism is that systems and structures, including schools, support the status quo and that racism is so ingrained in our culture that we might not even see it. This component was exemplified recently when a racial slur was written on the gate of the home of LeBron James, an African American NBA player for the Cleveland Cavaliers, and widely regarded as one of the all-time greats in the game. Kilgore (2017) of the *Washington Post* reported James' response to the incident. James stated that racism will always be a part of our country, and "No matter how much money you have, no matter how famous you are, no matter how many people admire you, being African American in America is tough. We've got a long way to go, for us as a society and for us as African Americans, until we feel equal in America." I included this tenet as it is important as teachers to recognize this sentiment as they address students of color in the classroom. I also believe that it ties closely to another CRT tenet: color-blindness. There is a belief held by some White people that if racism is ignored, it will just go away. Recent events remind us that it will not.

Other tenets of CRT include whiteness as property. This tenet continues to consider the multiple meanings of "property," including actual physical property, intellectual property, and access as property. This tenet is included as it may help to examine the resources teachers state that they use in their culturally responsive classrooms. By including diverse materials and including the student's background knowledge and experience, teachers often challenged the whiteness as property tenet. Interest convergence, the third tenet, considers that laws or decisions that support equality for African Americans only because they were in the best interest of Whites. Until No Child Left Behind (2001), state achievement data was not reported by

ethnicity or race, so the gaps were brought to light. In terms of interest convergence, the question to ask is: Would the closing of the achievement gap be desired because it would make the district look better? Many may believe that this would be in the best interest of the White administrators and teachers in the district.

The critique of liberalism includes color-blindness, neutrality of the law, and meritocracy. The color-blind component challenges those that feel that they are more progressive in their thinking. In sociology, to be color-blind means to be race neutral. To be "color-blind" does not recognize that race matters, and race always matters (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson Billings (2009) also states that "given the significance of race and color in American society, it is impossible to believe that a classroom teacher does not notice the race and ethnicity of the children she is teaching" (p. 36). To be color-blind, therefore, contradicts the goals of culturally responsive teaching in that it does not recognize or honor the different experiences students have had based on their race. Neutrality of the law is the belief that the law is never influenced by race. The final component is meritocracy, which supports the American ideal that everyone has an equal opportunity to succeed and that all it takes is hard work. This ignores any privilege Whites may have just by being White.

CRT can help analyze the perceptions of White teachers and their use of culturally responsive teaching practices. The tenets identified, the permanence of racism, whiteness as property, interest convergence, and the critique of liberalism, are some of the themes used to develop the interview questions and represented in the post-interview CoBRAS survey. It is through these tenets that the understanding of the importance of recognizing race and white privilege were determined. For example, understanding how teachers analyze achievement data and other data showing a gap between African American and White students in teacher perceptions and beliefs can help to determine the impact of interest convergence and meritocracy. Gaining their insight to the belief of a color blind approach to teaching represents the critique of liberalism tenet. How much teachers incorporate materials that offer a variety of perspectives or that use students' cultural backgrounds is supportive of the whiteness as property tenet. Critical Race Theory will provide the framework in which to effectively analyze these perceptions.

Multicultural Education

One of the ways to address how to meet the needs of diverse learners is through the implementation of multicultural education. While multicultural education has existed since the late 19th and early 20th centuries, the current form came out of the Civil Rights movement in the 1960s and 1970s. According to Banks (2001), multicultural education is defined as, "a field of study designed to increase educational equity for all students that incorporates, for this purpose, content, concepts, principles, theories, and paradigms from history" (p. xii).

Through his research, Dr. James A. Banks (2001) developed a framework for multicultural education that consisted of five dimensions. The first dimension is content integration, which is what people think of most frequently when they hear the term multicultural education, and it is often only understood as the rewriting of curriculum to include different ethnic groups, when in fact it has many more dimensions. The next dimension, according to Banks, is knowledge construction, in which it is the role of the teacher to help students to understand and determine the perspectives and assumptions that are inherent in the content area being taught. This is important, for example, as it plays into the mindset of the author(s) of the book(s) being used to support the content to determine and evaluate its validity and to construct their own knowledge about it. The third dimension, equity pedagogy, occurs when teachers change their methods of instruction to enable diverse students to achieve which includes using a variety of teaching styles and resources that are culturally relevant to their students. The fourth dimension is prejudice reduction. The goal of that dimension is to help students develop more positive racial attitudes as well as to understand how identities are formed by the dominant class. The final dimension is empowering school culture and social structure. This includes having the teacher population look more like the student population as well as establishing practices that result in every student feeling and believing that they can be successful in their goals.

Multicultural education has gone through several phases. The first phase began with ethnic studies, which was to include the history and culture of ethnic groups into the curriculum. The second phase began because there was a desire for more systemic change, because it was felt that just adding content into student and teacher curricula was not enough to increase educational opportunities for students. The third phase included not only people of color, but also other underrepresented populations, including women, those with disabilities, and those from lower social classes. The fourth phase was the development of theories and research to support

multicultural education (Banks, 2001). Multicultural education is a requirement for approval of teacher education programs in the state of Ohio. It appears, however, that even with this requirement, teachers were not entering the field with a deep understanding of how to meet the needs of students that were different than them. One of the criticisms of multicultural education is that only a few of the tenets are addressed, and when they are, it is only in a very superficial way. For example, having a Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. breakfast every year or having a Black History Month assembly does not achieve the goal of multicultural education.

Culturally Responsive Teaching

One of the ways to better meet the needs of diverse students and to create equity may be to create culturally responsive environments. This phrase includes the ideas of Geneva Gay (2002) and culturally responsive teaching, Ladson-Billings (1995) and culturally responsive pedagogy, Au (2007) and culturally responsive instruction, and Paris (2012) culturally sustaining pedagogy. In general, to be culturally responsive means, "that teachers work proactively and assertively to understand, respect, and meet the needs of students from cultural backgrounds that are different from their own" (Ford & Kea, 2009, p. 1). While each of these theorists had a slightly different definition and phrase, there were several general assumptions that they shared, including the idea that culturally responsive practices honored the cultures and background knowledge that students brought with them to school and that the goal of these practices was to increase achievement in diverse student populations (Gay, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1995; Au, 2007; Paris, 2012).

According to Gay (2013), ''culturally responsive teaching is a technique for improving the performance of underachieving ethnically and racially diverse students'' (p. 67). Culturally relevant teaching practices honor the various cultures of the members of the class and increase ownership of learning by the student, as they feel a part of the curriculum. As Rychly and Graves (2012) shared, unlike multicultural education, which can be implemented regardless of who the students are in the room, culturally responsive teaching is specifically designed for the students in the classroom, based on their personal cultures and experiences.

Ladson-Billings (1995) outlined that culturally relevant pedagogy was a model that not only addresses student achievement, but it also helped students accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing a critical perspective that challenged inequities that institutions perpetuate. As Ladson-Billings (2009) stated, "Thus, culturally relevant teaching uses student

culture in order to maintain it and to transcend the negative effects of the dominant culture" (p.19). The goals of culturally relevant pedagogy should be to produce students who can achieve academically and demonstrate cultural competence, as well as students who can both understand and critique the existing social order. Ladson-Billings (1995) referenced previous research and used terms such as culturally congruent, culturally appropriate, and culturally compatible. *Culturally responsive,* however, "appears to refer to a more dynamic or synergistic relationship between home/community culture and school culture" (p. 467). It is for this reason that I chose the term *culturally responsive pedagogy* in this research.

With culturally responsive teaching, there is an emphasis on sociocultural awareness, in which teachers recognize their own identity. Table 5 outlines the characteristics of teachers from a variety of researchers. The researchers state that teachers must have a high expectation of students and a belief that all students can learn. They also need the knowledge and skills to be able to create lessons that align with individual cultures and experiences, and in order to be able to do this, they know their students well personally. There is also a common belief of being agents of social change within the school and within their community. Rychly and Graves (2012) also included that culturally relevant teachers had to be not only reflective of what they think about other cultures, but also that they needed to be aware of their own cultural frame of reference. As noted earlier, with the majority of the teachers in this setting, as well as nationwide being predominantly white one of the cultural frames of reference that White teachers may consider was white privilege, and how that impacted their ability to use culturally responsive teaching practices. McGowan and Kern (2016) found that the cultural gap between students and teachers was larger when teachers fail to recognize their own white privilege.

Aronson and Laughter (2016) compiled research from several studies across five content areas, including English, social studies/history, mathematics, science, and English as a second language. Their findings, from the approximately 40 studies that they reviewed, showed that the use of culturally relevant teaching resulted in students of color being more on task, having improved attitudes, more motivation, and higher interest in the content, and they saw themselves as learners. Farinde-Wu, Glover, and Williams (2017) research found that "culturally responsive teaching serves to increase student motivation, enthusiasm for learning, and academic achievement" (p. 282).

Culturally responsive teachers have been studied, most notably in Ladson-Billings'

(2009) book *The Dreamkeepers.* This book describes eight teachers considered to be successful teachers of African American children, some of whom are African American themselves. Other studies have a primary focus on urban settings or are specific to classrooms, school buildings, or content areas. Unlike the studies mentioned, the focus of my research is on only White teachers in a suburban setting. It is a unique approach and contributes to a gap in the research. Our suburban schools are becoming more diverse, yet in this case students of color do not represent the majority of the population, as they typically do in urban settings in this state. How White teachers in this unique setting come to learn about their white privilege and the practices that they use is of growing value.

Table 5: Characteristics of Culturally Responsive Teachers

Author	Ladson -Billings (2009)	Gay (2002)	Villegas and Lucas (2002)	Rychly and Graves (2012)
Characteristics	Believe that all students can succeed	The ability to build a learning environment in which caring and cultural scaffolding occur	Have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds	Caring and empathic
	Help students make connections between their community, national, and global identities	The ability to conduct cross cultural communications	Socioculturally conscious	Reflective about their attitudes and beliefs about their cultures
	See themselves as part of the community, see teaching as giving back to the community, and encourage their students to do the same	The capability to develop culturally relevant curricula	See themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable	Reflective about their own cultural frames of reference
	High self-esteem and a high regard for others	A developed cultural diversity knowledge base	Design instruction that builds on what their students already know while stretching them beyond the familiar	Knowledgeable about other cultures
	See teaching as an art and themselves as artists	Knowledge and skills to match instruction to the students from a variety of cultures	Know about the lives of their students	
	See teaching as "digging knowledge out" of students		Understand how learners construct knowledge and are capable of promoting knowledge construction	

White Privilege

Based on CRT, it is crucial that teachers recognize and understand their own perceptions

of the world to be able to relate and support students (McAllister & Irvine, 2000). White privilege continues to be the "invisible" power afforded to persons based on skin color. Glimps and Ford (2010) defined "white privilege [as] the 'invisible' power afforded to persons based on skin color" (p. 41) and Case (2007) defined white privilege as "unearned advantages" and benefits, often invisible to the dominant group, afforded to whites within a system of institutional racial oppression (p. 231). While speaking of schools as an institution, let alone one of "institutional racial oppression," we can look to the graduation rate, discipline data, and access to accelerated coursework of students of color to see that it has not equitable for all students. Racism and white privilege appear to be interconnected. Whites may not recognize the privileges they have just because they are White and this may make the experiences of people of color, who encounter racism, difficult to understand or relate to. As African Americans continue to be disadvantaged because of racist beliefs, the opposite happens with Whites. They are advantaged because of their color. An example of this is the "myth of meritocracy," which is the belief that everyone has had the same opportunity to succeed and that all individuals succeeded (or did not) because of their own efforts. Whites should consider the opportunities they receive because of their race and the race of their ancestors that may not have been afforded to people of color.

The idea that African Americans being taught in a White school would be inherently better has been sharply contested by some research that tended to support the idea that minority students may benefit from teachers of their race. As Grissom et al. (2015) articulated in examining discipline, gifted identification, special education identification, and student achievement, each measure was more reflective of the population when there were more teachers of the same race as the students. For example, "the fraction of Black elementary students in gifted programs was 18 percentage points higher in a school with a 50% Black teaching staff than in a school with no Black teachers" (p. 188). Gershenson et al. (2016) also found that "non-black teachers had significantly lower expectations for black students than did black teachers" (p. 222). This research posits that White teachers and teachers of color continue to have different beliefs and expectations of what students of color can achieve. One of the reasons Grissom et al. (2015) found these positive results between teachers and students of like race was because they "often share similar values, experiences, and beliefs, which can induce consistency between minority bureaucrats' behaviors and minority clients' interests" (p. 187).

Whites unknowingly benefit just from being White as they tend to be the dominant group in a society where racism continues to exist. According to Matias (2013), in order for teachers to be culturally responsive, they have to understand their white privilege. The former, to her, does not happen without the latter. Sleeter (2017) referenced an unpublished study in which she surveyed teachers to find that over 95% of them know about culturally relevant pedagogy, yet when those same teachers were asked why students of color were not successful, the overwhelming feedback focused on what the students were not doing and did not show that teachers believed that their own pedagogy might be a reason. Teachers still had a deficit approach as they thought about the success of students of color. Ladson Billings (2009) stated, "they do not understand that their perceptions of African American students interfere with their ability to be effective teachers for them" (p. 23). Gregory, Skiba, and Noguera (2010) examined the disproportionate discipline of students of color and, while controlling for demographic characteristics including low-socioeconomic level and high-crime/high-poverty neighborhoods, found that "racial differences in discipline rates remained significant" (p. 61). This is also reflected in Tables 1 and 2 in terms of academic achievement. While removing the explanation of low test scores because of socio-economic status, special education identification, or limited English proficiency, there is still a gap in achievement between White students and African American students. As an educator in a suburban district, I am concerned at this disparity, particularly in light of the discrepancy between the teaching demographics and the student demographics and how schools now can best serve and support the needs of all learners.

One of the difficulties that the large suburban districts face is that oftentimes the students of color may also be those that are economically disadvantaged. For whites, it may be the belief that it is not a race issue, but a socio-economic issue because of the overlap between the two groups. Given the data above that accounts for that factor and others, this distinction does not seem to be the case.

White privilege has been studied, but it has been less about the narrative journey and much more focused on preservice education or before and after professional development. A few studies appeared very close to the work of this research, yet upon further examination, one of the studies' participants did not include any K-12 practicing teachers (Johnson, 2002) and the other (Brainard, 2009) focused on adult education settings.

Summary

Determining the best way to approach the closing of the achievement gap between Whites and African American students has varied over time. While it was initially thought that desegregation would provide African Americans with an equal and equitable education, that was not the case. While the Supreme Court's decision that "separate was *not* equal" was an important step in the Civil Rights movement, including African American students in White schools was not the complete answer. Multicultural teaching practices gained favor yet were too often trivialized or implemented as an approach to meet the needs of all learners. Culturally responsive teaching provides a more student-centered, whole child approach. Some researchers have said that this is impossible to implement if teachers haven't first looked within and understood their own cultural and racial biases and their own place in the world. For White teachers, this understanding comes in part through recognizing their own white privilege.

Chapter 3: Methodology

"We need to be willing to look for exemplary practice in those classrooms and communities that too many of us are ready to dismiss as incapable of producing excellence."

- Gloria Ladson-Billings, (1995)

Introduction

The primary goal of this study was to learn how teachers came to understand white privilege and how that has impacted pedagogical decisions, particularly the use of culturally responsive teaching practices. As explained in Chapter 1, the participants of this study were all from one suburban district in a mid-western state. Both quantitative and qualitative methods were utilized, with a significant focus on the latter. The data collection tools used in this study included both surveys and interviews. "Qualitative researchers use interviews to uncover the meaning structures that participants use to organize their experiences and make sense of their worlds" (Hatch, p. 91). This chapter first describes the type of study. It then states an overview of the timeline of the research followed by limitations and delimitations, followed by an articulation of the data collection methods. The next sections of this chapter focus on the participants and include the criteria used, how I gained access to the participants, the researcher-participant role, and the ethical protections of the participants.

Mixed Method Design

Type of Study

A descriptive mixed-methods case study was used in an attempt to study how teachers come to understand their white privilege and how that understanding impacts changes in pedagogy. I have chosen a descriptive approach as my study is designed to describe the influences and events that caused teachers to recognize their white privilege. This approach also allowed me to study the problem in a natural setting and be able to gain an understanding of the complexity of this problem of practice. This approach will also allow for triangulation of the data by capturing both quantitative and qualitative data (Bamberger, Rugh, & Mabry, 2011). The mixed methods approach was instrumental as the quantitative initial survey determined the sample to be used in the interview process and follow up survey. The initial survey also generated some insights that would otherwise not have been gained because of the large scope of the survey. Other reasons I used a mixed methods approach was to include the ability to address all of the questions within the research and to provide multiple perspectives and ways of looking

at the data collected. The use of the qualitative component of the research enabled me to gather the data necessary to gain a deeper understanding of how teachers came to use culturally responsive practices. The CoBRAS survey was also used as it measures racial attitudes and has been used over time to do so. While I created the survey questions and the interview questions, I felt that the use of this validated tool would help to contribute to validating this research as well.

Overview of Process

It was important from the beginning to establish a timeline for the completion of the data collection. The development of this timeline began after IRB approval. I initially gained approval from both the district superintendent and the teachers' union president. I sent the survey to the entire staff and allowed two weeks for it to be completed. I emailed the selected interview candidates and scheduled their interviews within the next two weeks in order to get the initial interview process completed prior to teachers leaving for Spring Break. The interview transcription turnaround time was approximately one week so that the interviewee could review it for accuracy and make additional comments. The coding of the interviews was completed within six weeks of the last interview. The quantitative survey at the end of the interview was also completed during that time. I did determine to reinterview participants based on my initial coding, and was able to get IRB reapproval and interview teachers prior to the end of the school year.

The first survey was entirely quantitative and Qualtrics was used to administer and analyze that data. The latter part of the survey was used to determine those teachers that use culturally responsive practices. I identified these teachers based on how high their responses are and selected to interview those respondents that scored in the highest tier, which were scores that ranged from 111-122 out of a possible 132 points.

After each interview, the interview was transcribed and sent to the interviewee as a word document to review. Once all of the interviewees confirmed that the information was correct, I began the coding process. I used a spreadsheet to transfer the answers to each question and to code the answers to identify themes.

I also kept a research journal so that I could record when and where the interviews took place as well as any non-verbal cues and other impressions I had of the interviewing experience or of the interviewee. According to Hatch (2002), this allowed me to capture the "human side of

the research experience" (p.114). The journal allowed me to reflect and improve upon my interviewing skills and the questions asked.

Limitations and Delimitations

One of the limitations of this study is that it is only focusing on one district, which will limit the transfer of the findings. However, one of the areas of focus for this district is specifically to find ways to address the discrepancies between races within the district, which this research will support. Another potential weakness in this research is the role of the researcher, in that I am a central office administrator. While I have been in the district for 18 years and have established relationships and trust with many of the teachers within the district, there is a certain level of distrust simply based on the fact that I am an administrator and that I may somehow have influence over their direct supervisors. Teachers that I do know well may also answer in a way that they know I would want to hear. The survey data was the first step in identifying teachers that use culturally responsive practices. I also used a focus group prior to the study to test both the survey and interview questions for unintended bias or leading questions. As the topic of white privilege is a sensitive topic, it was also important for me to be cognizant of this in all of my data collection approaches.

Data Collection Methods

Surveys

A survey to measure the use of culturally responsive teaching practices was sent and was the starting point for this mixed-methods approach. The survey was sent to all staff in the district. While this study was meant for all teachers in the district as my research was district-wide, the district did not have the capability to send emails only to teachers, so the directions explained that this was a survey for teachers. One participant of the survey was a paraprofessional and asked if it would be okay to complete the survey. Upon reflection, I determined that while my initial thought was only to survey teachers, anyone working with students to provide instruction would be able to participate. This quantitative data collection through the use of surveys enabled me to gather basic information on teachers' use of culturally responsive pedagogy and their recognition of white privilege and color-blind attitudes. Demographic information, including ethnicity, gender, years of teaching, and content areas taught, were part of the initial survey as well as Likert scale questions ranging from strongly disagree to strongly agree. The questions focused on the use of culturally relevant pedagogy,

which stemmed from the identification of both the descriptions of culturally responsive teaching and the characteristics of culturally responsive teachers (Table 5). Using an initial survey to identify teachers allowed me to collect the data in a standardized way, use statistical analysis, and allowed me to get a substantial amount of information in a short amount of time at a minimal cost (Bamberger, et al., 2011).

The results of the initial survey were three-fold. First, the results were used to identify the White teachers that teach in culturally responsive ways. Secondly, it helped in the development of the qualitative questions that I asked in the interviews, particularly the question after the Likert scale component that asked participants to expand on any of the responses they had in the survey. Finally, it helped me to draw comparisons and understandings between those that identified as teaching in a culturally responsive way and those that did not. Other than the initial four demographic questions, the second part of the survey consisted of 22 statements that participants were to rate from strongly disagree to strongly agree. I set up the scale in Qualtrics to align the highest point value to the most culturally responsive belief. Therefore, when evaluating the data to determine whom I would interview, I would be looking for the participants with the highest score.

After the interview portion, the interviewees were emailed a 20-question Likert scale survey, the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS). The reason I did this was to gather statistical data on their feelings about race (Neville, Lilly, Roderick, Duran, Lee, & Brown, 2000). I felt that using a vetted survey in this process would be beneficial in supporting my data collection. The survey asked respondents to mark their level of agreement with statements about race in the United States. I prefaced this survey with the interviewees at the conclusion of the interview. Initially, I had planned on this survey being completed at the conclusion of the interview, but changed my mind during the first interview. The reasons I changed my mind ncluded the time the interview actually took, which was closer to an hour than I had initially expected and because I wanted to offer the participants the opportunity to process the questions on their own time in their own space and not be burdened by me being there or by them being in my office completing the survey and feeling as though they needed to rush. Also, the questions were very personal and may have caused responders to think too deeply about their beliefs and may cause them to feel uneasy. I did not want participants to feel uneasy upon the conclusion of the interview. I did preface it well and explained that it was very direct. It was only given to

those that were identified and had self-identified as teaching in a culturally responsive way, so it was potentially less invasive to them. All but one participant completed this survey within 24 hours of the link being sent to them. I think that this supports that changing my approach was effective.

Expression of racial attitudes evolve, and so must the tools used to measure these attitudes. Neville, Lilly, Duran, Lee, and Brown (2000) developed the CoBRAS survey which was "explicitly designed to measure the multidimensional aspects of color-blind racial attitudes" (p.60) in response to the need of an updated tool. CoBRAS (Appendix B) is a 20-question survey on a Likert scale from 1-6 with 1 being *strongly disagree* and 6 being *strongly agree* with half of the questions being reverse-scored. There are three factors within this survey. The first factor is an Unawareness of Racial Privilege and included seven of the questions, including "White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin." The second factor is Institutional Discrimination, which includes seven questions. An example question is "Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people." The final factor is Blatant Racial Issues, and includes "Social problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations" as one of the six questions for this factor.

Since its' validation in 2000, several researchers used the CoBRAS survey as a part of their studies or research. Burkard and Knox (2004) examined therapists' empathy toward racially diverse clients and found that "color-blindness was directly related to therapists' capacity for empathy and also their attributions of responsibility for the solution to the problem with an African American client, but not with a European American client" (p. 387). What Burkard and Knox (2004) found was that those counselors who rated low on the color-blindness scale, meaning that they were not color-blind and who were more aware of racial matters had greater empathy for their patients. In another counseling study, Gushue (2004) examined the potential influence of race and culture in forming initial impressions about a client. Worthington, Navarro, Lowey, and Hart (2008) used CoBRAS as one tool in predicting perceptions of college campus climate, and Sperling and Kuhn (2016) measured the "extent to which this tool predicts attitudes toward resource distribution as a method of addressing the African American-White achievement gap" (p. 172).

The goal of the research was to explore and describe the phenomenon of White teachers, their understanding of white privilege, and how that impacts the use of culturally relevant

pedagogy. In examining several surveys to address the color-blind component that aligns with white privilege, the CoBRAs survey best addressed this. Other surveys stemmed from Peggy McIntosh's Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack (1988) and would serve to address the recognition of white privilege, and other surveys, including the Culturally Responsive Teaching Self Efficacy (CRTSE) scale and the Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancy (CRTOE) scale focused more on self-efficacy, which is not the focus of this study (Siwatu, 2007).

Interviews

Previous research on white privilege and culturally relevant pedagogy showed that interviews were used most frequently because they allowed for a deeper understanding of a topic as well as an opportunity to gain multiple perspectives (Hernandez, Morales, & Schroyer, 2013; Flynn, 2012; Atwater, Freeman, Butler, and Draper-Morris, 2010; Malott, Palone, Schaefle, Cates, & Haizlip, 2015). Because of this, there was a larger focus on the qualitative component in this study. The phenomenon to be described is complex, and required it to be studied in a natural setting, to have a deep understanding of qualitative research methods, and interviews best met this need.

I used a semi-formal interview approach. Each of the interviews were scheduled a week to two weeks in advance with a location secured and a set amount of time for the interview. I stayed fairly close to script in that I asked all participants the same questions. As Hatch (2002) states when interviews are the only form of data collection, I was sure to provide a detailed explanation of what my study was about and why they were chosen to participate. They received an initial email explaining the study as well as a detailed email when they were selected, as well as a two page consent form explaining the purpose of the study. I also reviewed this verbally with them prior to the start of the actual interview. Although this study wasn't only based on interviews, I felt that the interview component was such a large part that it was worth following this recommendation. The interview questions focused on how teachers came to use culturally responsive teaching practices and how teachers came to recognize race and their white privilege. They also were designed with three of the tenets of Critical Race Theory, which included the critique of liberalism, specifically the component of color-blindness, interest convergence, and whiteness as property. Rubin and Rubin (2002) state that "in-depth interviewing helps portray ongoing social processes" (p. 4). This method enabled me to understand and be able to describe the process these teachers went through to be able to teach in a culturally responsive way.

Questions included the identification of past coursework as well as events or professional learning opportunities that led to the use of those practices as well as how teachers came to recognize their white privilege. Other questions included when they first came to understand race existed and who in their life had been influential in this understanding. Some of the extant research (Haberman, 1996; Hyland, 2005; Metz, 1986; Ullucci, 2011) that supported this position that those who teach in a culturally responsive way have been raised in a similar environment or have embedded themselves in the community, thus a question about background and upbringing was asked to see if this is was the case. I started with approximately nine questions yet I adopted a semi-structured approach as I would ask for additional clarification or to expand on an earlier thought or statement. Although Hatch (2002) references the term "throw away" questions when discussing "background questions," this opening question for this study was quite important as it situated the participant to be able to continue to talk about life experiences, which was a goal of the interview. Interviewing allowed for a deeper understanding of a topic, however, there are limitations. These are related to the participant feeling comfortable and sharing exactly what they are thinking and researchers may not have the skill set to enable the participant to do so (Hatch, 2002).

Case Study Design

Yin (2014) described a case study as an all-encompassing research method. The research question is a "how" question, which lends itself to a case study. It also does not require control of behaviors and does focus on contemporary events. These three criteria meet the situation outlined by Yin (2014) to support the use of a case study. In studying individual teachers and how they have come to understand their white privilege and the impact on their pedagogy, a rich description is necessary, which can be completed through the use of a case study approach. Another goal is to "captur[e] behaviors in an authentic context" (Turner, Cardinal, & Burton, 2017, p. 247). Also, the desired information is specific to this suburban school. While the data may lend itself to be generalized, that is not the goal of the research question.

Participants

Population and Sampling

The school district in a large suburban Midwest town serves almost 15,000 students and employs approximately 900 teachers. There are 23 schools consisting of 15 elementary schools, four middle schools, three high schools, and one pre-school. Economically disadvantaged

percentages of the buildings range from 13.5% to 75.2% at the elementaries, 15.8% to 49.6% at the middle schools, and 25.3% to 37.3% at the high schools. The percentage of African American students at the elementary schools range from 7% to 45%, at the middle schools the range is from 16% to 38%, and at the high schools it ranges from 20% to 29% (Ohio Department of Education, 2017). The target population was teachers from each of the levels (pre-K, elementary, middle, and high) from buildings that represent this range of diversity so that this can be a sample population from the district. Over the course of the past few years, the district has begun addressing equity through volunteer professional learning opportunities and, at the high school level, a specific focus on increasing the enrollment of underrepresented students in advanced coursework, including honors courses and Advanced Placement and International Baccalaureate classes. Given this foundation, the focus of the research would not be seen as out of context.

Criteria for Selecting Participants

In order to get a sampling representative of our district and to not limit the ability to obtain strong candidates for interviews or observations, the survey was distributed to all teachers. Prior to sending the survey, I spoke with the union president as well as the superintendent and outlined my research study. Upon Internal Review Board (IRB) approval, I shared all communication documents with them as well and secured written approval to proceed with my study, which I then submitted to IRB. I also shared this study in face to face meetings with elementary instructional coaches, building principals, and other administrative and teacher leaders. As a member of this school community, it was extremely important to me to convey that this survey was a personal project and that no specific information would be shared with district employees, which was part of every communication piece.

The study was to be broad in that it spans all levels of the school district. Aronson and Laughter (2016) synthesized research on culturally relevant education from 1995 - 2013. Their research focused on one class, one school or one grade band of either elementary, middle, or high. My study was unlike the research they synthesized in that my study spans the entire district as opposed to a specific class, grade level or band, or school. This approach helped to identify those using culturally relevant pedagogy from a district level. The purpose of my study is to understand how White teachers come to understand their white privilege and use this knowledge to employ culturally responsive pedagogical practices. In order to do this, it was

necessary for me to identify those teachers who have those beliefs. Research shows that teachers need to first recognize their own worldviews before they can begin to understand the views of others (McAllister & Irvine, 2000). Therefore, identifying those that have done so enabled me to identify the teachers that I interviewed.

Several of the research studies resulted in the development of specific qualities or characteristics of culturally relevant teachers, while other studies provide examples of what culturally relevant teaching practices look like. The former have been included in Table 5. My initial idea was to give this chart with corresponding definitions to building leaders which would have provided a comprehensive understanding of the characteristics and practices. In order to obtain a list of teachers, I was going to ask building administrative leaders to identify culturally responsive teachers. I would have to also clearly articulate and explain the criteria to the building leaders so that a consistent and common understanding would be used when identifying these teachers. However, when I submitted this idea to the IRB, I was told that this method was inappropriate, which was quite disappointing and a bit confusing. One dissertation I had read, *White Lies: A Critical Race Study of Power and Privilege* (Brainard, 2009) used the idea of snowballing, and in other studies that our district have been asked to be a part of simply asked for names of teachers that leadership felt met a certain criteria. While I felt that asking principals for names was not inappropriate and while my committee was supportive of the use of that practice, I did ultimately remove that way of respondent identification out of my study in order to gain IRB approval.

The survey was sent to all staff, in which just over 900 of those staff members are teachers. After working with the IT department at the district, I first attempted to send out the survey on a morning in which school was cancelled due to inclement weather, only to discover that the email had not been set up correctly to send to all staff. This was able to be remedied and I sent out the survey the next evening. Historically speaking, the completion of surveys by staff has not been great. While my goal was to identify and interview between nine to twelve teachers throughout the district, I was quite unsure how many teachers would actually complete it. A few of the reasons why I decided to administer the survey to all teachers was because of the historic lack of completion of surveys as well as to research a broader scope of teachers unlike other research I have found to date.

Research on culturally relevant pedagogy spans the content areas, including English

language arts, mathematics, social studies/history, science, and English as a second language (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). The goal would be to have representation from a variety of buildings and content areas. After 10 days, I checked Qualtrics and was pleased to see that over 200 staff had started the survey, over 135 teachers had completed the survey, and approximately 75 had agreed to be interviewed. To determine the pool of interview candidates, I looked at the scores from the Likert scale component of the survey. There were 22 statements in this section and each question was ranked on a scale of 1-6, with 6 being the most culturally responsive answer and some questions being reverse-scored. The total possible points for this section was 132. The highest score was 122, and there was a natural break that identified eleven teachers to be interviewed. These eleven scores ranged from 122-111. The next score after that was 108 with multiple respondents with descending scores. These eleven were emailed and sent a google form with their name, times they were available to be interviewed, and their preference of location to be interviewed as shown in Table 6 below. Nine of the eleven responded that they were interested in being interviewed and selected between one and three available times. Once I had heard from about half of them, I scheduled their interviews. I then sent out a reminder email to the rest of them, always blind-copied, with remaining times available. One candidate replied that he did not have time in his schedule and the remaining candidate never replied. Interviews were scheduled within a two week period after school hours.

Table 6: Interview Location Responses

Respondent	Interview Location Preference
A	The classroom/building in which I work
B	The classroom/building in which I work
C	No preference
D	The classroom/building in which I work
E	Jennifer Knapp's office located at the Early Learning Center
F	No preference
G	No preference
H	Jennifer Knapp's office located at the Early Learning Center
I	The classroom/building in which I work

Unexpectedly, I had almost 60 staff members that had expressed interest in participating in the survey but were not selected. I contemplated what I should do. In the initial email, I had only stated that candidates to be interviewed would be notified. However, I work in this district and many, but not most, of the people that had stated they would be willing to participate were people that I knew or saw regularly. I crafted an email thanking them for their willingness to participate. The subject line of the email was Thank You and I stated in it that, "Thank you for completing my research survey and for providing me with valuable feedback. It is greatly appreciated! At this time, due to the number of responses, I do not need to schedule an interview with you. As I progress through my research, I may reach out to you at a later date" (personal correspondence, March 10, 2018). I received several "you're welcomes" and "best wishes" as responses.

Access to Participants

Following IRB approval, I obtained approval from the district superintendent and the union president. I had several face to face conversations with each of them to make sure the purpose of the study was clear and that there was an understanding that the survey and that the follow up interviews would be completely voluntary and anonymous. The voluntary nature of the survey and subsequent surveys was clearly articulated in all communications. It was also made explicit that the information provided in the survey, interviews, or observations will not be used against any teacher in any way. In my second attempt at receiving IRB approval, I clarified that none of the data would be shared with district employees, which addressed IRB's concern that I was completing research within my own district. The information about being voluntary and being confidential was relayed in one-on-one meetings, specifically with the union president, and was included in the email that went to all staff so that potential participants and other members of the school community were fully informed of the process. Given that there was no way for the district to delineate teachers from all staff, the email in fact went out to all staff, including building principals. This added an unforeseen benefit in that it reminded building leadership of the research that I was doing and enabled them to see exactly what was said in the email. While no administrator or teacher came to me with questions about requirements of the survey, I felt that because everyone had been contacted that this provided clear communication to all. I also had members of the non-academic side of the district replying and wishing me luck.

The survey was given through Qualtrics and the first several questions were demographic

in nature. At the end of the survey, respondents were asked if they would be interested in being interviewed. If the answer was no, the survey was routed so the teacher's next response was to submit. A thank you notice then appeared. If the answer was yes, the next survey question was to provide contact information, including name and email address. Most respondents included both, yet several included only one or the other. Also, a significant number of respondents replied with their personal address. While this was not a problem when I was only emailing the first 11 respondents, the process did become tedious when I was trying to email the almost 60 that were not asked for an interview at this time. I was concerned with the amount of surveys that teachers receive, which last year, in the most extreme case, reached 10 surveys throughout the course of the year (R. Gilpin, personal communication, September 5, 2017). I thought this may lead to survey fatigue and poor completion rates. However, I was satisfied with the number of completed surveys and the number of willing interview participants.

Researcher-Participant Relationship

As an administrator in the district in which the research was done, it was imperative that I established a safe environment with teachers so that they felt their honest answers were appreciated and desired in this process. I do not directly supervise teachers or building principals and my role as a curriculum director hopefully helped support the teachers' comfort level with me. Of the nine that were interviewed, I had met eight of them prior to the interview through a variety of professional development opportunities. I have also been in the district for almost 20 years, so I have had an opportunity to establish meaningful relationships with staff members from various grade levels along the way. This helped to establish my credibility within the district and with individual teachers and teacher leaders. This information was also explicit in the consent forms for both the surveys and interviews. It also led to some additional insights for me as an administrator in the district who supports the purchase of resources to meet the needs of our students and teachers.

Emails of invitation were sent to those who were asked to be interviewed and included clear expectations and explained that while they had been chosen to participate in the interviews, being interviewed was completely voluntary. The interview time slots were scheduled for an hour and in most cases the interview stayed within that parameter. Frequently, at the conclusion of the interview, the teachers would share their excitement in the work, ask questions, and share their passion for the work. The interviews and conversations were reviving for me. Four of the

nine interviewees requested that the interview take place in their building, three had no preference, and two requested that the interviews take place in my office, as shown in Table 6. With this information, four were completed in the teacher's classroom and five were completed in my office. The flexibility of the respondents who had no preference allowed me to have the interviews in my office and have them back to back, with fifteen minutes in between.

During the second week of the interview process, I came down with the flu. In two of the interviews, I chose to meet in a conference room instead of my office because of my illness. Both interviews in that room were the shortest. I attribute this to the increased formality of the space. It was not as comfortable for interviewees as their own space, although one had requested my office and the other indicated no preference for where the interview was held. In my office, we were closer in proximity, and there was evidence of a space that is lived in. There are pictures of my family and drawings from my children and I feel that it created a more conducive environment. Notably, when I interviewed these two participants in the follow up interview, one was in my office and one was in the participant's classroom, the interview was much lengthier.

By the end of the day that the interview was completed, the interviewee was sent the link to the CoBRAS survey. At this time, I also submitted the recorded transcript to an online company for transcription. After the majority of interviews were completed, I sent the transcript to the interviewee. After the first four interviews, I realized a question that I wanted to ask as a follow up needed to be added. I then added this question to the email that included the transcription for review asking that they review the transcription and answer the follow up question. I had stated that this may be a possibility in the interview, and most participants replied to the question and provided feedback on the transcription. I then added this question to the interview for the next five interviewees.

To be sure that the questions asked in the interview and in the initial survey garnered the information needed, I had a focus group of five people who were currently or who had been in the teaching profession and had worked with a diverse student population review them and provide feedback. Their feedback resulted in my removing some of the questions, adding detail to other questions, and reordering the questions for better flow. The goal was to help the process to be more efficient as it was to aid in preventing the need to ask teachers to be interviewed again.

However, after initially coding the responses to the interview questions, I felt that I needed to complete follow-up interviews with each of the participants. I followed IRB procedures and submitted a Protocol Modification Request in order to interview my candidates again. Upon approval, I used a similar process in reaching out to the candidates and asked for a short time to follow up. All nine responded that they were willing to do so and I was able to schedule all interviews prior to the conclusion of the school year. Another component of the follow up interview was to ask teachers to review the characteristics of culturally responsive teachers and to select those that most resonated with them.

The follow up interviews also provided another benefit. In the first round, five of the interviews were held in my office. However, during the second round, only three were as I was able to go to the teachers' individual classrooms. Two teachers brought me articles or books that they had or were going to be teaching and another invited me to her room specifically to see how it was decorated. After thanking them greatly for their additional help at the end of each interview, several remarked that they look forward to reading my dissertation upon its completion.

Methods for Ethical Protection of Participants

I followed the Institutional Review Board (IRB) process and completed the required cover page, research description, and I attached examples of the forms, letters, survey, and interview questions. The informed consent forms completed by the teachers explained how this information would be kept anonymous. Also, this study only required me to interview and study teachers and not students. The role of white privilege puts race in the forefront of the conversation. It was imperative that the survey questions, the interview questions, the interactions I had with teachers during this process, and the findings clearly articulated the sensitivity of this topic.

Summary

This chapter restated the purpose of the study and explained how both surveys and interviews were used to gather data. This chapter articulated that the criteria used to select interview participants was to score in the highest tier in survey given to all staff members. It also provided information on the types of questions that were asked in the interview process. The specific ways in which the participants were protected was described, including a variety of communication strategies with various stakeholders within the district. In addition, this chapter

stated how the unique relationship of the researcher and participants was supported as they are all members of the same school district community. The next chapter will provide the data analysis by themes.

Data Analysis- Chapter Four

"Oppressors always expect the oppressed to extend to them the understanding so lacking in themselves."

- Audre Lorde

Introduction

This mixed methods study examined how suburban teachers began to use culturally responsive teaching practices, and specifically, what life experiences or education they had that caused them to recognize their white privilege which led to the support of those practices. Also, using the Critical Race Theory framework, the perceptions of White teachers and their use of culturally responsive teaching practice were also analyzed. This was achieved by identifying teachers who were culturally responsive through a survey in which the teachers responded to 22 statements about culturally responsive teaching and then interviewing those participants that scored the highest and who also volunteered to be part of the process. The participants also completed the CoBRAS survey and identified the characteristics of culturally responsive teachers that resonated the most with them. Both quantitative and qualitative data were used, with qualitative being the primary methodology.

This chapter begins with an overview of the process and an explanation of how the data were analyzed. A qualitative research methodology is one that is "inductive, emerging, and shaped by the researcher's experience in collecting and analyzing the data" (Creswell, 2013, p. 22). It then states the demographic data of the participants. It is then followed by references to previous research that states reasons teachers were most likely to employ these practices. The following components of this chapter are organized by the themes that were discovered in the interviews, the themes of the CoBRAS survey, and the relevant tenets of Critical Race Theory.

Overview

The qualitative data included responses by subjects in interviews to nine initial questions and five follow up questions. All of these interviews were audio recorded and transcribed. I also took notes throughout the interviews of major ideas and the general demeanor of the interview. After the first four interviews, I decided to add an additional question, and when I interviewed the following five participants, I included that question. Each participant was emailed the transcription of the interview in a word document and was asked to provide feedback. When the first four participants received their transcription, the additional question was included in the

email, which I had stated in the initial interview process was a possibility. Most of the participants emailed back and none of them stated that changes or additions needed to be made to the original transcription.

Once all of the interviews were transcribed, I created an excel document in which every question was given its own tab and the participant responses were cut and pasted into the document. I then read each of the answers and identified similar ideas and coded them. At this time, I realized that there was additional information needed to more thoroughly complete my research. I completed the request through IRB to interview the participants again and upon approval, all nine completed the second interview. This information was processed in the same way as it was audio recorded, transcribed, documented in the excel file, and then coded. From these initial codes, larger themes emerged and pertinent tenets of Critical Race Theory became apparent.

In interviewing nine participants, I determined to include information in my findings that I found represented by at least five of the participants. One of the initial questions in the interview was when the participants first experienced race. The codes that were the most prevalent included elementary school and that it was experiencing someone else's race. Another question asked was, "who were the key individuals that influenced their views on race?" and friends and college professors were stated six and five times respectively. When asking what experiences led the participants to use culturally relevant teaching practices, authentic interactions with persons of color was the most widely stated. Professional development or learning opportunities was the most common response when participants were asked how teachers can become more aware of and use culturally responsive teaching practices. What I had realized throughout this initial coding process is that there were themes emerging that spanned over multiple questions in supporting my two research questions of:

1. *How do teachers learn about their own White privilege*
2. *How does that knowledge contribute to their use of culturally responsive pedagogy?*

The themes that emerged from the initial coding were personal experiences, learning opportunities, and a reflective journey. The final theme did not come out from my initial coding but emerged as I read through each of the responses as a whole.

I then focused on each theme individually and re-read every answer looking for evidence to support that theme. Some of the information that I had coded earlier for a particular question

supported one of these larger themes, but I often also found other information within the response that had not been coded that supported one of the themes. In working through the large number of questions, which was 14, and the number of participants, the most effective way for me to identify these larger themes was to print all of the excel sheets out and highlight the larger themes by color. It was interesting to see how many questions resulted in comments that supported the various themes. I also tried to capture significant quotes around the theme at this time. In some cases, however, it was easier to find quotes by looking back at the actual transcription because I could remember the statement made but I could not easily remember what question prompted a particular answer.

The quantitative data for this research comes from the CoBRAS survey and the completion of the chart in identifying what the participants felt were the key characteristics of culturally responsive teaching. The CoBRAS survey was a Likert scale with some questions being reverse-scored. These quantitative data points helped me to get a more complete picture of the participants' thinking around culturally responsive teaching practices and helped me to confirm their beliefs and attitudes about race.

Demographic Data

Of the 11 teachers selected to be interviewed, six of them were high school teachers, two were middle school teachers, and three were elementary teachers. This appeared somewhat disproportionate, so I looked further into the data to determine if the number of initial respondents at the high school level was the cause. My initial thought that this was because the day that the survey had been sent was a work day for the high school teachers because of parent conferences. However, as shown in Table 7, there were actually more elementary teachers that had started the survey and almost the same amount of elementary and high school teachers that completed the survey. As some teachers span elementary and middle and some teachers span all of secondary, the calculations that follow will not always equal the total. As depicted in Table 7, the high school had the highest percentage of teachers meet the criteria of those that began and completed the survey as well as who were willing to be interviewed. Of the teachers that met the criteria, there was one art teacher, two elementary teachers, two high school English teachers, three high school social studies teachers, one World Language teacher, one secondary English as a Second Language teacher, and one English as a Second Language teacher on special

assignment. After reaching out to the 11 teachers that met the criteria, nine chose to participate in the interview process.

One component of the initial survey that I wanted to examine was to see if there was a correlation between number of years taught and the use of these practices. For this case study, there did not appear to be a correlation given that of the participants identified three had 0-5 years of teaching experience, two had 11- 15 years of experience, and four had 16 or more years of experience. However, one of the teachers that has been teaching less than five years had earned her teaching degree over 25 years ago, and the other teacher with less than five years of experience had spent a number of years as a substitute. The latter, Participant I, provided feedback as to a reason why not many teachers with less than five years of experience were identified. She stated that as a new teacher, the textbook is the primary teacher material and it takes time to understand the content and to be able to move away from it.

Of the nine who were interviewed, eight were women and one was a man. Two additional men met the criteria but were not interviewed. Several of the women mentioned that being a woman did help them to identify with students of color, including African Americans, and two of the women identified themselves as gay, which they both felt also contributed to understanding being an "other" in society.

Table 7: Breakdown of Respondents to Initial Survey

	Began the Survey	Completed the Survey	Willing to be Interviewed	Selected based on Criteria	Interviewed
All	205	137	76	11	9
Elementary	84	55	27	3	3
Middle	56	34	30	2	2
High	76	54	33	6	4

Previous Research

Previous research (Haberman, 1996; Hyland, 2005; Metz, 1986; Ullucci, 2011) stated that two determining factors in teachers using culturally responsive teaching are that the teachers have (1) grown up in a similar environment as the students that they teach, or (2) that they live in the community. However, the background of the participants of this study did not correlate with that research. Seven of nine interviewed came from homogeneous white communities and most

came from what would be considered as middle-class environments. The group was fairly split between growing up in a suburban area and a small town. Only one participant relayed that she had grown up poor and had moved around a lot and could relate to her students in those ways.

Through previous research, it was also stated that in order for teachers to teach in a culturally responsive way, they had to be able to identify where they were (Glimps & Ford, 2010). In asking this question of the participants, they all agreed to an extent that it is needed and gave their reasons why. Participant A shared that "it's difficult to be culturally sensitive to somebody if you don't understand your own culturally sensitivity. If I don't recognize my own privileges, I'm going to have a much harder time recognizing a lack of privilege for somebody else." While another participant didn't feel that this recognition directly impacted her teaching, she did state that it has changed the way in which she responds to students' behaviors. Participant C took a more global approach in that while if it isn't explicitly white privilege, then it is "at least understanding access to power and privilege and that some people have it and some people don't. Others stated that it has to be understood, even if you don't know the term for it. Participant E stated that "if you don't have that kind of framework to understand that there for even subtle inequities, then you're not going to be as successful." One participant specifically stated that this was a foundation of her core beliefs, even prior to being a teacher while another teacher stated that she didn't teach in this way until she came to recognize this privilege. "I was aware in a way, but not aware in a way that affected my teaching," Participant H stated. Participant F stated, "I think you have to at least recognize your privilege enough to know that you have to do something different. That you have to reach out and change things and welcome people and realize what they are…you know these parents love their kids the same way we love our kids. It's no different."

Characteristics

The focus of this research is to understand how teachers have come to recognize their white privilege and use culturally responsive teaching practices, I felt it was important to understand what culturally responsive characteristics the participants identified with the most. They were asked to choose using the table first developed to help principals recommend participants to be interviewed as shown on Table 5. The participants identified most with the following, with six of the nine choosing the first three statements and five of the nine choosing the last two statements.

- Believe that all students can succeed (Ladson – Billings, 2009)
- Have affirming views of students from diverse backgrounds (Villegas and Lucas, 2002)
- Reflective about their own cultural frames of reference (Rychly and Graves, 2012)
- See themselves as part of the community, see teaching as giving back to the community, and encourage their students to do the same (Ladson – Billings, 2009)
- Reflective about their attitudes and beliefs about their culture (Rychly and Graves, 2012)

While less than five of the participants selected the statement "See themselves as responsible for and capable of bringing about change to make schools more equitable" (Villegas and Lucas, 2002), six of them stated that they address white privilege and specific current events that address various types of racism in their classroom with students. Participant F, a fourth grade teacher, explains it to her students so that they can recognize it in themselves. High school teachers mentioned discussions and learning opportunities with their students about the Black Lives Matter movement. Other teacher teaches the history of racism in our culture, in part to assist in the understanding of the texts they are reading but to also gain perspective and knowledge about "the palpable ramifications of oppression and privilege in our society."

Findings

My qualitative data came from the interview questions. The initial interview was nine questions and the follow up interview was five questions with a chart to complete. These questions were designed to answer my research questions of:

1. *How do teachers come to recognize their white privilege?*
2. *How does that impact their use of culturally responsive pedagogy?*

While Hatch (2002) considers the introductory question of "tell me about your background" a throw-away question, that information proved to be very valuable in my findings. This research captures common themes about the journeys these nine teachers have taken as they have come to understand their role as a White teacher and are culturally responsive to their students. These themes include personal experiences with persons of color, empathy, and learning opportunities, both formal and informal. Many of the participants also mentioned how this was a journey for them and that they are still evolving. Critical race theory tenets were also themes which included the permanence of racism, Whiteness as property, and the critique of liberalism. The participants also shared why they feel some teachers and White people in general have not or do not recognize their white privilege.

Theme #1 – Personal Experiences

Personal experiences rose as a theme and encompassed experiences with understanding race from both Whites and individuals of color. Participants were asked how they first came to understand race, what key individuals influenced their views on race, and how they came to understand that white privilege existed. These questions, as well as the background question, provided valuable feedback in understanding the most significant theme in understanding how these teachers came to understand white privilege and teach in a culturally responsive way, which is personal experiences with persons of color, specifically African Americans. Participant D stated, "certainly tak[ing] classes or some sort of professional development to see the world in a different way, but it has to be an actual life experience. We can learn anything in theory…but until you put that learning into action and actually have an experience, it is only theory."

Seven of the nine participants that I interviewed had had a personal experience with a person of color. These varied from casual friends in elementary school, to children one participant babysat as a teenager who continue to be in integral part of her life. Participants shared experiences or conversations that they had with these friends that had a lasting impact. Participant E shared that she had made a playground friend and in sharing that with her mother, her mother realized who the other child was and was not pleased. This too was when Participant E began to recognize race. Participant E also remembers the social dynamic of having a friend that was not accepted by either the White community or the African American community because this friend was Jamaican and West Indian. Seeing her friend try to navigate her place and participating in some typically African American social events with her raised her awareness of how people perceived color. Participant G was asked by teammates in high school if it would actually be okay for them (as African American males) to go into the participant's house because he was unsure that the father would be okay with that. He stated, "and I was like, I had never thought about that question before, but I think he's going to be fine with it. But that really really struck me that no one else I'd ever brought into the house ever thought to think that way. I mean there was probably an awareness before that I'm sure, seeing the differences and things like that, but that really really sort of struck home, and I can still remember it today." The same participant shared that one of his colleagues in the Navy was African American and shared stories which were an influence. Participant C's best friend in middle school was African American and can remember being at her friend's house when Marvin Gaye, Jr. was killed by his

father and the impact that had. Participant I, who had grown up in a homogeneously White community, didn't truly understand that there was still racism and that African Americans still felt discriminated against until she went to college in a diverse setting, took classes, and had befriended African Americans and began to learn how they felt.

Other participants shared specific stories of close relationships with African Americans and the deep conversations that they had which contributed to their understanding of white privilege and what it means to be a person of color. Participant A befriended two African Americans in high school and became cognizant of the different way in which people interacted with them. From being called "Walking Oreo" when the three of them would be in the mall together, to recognizing employees watch her friends in stores and not her, and learning from other experiences that her friends shared with her. It became apparent to her that there were big differences in race and how people perceived race. Her father, who was not very racially sensitive, and her African friends, caused her to want to investigate. "I was like, I need to kinda figure something out here because there is a big difference in how we view the world, and we are supposedly coming from the same geographical space, but how we look at the world is very, very different." This led her and her friends to have very frank conversations about race, and it opened her eyes to the differences in their cultures and the ways in which others react to them because of their race.

Participant D began babysitting two African American girls as very young children when she was a teenager and has continued to be close with them as adults. She too learned from their willingness to share their experiences and ways in which they were treated. She shared how difficult it was for her to know that people that she cared about so deeply were seen differently just because of their looks, which she felt was so superficial in relation to who they were as people underneath. The three continue to be close and to have conversations about the ways in which various people interact with them and how differently they approach certain situations as a White person or a person of color.

Almost half of the participants firmly believed that in order for people to understand their white privilege that they had to have had a personal experience with a person of color. Participant A stated, "I think part of it is there hasn't been an intimate moment with somebody of another race, and I don't mean intimate as in sexual, but intimate as in a meaningful, real life experience where there's a moment that you recognize that somebody else has a different

experience solely because they're not white." Participant B, who has not had that type of experience, also felt the same way. She stated, "it's really hard unless you know somebody. I think that's the bottom line." However, Participant B did not have a personal experience with an African American. She had personal experiences with other minorities, including Latin Americans and Muslim Americans, and in reading the book *Waking Up White,* she felt she was able to transfer this knowledge in understanding her white privilege and being more responsive in her teaching practices.

Another component of these experiences is empathy. Participant D stated, "and until we have an emotional connection with somebody different than us or something tangible and can relate to on an empathic level, we don't start to recognize our own biases." Participant E also stated that empathy was an important component in their understanding and growth in that "you have to be aware, then you have to develop that empathy so that you want to make a difference." She stated that if there is a population of people who are misunderstood that she empathize with them and do all she can to understand them better. She also feels that something has to happen for that empathy to be created, whether it is reading a book or having a life experience. Once you are aware, "you have to develop that empathy so that you want to make a difference, and then you have to build a repertoire of tools to use in the classroom to make that difference."

While three males met the criteria to be interviewed, only one chose to be. A probing question that was asked of him and not the others was around the idea of not being an "other." Most of the women interviewees had, by the time I interviewed him, made comment of being an "other" as a woman and how this helped to identify with those that are treated differently. This resulted in Participant G stating that empathy was key in developing his recognition of white privilege, but it stemmed from a personal experience not related to color. In his early thirties, he lost his wife and had two small children and had to figure out how to move forward. He stated,

> Whatever limited amount of empathy I had prior to that process, it was almost just empathy on steroids afterwards. So being able to just see my individual students and their stories, and again, I'm a history teacher, so we never talk about the good day. So it's always something bad that's going on or whatever. It really really I think intensified the journey, you know, in a way that's resulted with me being wherever I am now.

Not only did more participants state that a connection with a person was important, based on further questioning, in almost every case, it happened before other events, including coursework or personal professional development. Also, positively or negatively, their family members played a role. Three participants stated that they had family members that were not accepting of others, while four participants shared stories of positive influences, from a general acceptance of an immediate parent being kind and accepting to everyone, to an older sibling that was an advocate for racial justice. This sibling had discovered that where she was working as a newspaper editor in another state, there were members of the Ku Klux Klan in the local government and she worked to bring that fact to light in that community, which caused significant issues for her. As a young teen, he stated, this had a big impact on him.

Theme #2 Learning Opportunities

A significant amount of research around this topic has focused on professional development opportunities and measuring the recognition of white privilege or the use of culturally responsive teaching practices before and after the professional development. Almost all of the participants referenced various coursework that impacted them, as well as specific professors in college. However, very few noted that the themes or theories learned were directly related to or meant to support and develop their pedagogical practices. Many also shared specific books, authors, or documentaries that were significant influences.

Coursework and Professors

All of the participants referenced either college coursework or professors that had an impact on how they viewed the world, and five referenced specific courses, placements, or people that specifically discussed race or diversity. One third of the participants stated that they had taken women's studies courses and many of them referenced the coursework or professors focusing on the theoretical aspects of multiculturalism, diversity, and pedagogy.

Participant B mentioned a specific course called "The Other" in which they studied the "dynamic of understanding how people create space between themselves and others, showing that they are superior." For her, it "really put into focus how power and privilege and how that whole state of being…impacts how that person or that group of people views the rest of society." While it did give her a different world view, it was not a course that supported pedagogical shifts. This participant also stated that a course on Latin American history that helped her to understand the power struggle having been colonized by Spain and oppression.

Three of the participants took courses in women's studies and made reference to "othering." As participant D noted, "the marginalization of people and the 'othering' of people really affected me on a personal level." One participant mentioned that just having a history degree supported his understanding, while Participant I noted her African American studies course was specifically when she first realized that there was still racism. It was in college when white privilege was explained to her when she completed a privilege exercise in which students take one step forward if their experience agrees with particular statements. For example, she stated, one statement was "If your parents have a college degree."

Participant C noted that the program she attended organized itself around social justice and explicitly taught it. One course specifically focused on "understanding power and privilege." She did note that she was already of that belief, so it did not impact her as significantly, and also that some people in the course did not want to unpack the understandings behind power and privilege.

Six of the participants stated that professors played a role in their learning. Participant C stated that one of her professors, "had a demeanor that allowed people to feel comfortable talking about difficult things in her presence, and that she was really great at facilitating conversations about race and racism in ways that were not threatening." Another participant stated that a professor was "the best champion for equality across the board." Participant E stated that her professor of African American literature took them on a field trip to a museum and to a famous African American poet's former home. Other participants stated that they had inspiring professors or ones that were very culturally aware and encouraged the participant to speak out and speak up.

While almost every participant mentions coursework as having a significant impact, very few state that the coursework they took had specific pedagogical impact. Participant A spoke the most of how her coursework and placement positively influenced her use of culturally responsive teaching practices. She stated that her professors were very culturally responsive and taught using those forms. They also made a point to talk about race and purposefully created diverse placement settings. One of her placements was at a juvenile detention center. Other than the guard, she was the only White person in the room. "I kinda got hit in the face with it really intensely because it was also tied to the prison system," she states. She noticed her clientele and knew that she really needed to understand where they were coming from if she was going to get

any buy in in what she was trying to do. She also shared the importance of having educational moments in diverse settings prior to having one's own classroom. "If I hadn't had a teaching experience where race was such a large component of what I was learning, I think I would be far behind where I am now in terms of recognizing the role of race within education."

Participant I, who attended a very liberal graduate school, also stated that her coursework was "specifically designed for teaching cultural differences" and that her program was "pretty explicit about it." Others made statements that the coursework was either only literature or only theory, but did not focus on pedagogy. Participant F stated that while she had diverse placements, the approach was just to "throw you in there and see how you do" rather than providing educational opportunities to prepare pre-service teachers to be successful in diverse classrooms.

Books, Writers, and Documentaries

Four participants stated that books or writers helped them to recognize their white privilege and five participants referenced documentaries. Two participants specifically mentioned the book *Waking Up White* (2014) by Debby Irving which is the book that had a significant influence on me and was part of the inspiration for choosing this topic to research. Participant B stated that reading that book was "one of the defining moments of my life." Participant E also read that book and stated that, given her upbringing, she had never considered herself to have been privileged. However, this book made her see that her family had what she had because of the white privilege her ancestors and family members did. Another participant, a high school English teacher, referenced numerous authors including Toni Morrison, Eve Ensler, Jane Elliot, and Dorothy Allison, to name a few. Participant F mentioned that reading books on her own had the greatest impact on her, which has really been over the past ten years. Specific books or authors she shared included *Kaffir Boy* (1998) by Mark Mathabane, *The New Jim Crow* (2012) by Michelle Alexander, books from Ta-Nahisi Coates including *Between the World and Me* (2015) and *The Beautiful Struggle* (2009), and *Born A Crime: Stories from a South African Childhood* (2016) by Trevor Noah.

Five participants stated that documentaries had a role in helping them to recognize their white privilege. Specific documentaries included 13TH by Ava DuVernay which examines the history of race and the criminal justice system. Another participant mentions that as a young person she watched the Eyes on the Prize series and The Emmett Till Story. She states, "if I

have to think of a moment that kind of led be down a path of social justice, I would say it's Emmett Till's story. As an 11 or 12 year old girl, I heard the story of Emmett Till, and his murder, and the fact that the men, the adults that murdered him as a child when unpunished was definitely a catalyst for my interest." Participant B stated that the Oscar Romero story had an impact. Participant H attended the showing of a documentary on white privilege and racism at a large university. This was presented to her as a voluntary opportunity during her first year of teaching and she took her daughter with her and she shared that it was her "a-ha moment." "It finally made sense to me why I was seeing such a gap in treatment and just understanding and all of those things and how systemic it was," she stated.

Theme #3 – A Reflective Journey

The initial survey of 22 questions identified these teachers as being culturally responsive and can be found in Appendix A. Statements in which all participants responded with "strongly agree" included "culturally responsive practice is essential for creating an inclusive classroom environment" and "encouraging respect for cultural diversity is essential for creating an inclusive classroom environment." All but one participant strongly disagreed with the statement "using culturally familiar examples for students isn't necessary to impact or improve student learning" and "a color-blind approach to teaching is effective for ensuring respect for culturally diverse students." Also, one disagreed and the rest strongly disagreed with "using culturally familiar examples for students isn't necessary to impact or improve student learning." Eight of the nine also strongly agreed they "make students aware of social and political issues" and the same number strongly disagreed that "culturally responsive practice undermines national unity by emphasizing cultural differences." Seven of the nine strongly disagreed with the statement, "Regardless of cultural differences, all children learn from the same teaching method" and "Regardless of cultural differences, using the same reading materials is an effective way to ensure equal access to all students in the classroom" while the balance disagreed. These statements reflect their beliefs and methods which support their use of culturally responsive teaching practices.

While all of the participants in this study were identified because they use culturally responsive teaching practices, over two thirds of them shared that they understood that it is a journey, and that they are in various stages of that journey. Also, in order to recognize qualities about yourself, you have to be reflective. Two participants mentioned professional experiences

in which reflection was a component. This helped them to use more culturally responsive teaching practices and also helped them to be continually reflective.

Participant A noted that reflection was a major component in her education and there was a significant amount of journaling. She stated that "if you don't give yourself the time to be reflective on what you have done, you're never going to be a strong culturally responsive teacher because you're not looking at all of the moments informing your viewpoint." She also stated that what has helped her is having "honest and real conversations with your students that are age appropriate." This has led her to have several very small a-ha moments that have helped her to realize other people's viewpoints and life experiences. She also shared that this has happened over time, more through "authentic interactions with students and not skirting hard issues and hard questions, but addressing them and trying to create an environment in which students feel okay to respond."

Participant F shared that she felt she really began this journey about 10 years ago through reading books on her own. "It kind of started forming in my brain and I started reading and hearing stories and getting the real history of the United States." She stated, "I just think you should always be looking at yourself and your teaching and your practice. As soon as you stop, you are done." This idea of an evolving process was displayed in Participant G's responses as well. His teaching just sort of evolved to "not teaching the same way, not just year after year, but at times it's like period by period….Once I began to see the impact that it had on the kids….I was like, hey I'm on the right track here." He stated that because of that impact that he saw and heard from students and from parents, that it increased his desire to keep doing the difficult work. The recognition of white privilege has allowed him to put the different pieces of the puzzle in a more coherent way, which has been emergent. While he did this before, he didn't have the data or the research or the philosophy behind it.

Participant B stated that it wasn't until she read *Waking Up White* that she truly had a moment of realization. As she discussed her pedagogy and interactions with students, she reflected on times when she did not act in a way that she felt was most culturally responsive. "I feel like I am not there yet even though I feel like I know, I feel like cerebrally I am there. I'm not really there." This is another example of a participant articulating and understanding that it is a journey. She also stated that she started off pretty open minded but that many stars had to line up for her to get where she is today.

Participant E shared that it was something that she had always thought about and she would have different epiphanies throughout her life about how people of different races are treated and how they interact with one another. She also shared that over her 27 years of teaching, she has gone through phases and has had transformational moments, and pivotal moments that have made her want to champion the cause. She also shared that one of the first steps is just "recognizing how much you don't know, which is very humbling. " Participant D shared a similar belief in that in order to be a culturally responsive teacher, you have to be okay with being a work in progress and knowing that sometimes you are going to be wrong, but you have to be willing to try, "the moment you think you've got it all, it comes back and bites you in the butt."

Participant I attended a pretty liberal graduate school, but shares how her views continue to evolve. "I felt pretty good about my views on race and accommodating for all of my students but when I got into the classroom I began to see I wasn't even halfway there yet." She also stated that while she can't change that she is White or that most of the teachers her students have are white, she does try to be aware of how difficult it would be to always be in the minority, and that humbled her. She shared that initially, she thought, "I got this. I'm great. I'm super progressive, and then she was like, oh, I could probably learn more." As several participants shared that this experience is a journey, one participant shared that "recognizing your white privilege and doing something about it, and continuing to do something about it, is a process. It is not inherent."

Critical Race Theory Themes

Permanence of Racism

The first tenet is the permanence of racism, and is just that; racism has always existed and will always be present in the United States. It may be explicit and easy to see, yet it may also be implicit and hard to recognize or discern. Another component in the permanence of racism is that systems and structures, including schools, support the status quo and that racism is so ingrained in our culture that we don't even see it. Only two participants really brought this tenet to light in the interview process, but it also presented in the CoBRAS data in Table 7. Participant B spoke of a television show and of a commercial that reminds her that racism is still so prevalent. She shared when she watched *This is Us* and the African American daughter of Randall, one of the main characters, was the lead in her school play *Snow White.* The scene

shows the audience members laughing at the idea of an African American Snow White while Randall is just sitting there. The commercial she shared depicted the different ways in which African American parents speak to their children in hopes to help them navigate the world a bit better. It is the confusion she feels that is present between recognizing White privilege and being called racist, and that the ideas behind both were to help Whites to recognize that African Americans have a different experience, and how difficult that can be for some people.

Participant C stated that part of the reason teachers don't use these practices is a fear of being wrong or a fear of making a mistake. "I think it is really liberating to say. 'I live in a racist culture and I have internalized that racism.'" Participant C also shared how she perceives her African American students as living in "a highly racist culture" and she also feels that the educational system is charged with solving problems that are far greater than what can be done in schools. "We are supposed to level the playing field in a world of institutional classism and racism. And we aren't winning because we don't have the institutional power we need to make those changes."

Whiteness as Property

As teachers work to create culturally responsive environments and use those practices, there are difficulties, which represents the tenet of Whiteness as Property. This tenet includes multiple meanings of "property," including actual physical property, intellectual property, and access as property. This tenet is included as it may help to examine the resources teachers state that they use in their culturally responsive classrooms. Teachers, particularly those at the secondary level, articulated that the traditional materials are not culturally responsive. Participant C said, "You need literature that is a mirror. You need to see yourself in text. That's really important." One participant, an American Government teacher, remarked that the course is about White males given that the presidents, Supreme Court justices, and legislators are overwhelmingly White. Five of the participants referenced that there are shortcoming in our text and do not include contributions of people of color. Participant H stated that the list provided in the materials of philosophers to study included only White people. When a student asked if there were black philosophers he could study, she collaborated with him to find a person to study. She also referenced that there are specific courses that are less inclusive based on the content. When she describes these offerings to her students, she states to the students, "So, you have Cultural Studies, where you read various authors from different cultures, different races, and different

genders. There's Brit Lit, which is the exact opposite. It's all the dead white guys." Another participant mentioned that she will catch herself giving examples in class that she realizes are based on her race and on her experiences.

That is one example of what several other participants stated in that they have to seek out supplementary resources to meet the needs of the diverse student population. As a curriculum director, I understand that this is a missing component for us at the district level and that through this research, more inclusive material will be provided for our teachers. While we state in our materials adoption process that diversity and inclusivity will be considered, it is only now that I am truly understanding what that means. Participant I was "active in bringing in that supplemental material to show role models for young women and people of color, people that they can look up to and they can see that people that look like them have made contributions even if they have not been in that highest office yet." Another example was not within the curriculum specifically, but to be cognizant of calling the break in December "Winter Break" as opposed to "Christmas Break" and not expecting that your experiences are theirs. Participant D shared that she brought in an article about the first Muslim American woman to be elected to the Minnesota local government. She "want[ed] to make sure that they get to see they are leaders too and that there is nothing that they can't do. Because I can't even imagine what that would be like to feel that everybody who's telling me what to do in life, nobody looks like me telling me to do it."

One participant did state that the materials in high school English language arts courses allow for 'choice books,' which sufficiently provides a wide range of perspectives to meet the needs and interests of the students. Participant C stated that she perceives "African American students as living in a highly racist culture and maybe not always seeing themselves in the curriculum so I try any way that I can to make that visible [and] to get them materials that testify to their existence to push back against some whitewashing of the curriculum." It plays a role for her in the types of curriculum she designs for students. "I'm trying to represent myriad voices, myriad perspectives. Again, oftentimes trying to give students that meta-discourse, that language to talk about these sorts of issues." During the follow up interview, I was able to see this myriad of perspectives by visiting her room and seeing the representations of diversity displayed throughout her room. Participant G also introduced the idea of denied history to his students as

they studied "ancient world history and Africa and how Africa had this tremendous history that had essentially been erased or was not told."

Another component of whiteness as property noted by one participant was the school system and the school itself. He noted that schools are set up with certain cultural norms and that they are middle class White norms. He also shared that some non-white students have adopted these norms and can be extraordinarily successful, however, for other students, it is difficult. In looking at pictures displayed in the hallways of the high school in which he teaches, yearly the top 10 students are recognized and over the course of the past 10 years he could see two students of color. "Somehow whatever it is we're measuring and naming student success seems to have an exclusionary effect." Participant F felt that standardized tests were a form of property as well. She described these assessments as "another thing being set up by white men to allow white children to be successful and for people of color to be left behind. The questions and the passages…who has background knowledge with a lot of those passages? White kids."

Participant C also mentioned that one of the reasons why teachers may not embrace these practices is the [lack of] ability to find the resources one needs. Participant E also mentioned that there may not be an awareness of the some of the resources teachers could use. Participant G stated that history textbooks are written in a way "to be accepted, so it doesn't tell an accurate story of the issues, and it's not until you start to go outside of those books to look for other materials – powerful things…that really really hits these things home and they're very impactful." Participant H stated that it is frustrating to try to teach African American history because she doesn't know it or feel like she has the tools because we do not currently have textbooks that have been written from that perspective.

Interest Convergence

Interest convergence, the third tenet, considers that laws or decisions that support equality for African Americans only because they were in the best interest of Whites. Interest convergence only came up in one of the questions asked, which was, "Would the closing of the achievement gap be desired if it wasn't measured on our report card?" Two thirds of the participants stated that it would not and provided a variety of reasons. Some feel that students have just become numbers. Another participant felt that while it has shone a light on the disconnect in education, if it wasn't measured that everyone would take the easier road. Another person stated that we wouldn't because of the implicit bias we have. Two teachers felt that it

would still matter because teachers are not motivated by test scores because that is not why teachers teach. Another participant stated that she "hoped the fact that it was a report card category wouldn't be the drive behind wanting all students to be successful." Another participant felt that these measurements haven't led us to the kinds of outcomes that we want and that teachers are tasked with leveling the playing field when there are so many components that go into student achievement scores.

Critique of Liberalism

The critique of liberalism includes color-blindness, neutrality of the law, and the myth of meritocracy. No participants' answers represented neutrality of the law. In reflecting on how they came to recognize their privilege, several mentioned why some teachers don't, which included the myth of meritocracy. Participant I, E, and B all specifically referenced the "pulling myself up by my bootstraps" mentality that Whites may have. Participant H referenced the American Dream and the belief that "anybody can make anything happen for themselves. What people fail to realize, she stated, is that even if Whites have struggles, they are not the same struggles African Americans face."

One question that was asked specifically was about being color-blind, and how to approach teachers who took that approach to their craft. Seven of the nine stated that it was impossible, with four participants stating that it invalidated who people are and their background. Three stated that color is everywhere. Some of the powerful statements the participants shared included Participant A, who said, "a colorblind approach to teaching is as mythical as a unicorn. When people say they are colorblind in their teaching, they are saying they are colorblind to the minority." One participant went on to say that that belief "comes out of a delusional privilege position."

Table 8: CoBRAS Data

	Statement									Average
1	Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich.	1	1	1	2	2	2	1	4	1.75
2	Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of healthcare or daycare) that people receive in the U.S.	1	1	1	2	3	1	1	3	1.63
6	Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not.	1	1	2	2	3	2	5	4	2.5
8	Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	3	1.25
12	White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
15	White people are more to blame for racial discrimination in the U.S. than racial and ethnic minorities.	4	2	2	1	2	1	1	4	2.13
20	Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
3	It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
4	Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.	3	1		2	2	1	1	3	1.86
9	White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color their skin.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
13	Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S.	2	2	4	4	5	6	1	2	3.25
14	English should be the only official language in the U.S.	1	4	4	4	3	2	1	1	2.5
16	Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.	2	1	2	2	2	1	1	2	1.63
18	Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.	1	1	1	1	1	2	1	2	1.25
5	Racism is a major problem in the U.S.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1

7	Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
10	Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension.	1	1	1	2	1	1	1	2	1.25
11	It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.	1	1	1	2	1	3	1	1	1.38
17	It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
19	Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1
	Average Per Respondent	1.35	1.25	1.47	1.65	1.7	1.55	1.2	1.95	

Racial Privilege - 1.60

Institutional Discrimination - 1.78

Blantant Racial Issues 1.105

Eight of the nine participants completed the CoBRAS survey. As it was anonymous, I was unable to determine who did not complete this component of the research. CoBRAs was used because it has been used for decades and I felt that using a vetted survey in this process would be beneficial in supporting my data collection. As the name states, it is designated to measure color-blind racial attitudes. While I created a survey to identify teachers that used culturally responsive teaching practices, I felt that the results from this survey would help to triangulate the data through an additional quantitative component as well as support and articulate some of the tenets of Critical Race Theory. Initially, I thought that this would possibly be a survey that I could use to identify teachers, however I did not choose to do so for two reasons. One, it measured only beliefs, which may not result in culturally responsive teaching practices, and secondly, because it was fairly direct about a very sensitive topic. Because of the sensitivity of the topic, I felt that it wasn't a good entre or perhaps would not be well received by the greater community.

I organized the results of the survey into the three factors, which are Unawareness of Racial Privilege, Institutional Discrimination, and Blatant Racial Issues. The final component, the Blatant Racial Issues, ties most closely to the Permanence of Racism tenet in Critical Race Theory. In four of the six questions, the respondents all gave the answers that earned a "1,"

which is considered to represent having the lowest color-blind racial attitude. Racial Privilege, which would tie most closely to the recognition of white privilege, had an average of 1.6. While all respondents strongly agreed with the following two statements – "White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin," and "Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison," not all agreed that "Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not" as the average of the latter statement was a 2.5. Another statement in that category, "Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich" had an average of 1.75 with all respondents strongly disagreeing or disagreeing with only one person disagreeing. This statement supports the Critical Race Theory tenet of the myth of meritocracy in that these participants believe that there is more to success than just working hard. There are some privileges that some have that enable that success.

The averages of each of the groups was under two, which means that overall, respondents were in between strongly agree or agree on answers or strongly disagree or disagree on other answers – all positives in their racial attitudes. All individual averages were also under two, with the highest being 1.95.

Additional Analysis

As previously mentioned, there were unforeseen benefits to interviewing the participants a second time included a renewed sense of purpose for me and that several teachers shared work they were doing around this topic. For example, Participant H brought a book that she was going to have her students read in her AP Literature class in the coming school year. She had read the book and recognized themes in it that she felt would resonate with her students. Another teacher shared three articles on race that she used in her classroom and had books displayed with students of color and authors of color clearly displayed. In the first round, I had traveled to four teacher classrooms and in the second round I traveled to six. One teacher, participant C, specifically suggested that I come to her classroom to see how it was displayed and how it reflected the culture of her students. While I apologized for having to interview them again, several stated that they would be happy to be interviewed again or would be open to furthering the discussion with me in a less formal sense. Their passion was evident in continuing to address this issue. One participant recognized that bringing forth the idea of white privilege and addressing it to promote change was an overwhelming task. "We as individuals…we can make a

dent. You are making a dent through this work, I am making a dent. That is all we can do. Each of us can try to make a dent."

Several of the teachers shared with me after the interview their passion for this work and how excited they were that I was doing something such as this. They offered me the best of luck and many were interested in reading this dissertation. While my initial goal was to complete my survey earlier than February, it did prove relevant to one participant. Given that February is Black History Month, after completing the survey she reflected on whether or not she was doing enough to meet the needs of all of her students. She then further evolved her activity and research project and was met with great enthusiasm from both students and families of this project.

As Audre Lorde states at the opening of this chapter, it is not for persons of color to address the issue of racism or equity alone. It is up to Whites to recognize ways in which white privilege and other advantages have created opportunities for Whites at the expense of others. It is then the responsibility of Whites to take action on correcting those inequities. We cannot be passive in thinking that this gap is attributed to experiences or decisions that people of color have made unilaterally and completely by choice. Whites have to understand how institutional these inequities are and how they have to be a large part of the solution.

Summary

In this chapter, an introduction was given that explained how the participants that were interviewed were chosen and what the goal of the research was. Also provided was an overview of the process that I used to analyze my data, in which I coded the interview questions and discovered themes that supported the research question. Demographic data of the participants was included.

Results from the interview questions revealed several themes that addressed the research question and tied to the theoretical framework. These themes included personal experiences, learning opportunities, and the understanding that this realization and the use of responsive practices is a journey. Also apparent in this research are specific tenets of critical race theory, which include the permanence or racism, whiteness as property, and the critique of liberalism. Quantitative data, including the CoBRAS survey and the characteristics of culturally responsive teaching were also analyzed in this chapter. In the following chapter, I will provide the summary of my findings, conclusions, and implications for further research.

Chapter Five – Conclusions, Discussion, and Suggestions for Further Research

"It would be unfair to assert that teachers are fully responsible for such racial inequality in education or that they are solely responsible for correcting it"

- Nora Hyland (2008 p. 429)

Introduction

In the previous chapter, I provided an overview of the timeline, process, and explanation of the tools used and a presentation and analysis of the qualitative and quantitative data that was reported. Chapter Five provides background information on why I conducted this research. Also included is a discussion of the findings, implications for practice, and recommendations for further research, conclusions, and my closing thoughts. The purpose of the later sections is to provide further understanding of teachers who have recognized their white privilege, what were the events or experiences that led them to recognize this, and in what ways that has supported their use of culturally responsive teaching practices. This is in light of the tenets of Critical Race Theory that I felt would be most represented in their answers around how they have gotten to this place in their belief system and in their practices.

The Why

The decision to focus on white privilege in this descriptive case study was truly a journey for me. I must admit I had several ideas of what my area of focus was to be and that is reflected in my doctoral coursework. Every paper had a different focus. As a curriculum director, the use of standards intrigued me. As a person that facilitated the implementation of digital content, devices to our students, and instructional practices that supported personalization, and the integration of technology, the impact that had on education intrigued me. Through a conversation with a colleague, I was advised to pick a topic that mattered to me. I feel as though I couldn't have picked a better topic. In fact, as one professor shared when we had to choose books to write a chapter on to create a collaborative book, sometimes the book picks you. I truly feel like the topic picked me.

Teacher efficacy was something that mattered to me, but it was more than that. It was specific to populations of students that didn't look like the teachers teaching them. In reading the history on the ways in which African Americans were discriminated against, I learned so many more institutional ways in which that discrimination occurred that I had not even realized. And I was a history teacher! This led me to more closely observing interactions between

teachers and students and to be more attentive in listening to how educators spoke about specific students or groups of students. Around this time, I also had an opportunity to hear Debby Irving speak. In turn, I read her book. Our students of color are underachieving, and yes, there are non-educational reasons why, which could be an entirely different dissertation. But as a former principal had shared with the staff – the focus should be on what we could do in the classroom to help students achieve. She knew there were barriers or hurdles outside of the classroom, but teachers cannot use those as excuses to explain why their students do not achieve and grow. This was why this research chose to focus on teachers that were employing sound research-based instructional practices that did meet the needs of students of color. My focus was not the practices as much as it was how teachers came to use these practices, which was in part was through the recognition and understanding of white privilege.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to understand how teachers came to recognize their white privilege and their use of use of culturally responsive teaching practices. As stated earlier, nationally and in this setting, the demographics of students is becoming more diverse and the teacher demographic is remaining largely White. The achievement gap, as measured by state and national assessments is not closing, and other markers, which include discipline, identification of students needing special education services, and the identification of students needing gifted services is negatively disproportionate toward African American students. Other research also suggests that the use of these practices improves student motivation and engagement. I examined the practices that were affective with African American students and a significantly affective practice is culturally responsive teaching. There are several slightly different names for these practices, but through the literature review, I determined that culturally responsive teaching best represented my focus.

I identified teachers using a survey that I had developed that asked them to rate their level of agreement with 22 statements. These statements represented culturally responsive teaching practices, and the rating were from 1-6 with the highest score possible being a 132. This survey was sent to all staff in this suburban district for two reasons. One reason was that in the research I had conducted, I did not find studies that examined teachers from every level. Another reason was because I was concerned that I would not get the number of teachers needed to be able to conduct the research desired. As an administrator in the district, I was aware of the number of

surveys that are given to teachers and was concerned that survey fatigue would contribute to a lack of responses. I was quite surprised when over 135 people completed the survey and over 70 of those expressed a willingness to be interviewed. Based on the results of the Likert-scale questions, I determined that I would interview 11 people. These teachers scored between a 122-111. The next highest score was a 108 and there were several teachers that had earned that score. I chose to have my criteria be a 111 or higher because of this natural break in the score. I felt that while this would increase the interviewee pool substantially, I felt that the number of participants would be sufficient and I also felt that those that scored that low may not actually exemplify the beliefs or practices I was trying to find.

While 11 teachers were selected, only nine chose to participate in the interview component. The teachers interviewed represented elementary, middle, and high school teachers. Three were elementary teachers, two were middle school teachers, and four were high school teachers. Two of them had been teaching for less than five years, three had been teaching between 11-15 years, and four had over 16 years' experience. Eight of the participants were female and one was male.

Primarily qualitative data through the use of interview questions with some quantitative data, through survey and interview questions, including the CoBRAS survey were collected to answer the following questions:

- *How do teachers learn about their own White privilege and how does that contribute to their use of culturally responsive pedagogy?*

Every interview was transcribed, and the participants had an opportunity to provide feedback. I then used an excel template that had been developed in one of our classes and cut and pasted each answer into it with one question per tab. Then I read every question and looked for themes from answers of those specific questions. This was all done electronically. Next I identified those themes on the bottom of the excel sheet and then coded each question. As I read through the first set of questions, I realized I needed to ask the participants additional questions, and all of them agreed. I followed the same process as I had done before. As I was coding all of the questions, I started seeing larger themes and recognizing answers that aligned with Critical Race Theory. I then started re-reading and re-coding the answers. I first attempted to do this electronically, but found it too difficult to manage. I then printed off all of the responses by question. Having identified the themes of personal experience, learning opportunities, and

journey, as well as the three tenets of CRT. I then highlighted each theme or tenet in a different color and wrote my findings theme by theme. This was much more effective but very labor intensive. I attempted to read for more than one theme at a time but that was unsuccessful. I did also notice that I would have to go back and re-code after missing something that should have been coded after re-reading.

Findings

Previous research has identified culturally responsive teaching practices, how White privilege influences teachers in the classroom, and has measured the effectiveness of professional development opportunities in relation to the use of these practices. What was missing was an examination of suburban schools, as the research I discovered focused on urban settings. Other research had a more specific focus as the studies were about a particular building, a particular class, or a particular content area. One of the goals of this research was to be broader in scope and to examine it from a district perspective. The overall goal of my study was to understand how teachers who use culturally responsive teaching practices came to use them and how they learned to recognize their White privilege. Through interviewing nine teachers, three themes emerged to answer my research question. Those themes were personal experiences with people of color, learning opportunities, and that this is an ongoing journey.

Almost every participant shared a story about a personal experience with a person of color and how that influenced them to reflect upon themselves and take a deeper look into how they viewed the world, how others viewed them as well as how others viewed people of color. The participants gave examples, many from a young age, of how they had befriended a person of color and began learning about how their experiences were different. Many of the participants shared that this was a requirement to truly understand the White privilege that they had. These personal connections enabled frank conversations that helped the participants have a greater understanding of the ways in which persons of color were treated.

Participants also mentioned professional learning opportunities that helped them to recognize their white privilege. Two mentioned the book *Waking Up White* specifically and several others mentioned documentaries or other books and resources. While many of the teachers had classes on multiculturalism, overwhelmingly these teachers did not have specific training on recognizing white privilege or on culturally responsive teaching practices specifically. Two of the teachers who had gone to college in the 1980s specified that there were

not any courses that addressed students of color. While others mentioned that there were courses about various cultures, it was approached in a very theory-based way with no practical applications as a part of it.

A fascinating component of this research was in listening to the participants explain their journey, and almost all of them recognized that they were on one. From one participant stating that she is only there cerebrally and has a long way to go, others stated that they thought they knew so much only to realize they may not even be half-way there. As diverse students continue to enter their classrooms, they too know that it is about responding to the specific students that are in front of them. It is not something that is learned and never refined. Most of the participants talked about how they have had epiphanies along the way and how they are reflective in their practices.

Implications for Practice

As our student demographic continues to become more diverse, our teaching demographics remain largely White. Although research shows that teachers of color have positive impacts on students of color, the teaching population isn't changing quickly enough for us to wait for there to be more teachers of color to support our students. The implications for practices could be extremely substantial. This information could help districts hire teachers who have the characteristics of culturally responsive teachers and guide professional development so current teachers will be able to grow to understand and utilize these practices. What is necessary is that teachers have to recognize their white privilege first. For the teachers in this study, overwhelmingly they had experiences with people of color who had influenced the way they saw the world and caused them to become more reflective.

This could impact the hiring process to ask specifically about interactions or experiences candidates have had with people unlike themselves. The CoBRAS survey or a survey similar to the one that was given in this study to identify teachers could be very beneficial in the selection process of educators. Specific questions could also be asked in the interview process that are similar to ones in this study that are more closely tied to how the candidate is reflective in his or her practices as well as specific questions that address how he or she utilizes a variety of resources to meet student needs and how he or she differentiates instruction based on the individual need of the students.

While some of the participants stated that they had specific coursework on culturally responsive teaching practices, it appears from this study that the more important component of the coursework is more on their belief systems as well as on the continuous reflection on why a teacher is doing what he or she is doing. Participants mentioned specific books and documentaries that helped them to better recognize the privileges they had and these caused them to shift their practices. It would be important for those providing professional development to not jump to the use of the practices, but to start with the foundation of privilege. This is a very sensitive topic and will at times be difficult. As the participants stated that the color-blind approach was dated and actually impossible, it would be important to address this tension since many teachers still feel that taking a color-blind approach is equitable.

Another implication is on materials purchased by local boards of education. Overwhelmingly, the teachers in this study stated that there are not enough materials that show the content from multiple perspectives. While one participant, a high school English language arts teacher, felt that there was a wealth of choice books for students, the other participants felt that they had to research on their own to find books or resources that represented students in their classroom. While it may never be perfect, it is the role of this particular district to determine the materials teachers use. There is a detailed process in which teacher teams review the standards, write courses of study, and select materials. These materials are then adopted by the Board of Education with the expectation that all teachers will use them. This one-size-fits-all approach may need to be revisited. The greater understanding of the diverse needs of our students and the materials needed for teachers to be able to teach in a more culturally responsive way has to be a larger focus when selecting materials.

Suggestions for Further Research

The student population in this suburb and across the country continues to become more diverse while our teaching population does not. The majority of the teaching staff are White and middle class, and the culture of the school and district largely reflect those values. In recognizing the need for culturally responsive teachers, I started my research on this topic only to discover an understanding was required for teachers to teach in this way. That understanding, or recognition, was that of a teacher's own culture and a part of that is their white privilege.

Suggestions for further research include examining if high school teachers are more culturally responsive than elementary teachers and, if so, what may be the reason. Over half of

the initially selected participants were high school teachers. While none of the high school teachers interviewed stated that specific coursework helped them to understand their privilege or these practices, what qualities or experiences do these teachers have that make them want to go into secondary education specifically?

Several research studies outlined in the literature review studied teacher preparatory programs and in-services focused on multicultural education. There is growing research on addressing white privilege within these environments. The book *Waking Up White* was referenced by two of the participants and was a significant component to my learning and a factor in determining my research study. Research on the impact that this book has through a before-and-after book study and subsequent professional development may be worth researching.

The statement that scored the highest in the CoBRAS survey was "Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S" as it scored a 3.5. This district has a significant English learner population. While the focus for this study was primarily on African American students, it would be worth examining the beliefs of teachers in terms of immigrants and non-English speakers. It appears that this group of participants work diligently to be culturally responsive to those that are from this country, but it is not as reflective for those that are not born here. Examining the reasons why this exists and in what ways it could be minimized would help to contribute to the ways in which we can learn to support the growing diversity of our learners.

Some of the participants referenced coursework as an influence to understanding their white privilege and their place in the world. The two teachers who have been teaching less than five years and one teacher that had been teaching 11-15 years referenced specific coursework that supported teaching in a culturally responsive way. Examining policies on what is taught to pre-service teachers and following them over the course of their first five years to see how many of these practices they end up employing would be a significant contribution to research. Aligning specific university's work with the types of students and the types of beliefs districts want in terms of belief systems like those reflected in culturally responsive pedagogy could help provide a pipeline to school district. It is important that teachers take courses or participate in learning opportunities on recognizing diversity and privilege. This is where it all begins. If they have that knowledge, they will inherently begin the journey of using those practices as they learn how to relate to their students because they know who they are.

Conclusions

There continues to be an achievement gap between our White and African American students. Additionally, the number of suspensions, students receiving special education services, and students receiving gifted services continues to be disproportionate. Also, as the student population continues to become more diverse, it appears that the teaching staffs remain overwhelmingly White. Through examining how White teachers come to recognize their White privilege and are therefore more apt to employ practices that met the needs of their diverse learners, several themes were discovered that can both help how we guide professional development as well as our hiring practices. These themes included personal experiences with people of color, learning opportunities, and also the understanding that the recognition of their privilege and the use of culturally responsive practices is an ongoing journey. The participants also recognized how Whiteness as Property was represented in their schools and classrooms in terms of resources and achievement and how they worked against that tenet. The participants also articulated how the color-blind approach is not an effective way in which to educate students, which was formerly thought of as an appropriate response to students of color.

The findings of this study suggest that further investigation of the questions that we ask as we hire teachers is important: as perhaps asking about personal experiences with persons of color would help us to hire and retain teachers who were more apt to recognize white privilege and to use culturally responsive teaching practices. Other further investigations include specific book studies, what is taught to pre-service teachers in terms of recognizing white privilege and how that influences their pedagogy and belief system, and how immigrants and English learners are folded into this work.

Closing Thoughts

This research has provided me an opportunity to learn from teachers in this district and to have a renewed sense of faith about what teachers are doing in our classrooms every day for students of color. As a curriculum director, it has caused me to more closely evaluate how and what materials we purchase for our teachers that are designed to meet the needs of all students. We have a lot of work to do to provide those curriculum materials to teachers and to students. I have a more critical understanding of what it means to do research and have grown in my understanding of research-based practices that support student learning. This is an area of

growth for our district and for districts nationwide and this research is just the beginning of my efforts to more fully support teachers and students of color.

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Appendix A

Survey Questions

Thank you for taking a few minutes to complete this survey as part of this research study. Follow up interviews will be given to those that match the criteria and express interest in being part of the interview process.

1. What grade levels do you teach? (Please mark all that apply)
    a. PreK – 2
    b. 3 – 5
    c. 6 – 8
    d. 9 – 12

2. How many years have you been teaching?
    a. 0-5 years
    b. 6-10 years
    c. 11-15 years
    d. 16 or more years

3. Please specify your ethnicity:
    a. African American
    b. Asian/ Pacific Islander
    c. Hispanic or Latino
    d. Native American or American Indian
    e. White
    f. Other

4. What content areas do you teach? (Please mark all that apply)
    a. Art
    b. Business
    c. English language arts
    d. Mathematics
    e. Music
    f. Physical Education/Health
    g. Reading
    h. Science/Engineering
    i. Social Studies
    j. Special Education
    k. World Language
    l. Other

Rate the following using the scale from 1-6.

1	2	3	4	5	6
Strongly Disagree	Disagree	Somewhat Disagree	Somewhat Agree	Agree	Strongly Agree

5. I explain new concepts using examples that are taken from my students' everyday lives.
6. I revise instructional materials to better reflect the cultures of my students.
7. A color-blind approach to teaching is effective for ensuring respect for all culturally diverse students.
8. Students will develop an appreciation for their culture when they are taught about the contributions their culture has made over time.
9. There is a strong connection between my own culture and the way I teach.
10. Regardless of cultural differences, all children learn from the same teaching method.
11. I critically examine the curriculum to determine whether it reinforces negative cultural stereotypes.
12. There is a mismatch between my students' home culture and the school culture.
13. I encourage my students to question authority.
14. Regardless of cultural differences, using the same reading materials is an effective way to ensure equal access for all students in the classroom.
15. Culturally responsive practice undermines the national unity by emphasizing cultural differences.
16. Encouraging respect for cultural diversity is essential for creating an inclusive classroom environment.
17. My classroom environment has displays that reflect a variety of cultures.
18. Acknowledging the ways that the school culture is different from my students' home culture will minimize the likelihood of discipline problems.
19. Understanding the communication preferences of my students will decrease the likelihood of student – teacher communication problems.
20. I identify ways that the school culture is different from my students' home culture
21. Students' self-esteem can be enhanced when their cultural background is valued by the teacher.
22. Culturally responsive practice is essential for creating an inclusive classroom environment.
23. My teaching approach varies in ways which accommodate the cultural differences in my classroom, including student groups and students helping each other.
24. Using culturally familiar examples will make learning new concepts easier.
25. I teach students about their cultures' contributions to the subject(s) I teach.
26. I make students aware of social and political issues.
27. Explanations or additional information from the responses above:
28. Would you be willing to participate in a follow up interview if you are selected?*
    a. Yes
    b. No

*If yes, survey respondents would then be prompted to answer the next question. If no, the survey will conclude.

29. Please provide your contact information (full name and email address) below. You will be contacted no later than March 7th if you are selected for an interview.

Appendix B

COLOR-BLIND RACIAL ATTITUDES SCALE (CoBRAS)

Directions. The following is a set of questions that deal with social issues in the United States (U.S.). Using the 6-point scale, please give your honest rating about the degree to which you personally agree or disagree with each statement. Please be as open and honest as you can; there are no right or wrong answers.

1 2 3 4 5 6

Strongly Disagree Strongly Agree

1. ____ Everyone who works hard, no matter what race they are, has an equal chance to become rich.

2. **____ Race plays a major role in the type of social services (such as type of healthcare or daycare) that people receive in the U.S**.

3. ____ It is important that people begin to think of themselves as American and not African American, Mexican American or Italian American.

4. **____ Due to racial discrimination, programs such as affirmative action are necessary to help create equality.**

5. **____ Racism is a major problem in the U.S.**

6. **____ Race is very important in determining who is successful and who is not.**

7. ____ Racism may have been a problem in the past, but it is not an important problem today.

8. **____ Racial and ethnic minorities do not have the same opportunities as White people in the U.S.**

9. ____ White people in the U.S. are discriminated against because of the color their skin.

10. ____ Talking about racial issues causes unnecessary tension.

11. **____ It is important for political leaders to talk about racism to help work through or solve society's problems.**

12. **____ White people in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.**

13. ____ Immigrants should try to fit into the culture and adopt the values of the U.S.

14. ____ English should be the only official language in the U.S.

15. ____ **White people are more to blame for racial discrimination in the U.S. than racial and ethnic minorities.**

16. ____ Social policies, such as affirmative action, discriminate unfairly against White people.

17. ____ **It is important for public schools to teach about the history and contributions of racial and ethnic minorities.**

18. ____ Racial and ethnic minorities in the U.S. have certain advantages because of the color of their skin.

19. ____ Racial problems in the U.S. are rare, isolated situations.

20. ____ **Race plays an important role in who gets sent to prison.**

Items in bold will be reverse scored.

Appendix C
Interview Questions

Thank you for your willingness to participate in this interview. The purpose of this interview is to understand how you came to use culturally responsive teaching strategies. I have prepared several questions regarding your background, coursework, and experiences as well as questions on your pedagogical beliefs and how those came to be.

1. Tell me about your background. Where did you grow up and where did you attend college?

2. Several teachers have said that there is a moment in their lives when they first thought about their race and others' races. Can you think of your first recollection of your race and/or races different than yours?

3. What key individuals influenced your views on race?

4. How would you define white privilege, and how have you come to recognize that it exists?

5. What role do you feel white privilege plays in the classroom, if any?

6. Explain what the phrase *culturally responsive teaching* means to you.

7. What experiences or learning opportunities led you to use culturally responsive teaching strategies in your classroom?

8. What prevents teachers from using culturally responsive teaching strategies in the classroom?

9. How can teachers become more aware and prepared to teach from a culturally responsive pedagogy?