CHARACTERISTICS OF PRESERVICE TEACHERS LEARNING
PARENT INVOLVEMENT PRACTICES

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This study was conducted with the goal of providing insight to the effect of a particular teacher education program on preservice teachers learning about parent involvement practices. Demographics of preservice teachers were correlated with changes in knowledge about six types of parent involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, advocacy and decision making, and collaborating with the community. Multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers were also correlated with changes in knowledge about parent involvement dimensions. Preservice teachers’ parent involvement skill levels and their post-knowledge about parent involvement were also correlated.

Participants in this study were 78 undergraduate teacher candidates enrolled in a family, school, and community resources course. The course was delivered 100% online.

The data from this study was collected through pre- and post-knowledge assessments, a demographic survey of participants, a multicultural teaching concerns survey, and an essay written by preservice teacher participants in response to a case study dilemma concerning a new teacher.

The research used experimental and correlation research designs which employed mixed methods to analyze data. Repeated-measures ANOVA was used to analyze data. Five of the 22 significant findings from this study resulted from knowledge changes (pretest/posttest) made by preservice teachers learning about parent
involvement through online curriculum modules. Results also demonstrated a significant interaction between participants' age/parental status with knowledge changes. One significant finding resulted from the correlation between multicultural teaching concern scores and knowledge changes about advocacy and decision making. Moreover, a significant correlation was found between parent involvement skills and post-knowledge about volunteering.
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CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

The quest for teacher education that supports schools and teachers in encouraging parent involvement is an enticing challenge. Even in a time of skepticism about new educational practices, this challenge intrigues educators and policy-makers. The dearth of curriculum regarding family involvement available for preservice teachers presents an additional concern. Researchers, educators, practitioners, and policy makers are searching for the curricular and instructional approaches that will best promote the teacher’s ability to interact and partner with parents and family members at school. Their ability to do so could make an appreciable difference for students.

Background of the Study

Several factors have contributed to the focus on parent and family involvement in American schools. First of all, public schools are facing a federal accountability movement that is unparalleled in the history of the United States. The past two decades have seen a tremendous increase in the amount of government influence in areas of policy that were once relegated to states or to independent school districts under local control. Federal accountability measures are levered by funding which drives the need for student achievement on high-stakes tests that are used to measure the effectiveness of public schools (Conley, 2003). In these times of heightened scrutiny, practices that are believed to improve student achievement are being closely examined. Parent involvement is surely one of these practices.

Contemporary research continues to point toward the effectiveness of family
involvement on the success of American students. According to Henderson and Mapp (2002), the evidence can no longer be ignored. When parents are involved with their children’s education at home, children are more successful at school. John Dewey pointed to this possibility in 1936 when he experimented with school organization, administration, instruction, and curriculum in a community–centered school called a laboratory school. In this setting, teachers, parents, and students planned school programs and curriculum together to best integrate student interests with community values and societal needs (Shannon, 1951). Thus, family involvement is not a novel concept, but perhaps it is an idea whose time has come.

The current practice of parent involvement is complicated, however, by student populations that are growing more ethnically diverse while the teaching force is remaining predominately White (US Department of Education, 2005). Public schools in 1972 reported only 22% of their enrollment as racial or ethnic minorities, while public schools in 2005 reported their racial and ethnic minority enrollment at 42% of their student populations (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007). Meanwhile, the teaching profession has maintained its Whiteness. The US Department of Education (2005) reported that 86.8% of public school teachers in 1994 were White compared to 83.3% in 2004. This propensity toward dissimilar backgrounds coupled with the move toward higher accountability measures has created a highly visible achievement gap showing many minority students struggling. To further complicate matters, teachers and students may live in worlds so different that the crossroad is difficult to find. Historically, teachers lived in the neighborhoods and communities where they taught. However, in many cases, this is no longer true (Johnson, 2001). Understanding the values and
beliefs of diverse families is yet another challenge faced by modern educators.

To compound this challenge, many families are no longer patterned after the traditional model of both mother and father in the home. The U. S. Census Bureau records show that 51.7% of American households were married-couple households in 2000. However, the American Community Survey (2005) reports that number decreasing to 49.7% over five years. Curriculum that was once directed to children who were from traditional families needs to be reconsidered in light of the fact that often grandparents, single parents, and guardians may be the adults responsible for many school children. Although family variation is not new to this decade, it continues to provide a challenge for teachers to effectively work with families as individual entities.

This dissertation was developed because of a confluence of societal, intellectual, professional, and research factors that make this topic pertinent to American public school teachers, parents, community members, policy makers and students. The development of the dissertation is supported by a belief held by many educators that “schools can be places where people of many cultures, communities, and styles joyously work and learn—nondiscriminately, respectfully, and caringly” (Pechman, 1992). The dissertation addresses the fundamental issue of teacher education and whether there are particular characteristics of preservice teachers related to their life experiences and cultural commitments that dispose them toward greater success in acquiring the knowledge, skills, and attitudes associated with successful engagement of families in the education of their children.
Research Questions

This study sought to answer the following questions based on data collected over two semesters from University of North Texas undergraduate students who identified themselves as preservice teachers and who enrolled in a course on family, school, and community resources offered by faculty in development and family studies.

1. Is there a significant change in preservice teachers' knowledge about parent involvement in the areas of parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, collaborating with the community, or advocacy and decision making, as evidenced by pre- and post-assessments?

2. Does chronological age, ethnicity, or parental status of preservice teachers impact changes in their knowledge of parent involvement acquired through a course in family, school, and community resources?

3. Is there a correlation between multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers and changes in their knowledge about parent involvement acquired through a course in family, school, and community resources?

4. Is there a correlation between preservice teacher parent and family involvement skill levels and their post-knowledge assessments about parent involvement?

Several techniques were used to collect data in this study. Pre- and post-knowledge assessments were administered and measurements completed to establish the scope of changes in participant knowledge. A demographic questionnaire was presented in order to obtain information about age, ethnicity, gender, and parental status of participants. Additionally, a survey was used to determine participant multicultural teaching concerns. Then, Bloom’s taxonomy was used as a guide to perceive thinking levels of participants through the analysis of narratives written in response to a question from a case study. Finally, a transition between thinking level and skill level was recognized as appropriate based on previous studies where cultivation of thinking resulted in problem solving ability (Scriven & Paul, 2004).
Research Perspective

This study was designed from the constructivist viewpoint that learners develop knowledge, skills, and dispositions through engagement with learning experiences. Participant knowledge was measured both before and after the treatment to discern changes in this area. Furthermore, skill levels of participants were examined for the possibility that their knowledge construction would enable problem solving through reflection on teacher action. When constructivism underpins learning theory, students are actively involved in their learning and engaged in experiences that challenge their thinking and compel them to reorganize their beliefs. “Constructivism calls our attention to the fact that we must structure teaching and learning experiences to challenge students’ thinking so that they will be able to construct new knowledge” (Schunk, 2004, p. 327).

Moreover, constructivism underlies the current emphasis on reflective teaching. When students practice reflection, they often make thoughtful decisions while considering learning and self-knowledge (Schunk, 2004). This study looks toward constructivism as a way that preservice teachers develop novel understandings that depend on knowledge of self and accommodate new learning to previous concepts. Additionally, this study posits reflective writing as a tool for assessing preservice teachers’ understandings that might be related to their learning through the curriculum modules presented in the family, schools, and community resources course.

Research Type

The study used a mixed methods research approach that served to facilitate a
measurement of participant construction of knowledge and skills and that called for both quantitative and qualitative analyses. Quantitative measures were used for the following purposes: (a) to determine the changes in preservice teachers’ knowledge across six dimensions of parent involvement; (b) to demonstrate the main and interaction effects between teacher candidate demographics and their knowledge changes regarding parenting involvement; (c) to ascertain the levels of correlation between multicultural teacher concern scores of preservice teachers and their changes in knowledge of parent involvement, and (d) to correlate participants’ parent involvement skills with their post-knowledge of parent involvement.

Qualitative measures were employed to examine the skills of preservice teacher participants from an analysis of their essays written in response to a case study dilemma. Using hermeneutics, I analyzed the narratives of each participant and marked each response with the perceived level of thinking employed to resolve the dilemma set forth in the case study. Two additional readers were employed to triangulate data until a consensus as to thinking (skill) levels could be reached.

Two research designs were necessary to answer the questions posited in this study. Briefly, a pre-experiment subtype was necessary to answer question one because it required the use of one group taking both pretests and posttests to determine changes in knowledge. The t-tests were used to determine the significance of changes in knowledge. The second question utilized a quasi-experiment in that (a) groups were tested before the treatment and retested after the treatment, and that (b) groups were not randomly assigned, as in a true experiment. Repeated-measures ANOVA was used to answer Question 2 and determine the impact of participants’
demographics on knowledge changes as acknowledged by pre- and post-knowledge assessments. A correlation design, using Pearson’s $r$, was necessary to find significance of relationships between variables (multicultural teaching concerns and knowledge changes) presented in Question 3. Finally, a bivariate correlation was used in Question 4 to verify individual participant’s parent involvement skill was significantly correlated with post-knowledge assessments. Again, Pearson $r$ was utilized to determine the magnitude of relationship between these two variables. Research designs are further discussed in Chapter 3 of this dissertation.

Professional Significance of the Problem

The study was particularly timely at this juncture in American education. Several underpinnings support the belief that involving parents and families in student learning results in greater outcomes for students and schools. Family involvement has been noted as making a considerable, positive difference in student achievement (Kirschenbaum, 2001; Reynolds & Clements, 2005). Government legislation follows this strong body of research and mandates that schools involve families in the education of their children (US Government, 2001). A particular complication arises from the combination of the impact studies of family involvement coupled with the governmental mandate, however, because of a lack of systematic and predictable teacher education about parent, family, and community involvement in most teacher education programs (Hiatt-Michael, 2001). In fact, Epstein (2005) found that only 7% of teacher education program leaders agreed that their graduates were well versed in methods to effectively involve parents and families. This troubling dichotomy presented another reason for
conducting this study.

The need for preservice teacher education regarding parent and family involvement guided this research with the goal of providing insight as to the effect of a particular teacher education program on preservice teacher learning. Studies about the impact of parent involvement, government legislation such as NCLB, and the need for effective teacher education in this field provided a meaningful professional backdrop for the study undertaken.

Terms, Abbreviations, and Conventions

- Advocacy represents the advocacy and decision making module.
- BTLS is an abbreviation for Bloom’s taxonomy of learning skills.
- Collaborating represents the collaborating with the community module.
- Dimension is a term used interchangeably with area and type when referring to one of the six parent involvement modules.
- Diversity refers to a variety of ethnicities.
- EC is an abbreviation for early childhood.
- FSCR is an abbreviation for the family, schools, and community resources course.
- HFRP is the abbreviation for the Harvard Family Research Project.
- Knowledge is a term used for information about parent involvement.
- Learning represents the learning at home module.
- Levels of thinking refer to Bloom’s hierarchy including knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation.
- Module is a term used when referring to an online curriculum unit written and disseminated by PTE Connect associates.
- MTCS is an abbreviation for Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey.
• Preservice teacher is a phrase that may be used interchangeably with participant or teacher candidate. A preservice teacher is an undergraduate student preparing to be an educator.

• Parent Teacher Education Connection is represented as pte connect.

• Students of diversity is a phrase showing a variety (two or more) of ethnicities represented in a learning situation.

• Authors of the PTE Connect modules are listed in Appendix J, so as to avoid multiple repetitions throughout the narrative.

Delimitations of the Study

The study, as defined thus far, had five notable boundaries. A primary limit of the study related to the participants who were all enrolled in an online course that is required in their programs of study in early childhood education. A possibility existed that these students were not representative of the population of preservice teachers, in general. It is expected that these students had background information predisposing them to a heightened awareness of parent and family involvement practices because of the nature of their chosen field (Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider, & Lopez, 1997).

A second consideration that restricted this study was the one-group pretest-posttest design which limited the generalizability of the results from this study to a larger population. Because of extraneous variables associated with this scheme, internal and external validity may be compromised (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). Possible extraneous variables may exist due to changes in demographics that occurred during the treatment such as participants adding family members and maturation of participants (Mason & Bramble, 1997).

A third boundary of this study was related to the demographics of the participants who were enrollees in one course in one university. The ethnicity of this university is
predominately White, and the White participants in this study represented 82% of the total participant numbers. The Institutional Research and Accreditation office at the University of North Texas reported that student enrollment in 2007 was 64.8% White, 13% African-American, 11.7% Hispanic, 7% Asian/Pacific Islander, 0.8% American Indian, and 1.5% Other. The college of education was represented by a 71% White and 29% minority student population. Furthermore, 97% of the participants were female, even though 57% of the university’s enrollment was female. Ages of participants in this study varied, as that of the university. The mean age for all students enrolled at the University of North Texas was 24.8 years (Office of Institutional Research and Accreditation, 2007).

A fourth limitation of this study involved the particular instruments used to measure participant knowledge, skills, and multicultural teaching concerns. The knowledge assessments were directly tied to the curriculum modules used in the family, school, and community resources course and were written for the Parent Teacher Education Connection. They may not, however, reflect the knowledge most related to candidate ability to effectively engage parents and families. The Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey (MTCS) used in this study was a revision of a previous version, and reliability and validity scores were not yet available for the revised instrument. A further concern about the MTCS is that it requires participants to use self-ratings. “The subjectivity involved in self-ratings has the potential to diminish the accuracy of the data” (Thompson, 2007, p. 17). However, this possibility was addressed by the researcher’s giving specific direction to participants before the administering of the MTCS, a self-report instrument.
Finally, the delivery of the curriculum in this course was 100% online. Thus, the analyses of student discussions did not allow for further questioning, in real time, regarding levels of thinking. Additionally, analyses of non-verbal cues were not a possibility in this study. These are limitations on the collection of the data that were used to assess candidate problem solving skills.

Summary

A considerable number of studies allude to the importance of parent involvement as a component of student achievement and success in school (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, parent involvement has not been systematically addressed in teacher education programs (Epstein, 2005). The dearth of preservice teacher curriculum regarding parental involvement is complicated by the fact that school populations are becoming more diverse while the teaching force maintains its propensity toward Whiteness. Further obstacles to preservice teachers involving parents relate to changes in the family unit with less than half of American families consisting of married-couple households. The convergence of a diverse population of students who likely come from non-traditional families has provided a significant concern for colleges of education who continue to educate mostly White, female teachers. As school districts seek ways to meet a federal mandate and improve relationships between parents and teachers, educators are finding themselves unprepared for collaborating with adults who likely come from backgrounds quite different from theirs.

Answers to the questions posited in this study provide insight into some factors that dispose future teachers to successfully working with students and their families.
Those factors include chronological age, ethnicity, and parental status of the preservice teacher. Additionally, participant responses reveal interactions between these factors and changes in preservice teachers' knowledge toward parent involvement. A constructivist viewpoint was respected as preservice teachers provided insight into problem solving through reflectivity. Multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers were inspected for indications of the impact of this variable on changes in knowledge toward parent involvement. Finally, problem solving skills were correlated to post-knowledge scores across the six parent involvement types. Chapter 2 reviews the literature in strands that are significant to the topic presented in this study.
CHAPTER 2

REVIEW OF THE LITERATURE

Six streams of literature course toward an understanding of this study: (a) literature demonstrating the importance of parent involvement, (b) literature describing parent involvement in teacher education, (c) literature depicting teacher demographics, (d) literature portraying teacher multicultural concerns, (e) literature representing relationships among teacher demographics and multicultural concerns related to family involvement, and (f) literature examining the need for cross-cultural family involvement. Each stream of literature is scrutinized in turn.

Importance of Parent Involvement

Three distinct concepts dominate the literature regarding the importance of parent involvement in educational settings. This section begins with a discussion of the ways in which parent involvement affects students. It then looks at the positive effects of parent involvement on schools. Third, this overview characterizes the constructive effects of parent involvement on parents and families.

Parent Involvement Effects on Students

Research of the past 40 years acknowledges that parental involvement in the cognitive, social, and emotional development of children is vitally important for realization of student success (Hill, Baker, & Marjoribanks, 2004/2005). However, when the findings of the Coleman Report (Coleman et al., 1966) were released four decades ago, many educators were incensed with the conclusion that schooling had less impact
on student success than home variables. This report served as a starting point for educators and researchers in seeking to embrace and encourage home variables in the school setting. Currently, a prevalent national consensus exists that partnerships around family involvement are important to schools and communities (Kirschenbaum, 2001). Greenwood & Hickman (1991) posit that the home is at least as influential as the school on student attitudes and skills. Specifically, students whose parents are involved in their educational pursuits tend to have higher achievement (Berger, 1991), improved attendance (Haynes, Comer, & Hamilton-Lee, 1989; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991), positive attitudes (Becher, 1984), good behavior (Henderson, Marburger & Ooms, 1986), and superior social and emotional stability (Cochran, 1987) compared to students without parental support. Moreover, particular parent involvement practices (Reynolds & Clements, 2005) are evidenced as driving students toward some of these dispositions.

Numerous studies (Hill, Castellino, Lansford, Nowlin, Dodge, Bates & Petit, 2004; Redding & Sheley, 2005; Henderson & Berla, 1995) consistently reveal that student achievement across developmental levels from preschool through college is positively affected when parents and families are involved in their children’s educational pursuits (Hill, Baker, & Marjoribanks, 2004/2005). This theme is evident in a large body of research reviewed by Henderson and Mapp (2002) between 1995 and 2002 on the effects of parent involvement on student achievement. These researchers used Epstein’s typology based on surveys and observations of actual school practices to define parent involvement. The typology includes six kinds of parent involvement: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, advocacy and decision
making, and collaborating with the community. Further, Henderson and Mapp define student achievement as follows: (a) for young children, teacher ratings of school adjustment, reading skills, and social and motor skills; (b) for school-age children, report card grades, standardized test scores, grade point averages, and attendance in advanced classes; (c) for all children, staying in school, promotions to the next grade, high attendance; (d) for all children, appropriate/improved behavior and healthy development which may include absence of disruptive behavior and declining substance abuse. In the sections that follow, a sampling of the 51 studies reviewed by Henderson and Mapp will be discussed across the various development levels of students.

Birth through Preschool

Mathematica Policy Research and the Center for Children and Families at Columbia University (2001) examined results from the Early Head Start program which serves low-income families. The program offered family support services, health services, parenting training, and early education. Researchers examined programs at 17 sites that included 3,000 children and families. Children were randomly dispersed to the treatment or control groups. After two years, the Early Head Start children used more words, spoke in more complex sentences, and scored higher on cognitive measures than those students in the control group. Moreover, families of the Early Head Start children were more likely to support early literacy and child development than those parents of children in the control group (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

An early literacy program in Minnesota evidenced similar success. Project EASE
(Early Access to Success in Education) offered home and school literacy activities for kindergarteners and their families in Minnesota. Trained parent educators met with mothers at school to aid them in developing their children’s literacy skills. Then, teachers provided books and activities for parents to use at home with their children. Researchers (Jordan, Snow, and Porche, 2000) surveyed four schools that implemented this project and found that students in Project EASE made significant gains over the control group after just one year. Furthermore, children’s gains varied directly with the number of home activities families completed with their children. Importantly, the children who made the largest gains were those who started at the lowest skill levels (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Starkey and Kelin (2000) studied the math skills of Head Start children in the San Francisco area. These researchers examined children in one area serving mostly African-American families and children in another area serving mostly Latino families. About 30 families participated at each location. An experimental study was implemented with half of each group placed in a control group and the other half included in the treatment group. The treatment consisted of a four-month intervention in which the Head Start staff provided training for children and mothers. Second, staff members provided math activity kits for home use. In both locations, the treatment group outperformed the control group after four months (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Elementary and Middle School

When Westat and Policy Studies Associates considered student achievement in 71 Title I elementary schools, they looked at possible connections between student
improvements in reading and math to each school’s parent outreach practices (Redding & Sheley, 2005). Seven variables were considered in the study: visibility of standards and assessments, basic or advanced teaching techniques, teacher preparation and skill in math instruction, professional development of teachers, focus on assessment and accountability, district policies regarding standards, and outreach to parents. Parent outreach was found to be a more significant contributor to student learning increases than any other variable measured in the study. Outreach was noted in three ways: face to face meetings, materials sent to and from school, and routine telephone calls. Test scores grew at a rate 40% higher in parent outreach schools than in schools without strong links to parents (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Shaver and Walls (1998) examined the outcomes of school-based parent workshops on achievement of 335 students in nine West Virginia Title I schools. First, parents were trained in sessions geared toward their interests. Second, learning packets in math and literacy were provided along with training on how to use the packets. Student achievement gains were measured using pretest scores and comparing those against average national gains on the Comprehensive Test of Basic Skills (CTBS). Five significant findings were reported: (a) students who made the largest gains had the most involved parents, and this held true across all income levels; (b) students in Grades 2-4 made greater gains than students in Grades 5-8; (c) parents were more involved with students in Grades 2-4 than in Grades 5-8; (d) students from lower-income families made smaller gains than students from higher-income families; and (e) income levels of families did not affect levels of involvement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).
Epstein, Simon, and Salinas (1997) studied two Baltimore middle schools and found that programs engaging families in learning at home have positive effects on children. Nearly 700 students in sixth or eighth grades and their families were involved in the study. These researchers implemented an interactive homework program, Teachers Involving Parents in Schoolwork (TIPS), to promote improvement of student writing. Findings support the notion that TIPS homework completion and student’s language arts grades were directly related. (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Van Voorhis (2001) found similar results in a quasi-experimental study of middle school students using TIPS for science. Three sixth-grade classes and two eighth-grade classes, 253 total students, were involved in the study. About 50% of the students were White while the other half of the participants were of African American, Asian, Hispanic, or Russian heritage. Six classes were involved in the treatment which consisted of TIPS homework, while four classes were assigned non-interactive homework. Researchers controlled for amount of homework turned in, previous student grades, and family background variables. After two marking periods, TIPS students scored significantly higher in science than students in the control group (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

**High School**

The National Center for Educational Statistics followed 25,000 eighth grade students from 1,000 schools and surveyed them every two years beginning in 1994 and ending in 2000. Researchers from NCES also surveyed parents and educators and gathered data from students’ high-school records. Additionally, student participants took math, reading, science, and social studies tests every two years. Then, the
variables of teacher support, parent involvement, and student sense of belonging were examined as possibly relating to student achievement. Key findings emerging from this inclusive study showed that no single variable was significantly associated with student achievement gains. However, a combination of all three variables where teacher support was high, parent involvement was high, and students felt strongly that they belonged resulted in an average grade point of 3.4 on a 4.0 scale. Importantly, students who reported high parent involvement maintained higher average grades when paired with either of the other two variables than those students without high parent involvement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Trusty (1997) analyzed data from a National Educational Longitudinal Study (NELS: 88) and found students who reported parent involvement in eighth grade were influenced to finish college after six years. Furthermore, students who reported their parents as communicative of their support of learning were more likely to continue their schooling to higher education. Trusty inferred this finding as noteworthy in maintaining that parent and family support is continual while school support is relatively short-term (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

Catsambis (1998) found that students in Grades 8-12 who experienced high expectations from home were more likely to score higher on tests, enroll in advanced courses, and earn high school credits. She studied 13,500 families whose children attended school through Grade 12. Catsambis examined parent involvement in Grades 8 through 12 and found that parent expectations for high performance were the strongest indicator of school success in grade 12 across all family backgrounds (Henderson & Mapp, 2002).
Types of Parent Involvement

A survey of the parent involvement literature confirms that parent involvement can take many forms and is certainly more than the traditional parent-teacher conference. Hiatt-Michael (2001) promotes home-school communication as a significant element of parent involvement. She explains her concept of home-school communication as including home visits by educators, placement of parents on school committees, school newsletters, informal and formal conferences, and telecommunications.

Dornbusch and Ritter (1988) reported that just informing high school parents about school activities could improve parental attendance at athletic events or dramatic performances. They report that parent involvement at the high school level is highly correlated with student achievement even when differences in social class and student ethnicity are controlled. Similarly, Hill of the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) (2004/2005) identified communication between parents and teachers as an important practice for student achievement gains from high school through college. The HFRP (2006/2007) found home-school relationships as one of the three most influential aspects of parent involvement on student success in school.

Redding and Sheley (2005) reported that outreach to parents was the most important variable affecting student achievement in 71 Title I schools. Outreach was defined as meetings between parents and teachers, notes from school to home, and telephone calls made routinely from school to home. In addition to communicating, other parent involvement practices may have existed.

The HFRP (2006/2007) signifies parenting as a significant parent involvement
skill. Experts in child development report that positive parent-child relationships are characterized as supportive and instructional. Support can take the forms of encouragement or sensitivity; whereas, instruction should be appropriately based on the child’s characteristics and development. For example, parents who explain learning tasks at a developmentally appropriate level while offering emotional support produce children who are more capable of monitoring their own work at school. The school’s role in parenting is to inform parents about what is developmentally appropriate support and instruction for children while providing a social network where parents feel comfortable interacting with educators.

One example of school promotion of skillful parenting is evidenced in the Families and Schools Together (FAST) program aimed at fostering relationships between family members and between families and schools and at addressing problems such as school failure, substance abuse, violence, child abuse, and delinquency. Entire families meet at school for an eight week program based on behavior change theories. Families are encouraged to enroll in FAST for two years. Promising results from FAST show that children are more adept at handling stress while improving attention spans and improving achievement. Evaluations from participants also show evidence of improvement in family relationships, community leadership, and home-school relationships (HFRP, 2006/2007).

Volunteering is seen as a practical aspect of parent involvement. Hill, Baker, and Marjoribanks (2004/2005) provide evidence that parents who volunteer positively affect student achievement at school. Volunteering, however, may occur outside of the classroom. Dornbusch and Ritter (1988) report that parent attendance at extra-
curricular activities has a positive impact on student learning in the classroom. When volunteering is interpreted by students as supervision, however, only small gains in achievement are noted. This pattern was consistent across the Chicago Longitudinal Study and meta-analyses of the entire field of parent involvement (Reynolds & Clements, 2005).

When parents make decisions that affect student educational outcomes, they place themselves in the role of advocate. Davies (2001) posits that school decision making and advocacy are significant and will continue to be important in the future based on a belief that parent participation will contribute to school reforms related to equity in the educational environment. Furthermore, Davies believes that parent decision making will unfold into community forums that work toward a more democratic social order. This sentiment is echoed by other researchers who state that parent participation in school governance is imperative for impacting positive achievement for students (Hill, Baker, & Marjoribanks, 2004/2005).

Opportunities for advocacy and school decision-making are possible in schools at every grade level. For example, the Title I program has a highly developed school-family partnership premise (Moles, 2005). Federal law requires that parents in low-income and low-achieving schools become involved in multiple ways. First of all, parents and teachers are trained to work collaboratively with one another. Second, strategies for outreach from school to home are identified at school. Importantly, special education and English language acquisition programs also make provisions for parental involvement and advocacy. Moreover, the No Child Left Behind legislation
(2001) mandates that all schools welcome parents into the school in partnership roles with educators.

Simon (2000) completed a study of 11,000 students using National Educational Longitudinal data to explore how high schools, parents, and communities unite to undergird student achievement. This study began in 1990 and concluded in 1992. Family involvement was calculated by examining student, family, and school administrator responses to questions about parent involvement practices. Student achievement was referenced by test scores, grades in English and math classes, number of school credits, attendance, behavior, and preparedness for school. Using regression analysis, Simon tested the influence of student demographics, previous school achievement, and family income on current achievement of students. Importantly, Simon found that families and communities participate more readily when they are contacted for one of the following purposes: (a) attending workshops, (b) volunteering at school, (c) working with students on homework at home, or (d) communicating with students at home about school. Furthermore, Simon's study revealed positive effects regarding parenting, volunteering, learning at home, and decision-making activities. Those activities evidenced the following: (a) improved English and math grades, (b) increased course credits in English and math, (c) higher attendance and improved behavior, and (d) improved organization and readiness for class.

According to Marzano (2003) five factors promote effective schools: a viable curriculum, challenging goals, an orderly environment, a collegial and professional climate, and parent and community involvement. Considering parent and community
involvement as one element of effective schools, it is sensible to explore ways in which the community and school might collaborate and potential outcomes of that collaboration. Cronenwalt (1996) suggests mentoring as one way community members can effectively impact student learning. He posits that mentors help with student attitudes, motivation, and problem solving. Moreover, community members may offer tutorials for students with intervention needs. According to Bloom (1984), tutored students outperform 98% of students in a conventional classroom setting. Most importantly, schools that partner with community members are more effective in responding to the needs of students (Oakes, 2000).

Dryfoos (2000) studied 49 schools that practiced school-community collaborations and noted these results: (a) achievement improved in 36; (b) attendance improved in 19; (c) suspensions were reduced in 11; (d) high-risk behaviors were reduced in 11; (e) parent involvement improved in 12; and (f) neighborhoods experienced lower violence rates in 6. Gains in achievement generally involved improvements in reading and math scores over a 2-3 year period. Schools that improved attendance also reported lower dropout numbers among students and higher teacher attendance rates, and one school showed a decrease in the drop-out rates of pregnant and parenting teens.

Two schools were particularly affected by reduction in school suspensions. Woodrow Wilson Middle School in Des Moines, Iowa, reduced suspensions by 16% over five years. Similar results were evidenced in Portland, Oregon, at Lane Middle School where suspensions declined from 50 to 15 (70% decrease) over two years. High-risk behaviors were noted as substance abuse, teen pregnancy, and disruptive
classroom behavior. Significantly, the Blenheim School in Missouri reported a 40% decrease in disruptive incidents following clinical therapy initiatives at school (Dryfoos, 2000).

Family well-being was one derivative of the community partnership initiatives. At Bryant School in Missouri, an intensive family intervention program correlated with an increase of 2000% in parent and community volunteers at school. Finally, the six programs reporting lower violence rates also evidenced declining mobility among neighborhood families. Dryfoos (2000) inferred this statistic to be important in that students who are in the same school for a longer time have more chances to learn and partake of school programs.

Several researchers posit that learning at home is the most effective parent involvement strategy to positively impact student achievement (Redding & Sheley, 2005; D’Agostino, Hedges, Wong & Borman, 2001; Cooper, Chavira, & Mena, 2005). The HFRP (2006/2007) explains that learning-at-home places importance on home and community activities that encourage student learning. Some examples of these home learning opportunities involve literacy support, homework help, managing and organizing children, and continuous high expectations. When teachers were queried about specific techniques that could involve parents and children in home learning experiences, five categories emerged as significant: (a) techniques that involve reading, (b) techniques encouraging family discussions, (c) techniques that specify informal learning activities, (d) contracts between parents and teachers delineating roles of each in school lessons, and (e) techniques that develop parent abilities to tutor, help, and evaluate student learning (Epstein, 2001).
Furthermore, fathers have a role equally important to the role of mothers for perpetuating student learning. In fact, HRFP reports that students who have fathers who conference with teachers and meet with school personnel, experience more school success than their peers whose mothers are the lone participants at school. Consistent evidence exists showing father’s involvement in educational activities at home directly results in improved student achievement (HFRP, 2004/2005).

A rationale for the importance of learning at home as significantly impacting student achievement may be related to Vygotsky’s sociocultural theory which focuses on community and home-specific practices inherent in all cultural groups. These cultural practices act to develop goals, values, and skills which encourage students to adapt to their environments (Harkness, Super, & Keever, 1992). By completing household chores and homework, and participating in religious and sports activities, children become experts in their own cultural community (Gallimore, Goldenberg, & Weisner, 1993).

Various research studies were examined to explore learning at home as pertinent to positive student achievement outcomes. First, a study of middle school students in Maryland looked at differences between two groups of students learning science. The treatment group was given science assignments with suggestions for involving their families. The control group was assigned the same science homework without suggestions for involving parents. (Gallimore, Goldenberg, & Weisner, 1993). Van Voorhis (2003) reported that students who involved families in home learning scored significantly higher in science than the control group.

A second study reported by Catsambis (2001) represented a national cohort of
students accessed through the National Educational Longitudinal Study data base. Findings presented from this study indicated that middle and high school students across social and ethnic groups were more likely to enroll and excel in college when their parents held high expectations and provided continuous encouragement. These findings were supported in a meta-analysis of research studies showing parents’ expectations to be the strongest forecaster of student achievement (Fan & Chen, 2001).

Parents of fifth and sixth grade, low income, African-American students in Michigan were interviewed to determine the differences in parent involvement between 17 high achieving and 17 low achieving students (Gutman & McLoyd, 2000). All parents were similar in that they encouraged learning activities at home, helped students with homework, and involved their children in sports. However, parents of the higher achieving students used more specific strategies for homework help and promoted academic accomplishments. Moreover, these parents were involved at school and often instigated communication with school. Importantly, parents of high achieving students involved their students in art, music, and religion classes. On the other hand, parents of the low achieving students focused on student behavior over academics. Further, they responded to school queries about poor work and misbehavior, but they were less likely to initiate communication with school.

**Parent Involvement Effects on Schools**

A strong body of evidence suggests that families and communities involved with schools contribute to student achievement and higher school quality (Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider, & Lopez, 1997). This section addresses the positive impact of parent...
involvement on schools in the following five ways: parents as resources in the classroom, parent involvement as a benefit to educator, parents’ effect on school governance policies, parents’ effect on school reform measures, and parents’ impact on school quality.

Parents as Resources in the Classroom

When educators involve parents in the classroom, it is possible to expand curriculum and make it more pertinent to students. Moreover, parents may broaden the contact base of the school in the community. This sometimes results in financial donations to the school from businesses in the way of technology contributions or school improvements (Tangri, 1987).

A second way that parents and community members are resources for the school is through volunteering. One example of the effective use of volunteers occurred in a Reading Recovery intervention program that was implemented in six Virginia elementary schools (Invernizzi, M, Rosemary, C., Richards, C. J. & Richards, H.C., 1997). Nonprofessional volunteers were trained to utilize the curriculum involving reading text, word study, writing for sounds, and reading a new book. The purpose of the experiment was to determine if nonprofessionals could be trained to tutor students and improve student reading outcomes. Tutorials involved one child, one graduate student reading director, and one volunteer. Students were divided into control and treatment groups with the control group receiving less instructional time than the treatment group. Three cohorts of first graders ($n = 358$) took part in the study with a new cohort beginning each school year. Over three years, the treatment group
receiving more tutorials showed higher reading gains. Second, the treatment groups across three years showed greater gains with each subsequent year. Third, the cost of using volunteer tutors was about one-sixth of the cost of Reading Recovery. According to the researchers, the use of parent and community volunteers positively impacted the school through the use of a reading tutorial program.

Parent Involvement as a Benefit to Educators

According to the National PTA (2000) and based on 85 studies (Henderson, 1987; Henderson & Berla, 1995), parent involvement at school is likely to provide motivation for educators and support for teachers and principals. Specific findings from the 85 studies show five significant outcomes: (a) educators experience higher morale and self-esteem; (b) educators experience more esteem for their profession; (c) educators have enhanced job satisfaction; (d) educators receive heightened home communication resulting in improved relationships between parents, teachers, and administrators; and (e) educators acknowledge improvements in over-all community school support.

Parent Involvement Effects on School Governance Policies

Henderson and Mapp (2002) report an important study confirming the positive effect parents can have when they are empowered as decision makers in the school. The Chicago public schools were examined over a seven-year period to determine the reasons for improvement in elementary students’ reading achievements. The study confirmed that elementary schools showing substantial reading improvement over the
seven year time frame were more likely to utilize competent local school councils. Competence was measured by ratings from teachers at each school campus. Local school councils (LSC) were comprised of six parents elected by other parents and community members, two community members similarly elected, two teachers elected by staff and faculty, the school principal, and one student elected by students (at secondary level). Strong powers were specified for the LSC. For example, they selected and evaluated the school principal. Also, the LSC developed an annual school-improvement plan focused on student achievement. Finally, the LSC developed the school budget. Besides the improvement in reading scores, schools with strong LSC support also were perceived as having principals who were deemed more effective by teachers and as having teachers with more influence on school decisions than those schools with less LSC support (Moore, 1998).

*Parent Involvement Effects on School Reform*

Findings from a number of studies indicate the benefits of family involvement on implementation of school reforms and policies that emphasize family and school relationships (Shartrand et al., 1997). One example of such school reform measures is site-based management plans such as the plans implemented in New York, Massachusetts, and Chicago. These particular plans were developed by teachers, school personnel, parents, and community members. A second example is that of public school choice advocated in some districts, like the Garland, Texas, Independent School District, where parents are empowered to choose the public school their child will attend. Third, statewide, school-based programs for young children are enveloped
through family support initiatives in Minnesota and Missouri. These initiatives provide educational support such as parenting classes and literacy education for parents.

Another way that parent groups have affected school reform is discussed in a study by Shirley (1997) who documented the approaches, feats, and activities of the Texas Industrial Arts Foundation (TIAF) toward new practices in parent engagement. TIAF differs from traditional parent involvement in that it moves parents past reactive behaviors toward proactive behaviors, and it bases its work in neighborhood churches instead of schools. TIAF works from a social capital philosophy that all families have something of value to offer communities. Leaders in TIAF promote neighborhood meetings in homes, where they teach parents and residents about how to impact local school systems. Moreover, they invite elected officials to meet with parents in the community to answer questions and obtain support for TIAF initiatives such as after-school programs. Schools participating in the TIAF Alliance are populated with large Latino populations in poor-urban neighborhoods across Texas. Thus far, the Alliance schools have made their greatest gains in Texas high schools. The average gain, over three years, in state accountability tests was nine points, while Alliance high schools gained 20 points. TIAF is impacting the directive of legislation to leave no child behind.

**Parent Involvement Effects on School Quality**

The premise of parent involvement develops from persuasive data that strong contributions from parents improve school quality (Shartrand et al., 1997). In fact, the National PTA (2000) unequivocally states that “high-quality education cannot be successfully achieved without parents’ active involvement” (p. 15). Schools are the
benefactors of parent involvement when they receive support from families resulting in
increased reputability in the community. Second, schools benefit from parent
involvement through higher-quality programs than those without parent involvement.
Third, schools who partner with parents see dramatically improved student achievement results.

Henderson and Mapp (2002) report a study conducted by Research for Action, which partnered with the Cross City Campaign for Urban School Reform in Philadelphia, to identify the impact of 19 community groups on improved education. Telephone interviews were conducted with the 19 groups, and five in-depth case studies resulted from the interviews. Researchers selected Alliance Organizing Project in Philadelphia, Austin Interfaith in Texas, Logan Square Neighborhood Association in Chicago, ACORN in New York City, and Oakland Community Organizations in California for further study. Two of the eight findings from this project related to improvement in school quality: positive school climate and high-quality instruction and curriculum. Specifically, school quality was noted as (a) stakeholders taking more pride in the school, (b) display of signage in multiple languages, and (c) an enhanced perception by students that teachers care. High-quality instruction and curriculum were designated through (a) improved test scores, (b) higher numbers of student acceptance into magnet programs, (c) increased numbers of challenging courses, (d) increase in teachers’ self-efficacy, and (e) renewed perception by students that school is relevant to and respectful of all cultures (Gold, Simon, & Brown, 2002).

Parent Involvement Effects on Parents

Parents who are involved with their children at school receive numerous benefits.
Involved parents realize increased and improved interactions with their children (National PTA, 2000; Rich, 1988), social and emotional benefits, enhanced problem-solving abilities, and various personal rewards (National PTA, 2000). Additionally, engaged parents benefit from increased communication with the school (Hiatt-Michael, 2001) which acts to promote a supportive social network for families (Taylor, 2005). Parents who have such social networks are reported to be better adjusted and offer higher-quality parenting to their children than those who are not socially networked (Taylor, 2005). Finally, literature suggests that parents benefit through greater satisfaction with schools and teachers when they are involved with their children’s education (Epstein, 1984; Rich, 1988). This section of the literature review examines the positive effects of parent involvement on parents through the lenses of supportive networks, improved relationships between children and their parents, and increased parent satisfaction with educators.

**Parent Involvement as a Supportive Network**

When parents perceive schools as partners in the educational pursuits of their children, they experience the school culture as similar to a community where they are members (Mapp, 2002). Interviews with 18 sets of impoverished parents of diverse ethnicities were conducted in an urban elementary school. Mapp found that relational factors had a major impact on parents’ involvement. When parents became actively involved at O’Hearn Elementary School, they benefited by becoming devoted members of the school community. The school and children benefited as well.
Improved Family Relationships

Parents of students from six high schools in Maryland were surveyed to determine whether particular types of parent involvement influenced the attitudes of parents of secondary students (Sanders, Epstein, Connors-Tadros, 1999). Conclusions indicated that certain types of parent involvement practices were more likely to improve parent attitudes toward school and encourage parent involvement at home. Moreover, parents who partnered with schools were more likely to work with their students on homework at home and to talk with their students about school. According to the National PTA (2000), involved parents reasoned more with their children, praised their children more, and encouraged their investigative behaviors.

Increased Satisfaction with Schools and Educators

Findings in two studies indicate that parent involvement increases parent satisfaction with schools and teachers (Epstein, 1984; Sanders, Epstein, Connors-Tadros, 1999). Parents of 1,269 students in 82 elementary classrooms in Maryland were surveyed to explore effects of parent involvement on parents. Results of the surveys indicated that parents generally had affirmative attitudes about their child’s school and teacher. However, parents of children with teachers who often utilized learning-at-home activities and knew more about the school curriculum and instruction, tended to rate the teacher higher in overall quality (Epstein, 1984).

A second study evaluated survey data from 423 parents at six high schools in Maryland to explore the effect of parent involvement programs on parent attitudes. Two of the participating schools were rural; two were urban; and two were suburban. The
parent sample was 71% White and 21% African American. Results from the surveys indicated that parent attitudes were directly related to the achievement levels of their children at school. Moreover, a strong positive correlation was found between parental attitudes and types of school partnership practices. Those high schools deemed more welcoming to parents elicited more favorable parent attitudes toward the school than those considered less welcoming.

**Summary**

The evidence is irrefutable. “Family involvement in education predicts children’s school success” (HFRP, 2004/2005, p. 2). Parent involvement positively affects students across all grade levels from preschool to college and from all ethnic and cultural groups. An abundance of studies explored the positive impact of parent involvement on schools. Specifically, these impacts were discussed as significant when parents were seen as resources for the classroom and school campus. Findings revealed that parents also reap the benefits of parent involvement practices. The literature suggested numerous benefits to parents. Specifically examined in this report were benefits regarding the building of support networks when parents and schools partner. Additionally, parents reported enhanced relationships with their teens when they were active participants at school and home. Parents who were engaged in their children’s educational pursuits testified to greater overall satisfaction with schools and teachers.

**Parent Involvement in Teacher Education**

The literature in this section of the review is presented in five parts. A discussion
of the perceived meaning of parent involvement is followed by literature describing the lack of parent involvement curriculum in teacher education, literature pointing to a need for parent involvement curriculum in teacher education, literature illustrating the types of parent involvement curriculum needed in teacher education, and literature describing five prominent parent involvement curriculum models.

**Parent Involvement Defined**

Based on three decades of research, educators have come to realize that excellence in education begins with parental involvement (U.S. Department of Education, 2007). However, defining parent involvement is not simple. In fact, Potter (1989) prefers the term “parent participation” to “parent involvement” since parent participation perpetuates an ideology of parents and teachers as co-educators. Shartrand and colleagues (1997) extend the concept of parent involvement to all family members and prefer the term “family involvement.” Importantly, U.S. policies that work to strengthen home and school characteristically accept the notion and label of parent involvement (Graue & Brown, 2003; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991).

Traditionally, parent involvement included the following: unidirectional activities where parents gave to the school, programs in which privileged parents were most likely to participate with educators, or narrowly focused involvement highlighting achievements of children (Shartrand et al., 1997). However, the nature of parent involvement has evolved to a more inclusive stance from these original definitions. Designs of contemporary parent involvement programs focus on reciprocal partnerships which involve all families and respect various types of family involvement. Moreover,
the typology of Joyce Epstein (1995) is most representative of the genre of existing parent involvement approaches (Graue & Brown, 2003). Epstein and colleagues have developed six types of parent involvement ranging from parenting assistance to an integration of parent and school collaborations where families and teachers work as partners. Hiatt-Michael (2001) acknowledges a broad perspective of parent involvement which results in partnerships among stakeholders concerned with educational pursuits of public school students. Her notion of stakeholders includes persons involved in familial relationships, educational roles, and community groups.

Despite the difficulties in defining parent involvement, a clear and comprehensive understanding of the concept of parent involvement is necessary to guide teacher education programs while still allowing for contextual interpretations of when, where, and how parent involvement can be taught to preservice teachers (Shartrand et al., 1997). The complexity of defining and conceptualizing parent involvement has presented one hurdle for colleges of education. However, parent involvement curriculum is lacking in colleges of education for various reasons.

Lack of Parent Involvement Curriculum

Numerous barriers have prevented parent involvement from becoming systematically addressed in colleges of education. A primary obstacle is the resistant attitudes of faculty members in colleges of education, cooperating teachers, school administrators, and preservice teachers (Shartrand et al., 1997). Moreover, Shartrand reports that professional organizations have been reluctant to embrace parent involvement as integral to teacher education. Parent involvement is, in fact, relatively
new to mainstream discussions in colleges of education. As recently as 1991, parent involvement was a fringe topic for professional educators (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Furthermore, state departments of education have been faulted for the lack of parent involvement emphasis by their restriction on the number of course units allowed in teacher education programs, while requiring too much of the curriculum (Shartrand et al., 1997).

An analysis of state teacher certification requirements reveals a glaring absence of parent involvement terminology. Only 22 states (1997) alluded to family involvement as a requirement for teacher certification for some grade levels while only eight states mentioned family involvement for EC-12 certification. When parent involvement was mentioned in state certification requirements, it was not clearly defined. For example, phrases such as “parent involvement,” “home-school relations,” or “working with parents” often emerged without clarification. Nebulous definitions paired with omissions in state certification requirements have helped to perpetuate the ideas that parent involvement curriculum is misunderstood and not a high priority for the teacher education curriculum (Shartrand et al., 1997).

University limitations have further complicated the inclusion of parent involvement curriculum. Questions have been raised about where such a curriculum should fit in college coursework. This is likely due to the restrictions and requirements placed on teacher education programs that are already challenged to provide required curriculum through a limited number of course offerings (Shartrand et al., 1997). Moreover, Shartrand explains that public schools are often resistant to involving parents. The resistance may dissuade professional development schools from
implementing parent involvement curriculum in related coursework. A lack of financial and human resources may discourage some colleges of education from implementing parent involvement curriculum. The HFRP (2006) found that numerous responsibilities of faculty members limited the time available to spend on family involvement issues. Moreover, funding for additional programs was scarce among the colleges surveyed (Shartrand et al., 1997). Bluntly, Dorothy Rich from the Home and School Institute relates the difficulty of creating change in schools of education, even though some educators are trying (HFRP, 2006).

Research by Shartrand, Weiss, Kreider, and Lopez (1997) revealed the lack of a model for family involvement training for preservice teachers. Furthermore, they noted an absence of research in the domain of parent involvement strategies plus a deficiency in trained experts to deliver such a curriculum. Additionally, a recent study evaluating family support programs reveals that policymakers are calling for increased partnering of parents and schools without providing practical and applicable guidance to educators (Hill, Baker, & Marjoribanks, 2004/2005). These barriers are further complicated by a lack of practicality in parent involvement practices seen in the day-to-day life of schools and families. Facilitating this process has not been attended to, according to Hill and colleagues.

A final barrier is represented by those colleges who do provide family involvement in their course offerings. When 60 teacher education programs were surveyed in the 22 states providing parent involvement training, course offerings were sketchy and lacking a systematic approach. Among the 60 programs, parent involvement was most often viewed (88%) through the lens of parent-teacher
conferences (Shartrand et al., 1997).

The lack of systematic infusion of parent involvement in most colleges of education, in addition to the incomplete focus of parent involvement in many others, has resulted in a lack of suitable curriculum for teacher candidates. Moreover, this deficiency has resulted in a shortfall for many new teachers who are now required to welcome parents into the school (NCLB, 2001). Regardless of political initiatives such as Goals 2000 (Riley, 1998) and No Child Left Behind (US Government, 2001), teacher groundwork in parent involvement lags (Shartrand et al., 1997). A MetLife Survey (2006) found that novice teachers consider working with parents as their biggest challenge and the area in which they were least prepared. Only 42% of teachers with less than 5 years experience felt prepared to partner with parents in educational pursuits of their children.

The HFRP (2006) conducted an ethnographic study of professors in colleges of education. In this study, Chavkin, Professor at Texas State University, reported a lack of teacher preparation programs in conceptualizing the whole child including the child as part of a family unit. In this same study, Ferguson, from the National Coalition of Parent Involvement in Education, reported a lack of teacher education toward cultural and class differences impacting home-school partnerships.

Tichenor (1997) surveyed 257 teacher candidates regarding their experiences readying them for parent involvement. Over half the respondents reported no parent involvement training. These same respondents reported a reliance on their own personal background experiences as to their intent of involving parents. Similar findings are reported in research of teacher education programs evidencing a lack of parental
involvement preparation for preservice teachers (Chavkin, 1991; McAfee, 1987).

Even when parents are required by law to participate in school events to advocate for their children, 48% of school principals in Title I schools report a lack of teacher preparation for working with parents and families (U.S. Department of Education, 1997). Conclusions from these studies give credence to Greenwood and Hickman (1991) who state, “Unfortunately, the number of courses and professional experiences in parent involvement included in the preservice and in-service preparation of teachers is insufficient” (p. 279).

**Need for Parent Involvement Curriculum**

As educators accept the call toward an increase in parental involvement, it becomes clear that they begin to understand curriculum as more than a program of study or a set of facts, but “the process of making sense with a group of people, or the systems that shape and organize the world” (Grumet, 1995, p. 19). According to Grumet, when teachers begin to embrace this ideology, they begin to embrace the life-worlds of themselves and their students. Embracing these unique life-worlds is possible when teachers are provided the motivation and tools for understanding parents and families.

Acknowledging that barriers exist for the implementation of parent involvement curriculum and understanding that educators need both motivation and tools for such implementation, several indicators point toward a need for inclusive, systematic instruction in colleges of education (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). One indicator motivating parent involvement practices is evidenced by the increased voice of
government through policies enacted. For example, policymakers as early as 1990 recognized the fact that family involvement in children's learning should be a priority. Thus, the National Educational Goals (1998) reflected that inescapable truth (Shartrand et al., 1997). Additionally, Goals 2000 (Riley, 1998) spoke directly toward the need for parent involvement practices at all levels of schooling. Goal eight of Goals 2000 requires that every state develop policies to assist schools in establishing programs for partnerships that meet the needs of parents and actively engage families in partnerships. Finally, NCLB (US Government, 2001) left no choice in the mandate that educators welcome parents into schools. In fact, the parental involvement language used in NCLB parallels the work of Epstein (1995) and colleagues at Johns Hopkins University as well as the National PTA Standards, which are cited in the bill.

A second motivation for parent involvement curriculum is research showing it as beneficial to entire communities. When 60 teacher education programs were surveyed, 36 indicated plans to increase training in parent involvement. When these respondents explained the reason for their expansion plans, they suggested that "students, teachers, parents, and the broader community would benefit from increased family involvement in schools" (Shartrand et al., 1997, p. 25).

A third motivation for parent involvement curriculum is noted in three separate studies showing that stakeholders acknowledge a need for additional parent involvement training. When 120 undergraduate early childhood and elementary education majors were surveyed about their expectations for working with parents, the vast majority admitted to feeling unprepared (Foster & Loven, 1992). A second study attended to responses of 257 preservice teachers, and a consensus was drawn that
preservice teachers at the beginning and ending of their programs wanted more classes on parent involvement. Additionally, they requested more information about the history, theories, and research on involvement of parents (Tichenor, 1997). The third study revealed that 25% of first-year teachers reported they needed more training in engaging families as support for children in school. Similarly, 35% of the 500 principals queried reported that first-time teachers were not prepared to engage parents and families. Additionally, 58% of the 200 education deans/chairpersons surveyed believe their graduates to be under prepared for engaging families at school. This study also revealed that 50% of teachers believe parents lack school involvement while 48% of parents do not understand the curriculum of the school (MetLife Survey, 2006).

Implementing parent involvement curriculum in colleges of education is also propelled by the motivation of giving legitimacy to the field based on undeniable research findings (Shartrand et al., 1997). When colleges of education embraced parent involvement within the curriculum, they became proactive instead of reactive. According to research of Shartrand and colleagues, a need clearly exists for teacher preparation programs to serve as models, circulate information, and devise standards for a parent involvement curriculum. Similarly, Epstein (1992) states, “The future of school and family partnerships rests in improving teacher education and training” (p. 1147). On the other hand, teacher preparation programs that operate aloof from a systematic program advancing parent involvement send an estimated 120,000 new teachers into elementary and secondary schools every year. Their failure to teach about parent involvement serves to handicap those who seek certification (Shartrand et al., 1997). Aptly stated by Levine (1992), “If one hopes to have teachers teach in different
According to various research studies (Allington, 2000; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991), teachers are integral to effective implementation of curriculum. Epstein and Dauber (1993) posit that parent involvement programs are successful when teachers are willing to be centrally involved in the implementation. Greenwood and Hickman echo this belief when they describe the central role teachers play by developing, planning, and selecting materials for parents to use for children’s home learning experiences. Becker and Epstein (1982) believe those home learning experiences to be the most educationally significant for children. They surveyed 3,700 elementary teachers in 600 schools and found that teachers felt parent involvement in reading with children, signing papers and folders, and summer learning at home were three of the most important tasks for families to affect student achievement. It is likely that the success of those experiences can be traced back to a teacher who embraced partnering with parents. Epstein reflects, “We … found that it was the teachers’ practices, not the education, marital status, or work place of parents, that made the difference in whether parents were productive partners with schools in their children’s education” (Epstein, 1988, p. 58).

Even when teachers are motivated to involve parents, the need exists for tools enabling such engagement. One tool that could be useful to new teachers is the ability to work with diverse families. According to Decker, an expert and writer on school-community partnerships, teachers have little knowledge about adapting instructional approaches, establishing suggested outreach, and relationship-building to meet the requirements of diverse families (HFRP, 2006). Similarly, Hughes, Education Professor
from Toledo, responds to the Harvard Project by insisting that skilled teachers build on the knowledge their students bring to school. Particularly important in the classroom is that knowledge students bring which is shaped by their cultural histories.

Teacher candidates often display negative attitudes toward parent involvement practices (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Six California high schools were studied to determine the level of parent involvement initiated by teachers. Findings from this study showed that 63% of teachers initiated parent contact with “few” parents and did not desire any greater engagement (Dornbusch & Ritter, 1988). In a similar study, Menacker and colleagues (1988) found that 47% of inner-city teachers surveyed believed in engagement of parents, while 30% believed that parents should have little or no input toward school business. Rothenberg and McDermott responded to the HFRP (2006) by relating the results of their study of effective teachers in urban schools. According to Rothenberg and McDermott, even teachers consistently exhibiting best practices found working with parents to be their most disagreeable task. Thus, affecting teacher candidates’ attitudes and dispositions is a skill to be addressed by parent involvement curriculum.

Preservice teachers report various occasions for working with schools and children but limited chances for interacting with parents and families. After surveying 257 preservice teachers, Tichenor (1997) recommended that teacher candidates need direct contact with parents and families in their preparatory coursework and field experiences.

Finally, a decrease in parent involvement is noted as students in K-12 progress through the grade levels. A study by Shartrand and colleagues (1997) notes that early
childhood educators receive more training for parent involvement than educators at any other certification level. This parallels data showing family involvement declines remarkably with each passing school level (Epstein, 1992; Epstein, 1986; Stevenson & Baker, 1987). This is particularly regrettable since parent engagement continues to impact students positively at both elementary (Epstein, 1987; Epstein, 1991) and secondary levels (Keith, Reimers, Fehramm, Pottebaum, & Aubrey, 1986, in Bempechat, 1990).

Chavkin (1991) asserts that parent involvement is most effectively implemented when the barriers are removed through teacher education. Additionally, providing skills for new teachers through a solvent parent involvement curriculum could address the deficits faced by the thousands of new teachers sent into public school classrooms annually (Shartrand et al., 1997).

Specific Program Needs

Five specific themes emerge regarding program needs for parent involvement in teacher education. This section serves to discuss the theoretical beliefs underpinning parent involvement practices; the attitudes, knowledge and skills that should be perpetuated in colleges of education; the infrastructure supporting a parent involvement program; and the specific course needs sustaining a parent involvement curriculum.

Various experts in the field of parent involvement have suggested the concept of partnerships between school, home, and the community (Epstein, 1995; Christenson, Godber, & Anderson, 2005; Hiatt-Michael, 2001). According to Christenson and colleagues, a notion of partnerships suggests a systems approach to parent
involvement. When educators understand involvement as systemic, they begin to see student outcomes comprising emotional, social, and academic aptitudes. Additionally, educators commemorate the successes of diverse students while embracing their strengths. This perspective of a wider world-view exemplifies broader macrosystemic influences at work in the dynamics of partnerships. When a systems approach underpins the theory of teachers, parents begin to be viewed as “essential partners” instead of “desirable extras” (Christenson, Godber, Anderson, 2005).

The attitudes, knowledge, and skills of preservice teachers need to be addressed through parent involvement coursework (Shartrand et al., 1997; Johnson, 2001). Fourteen components are recommended for a parent involvement framework to address preservice teacher attitudes, knowledge, and skills: general family involvement (Shartrand et al., 1997); general family knowledge (Shartrand et al., 1997); home-school communication (Morris & Taylor, 1998; Shartrand et al., 1997); family involvement in learning activities (Shartrand et al., 1997); families supporting schools (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Shartrand et al., 1997); schools supporting families (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Shartrand et al., 1997); families as change agents (Shartrand et al., 1997); potential parental roles in school (Graue & Brown, 2003); reflection on identity (Graue & Brown, 2003); examples of home-school relations through case studies (Graue & Brown, 2003; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991); and strategy development (Graue & Brown, 2003; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Additionally, Reynolds and Clements (2005) believe teachers would benefit from training about barriers to parent involvement and conflict resolution.

Teacher candidates would become more skilled in involving parents if they had
models to examine and the technical expertise to recognize models (Shartrand et al., 1997). Additionally, Chavkin (2005) promotes a greater attention to training preservice teachers at all teacher certification levels regarding parent involvement practices. She believes meeting this challenge would greatly improve school-family partnerships and offer multi-level skills for educators. A third skill that could benefit teachers in parent involvement relates to knowing parents and their specific attributes (Shartrand et al., 1997). Developing partnerships is difficult when parents and teachers lack knowledge about each other, and formal school meetings provide little opportunity for interaction between families and teachers (Johnson, 2001). Access to models, technical expertise, multi-level training, and increasing parent-teacher knowledge of each other are suggestions to increase teacher candidate parent involvement skills.

Experts in the parent involvement field recommend that teacher candidates could become more efficacious at involving parents if they were trained toward better communication practices. One example of this is reflected in the HFRP (1997) which outlined the necessary competencies for working with parents. The first competency includes school-family relations involving communicating with parents (Shartrand et al., 1997). The Harvard Project relates the importance of communication as providing teachers ways to understand families, discuss differences, and construct agreements. Another function of teacher communication with parents is productivity at school through better understanding of children’s environments outside of school. When teachers learn to listen to parents, they emit a welcoming signal to families (Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2003). Furthermore, parents and teachers become more comfortable with one another when they learn to communicate. As teachers become more skilled communicators, they
become more effective at explaining school curriculum, procedures, and expectations (Johnson, 2001). Importantly, teachers who ably communicate with parents are more likely to express expectations and values toward educational goals (Reynolds & Clements, 2005). Finally, communication skills of educators are important as they work with culturally diverse students and their families. Developing these interpersonal communication skills helps teachers become more equipped to augment shared meanings with parents (HFRP, 2006).

Teachers are likely to become more skilled at involving parents if they address their own attitudes toward parents and their children. The HFRP (2006) sought qualitative data and found at least one respondent, E. Kugler, who felt teachers need to move beyond the myths they might hold regarding parents. When educators put parents into a mold that doesn’t fit, Kugler advises, they move beyond traditional parenting models and look for ways schools can support all parents and families. Kugler further relates that some parents who do not come to school are not necessarily uncaring; they just want to be asked to be engaged. Shartrand and colleagues (1997) support Kugler’s response and suggest that teachers and families are best served when the inherent worth of families, as contributors toward children’s education, is recognized.

Compared to other fields of educational study, parent involvement is in its infancy. Therefore, a strong infrastructure to perpetuate parent involvement learning experiences in colleges of education is lacking, according to Epstein (HFRP, 2006). Epstein calls for investments in research to develop a much-needed network for parent involvement practitioners. Greenwood and Hickman (1991) suggest a need for colleges
of education to insist that professional knowledge subtests on teacher certification exams reflect “extra-classroom influences,” such as parent involvement knowledge. When state exams begin to include parent involvement knowledge on subtests, most likely colleges of education will undertake a more supportive infrastructure for teacher candidate learning. Furthermore, networking of teacher education institutions and professional organizations is suggested to provide uninterrupted development, evaluation, and distribution of parent involvement course developments, techniques, and programs (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Shartrand and colleagues (1997) believe that collaboration is a hopeful strategy for growing networks supportive of parent involvement developments. Collaborations are suggested across teaching specialties like early child and special education; further collaborations are also proposed between professional schools of social work and public health.

There are some discrepancies about how specific coursework in parent involvement should unfold. Greenwood and Hickman (1991) suggest a starting place might be to inform learners of the research undergirding parent involvement. Further, they posit that examples of effective practices should follow research revelations. These two elements—research and practice—might motivate stakeholders to promote parent involvement practices. However, embracing parent involvement curriculum affords a quandary. Questions of professional educators tend to center around three components of parent involvement curriculum implementation: infusion of content or stand-alone courses, status of required or elective, or focused on multicultural and special populations (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Greene, a respondent in the Harvard Study (2006), suggested that content should be woven throughout the teacher
preparation program. Similarly, the HFRP (1997) suggested that training should be available through a number of courses across the curricula. The Harvard Study (1997) found that educators intending to increase parent involvement curricula planned to use the case study method, role-play, and video in their programs.

The parent teacher education connection (pte connect) model utilizes a modular format including course objectives, content, and case studies to involve teacher candidates with parent involvement practices. Six modules are available online to teacher candidates, and instructors may choose to use some or all of the offerings in course presentations (Harris, Jacobson, & Brown, 2007). These suggestions are attuned to the research done by Henderson (1987) who found that family involvement training is most effective when it is extensive across time and pursued through various activities. Shartrand and associates (1997) agree that no single instructional method can prepare all teachers to effectively engage parents; however, approaches need to be comprehensive, varied, and integrated across course work. Furthermore, integrating parent involvement curriculum alleviates the difficulty faced by colleges of education who have limited course offerings and face state regulations (Shartrand et al., 1997).

More recently, Graue (2005) suggests that parent involvement should be integrated across courses and taught in a stand-alone course. Her response is based on findings from interviews she conducted with nine preservice teachers who noted the need for more attention to be placed on parent involvement in colleges of education.

Across several studies a general consensus was reached about the need for parent involvement fieldwork experiences. For example, when 257 preservice teachers were surveyed, their narrative responses indicated two types of experiences as needed
in parent involvement curriculum: class discussions plus field experiences (Tichenor, 1997). The Harvard Project (1997) suggested that colleges move beyond the classroom by offering students direct field experiences with families (Shartrand et al., 1997). Fieldwork is also suggested so teachers and parents do not view each other as alien individuals (de Acosta, 1996; Morris & Taylor, 1998). Ongoing interactions with families become possible when fieldwork is provided through college courses (Greenwood & Hickman, 1991). Additionally, fieldwork placements that are informal seek to serve teacher candidates well as they interact with parents in after-school programs, for example (Graue & Brown, 2003; Graue, 2005).

As parent involvement curriculum needs are addressed, the literature suggests that professional educators embrace the systems theory to understand the concept of partnerships. Furthermore, programs need to speak to the attitudes, knowledge, and skills of learners who aim to involve parents effectively. Importantly, the infrastructure to underpin this relatively new topic should be examined. Finally, specific course needs should be explored with particular attention toward field experiences.

**Training Frameworks**

Acknowledging the need for infrastructure to underpin parent involvement curriculum, five specific frameworks are suggested as emerging. These frameworks for teacher preparation involving parent involvement are discussed with attention to general knowledge about family contributions to child development and school achievement. Additionally, these frameworks are examined regarding how they build toward specific knowledge of ways in which schools can support families and families can support
The three major approaches recognized by Shartrand and colleagues exemplify the types of attitudes, knowledge, and skills that educators can attain to augment their efficacy with families. These approaches include (a) a functional approach that depicts the roles and responsibilities of both parents and teachers in advancing student achievement; (b) a parent empowerment approach supported by the strengths of marginalized families; and (c) a cultural competence approach where schools are inclusive, respectful settings that welcome diversity. Aside from the three approaches recognized by Shartrand, two additional approaches are noted. A comprehensive school improvement approach encourages the integration of all significant adults into the success of the child (Comer, Haynes, & Joyner, 1996). Finally, the building cultures approach is unique in that it promotes parent involvement through understanding differences in the ways cultures understand school (Rothstein-Fisch, 2003). While each of the frameworks can be used independently of the other four, a combination of frameworks is also possible in teacher preparation programs.

Functional Approach

The work of Joyce Epstein (1986) ignited understanding of the functional approach in which preservice teachers learn skills for involving parents from diverse backgrounds in school settings. In general, the type of teacher training that develops from attention to Epstein’s study of school practices of parent involvement promotes the theory that all teachers benefit from knowing about the benefits and goals of family involvement, as well as the barriers to it. The functional approach to teacher education
requires teachers to be aware of family differences while respecting those variations. Inherent in this approach is the educator’s knowledge of different family structures and childrearing practices. Specifically, the functional approach calls for teachers to be knowledgeable of how families’ social and educational needs can be supported by schools. Another particularity of the functional approach is the notion that teachers support and involve parents in all areas of school decision making that are pertinent to families (Shartrand et al., 1997).

According to Kirschenbaum (2001), an exemplar of the functional approach can be found in the Bank Street College of Education in New York City. Teacher candidates access a tri-partite competency design: content knowledge, attitudes/dispositions, and practice/performance skills. Professor Rena Rice uses various strategies to provide learning experiences for teacher candidates. Two assignments utilized by Rice are role playing to develop empathy for parents and essay writing as a tool for self-reflection on their own family’s school involvement. A third assignment invites teacher candidates to develop a community collaboration plan for the upcoming school year.

**Parent Empowerment Approach**

The parent empowerment approach is founded on two major assumptions. First, it assumes that families have strengths instead of deficits; second, it supposes that much of the most effective child-rearing practices can be located within the community through social networks, cultural traditions, and older generations (Cochran & Dean, 1991). The type of teacher preparation built from these basic assumptions is likely to focus on recognizing parental strengths, learning how to empathize with parents, and
finding creative ways to involve parents in school activities. Colleges of education embracing the parent empowerment approach are likely to prepare teacher candidates for home visits in order to learn more about families of their students. Furthermore, teacher candidates might work within neighborhoods to help families build clusters of support. Importantly, teacher candidates would likely “learn to respect parents as the most important adults in the lives of their children” (Cochran & Dean, 1991, p. 263).

Parent empowerment is exemplified through the Cornell Family Matters Project (Dean, 1983) in which teachers, school administrators, and parents are creatively involved as partners. This project educates teachers about empathy toward parents and aids them in highlighting parental strengths. Second, teachers are given direct instruction regarding best practices for parent-teacher conferences and ways to creatively engage families in school activities. Teacher strengths are emphasized as well. Simultaneously, administrators learn to recognize the potential found in parent-teacher partnerships while envisioning removal of the possible barriers to edifying partnerships between home and school. When administrators use translators for school meetings, for example, they employ an element of the parent empowerment approach. Finally, workshops are available for parents to learn about the challenges faced by teachers, to practice problem solving, and to become aware of specific skills for effective conferencing with teachers (Cochran & Dean, 1991). While this example provides evidence of the parent empowerment approach used with in-service teachers, these same attributes could be present in a teacher preparation program.

*Cultural Competence Approach*

Luis Moll (1992) coined cultural competence as an approach for preparing future
teachers in ways that school them to welcome and include all families. Diversity is respected and valued in the cultural competence framework. Moll’s primary premise is that future educators realize the academic benefit available to minority and students of low socio-economic status whose families are active participants in their schooling. This particular training model seeks to reverse negative parenting stereotypes and replace them with information about cultural influences on student learning and diverse parental disciplining practices. Specifically, Moll’s framework requests that preservice teachers discover the potential of every parent as a contributor to the success of the classroom. Parents in this role may be guest speakers, act as translators, or organize events at school (Shartrand et al., 1997).

The University of Texas at El Paso (UTEP) embodies Moll’s framework through Project Podemos. Podemos is the Spanish word representing, “We can do it” (Munter, 2004, p. 19). One aspect of Project Podemos involves biweekly sessions for future teachers and parents of English language learners. A primary goal of the sessions is to promote family learning of mathematics or science. Teacher education students both participate and observe in the school and work with parents to design an after-school power night.

Because El Paso is positioned on the Texas/Mexican border, unique opportunities to promote understanding of cultural diversity are presented to future teachers. The family learning literacy project provides reciprocal benefits to both the novice educators and the non-native English speaking parents. Future teachers develop new knowledge about what is involved in raising children when parents lack English fluency. Importantly, the partnering of UTEP students with families from the U.S./Mexico
border develops strong bonds and a healthy comfort level which will likely promote further home-school connections (Munter, 2004). Moreover, the parents gain close contact with college students and are exposed to ideas that may help them to involve their children in math and science learning at home.

*Comprehensive School Improvement Approach*

The rationale behind the comprehensive school improvement approach is the importance of healthy child development as integral to student learning (Comer, Haynes, & Joyner, 1996). Comer’s premise is that all the adults who contribute to the life of a child are responsible for the environment in which the child develops. This premise results in a restructuring of schools so that all significant adults interact to create an environment where children can flourish. Thus, parent involvement is the foundation of this approach. Assuming this framework, schools include parents in planning, managing, and reinforcing school activities and practices.

The comprehensive school improvement approach is exemplified in Chicago schools where parents work in conjunction with school personnel to plan, problem solve, and govern the schools. Parent representatives impact Chicago schools by sitting on school councils who hire new educational leaders. Through the leadership of parents, Chicago leadership better reflects community diversity. Importantly, leadership chosen by parents is likely to be supported by parents and community. Moreover, parent representation provides an avenue for advocacy of schools and students (Lopez & Kreider, 2003).
**Bridging Cultures Approach**

The bridging cultures approach was developed collaboratively among WestEd regional laboratory, The University of California at Los Angeles, and seven bilingual public school teachers from Southern California. Their goal was to envision ways that individualism and collectivism could be useful for educators seeking a bridge between cultures (Trumbull et al., 2001). The gamut of individualism/collectivism symbolizes the extent to which a culture highlights individual achievement versus interdependent associations and group welfare. Authors of the guide to this curricular framework point out that the dominant US culture is acutely individualistic while many immigrant cultures are robustly collectivistic. Straddling these vastly different environments becomes quite a hurdle for many students from collective ideologies who enter schools perpetuating individualistic schemes. This framework attempts to define culture while contrasting concepts of individualism and collectivism. Additionally, the framework provides evidence of outcome differences through the lenses of different orientations.

Authors of this curriculum focus on the relations and communication between community and school (Trumbull et al., 2001). Specifically, the bridging cultures approach reviews the following: (a) conventional approaches to parent involvement, (b) cross-cultural parent-teacher conferences, (c) examples of effective parental involvement practices, (d) experiences of teachers who work as ethnographers in their own classrooms, and (e) challenges of individualistic and collectivistic entities working together.

The bridging cultures approach has been assessed by its developers who provided pre-assessments before and post-assessments after training workshops.
Fourteen respondents to the assessments showed evidence of a more balanced ideology of individualism and collectivism toward problem solving after the training workshops. All 14 respondents suggested a continuation of training sessions and compacted to implement the bridging cultures framework in individual school settings (Trumbull et al., 2001).

The bridging cultures approach is exemplified in the classroom of an upper elementary teacher in Southern California. In contrast to the traditional parent conference, Marie Altchech used group conferences for her largely Latino parent population. When Latino parents arrived, they sat in a circle with the teacher and their children while they discussed questions raised by each parent. In the grouped conferences, at least one parent began to talk bringing others into the conversation. Following the conference, students lead parents through the campus and proudly presented their portfolios (Trumbull et al., 2001).

Parent Involvement Curriculum Models in Teacher Education

The aforementioned frameworks for parent involvement practices serve as underpinnings for the curricular models that have evolved in practice. Even though the general picture of teacher background in parent involvement is bleak, some curricular innovations are promising (Chavkin, 2005). This section begins by exploring the factors that have caused a growth in models for parent involvement in teacher education. Next, six unique models currently in practice will be inspected with attention to their placements among the previously explored frameworks. The following specific curriculums will be examined: SEDL’s ideal model; Harvard’s seven key knowledge
areas; Kirschenbaum’s knowledge, attitudes, and skills; Leuder’s self-renewing partnerships; Epstein’s practice model; and parent teacher education connection’s curriculum modules.

Several factors have united to highlight a need for parent involvement education for teacher candidates. First, California provided the need for parental involvement training by mandating work in partnerships with parents for teacher certification. Similarly, since 2003, New York has required that all teachers receiving certification have training that includes home, school, community, and collaborative components. Second, the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) now includes family-school-community partnerships as part of the base of knowledge, skills, and dispositions expected of teachers in Standard 1. These factors combined with conclusive evidence about the positive effects of parent involvement at school call for colleges of education to provide appropriate curriculum in teacher preparation programs (Chavkin, 2005). Hence, several parent involvement models have emerged to make the theoretical frameworks more viable as a practice in colleges of education.

**Ideal Model**

The Southwest Educational Development Laboratory (SEDL) developed a practical framework to serve as a model for teachers aiming to engage families. The model was developed by results analyzed from surveys of teachers, principals, administrators, teacher educators, and parents. Moreover, a survey of pertinent literature was examined in addition to comments from 150 college and university faculty and inservice directors regarding their vision for teacher preparation toward parent
involvement (Chavkin & Williams, 1988). SEDL’s ideal model is composed of four components: the personal framework, the practical framework, the conceptual framework, and the contextual framework. An overlapping of the first three elements of the model within the contextual framework as an underpinning represents the ideal model.

The focus of the personal framework is on teachers’ self-knowledge regarding values and beliefs. Moreover, the personal framework serves to aid teachers in their perception of the school, importance of differences among individual parents, and their understanding of community diversity. The practical framework informs teacher candidates about program models of parent involvement. Furthermore, this frame serves to enlighten educators about effective instructional methods, barriers to parent involvement programs, and interpersonal skills of communication. Within the conceptual framework, educators are exposed to various theories of parent involvement practices along with the research, history, and nature of parent involvement development. The contextual frame represents the environment, both physical and attitudinal, where the training occurs (Chavkin, 2005).

**Seven Key Knowledge Areas**

The Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) emphasizes seven knowledge areas as keys for teachers to effectively involve parents. These seven keys are recommended for inclusion in teacher preparation programs (Shartrand et al., 1997). The first key of knowledge is general family involvement. In this broad category, educators are exposed to the objectives, advantages, and obstacles to parent
involvement. Second, HFRP suggests that educators have a general family knowledge. This key recognizes the need of teachers to have an understanding of diverse family cultures, parenting practices, and lifestyles. Third, HFRP advises home-school communication as integral to parent involvement education. Effective two-way communication between parents and teachers is stressed through techniques and specific strategies. Fourth, family involvement in learning activities is a key recommended by HFRP. Teachers learn methods for involving parents through providing information about homework and community collaborations. A fifth element of this framework advocates families supporting schools. Teacher candidates are provided examples of ways in which families can be invited to help inside and outside the classroom. Importantly, the sixth component of this model suggests that schools support families. Preservice teachers are informed about social service needs, in addition to educational supports, they might suggest for families. Finally, key seven regards families as change agents. Teacher candidates come to understand the possible roles families can play as advocates for specific policies, curriculum, and programs at school (Chavkin, 2005).

Knowledge, Attitudes, and Skills

According to Kirschenbaum (2001), teacher educators are most helpful toward influencing teacher candidates when they implement curriculum that provides content affecting knowledge, attitudes, and skills. Kirschenbaum asserts that teachers need to know how to develop partnerships with parents, but just as importantly, he believes teachers need to desire those partnerships and feel confident in that role. Although the
cognitive, affective, and behavioral areas may overlap when this model is utilized, each component is exemplified with several descriptors. For example, knowledge components are seen as theoretical understandings, paradigms, family involvement forms, and models of implementation. Attitude may be represented in practice through self-knowledge activities, partner and group work, and ease of working with diverse populations. Skills are acknowledged through dual communication, conferences, home visits, and communication with diverse populations. Kirschenbaum suggests that teacher educators add process descriptors to each component as deemed relevant.

Self-renewing Partnership Model

Leuder (1998) theorizes a systems approach to parent involvement by promoting the creation of learning communities. His vision is that parent involvement becomes multi-dimensional in that schools reach out to all families—especially those who do not communicate with the school. In Leuder’s framework, schools are responsible for actively seeking partnerships with hard-to-reach families. In practice, Leuder points to Apple Hill Elementary School as an exemplar for reaching families that were not involved at school. Goal-setting among educators was specifically targeted to reach specific families. Then, explicit plans were implemented to reach the goals. Leuder promotes the use of case studies to provide examples for teacher candidates learning partnership practices with silent families.

Six Types of Involvement

Joyce Epstein (2001) has written two volumes especially intended for educators
who intend to partner with families and collaborate with communities. Epstein uses her expertise to provide theory, history, and research in her texts. Second, she elaborates on policies, partnership programs, and strategies for application between families and teachers.

Epstein’s model for parent involvement was developed from policy, theory, and research. However, Epstein’s typology offers practicality for use in teacher education. The six types of parent involvement are noted as: parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, advocacy and decision making, and collaborating with the community. Epstein elaborates on these six components of her framework, but she also provides model practices and possible challenges (Chavkin, 2005).

*Parent Teacher Education Connection (PTE Connect)*

Curriculum developed from a partnership of four demographically diverse universities resulted in six modules designed to sustain preservice teacher development of cross-cultural proficiency aiming toward engaging parents in the learning of K-12 students (Trotti, Harris, Jacobson, & Brown, 2006). The Center for Parent Education at the University of North Texas in conjunction with the University of Mississippi, the University of Texas at El Paso, and the University of North Dakota responded to the broad spectrum of studies promoting parental involvement by developing and disseminating six online curriculum modules. The content of the six modules is based on the National PTA Standards developed from Epstein’s model. PTE Connect modules are designed specifically for preservice teachers and are replete with objectives, content, case studies, activities, and resources listed for each of the six modules.
Additionally, efforts are made to focus on parent experiential perceptions of new teachers at different educational certification levels: K-4, 4-8, and 8-12. Moreover, the curriculum modules are devised with parent involvement strategies for teachers of K-12 students in mind as well.

Importantly, PTE Connect modules have been pilot-tested over three years to determine the possibilities of preservice teacher changes in knowledge and attitudes related to learning acquired from the modules. The impact studies so far have provided promising results that indicate the possibility of correlation between improvements in learner attitudes about and knowledge of parent involvement strategies (Harris, Jacobson, & Hemmer, 2004).

*Models within the Frameworks*

Frameworks for parent involvement provide a theoretical basis for understanding the rationale behind the various models being developed for use in practice. However, the functional framework is the one most prevalent in the models examined. For example, SEDL’s ideal model (Chavkin & Williams, 1988) is representative of the functional approach by asserting that all teachers benefit from knowing about the benefits and goals of family involvement, as well as the barriers to it. Second, the Harvard Family Research Project (HFRP) acknowledges seven knowledge areas for teachers to involve parents (Shartrand et al., 1997). The premise of their model combines elements of both the functional approach and the parent empowerment approach to parent involvement.

One example of the seven keys model aligning with the functional approach
regards their parallelism toward understanding of diverse families and parenting practices. However, the seven keys model also suggests an alignment with the parent empowerment approach in the seventh element of their framework by proposing that teachers view families as change agents. Third, Kirschenbaum’s knowledge, attitudes, and skills model (2001) is largely functional in that teachers are directed to desire and feel confident in partnering with parents. This ideology is directly supported by the functional approach to parent involvement. Leuder’s self-renewing partnership model (1998) relates most closely to the cultural competence approach (Moll, 1992). He envisions settings in which educators reach out toward parents who do not communicate with the school.

Experts (Shartrand et al., 1997; Lawrence-Lightfoot, 2001) report that those who are most reluctant to come to school are usually poor and minority parents who likely had negative experiences in their own schooling. Thus, those silent parents are likely of a different culture than that prominent in the school. According to Moll’s cultural competence approach, educators must discover the potential of every parent.

Epstein’s six types of involvement (2001) certainly represent a functional approach to parent involvement. In fact, Epstein’s work served to aid educators in understanding this particular framework. Importantly for teacher educators, Epstein’s typology represents both theoretical and practical applications toward parent involvement. A major premise of the functional approach is that teachers learn of the benefits and barriers to parent involvement. Epstein elaborates on this premise through her six types of parent involvement. Finally, the Parent Teacher Education Connection curriculum is representative of the functional approach to parent involvement. Written
with new teachers in mind, this modular curriculum reveals many practical applications of parent involvement. Using the National PTA Standards, pte connect offers teachers information about dilemmas faced by various culture groups through the use of case studies (Harris & Trotti, 2007). This opportunity aligns well with the functional approach as it frames a need for understanding different family structures and childrearing practices.

Summary

An overview of the literature regarding parent involvement in teacher education provided definitions of parent involvement that have evolved over several decades. However, government policies have given form to the parent involvement terminology that was previously somewhat nebulous. Moreover, examination of the literature evidenced a lack of parent involvement curriculum in colleges of education. Third, a case was made for explicit, systematic, parent involvement curriculum needed in teacher preparation programs. Then, specific suggestions for components of a parent involvement curriculum were evidenced through various literature studies. Next, six curriculum frameworks were presented, and components of each were described. Finally, six curriculum models were examined and situated within one or more of the frameworks.

Teacher Demographics

The review of literature began by establishing the importance of parent involvement in schools. Next, the review examined teacher preparation aimed at
persuading new teachers toward involving parents at school. The literature review now veers toward an examination of teacher demographics with especial interest toward teacher ethnicity. This section will look at literature describing specific teacher characteristics, literature exploring the discrepancy of teacher ethnicity distributions to that of school populations, literature explaining related problems regarding that discrepancy, and literature detailing the responses of educators to those perceived problems.

**Teacher Characteristics**

Although teachers’ characteristics are numerous, this section of the study largely examines primarily the trait of teacher ethnicity and how that factor has remained constant in an ever-changing school population. For example, teachers in public schools during the 2003-2004 school year were noted as 83% White while the teaching force in 1994 was 87% White (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999; 2007). Additionally, 75% of the teaching force in 2004 was female, over half of the teaching force had at least ten years of teaching experience, and almost all classroom teachers held a bachelor’s degree or higher (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2007).

Further examination of the ethnic distribution of teachers during this time frame reveals that 8% were Black, and 6% of teachers were Hispanic. The remaining 2.7% of educators were of other minority groups. These statistics compare with those from 1994 when teachers were ethnically distributed as follows: 7% Black, 4% Hispanic, 1% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native (National Center for Educational Statistics, 1999).
When Graue and Brown (2003) conducted a survey to illuminate the social and cultural understandings of 130 teacher candidates, they found characteristics of their sample to be 91.5% White, 0.8% African-American, 2.3% Asian, 2.3% Hispanic, and 2.3% other. Similar to the National Center for Educational Statistics (NCES) group, teachers in Graue and Brown’s survey were 74.6% female. Additionally, Graue and Brown report that participants in their survey were mostly of middle class backgrounds. Especially troubling findings from this survey indicate that teacher candidates viewed parent involvement in somewhat stereotypical ways regarding gender roles and expectations of lower parent involvement from minority parents. Marshall (2001) responded with concern about the majority of the teaching force being White and noted the need for heightened cultural awareness on the part of educators as school populations continue to diversify. However, Marshall’s desire for heightened cultural awareness is met with the challenge of teacher preparation programs where 94% of faculty is White (Fuller, 1992). Additionally, teachers prepared in historically Black institutions represent 66% of the Black teachers in the United States (Clark, 1987). Thus, segregated teacher preparation programs may lack the richness of discourse needed for teachers to be effective in a divergent public school population.

**Ethnic Discrepancies of Teachers and Students**

While statistical data continue to point toward a teaching force that is largely White, student populations are diversifying. For example, public school enrollment in 1994 was represented by the following distributions: 66% White; 17% Black; 13%
Hispanic; 4% Asian/Pacific Islander, and 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native (NCES, 1999).

On the other hand, student ethnic distributions in 2004 were somewhat different. For example, White students represented 60% of the population. Black student populations remained steady at 17%, and Hispanic student populations rose to 19% of school enrollment. Moreover, Asian/Pacific Islander populations rose to 4.5% in 2004, and American Indian/Alaskan Native students made up 1.2% of the school population. These numbers resulted in the following changes in American public school populations: 9% decrease in White student enrollment; 0% change in Black student enrollment; 46% increase in Hispanic student enrollment; 12.5% increase in Asian/Pacific Islander student enrollment; and a 20% increase in American Indian/Alaskan Native student enrollment.

Teacher demographic changes across the decade of 1994-2004 reveal quite different changes in ethnic distribution patterns. For example, the number of White teachers has decreased by 4.5%, and the number of Black teachers has increased by 14%. While the number of Hispanic teachers has increased by 50%, those numbers represent only 6% of the total teaching force. Asian and Native American teacher numbers have remained stable over the decade.

Problems Related to Teachers’ and Students’ Ethnic Discrepancies

Due to stable teacher demographics and dynamic student characteristics, a chasm exists between schools and families (Johnson, 2001). This may be due, in part, to the fact that teachers and their students are less likely to live in the neighborhood of
their students than teachers were a century ago. In the past decades, teachers were likely to meet parents and families informally through community events, religious activities, and shopping experiences. However, the current school atmosphere may place parents and teachers in a more formal role of communicating at scheduled meetings and conferences. Lawrence-Lightfoot (2003) completed an ethnographic study of teachers who practiced strategic parent involvement, and she laments that often the crossroad for parents and teachers is hard to find.

Culture Clashes

The propensity toward Whiteness of teachers and the increase in student ethnic diversity creates an inescapable meeting of cultures in public school classrooms. Generally, however, teachers bring a modicum of knowledge and background experience to a cross-cultural classroom (Sleeter, 2001; Irvine, 1992; Zimpher & Ashburn, 1992). This deficiency was exemplified in a study of seven student teachers assigned to an eight-week placement at an elementary school composed of 99% African-American students. Further, the student teachers in the study were of middle class backgrounds while the student population was from families whom the principal described as the working poor. The researchers collected data by interviewing student teachers, observing teaching demonstrations by the participants, and conversing with elementary students and the cooperating teachers. Audio and video taped classroom discussions were also used to analyze the teaching at Park Elementary School.

Research findings promoted a classification of the student teachers into three roles: resisters, rethinkers, and culturally relevant. Two students were noted as
resisters of the teaching experience. They consistently related self-concerns while marking the days until the placement was complete. Classroom management issues created a disastrous experience for one male teacher candidate. When asked if he had called parents, he replied, “I assume that if I call the parents of these children I will find the same bad attitude about school as is evident in their children” (Gillette, 1996, p. 112).

Four student teachers were categorized as rethinkers. They noted their deficiency in teaching students of color; however, they worked to modify their preconceived notions and reflect on practices that connected them to students most effectively. The rethinkers entered the field experience with a deficit orientation in their view of the school population. However, these student teachers came to realize it was their deficit instead of the students’. Importantly, each of the four refused to start their teaching in a school such as Park Elementary. One teacher decided to take more multicultural classes before she completed her teacher preparation program while three decided to work in settings representative of their own cultural backgrounds.

Finally, one student teacher was found to be culturally relevant in this experience. Although Gina entered the student teaching experience with little exposure to diverse populations, she found a way to connect with her students. She found ways to enhance her lessons in order to meet student needs. Importantly, Gina looked at her students as having much to offer her as a learner (Gillette, 1996).

Discrepant Viewpoints

Another problem associated with differences in cultural heritages of students and
their teachers emerges through mismatches in viewpoints and practices (Graue & Brown, 2003). This is evident in a study of 130 teacher candidates who were beginning their teacher preparation program in a large public Midwestern university. Researchers surveyed all participants to understand the perspectives that beginning teacher candidates bring to the program. Survey results indicate that teacher candidates have preconceived notions of working with families that reflect their own backgrounds. Moreover, teacher candidates expect that families will support their decisions in the classroom. Participants widely suggested that parents have their own role, and it is clearly situated in the home and outside of the classroom. Most respondents focused on the expectations of respect from families that was due them because of their professional expertise. However, Graue and Brown (2003) point toward the growing body of ethnographic literature that depicts the applications of diverse families framing their behaviors within a cultural connotation system.

**Responses and Solutions**

Young, white, middle-class women may not have broad experiences to support diverse ways of understanding the intricate relationships connecting home and school. However, responses and solutions to this predicament have been suggested by educational experts seeking ways to better prepare teachers for teaching diverse populations (Graue & Brown, 2003; Sleeter, 2001). Four suggestions have emerged from reviewing pertinent literature: alternate certification programs, better preparation of White teachers, gaining variant perspectives through crossing cultural boundaries, and recruiting teachers with particular characteristics.
Sleeter (2001) suggests that the development of alternate teacher education programs may act as a magnet for teachers of color who are currently employed outside of education or as paraprofessionals. Alternate certification programs sometimes develop insights other than those depicted through the traditional White teacher preparation routes. In fact, students of color are often recruited and valued in alternative teacher preparation programs based on the valuable assets they bring to a program.

Although a more diverse population of teacher candidates is desired, it remains essential to promote White teacher candidates toward greater success in engaging students and parents of different cultures (Sleeter, 2001). Suggested experiences to aid new teachers in engaging culturally diverse families regard field experiences in the community coupled with coursework. Studies relating the importance of fieldwork (Tichenor, 1997; HRFP, 1997; Acosta, 1996; Morris & Taylor, 1998) were cited in previous sections of this writing.

A critical focus on cultural boundaries is suggested in the hope of developing strategies for implementing parent involvement practices with all families (Graue & Brown, 2003). This evaluation of cultural practices that frame actions and behaviors of different families is hoped to provide broader awareness of issues that teachers and families face in the common goal of educating children. The case study method is noted as one particular method that may help culturally different partners realize a more fruitful relationship. According to Harris and Trotti (2007), case studies are often successful in improving teacher candidates’ knowledge of and attitudes toward parent involvement. PTE Connect infuses culturally diverse case studies in its modular parent involvement curriculum. Additionally, Weiss, Kreider, Lopez, and Chatman (2005) responded to the
need for culturally diverse parent involvement materials by editing a book of cases focusing on divergent families and schools that serve them.

One strategy suggested to address the disconnect between cultures of home and school is that of recruiting teachers with particular knowledge, experiences, and attitudes predisposing them to teach in diverse school settings. According to Haberman (1995), successful preservice teachers bring certain attributes to the teaching field. Generally, his research points to successful novice teachers being of color, older (30 to 50 years of age), and experienced with raising children and participants in the work force.

Summary

This section of the literature review was characterized by statistical evidence that White teachers continue to represent the dominating instructional culture in public schools. On the other hand, evidence was presented indicating the dynamics of public school populations regarding diversity. Studies were described in which problems resulted when White teachers and diverse student populations collided in classrooms. Finally, this section offered several responses as possible solutions toward meeting the challenge of home and school partnerships that have unique cultural boundaries but a common goal of student success.

Teacher Multicultural Concerns

The previous section examined the demographics of teachers in public elementary and secondary schools. Data was provided showing the disproportionate
number of White teachers in classrooms compared to more diverse student populations. Literature examined in this section will explain the multicultural concerns that teachers have regarding teaching students from different cultures. Three specific categories emerge from the literature on teacher multicultural concerns: literature describing teacher attitudes, literature discerning particular assets of culturally competent teachers, and literature describing multicultural education and its impact on teachers and their students.

Teacher Attitudes

A variety of studies attempt to describe the attitudes of teacher candidates toward multicultural teaching. Findings from these studies indicate that novice teachers are unsure about teaching diverse student populations (Sleeter, 2001). According to Schutz, Neyhart, and Reck (1996), this uncertainty may exist because of a naivety about urban children. Moreover, a largely White population of teachers may bring stereotypes about students into their classroom practices. A limited vision of teaching multicultural students sometimes blinds preservice teachers who continue to use prescribed curriculum without attention to cultural differences (Goodwin, 1994). While racism is touted by some minority parents, research reports show that most White preservice teachers lack awareness or understanding of discriminating practices (Avery & Walker, 1993; King, 1991; Su, 1996, 1997).

When novice teachers attempt to apply diversity programs in their classrooms, diverse students often view them as inauthentic. Students of color are highly critical of these practices, believing them to be superficial (Parker & Hood, 1995). Such practices
were noted as special emphasis on Black history during February or a particular unit on Negro cowboys instead of a steady, consistent aim at understanding diverse students every day.

Henry (1995) posits that reflective teachers take the first step toward awareness of their own attitudes toward multicultural teaching. Those attitudes may be realized when teacher candidates are exposed to multicultural education. Eight different studies report that students’ attitudes toward multicultural teaching improved after coursework (Baker, 1973, 1977; Bennett, 1979; Bennett, Niggle, & Stage, 1990; Hennington, 1981; Martin & Koppelman, 1991; Rios, McDaniel, & Stowell, 1998; Tran & Young, 1994). Some studies recorded only minimal gains (Baker, 1973, 1977). Moreover, a follow up to one study found that gains were lost only a month after the course ended (Hennington, 1981). Two studies used an experimental design to examine the effect of coursework on students’ applications of multicultural learning. Findings indicate no difference between the transfer of student learning from the treatment group compared to the control group receiving no specific multicultural training (Guillaume, Zuniga-Hill, & Yee, 1998). McDiarmid (1992) studied a cohort of Los Angeles teacher candidates who had participated in 15 sessions on pedagogy and cultural backgrounds in Los Angeles schools. His interviews with these preservice teachers revealed that the sessions had perpetuated stereotypes and broad generalizations about diverse cultural groups.

**Assets of Culturally Competent Teachers**

Teacher candidates exhibit ambivalence about their ability to teach diverse students. Pang and Sablan (1998) report that White preservice teachers are especially
confused about ways to teach African-American students. However, teacher candidates of color are generally more committed to social justice and providing equal learning opportunities for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1991). Although African-American students do not necessarily bring more knowledge about pedagogy to the classroom than White teachers (Goodwin, 1997), they are more likely to be devoted to multicultural teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1991).

One qualitative study supported previous citations regarding teacher candidate’s uncertainty about teaching diverse cultures (Valli, 1996) while exploring possible teacher assets maintained by culturally competent teachers. Data were collected from research on six White students who entered their student teaching placements during the same semester. Two of the teacher candidates were placed in a junior high school of 95% African-American students. Four students were assigned to a senior high school where White students represented only 30% of the student population. Findings from the study focused on classroom observations, videotaped lessons, interviews, student reflections on teaching, discussions, and conversations occurring within the intern cohort.

Student teachers initially reported anxiety about their school placements. Moreover, only one of the six students had any previous coursework in multicultural education. Some cooperating teachers perpetuated student concerns with negative storytelling about students in their respective classes. However, other teachers continued to mentor the interns while introducing them to positive outcomes at the schools. During the course of the placements, interns began to overcome their fears while replacing stereotypes with authentic experiences (Valli, 1996).
At the conclusion of the student teaching semester, findings revealed several characteristics of teachers shown to be assets for successful multicultural teaching. Data analysis revealed that progress was made in each placement when teacher candidates began to establish trusting relationships with their students. These relationships were developed by student interns in four ways: risking personal revelations through personal stories, evoking student voice through reciprocal listening to student stories, respectfully coping with confrontations erupting in the classroom, and evoking a responsive curriculum considerate of student backgrounds (Valli, 1996). Matt reported his finding, “You can’t spend hours talking about an obsolete White person and then spend only two to three minutes on Booker T. Washington” (p. 301).

The Impact of Multicultural Education

Multicultural education has received mixed reviews in studies relating its impact on students. However, it seems likely that assets of culturally competent teachers are worthy of exploration through teacher preparation coursework. The upcoming text examines the literature on multicultural education regarding the specific coursework offerings and fieldwork provisions in teacher preparation programs. Moreover, the impact of multicultural education on White teachers is explored through various studies. Finally, the transfer of multicultural education to classroom practices is noted in this section.

Characteristics of Multicultural Education

Attention to multicultural education in teacher preparation has been solidly
instituted in more than half of the teacher education programs in the U.S. However, the authentic realization of multicultural education continues to evolve (Marshall, 1998). Particularities of multicultural education in teacher preparation programs usually center on courses and fieldwork experiences (Sleeter, 2001). Components of multicultural courses take a variety of frames. Faculty members indicate the use of case studies, autobiography (Clark & Medina, 2000), cultural correspondence exchanges (Fuller & Ahler, 1987), and debate (Marshall, 1998). These frames serve largely to raise teacher candidates’ awareness of cultural and racial differences.

Fieldwork experiences are another aspect of multicultural teaching preparation. Some states require fieldwork experiences as part of a multicultural course (Sleeter, 1989). Generally, field work is implemented in teacher preparation programs through a requirement that teacher candidates work directly with culturally diverse children in their communities (Sleeter, 2001). An assumption could be made that these experiences would provide increased confidence to the students involved. Two studies validated the aspect of increased confidence in teacher candidates involved in fieldwork experiences (Haberman & Post, 1992; Reed, 1993). However, negative attitudes toward students increased at the end of the fieldwork compared to those attitudes at the beginning of the experience.

In addition to coursework and field experiences, some teacher preparation programs have included community-based, cross-cultural immersion experiences for teacher candidates. These experiences are possible when teacher candidates reside in communities that are culturally dissimilar from their own while they are learning to teach. Community-based learning has been supported as powerful for improving cross-cultural
teaching (Sleeter, 1996; Yeo, 1997). Immersion projects at Indiana University place teacher candidates in the American Indian Reservation Project, the Hispanic Community Project in the lower Rio Grande Valley, the Urban Project in Indianapolis, and the Overseas Project (Sleeter, 2001). Graduates from the American Indian Project report increased knowledge, improved attitudes, and employability at both Native and non-Native schools (Mahan, 1982). Similar findings were evident from the Overseas Project, where teacher candidates reported communities as places for significant learning experiences (Stachowski & Mahan, 1998). Although most community-immersion projects have a very small sample size, researchers usually report them as being powerful influences on student learning (Sleeter, 2001).

**Impact on White Teachers**

A noticeable effort has been made by some teacher preparation programs to impact White teacher candidates through multicultural teaching practices (Sleeter, 2001). Action research and narratives explaining multicultural education experiences reflect on these efforts. Additionally, studies have been implemented to learn how White teacher candidates perceive these efforts. Six studies used the pretest-posttest method to inspect the ramifications of a course with a field experience component. Findings from four of the studies noted a positive change in multicultural field work practices of predominantly White preservice teachers (Bondy, Schmitz, & Johnson, 1993; Grottgau & Nickolai-Mays, 1989; Mason, 1997; Wiggins & Follo, 1999). However, findings from two of the studies were less encouraging. Teacher candidate participants in both of
these studies interpreted their field experiences through their preconceived, stereotypical notions (Haberman & Post, 1992; Reed, 1993).

Transfer of Theory to Classroom Practice

Student teachers may leave university classrooms armed with theory and materials to approach multicultural education. However, multicultural materials are ineffective when placed in the hands of teachers who have negative attitudes toward teaching students from diverse cultures (Henry, 1991). The impact of theory on classroom multicultural practices is revealed in a study by Lawrence (1997) who followed teacher candidates into their student teaching to discover the extent of transfer their learning had in the classroom. Pervasive variances were found among the students with these variances being directly related to teacher candidates’ racial awareness.

Teacher candidates in five studies were instructed to complete ethnographic research in largely African-American communities (Fry & McKinney, 1997; Narode, Rennie-Hill & Peterson, 1994; Olmedo, 1997; Ross & Smith, 1992; Sleeter, 1996). Although these teacher candidates were not followed into the classroom, they generally described situational growth and increased willingness to work in urban schools after completing their ethnographic studies.

The quantity of multicultural education courses in teacher preparation programs propelled some teacher candidates toward transfer of theory to practice. When teacher candidates completed four or more credits of coursework in multicultural education, they were more likely to use multicultural strategies in the classroom than those students
completing less than four credits of coursework (Sleeter, 2001). Importantly, these
students were more likely to integrate multicultural components into their curriculum
when students were from low-income families or families of color than when they were
not.

Summary

Teacher multicultural concerns were addressed by examining attitudes teachers
have toward teaching culturally different children. Then, assets evidenced in culturally
competent teachers were explored through the lens of a case study of White teacher
candidates in their student teacher placements. Finally, the impact of multicultural
education was inspected with particularities of different programs explored.

Teacher Demographics and Multicultural Concerns
Related to Parent Involvement

The encompassing premise of this review is the importance of parent
involvement in schools. Additionally, the literature review considers references toward
the preponderance of White teachers in classrooms that are becoming less White and
increasingly ethnically diverse. It is reasonable to assume that White teachers who likely
have limited access to multicultural experiences, when implored to involve parents,
acknowledge a sense of apprehension. This apprehension may be due to the following
concerns: teacher anxiety about language differences with multicultural parents,
teacher perception of educational goals that differ from those of parents, and teachers
and parents lacking trust with each other. These concerns will be addressed in this
section of the literature review. Additionally, teacher expectations toward parent
involvement will be examined along with suggestions to address the concerns teachers have regarding multicultural parent involvement.

**Concern about Language Differences**

It is reasonable to expect that teachers are concerned about communicating effectively with parents of their students. Understandably, ethnic differences often make communicating difficult because of language. Additionally, parents and teachers may find it difficult to understand one another because of their unique cultural experiences. According to Matuszny, Banda, and Coleman (2007), students of color comprise about 40% of total student populations in U.S. public schools. Moreover, multicultural differences between parents and teachers are further complicated when students have specific needs that must be communicated accurately. Approximately 22% of minority students have a disability (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2002). These numbers make it imperative for teachers and parents to be able to converse with one another effectively. Furthermore, NCLB (2001) requires that parents are involved in the decision-making process for students with disabilities. Nevertheless, culturally different parents and teachers may experience communication problems. Researchers report that diverse parents who come to school as required are often submissively involved in educational planning (Geenen, Powers, & Lopez-Vasquez, 2001). This may be attributed to language barriers, intimidation factors at school, and discouragement from educators (Chavkin, 1989; Lopez & Scribner, 1999).

Prior to a 10-week field experience in a middle school placement, 16 preservice teachers were queried about their attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors toward culturally
different students. No participants in the study had studied multicultural coursework in their teacher preparation programs or otherwise. Additionally, all were middle to upper class students living in a suburban area. The Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI) (Henry, 1991) was administered to all students prior to their field experience. Findings from the CDAI were not surprising to the researchers, who found that 23% of participants were uncomfortable about working with people who speak nonstandard English (Deering & Stanutz, 1995).

Concerns about Educational Goals

Although NCLB (2001) requires parent involvement when students attend special education, teachers may regard such participation as coaxed. Teachers, who attend individual educational program (IEP) meetings at school, report that African-American, Hispanic, and American Indian parents attend fewer meetings, nod their heads, sign papers, and depart (Matuszny, Banda, & Coleman, 2007). Educators worry that parents from diverse cultures offer little input and may not be aware of or agree with educational goals set by the school.

Absences from school meetings and inattention to school procedures cause some teachers to infer that cross-cultural parents are not concerned about their children’s learning, and this causes some apprehension among educators. However, numerous studies (Henderson & Mapp, 2002) refute this belief. In one study, 18 poor parents of students at O’Hearn Elementary School were interviewed to determine reasons for the 90% rate of parent involvement at school. Findings support previous synthesized studies from Henderson and Mapp (2002) that “A majority of parents—
regardless of race, ethnicity, or socioeconomic status—want their children to do well in school and have a strong desire to help their children succeed” (Mapp, 2002, p. 140).

Concerns about Trust

Teachers are concerned about relationships with parents they may not trust as perpetuating their students’ best interests. This feeling is reciprocated by parents who may not trust the school and the teacher. Parents report that student progress may be obstructed by schools which provide culturally-insensitive, irrelevant information (Matuszny et al., 2007) regarding community services and parent rights and responsibilities (Connery, 1987; Harry, 2002; Matuszny, 2004). Moreover, parents sense that teachers are “just doing their jobs” (Matuszny, 2007, p. 25) instead of facilitating a caring persona toward culturally different parents. A deficiency in relationship-building at school causes some parents to doubt the sincerity of schools who seemingly welcome parents.

Teacher candidates come to the teaching field with preconceived notions about parent involvement (Graue, 2005). Most of their ideas about teachers building relationships with parents are based on their previous experiences as students in public schools and the interaction their parents had with schools. When nine preservice teachers were interviewed, findings revealed that preconceived notions served as a springboard for new teachers to assume authoritative roles with parents (Graue, 2005). Participants valued teacher knowledge over parent knowledge viewing parent knowledge as biased and limited. While they recognized value in parent involvement, they wanted parents to be in supportive roles at school. Teacher candidates were
concerned that parents who became partners with the school would somehow detract from the role of the teacher as a professional. This group of preservice teachers desired to work with parents as unequal partners. When teachers and parents have qualms about their roles as partners in educational pursuits of children, building trust is a concern.

**Teacher Expectations for Culturally Sensitive Parent Involvement**

Predetermined notions about school and family partnerships may serve to further exacerbate the concerns held by teacher candidates about working with culturally diverse families. When 130 teacher candidates were surveyed at the beginning of their teacher education coursework, responses indicated that they felt some parent involvement practices were more appropriate than others. Researchers (Graue & Brown, 2003) employed a rating scale to examine practices participants viewed as most/least appropriate. The top three ways parents should participate at school were noted as follows: (a) show respect for the school, (b) respond to school, and (c) discuss school with child. Conversely, the least appropriate types of parent involvement were noted: (a) parents helping in class, (b) parents participating in school governance, and (c) parents suggesting strategies to teachers.

A second survey asked teacher candidates to ascribe knowledge to parents and teachers by rating their unique expertise with children. Sixteen areas of expertise were represented in the survey with the following results. Participants viewed teachers as expert in the following areas: (a) curriculum, (b) achievement compared to others, and (c) ways to deal with learning problems. Teachers were least expert in these knowledge
areas: (a) family cultural practices, (b) developmental history of children, and (c) socio-emotional needs of children. Parents were viewed by participants as being especially knowledgeable in these areas: (a) family cultural practices, (b) developmental history of children, and (c) physical skills of children. Parents were seen less able in these areas: (a) curriculum, (b) achievement compared to others, and (c) ways to deal with learning problems (Graue & Brown, 2003).

A third survey asked teacher candidates about their conceptions of parent involvement for various subgroups. Sixteen subgroups were mentioned as possibilities on the survey. Participants expected that subgroups least involved in parent involvement would be grandparents, followed by parents living in poverty, other adults living with the child, and second language parents. A fourth survey asked teacher candidates the level of parent involvement they anticipated in teaching. The three highest responses were in regard to parent-teacher conferences, parent descriptions of student, and parent input on child’s educational program. The least anticipated parent involvement practices were suggested by teacher candidates as home visits, parent input on curriculum, and get-togethers outside of school (Graue & Brown, 2003). Results of these surveys indicate a willingness of teacher candidates to partially partner with parents. However, their anticipation for limited partnerships is likely to thwart school understandings of families from diverse cultures.

**Suggestions for Culturally Responsive Parent Involvement**

During the last decade, researchers envisioned the need for culturally responsive family involvement. In fact, Greenwood and Hickman (1991) implied that particular
research should be focused on specific types of parent involvement that work best with parents from diverse families and families of varied socioeconomic status. Sixteen years after their appeal for research, some suggestions are advanced for parent involvement practices that are sensitive to cultural and economic differences. Interviews with nine preservice teachers resulted in descriptions of culturally sensitive parent involvement practices. Ellen, a white, middle class mother of three children, suggested that parent involvement should involve a caring disposition. She recommended social activities initiated by teachers promote a sense of caring. Wendy, a white, middle class teacher candidate, proposed connections with families as making a positive difference. She suggested using parent volunteers in the classroom to share cultural practices and traditions (Graue, 2005).

Further suggestions for culturally sensitive parent involvement practices focus on breaking down barriers to parent involvement and encouraging parent participation. Matuszny and colleagues (2007) recommend that teachers support parents as they navigate school bureaucracy. Additional suggestions are framed through a progressive plan for involving parents by initiating parent collaboration during the first week of school, building a foundation with parents through relationships, and maintaining and supporting parents through continual communication.

**Summary**

Preservice teachers expressed varied parent involvement concerns as they considered student populations that are likely to be quite diverse. Noted in this literature review were teacher concerns regarding language differences that may impede
understanding of parent and teacher intentions. Additionally disconcerting to teacher candidates was that parents may not share educational goals that are in the best interest of their children. Trust issues were named as perplexing by both teachers and parents, as each navigate the borderlands of school and home. Moreover, expectations of teacher candidates toward parent involvement practices were carefully examined in this review. Finally, suggestions for promoting culturally sensitive parent involvement practices were offered.

Need for Cross Cultural Parent Involvement Curriculum

This review of literature has cited numerous studies noting a lack of parent involvement curriculum in colleges of education (Shartrand et al., 1997; Greenwood & Hickman, 1991; Hiatt-Michael, 2001; Chavkin, 1991; McAfee, 1987). Furthermore, evidence of the differences between teacher and student demographics has been supported by various statistical data (Graue & Brown, 2003; NCES, 2007). Additionally, various studies (Deering & Stanutz, 1995; Graue, 2005) reported that teacher candidates have concerns about partnering with parents from diverse cultures. This accumulation of findings is somewhat troublesome considering the tremendous impact that parent involvement has on students, parents, and schools across all cultures and grade levels (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Therefore, the need for cross cultural parent involvement curriculum is explored in this final section of the literature review.

Parent involvement curriculum that is culturally sensitive will be briefly examined from the aspect of current deficiencies and needs. Second, the uniqueness of families across and within cultures and communities will be addressed as a needed component
of parent involvement curriculum. Finally, this review will consider the positive impact this type curriculum will have on student success at school.

**Curriculum Deficiencies and Needs**

Current descriptive studies indicate that what exists in parent involvement curriculum reflects the roles posited by teachers as authorities and parents as supporters (Graue & Brown, 2003). This picture fails to address the forces that shape interactions between parents and teachers who attempt a partnering relationship. When families and schools interact effectively, preconceived roles of each become much more multidimensional. Interpretive studies, for example, include terminology like cultural capital: the role of culture, gender, and ethnicity to shed light on the complexity of partnerships between school and home (Graue, Kroeger, & Prager, 2001; Lightfoot, 1978). Weiss (HFRP, 2004/2005) reports evidence from psychology and sociology studies which report findings that family involvement at school is complex, “influenced by class, race, culture, and school and community supports” (p. 1). Graue and Brown (2003) insist that teacher preparation programs need to provide opportunities for students to build stronger theoretical frameworks while participating in field experiences working with families.

Rothenberg and McDermott, professors from Sage College’s School of Education, suggest that specific coursework in teacher preparation programs should provide candidates with skills and strategies that serve to better involve urban parents. Additionally, these professors advocate for clear and sensitive communication between new teachers and ethnically different parents. Specifically, they suggest methods
courses should provide occasions for teacher candidates to practice writing notes, letters, and newsletters written clearly enough for families to understand the positive implications of working with their students at home (HFRP, 2004).

**Uniqueness of Families**

Students have unique cultural histories that they bring into the classroom as lived experience. Hughes, a professor from the University of Toledo, has completed five years of ethnographic research in North Carolina, and she has come to understand that knowledge is shaped by family, community, and culture (HFRP, 2006/2007). Her findings include the nuanced ways that families and children work together at home. Hughes calls this “family pedagogy” (p. 1) shaped by faith, hope, and struggles shared by families. Teachers are encouraged to consider family narratives as legitimate voices for curriculum planning. However, they need support, motivation, and cultural experiences outside their own cultures to become skillful at validating culturally diverse students and their families.

Various studies suggest children’s learning is positively affected across cultural and socio-economic groups when parents are involved throughout their school careers (Shartrand et al., 1997; Henderson & Mapp, 2002). However, closer examination of these studies reveals that parent involvement is not a “one size fits all” model (HFRP, 2006/2007, p. 7). In fact, parent involvement beliefs and practices contrast by economic status and culture. This is evidenced from a study of African-American kindergarten students who performed more capably in math when their parents became involved in school activities. However, improved math scores did not result for White children when
their parents where more involved at school. A second study found that volunteering in the school is associated with a minimal increase in behavior problems among children from middle class homes; however, a great decrease in behavior problems is noted among low-income children. African-American kindergarten students improved social abilities and raised math scores when their parents’ school involvement increased. This was not found to be true of White kindergarteners in the same study. However, White children raised achievement levels when their parents became more involved at home (HFRP, 2006/2007). These findings suggest that outcomes from home-school relationships vary by ethnic and socio-economic groups.

Kroeger, Professor at Kent State University, elaborates on the need to view every family for its uniqueness within culture and community ecology (HFRP, 2006/2007). She cites volunteering in one Midwestern school as possible for parents who were professionals, while other parents were not able to work in classrooms. Further probing cited that most families were supportive of the school though few were able to be volunteers during school hours. The same school reported middle class, professional parents as most involved in their parent teacher organization (PTO). When questioned, minority parents stated time was a barrier, and many felt PTO events were unimportant. This suggests that school events somehow fell short of reaching the rich tastes of the entire school population. Kroeger posits that colleges of education should look at specific ecology produced by sub-communities within the community while differentiating involvement possibilities across social groups.

*Impact on Learners and Families*

Americans live in a democratic society where the right of all children to learn is
embedded in our belief system. Democracy is not just a form of government but a way of life. Therefore, it needs to permeate the foundations of our social and political practices. Significantly, democracy can be brought into our lives by personal relationships and education (Greene, 1995). According to Greene, “We must learn how to enable the diverse young to join the continually emergent culture’s ongoing conversation” (p. 56).

The achievement gap between minority and White, rich and poor students can no longer be ignored. Schools are developing the capacity of only a small proportion of children while leaving a quarter of the school population with an incomplete education (Pechman, 1992). Significantly, skills levels needed to navigate society are continually becoming more complex. Today’s students need to speak, read, and write fluently while applying their knowledge on the job. This necessitates the ability to problem solve and collaborate across cultures and communities. Training for these increasingly complex skills comes from teachers who are committed to change and growth. “There is no better way to ensure expanding learning opportunities for children than through such uninterrupted and systematic improvement of teaching practice” (Pechman, p. 53-4).

Teachers who are insensitive to or unfamiliar with needs of minority students unconsciously make schooling more difficult for them (Grant & Sleeter, 1986). However, studies also link teachers’ cultural sensitivity to minority students’ achievement (Banks, 1987; Cruickshank, 1988). Several attempts at promoting a cross-cultural curriculum, however, have met with failure. School district inservice programs have shown little effect on teacher thinking and cross-cultural teaching
Some multicultural education courses have shown similarly dismal results (McDiarmid & Price, 1990). However, one study preparing preservice teachers in Minnesota for teaching in Texas had promising results. Teachers were found to be more sensitive to multicultural issues (Cooper, Beare, & Thorman, 1990). Similarly, Noordhoff and Kleinfeld (1993) report hopeful findings from the success of the Teachers for Alaska program preparing teachers for working in Eskimo and Indian villages. Although these studies are valuable, it is important to consider the teachers involved volunteered for these programs and were motivated and prepared to teach culturally different students.

It is evident that systematic, consistent, cross-cultural curriculum is needed for all students to be successful at school. PTE Connect provides a culturally diverse curriculum that is relevant to teachers of students from EC-12 and across specialization areas (Harris, Jacobson, Brown, and Revelle, 2005). Findings from a three-year pilot study indicate that students’ knowledge, attitudes, and skills increase significantly after engagement with the PTE curriculum modules. While PTE Connect research as yet does not follow teacher candidates into their own classrooms, early results indicate student attitudes that predispose them to use their new knowledge about culturally different families when they become practitioners. Finally, Deering and Stanutz (1995) state, “Findings make it clear that teacher preparation programs must take an active part in helping to prepare teachers to work with students from culturally diverse backgrounds” (p. 390).

**Summary**

The argument for cross-cultural parent involvement curriculum is substantial.
First, this section of the literature review examined current curriculum deficiencies and needs illuminating specific examples where parents are noted in support roles and schools are professional authorities. Second, this section explored the uniqueness of families across and within cultures and socio-economic groups. The need for educators to understand a “family pedagogy” was explained. Finally, the impact of cross-cultural parent involvement curriculum on learners and families was scrutinized. The rights of citizens in a democracy toward equity in education were explained. Additionally, the use of culturally sensitive parent involvement curriculum was celebrated as a possible response for schools “where everybody is somebody” (Corrigan, 1990, p. 5).

Literature Synopsis

Six streams of literature have been reviewed in order to augment an understanding of past research pertaining to this dissertation. An overview of the literature depicting the importance of parent involvement was presented by examining its effects on students. Numerous studies were cited revealing that student achievement across all developmental levels from preschool through college is positively affected when parents and families are involved in their children’s educational pursuits. Furthermore, the positive effects of parent involvement on schools were addressed specifically through studies recognizing parents as resources in the classroom. Eighty-five studies by Henderson (1987, 1995) and Berla (1995) illustrated five significant outcomes for educators when parents are involved at school. The effects of parent involvement on school reform were supported by studies showing improvement in school environment and quality when parents became active stakeholders. The first
stream of literature concluded by disclosing the effects of parent involvement on families. Parents, who perceived the school as their educational partners, experienced a culture of support, improved family relationships, and increased satisfaction with schools and teachers.

The literature review then focused on parent involvement in teacher education. This section began by acknowledging a variety of ways in which parent involvement has been defined and conceptualized. Barriers to a lack of parent involvement curriculum in colleges of education were attributed to limitations of university funding, deficiency in parent involvement models, and the dearth of systematic delivery. Then, the need for parent involvement curriculum was acknowledged in the literature review. Recent government legislation, such as NCLB, was mentioned as a driving force behind the need for curriculum that would aid new teachers in involving parents. Explicit program needs emerged through the review of literature. Specifically, field experiences and instruction through coursework were brought forward as needs for preservice teachers. Five specific training frameworks were discussed as providing a necessary infrastructure to support parent involvement curriculum: the functional approach, the parent empowerment approach, the cultural competence approach, the comprehensive school improvement approach, and the building cultures approach. The conclusion of this section of the literature review included a description of six curriculum models currently practiced in teacher education.

Teacher demographics were considered with a special emphasis on ethnicity. Teachers in public schools were described as 83% White (NCES, 2007) and 74.6% female (Graue & Brown, 2003). The review then presented statistics pointing to the
ethnic discrepancies between teachers and students. One telling example of this discrepancy was noted in national data indicating a 9% decrease in White enrollment and a 46% increase in Hispanic enrollment in public schools, while the teaching force remains largely White. Problems associated with this discrepancy were then addressed in the literature review. Culture clashes and discrepant viewpoints were discussed as potential dilemmas that must be attended to if parents and educators were to join forces as partners. Responses and solutions to the quandaries faced by educators teaching students from diverse populations were suggested in the literature. Four recommendations were posited as strategies for teacher education to undertake as a cultural bridge in preparation programs.

Three categories of teachers’ multicultural concerns were addressed in the literature review. The first category examined studies pertaining to attitudes of preservice teachers toward multicultural teaching. Clearly, novice teachers were described as unsure about teaching diverse student populations. The second category explored assets of culturally competent teachers. Culturally competent teachers were described as being capable of developing trusting relationships with their students by revealing personal stories, evoking student voice, respectfully coping with confrontations in the classroom, and evoking a responsive, considerate curriculum. The third category explored multicultural education and its impact on students and teachers. This section of the literature review examined specific course offerings, fieldwork provisions, the impact of multicultural education on White teachers, and the transfer of multicultural education to classroom practices. One study presented findings that teacher candidates who completed four or more credits of multicultural coursework were
more likely to use specific strategies than their peers who completed less than four credits.

The literature review exposed five specific concerns that promote novice teachers’ apprehension toward involving families who are culturally different from themselves. Teachers are concerned about languages differences that may impede communication with parents of their students. In one study, 23% of teacher candidates acknowledged their discomfort about working with people who speak nonstandard English (Deering & Stanutz, 1995). Second, educators worry that parents from diverse cultures may not be aware of or agree with educational goals set by the school, in spite of numerous studies that refute this belief (Henderson & Mapp, 2002). Trust issues compose the third concern for new teachers working with culturally different families. Teachers worry about relationships with parents who may not share what educators believe to perpetuate the educational goals of the school. A fourth multicultural concern of new teachers relates to their predetermined conceptions of school and family partnerships. Three separate surveys advance findings that new teachers view parents in support roles more than partnership roles.

The final stream of literature addressed the need for cross cultural parent involvement curriculum. A case was made that the prevalent parent involvement curriculum is deficient, and stronger theoretical frameworks and field experiences are needed. The uniqueness of students was ascribed to the cultural histories they bring to the classroom. The literature review clearly supports a view that parent involvement is not a “one size fits all” model. Finally, the literature suggests that systematic, consistent, cross-cultural curriculum is needed so that all students can be successful at school.
Teacher education is charged with the task of preparing teacher candidates to work with students from all cultural backgrounds.
CHAPTER 3
MATERIALS AND METHODS

The study was conducted at the University of North Texas during the summer and fall semesters of 2007. Preservice teachers enrolled in a 100% online course, DFEC 4423.020 Families, Schools, and Community Resources, were contributors to the study. The instructor for the course gave verbal permission for data gathering among her students. Additionally, Institutional Review Board (IRB) permission was obtained for this study. Chapter 3 is divided into six sections: research (alternate) hypotheses, design, participants, instrumentation, data collection, and data analysis.

Research Hypotheses

The following questions were asked, and related hypotheses were tested in this study:

1. Is there a significant change in preservice teachers' knowledge about parent involvement in the areas of parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, collaborating with the community, and advocacy and decision making, as evidenced by pre- and post-assessments of knowledge through a course in family, schools, and community resources?

   H₁: There is a significant change in preservice teachers' knowledge about parent involvement as evidenced by pre- and post-knowledge assessments.

2. Does chronological age, ethnicity, or parental status of preservice teachers impact changes in their knowledge of parent involvement acquired through a course in family, school, and community resources?
H₂: There are significant main and interaction effects for (a) chronological age, ethnicity, or parental status of preservice teachers and (b) their treatment (pretest/posttest).

3. Is there a significant correlation between multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers and changes in their knowledge about parent involvement acquired through a course in family, school, and community resources?

H₃: There is a significant correlation between multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers and changes in their knowledge about parent involvement.

4. Is there a significant correlation between preservice teachers’ parent and family involvement skill levels and their post-knowledge assessments about parent involvement?

H₄: There is a significant correlation between preservice teachers’ parent and family involvement skill levels and their post-knowledge of parent and family involvement.

Designs

Two research designs were necessary to answer the questions posited in this study. An experimental design was utilized to answer questions one and two, while a correlation design was used to determine interaction between variables in questions three and four. Both designs are described in this section of the dissertation.

Experimental

A one-group pretest-posttest research design was necessary to respond to Question 1 of this report. In this scheme, a group of participants is measured on the dependent variable prior to the administration of the treatment condition. The independent variable is then administered, and the dependent variable is again
measured (Johnson & Christensen, 2000). In the study reported here, parent involvement knowledge of a group of preservice teachers was measured on six types of parent involvement using pre-assessments. The PTE Connect curriculum modules were used as a treatment, and the dependent variable (knowledge) was again measured. It should be noted that the one-group pretest-posttest design is potentially problematic in that extraneous variables may contribute to changes in the dependent variable. For example, in this study participants may have acquired knowledge from other courses and sources during the time frame in which the treatment was administered. Additionally, participants may have become parents or step-parents during the time period of the treatment. It is reasonable to assume that participants may have attended conferences at school that affected their learning across the treatment period. Even though the literature suggests that this particular scheme is weak because of the inability to control for the extraneous variables, it does provide some information about changes between pre- and post-testing. It should be acknowledged, however, that causation cannot be inferred because of the internal and external threats to validity inherent to this design.

Question 2 of the dissertation required the implementation of a quasi-experimental design. According to Barnes, Hauser, Heikes, Hernandez, Richard, Ross, Yang, and Palmquist (2005), a quasi-experimenter treats a specific situation as an experiment even though it is not entirely by design. In a quasi-experiment there may or may not be a control group; groups may or may not be randomized. However, the quasi-experiment is similar to an experiment because both allow for comparison of the dependent variable. The study reported here did not involve a control group, and
participants were not randomly grouped. Specifically, question two required a nonequivalent control-group range of quasi-experiment. “The essential features of this particular design are nonrandom assignment of research participants to groups and administration of a pretest and posttest to all groups” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003, p. 403). Researchers using this design should be aware that the main threat to internal validity in a nonequivalent control-group experiment is the possibility of group differences on the post-test that were preexisting rather than due to the treatment.

**Correlation**

This study employs a correlation design in an attempt to understand the relationship between variables referred to in both questions 3 and 4. Although a correlation design cannot prove causation, it can be useful in predicting one variable based on another and building a theory about a phenomenon (Glatthorn & Joyner, 2005). The subtype used in this study is bivariate correlation, which assisted the researcher in describing the magnitude of relationship between two variables. Variables were measured using instruments such as knowledge assessments, a multicultural teaching concerns survey, and essays interpreted using Bloom’s taxonomy of learning skills (BTLS).

Reliability of knowledge assessments was established using Cronbach’s alpha, which is a measure of the internal consistency of a test (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Additionally, validity of the interpretation of the participants’ written essays was established by triangulating results from two or three professional educators until consensus could be reached regarding thinking levels perceived through reflective
essays and prescribed by the BTLS. According to Gall and associates (2003), validity is the meaningfulness and usefulness of specific inferences made from test results. In this portion of the study, test results were in the form of written essays.

Data from this study are displayed using tables and figures. While histograms were analyzed during the data collection and analysis stages to discern the presence of outliers in the data set, a histogram is not present in this document. Qualitative data are available in the form of student responses to case studies, and samples of essays are included in the appendixes.

Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were utilized in this study for organizing and summarizing numerical data sets. For example, when the study describes demographics of participants using percentages and frequencies, descriptive statistics are necessary. Additionally, descriptive statistics include bivariate correlation coefficients. As previously discussed, two hypotheses in this study were tested using correlation statistics. Correlation analyses are supported by concepts such as skewness, variance, and standard deviation (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Skewed distributions occur when extreme scores occur in a data set, causing the mean to be pulled in the direction of the extreme scores. Variance is the square of the standard deviation and may be used in research reports as an intermediate step in computing ANOVA. Standard deviation, abbreviated as SD, represents the variation of scores from the mean. These concepts are used to review and classify data in the study.
Inferential Statistics

Inferential statistics were also used in this study. When researchers aim to generalize from a sample to a population, inferential statistics may be appropriate. A statistical inference may be drawn when using information about a sample to draw conclusions about the population from which the sample was drawn. Other terms and concepts gleaned from inferential statistics include the alternate hypothesis, tests of statistical significance, and use of \( p \) values. The alternate hypothesis states that some differences will be found between descriptive statistics in one's study. Tests of statistical significance are also integrated into inferential statistics. These tests are done to determine if the alternate hypothesis can be supported. Often the \( p \) value is used to suggest the probability of occurrence. In this study, as in other research studies, the lower the \( p \) level, the higher the level of significance of findings (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003).

Inferential Statistics and Convenience Samples

It is important to note that a convenience sample was used in this study for two reasons. First of all, the sample was in a convenient location for the researcher's study. Second, and most importantly, the sample suited the purpose of the study in that a particular group of preservice teachers was exposed to instruction on parent involvement using curriculum modules pertinent to the topic of this study. However, “[t]he logic behind using inferential statistics requires that the sample be randomly drawn from a defined population” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003, p. 176), so that results can be generalized from the sample population to a similar population. On the other hand,
Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003), justify the use of inferential statistics with a convenience sample when it is possible to theorize a population that the sample represents. In this study, care has been taken to (a) specify specific populations for generalizations, (b) describe important characteristics of the sample, and (c) provide a rationale for why the sample was well suited to the purpose of the study. Finally, this study was a replication and extension of earlier pilot studies using the curriculum modules described in this report. According to Gall, Gall, & Borg, repeated replications of findings is much stronger evidence of valid outcomes and generalizability than an isolated study.

Participants

The total summer 2007 and fall 2007 semester enrollment for teacher candidates in the Families, Schools, and Community Resources (FSCR) class at the University of North Texas (UNT) was 78 students. Only teacher candidates who attended either the fall or summer semesters of the FSCR course and who were seeking teacher certification were participants in the study. Participants who were seeking teaching certification in EC-4 represented 88% of the total number of subjects. The remaining participants were pursuing a major or minor in development and family studies. Participants in this study were chosen largely because of their chosen fields of study and their access to curriculum modules reflective of parent involvement instruction. According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003), these participants were part of a convenience sample.

Only two students in this study were male; 76 participants were female. Chronological ages of participants were noted through five groupings: 18-22, 23-27, 28-
33, 34-39, and over 40. As expected, 50% of the participants were in the 18-22 age range, while 31% were in the 23-27 age range. This projection was foreseen, since the mean age of students at UNT was 24.8 years. The demographic of ethnicity was represented by five groups: African American (10%), Asian American (2%), Hispanic American (3%), Other (2%), and White (83%). The student population in the college of education was 71% White, and this study had a strong preponderance of White participants, as well. Three categories of parental status were examined in this study. Most participants (81%) reported having no children, while 15% reported having one or two children. The remaining participants (4%) reported having three to four children.

**The FSCR Course**

A course in families, schools, and community resources (FSCR) was offered at the University of North Texas and was a requirement for teacher candidates seeking certification in EC-4. However, the course was available to students outside this certification level, as well. The syllabus (Appendix A) provided in the FSCR course had four major components: theory and background; families as partners; collaborations between families, schools, and communities; and family diversity.

**PTE Connect Modules**

Integrated within these four program components were six online curriculum modules that represent the work of Epstein (1995) and the National PTA Standards (1998) and were developed as part of the parent teacher education connection (PTE Connect) funded by the Fund for the Improvement of Post-secondary Education
(FIPSE) from 2003 to 2007 (Trotti, Harris, Jacobson, & Brown, 2006). The curriculum modules included research-based content, activities for teacher candidates, resources for further study, and case studies designed by teacher educators. Case studies featured new teachers who worked with diverse populations. The content was directed by objectives which were stated at the opening of each curriculum module. The purpose of the content was to provide teacher candidates with information about the needs and concerns of new teachers as they sought to partner with parents and community members.

A problem-based learning approach was used in the PTE Connect modules, with the case studies serving as the focus of dialogue, activities, and further study. Case studies helped to differentiate the curriculum by grade level, subject area, and culture in a variety of school contexts (Trotti, Harris, Jacobson, & Brown, 2006). Topics of curriculum modules shaped the focus of this study on changes in preservice teacher knowledge of, and skills in, parent involvement practices.

The PTE Connect curriculum modules were offered 100% online in the course presented to teacher candidates in this study. The online component was enabled by WebCT Vista, which facilitated discussion group postings and collection of participant assignments. Important to this study was the collection of essays written by individual participants responding to a case study dilemma presented through the PTE Connect Parenting (Jacobson & Brown, 2005) module. While this particular assignment was completed independently by students as part of a final exam, discussions among groups of students about case study problems had been completed previously (Harris &
Trotti, 2008). Group discussions enabled students to reflect on their growth as problem solvers and construct learning socially as theorized by Vygotsky (1978).

Instrumentation

Four specific types of instruments were used in this study. One type of instrument, which provided quantitative data about knowledge of parent and family involvement, was used extensively in the parent teacher education (PTE Connect) pilot project recently completed at UNT. Six pre- and post-knowledge assessments represented variations of each of the six modules from PTE Connect. The second instrument used was Form N of the Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey (Marshall, 2007). Additionally, a questionnaire was used to acquire demographic information from the preservice teacher participants. Bloom’s taxonomy of learning skills (BTLS) was used to interpret student responses to a case study by accounting for the thinking level utilized by students in problem solving.

Knowledge Assessments

Six knowledge pre- and post-assessment surveys were developed by participants in PTE Connect at the University of North Texas. Each survey consisted of 20 multiple choice and true/false items designed to provide information about participant learning regarding the six types of parent involvement as defined by Epstein (1987). All six of these surveys were used in pilot tests which began in 2002. As a result of the pilot tests, the assessments were revised based on an item analysis of each assessment instrument (Jacobson & Brown, 2005; Harris, Callahan, & Brown, 2005a; Harris,
Callahan & Brown, 2005b; Revelle & Brown, 2006; Trotti & Brown, 2006a; Trotti & Brown, 2006b). According to Gall, Gall, & Borg (2003), an item analysis is “a set of procedures for determining the difficulty, the validity, and the reliability of each item in a test” (p. 627). The pre- and post-knowledge assessment instruments for individual curriculum modules were identical.

**Internal Consistency**

Prior to conducting statistical tests in SPSS 15, Cronbach’s alpha was examined to determine the reliability of the six knowledge assessments used in the study. Reliability is associated with the variation accounted for by the true score of the hypothetical variable being measured (Reynaldo & Santos, 1999). Alpha coefficients range in value from 0 to 1 and may be used to describe the reliability of factors extracted from multi-point formatted questionnaires. Higher scores indicate greater levels of reliability than lower scores. Nunnaly (1978) indicates that 0.7 is an adequate reliability coefficient. The reliability coefficient for the knowledge assessments used in this study was 0.8 which indicated these assessment instruments would likely elicit consistent, dependable responses even if questions were replaced with other similar questions.

**Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey**

The Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey (MTCS) was designed in 1996 by Marshall and revised in 2007. Marshall used a 64-item “self-report scale to assess the intensity of teachers’ concerns about working with diverse student populations” (2001,
Using a factor analysis, Marshall identified four multicultural teaching concern factors. Those factors are represented by the items in Form A of the MTCS.

Marshall’s revised MTCS, reflected in Form N (Appendix C), revealed the following four factors emerging from the survey: cultural competence, strategies and techniques, school bureaucracy, and family/group knowledge. Form N of Marshall’s survey consisted of 30 questions which teachers suggested be posed about unique aspects of working with culturally diverse learners. A Likert-type scale was employed in the MTCS. Students chose between five choices ranging between “extremely unimportant” to “extremely important.” Scoring the MTCS was based on the specific number of the response. For example, if a student chose the number three, which represents “neutral” as the response, the student received a concern score of three on that item. Each question was then correlated to its corresponding factor, the response numbers summed, and a cultural concern score tallied for each participant. Higher scores on the MTCS represented greater multicultural teaching concerns than lower scores.

The four factors of the MTCS were represented among the 30 questions with factors interspersed in the survey and given in no particular order as to importance or factor difference. Factor 1, cross cultural competence, associated with ten questions on the MTCS. Eleven questions were relevant for Factor 2, strategies and techniques. School bureaucracy, Factor 3, was present in 4 questions. Finally, family/group knowledge was represented in five questions for Factor 4 (Marshall, 2001).

Reliability and validity measures were not reported for the Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey (MTCS) at the time of this study. Marshall (2007) recently developed
Form N of the MTCS, and psychometric measures for this instrument were not yet available.

Demographic Questionnaire

A questionnaire (Appendix B) was used to acquire demographic data from the participants. Preservice teachers were asked questions regarding chronological age, gender, ethnicity, and parental status. This questionnaire, developed by the researcher, was available to participants in a multiple-choice format as an online document.

Bloom’s Taxonomy of Learning Skills

Qualitative data acquired through one of the online assignments of the course were analyzed using Bloom’s taxonomy of learning skills (BTLS) as a basis for evidence of higher level thinking on the part of participants. These data were gathered by inspecting the discussion of case studies by individual student participants. From the perspective of a qualitative researcher, this portion of the study utilized the contemporary philosophy of social sciences, hermeneutics. According to Gall, Gall, and Borg (2003), hermeneutics has come to mean the “process by which individuals arrive at the meaning of any text” (p. 505). In this study, text referred to participant written responses in the form of an essay. The researcher, then, is the individual who interpreted the meaning disclosed by the preservice teachers through written essays. The investigation of language and communication in qualitative research is often referred to as narrative analysis (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003).

Case studies were embedded in the curriculum modules of the course
The case studies were written by associates of the PTE Connect project. Each case study was connected to one of the six curriculum modules of Parenting, Communicating, Volunteering, Learning at Home, Collaborating with the Community, or Advocacy and Decision-Making. Individual student participants read and reacted online to the same case study (Appendix G). These responses were analyzed for thinking levels of knowledge, comprehension, application, analysis, synthesis, and evaluation, with definitions provided by Bloom (1984) (Appendix D).

The ability of teacher candidates to use higher order thinking in order to solve a particular problem presented in a case study was equated with skill level in the context of this study. The transition from thinking levels to skill levels has been suggested in the literature by researchers (Scriven & Paul, 2004; Knowlton, 2003) who posit that imposing intellectual standards on learners is more likely to develop well cultivated thinkers who ably solve problems and reflect on their solutions. Measuring critical thought is one way professional educators can determine the progress of teacher candidates toward proficiency in career goals. Moreover, using Bloom’s taxonomy as a tool to measure thinking levels has been suggested by Sudzina and Kilbane (1992) and Yong (2002). This reasoning supports the use of Bloom’s taxonomy in this study to guide the researcher in determining thinking levels that resulted in skillful resolution of a case study dilemma.

Data Collection

The demographic questionnaire was administered at the beginning of each session of the course under review. Knowledge pre-assessments were administered
before each of the six curriculum modules was taught. The MTCS was administered at the beginning of the fall 2007 and summer 2007 sessions of the FSCR course. Each instrument was administered online.

Knowledge post-assessments were administered individually online at the conclusion of each of the six modules. Qualitative data were gathered as participants completed the final exam case study responses at the conclusion of summer 2007 and fall 2007. These responses were submitted online.

Data Analysis

The research reported here embodied both quantitative and qualitative data analyses perspectives. Quantitative measures were utilized to discern answers to Questions 1, 2, 3 and 4. However, qualitative measures were needed for analyzing participant responses described in Question 4.

Quantitative Methods

Question 1

Paired sample $t$-tests were used to determine the significance of learning gains made by preservice teachers in this study. Pre- and post-knowledge assessments for individual participants were paired to discern the changes in knowledge scores. Mean scores were established from the participants’ pre- and post-knowledge scores for each of the six curriculum modules. The $t$-tests enabled the researcher to examine mean scores of the pre- and post-knowledge assessments and determine which modules were most effective as tools for teaching about parent involvement to learners in this
study. The \( t \)-test was appropriate for these analyses because it enabled the analyst to determine whether a difference in mean scores was statistically significant (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003).

**Question 2**

Repeated-measures (RM) ANOVA was used to determine the significance of main and interaction effects for (a) the independent variables of chronological age, ethnicity, and parental status and (b) the dependent variable of preservice teachers' changes in knowledge (pre-test/post-test) about parent involvement across six curriculum modules. Demographic factors were represented by five age groups, five ethnic groups, and three variations of parental status represented by participants in this study. RM ANOVA was used to determine whether the difference between the mean scores in each of these three demographic grouping variables on the dependent variable of knowledge change for each of six curriculum modules was statistically significant. RM ANOVA was appropriate for this task because of the within-subjects design of the study and the use of correlated samples. A standard ANOVA was inappropriate for this study because ANOVA fails to account for the individual variation between repeated measures suggested by the demographics in the study. The data might validate the ANOVA assumption of independence. However, the RM ANOVA was used to provide a way of accounting for the variation between sample members who were matched according to some important characteristic (University of Texas Statistical Services, 1997).

The \( F \) ratio (the ratio of between-groups variance to within-groups variance) in
RM ANOVA was analyzed to determine if statistically significant knowledge gain differences were found for the independent variables of chronological age, ethnicity, and parental status. When the $F$ ratio was deemed significant, post-hoc tests were examined to aid the researcher in determining where those significant differences were present in the data set.

**Question 3**

Gains in participant knowledge about each of six curriculum module topics or dimensions were correlated to participant multicultural teaching concerns scores. This was accomplished by examining and summing the responses to the MTCS given by preservice teacher participants. Thus, each preservice teacher had a cumulative score indicating his/her multicultural teaching concerns. The higher the cumulative score on the MTCS, the greater the level of concern the preservice teacher had regarding multicultural teaching (Marshall, 2007).

Additionally, pre- and post-knowledge assessments from each of six curriculum modules were scored. Mean scores for each of the pre- and post-knowledge assessments were recorded. The mean knowledge change for teacher candidates on each module was found by determining the difference between the post- and pre-knowledge assessments.

A Pearson correlation ($r$) was then analyzed to determine the strength of relationship that existed between teacher candidates’ multicultural teaching concerns and their changes in knowledge about parent involvement practices obtained through a course in family, school, and community resources.
Pearson’s $r$ is a mathematical expression informing researchers of “the direction and magnitude of the relationship between two measures that yield continuous scores” (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003, p. 633). Pearson $r$ was used in the study because it is the most widely accepted correlation coefficient used in educational research, it employs continuous scores, and it has a small standard error. The correlation coefficient quantifies not only an evaluation of the association between variables “but also an index of the proportion of the individual differences in one variable that can be associated with the individual differences in another variable” (Hinkle, Wiersma, & Jurs, 2003, p. 109). Two imperative conditions were satisfied in order for the Pearson $r$ to be appropriate for this analysis. First, the two variables were paired observations for the same set of individuals. Second, the variables being correlated were measured on an interval or ratio scale.

**Mixed Methods**

**Question 4**

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were used to test the hypothesis presented in question 4 of this report. Both of those procedures are explained hereafter.

**Qualitative.** A colleague and I employed the use of hermeneutics to interpret the thinking levels represented in essays written by preservice teachers regarding a dilemma presented through a case study. Hermeneutics is “the process by which individuals arrive at the meaning of a text” (Gall, Gall & Borg, 2003, p. 477), and it is accepted as a qualitative research tradition.

The case study problem involved a new teacher who misunderstood the
significance of a Native American ceremony as described by Kylee, her student. Evidence of the new teacher's disbelief in Kylee's story of the ceremony served to alienate the student and her family. Preservice teachers were requested to write 1-2 well developed paragraphs to illustrate how they would initiate a solution to the problem presented.

Preservice teacher responses were varied and provided evidence of thinking levels that could be equated to the taxonomy developed by Bloom (Bloom & Krathwohl, 1956). One preservice teacher responded, “In reading the story I feel that being a teacher, she should have seemed excited no matter how the story sounded…The teacher needs to sit down with the family and try to understand their Native American culture.”

A second participant answered the dilemma, “I would apologize to Kylee and her parents and let them know it was an error on my part, and I would like to mend the issue.” A third preservice teacher reacted quite differently and countered with this statement, “If I was the teacher and Kylee had told me this story, I would probably be a little skeptical myself.”

After all responses to the case study dilemma were read, the data was triangulated using one or two additional professional educators until a consensus about thinking levels could be reached. Bloom’s taxonomy of learning skills (BTLS) was used as a guide to aid researchers in determining the thinking levels being used by the respondents, and thinking levels were noted by the readers involved in triangulating these data. Bloom’s thinking levels were denoted on the copies of student essays as follows: (1) knowledge, (2) comprehension, (3) application, (4) analysis, (5) synthesis,
and (6) evaluation. Each evaluator began with an unmarked copy of student essays. The researcher met with one evaluator to compare results of the interpretation of thinking levels for each essay. When a consensus could not be reached, a third evaluator was consulted to reach agreement on analyses of qualitative data.

**Quantitative.** Bivariate correlation was employed to determine the magnitude of relationship between preservice teachers’ perceived parent involvement skills, as noted by BTLS scores, and their post-knowledge about parent involvement across each of the six dimensions. When two variables are involved in analyses, the use of bivariate correlational statistics is appropriate (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Pearson’s $r$ was the specific statistic used to determine the magnitude of the relationship between the two variables. As previously mentioned, Pearson’s $r$ is often used in education-related research because of the small standard error and the use of continuous scores in a study.

**Data Screening**

Data were screened to determine if variables were missing for any portion of the study. When data were missing, a list-wise deletion was employed. Data were also removed from the set if the student enrolled in the family, schools, and community resources course indicated he/she was not seeking teacher certification.

Tests of skewness, kurtosis, and homogeneity of variance were conducted to determine if outliers existed in this data set. A histogram was utilized to depict frequencies of individual scores and provide evidence of tendencies in the data set. Three cases were depicted as outliers in the data, and these three were eliminated from
the set to prohibit a skewed data set. For example, case 48 was an outlier for pre-test collaborating knowledge with a score of zero. Case 66 was an outlier for pre-test communicating knowledge with a score of zero. Case 41 was an outlier for pre-test volunteering knowledge with a score of 20. If these scores were maintained in the data set, the results would be distorted, pulling the variable toward the extreme value. A skewed distribution forms a non-symmetrical curve when plotted on a frequency graph (Gall, Gall, & Borg, 2003). Thus, the outliers were removed from the set, so that a normal distribution would remain. A normal distribution is noted when the range of skewness and kurtosis are between 3 and -3. The amended data set was within that acceptable range. Finally, a computer software program, SPSS 15.0, was utilized to analyze the statistics in this study.

Summary

Chapter 3 revisited the questions put forth in this study in addition to the four alternative hypotheses to be tested. Then, the design of the study was discussed with attention to reliability and validity of instruments, methods for displaying data, and the use of both descriptive and inferential statistics. The appropriate use of inferential statistics with convenience samples was discussed in its particularity to this study.

Participants in this study were described as to gender, chronological age, parental status, and ethnicity. Then, the FSCR course was examined with a focus on the PTE Connect modules including case studies which were offered to preservice teachers as they studied about parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, advocacy and decision making, and collaborating with the community. The
method of delivery of the course was acknowledged as being 100% online.

Specific instruments used in the study were described as knowledge assessments for each of the six PTE Connect modules, MTCS with its four factors, a demographic questionnaire, and the BTLS for guidance in determining preservice teachers’ thinking levels. Attention was devoted in this chapter to data collection using the four types of instruments acknowledged. Then, a requirement for both quantitative and qualitative data analyses was noted for the testing of hypotheses put forward in this study.

Each of the four questions asked in this study was explored individually with the specific statistical methods needed for testing each of the alternate hypotheses. Briefly, paired sample $t$-tests were determined necessary for evaluating results that corresponded with Question 1. RM ANOVA was considered appropriate as accounting for main and interaction effects resulting from analyzing Question 2. Question 3 required a Pearson correlation ($r$) to aid in determining the strength of relationship between candidates’ multicultural teaching concern scores and their knowledge changes about parent involvement. Finally, hermeneutics was used to analyze teacher candidates’ responses to a case study dilemma; bivariate correlation was appropriate for resolving the correlations between essay responses and MTCS scores. Additionally, samples of individual participant’s responses to the case study dilemma were provided.

Finally, Chapter 3 presented information about how the data were screened in this study. Three specific cases were eliminated from the study because of outliers in the data set which would have caused a skewed distribution. Next, Chapter 4 presents the results attained with the methods described in Chapter 3.
CHAPTER 4
RESULTS OF THE STUDY

As noted in Chapter 1, the study reported here examined a curriculum that supports teachers in encouraging parent involvement practices for a diverse school population. This chapter is arranged according to the four research questions posed in Chapter 1. It reports the gains in knowledge that occurred after preservice teachers were involved in a course where parent involvement curriculum modules were used for instruction. It then reports the statistically significant main effects and interactions between preservice teachers' demographics and changes in their knowledge of parent involvement practices. Third, this chapter examines the degree of relationship between preservice teachers’ multicultural teaching concerns and changes in their knowledge about parent involvement. Finally, it inspects the degree of association between preservice teachers’ parent involvement skill levels and their post-knowledge scores on each of six parent involvement curriculum modules.

Question 1

The first question posed in Chapter 1 asked if significant learning about parent involvement occurred when preservice teachers were instructed using six specific curriculum modules. Chapter 3 presented the alternate hypothesis to be tested in this study.

$H_1$: There is a significant change in preservice teachers’ knowledge about parent involvement as evidenced by pre- and post-knowledge assessments.

I pursued the testing of the first hypothesis, and the findings are presented in Tables 1 and 2. Table 1 provides support for changes in knowledge that occurred for
participants in this study. Mean scores and standard deviations for pre- and post-knowledge assessments are indicated for each of the six curriculum modules taught during the FSCR course.

Table 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Dimension</th>
<th>Pretest Mean</th>
<th>Pretest SD</th>
<th>Posttest Mean</th>
<th>Posttest SD</th>
<th>N</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting</td>
<td>79.03</td>
<td>8.31</td>
<td>89.74</td>
<td>9.24</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>77.53</td>
<td>9.86</td>
<td>90.21</td>
<td>8.23</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>86.23</td>
<td>8.20</td>
<td>88.05</td>
<td>8.12</td>
<td>77</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>77.12</td>
<td>9.24</td>
<td>88.63</td>
<td>10.58</td>
<td>73</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>82.95</td>
<td>12.60</td>
<td>87.69</td>
<td>11.95</td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating</td>
<td>69.93</td>
<td>10.83</td>
<td>82.4</td>
<td>11.49</td>
<td>75</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Knowledge gains are apparent through examination of Table 1 for differences between pre- and post-knowledge assessment mean scores for each of the six parent involvement modules. Clearly, preservice teachers’ post-test of knowledge mean scores were higher than pre-test mean scores for each type of parent involvement. Mean scores for preservice teachers' learning about communicating represented the largest gains from pre- to post-knowledge assessments. The volunteering mean score gains, however, was relatively small.

After an examination of pre- and post-test scores for each of the knowledge dimensions, paired-sample t-tests were administered to determine the significance of
the pre- and post-test knowledge differences for each of the six curriculum modules.

Table 2 presents the results of the t-tests used to test hypothesis 1.

Table 2

*Paired sample t-tests for Mean Knowledge Differences in Six Modules*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Mean Difference</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>t</th>
<th>Sig</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting</td>
<td>-10.71</td>
<td>10.35</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>-9.087***</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating</td>
<td>-12.67</td>
<td>12.22</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-8.858***</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering</td>
<td>-1.82</td>
<td>8.73</td>
<td>76</td>
<td>-1.827</td>
<td>.072</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning</td>
<td>-11.51</td>
<td>12.85</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>-7.65***</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy</td>
<td>-4.74</td>
<td>10.66</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>-3.93***</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating</td>
<td>-12.47</td>
<td>15.30</td>
<td>74</td>
<td>-7.06***</td>
<td>.000</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*** p < .001

Results in Table 2 provide support for preservice teachers’ significant knowledge gains as evidenced by pre- and post-test scores in five of the six modules used in the FSCR course. Even though preservice teachers’ learning about volunteering did show an increase in mean scores, as noted in Table 1, it was not a significant increase, as noted in Table 2.

**Question 2**

The second question regards the impact of preservice teachers’ demographic data on knowledge gains across the six dimensions of parent involvement noted in this study. Chapter 3 presented the alternate hypothesis tested by the researcher.
H$_2$: There are significant main and interaction effects for (a) chronological age, ethnicity, or parental status of preservice teachers and (b) their knowledge gains. Repeated-measures (RM) ANOVA is used to provide data regarding significant relationships that might exist between knowledge changes related to the six curriculum modules, as measured by the difference in pre- and post-knowledge assessments, and the independent variables of chronological age, ethnicity, and parental status. The effect sizes rendered in the RM ANOVA summary tables are distinguished as small (eta-squared = 0.2), medium (eta-squared = 0.5), or large (eta-squared = 0.8) based on widely accepted ranges set by Cohen (1988) through his statistical work in behavioral sciences.

Chronological age was represented by the following five ranges: 18-22, 23-27, 28-33, 34-39, and 40 or over. The independent variable of ethnicity was represented by the following five groups: African American, Asian American, Hispanic American, Other, and White. Parental status was represented in three variations: no children, 1 or 2 children, and 3 or 4 children.

Chronological Age and Knowledge Change

RM ANOVA was used to determine the significance of main and interaction effects for chronological age of preservice teachers and changes in their knowledge about parent involvement. Not all data are presented here but only tables of data that were associated with a statistically significant result. Two significant findings are represented in this portion of the report. First, the interaction between chronological age and collaborating knowledge changes is discussed. Second, the interaction between learning at home knowledge changes and chronological age is discussed.
Collaborating with the Community

Table 3 provides specific evidence of changes in preservice teachers’ knowledge about collaborating with the community across the age groups represented in this study.

Table 3

**Collaborating Knowledge Change and Chronological Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Mean Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-22</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>68.21</td>
<td>82.86</td>
<td>+14.65</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-27</td>
<td>17</td>
<td>71.18</td>
<td>79.71</td>
<td>+8.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-33</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>80.00</td>
<td>82.00</td>
<td>+2.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34-39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>66.88</td>
<td>89.38</td>
<td>+22.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or over</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>78.33</td>
<td>73.33</td>
<td>-5.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>75</td>
<td>69.93</td>
<td>82.40</td>
<td>+12.47</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination of the cell means indicates that there was a large increase (14.65) in collaborating with the community knowledge scores for preservice teachers age 18-22 from before to after taking the class ($M = 68.21, M = 82.86$) and an even larger increase (22.5) for those age 34-39 from before to after taking the class ($M = 66.88, M = 89.38$). The class, however, was not associated with much of an increase (8.53) in the knowledge scores for collaborating of students age 23-27 ($M = 71.18, M = 79.71$). Only a small increase (2.00) is noted for those age 28-33 ($M = 80.00, M = 82.00$). Moreover, preservice teachers age 40 or older show a small decrease (5.00) in knowledge scores ($M = 78.33, M = 73.33$).

Before the class, preservice teachers age 28-33 had much higher collaborating scores ($M = 80.00$) than those age 18-22 ($M = 68.21$) and 34-39 ($M = 66.88$). But after
taking the FSCR course, there was not so much of a difference in collaborating post-
knowledge scores among age groups.

Data represented in Table 3 indicate that post-test mean scores for collaborating
knowledge were not significantly different for age groups. However, gain scores for
preservice teachers age 34-39 and age 18-22 show a significant increase in
collaborating knowledge when compared with other age groups. Figure 1 illustrates the
changes in mean scores for each of the age groups noted in Table 3.

![Collaborating knowledge change between age groups.](image)

*Figure 1.* Collaborating knowledge change between age groups.

The notable knowledge gains for preservice teachers age 34-39 and age 18-22
are evident in Figure 1. However, preservice teachers age 40 and over had a lower
mean knowledge post-test score than pre-test score, as illustrated in this plot.

Table 4 confirms a significant main effect for participants’ knowledge change
about collaborating with the community. Additionally, a significant interaction effect
between knowledge change and chronological age of participants is substantiated.

Table 4

**RM ANOVA Summary Table of Collaborating Knowledge Change (KC) and Chronological Age**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Between groups</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>346.98</td>
<td>86.74</td>
<td>.64</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (between)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>9436.36</td>
<td>134.81</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within groups</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-Posttest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1228.75</td>
<td>1228.75</td>
<td>11.79**</td>
<td>.14</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age x KC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1365.39</td>
<td>341.35</td>
<td>3.28*</td>
<td>.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>7293.94</td>
<td>140.20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, **p < .01

Two (Knowledge Change) x Five (Age) mixed-model ANOVA results revealed that the main effect for age was not statistically significant; $F(4, 70) = .64$, $p > .05$, eta-squared = .04. Thus, there was no overall difference in the collaborating grand mean (average of pre- and post-mean) knowledge scores among preservice teachers age 18-22 ($M = 75.54$), 23-27 ($M = 75.44$), 28-33 ($M = 81.00$), 34-39 ($M = 78.13$) and 40 and above ($M = 75.83$). The grand means were derived by averaging the pre- and post-test mean scores (Table 3) of preservice teachers for each age group to determine the size of knowledge differences between the age groups. Because there were no statistically significant differences between the grand means of age groups, there was no main effect for age.

However, a statistically significant main effect for knowledge change was
obtained, \( F(1, 70) = 11.79, p < .01 \), with a small effect (eta-squared = .14).

Collaborating with the community scores of teacher candidates after taking a class \((M = 81.45)\) were statistically significantly higher than before taking a class \((M = 72.92)\).

Furthermore, a statistically significant interaction effect for Knowledge Change (KC) \(x\) Age was also obtained, \( F(4, 70) = 3.28, p < .05 \), with a small effect (eta-squared = .16).

*Learning at Home*

Table 5 provides specific evidence of changes in preservice teachers’ knowledge about learning at home across age groups represented in this study.

Table 5

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Age</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Mean Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>18-22</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>79.29</td>
<td>88.69</td>
<td>+9.40</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23-27</td>
<td>16</td>
<td>78.13</td>
<td>86.56</td>
<td>+8.43</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28-33</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>67.50</td>
<td>88.75</td>
<td>+21.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>34-39</td>
<td>8</td>
<td>71.88</td>
<td>92.50</td>
<td>+20.62</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40 or over</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>68.33</td>
<td>88.33</td>
<td>+20.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>77.12</td>
<td>88.63</td>
<td>+11.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Data represented in Table 5 indicate that post-test mean scores for learning at home knowledge were not markedly different for age groups. However, gain scores for preservice teachers age 28-33, 34-39 and 40 or over showed a considerable increase in learning at home knowledge when compared with other age groups.

Examination of the cell means indicates that there was a large increase (21.25)
in learning at home knowledge scores for teacher candidates ages 28-33 ($M = 67.50$, $M = 88.75$). Similarly, a large knowledge gain (20.62) was evidenced by preservice teachers ages 34-39 ($M = 71.88$, $M = 92.50$). A comparable knowledge gain (20.00) was noted for preservice teachers ages 40 and over from ($M = 68.33$, $M = 88.33$).

Before the class, preservice teachers age 18-22 had much higher learning at home scores ($M = 79.29$) than those age 28-33 ($M = 67.50$) and those age 40 or over ($M = 68.33$). After taking the FSCR course, there was not much of a difference in learning at home post-assessment scores among age groups. However, knowledge gains were noticeably different between preservice teachers age 18-22 and 23-27 contrasted with those age 28-33, 34-39, and 40 or over. Figure 2 illustrates the changes in mean scores for each of the age groups noted in Table 5.

![Figure 2](image)

**Figure 2.** Learning at home knowledge change between age groups.

Figure 2 shows that preservice teachers in three age groups, 28-33, 34-39, and 40 or over, made noticeably larger knowledge gains about learning at home than those in the other two age groups. Moreover, the plots demonstrate the similarities between
pre- and post-test mean scores of participants in two age categories, 28-33 and 40 or over, as those two lines almost overlap in the figure.

Table 6 confirms a significant main effect for knowledge change (pre-test/post-test) of preservice teachers studying about learning at home. Moreover, a significant interaction effect between knowledge change and chronological age is noted.

Table 6

* RM ANOVA Summary Table of Learning at Home Knowledge Change (KC) and Chronological Age *

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>424.93</td>
<td>106.23</td>
<td>.92</td>
<td>.05</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (between)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>7841.85</td>
<td>115.32</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-Posttest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>3998.55</td>
<td>3998.55</td>
<td>52.87***</td>
<td>.44</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Age x KC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>798.78</td>
<td>199.70</td>
<td>2.64*</td>
<td>.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>5143.34</td>
<td>75.64</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, ***p < .001

Two (Knowledge Change) x Five (Age) mixed-model ANOVA results revealed that the main effect for age was not statistically significant; \( F(4, 68) = .92, p > .05, \) eta-squared = .05. Thus, there was no remarkable difference in the learning at home grand mean (average of pre- and post-test mean) knowledge scores among preservice teachers age 18-22 \( (M = 83.99) \), 23-27 \( (M = 82.34) \), 28-33 \( (M = 78.13) \), 34-39 \( (M = 82.19) \) and 40 and above \( (M = 78.33) \). The grand means were derived by averaging the pre- and post-test mean scores (Table 5) of preservice teachers for each age group to determine the size of knowledge differences between the age groups. Because there were no statistically significant differences between the grand means of age groups,
there is no main effect for age. However, a statistically significant main effect for knowledge change was obtained, $F (1, 68) = 52.87, p < .001$, with a medium effect (eta-squared = .44). Learning at home scores after taking a class ($M = 88.63$) were statistically significantly higher than before taking a class ($M = 77.12$). Furthermore, a statistically significant interaction effect for Knowledge Change (KC) x Age was also obtained, $F (4, 68) = 2.64, p < .05$, with a small effect (eta-squared = .13). Table 5 shows the specific knowledge change differences across age groups.

Briefly, examination of the chronological age variable and knowledge gains across six dimensions of parent involvement resulted in two significant findings: (1) There was a statistically significant difference between knowledge gains in collaborating with the community between age groups of preservice teachers, and (2) There was a statistically significant difference in knowledge gains for learning at home between age groups of preservice teachers.

**Parental Status and Knowledge Change**

RM ANOVA was used to determine the significance of main and interaction effects for parental status and knowledge changes. Data are presented here only for statistical results associated with significant findings. Tables 7 and 8 provide support for a significant main effect for knowledge change (KC) in the Learning at Home module. Also noted is a statistically significant interaction effect for KC and parental status. Tables 9 and 10 illustrate the main effects for KC in the Communicating module and the main effects for parental status.
Learning at Home

Table 7 provides specific evidence of changes in preservice teachers’ knowledge about learning at home across parental status groups represented in this study.

Table 7

Learning at Home Knowledge Change and Parental Status

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Status</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Mean Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>78.81</td>
<td>87.97</td>
<td>+9.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or 2 children</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>69.55</td>
<td>91.82</td>
<td>+22.27</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or 4 children</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>71.68</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>+18.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>77.12</td>
<td>88.63</td>
<td>+11.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination of the cell means in Table 7 indicates that there was a large increase (22.27) in learning at home knowledge scores for (a) preservice teachers with 1 or 2 children from before to after taking the class ($M = 69.55$, $M = 91.82$) and (b) those with 3 or 4 children (18.32) from before to after taking the class ($M = 71.67$, $M = 90.00$). However, the FSCR class was not associated with much of a change (9.16) in the learning at home knowledge scores of students without children ($M = 78.81$, $M = 87.97$).

Furthermore, the plot (Figure 3) substantiates the considerable difference on learning at home knowledge pre-test scores among parental status groups, $F(2, 74) = 5.476, p < .05$. Post Hoc tests for assessing group differences on learning at home knowledge pre-test scores indicated that preservice teachers without children had statistically significantly different knowledge changes from those with 1 or 2 children, and those with 3 or 4 children, at a significance level of .05.
At the beginning of the class, preservice teachers with 1 or 2 children and those with 3 or 4 children had less knowledge about learning at home than those without children. Figure 3 illustrates the increases in knowledge gains as evidenced by the pre- and the post-tests. The course did particularly benefit the preservice teachers with 1 or 2 children and those with 3 or 4 children.

The strong main effect for the changes in knowledge that occurred for preservice teachers on the Learning at Home module is presented in Table 8. Data presented in Table 8 reveal a moderate effect for parental status and changes in knowledge.

Two (Knowledge Change) x Three (Parental Status) mixed-model RM ANOVA results revealed that the main effect for parental status was not statistically significant $F(2, 70) = .70, p > .05$, eta-squared = .02. Thus, there was no overall difference in the grand mean (average of pre- and post-mean) knowledge scores among preservice teachers without children ($M = 83.39$), with 1 or 2 children ($M = 80.69$), and with 3 or 4
children ($M = 80.84$). The grand mean was determined by averaging the means of pre- and post-test mean scores (Table 7) of preservice teachers in each of the three parental status groups.

Table 8

**RM ANOVA Summary Table of Learning at Home Knowledge Change (KC) and Parental Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>$df$</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>Eta$^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Status</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>162.11</td>
<td>81.05</td>
<td>.70</td>
<td>.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (between)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>8104.67</td>
<td>115.78</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Within groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-Posttest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2805.95</td>
<td>2805.95</td>
<td>38.73***</td>
<td>.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status x KC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>870.89</td>
<td>435.44</td>
<td>6.01**</td>
<td>.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5071.24</td>
<td>72.45</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**p < .01, ***p < .001

However, a statistically significant main effect for learning at home knowledge change (pre-test/post-test) was substantiated; $F (1, 70) = 38.73$, $p < .05$, with a medium effect (eta-squared = .36). Knowledge mean scores after taking the FSCR class ($M = 89.93$) were statistically significantly higher than before taking the class ($M = 73.34$).

Furthermore, a statistically significant knowledge change (KC) x parental status was obtained, $F (2, 70) = 6.01$, $p < .01$, with a small effect (eta-squared = .15).

**Communicating**

Table 9 provides specific evidence of changes in preservice teachers’ knowledge about communicating across parental status groups represented in this study.
Table 9

*Communicating Knowledge Change and Parental Status*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parental Status</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Mean Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>No children</td>
<td>57</td>
<td>76.40</td>
<td>89.56</td>
<td>+13.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1 or 2 children</td>
<td>13</td>
<td>80.39</td>
<td>91.54</td>
<td>+11.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3 or 4 children</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>86.67</td>
<td>96.67</td>
<td>+10.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>77.53</td>
<td>90.21</td>
<td>+12.68</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination of the cell means in Table 9 shows that there was a direct variation between preservice teacher parental status regarding their pre- and post-test mean scores. The group with no children began the FSCR course with the least knowledge about communicating (76.40), and they ended the course with the least knowledge (89.56). Similar knowledge changes about communicating resulted for the other two groups. Parents with 3 or 4 children began the FSCR course with more knowledge (86.67) about communicating than the other two groups, and they completed the course with the most knowledge (96.67) about communicating. The similarity in mean changes for each of the parental status groups is illustrated in Figure 4. Although each group showed similar knowledge changes, they began and ended the FSCR course with different knowledge about communicating.

The direct variation between pre- and post-knowledge about communicating is illustrated in Figure 4 with each line being similar in slope.

Data represented in Figure 4 indicate that preservice teachers with no children began the Communicating module with less knowledge about communicating.
However, that group of preservice teachers shows the largest gain scores (15%) on the Communicating module as evidenced by pre- and post-knowledge assessments.

![Communicating knowledge change and parental status](image)

**Figure 4.** Communicating knowledge change and parental status.

Table 10 confirms a weak (eta squared = .09) but statistically significant main effect for parental status, as discussed in the preceding paragraphs of this report.

**Table 10**

**RM ANOVA Summary Table of Communicating Knowledge Change (KC) and Parental Status**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Parental Status</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>568.27</td>
<td>284.13</td>
<td>3.35*</td>
<td>.09</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (between)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5932.76</td>
<td>84.75</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-Posttest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>1375.99</td>
<td>1375.99</td>
<td>18.022***</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Status x KC</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>32.42</td>
<td>16.21</td>
<td>.21</td>
<td>.01</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>70</td>
<td>5344.64</td>
<td>76.35</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, *** p < .001
Although there was a weak effect for parental status, there was a statistically significant main effect for parental status on communicating scores among preservice teachers without children, with 1 or 2 children, and with 3 or 4 children in the overall test; $F(2, 70) = 3.35, p < .05$, eta-squared = .09. Thus, there was a statistically significant difference in the grand mean (average of pre- and post-test mean) knowledge scores among preservice teachers without children ($M = 82.98$), with 1 or 2 children ($M = 85.97$), and with 3 or 4 children ($M = 91.67$). The grand mean was determined by averaging the means of pre- and post-test mean scores (Table 7) of preservice teachers in each of the three parental status groups.

The main effect for pre-test/post-test was also statistically significant, $F(1, 70) = 18.02, p < .001$, with a small effect (eta squared = .21). However, the interaction effect between pre-test/post-test (treatment) and preservice teachers’ parental status had no statistical significance. This is evident by examining the similarities for mean change between groups as presented in Table 9. Taking the FSCR course did benefit participants regarding knowledge gains about communicating. Although there was no statistically significant interaction effect, preservice teachers with children had more knowledge concerning communicating compared to those without children. As evidenced by Table 9, parents started and ended the FSCR course with more knowledge about communicating than childless participants.

**Ethnicity and Knowledge Change**

RM ANOVA was used to determine the significance of main and interaction effects for ethnicity of preservice teachers and changes in their knowledge about parent
involvement. Not all data are presented here but only tables of data that were associated with a statistically significant result.

Tables 11 and 12 provide support for a significant main effect for knowledge change (KC) in the Parenting module. Also noted are significant main effects for ethnicity in the Parenting module. Tables 13 and 14 illustrate the main effects for ethnicity in the Learning at Home module.

Parenting

Table 11 offers explicit evidence of changes in preservice teachers' knowledge about parenting across ethnic groups represented in this study.

Table 11

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Mean Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>78.89</td>
<td>85.00</td>
<td>+6.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>87.50</td>
<td>+17.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>77.50</td>
<td>90.00</td>
<td>+12.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62.50</td>
<td>65.00</td>
<td>+2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>62</td>
<td>79.92</td>
<td>91.29</td>
<td>+21.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>77</td>
<td>79.03</td>
<td>89.74</td>
<td>+10.71</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Examination of the cell means in Table 11 indicates that there were relatively large increases in the knowledge scores about parenting for White (21.36) preservice teachers from before and after taking the FSCR course ($M = 79.92$, $M = 91.29$).

Similarly large increases in knowledge were noted for Asian American participants...
(17.50) from before and after taking the course ($M = 70.00, M = 87.50$). However, the course did not produce much of a change (2.50) in participants identifying themselves as Other ($M = 62.50, M = 65.00$). A relatively small knowledge gain (6.11) was also evidenced for African American preservice teachers ($M = 78.89, M = 85.00$). Hispanic American participants showed a relatively moderate increase (12.50) in knowledge about parenting ($M = 77.50, M = 90.00$). Furthermore, the graph (Figure 5) substantiates the considerable differences for parenting pre-test and post-test mean scores among ethnic groups.

![Figure 5. Parenting knowledge change and ethnicity.](image)

Figure 5 demonstrates similar changes in knowledge about parenting for the White, Hispanic American, and Asian American groups. However, the Other and African American groups made less remarkable knowledge gains than the other three groups.

Table 12 confirms a significant main effect for knowledge change (pre-test/post-test) of preservice teachers learning about parenting in addition to a significant main
effect for ethnicity. A small to medium main effect for ethnicity between groups is substantiated for preservice teachers learning about parenting $F (4, 72) = 6.88$, $p < .001$, eta-squared = .28. Thus, there was a statistically significant difference in the grand mean of knowledge scores between preservice teachers represented by the five ethnic groups in this study. The grand mean was calculated by averaging the pre- and post-knowledge mean scores (Table 11) of preservice teachers in each ethnic group. Grand means for (a) African American (81.95), (b) Asian American (78.75), Hispanic American (83.75), Other (63.75), and White (85.61) preservice teachers were found to be statistically significantly different between groups.

Table 12

**RM ANOVA Summary Table of Parenting Knowledge Change (KC) and Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>$F$</th>
<th>Eta$^2$</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Between groups</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>2123.57</td>
<td>530.89</td>
<td>6.88***</td>
<td>.28</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (between)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>5555.33</td>
<td>77.16</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Within groups</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-Posttest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>767.62</td>
<td>767.21</td>
<td>14.38***</td>
<td>.17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity x KC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>225.43</td>
<td>56.36</td>
<td>1.06</td>
<td>.06</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>72</td>
<td>3842.43</td>
<td>53.37</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

***$p < .001$

Additionally, a small but statistically significant main effect for knowledge change was substantiated by Table 12; $F (1, 72) = 14.38$, $p < .001$, eta-squared = .17. However, no statistical significance was apparent for interaction effects between knowledge change and ethnicity (eta-squared = .06).
Learning at Home

Table 13 offers explicit evidence of changes in preservice teachers’ knowledge about learning at home across ethnic groups represented in this study.

Table 13

Learning at Home Knowledge Change and Ethnicity

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ethnicity</th>
<th>N</th>
<th>Pre-test Mean</th>
<th>Post-test Mean</th>
<th>Mean Change</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American</td>
<td>9</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>85.56</td>
<td>+10.56</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Asian American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>77.50</td>
<td>77.50</td>
<td>0.00</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hispanic American</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>77.50</td>
<td>75.00</td>
<td>-2.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Other</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>62.50</td>
<td>70.00</td>
<td>+7.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>White</td>
<td>58</td>
<td>77.93</td>
<td>90.60</td>
<td>+12.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>All</td>
<td>73</td>
<td>77.12</td>
<td>88.63</td>
<td>+11.51</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Cell means in Table 13 provide evidence of knowledge changes that are unique to each ethnic group. Largest knowledge gains are apparent for White (12.67) preservice teachers who started and completed the FSCR course with the highest mean scores ($M = 77.93$, $M = 90.60$). African American participants had relatively high knowledge change scores (10.56), and they began the class with relatively low knowledge mean scores ($M = 75.00$). The group identified as Other showed a gain of 7.50 points although they began and concluded the FSCR course with the lowest pre- and post-test knowledge scores ($M = 62.50$, $M = 70.00$). Table 13 confirms that Asian American participants had no changes in knowledge mean scores before and after studying about learning at home ($M = 77.50$, $M = 77.50$). Hispanic American teacher candidates change scores were negative (-2.50) from pre- to post-knowledge scores on
this module \((M = 77.50, M = 75.00)\). Although pre-test mean scores were similar across most of the ethnic groups for learning at home knowledge, post-test mean scores were quite varied. Figure 6 exemplifies these changes across ethnic groups.

![Graph showing learning at home knowledge change and ethnicity.](image)

**Figure 6.** Learning at home knowledge change and ethnicity.

Figure 6 provides a visual display of Table 13 showing notable differences in mean score changes across the five ethnic groups represented in this study. Table 14 substantiates the significant main effect of ethnicity on preservice teachers’ knowledge about learning at home.

Two (Knowledge Change) x Five (Ethnicity) mixed-model ANOVA results revealed that the main effect for ethnicity was statistically significant; \(F (4, 68) = 4.54, p < .01\), eta-squared = .21. Therefore, there was a small but statistically significant difference in the learning at home grand mean (average of pre- and post-test mean) knowledge scores between (a) African American (80.28), Asian American (77.50), Hispanic American (76.25), Other (66.25), and White (84.27) teacher candidates.
studying about learning at home. The largest difference (18.02) in grand mean knowledge scores for the ethnic groups studying about parenting occurred between the White (84.27) and Other (66.25) teacher candidates, while Asian Americans (77.50) and Hispanic Americans (76.25) posted quite similar grand mean scores.

Table 14

**RM ANOVA Summary Table of Learning at Home Knowledge Change (KC) and Ethnicity**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>df</th>
<th>SS</th>
<th>MS</th>
<th>F</th>
<th>Eta²</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Between groups</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>1742.95</td>
<td>435.74</td>
<td>4.54**</td>
<td>.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (between)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>6532.83</td>
<td>95.94</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pretest-Posttest</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>244.67</td>
<td>244.67</td>
<td>3.00</td>
<td>.04</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ethnicity x KC</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>388.12</td>
<td>97.03</td>
<td>1.19</td>
<td>.07</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Error (within)</td>
<td>68</td>
<td>5553.99</td>
<td>81.68</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

** p < .01

There are no significant main effects for knowledge change (pre-test/post-test) evident in Table 14. Moreover, statistically significant interaction effects between knowledge change and ethnicity cannot be supported by findings presented in Table 14.

**Question 3**

The third question asked in this study regards the correlation of preservice teacher multicultural teaching concerns and their knowledge changes across six dimensions of parent involvement. Chapter 3 presented the third hypotheses tested by the researcher.
H₃: There is a significant correlation between multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers and changes in their knowledge about parent involvement. The testing of this hypothesis revealed there were significant correlations between Factor 2 of the MTCS and five knowledge dimensions that included either changes in knowledge scores or post-assessment scores. The interpretation of the size of correlations discussed in this portion of the report is based on widely accepted parameters posited by Hinkle (2003).

Chapter 3 of this report detailed the development of four factors that are represented among the 30 questions on the MTCS as presented in Appendix C. Factor 1, cross cultural competence, is represented by 10 questions on the MTCS. Factor 2 of the MTCS includes 11 questions which describe concerns about choosing and integrating the most fitting teaching resources, materials, and methods to constructively influence achievement for diverse students. Factor 3, school bureaucracy, is embodied in 4 questions, and Factor 4, family/group knowledge, corresponds with 5 questions (Marshall, 2007). Significant correlations will be examined after a closer inspection of Factor 2, whose questions are presented in Table 15.

An exploration of Factor 2 of the MTCS reveals that the 11 questions represent task and impact concerns for educators. According to Bendixen-Noe (1994), task concerns are those concerns teachers have about how to acceptably accomplish all the tasks required of them. Impact concerns, however, are those concerns teachers have about the socio-emotional needs of students as individuals (Fuller & Brown, 1974). Table 16 provides the correlations between MTCS factors and the knowledge change scores of the candidates for each module.
Table 15

Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey: Strategies and Techniques (Factor 2) (Marshall, 2007)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MTCS* item</th>
<th>Item Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What criteria do I use in selecting materials related to diverse cultures?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What kinds of things can I do to meet both the academic and emotional needs of diverse students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What strategies should I use when working with diverse students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>What are the most effective methods for teaching diverse students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>How do I make lessons and content relevant to diverse students' lives outside of school?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>What can I do to insure that students in need of financial and nutritional assistance receive it in a dignified manner?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>What specific techniques and materials motivate diverse students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>How do I effectively teach a class of students whose abilities and experiential levels vary greatly?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>How should I vary my teaching methods when dealing with culturally diverse students?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>How can I help all students relate well to those who differ from themselves?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>What are the methods and techniques that appeal to all students regardless of their cultural background?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 16 maintains one significant correlation between Factor 2 of the MTCS and changes in knowledge mean scores about advocacy and decision making. Although the relationship is considered small (.273), it is statistically significant. Further examination of cells provides shows that several other relationships approach significance. For example, changes in knowledge about advocacy and decision making and Factor 1 of the MTCS have a relatively strong though not significant relationship. Similarly, changes in knowledge about collaborating with the community and Factor 1 of
the MTCS are relatively highly correlated, though not significantly. Nearly half of the correlations (10 of 24) presented in Table 16 show a negative relationship between knowledge changes about parent involvement and MTCS scores across the four factors.

Table 16

*Intercorrelations between MTCS Scores and Knowledge Change*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MTCS Factors</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Factor 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Change</td>
<td>-.002</td>
<td>.118</td>
<td>.102</td>
<td>.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating Change</td>
<td>.078</td>
<td>.094</td>
<td>-.017</td>
<td>.067</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Change</td>
<td>.074</td>
<td>.173</td>
<td>.037</td>
<td>-.091</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering Change</td>
<td>-.142</td>
<td>-.135</td>
<td>-.229</td>
<td>-.182</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy Change</td>
<td>.182</td>
<td>.273*</td>
<td>.092</td>
<td>.169</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating Change</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>-.066</td>
<td>-.060</td>
<td>-.077</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* * p < .05

Table 17 provides data about the MTCS and post-test knowledge mean scores. As mentioned previously in this report, Factor 2 of the MTCS is the only factor significantly correlated to knowledge about parent involvement. That is evident in the intercorrelations recognized in Table 17.

Table 17 displays data showing significant correlations between MTCS Factor 2 and post-knowledge scores for teacher candidates studying about learning at home (.404), volunteering (.266), advocacy and decision making (.365), and mean post-tests across all modules (.370). According to Hinkle (2003), the relationships between MTCS Factor 2 and (a) mean knowledge post-tests, (b) advocacy and decision making mean
post-tests and (c) learning at home mean post-tests are considered positive and moderate. The magnitude of relationship between MTCS Factor 2 and volunteering post-test mean scores are considered little and positive. These correlations are based on Hinkle's (2003) “Rule of Thumb for Interpreting the Size of a Correlation Coefficient” (p. 109) which is listed in Table 18.

Table 17

**Intercorrelations between MTCS Scores and Knowledge Post-tests**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>MTCS Factors</th>
<th>Factor 1</th>
<th>Factor 2</th>
<th>Factor 3</th>
<th>Factor 4</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Parenting Post-test</td>
<td>.062</td>
<td>.220</td>
<td>.005</td>
<td>.049</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Communicating Post-test</td>
<td>.046</td>
<td>.188</td>
<td>-.053</td>
<td>.009</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Learning Post-test</td>
<td>.205</td>
<td>.404**</td>
<td>.132</td>
<td>.120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Volunteering Post-test</td>
<td>.082</td>
<td>.266*</td>
<td>-.010</td>
<td>.095</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Advocacy Post-test</td>
<td>.149</td>
<td>.365**</td>
<td>.097</td>
<td>.225</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Collaborating Post-test</td>
<td>.098</td>
<td>.156</td>
<td>.064</td>
<td>.065</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mean Post-test</td>
<td>.153</td>
<td>.370**</td>
<td>.065</td>
<td>.139</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05, **p < .01

Table 18

**Rule of Thumb for Interpreting the Size of a Correlation Coefficient**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Size of Correlation</th>
<th>Interpretation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>.90 - 1.00</td>
<td>Very high positive correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.70 - .90</td>
<td>High positive correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.50 - .70</td>
<td>Moderate positive correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.30 - .50</td>
<td>Low positive correlation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>.00 - .30</td>
<td>Little positive correlation</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Question 4

Mixed methods research techniques were required to answer Question 4 and respond to the alternate hypothesis. The qualitative aspect of this study determined preservice teachers’ thinking levels as applied in narratives written in response to a question about a case study. The quantitative aspect compared thinking levels to post-knowledge scores across the six dimensions of parent involvement. Question 4 was posed in Chapter 1, and the fourth hypothesis was stated in Chapter 3 of this study.

\[ H_4: \text{There is a significant correlation between preservice teacher parent and family involvement skill levels and their post-knowledge of parent and family involvement.} \]

Results of testing the fourth hypothesis are examined in the following paragraphs. Figure 7 provides results from the qualitative data analyses by categorizing thinking levels as evidenced by participants’ responses to a case study dilemma. Then, correlations between thinking levels and post-knowledge about parent involvement are presented in Table 19. Bloom’s taxonomy was used to categorize responses using the procedures explained in Chapter 3.

One-third \((n = 24)\) of the total respondents \((N = 72)\) to the case study dilemma displayed thinking identified at the application level. According to BTLS (Bloom 1984), the application level is identified when information is used to solve problems requiring skills or knowledge. In this study, preservice teachers likely used the information from PTE Connect modules and the FSCR course to apply learned concepts for resolution of the case study dilemma. One-fourth \((n = 25)\) of the respondents in this study were perceived to be using comprehension to resolve the case study problem. Bloom (1984) posits that comprehension is apparent when learners understand information, interpret...
facts, and predict consequences. Sample participant responses to the case study dilemma and perceived thinking levels of the responses are included in Appendix G. As mentioned in Chapter 3, the transition from thinking levels to skill levels is feasible in that well cultivated thinkers ably solve problems and reflect on solutions (Scriven & Paul, 2004; Knowlton, 2003).

![Bar chart showing perceived thinking levels in response to case study.]

Figure 7. Perceived thinking levels in response to case study.

Table 19 indicates the correlation between skill levels of preservice teachers and their post-knowledge about parent involvement. As indicated in the table, higher post-test knowledge scores on the Volunteering module were significantly correlated with higher levels of skill for solving the case study problem referenced in this investigation.
The magnitude of this relationship is noted as a small, positive correlation based on information from Tables 18 and 19. Second, lower post-test knowledge scores on the Collaborating module were inversely related, though not significantly, to skillful resolution of the case study dilemma.

Table 19

*Relationship between Skills (BTLS) and Knowledge Post-test Scores*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Knowledge (post-test)</th>
<th>Parenting</th>
<th>Communicating</th>
<th>Volunteering</th>
<th>Learning</th>
<th>Advocacy</th>
<th>Collaborating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Blooms Correlation</td>
<td>.019</td>
<td>.101</td>
<td>.286</td>
<td>.117</td>
<td>.081</td>
<td>-.100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Sig)</td>
<td>(.899)</td>
<td>(.495)</td>
<td>(.048)*</td>
<td>(.427)</td>
<td>(.586)</td>
<td>(.498)</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* p < .05

Summary

The findings from this study are organized in Chapter 4 according to the four questions posed in Chapter 1 and the alternate hypotheses presented in Chapter 3. This synopsis reviews the findings discussed previously.

The first research question in this study called for an examination of pre- and post-knowledge assessments for preservice teachers’ learning about parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, advocacy and decision making, and collaborating with the community. Tests of significance of gain scores of teacher candidates showed that knowledge was gained about each of the six dimensions of parent involvement examined. Moreover, statistically significant learning gains occurred across five of the six dimensions. Only pre- and post-knowledge mean scores for
preservice teachers’ learning about volunteering did not show significant gains.

The second question called for the use of Repeated-measures (RM) ANOVA to discover answers about the impact of participants’ demographics on knowledge changes for each of the parent involvement module topics. Specifically, the demographics of chronological age, ethnicity, and parental status were examined for possible significant main effects and interaction effects on knowledge changes. Testing the second alternate hypothesis revealed eight statistically main effects and three statistically significant interaction effects.

Testing the second hypothesis revealed these main effects: (a) chronological age significantly impacted pretest/posttest scores on collaborating with the community, (b) chronological age significantly impacted pretest/posttest scores on learning at home, (c) parental status significantly impacted pretest/posttest scores on learning at home, (d) parental status differences between groups significantly impacted learning about communicating, (e) parental status significantly impacted pretest/posttest scores on communicating, (f) ethnic differences between groups significantly impacted learning about parenting, (g) ethnicity significantly impacted pretest/posttest scores on parenting, and (h) ethnic differences between groups significantly impacted learning in the Learning at Home module. Testing the second hypothesis resulted in these significant interaction effects: (a) chronological age and knowledge changes on collaborating with the community, (b) chronological age and knowledge changes on learning at home, and (c) parental status and knowledge changes about learning at home.

The third question answered in this study called for the use of bivariate correlation to analyze data for significant relationships between preservice teachers’
multicultural teaching concerns and knowledge changes about parent involvement. Five aspects of knowledge were found to correlate significantly with factor 2 of preservice teachers’ multicultural teaching concerns. Knowledge changes of preservice teachers’ learning about advocacy and decision making elicited a small, positive correlation with factor 2 of the MTCS. Additional knowledge aspects that significantly correlated with factor 2 of the MTCS were (a) learning post-test, (b) volunteering post-test, (c) advocacy post-test, and (d) mean knowledge post-test.

Responding to Question 4 required mixed methods research techniques. Bloom’s taxonomy was used as a guide for the researcher to determine the perceived thinking levels of preservice teachers’ written narratives in response to a question from a case study. Thinking levels of preservice teachers were acknowledged at the application level for 24 respondents and the comprehension level for 18 respondents. Smaller numbers represented the other four thinking levels. Using support from literature (Scriven & Paul, 2004; Knowlton, 2003), thinking levels were considered as a basis for skill levels in this study. Skill levels and mean knowledge post-tests about each of the parent involvement topics were correlated for evidence of significance. One statistically significant result emerged. Volunteering post-test scores and thinking levels (skills) were found to have a small, positive correlation.

Findings presented in Chapter 4 are interpreted in Chapter 5 of this study. Then, conclusions about the findings are discussed followed by recommendations for further study.
This study began with a quest for teacher education that supports schools and teachers in encouraging parent involvement practices. Moreover, the pursuit of appropriate teacher education curriculum to promote parent involvement was impelled because of societal, intellectual, professional, and research indicators that make this topic especially important in an era of increasingly diverse school populations. As noted in Chapter 2, a plethora of literature supports the impact of parent involvement on student achievement (Henderson & Berla, 1995; Hill, Castelloni, Lansfore, Nowlin, Dodge, Bates & Petit, 2004; Redding & Sheley, 2005). However, the lack of systematic, pervasive instruction on parent involvement presents a dilemma for educators and teacher candidates. A disconnect that exists between what is needed in parent involvement curriculum for future teachers and what is currently available prompted the present research study.

Summary of Results

The alternate hypotheses were supported for each of the four questions studied. First of all, $t$-tests used in Question 1 identified the significant changes in mean scores across five of the six curriculum modules. Only gain scores in the Volunteering module were not considered significant. Question 2 investigated the impact of participants’ demographics on knowledge changes across the six dimensions of parent involvement. Significant main effects were found for independent variables in the Collaborating with the Community, Learning at Home, Parenting, and Communicating modules.
Statistically significant interaction effects were apparent between knowledge change and chronological age in the Collaborating and Learning at Home modules. Moreover, parental status and knowledge change interacted significantly in the Learning at Home module.

Question 3 of this study explored the possibility of a relationship between multicultural teaching concerns and knowledge changes of preservice teachers. One significant correlation resulted from this exploration. Teacher candidates’ knowledge gains about advocacy and decision making were significantly correlated to Factor 2 (strategies and techniques) of the MTCS. Gains in knowledge about advocacy and decision making and Factor 1 (cross cultural competence) of the MTCS approached a significant relationship. Four additional significant results were found. Statistically significant correlations of preservice teacher MTCS scores on Factor 2 were noted with each of the following: (a) post-knowledge mean scores from the six modules, (b) post-knowledge mean scores about advocacy and decision making, (c) post-knowledge mean scores about learning at home, (d) and post-knowledge mean scores about volunteering. Additionally, post-knowledge mean scores on advocacy and decision making and MTCS Factor 4 (family/group knowledge) approached statistical significance.

Question 4 explored the relationships between preservice teachers’ parent involvement skill levels and their knowledge about parent involvement as measured on post-tests. One statistically significant result was elicited from Question 4. Preservice teachers who were perceived as exhibiting strong skill levels for parent involvement also had similarly strong post-knowledge scores about volunteering. No other post-
knowledge results approached a significant relationship with preservice teachers’ parent involvement skill levels.

Briefly, the study reported here resulted in five statistically significant findings from answering Question one, eleven significant findings from responding to Question two, five significant findings from exploring Question three, and one significant finding from examining Question four. These findings about characteristics of preservice teachers learning parent involvement practices will be discussed in the subsequent narrative.

Discussion of Results

Results from this study are discussed in the following format: interpretation of findings, relationship of this study to previous research, recommendations for educators, and suggestions for additional research.

Interpretation of Findings

Twenty-two statistically significant discoveries surfaced from this dissertation study. Each of those is interpreted in this section of the report.

Question 1

The first research question asked, “Is there a significant change in preservice teachers’ knowledge about parent involvement in the areas of parenting, communicating, learning at home, volunteering, collaborating with the community, or advocacy and decision making, as evidenced by pre- and post-assessments
administered through a course in family, school, and community resources?" From a statistical perspective, using this population sample and the findings from this study, the answer to this question is “Yes.” Pre- and post-tests of knowledge support the finding that preservice teachers left the family, schools, and community resources course with more knowledge about parent involvement than what they had when they began the course. Statistically significant knowledge gains \( (p < .001) \) occurred for preservice teachers for all the curriculum modules except Volunteering. While participants did record knowledge gains about volunteering, it was not a statistically significant knowledge change. The largest gain score across all six parent involvement knowledge dimensions was recorded for communicating, with a change of 12.67 points in the mean scores of preservice teacher participants. Preservice teachers recorded a similar knowledge gain score on the Collaborating module with a change in mean of 12.47. Other significant knowledge changes for specific modules in descending order of gain are Learning at Home (11.51), Parenting (10.71), and Advocacy and Decision Making (4.74).

Attention to the Communicating module may provide some insight as to the reason for the large gain in preservice teacher knowledge for that particular type of parent involvement. The Communicating module informed participants about the importance of communication with parents and family members. Importantly, tips on preparing for parent conferences were explained with explicit directives for conducting a conference. Guidance toward conducting a difficult conference was also available through the Communicating module. One activity requested of preservice teachers was that they learn to write notes and letters to parents of their students. The module
provided a sample letter and a rubric for scoring the communication, so that preservice teachers might inspect and scrutinize a message to determine its likely value to parents. Another central component of the module was a Communications Framework which provided methods of communication appropriate for teachers to use in different types of interactions with parents.

The relatively low pre-test mean score regarding knowledge about communicating is likely indicative of the fact that preservice teachers had thought about communicating in somewhat limited ways. A survey by Graue and Brown (2003) revealed that most teacher candidates viewed parent-teacher conferences as the most anticipated type of communication expected in their roles as teachers. However, this same survey exposed less expectation on the part of teacher candidates for receiving parent input about curriculum, making home visits, and meeting outside of school. A second limitation of mostly White teachers may be a lack of concern about language differences between the teacher and the parents of their students. Students of color comprise about 40% of student populations in US public schools (Matuszny, Banda, & Coleman, 2007), and approximately 22% of minority students have a disability (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2002). These attributes provide a need for knowledge and awareness about possible language barriers coupled with the specific need to communicate accurately about student abilities and characteristics.

When teacher candidates in this study became more knowledgeable about the variety of methods and venues for communicating with parents, their levels of knowledge probably became more inclusive. Understanding the preparation for parent/family conferences, construction of notes sent home, and using different
communication frameworks were concepts that had not likely been considered this systematically before the FSCR course.

Moreover, one responsibility of teachers is to have at least one parent conference every school year. When preservice teachers began to understand this requirement and the possible challenges afforded by it, they were likely motivated to learn about the strategies and techniques that guide effective parent communication. Their knowledge gains about communicating were remarkable.

Question 2

The second research question asked, “Does chronological age, ethnicity, or parental status of preservice teachers impact changes in their knowledge of parent involvement acquired through a course in family, school, and community resources?” Eleven statistically significant findings resulted from this query.

**Main effects.** From a statistical perspective, findings supported a significant main effect for chronological age on pretest/posttest mean scores in two modules: Collaborating with the Community and Learning at Home. Main effects were also significant for ethnicity between groups learning about parenting and learning at home. Ethnicity significantly affected pretest/posttest scores within groups. Significant main effects were noted for parental status on pretest/posttest mean scores in the Learning at Home and Communicating modules. Parental status between groups of preservice teachers was noticed as a main effect in the Communicating module.

**Interaction effects.** Findings supported a significant interaction effect between chronological age and knowledge change from the treatment (pretest/posttest) in two of
the six modules: Collaborating with the Community and Learning at Home. Second, findings supported a significant interaction effect between parental status and knowledge change in the Learning at Home module. Each of these statistically significant findings is discussed in the following paragraphs.

**Collaborating knowledge change and chronological age.** The interaction between chronological age and knowledge change in the Collaborating module accounted for approximately 16% (eta-squared = .16) of the variance in the scores within age groups. These differences may be partially explained by the relatively low pre-test mean knowledge scores on the Collaborating with the Community module. Examination of individual cells in Table 1 revealed the collaborating mean scores ($M = 69.93$) of preservice teachers to be the lowest of the six pre-test knowledge, although there is no reason to believe these assessments are of equal difficulty. This relatively low mean score provided a greater opportunity for knowledge gains about collaborating with the community than for the other five modules. Participants age 34-39 recorded especially low pre-test knowledge mean scores ($M = 66.88$) for collaborating. Sizable gains in knowledge (22.5) were evidenced for these participants as noted by post-test mean knowledge scores ($M = 89.38$). Moreover, it is probable that collaborating with the community is less likely to be discussed in education classes than the more common topics of parenting (HFRP, 2006/2007), communicating (Hiatt-Michael, 2001), learning at home (Van Voorhis, 2003), and volunteering (Reynolds & Clements, 2005). The lack of previous learning on the topic of collaborating may be partly due to a lack of coverage in previous courses. Importantly, an opportunity for learning about collaborating was
presented to teacher candidates, and they responded with significant differences ($p < .05$) between age groups.

An examination of the Collaborating with the Community module may provide insight as to reasons for the largest knowledge gains for preservice teachers age 34-39. The module informed preservice teachers about the value of collaborating with the immediate community and the larger community. Furthermore, the module presented information about field trips that can be enriched when the community gets involved. Service learning was presented as a way for students to provide assistance in their communities and have this assistance become a viable part of the curriculum.

Collaborating outside the immediate neighborhood becomes possible for learners through email, blogs, and discussion boards. These opportunities were unavailable in public schools during the student days of preservice teachers who are now between 34 and 39 years old. Therefore, the implications of collaborating may be much broader than they may have considered before the FSCR course. Second, the notion of community assistance in field trip and service learning experiences may be a new one for 34-39 year old preservice teachers. As the school begins to invite the community into the school setting, citizens begin to better understand the needs of schools (Oakes, 2000). Professionals may provide invitations for students to shadow them for a day at their jobs (Fitzgerald, 1997). They may provide technological support to classes or schools. Volunteer tutoring and mentoring are other possibilities for community collaboration with schools.

Preservice teachers between 34 and 39 years of age may have a two-fold interest in collaborating with the community. They may see themselves as beneficiaries
of collaboration efforts when they become teachers, or they may envision themselves as members of the community with something to offer the school. Participants in this age range are likely entering teacher education with a skill set from another occupation or other experience, including parenting experience, which is valuable to the school. Not only do they begin to understand that collaborating with the community may enrich the curriculum in a variety of ways, they also see themselves as providing some of the richness in their own classroom or the classrooms of others. These are traits that may not be manifested in younger preservice teachers.

*Learning at Home knowledge change and chronological age.* The interaction between age and knowledge change in the Learning at Home module accounted for about 13% (eta-squared = .13) of the variance in scores within age groups of preservice teachers. Relatively low pre-test mean scores of preservice teacher participants provided opportunity for notable changes in knowledge about learning at home. Examination of individual cells in Table 1 revealed the mean scores of the learning at home pretest to be 77.12. This was the second lowest pre-test mean score among the six modules.

Age groups varied significantly from each other in knowledge gains from studying about learning at home. Examination of Table 5 revealed the gaps between knowledge gains related to age differences of participants. Specifically, preservice teachers between the ages of 34-39 improved their mean knowledge scores by 20.62 points while those students ages 18-22 improved their mean knowledge scores by only 9.40 points. Figure 2 supports the finding that preservice teachers in three age groups, 28-33, 34-39, and 40 or over posted significant knowledge changes when compared with
students in the 18-22 and 23-27 age groups ($p < .05$).

Preservice teachers between the ages of 34-39 showed significantly higher gain scores ($M = 71.88$, $M = 92.50$) than those in younger age groupings. Students who were 40 years or older showed gains similar to the 34-39 year old group ($M = 68.33$, $M = 88.33$). Post-hoc tests of significance show that the significant interaction effects are due to the large gains in learning at home knowledge for preservice teachers who are over 27 as compared to those younger participants.

Examination of the Learning at Home module revealed two specific objectives that likely promoted the interaction between age and knowledge gain of preservice teachers across this particular parent involvement dimension. For one, the Learning at Home module speaks directly to practices involving homework that should be purposeful; this suggests that teachers address particular learning standards set forth in the school curriculum. As mentioned in Chapter 1, public schools are facing a federal accountability movement that is unparalleled in the history of the United States (Conley, 2003). Preservice teachers who are over 27 years old were not students in public schools when NCLB became law. Therefore, the specific ties between curriculum standards, as mandated by NCLB, and homework were not in place for them as students. Younger teacher candidates, however, have first-hand knowledge of NCLB and its effect on standards that have prevailed in this decade.

Second, the communications framework is revisited in the Learning at Home module. As mentioned previously, preservice teachers showed their highest knowledge gains in the area of communicating. Although no significant correlation was noted for communicating and chronological age, the communicating module is one in which the
gain scores of all participants were higher than for all other modules. The tie between communicating and learning at home may contribute to the significant correlation between knowledge gains about learning at home and chronological age of participants.

**Collaborating and chronological age.** A significant main effect for pretest/posttest (treatment) was revealed within age groups learning about collaborating with the community. Table 4 suggests that 14% of the variance in mean scores on collaborating were due to differences within age groups of preservice teachers in this study. The $p$ value ($p < .01$) supports this finding by acknowledging there is only one chance in 100 that this variance occurred by chance. The main effect for treatment suggests that preservice teachers within each age group made significantly different scores on pre- and post-test knowledge assessments about collaborating with the community. This may be attributed to differing background experiences of students within age groups. While some participants may have had opportunity to collaborate with community members in some capacity, others may not have had this experience. Thus, those differences affected what they knew before coming to the FSCR course and what they learned as a result of the course.

**Learning at Home and chronological age.** A significant main effect for treatment (pretest/posttest) was apparent within age groups of preservice teachers studying about learning at home ($p < .001$). A medium size main effect (eta-squared = .44) was noted in Table 6 of this report indicating that 44% of the variance in pretest/posttest mean scores about learning at home was due to the differences within age groups of participants in this study. Data collected for this study did not allow for cross-referencing of age and parental status, but it is possible that participants in the same
age range may have differing parental statuses which may be effecting the variation in pretest/posttest scores within groups. Parental status and learning at home variations (eta-squared = .36) within groups (Table 6) are very similar in variance to learning at home and age differences (eta-squared = .44) within groups. Moreover, parents may have had opportunity to experience the concepts of learning at home with their own children. It is possible that variation within age groups in response to treatment may be attributed to differences in parental status as well.

*Parenting and ethnicity.* A significant main effect was evident between ethnic groups learning about parenting. In fact, 28% of the variance in knowledge scores of preservice teachers learning about parenting was due to the differences between ethnic groups. This variance may be distorted because of the small sample size of participants in three of the ethnicity groups: Asian American (N = 2), Hispanic American (N = 2), and Other (N = 2). However, since $p < .001$, the value of this finding should be considered. A second significant main effect for treatment (pretest/posttest) is noticeable within ethnic groups of preservice teachers in this study ($p < .001$). The within groups main effect is responsible for approximately 17% of the variance in knowledge mean scores for participants studying about parenting.

An examination of the Parenting module may be useful for understanding why these main effects existed in this data set. The Parenting module sets forth objectives that are directed specifically to minority cultures. For example, preservice teachers are implored to “recognize basic cultural differences in parenting and childrearing practices” (Jacobson & Brown, 2003, p. 1). Moreover, the concepts of individualism and collectivism are presented as differences in the ways families may interact. Special
attention is given to Asian American, Hispanic American, and African American differences in roles and expectations of family members. The small to medium size main effect for ethnicity (eta-squared = .28) in the Parenting module suggests that participants from different cultural groups came to the FSCR course with knowledge specific to their cultures and upbringing that likely affected the ways in which they understood and responded to the content of the Parenting module. The main effect for treatment (pretest/posttest) has a smaller, though significant, effect (eta-squared = .17) within ethnic groups suggesting that participants within each group varied from one another about their knowledge of parenting.

Learning at home and ethnicity. A statistically significant main effect was found between ethnic groups of preservice teachers studying about learning at home. In fact, 21% of the variance in knowledge mean scores for the Learning at Home module can be attributed to differences between ethnic groups in this study. As mentioned previously in this report, care should be given when interpreting significant findings related to ethnicity reported here because of the small sample sizes of three of the groups. However, these findings are reported with suggestions that further research be conducted to affirm validity. One assumption that could be supported from the significant main effect of ethnicity on learning at home is that participants from different cultures come to the FSCR course with unique ways they have experienced learning at home. For example, African American families typically have a high degree of human interaction and emphasize resiliency. Hispanic Americans generally have strong family ties with respect given to the father in the home. Asian Americans also value the father as the authority figure in the home, but they value collectivism, obedience, and non-
confrontational behaviors (Jacobson & Brown, 2003). These cultural differences are likely to be played out quite differently between ethnic groups when children are involved in activities where learning at home is the focus. Preservice teachers from various ethnic groups who are entering the FSCR course probably have very different ideas about how children work on school lessons at home.

*Learning at Home and parental status.* A significant main effect for treatment (pretest/posttest) was apparent within parental status groups studying about learning at home. As mentioned previously, 36% of the variance in scores within parental status groups can be attributed to the treatment administered through the FSCR course. This finding indicates that parents within each of the three groups reacted differently than others in the same group when exposed to the treatment which involved the Learning at Home module in the FSCR course. An analysis of the data calls attention to the similarities in variance between treatment of both parental status and chronological age groups. It is possible that an overlap between chronological age and parental status contained many of the same participants and provided for similar variations within groups of participants when exposed to the treatment (pretest/posttest). Again, cross referencing between demographic variables was not part of this study, so this assumption needs further research to be substantiated.

*Learning at Home knowledge change and parental status.* Significant interaction effects were evidenced between knowledge changes and parental status for preservice teachers studying about learning at home. As noted previously in this report, pre-test knowledge mean scores for learning at home were relatively low. Therefore, the interaction effect between parental status and knowledge changes about learning at
home may be due in part to the opportunity for growth in this knowledge area. A small effect size (eta-squared = .15) was found for the interaction between parental status of preservice teachers and their knowledge changes about learning at home (Table 8). In other words, parental status explains 15\% of the variability in the independent variable (knowledge change) for this population sample.

Figure 3 and Table 7 supported the findings that preservice teachers with 1 or 2 children made notably higher knowledge gains ($M = 69.55$, $M = 91.82$) than those with no children ($M = 78.81$, $87.97$). Knowledge pre-test and post-test mean scores for participants with 3-4 children ($M = 71.68$, $M = 90.00$) was similar to participants with 1 or 2 children ($M = 69.55$, $M = 91.82$). These findings indicated that studying about learning at home was significantly more beneficial for preservice teachers who are parents than those with no children ($p < .01$).

As mentioned previously in this chapter, homework is a particular emphasis in the Learning at Home module. Moreover, preservice teachers who are also parents may have experienced the implications of learning at home through experiences with their own children. According to a number of research studies, learning at home is the most effective parent involvement strategy to positively impact student achievement (Redding & Sheley, 2005; D’Agostino, Hedges, Wong & Borman, 2001; Cooper, Chavira, & Mena, 2005). Teacher candidates involved in the FSCR course as parents are likely more interested in learning about how to effectively engage their own children, as well as their future students, in effective home learning activities. This motivation likely underscores a statistically significant interaction effect between parental status and knowledge gains about learning at home.
Communicating and parental status. Significant main effects were discerned for parental status between groups learning about communicating. Significant main effects were also apparent within groups for pretest/posttest. Parental status was responsible for 9% of the variance in scores for preservice teachers learning about communicating. Within groups pretest/posttest (treatment) accounted for about 21% of the variance in scores. Pretest mean scores of knowledge \((M = 77.53)\) for preservice teachers learning about communicating began in the middle range of the six pre-test mean scores (Table 1). Unlike the findings mentioned previously in this report, there was not a dearth of knowledge when participants began studying about communicating in the FSCR course. However, the post-test mean score of knowledge \((M = 90.21)\) about communicating was the highest of all six post-test scores. Preservice teachers with no children began learning about communicating with a pre-test mean score of 76.40 and concluded the module with a mean score of 89.56. Participants with children began with more communicating knowledge and completed the module with higher mean scores as well. Preservice teachers with 1 or 2 children recorded mean scores of 80.39 (pre-test) and 91.54 (post-test). Even higher scores were recorded for participants with 3 or 4 children \((M = 86.67, M = 96.67)\). The main effect for parental status is not strong; however, it is significant \((\text{eta-squared} = .09)\).

Preservice teachers who have no children made the most remarkable gains in knowledge about communicating. This outcome may be due, in part, to lack of communicating experience on the part of the childless participants who began this module with the lowest knowledge mean scores on pre-tests. Support for this statement is suggested by examining the knowledge gains of participants who have children.
Preservice teachers with 3-4 children recorded the smallest gains between all parental status groups. However, they began learning about communicating with the highest pre-test scores on knowledge assessments. This may be due to their being more practiced at communicating with schools and teachers before they began the FSCR course. According to the Harvard Family Research Project (1997), communicating is the first competency required for teachers to effectively engage parents. Even though children of participants may not be of school age, they may be involved in day care settings or preschools which require more communication between parents and teachers than that required of their childless classmates. It makes sense, then, that preservice teachers, in their roles as parents, are possibly more practiced at communicating.

A second reason for the large communicating knowledge gains of preservice teachers with no children may be due to their new exposure to parent conferences. One particular objective of the Communicating module is that preservice teachers learn about conferencing with parents. Preservice teachers with children may have experienced this phenomenon; thus, they likely had less to learn about it than their childless classmates.

**Question 3**

The third question addressed in this study asked, “Is there a correlation between multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers and changes in their knowledge about parent involvement acquired through a course in family, school, and community resources?” As noted previously, the MTCS yields four factors: (1) cross cultural competence, (2) strategies and techniques, (3) school bureaucracy, and (4)
family/group knowledge (Marshall, 2007). A statistically significant correlation \((p < .05)\) was found between MTCS Factor 2, strategies and techniques, and changes for preservice teachers’ learning about advocacy and decision making. Four additional statistically significant correlations are related to this question. Mean total knowledge post-test scores of preservice teachers across all six parent involvement dimensions correlated significantly \((p < .01)\) with their scores on Factor 2 of the MTCS. Second, post-knowledge scores of preservice teachers learning about advocacy and decision making correlated significantly \((p < .01)\) with their scores on Factor 2 of the MTCS. Third, a statistically significant outcome \((p < .01)\) is noted for preservice teachers learning at home post-knowledge scores and their scores on Factor 2 of the MTCS. Finally, post-knowledge scores of preservice teachers learning about volunteering significantly correlated with Factor 2 of the MTCS. Each of these statistically significant findings is discussed in turn.

Advocacy and Decision Making knowledge changes and MTCS Factor 2. The pre-test mean score of teacher candidates learning about advocacy and decision making \((M = 82.95)\) was the second highest pre-test score across the six parent involvement dimensions. Interestingly, post-test knowledge mean scores \((M = 87.69)\) for this module were second to lowest. However, this change does represent a statistically significant change in learning \((p < .001)\) about advocacy and decision making. When considering the correlation between the knowledge gains for the module and Factor 2 of the MTCS, it is relevant to examine the content to understand why they are significantly related.
The Advocacy and Decision Making module presents content preparing teachers to empower parents to represent their children at school. The need for parental advocacy for children may be due to their eligibility for programs that serve special needs of the child such as gifted and talented programs, special education, English as a second language, and many others. Factor 2 of the MTCS addresses strategies and techniques that preservice teachers may be concerned about when working with a diverse population. When scores based on these measures are correlated, it is probable that teacher candidates who are predisposed to learning about empowering parents to advocate for their children are also concerned about the appropriate ways to teach children from diverse families. Perhaps preservice teachers who are apprehensive about strategies and techniques for working for diverse populations are interested in knowing how to encourage parent involvement from this same population of parents.

Mean post-knowledge across six dimensions of parent involvement and MTCS Factor 2. As mentioned in Chapter 4, the correlation between these two variables was considered a moderate positive correlation ($p < .01$). However, it was statistically significant. Examination of post-knowledge scores across all six dimensions of parent involvement indicated that preservice teachers who concluded the FSCR course recorded parent involvement knowledge scores that correlated with their concerns about strategies and techniques for teaching diverse student populations. This relationship may be due to the case studies across all six modules that presented information about working with diverse parents in all areas of parent involvement. When preservice teachers became more aware of families and cultural differences likely to be
present in their future classrooms, it can be assumed that their apprehension about strategies and techniques for teaching diverse student populations was acknowledged.

_Advocacy and Decision Making post-knowledge and MTCS Factor 2._ The correlation between preservice teachers’ post-knowledge about advocacy and decision making \((M = 87.69)\) and MTCS Factor 2 was significant at the .01 level. This correlation was stronger than the advocacy and decision making knowledge change and MTCS Factor 2. Perhaps this is due to the fact that preservice teacher mean scores about advocacy and decision making were relatively high when compared with the other five parent involvement dimensions. However, the relationship between post-knowledge mean scores and MTCS Factor 2 indicates that preservice teachers who concluded the course in FSCR were concerned about how to teach diverse student populations while being pre-disposed to knowledge about advocacy and decision making. In other words, preservice teachers concerned about how to address particular needs based on ethnicity/culture of students left the FSCR course knowing more about how to empower parents to advocate for their children at school.

_Learning at Home post-knowledge and MTCS Factor 2._ Preservice teachers studying about learning at home compiled a post-knowledge mean score of 88.05. A statistically significant correlation \((p < .01)\) was found between the post-knowledge mean score and MTCS Factor 2. This is considered a low positive correlation, as noted in Chapter 4. However, examination of Table 9 established the strength of this particular relationship to be greater than the other correlations between knowledge and MTCS scores.
Preservice teachers who completed the FSCR course and left with more knowledge about learning at home were also concerned about strategies and techniques for teaching diverse student populations. This relationship is likely due to the content of the Learning at Home module concerning homework and expectations of all parents working outside of school with their children. Teacher candidates who anticipated the need for specific teaching methods for diverse students were similarly pre-disposed to acquiring knowledge about helping parents work with their children at home. The connection between these two variables may be linked to the PTE Connect curriculum which addressed the many differences in ways that families interact at home with their children. Content of the Learning at Home module addresses these differences. Specifically, the Learning at Home module presents information about Parent Power Nights in El Paso, the Multicultural Extravaganza at Lake Agassiz Elementary School in North Dakota and Summer Programs at the University of Mississippi. Each of these activities presented opportunities for preservice teachers to work with diverse students and families. Parent Power Nights presented occasions for teacher candidates to work with largely Hispanic populations. The Multicultural Extravaganza focused on multiple ethnicities, but especially on tribal affiliations of a large Native American population. Summer programs at the University of Mississippi prepared teacher candidates for working with African American students and their families. Preservice teacher participants who learned about encouraging families from different cultures to work with their children at home were concerned about how they would address the learning needs of these students at school.
Volunteering post-knowledge and MTCS Factor 2. The mean score of pre-test knowledge about volunteering ($M = 86.23$) was the highest of any parent involvement dimension discussed in this study. Therefore, there was a smaller window of opportunity for gain in knowledge about volunteering. However, the post-knowledge mean scores on the Volunteering module ($M = 88.05$) significantly correlated ($p < .05$) with teacher candidate scores on MTCS Factor 2.

Examination of the Volunteering module revealed four specific objectives. One of these objectives is, “Describe practices that may encourage the involvement of bilingual families in volunteering” (Revelle & Brown, 2005, p. 1). The content addressed the need for attending to language differences between educators and parents. Similarly, the module discussed ways to involve groups of families who speak the same language, so they might feel a connection in the community. Also mentioned in the module was the possibility of translating handouts that briefly explained some of the things parents should know about working at the school, what their role is, and who to communicate with, and thank them for being involved.

Preservice teachers who learned about volunteering in the FSCR course were also concerned about ways to teach children of diverse populations. It is probable that the learning acquired about volunteering in this course was significantly related to MTCS Factor 2 because of the emphasis on multicultural objectives of the Volunteering module and the multicultural focus of the MTCS instrument.

Question 4

The final question asked, “Is there a correlation between preservice teachers’
parent and family involvement skill levels and their post-knowledge scores about parenting, communicating, volunteering, learning at home, advocacy and decision making, or collaborating with the community?"

Both qualitative and quantitative methods were employed to elicit this relationship. Qualitative methods were utilized as the researcher applied hermeneutics and used the BTLS to perceive thinking levels of preservice teachers in regard to essays written in response to the dilemma presented through a case study. Then, post-knowledge mean scores of preservice teachers, on each parent involvement dimension, were recorded. Findings revealed a statistically significant correlation ($p < .05$) between preservice teachers’ skill levels and post-knowledge about volunteering. In other words, teacher candidates who were scored as having greater parent involvement skills also left the FSCR course with higher knowledge scores on the Volunteering module.

Examination of the Volunteering module disclosed benefits to teachers and schools when community members are involved with the school. Engaging community members, including parents and family members, as contributors to the school creates a “better sense of the total education picture and a better understanding of the roles and responsibilities of teachers and other school personnel” (Revelle & Brown, 2005, p. 6). The Volunteering module was clear in its intent to provide information regarding involvement for many dedicated people in educating children and youth. Moreover, the module posited that volunteering creates, “better understanding, trust-building, and commitment to the school family” (Revelle & Brown, 2005, p. 6) which augments higher community involvement.
The case study dilemma that was presented to preservice teachers called for participants to take on the persona of the new teacher who has alienated a Native American child and her family. This alienation was due to the perception on the part of the child that her teacher was disbelieving of a story about a Native American ceremony. As teacher candidates tried to work out a way to resolve the issue faced by the new teacher, they reflected on learning from the FSCR course plus other information they may have from past experiences.

High level resolution of the case study problem significantly correlated with knowledge outcomes on the Volunteering module. An assumption could be supported that preservice teachers who realized the many facets and positive effects of volunteering on the part of all dedicated individuals applied that knowledge to resolve the case study dilemma. Furthermore, participants may have viewed a positive relationship with Kylee and her family as contributing to “better understanding, trust-building, and commitment to the school family” (Revelle & Brown, 2005, p. 1). The depth of understanding about the value of positive relationships for educators and those committed to the school’s purposes, as presented by the Volunteering module, quite likely contributed to skillful problem resolution by the same teacher candidates.

There is no apparent rationale for a lack of significant correlation between the other five curriculum modules and preservice teachers’ skillful resolution of a case study dilemma. Each of the six modules included culturally sensitive content along with case studies that cross cultural lines. Yet, only the preservice teachers who scored higher on the post-test of knowledge about volunteering were noted as strong problem solvers regarding the case study dilemma. However, one possible explanation may be that
individuals who have a greater inclination toward volunteering also have personalities for skillfully resolving interpersonal dilemmas. An assumption could be made that a personality trait of those who are predisposed toward volunteering knowledge are also those who are more adept at problem solving in family and school issues, in general. This same trait may not be manifested as strongly through the other modules in this curriculum.

Relationship of this Study to Previous Research

On the basis of this study alone, it is inappropriate to make assumptions about the effect of PTE Connect curriculum on the knowledge gains of preservice teachers regarding the six dimensions of parent involvement. Similarly, one study of this size ($N = 78$) does not provide adequate information to be certain that demographics of participants relate to knowledge changes. Moreover, multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers may not correlate with parent involvement knowledge changes in all studies. Problem solving skills of participants may show a different relationship to the parent involvement dimensions across similar studies. However, this study can be useful when taken in a broader context of other research involving parent involvement curriculum and preservice teacher outcomes of knowledge, skills, and concerns.

Previous studies using the PTE Connect modules provide evidence of significant knowledge gains across the six parent involvement dimensions. For example, a study completed in 2006 included 402 teacher candidates from four demographically and geographically diverse universities who participated in courses using the PTE Connect modules (Harris, Jacobson, & Brown, 2007). Results of the knowledge changes, as
evidenced by pre- and post-knowledge assessments, indicated significant gains across all six modules at the .05 level of significance. A smaller study (N = 58) conducted at one university in the southwest United States reported statistically significant knowledge gains across all six PTE Connect modules at the .01 level of significance (Harris, Jacobson, Brown & Revelle, 2005).

A lack of studies regarding knowledge change and preservice teacher demographics is noted. However, one study reported learning as being affected by parental status. Lawrence-Lightfoot (2003) refers to a divergence of roles when teachers are also parents. She describes teachers, who are mothers, as having “peripheral vision” and having experiences of “living both sides” with a kind of “double vision” (p. 193). According to Lawrence-Lightfoot, mothering allows teachers to view child development in a different way regarding the mysteries of learning, the disposition of individual children, and the unique paths taken by each child as he or she masters learning. Moreover, she reports that mothers have dramatically different pedagogical approaches due to their experiences as parents. One might infer from Lawrence-Lightfoot’s ethnography that preservice teachers who are also parents might be more likely predisposed to learning about parent involvement than their childless classmates.

In a second study, Henry (1991) reported findings that teachers of different ages reacted differently regarding multicultural teaching concerns. Her use of the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI) supported significant differences between responses of teachers in their 20’s compared to those in their 30’s, 40’s and 50’s. This finding is similar to the findings in the dissertation reported here in that age was shown to impact teacher knowledge gains.
The fourth question in this report addressed the possible relationship between student knowledge and skill in problem solving as measured by thinking levels as interpreted by the researcher using BTLS. Several studies contributed to the body of research supporting a relationship between critical thinking, problem-based learning, case studies, and preservice teacher skill at problem resolution. According to Scriven & Paul (2004), critical thinking improves the quality of thinking by proficiently managing the structures involved in thinking and imposing intellectual standards upon thought. One such standard for critical thinking is attributed to Bloom (1956) who recognized six levels of cognitive learning. Yong (2002), for example, used Bloom’s Taxonomy to assess various learning activities. He described Bloom’s hierarchy as beginning at the lowest stage, recall and recognition, and becoming progressively more complex, until the highest level, evaluation, is reached. However, Scriven and Paul (2004) posit that excellence in thought must be methodically nurtured.

Hmelo-Silver (2004) reports that thinking strategies can be improved through problem-solving experiences. A frame for problem-solving may be noted as problem-based learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004; Basile, Olson, & Nathenson-Mejia, 2003). Knowlton (2003) supports the many virtues of problem-based learning as evidenced by his statement, “Problem-solving skills are a defining characteristic of an educated individual, and without a focus on problem solving, professors are ignoring their responsibilities to help students journey toward the educated life” (p. 11).

Case studies are one way that problem-based learning can be implemented with preservice teachers. According to Sudzina (1997), case studies provide access to authentic experiences “requiring a constructivist problem-based approach to learning”
She suggests that teachers should provide problems for learners to solve, respect all points of view, and recognize that substantive learning may take place over time as a result of confusion and conflict. Sudzina and Kilbane (1992) initiated a study of preservice teachers which resulted in findings that participants were able to assume teacher perspectives in problem solving after going through the process of analyzing cases. Moreover, problem-solving abilities of students in Sudzina’s class were assessed using Bloom’s Taxonomy. According to Yong (2002), case studies provide opportunities for participants to apply all of the six levels of Bloom’s hierarchy of thinking. Sudzina and Kilbane (1997) reported that the case study method provided a link between learner’s knowledge of educational theory to their field experiences and offered students an opportunity toward praxis.

The FSCR course which supported the study referenced in this dissertation embraced problem-based learning as noted in the course syllabus, “Lessons are participatory and require students to learn by analyzing and applying knowledge and discussion of ideas, primarily through an assigned cooperative learning group” (Jacobson, 2007, p. 2). Moreover, Jacobson’s FSCR course involved the use of case studies assigned as topics of discussion for cooperative learning groups through online discussion boards.

When learners skillfully solve problems through case studies, they are likely employing critical thinking based on knowledge gained in a problem-based learning format. This is an assumption that can be supported through the aforementioned studies and based on the findings of this dissertation.
Recommendations for Educators

One purpose of this study was to identify teacher education that supports teachers and schools in encouraging parent involvement. Second, this study set out to examine demographic characteristics of teacher candidates to discern whether certain traits predisposed them to greater learning regarding parent involvement practices. A third purpose of this study was to determine if multicultural teaching concerns of preservice teachers might relate to knowledge gains about parent involvement practices. Finally, this study proposed to measure the extent of relationship between preservice teacher knowledge about six dimensions of parent involvement and skillful problem solving requiring the use of such knowledge.

While findings from a single research project are unlikely to impact the field significantly, this particular study does provide support for several recommendations regarding the concerns set forth in Chapter 1 and restated in the preceding paragraph.

1. Parent involvement curriculum should be integrated into teacher education based on a number of studies reporting its positive impact on preservice teachers who in turn will work with parents of public school students. This recommendation is based on replicated findings showing that parent involvement impacts student achievement across developmental levels from preschool through college (Hill, Castellino, Lansford, Nowlin, Dodge, Bates, & Petit, 2004; Redding & Sheley, 2005; Henderson & Berla, 1994; Henderson & Mapp, 2002).

2. Modules designed by the parent teacher education connection, and based on the work of Epstein and the National PTA Standards, should be reconsidered in view of the revised PTA Standards set forth in 2007. Particularly, attention should be given to
the Volunteering module based on the results of this study and the lack of significant knowledge changes noted by preservice teachers learning about volunteering. Furthermore, the newly devised PTA Standards have removed volunteering as a parent involvement dimension. However, elimination of the content of this module is not recommended considering the fact that post-knowledge about volunteering was shown to be significantly correlated to skillful problem solving. In the new PTA structure, it is suggested that portions of the Volunteering module content be infused into two modules: Learning at Home and Collaborating with the Community.

3. A third recommendation from this study is that teacher education programs continue to recruit non-traditional students, since older participants (ages 34-39) showed significant knowledge gains about collaborating with the community and learning at home. Moreover, preservice teachers with children experienced greater knowledge gains about learning at home than their childless classmates. These findings support the work of Haberman (1995) who posits that successful preservice teachers bring certain attributes to the teaching field. Generally, his research asserts that successful novice teachers are older (30 to 50 years of age) and experienced with raising children. Significant main effects were also noted for ethnicity between and within groups. The attraction of minority preservice teachers should be an objective of colleges of education due to the fact that diverse students bring rich and unique experiences that benefit classmates who will likely be teaching a very diverse population of students in the future.

4. A fourth recommendation is that use of culturally diverse case studies be widely used in parent involvement curriculum. The rationale for this recommendation is
two-fold. First of all, case studies provide an opportunity for teacher candidates to envision themselves in dilemmas that are presented across diverse cultures. Resolution of problems presented in a culturally diverse setting may heighten preservice teachers’ awareness of parent involvement practices as perceived from the viewpoint of families who are culturally different from themselves. Second, case studies allow preservice teachers an opportunity to apply the structure afforded by problem-based learning (Hmelo-Silver, 2004). Using the framework of problem solving, participants are likely to reach skillful resolution of parent involvement dilemmas.

Suggestions for Additional Research

Additional research is suggested across several areas addressed in this study and the recommendations set forth previously. Research suggestions are presented about parent involvement in general and parent involvement as it responds to the PTE Connect modules specifically.

General Suggestions

1. A correlation study is recommended to find significant relationships that might exist between knowledge changes and attitude changes of preservice teachers learning about parent involvement across the six dimensions noted in this study.

2. A correlation design is recommended to study the possibility of relationships between preservice teacher attitudes and their multicultural teaching concerns while using an instructional framework that represents culturally sensitive parent involvement curriculum.
3. Studies that follow teacher candidates from preservice to inservice are suggested in order to discern their application of parent involvement practices as learned through teacher preparation courses.

4. A study similar to this one is suggested where the sample sizes of ethnic groups are larger, so that the results will be more reliable.

Specific Suggestions for PTE Connect

1. A causal-comparative study of preservice teachers learning about volunteering is suggested to clarify the relationship between post-knowledge and skillful parent involvement practices.

2. Studies are recommended that explore changes in preservice teacher attitudes toward parent involvement, before and after instruction, using the PTE Connect modules. An attitude survey developed by Epstein, Conners, & Salinas (1993) and the factors represented in that survey, as described by Jacobson and Brown (2008), are suggested as ways to denote possible significant attitude changes.

3. A causal-comparative study of preservice teachers learning about advocacy and decision making is suggested to clarify the relationship between knowledge gains and multicultural teaching concerns.

4. The online curriculum delivery in this study proved to be quite effective in eliciting significant learning across curriculum modules. Further research is suggested to compare student learning outcomes using online, face-to-face, and integrated curriculum delivery systems which implement the PTE Connect modules or other parent involvement curriculum.
5. Further examination of the Learning at Home module is suggested to
discern why all the demographic variables represented in this study had some
significant correlation to that particular module.

Summary

Chapter 5 began by restating the purpose of this study as a search for teacher
education that supports teachers and schools in encouraging parent involvement
practices. This purpose was examined in light of the societal, intellectual, professional,
and research facets that merge to make this topic especially relevant during a time in
which student diversity and scrutiny of student achievement are increasing.

Several factors should be considered when determining the overall importance of
this study. Clearly, preservice teachers left the FSCR course knowing more about
parent involvement than they knew when they began. This study supports an
assumption that the PTE Connect modules were effective instructional tools used by the
professor in this course to promote learning about parent and family involvement.
Moreover, preservice teachers’ demographics of age, ethnicity, and parental status
were associated with differences in the knowledge gains between and within groups, as
evidenced by the eleven significant effects from question 2. Of the 11 significant results,
five were associated with the Learning at Home module. Apparently, preservice
teachers across age, ethnicity, and parental status groups found this topic pertinent and
were motivated to know more about it.

Testing Hypothesis 3 substantiated that multicultural teaching concerns of
participants were significantly correlated with two aspects of knowledge about advocacy
and decision making. This may indicate that preservice teachers who are concerned about the strategies and techniques (Factor 2 of MTCS) for teaching diverse student populations are similarly concerned about empowering the parents of these students to advocate for their children at school. On the other hand, preservice teachers with higher levels of multicultural teaching concerns correlated negatively (not significantly) with volunteering across all four factors of the MTCS. This result indicates that participants in this study who were particularly concerned about culturally sensitive teaching were not particularly interested in learning about volunteering. One unexpected finding was that post-knowledge about volunteering was significantly correlated with preservice teachers’ skillful problem solving; yet, the volunteering module was the single module that did not affect significant knowledge gains among participants.

This study did break new ground in the field by illuminating certain characteristics of preservice teachers that affected their learning about parent involvement. Certainly chronological age, ethnicity, and parental status are three of those characteristics.
DEPARTMENT OF TECHNOLOGY AND COGNITION
COLLEGE OF EDUCATION
UNIVERSITY OF NORTH TEXAS
DFEC 4423.020 Families, Schools, and Community Resources
SYLLABUS - SUMMER 2007

INSTRUCTOR:
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Office Hours: BY APPOINTMENT: Other Office or Telephone conferences
Required Orientation: Tuesday, June 5, 6:00-8:00 PM, Matthews Hall 311.

COURSE DESCRIPTION:
Analyzing family, school and community resources and needs as related to the family life cycle, child welfare and education, ecological approach; and exploration of careers related to children and families. Strategies to improve communication and collaboration are emphasized with a focus on family types, cultures, economic conditions, school systems, community services, political forces, advocacy groups, and other factors that impact young children and their families. Fifteen hours a semester in field work arranged. 3 semester credit hours. Estimated 6-9 clock hours per week on-line, writing assignments, study time, and field work during 15-week term.

TEXT AND REFERENCES:

The University of North Texas, College of Education does not discriminate on the basis of disability in the recruitment and missions of students, the recruitment and employment of faculty and staff, and the operations of any of its programs and activities, as specified by the federal laws and regulations. The designated liaison for the Department of Technology and Cognition is Dr. Mickie Wirczenski, Room 304A Matthews Hall. Copies of the College of Education ADA Compliance Document are available in the Dean's Office, Matthews Hall. The student has the responsibility of informing the course instructor of any disabling condition that will require modifications to avoid discrimination.

DFEC 4423 Families, Schools, and Community Resources
GENERAL COURSE OBJECTIVES
National Association for the Education of Young Children (NAEYC) teacher certification guidelines:
The student will be able to:
1. Describe the major theories guiding research and practice in the area.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 1.2, 1.3, 3.3, 5.3
2. Describe the effects of community support on child and family development.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 1.2, 2.4.2, 2.4.4, 3.3, 4.1.3, 4.2, 5.4, 5.5
3. Describe the range of parenting styles and skills and provide education opportunities for parents to gain parenting skills.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 3.1, 3.1.1, 3.1.2, 3.1.3, 4.1.3, 5.5
4. Describe the impact of culture and language on children and apply such knowledge to interactions with diverse populations of children and families.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 1.2, 1.3, 1.3.1, 1.3.2, 2.1.4, 3.2
5. Identify community resources available for children and families, including those with special needs.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 1.2.2, 2.1.8, 2.3, 2.4.4, 3.4, 4.1.3, 4.1.5, 5.5
6. Identify and analyze societal trends affecting children and families.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 1.3, 2.4.2, 5.2, 5.5, 5.6
7. Identify careers related to child development and family relations.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 5.2
8. Identify family-centered practices in agencies and organizations.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 2.4.4, 3.1, 3.1.1, 3.3, 4.2, 5.5
9. Discuss and evaluate factors that facilitate (and those that inhibit) partnerships and cross-agency collaboration.
   NAEYC Guideline(s): 2.4.2, 3.1, 3.1.1, 3.3, 4.2, 5.5
10. Participate in a professional manner as a volunteer with a community agency.
    NAEYC Guideline(s): 5.5, 5.6, 5.8, 6.1, 6.2
11. Reflect on their own skills at collaborating and networking with parents and professionals in the field.
    NAEYC Guideline(s): 3.1, 3.1.1, 3.5, 4.1.3, 5.1

COURSE REQUIREMENTS AND ASSIGNMENTS & PERCENTAGE (%) OF GRADE

General Requirements
- All students are required to attend class orientation on June 5, 2007 from 6:00-8:00 p.m.
  in Matthews Hall 311. If you have extenuating circumstances, contact Dr. Jacobson for a
  telephone or office appointment by the end of the 1st week of the semester.
- The reading assignments and on-line lessons should be read thoroughly.
- Lessons are participatory and require students to learn by analyzing and applying knowledge and discussion of ideas, primarily through an assigned Cooperative Learning Group. Students are expected to follow the schedule of lessons in order to participate fully in the assigned Cooperative Learning Group and collaborate in learning with the other students.
• Communications and assignments should only be sent through WebCT for this course unless you have permission from the instructor. Credit will not be given to assignments posted into message section of drop boxes. PLAN AHEAD.
• Work posted after the due date (Thursday at midnight each week of term) without approval from the instructor will receive a 10% reduction in the grade for each week late. Approval for late work is given for documented medical or other emergency reasons. Employment and time management, and computer problems are examples of excuses that are not valid. Free access computer labs are available to complete work on campus and in libraries in communities.
• Assignments are not accepted after last day of classes (drop boxes locked) unless with prior agreement with instructor because of medical or other emergency reasons.
• All forms, links, and information required for the assignments are posted on WebCT Vista.
• Student goals for each lesson suggest a time line for beginning work on assignments due later in the semester. Follow the suggestions, get started early, work ahead, and ask questions at least a week before the due date.
• **Due dates are scheduled for Thursdays. All work is due by midnight.**
• All written assignments should be professional in appearance. Your work is expected to be at the level of a professional in the field and well edited. Written work should be spelling, grammar, and typographical-error free. Points will be deducted for any assignment not meeting these expectations.
• Back up copies of all assignments on your computer or disk.

**WebCT Vista Student Tutorial**
Complete the WebCT Vista Student Tutorial if you have not completed a 100% or Blended WebCT course. Go to [http://courses.unt.edu/webct/vista/student/tutorial.htm](http://courses.unt.edu/webct/vista/student/tutorial.htm).

**Surveys**
Complete the following surveys posted on WebCT.
- Getting to Know You questionnaire (1 pt%): download, complete, and post by the orientation meeting
- Pre- and Post-Assessment - Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey
- Pre- and Post-Assessment — Attitudes toward Parent Involvement
- Faculty Evaluation

Please read the consent information for anonymous data from the Pre- and Post-Assessments to be used in a research study.

**Field Work/Service Learning [10%]**
Fifteen hours of service learning is required. Students have an opportunity to learn in depth through field work about a community organization and how it partners with families and schools. Students are required to arrange their own field work in a community agency/program providing services or resources to children and families. Students are expected to keep the hours as agreed upon with the program and conduct themselves in a professional manner. For verification of hours, the student keeps an attendance log and has the appropriate program representative sign off. A weekly journal (4 pts.), final report and a paragraph (10 pts.) posted to the Cooperative Learning Group are also required. All of the required forms are in the “Field Work” folder in the “Assignments” folder on WebCT.

DFEC 4423 Families, Schools, and Community Resources
Key Terms [10%]
During your reading write down the definitions or explanations of the key terms found in each week’s lesson. The meaning of the terms can be found in reading in texts and on-line although not necessarily verbatim definitions. Number the terms and post the terms for each week in the “Key Terms” assignment and save as a “draft” on WebCT (with back up on your computer or file) This will allow you to go back to the assignment and add terms each week. At the end of the semester you will be graded on the completed key terms assignment. Do not post weekly.

Electronic Community Resource Directory [10%]
Collect information about at least 20 public and private agencies, programs, organizations, or community collaborations that offer services to children and families in the community or urban area where you currently live or plan to begin your professional career. Research can be conducted through internet searches, telephone directories, United Way, and referral services. You are expected to make visits and phone calls in order to have complete information and a resource directory you can use. Include at least one of each of the following kinds of services: (a) educational (e.g. literacy), (b) nutritional, (c) medical (e.g. low-income clinics), (d) social/recreation, (e) mental health, (f) parent/family life education, (g) family violence/abuse prevention/intervention, (h) work (e.g. child care resources for low income women), (i) substance abuse, (j) economic assistance, (k) counseling, (l) senior citizens, (m) foster care/adoption, (n) special needs, (o) immigrant services. Your directory will include (a) list of services, (b) location, (c) contact information, (d) eligibility information and referral information (if applicable). Include website addresses if available. Use the template available in the assignment folder on WebCT as a guide. Your electronic directory will make a valuable contribution to your portfolio and be useful in your career.

One-Year Action Plan Group Project [10%]
• Develop a One-Year Action Plan for Partnerships for a hypothetical school or community agency (emphasis on family or community). Use the knowledge gained in Lessons 5 – 10 to develop the Plan. A template for the Plan will be provided. Submit the completed One-Year Action Plan as a Word document in the assignment section of WebCT.

Public Policy Letter Assignment (10 pts.)
• Review public policy websites (link) for information about current child and family public policy issues and proposed legislation.
• Identify an a child or family public policy issue.
• Identify existing or proposed state or federal legislation related to the issue.
• Read AAPCS Public Policy Tool Kit at www.aapcs.org
• Study letter writing guidelines in AAPCS Public Policy Tool Kit
• Identify your state or federal Senator or Representative.
• Write a letter following AAPCS guidelines in support of a specific issue or legislation.

Participation in CL Group Discussions [10%]
Participation in the CL Group Discussions is required for each lesson. Each student’s participation in the Guided Dialogue group discussions will be monitored for quantity and quality of participation and a grade assigned. Participation in group discussion should reflect the
student’s understanding and reflection about what they have read. Each contribution to group discussion should be unique, thoughtful, and add to the learning of other group members as well as one self. Grades reflect quality as well as quantity of participation. Postings and replies are due by Thursday each week. Each lesson’s post is worth .7 pts.

Quizzes [14%]
Completion of pre- and post-assessments of the following quizzes, posted on WebCT are required. The quizzes can be found in the “Quizzes” folder on WebCT. The quizzes will cover information from the Weekly Lessons and Readings. There may also be information from websites given as references for that topic in the “Reference” folder on WebCT. Only the post-assessments are included in the grade.

- Quiz #1 - Theory Base
- Quiz #2 - Parenting
- Quiz #3 - Communications
- Quiz #4 - Learning at Home
- Quiz #5 - Decision-making
- Quiz #6 - Community Involvement
- Quiz #7 - Volunteering

Midterm Examination [10%]
Midterm Examination will be released on the WebCT home page on Thursday from 9 AM - 9 p.m. during midterm week. You will be allowed 30 minutes for the exam. The exam will be multiple choice questions. Review course content since beginning of term including key ideas discussed by groups and key terms.

Final Examination [20%]
Final Examination will be released on the WebCT home page on Thursday from 9 AM - 9 p.m. during final exam week. You will be allowed one hour for the exam. The exam will be multiple choice questions. Review course content since Midterm Exam including key ideas discussed by groups and key terms.

Technical Difficulties During On-Line Exams
If you have problems with WEBCT during an examination, contact the CDL Help Desk IMMEDIATELY.
SUMMARY OF ASSIGNMENTS AND GRADING

- Getting to Know You Questionnaire 1% (1 pt.)
- Field Work/Service Learning 10% (10 pts.)
- Key Terms 5% (5 pts.)
- Electronic Community Resource Directory 10% (10 pts.)
- One-Year Action Plan Group Project 10% (10 pts.)
- Public Policy Letter 10% (10 pts.)
- Participation in CL Group Discussions 10% (10 pts.)
- Knowledge Quizzes: Modules 14% (14 pts.)
- Midterm Exam 10% (10 pts.)
- Final Examination 20% (20 pts.)

GRADING SCALE

A = 90-100 pts.
B = 80-89 pts.
C = 70-79 pts.
D = 60-69 pts.
F = Below 60 pts.
W = Withdraw Passing [Participated 60% level to date]
WF = Withdraw Failing [Participated less than 60% level to date without medical excuse]

GRADING POLICIES

- Grades (points) for assignments turned in late without verifiable medical excuse.
  - emergency, or extenuating situation will be reduced 10%.
- Late assignments are accepted through the last day of class.
- It is the student’s responsibility to regularly check accuracy of grades and cumulative scores on the WebCT gradebook. Please inform the instructor or TA of inaccuracies.
- An INCOMPLETE (I) final grade will only be give for extenuating circumstances (e.g. medical) with a contract and timeline for completion agreed upon before the last day of class. Getting behind in submitting assignments does not qualify a student for an Incomplete.
COURSE DELIVERY:
WebCT Vista Course – 100% Online at http://webctvista.unt.edu. Students who have not taken a course on WebCT Vista are expected to enroll in and complete the Vista student tutorial at http://courses.unt.edu/webct/vista/student/tutorial.htm. If you are using a computer other than a General Access Computer Laboratory on campus, you need to check your browser settings; go to http://courses.unt.edu/webct/vista/student/browserPlugins.htm.
NOTE: If you have attachment problems, it is usually a "pop up ad blocker program" problem. Try these steps: If you want to use Mozilla Firefox (HIGHLY recommended): 1. Install Mozilla Firefox onto computer (works great with WebCT! and we all are using this new browser in our office). Download here: http://www.mozilla.org/ 2. Once it downloads to your desktop, open Firefox and do this: a. Go to Tools. b. Go to Options. c. Click Web features on the left. d. Check these boxes: Load images, Enable Java, Enable Javascript. e. Make sure the "Block pop up windows" is not checked. f. Click OK.

EAGLE MAIL:
All students should activate and regularly check their Eagle Mail (e-mail) account. Eagle Mail is used for official communication from the University to students. Many important announcements for the University and College are sent to students via Eagle Mail. For information about Eagle Mail, including how to activate an account and how to have Eagle Mail forwarded to another e-mail address, visit https://eaglemail.unt.edu/

COMMUNICATIONS POLICY:
1. Contact your instructor and teaching assistant only through the mail in WebCT for questions about the course: requirements, assignments, exams, or grades. Please do not mail both the instructor and teaching assistant with the same question. During the week you will receive a response the same day from your instructor or Teaching Assistant. On the weekends, expect to wait 24-48 hours for a response. During times when the instructor is unavailable, e.g. out of town for a conference, an announcement will be posted and questions should be directed to the teaching assistant.
2. Please do not phone or email with questions that can be answered by reading the syllabus or lessons on WebCT.
3. For questions related to using WebCT, review the tutorial, look on the Student Resources Page (http://courses.unt.edu/webct/vista/student/index.htm) or email the Help Desk at vista@unt.edu.
4. Participate in discussion and group projects within the week assigned. Group discussion should be posted by Tuesday midnight of each week to allow time for other group members to respond. Response is due by Friday midnight of the same week.
5. This course is a Distance Learning Course. Cooperative Learning Group work should only be done through the discussion tool and chat room. In-person meetings are not appropriate as they may exclude a group member.
6. WebCT is a public site. You are advised not to exchange personal contact information through WebCT.
ACADEMIC HONESTY POLICY: PLEASE READ

In your future careers two of the characteristics most prized by your future employer will be your honesty and your ability to communicate your understanding of concepts in writing and report accurately in writing. It is essential for your own integrity, the integrity of the learning process in this course, and the integrity of the university that your written work is totally your own work and that you credit through citations when paraphrasing or quoting from published works to avoid the appearance of plagiarism. Plagiarism is (a) the knowing or negligent use by paraphrase or direct quotation of the published or unpublished work of another person without full and clear acknowledgement and/or (b) the knowing or negligent unacknowledged use of materials prepared by another person or by an agency engaged in the selling of term papers or other academic materials.

It is expected that students will conform to the University of North Texas Code of Student Conduct and Discipline as outlined in the undergraduate catalog and in the Student Handbook, retrievable online at www.unt.edu. This policy states, in part, that all instances of cheating, fabrication, and plagiarism are prohibited and will be reported. Any student who assists in any form of dishonesty is equally as guilty as the student who accepts such assistance. Any work submitted with your name alone on it should represent only your work. Credit by name and cite references, as appropriate, any ideas or work contributed by others. Disciplinary action will be taken against any student found in violation of the Code, which may include failure in the course and possible expulsion from the University. Students violating this code on an assignment will receive a failing grade on that assignment.

HOW TO DROP A CLASS:
- If you get behind or failing at Midterm (March 7), you are encouraged to drop the class.
- If failing at Midterm, you can (a) drop, (b) be withdrawn with a WF by the instructor, or (c) meet with the instructor to agree on a plan to make up late work.
- Last date to drop in the Spring Semester is March 27.
- To drop a class login at www.my.unt.edu. Click on Academics, then Register for Classes, then Register for Classes (again). Click Drop/update Classes. Find the course that you want to drop, then choose Drop from the drop-down menu. Click Submit. Verify changes were successful by checking the Update Status.

PORTFOLIO AND JOURNAL REQUIREMENT:
If you are working toward teacher certificate or a Development and Family Studies Major (particularly those interested in Early Childhood Intervention Certification (ECI)), you are required to put together a professional portfolio which represents your professional development. Keep copies of syllabi, graded assignments, class handouts that may be useful as a resource or provide evidence of course learning, self-reflection journals, proof of attendance at professional meetings, etc. If you are a potential ECI certification student, write a few sentences in a self-reflection journal each lesson to include new understanding and ideas for application to work in Early Childhood Intervention. [Not a requirement for this course.]
## DFEC 4423 – Summer 2007
### COURSE CALENDAR

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK OF</th>
<th>TOPIC/READING</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT DUE (Thursday Midnight)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ALL WEEKS</td>
<td>Guided Dialogue in Groups (to be posted by Thursday of the week assigned)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/5</td>
<td>ORIENTATION</td>
<td>Tuesday, June 5, 6-8 p.m.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/4</td>
<td>Getting Started</td>
<td>“Getting to Know You Survey” Complete all Pre-Assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Home, School, Community (Lesson 1, Barbour, Ch. 1)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>History, Philosophy, Theory (Lesson 2, website resources)</td>
<td>Quiz #1 - Theory (Forum not required)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Collaboration &amp; Partnerships (Lesson 3, Barbour, Ch. 2)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/11</td>
<td>Responsibility for Children (Lesson 4, Barbour, Ch. 6)</td>
<td>Quiz #2 - Parenting</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parenting (Lesson 5, Barbour, Ch. 4)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communicating with Families (Lesson 6)</td>
<td>Quiz #3 - Communicating Questions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/18</td>
<td>Volunteering (Lesson, 7, Barbour, Ch. 11)</td>
<td>Quiz #4 - Volunteering</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/19</td>
<td>Midterm Exam – Lessons 1-7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Learning at Home (Lesson 8, Barbour, Ch. 7)</td>
<td>Quiz #5 - Learning at Home</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Parent Leadership (Lesson 9)</td>
<td>Quiz #6 - Decision Making</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6/25</td>
<td>Community Resources (Lesson 10)</td>
<td>Quiz #7 - Collaborating with the Community Public Policy Letter</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Community &amp; Family (Lesson 11, Barbour Ch. 9)</td>
<td>One-Year Action Plan</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

DFEC 4423 Families, Schools, and Community Resources
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WEEK OF</th>
<th>TOPIC/READING</th>
<th>ASSIGNMENT DUE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 6/25    | Models for Partnerships  
(Lesson 12, Barbour, Ch. 12) |              |
| 7/2     | Family Diversity  
(Lesson 13, SEDL, Ex. Summary,  
Ch. 1-2) | Electronic Community Resource  
Directory |
|         | Family Diversity  
(Lesson 14, SEDL, Ch. 3) | Field work journal, & report |
|         | Family Diversity  
(Lesson 15, Barbour, Ch. 4) | Post-Assessments:  
Attitudes toward Parent Involvement  
Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey  
Faculty Evaluation  
Key Terms |
| 7/5     | LAST DAY LATE WORK  
ACCEPTED |              |
| 7/6     | FINAL EXAM  
9 AM-9 PM on WebCT | Lessons 8-15 |
DFEC 4423.020 Families, Schools, and Community Resources
Summer 2007 – Orientation Meeting

Dr. Arminta Jacobson, Instructor

- Introductions
- Introduction to Course
  - Expectations for independent learning
    - Schedule class assignments on your calendar
    - Keep up to date
    - Check messages and announcements daily
    - Allow 24 hours for faculty response to email
  - Getting Started
- Course Policies
  - Communicating – only through WebCT.
  - Mail
    - All communication with Dr. Jacobson and TA’s MUST be through WebCT mail. (Mail only one of us.)
    - WebCT mail can be forwarded to an external e-mail address.
- Modules and Lessons
  - Module I - Theories and Background
    - Lesson 1
      - Lesson 2
      - Lesson 3
  - Module II – Families as Partners
    - Lesson 4
    - Lesson 5
    - Lesson 6
    - Lesson 7
    - Lesson 8
    - Lesson 9
  - Module III - Collaborations: Families, Schools, and Communities
    - Lesson 10
    - Lesson 11
    - Lesson 12
  - Module IV – Family Diversity
    - Lesson 13
    - Lesson 14
    - Lesson 15
- Course Assignments
  - Getting to Know You
  - Field Work
  - Electronic Community Directory
  - Public Policy letter
  - Key Terms
  - Discussion
- Grading
  - Click on grade for grader comments & check rubrics.
  - Grades are NOT assigned for pre-assessments.
- Resources for Community Resource Directory
  - United Way, e.g. http://www.unitedwaydenton.org/
  - Red Cross, www.redcrossdallas.org/ TXdenton
  - Social Service Agencies Directory for the Denton County Area
  - For Social Service Agencies in other cities http://MapQuest.com (click on
    Community, then Social Services http://www.soci alservice.com/)
- Resources for Public Policy Letter
  - UNT Library electronic data bases at http://www.library.unt.edu
    Some recommended abstracts & indexes for full text articles:
    - Academic Search Premier
    - EBSCOhost
    Ask a Librarian to help you.
- Southwest Educational Development Laboratory’s National Center for Family &
  Community Connections with Schools/
  The Connection Collection: School-Family-Community Publications
  http://www.sedl.org/connections/resources/bibsearch.html
- Imbedded in course and internet sites

**USING WEBCT VISTA**

- Make sure you do a browser check! You must have sun java installed and pop-up blocker
  disabled in order to attach assignments and navigate in vista
- Do WebCt Vista tutorial – must make a 100 (1) to move one in the course
- What to do if Technology Fails
- Help with WebCt Vista
- Course Navigation
  - Tool Bar
    - Calendar
    - Announcements
    - My Grades
    - Mail
    - More Tools
      - File Manager
      - Assessments
      - Syllabus
      - Discussions
      - Who’s Online
      - Assignments
  - Homepage
    - Resources
      - Help with WebCt Vista – CDL Help desk
      - What to do if Technology Fails – Computer Center Help Desk
o Discussions
  ▪ CL Group Discussions – Check your WebCT Mail for your group
    • Post a message to introduce yourself the first week
    • Post answers to Guided Dialogue and CL Discussion Questions
    • Post all discussions by Tuesday in order to allow group members
time to respond by Thursday
    • You are graded not only on your response to the weekly guided
dialogue questions, but your response to your group members.
  ▪ Group Boards – these boards are for you to communicate privately to your
group about the group project
  ▪ All Topics – for posting non-personal course questions – questions that
other students might want to see the answer.

THINGS NOT TO POST HERE
  • assignment submissions
  • questions about your grade that you do not want everyone to see
  • guided dialogue discussions
  • Collaborative Group discussions
  • Field work journal entries
  • Personal contact information – This is a public site.

• Posting Assignments
  o Submit all assignments, as attachments! DO NOT COPY AND PASTE into
   comments.
  o Do not submit assignments to TA or Dr. Jacobson’s personal or WebCT e-mail
    unless you are having technical difficulty and have prior permission.
  o For your portfolio, keep a word document of all assignments & discussions
  o Title your assignments with your last name & name of assignment. EX.
    ABrown_fieldworkjournal.
APPENDIX B

DEMOGRAPHIC QUESTIONNAIRE
1. I intend to teach?
   a. Yes
   b. No

2. If you intend to teach, what is your desired position upon completion of the degree you currently seek?
   a. infants/toddlers
   b. EC – 4
   c. 4 – 8
   d. 8 – 12
   e. EC – 12
   f. other

3. Your gender:
   a. Female
   b. Male

4. How many children live in your home for whom you have parental responsibilities?
   a. no children
   b. 1 or 2 children
   c. 3 or 4 children
   d. more than 4 children

5. My ethnicity is:
   a. African American
   b. Asian American
   c. Hispanic American
d. Native American

e. White

f. Other

6. My age:

a. 18-22

b. 23-27

c. 28-33

d. 34-39

e. 40 or over
APPENDIX C

MULTICULTURAL TEACHING CONCERNS SURVEY
## Multicultural Teaching Concerns Survey

**ID #**

**Directions:** Below are questions teachers posed about different aspects of working with culturally diverse students. These questions may or may not be of concern to you when working with students whose cultural backgrounds differ from your own. Read each question and then circle the number (1 = Extremely Unimportant; 2 = Unimportant; 3 = Neutral; 4 = Important; 5 = Extremely Important) that signifies the degree of concern the question holds for you. Do not think about an answer to the questions and don’t try to be “politically correct” when responding. Rather consider the relative importance the questions hold for you when you are working with culturally diverse students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>#</th>
<th>Survey Item Questions</th>
<th>Extremely Unimportant</th>
<th>Unimportant</th>
<th>Neutral</th>
<th>Important</th>
<th>Extremely Important</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>What criteria do I use in selecting materials related to diverse cultures?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>In what specific ways does family/culture affect diverse students’ performance in school?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Is it possible to teach about all the different races and cultures?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>What kinds of things can I do to meet both the academic and emotional needs of diverse students?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>What strategies should I use when working with diverse students?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Should schools be expected to cure the problems of the larger society?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Am I being held responsible for the lack of enthusiasm in students who have already had negative school experiences?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>How do I deal with the attitudes of intolerance toward diverse students that may be expressed by my colleagues?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>What are the most effective methods for teaching diverse students?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>How does the home environment of diverse students impact their receptivity to school?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Will my own beliefs about diversity interfere with the content I teach?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Will diverse students, for no apparent reason, try to label me as prejudiced?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>13</td>
<td>Will diverse parents be prejudiced against me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>14</td>
<td>Are diverse students’ home environments adequate models for academic study?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>15</td>
<td>How do I make lessons and content relevant to diverse students’ lives outside of school?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>16</td>
<td>What can I do to ensure that students in need of financial and nutritional assistant receive it in a dignified manner?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>17</td>
<td>Do parents of diverse students possess high expectations for their children?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>18</td>
<td>Will culturally diverse students perceive me as biased simply because my background is different from theirs?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>19</td>
<td>What specific techniques and materials motivate diverse students?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Do diverse students have appropriate adult role models at home?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>21</td>
<td>How do I effectively teach a class of students whose abilities and experiential levels vary greatly?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>22</td>
<td>How should I vary my teaching methods when dealing with culturally diverse students?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>23</td>
<td>How can I help all students relate well to those who differ from themselves?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>24</td>
<td>If I try to meet the needs of culturally diverse students is this reverse discrimination?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>25</td>
<td>What are the methods and techniques that appeal to all students regardless of their cultural background?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>26</td>
<td>Will I stereotype students on the basis of their race/culture?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>27</td>
<td>Will my diverse students be prejudiced against me?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>28</td>
<td>Is it realistic to expect one teacher to meet the needs of all the different cultural groups in one class?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>29</td>
<td>Will I be able to be myself when working with culturally diverse students without being accused of being insensitive?</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
APPENDIX D

BLOOMS TAXONOMY OF LEARNING SKILLS
Bloom's Taxonomy *

Benjamin Bloom created this taxonomy for categorizing level of abstraction of questions that commonly occur in educational settings. The taxonomy provides a useful structure in which to categorize test questions, since professors will characteristically ask questions within particular levels, and if you can determine the levels of questions that will appear on your exams, you will be able to study using appropriate strategies.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Competence</th>
<th>Skills Demonstrated</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| Knowledge  | • observation and recall of information  
• knowledge of dates, events, places  
• knowledge of major ideas  
• mastery of subject matter  
• **Question Cues:**  
  list, define, tell, describe, identify, show, label, collect,  
  examine, tabulate, quote, name, who, when, where, etc. |
| Comprehension | • understanding information  
• grasp meaning  
• translate knowledge into new context  
• interpret facts, compare, contrast  
• order, group, infer causes  
• predict consequences  
• **Question Cues:**  
  summarize, describe, interpret, contrast, predict, associate,  
  distinguish, estimate, differentiate, discuss, extend |
| Application | • use information  
• use methods, concepts, theories in new situations  
• solve problems using required skills or knowledge  
• **Questions Cues:**  
  apply, demonstrate, calculate, complete, illustrate, show,  
  solve, examine, modify, relate, change, classify, experiment,  
  discover |
| Analysis    | • seeing patterns  
• organization of parts  
• recognition of hidden meanings  
• identification of components |
• **Question Cues:**
  - analyze, separate, order, explain, connect, classify, arrange,
  - divide, compare, select, explain, infer

**Synthesis**
- use old ideas to create new ones
- generalize from given facts
- relate knowledge from several areas
- predict, draw conclusions
- **Question Cues:**
  - combine, integrate, modify, rearrange, substitute, plan,
  - create, design, invent, what if?, compose, formulate, prepare,
  - generalize, rewrite

**Evaluation**
- compare and discriminate between ideas
- assess value of theories, presentations
- make choices based on reasoned argument
- verify value of evidence
- recognize subjectivity
- **Question Cues**
  - assess, decide, rank, grade, test, measure, recommend,
  - convince, select, judge, explain, discriminate, support,
  - conclude, compare, summarize

*From Benjamin S. Bloom *Taxonomy of educational objectives.*
Published by Allyn and Bacon, Boston, MA. Copyright (c) 1984 by Pearson Education. Adapted by permission of the publisher.*
Final Exam – DFEC/DFST 4423

Analysis of Case Study
In response to the case study “Storytime Trouble/Kylee” from the Parenting Module at www.tcet.unt.edu/ptecconect prepare a well-developed paragraph or two that answers this question: As the teacher, what would you do and why?
Kylee


Connie greeted every student that entered her kindergarten classroom with a smile. "How are you today, Kim?" "Hello, Justin!" Each student would respond, some with many words and others with just a grin. But they all seemed pleased to be there, and Connie was glad.

When little Kylee, a Dakota Indian, entered the classroom that morning, she was very excited. "Kylee, you seem really happy today! Good morning!"

"Guess what, Mrs. Brown!"

"What, honey?"

"Last night I went with my mommy and daddy to a ceremony. And while we were sitting in a circle, my uncle was praying and then this big bird flew down and sat next to my uncle. A big eagle, Mommy said. Mrs. Brown, he had really big eyes! I asked my mommy to tell me why he was only by my uncle, but she told me to be quiet. I kept looking at the bird and his big eyes and then when my uncle was done praying the eagle looked at everyone and flew away. I wish he would have came and sat by me."

"Oh my! Eagles are rare! Are you sure that it was an eagle? Was it on a rope?" Connie was surprised by the story.

"It was an eagle. My mommy even told me the Indian word for it. I can't remember."

"Was it on a rope?"

"No. It just flew down from the sky."

Connie thought about this. She knew that Kylee was Indian, but she had no idea that her family practiced Indian rituals. The Native American families in Connie's church certainly didn't. So many of her younger students exaggerated the stories they told. This time, Connie thought, "It's Kylee's turn."

Connie's surprise must have shown on her face. Kylee said, "Don't you believe me? I'm not lying. It was a big eagle."

Connie said, "I believe you, Kylee," but she had to admit she didn't believe the whole story. Kylee must have known because she went slowly and quietly to her desk and stayed quiet the entire day.
At the end of the day, Kylee's mother picked her up from school. Kylee got in the car. Her mother could tell something was bothering her because usually Kylee would get in the car and start telling her mother about the school day's events. This time, however, Kylee began crying and told her mother, "Mrs. Brown doesn't like me. I told her what happened at the ceremony last night and she didn't believe me."

"Did she say she didn't believe you?" asked Kylee's mother.

"No, but I could tell. But I'm not lying, am I mommy? Why does Mrs. Brown think I am lying? It really did happen." Kylee continued to cry until they arrived home.

Kylee's mother felt angry. She understood the ignorance of many non-Indians because she had experienced it herself. But for now she wondered how best to explain what had happened to Kylee in school that day without making her feel she was "different" than the other children. How could she explain Mrs. Brown's ignorance and/or lack of understanding of the Native American culture? She definitely did not want Kylee to feel ashamed of being Indian or her culture. Kylee's mother wished she had told Kylee that what happened in these ceremonies shouldn't be talked about because of the sacredness of the ceremonies and also because people not believing in this way would not understand.

When they got home, Kylee's mother sat her daughter down on the couch and looked into her big, brown eyes, smiled and told Kylee, "Baby, I want you to always be proud of who you are and our culture. Our religion is very special because not many people understand it. That makes you a very special little girl..."

Kylee's mother explained that although Mrs. Brown didn't understand their traditional ways, she was a very nice person and that she still liked Kylee.

"I am glad I am Indian, Mommy! I still like Mrs. Brown but I am never going to tell her anything again." Kylee had learned an important lesson.

Connie worried about Kylee all evening. She never would intentionally make a child feel bad or embarrassed. Maybe Kylee was telling the absolute truth. Connie had to admit her own lack of knowledge. Growing up in a white, middle-class neighborhood in a predominantly white middle-class city had provided her with little information about the Native American culture. Why hadn't she bothered to learn more? Connie was getting angrier and angrier at herself. She didn't even know enough to know whether Kylee's story could be true. And now, Kylee didn't think her teacher liked her. Connie would have to mend the wound and listen and try to understand Kylee's story tomorrow.

Throughout the next day, Connie watched Kylee and the other children. She knew she had to try and make amends. However, it wasn't until the class settled down for the afternoon nap that she took Kylee aside to talk with her. Looking directly into Kylee's eyes, Connie apologized and said, "Kylee I am very sorry it didn't seem like I believed
your story about the ceremony yesterday. How about telling me your story again so I can understand it better?"

Kylee didn’t say a word, and Connie didn’t know what to do.
APPENDIX G

EXAMPLES OF STUDENT RESPONSES TO CASE STUDY
Participant 20 (Comprehension level)

At the beginning of the school year I would send out a let’s get acquainted questionnaire to find out about my students and their cultures. I would not be quite so caught off guard when Kylee came in with her story. I’m afraid I would be a little hesitant as was Connie. I think I would listen to Kylee and ask lots of questions like, “What did you do when you saw the eagle? How did it make you feel? What did your parents do? How did everyone else respond to it?” These questions would give me insight on whether she was telling the truth and also let her know that I was curious about what she was telling me.

Participant 3 (Analysis level)

In that particular case I would have asked more questions out of genuine interest and curiosity about Kylee’s culture. I think I would have called Kylee’s mother to ask her questions about the experience and perhaps I would have invited her as a guest speaker on multicultural day. One of the most ridiculous questions in my opinion that Connie asked was, “Was it on a rope?” That completely discredited Kylee because she was so excited about the fact that the eagle flew in and sat by her uncle. I would have done more research later that day and then asked more appropriate questions when her mother arrived, so that I could learn more about this culture for myself and my student. If it was that important to Kylee I would want it to be equally important to me.

Participant 49 (Application level)

As a teacher, I probably would be in the same situation as Connie. I am also not aware of the Indian culture, and I probably would have had the same response. I
probably would of went along with the story weather (sic) I believed Kylee or not, because I know how easy it is to hurt children’s feelings. Well since it did happen this way and Connie thought about it all night, she knew that what she said did in fact hurt Kylee’s feelings. I would definitely try to talk to Kylee the next day like she did, and since that did not work I would consider calling her parents just to let them know what is going on. I would then prepare a culture lesson on the Indian culture along with a fun activity, so I could learn about it myself along with the classroom. I think this would be a great way to make mends with Kylee and her mother.

Participant 27 (Application level)

As a teacher I believe it is very difficult to be not biased in a situation like this. As a white female that comes from a similar background as Connie I too would not believe the child. However, the background of my culture is also Indian, but my family does not do any rituals of this nature. This could be my common ground with Kylee. I too also have the Indian culture in my family and I would ask her to tell me about it so that I could talk about it with my family. This may get her to open up if I have something in common with her. If this does not seem to work I would tell her that I am sorry about not believing her, but I did not know any different. I would tell Kylee that if she does wish to tell me than (sic) she may, and if she does not want to share anymore that is alright too. There may be a way to get the entire class involved by asked (sic) Kylee for permission from her family to bring some artifacts to class and share some items from her culture with the rest of the class. This would be a way of her not only teaching me, but the other children. They may bring something from their cultures as well. There are many ways to handle this situation, you do not ever want to isolate any child in your
class the way Connie did. If we do happen to make this mistake we should never give
upon (sic) trying to communicate our apology to the student.

Participant 2 (Comprehension level)

Mrs. Connie Brown was at a very tough spot after seeming to not believe Kylee’s
story. The case study shows that Kylee was very upset about her not believing the
story of the eagle.

I believe that if I were put into a situation similar to this one, I would tell Kylee: “I
really am sorry that you felt like I didn’t believe you yesterday. I do understand if you do
not wish to tell me anymore about the ceremony. In the future, if you wish to tell me
another story, I will gladly listen and be very interested. Thank you for sharing your
story with me yesterday. I know that it is something very important and special to you.”

I think it’s good to tell Kylee that you know the reason why she’s not retelling the
story. I don’t think that it was a very good idea for Connie to ask Kylee to repeat the
story again. If she had listened the first time, there would be no need to repeat it. I
think that Kylee did exactly what she told her mother she would do and that was to not
tell her anything about the ceremonies again. It’s good to let Kylee know that in the
future if she wants to talk about it, you will be there to listen. That’s really all that you
can do.
APPENDIX H

PARTICIPANT PERMISSION STATEMENT
University of North Texas Institutional Review Board

Informed Consent Form

Before agreeing to participate in this research study, it is important that you read and understand the following explanation of the purpose and benefits of the study and how it will be conducted.

Title of study: Characteristics of Preservice Teachers Learning Parent Involvement Practices

Principal Investigator: Judy Trotti, a graduate student in the University of North Texas (UNT) Department of Curriculum and Instruction.

Purpose of the Study: You are being asked to participate in a research study which involves collection of demographic data that will be correlated to your knowledge of, skills for, and attitudes toward parent involvement practices.

Study Procedures: You will be asked to complete attitude and knowledge assessments, a multicultural teaching concerns survey and one assignment. The total time involved will be about 3 hours; however, this time is integrated into your course of study and not time that is in addition to your course time.

Foreseeable Risks: No foreseeable risks are involved in the study.

Benefits to the Subjects or Others: We expect the project to benefit you by providing information regarding learning related to specific curriculum directed toward parent and family involvement. Second, this study will likely benefit the field of education in providing specific demographic information that possibly leads to greater understanding of this particular subject. Finally, this study is expected to provide multicultural information which will likely benefit researchers and educators who prepare teachers to teach students of different ethnicities than they are.

Procedures for Maintaining Confidentiality of Research Records:
Classroom assessments will be administered by the instructor of the class and may be used by instructor in his/her own assessment of student learning. A second party, Dr. Arminta Jacobson, will record data from only those students who are study participants, replacing each name with an ID code before sharing the data with researchers. Your decision to participate in the study or to withdraw will have no effect on your course grade.

Research Participants’ Rights: Your signature below indicates that you have read or have had read to you all of the above and that you confirm all of the following:

* Judy Trotti has explained the study to you and answered all of your questions. You have been told the possible benefits and the potential risks and/or discomforts of the study.
* You understand that you do not have to take part in this study, and your refusal to participate or your decision to withdraw will involve no penalty or loss of rights or benefits. The study personnel may choose to stop your participation at any time.
* You understand why the study is being conducted and how it will be performed.
* You understand your rights as a research participant and you voluntarily consent to
participate in this study.
* You have been told you will receive a copy of this form.
* You understand that your completion of data forms for this study will imply your consent as a participant with/without your signature on this form.

______________________________
Printed Name of Participant

______________________________   _______________________
Signature of Participant     Date
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