AN EXAMINATION OF ELEMENTARY SCHOOL TEACHERS' BELIEFS ABOUT THEIR AFRICAN AMERICAN STUDENTS WITH AN ANALYSIS OF SELECTED CHARACTERISTICS OF SCHOOLS IN ONE URBAN SCHOOL DISTRICT

A Dissertation

by

OTONIEL MARRERO

Submitted to the Office of Graduate Studies of
Texas A&M University
in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

DOCTOR OF PHILOSOPHY

August 2010

Major Subject: Curriculum and Instruction

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Approved by:

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ABSTRACT

An Examination of Elementary School Teachers' Belief about Their African American Students with an Analysis of Selected Characteristics of Schools in One Urban School District. (August 2010)

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The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between five factors: teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, cultural responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity among African American, European American and Hispanic American elementary school teachers. The five factors were part of eight factors originating from the Cultural Awareness and Belief Inventory (CABI) given to Pre-kindergarten through Grade 12 teachers in an urban public school district in Houston, Texas during the 2005-2006 school year. A MANOVA using SPSS was conducted for the sample of 208 teachers from grades kindergarten through fourth to assess whether differences exist between the ethnic groups. The five factors served as the dependent variables and the ethnicities of the teachers were the independent variables. A further analysis was conducted of the elementary schools which

participated in the CABI for two purposes. The first purpose was to ascertain the number of teachers with strong efficacy beliefs, and the second purpose was to identify common and distinctive characteristics among those schools. Results were analyzed using standardized test scores from the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills (TAKS) as well as Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS).

The results of the MANOVA revealed a significant difference among the teacher ethnic groups only with Cultural Sensitivity. Further tests revealed the difference in Cultural Sensitivity, which could be explained by ethnicity, was relatively small. While African American teachers obtained slightly higher mean scores on some of the items related to the factors, the three teacher ethic groups had similar mean scores in the majority of the items. Each of the teacher groups demonstrated an overall optimism for the five factors, reflecting positive beliefs about African American students and their capabilities to achieve in school.

Each of the five urban schools had similar but also distinctive characteristics. The analysis of the schools with high teacher efficacy revealed them to have a high number of economically disadvantaged students. The only other commonality was very high retention rates among the schools. The high retention rates were inconsistent with practices of effective schools.

DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my late paternal grandfather, Nicolas Marrero. His dedication to and sacrifices for his family served as both guidance and an inspiration. Abuelo, you are dearly missed and will always be loved.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The members of my committee have been very supportive and insightful along the many paths this work has led me. I extend a sincere thank you to my chair and advisor, Dr. Norvella P. Carter, who has been a constant support for me throughout my studies. I have boundless appreciation for the many ways she aided and encouraged me along this journey. I will always be grateful for her guidance and kindness. I thank Dr. Stephanie L. Knight, whose insight allowed me to work both persistently and thoroughly while looking at new perspectives of my research. I thank her for the many thoughts and patience. I wish to thank Dr. Laverne Young-Hawkins for her words of advice and encouragement which gave me new paths to explore. I also thank Dr. Mitchell Rice for his guidance and constant help which gave me the opportunity to expand my horizons.

I would like to thank Dr. Prathiba Natessan, for her support and patience during some challenging moments. Dr. Patricia Henry was haven of support on which I leaned many times. I appreciate the support and encouragement she showed me and I thank her countless times. I also thank Dr. Patricia Roberts-Walter for her assistance and valuable help. To my sons, Emilio Marrero and Andres Marrero, your dad loves and thanks you for the simple, yet thoughtful ways you reminded me to keep writing. I thank my wife, Sonia Marrero, whose constant support, encouragement, and sacrifices allowed me numerous opportunities to focus on this work.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Background of the Study

The plight of African American students has been a long, arduous, and continuous journey. Countless schools have struggled with attaining success for their students of color, particularly African Americans, who are failing in our nation's schools at an alarming rate (Kunjufu, 2002; Ladson-Billings, 1994). As noted by Parsons (2005), while African American students "may have equal access to educational opportunity by occupying the same classroom space as their peers, they do not necessarily enjoy the same quality of experience" (p. 25). This failure by some researchers who believe African American students are not being taught properly and effectively (Hale-Benson, 1982; Gay, 2000, Bailey & Paisley, 2004). Although an already large percentage of our teachers are White and middle-class, the core of the problem remains that the vast majority of our teachers from all ethnic groups have been trained from a European American frame of reference (Banks, 2001, Grant, 1994). These teachers have not been taught to teach from a multicultural perspective. They also have not been prepared to teach effectively in diverse classrooms with students of color (Banks, 2001; Irvine, 2003).

The failure and eventual need for change lies in the schools and teachers. The failure of schools has had detrimental outcomes for African American students in a wide

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This dissertation follows the style of *American Educational Research Journal*.

array of areas. African American students are falling short in achievement within a number of areas in education. According to the National Center for Educational Statistics (2006), African American students' scores have seen a marked decrease over the last ten years in the areas of reading, math, and science. Although the drop-out rate for African American students nationwide has decreased to ten percent, this figure does not include the increased number of such students receiving GED degrees. It also does not account for the high drop-out rate (50 percent) in many urban cities (Kunjufu, 2002; EPE Research Center, 2006). Over a ten year period (1996-2006) African Americans have scored below all college bound ethnic groups in the Scholastic Aptitude Test (SAT) in the Reading and Math (Digest of Educational Statistics, 2007). Further compounding these figures associated with African American student achievement, is the increasing number who enroll in predominantly white colleges and universities, but eventually withdraw (Kunjufu, 2002). The lack of achievement for African American students in the overall educational setting is vast and wide.

Teacher perception of problems facing schools is another element further exacerbating the challenges for achievement with African American students. National surveys show public elementary and secondary teachers listing lack of parental involvement (22.7%), poverty (22.7%), and coming unprepared to class (26.1%) as the most serious problems in their schools (Digest of Educational Statistics, 2004). Teachers are either not listing or even being asked if their teaching styles and strategies may be part of the problem of student achievement in their classrooms. Those teachers who perceive issues outside of the classroom as being problems to their students'

learning, do not perceive themselves capable of teaching any student in light of whatever circumstances that student may be facing. These are teachers lacking in efficacy or have not developed substantially in the efficacy beliefs. The theory of teacher efficacy sheds light on many of the varied perceptions teachers have on their teacher abilities and their students.

Teacher Efficacy

Highly effective teachers of diverse learners demonstrate various characteristics which distinguish them from their peers. They not only show a willingness to teach all students regardless of their background but that, as their teachers, they can teach them effectively. These are the teacher with effective teaching practices. Gay (2000) notes these teachers who "with strong self-confidence and feelings of efficacy in their teaching abilities have high achievement expectations for students" (p. 61). Teacher efficacy is however a process which carries stages of development (Ashton, 1984). The more developed or higher a teacher's efficacy, the greater is her belief in her ability to teach all children and hence greater student achievement (Ashton & Webb, 1996; Collier, 2005; Tucker, Porter, Reinke, Herman, Ivery, Mack & Jackson, 2005). On the same note, the low levels or absence of teacher efficacy can have detrimental effects on student achievement (Good & Brophy, 2002; Gay, 2000). Teacher efficacy can impair or heighten the teacher's ability to teach all students. It also affects a student's motivation to learn and succeed. This is particularly important for students that are culturally diverse, from a low socio-economic background, and perceived as having

academic/behavioral difficulties (Tucker et al., 2005).

African American student achievement is known to be particularly high among teachers exhibiting high levels of efficacy (Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Billings, 1994, Love & Kruger, 2005). Such teachers demonstrate positive attitudes towards their teaching and their students. They exhibit a firm belief and willingness to teach all their students. They are what Ladson-Billings referred to as "conductors" who "believe that students are capable of excellence and they assume responsibility for ensuring that their students achieve that excellence (p. 23). These teachers acknowledge the fact that it rests upon them to teach their students and go about the task of teaching effectively. They hold themselves accountable for their students learning without excuses. This is affirmed not only by their actions but their attitudes and beliefs.

Teacher Beliefs

Teacher beliefs, like teacher efficacy, are important to student achievement in the classroom. The expectations a teacher has for students are also vital to student achievement (Good & Brophy, 2002; Kunjufu, 2002). What a teacher thinks and knows about education affects the manner in which they teach effectively in the classroom (Richardson, 2003). Richardson (2003) further extends this claim that teachers enter the classroom with "deep-seated" beliefs about the education in general which often times are difficult to change. A dimension of teacher efficacy according to Ashton (1984) is a sense of personal accomplishment. The teacher must view the work he is engaged in as meaningful and important. Thus, teachers must identify themselves strongly with

teaching. The challenges occur when teachers do not have a positive opinion about their profession and the impact this has on their teaching and those they teach. Ladson-Billings states that "too often teachers have a poor opinion of themselves and their profession" (p. 34). The students are a primary entity of teaching. If teachers do not feel good about teaching in general then that feeling is passed on to the students or at a minimum is sensed by them. If teachers do not feel good about their jobs, that will affect expectation, teaching, performance, and other dimensions of teaching that are part of teacher efficacy.

What a teacher thinks also impacts the expectations for the students. Teacher beliefs and efficacy affect the learning being attained in the classroom. These beliefs and efficacy are linked to teacher/student relationships which are vital to how students perceive themselves, their abilities and ultimate achievement. "They suggest that the heart of the educational process is the interactions that occur between teachers and students"(Gay, 2000). Culture plays an important role here as teachers from backgrounds different from their students may not have sufficient background knowledge of the students in order to provide effective instruction (Gay, 2000; Kunjufu, 2002; Pang, 2001). However, as Kunjufu notes "it's too simplistic to say that the teacher's race is the determining factor impacting academic achievement" (p. 18). The essential elements in teachers when it comes to promoting academic excellence for students of color particularly African American students are the skills and attitudes of the teacher. The teacher must have a firm belief in the students' abilities to succeed as well as, his/her abilities to make the success occur. Thus, the description by Pang (2001)

of a caring and nurturing teacher who makes a "moral commitment to care for and teach students" (p. 55) is representative of the essential element of the highly efficacious teacher. Hale (2001) also described these teachers as someone "who cares about the soul of the child" (p.74) and does whatever it takes to help that child acquire the skills he or she may lack in school.

Ladson-Billings (1994) states some teachers "do not easily relinquish beliefs and attitudes about themselves or others" (p. 131). So the issue points back to the beliefs and expectations all teachers have for their students. This belief is critical to these notions by teachers on what impacts academic achievement in the classroom. A teacher belief about a student is often linked to their beliefs about the students' parents and their cultures, especially if based upon stereotypes. African American parents are often perceived as being uninvolved and disinterested in their children's education (Chavkin, 1993). Such attitudes affect not only the perceptions teachers have of their students and their backgrounds/environment, but also of their academic expectations and outcomes. These attitudes are prevalent in many teachers regardless of their ethnicity. They also have implications for the teacher behaviors and effectiveness which affect the school environment. These attitudes also affect teacher's classroom management and teaching practices.

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

The ability to effectively teach students of color including African American students is enhanced by the use of culturally responsive pedagogy. Irvine (1991) notes

this use of the students' cultures in instructional practices allows for an accommodation of those cultures which in turns allow students to learn best within the school culture. While the declining number of African American teachers has contributed to a decrease in the knowledge of African American students' behavior and learning patterns (Irvine, 1991; Milner & Howard, 2004), it remains that proper skills and training to effective teach African American students as the components most teachers are lacking. The majority of teachers from all ethnic groups have learned as students and been trained as teachers from a European framework (Grant & Tate, 2001). Further argued by Grant & Tate (2001) is that schools and teachers through their instructional practices are not reflective of our diverse society by excluding much of the diversity from the curriculum. The resulting outcome from an absence of culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom is lack of cultural synchronization (Irvine, 2003) and low teacher expectations for African American students (Irvine, 1991).

Culturally responsive pedagogy strengthens the teacher's belief in the students' capacities for learning, enhances the teachers' efficacy development, and leads to the overall academic achievement of African American students (Ladson-Billings, 1995). It essentially impacts all students, primarily students of color whose cultures are frequently not represented in the curriculum. It also impacts teachers whose use of appropriate teaching strategies which include culturally responsive pedagogy strengthens their efficacy beliefs. It creates atmosphere of high expectations and academic achievement/success for all students. The influence of culturally responsive teaching is significant due to the engagement in meaningful learning by students who see a

reflection of themselves and their environment in their learning. Students see the connection and relevance the learning has in their lives and they are influenced to succeed. The students' cultures are brought into the classroom environment, bringing association into the learning process. Students create a bond with their teachers who have an awareness of their interest, learning styles, and background through cultural awareness.

Cultural Awareness

Pai (1990) states the existent of a strong relationship between culture and education. This relationship is "bi-directional". Culture determines how we think and learn. Our educational in turn, can "mold an individual's cultural identity" (Pai, 1990). In order to educate students properly and effectively, teachers must know more about them as individuals. It is imperative for them to understand what motivates the students and how they learn best in order to engage them with their learning. Knowing the students' culture is the primary method of knowing the students. Teachers must develop not only culture awareness but be cognizant of the fact that culture impacts learning and its use in classroom instructional practices is vital if students are to be educated properly to their fullest potential.

Teachers must also be cognizant of the barriers of prejudice and equality facing African American students and how these barriers have and continue to impact their educational experiences. Teachers must be aware of the historical issues of racial discrimination experienced by African Americans which continue to impact students in

their education despite the tremendous achievements in race relations throughout our nation. Having a cultural awareness means lacking "dysconscious" decisions which impel attitudes and beliefs that foster the inequalities experienced by African American students (King, 1991). In order to properly teach and impact students of color, teachers must acknowledge and be prepared to deal with racism and its impact on the educational experiences of these students (Carter, Gayles-Felton, Hilliard, and Vold, 1999). Avoidance of cultural awareness can lead to the color blind mentality that color does not matter when it actually should (Carter, Gayles-Felton, Hilliard, and Vold, 1999) and continued low teacher expectations reinforced through racial beliefs (Irvine, 1985). It remains a vital component of culturally responsive pedagogy and a link to the academic achievement for African American students by teachers who are caring and sensitive to their educational needs.

Cultural Sensitivity

The needs for teacher sensitivity to students and their backgrounds has been emphasized by scholars for some time now and continues to be necessity in our schools (Wood & Wilson, 1996). While studies (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006) continue to show positive attitudes towards diversity, the same studies (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006) show the mounting task of preparing and training teachers to take the next step in actually becoming culturally sensitive by way of proper training and engagement within diverse settings. Cultural sensitivity is a vital component of both cultural awareness and culturally responsive pedagogy because it fosters teachers' direct

connectivity to and consciousness of the students' culture and background. Teachers who have sensitivity to a student's individuality, background, and culture are prone to develop more positive attitudes and expectations for the students. Such positive perceptions and attitudes create conditions within the classroom towards academic success (Willis, 1995).

Engagement through proper training remains one of the keys if teachers are to overcome their lack of knowledge about diverse learners, especially with regards to African American students. Tucker, et al (2005) found that communication and meaningful interactions between teachers and students were keys to developing culturally sensitive teachers who could have a significantly positive impact on their students. These teachers would increase their efficacy beliefs by their awareness that cultural sensitive is essential when teaching diverse students (Tucker, et al, 2005).

Teacher efficacy cannot be effective without cultural awareness (Rushton, 2003), cultural sensitivity (Haberman, 1995; Hale, 2001), culturally responsive teaching management (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Tucker, et al, 2005), and teacher's beliefs (Ashton & Webb, 1986; Gay, 2000) in their children's capacity to learn. The teacher with a developed efficacy must have and/or seek the proper tools and training in order to effectively teach African American students. Having the desire and will is not enough; implementation is critical to successful reaching and teaching African American students. The highly efficacious teacher, through cultural awareness, must know that African American students are already capable learners with a strong intellectual capacity. Ladson-Billings (1994) found teachers who practice culturally relevant

teaching recognize and have a "belief in the knowledge their students bring to school" (p. 90). The teacher must recognize that African American learners are engaged in a complex thought process based in part on environmental interactions at home and within their society. Good & Brophy (2002) alluded to a component of culturally responsive teaching practices when stating the high level of student engagement by high-efficacy teachers. Culturally responsive teaching according to Ladson-Billings (1994) takes this engagement a bit further by having" students expected to teach other and be responsible for each other" (p.55). This form of learning and engagement is highly effective as students are working at the highest level of Bloom's taxonomy. This manner of instruction is also present within effective schools teaching African American students and other students of color.

Effective Schools

While it remains crucial for teachers to see color, color is not an essential component with regards to who teaches African American and other students of color. Scholars continue to show that successful teachers of African American do not necessarily have to be of the same ethnic group (Haberman, 1995; Ladson-Bilings, 1994; Parsons, 2005). While qualified African American teachers represent an increase in familiarization with and commitment to African American students (Irvine, 1988; Lynn & Hassan, 2000; Milner & Howard, 2004), effective teaching for African American students can be accomplished by dedicated and highly qualified teachers from any ethnic group who use appropriate culturally responsive pedagogy with their students (Howard,

2001). What is taught and how the instruction is presented remains as the important and vital elements as opposed to who is doing the teaching. This is what is found in effective schools that are comprised of caring and effective teachers who understand their students' way of learning and incorporate these cultural styles of learning into their teaching practices (Brown & Medway, 2007).

Statement of the Problem

Alarming trends are occurring throughout education involving African American students. While the overall minority enrollment count has seen a significant increase of over 12% from 1986 to 2004, the African American student portion of that increase is a little over one percentage point (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2003). African Americans lag behind in all subject areas in school. The quality and level of their education experience remains substandard (Pang, 2001; Parsons, 2005). Research has shown teacher belief systems impact student learning. Teacher belief and efficacy affects student learning. Therefore, additional studies are needed to examine teacher beliefs and their efficacy in relationship to the ethnicity of the teacher.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between five factors, teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, cultural responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity among elementary school teachers from different ethnic groups. The study examines the factors among African American, European

American, and Latino American teachers. The study also analyzes characteristics of those elementary schools whose teachers revealed high levels of teacher efficacy.

Significance of the Study

The results of this study may provide insight about teacher belief systems and efficacy in relationship to ethnicity. An expansion of knowledge in this area could benefit schools and university personnel and other educators in their efforts to support teachers in diverse classrooms.

Research Questions

1. Are their differences in teachers' efficacy, beliefs, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity and culturally responsive teaching by ethnicity?
2. What are the characteristics of schools whose teachers have high teacher efficacy?

Definition of Terms

Cultural Awareness and Beliefs Inventory (CABI) – inventory that measures the perceptions and attitudes of urban teachers' cultural awareness and beliefs of teachers (Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2005).

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy – "Ideas suggested by different scholars, researchers, and practitioners about teaching modes that work best with ethnically diverse students (Gay, 2000, p. xiv).

Culturally Relevant Teaching – "Is an approach to instruction that responds to the socio

cultural context and seeks to integrate cultural content of the learner in shaping an effective learning environment" (Pang, 2001, p. 192).

Culturally Responsive Counseling – Refers to the inclusion of diverse perspectives into the counseling process in a manner that validates and affirms children from marginalized groups and recognizes the contextual dimensions of race, culture, class, gender, religion, sexual orientation, and geography (Day-Vines, et. al., 2003, p. 41).

Culturally Responsive Teaching – Using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them (Gay, 2000, p. 29).

Deficit Syndrome – Attributing school failure and lack of academic achievement to students of color based on their capabilities (Gay, 2000, p. 23).

Efficacy-The extent to which a teacher feels capable to help students learn, can affect teacher's instructional efforts in areas such as choices of activities, level of effort, and persistence with students (Tshannen-Moran & Hoy, 2001).

Efficacy Beliefs - A person's belief in his capacity to execute a course of actions with an ability to produce a certain outcome (Bandura, 1977).

Learned Helplessness- the influence teacher attitudes and low expectations can have on African American and other students of color by cultivating a sense of incompetence and unworthiness in the students and lead to a cessation of intellectual engagement in the classroom (Gay, 2000, p. 56)

Resiliency – "a trait that has a major influence on successful adaptive and coping behaviors and forms the foundation for many other positive character skills, including patience, tolerance, responsibility, compassion, determination, commitment, self-reliance, and hope" (Lock & Janas, 2002, p. 117).

Self-fulfilling Prophecy – "Teachers' assumptions about students' intellect and behavior affect how they treat students in instructional interactions" (Gay, 2000, p. 57).

Teacher Beliefs- the feelings and perceptions teachers have towards education, teaching, and students, including thoughts "about the role that education can play, about explanations for individual variation in academic performance, about right and wrong in a classroom" (Raths, 2001).

Teacher Efficacy – a teacher's belief in his/her ability to make a difference in a student learning (Ashton & Webb, 1986).

Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System—Self Form (TEBS-Self)- this measure assesses teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, or teachers' individual beliefs about their own abilities to successfully perform specific teaching and learning related tasks within the context of their own classrooms (Dellinger, et al, 2008)

Teacher Expectations- The measurement of teachers' beliefs (Love, 2003)

Assumptions

1. Respondents' answers represent their actual teaching practices and beliefs.

Limitations

1. This study was limited to one school district in the southeastern United States.

Summary

National trends have continued to show a lack of academic achievement for African American students. Drop-out rates, low standardized test scores, and the achievement gap are among the challenges faced by schools seeking to improve instruction for all their students. Several factors show the lack of academic attainment for this particular ethnic group lies in deficiency within the schools, instruction, and the teachers as opposed to the students. One critical factor is the fact that African American students learn and should be taught from their cultural frame of reference. Yet, despite the low academic outcomes and research showing the critical needs for these particular students and the schools serving them, the movement for altering and tailoring their instruction is often lacking.

Teachers remain at the heart of this dilemma in spite of national, state, and local school agencies willingness to address the issue. Instructional support which properly teaches African American students lies with teachers who must perceive the need for enhanced instruction and belief in their students' capacities to achieve. As our student population becomes more diverse and the teacher population increases in the number of European American, the need for teacher to recognize African Americans' unique abilities to learn becomes paramount. The purpose of this study was to examine the relationship between teacher efficacy, teacher efficacy, culturally responsive classroom

management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity with regards to the ethnicity of the teachers. The study also examined the characteristics of schools showing high levels of efficacy beliefs among their teachers.

CHAPTER II

REVIEW OF LITERATURE

Background

Current trends continue to show a dismal picture for African American students in numerous areas of academic school achievement (Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Irvine, 2003; Kunjufu, 2002; Milner & Howard, 2004). Although the achievement gap between White and Black students is closing (National Center for Educational Statistics [NCES], 2007), in the long-term, White students continue to outperform Black students in both reading and mathematics (National Assessment of Educational Progress [NAEP], 2005). Results of a national assessment of fourth, eighth, and twelfth grade students in reading and mathematics showed Black student performance in those subjects lagging far behind that of their Asian and White counterparts (United States Department of Education [USDOE], 2005). African American high school graduate students had a far lower percentage of taking advanced academic level courses in Mathematics and Science than Asian/Pacific and White students (USDOE, 2007). Among high school students taking Advanced Placement (AP) courses, which allow them to earn college credit by taking AP tests, African American students had the lowest mean grade in those courses (USDOE, 2007). As noted by Hale (1982), "the American educational system has not been effective in educating Black children (p. 1).

Critical Needs of African American Students

While a small number of African American students have achieved and

succeeded substantially in private and independent African American schools (Ladson-Billings, 1994), the vast majority are not been provided with a quality education in our public schools (Hale, 1982; Irvine, 1991; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Parsons, 2005). The reasons for this are varied and centered on not only on the schools but society as well (Gay, 2000; Pang, 2001). Pang (2001) described this challenge for teachers who as members of our society are in a cultural prison whereby they are raised to view life from one perspective and not consider that of others.

American schools are not meeting the critical academic needs of African American students partly because they have not distinguished these students as being a "distinct cultural group" (Ladson-Billings, 1994) which should be taught from a different perspective (Boykin, 1978; Gay, 2000; Hale, 1982; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Hale (1982) observed that black people participate in a coherent culture that shapes their cognitive development and way of approaching academic tasks. Hilliard (1992) noted that "unique behavioral style factors could be identified among African American populations" which relate to distinct learning and cognitive style which all have "implications for instruction". The call has been made by various scholars (Boykin, 1978; Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Giddings, 2001; Tyson, 2003) for schools to adapt and change their practices by incorporating the students' culture in order to teach African American students more effectively and promote academic achievement. Schools must not only recognize the distinctive learning styles of African American students but must assess their curriculum, the learning environment, teacher strategies and training.

NCATE and Diversity Implementation

The National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) accredits over six hundred colleges of education with the goal of establishing high quality teacher, specialist, and administrator preparation (NCATE, 2008). NCATE and similar agencies are important because they take into account and guide what is put into and what is left out of teacher preparation programs. Whether or not agencies such as NCATE implement continue improvements to standards' accountability regarding diversity, the challenge falls on teacher education programs and more specifically on teachers to improve teaching practices which will have an impact on the academic achievement of African American students (Carter, 2003). Even with the present standards throughout our nation, African American student achievement is at a decline (NCES, 2003; NABSE, 1984). Students of color are failing and dropping out of school at alarming rates, while standards which are to address their diversity serve as part of the guidance for teacher training. Carter (2003) observed the challenge in asking if standards serve as change agents to transform the dispositions of teachers. The teachers are the pivotal point for change; they are the change agents regardless of the standards implemented, the school curriculum and climate, and the background of their students.

Schools' Frame of Reference

The vast majority of private and public schools teach from a European American frame of references (Banks, 2001). This condition also applies to the teaching force which is trained to teach from the same point of reference (Ladson-Billings, 1994;

Morris, 2004). Teacher preparation programs have been slow to implement training involving culturally responsive teaching and multicultural education practices both of which facilitate learning for students from diverse backgrounds (Castaneda & Rios, 2002). The problem is further exacerbated when African American students in urban schools are taught by teachers with the least experience (Chester & Beaudin, 1996; Crosby, 1999; Lankford, Loeb, & Wyckoff, 2002) who have had little or no exposure to effective teaching practices for these students (Gay, 2000). Chester & Beaudin (1996) further state the daunting task urban schools face simply recruiting and retaining teachers. In cases when teachers have received training to differentiate instruction and use other research-based approaches, implementing them in the schools becomes a challenge (Edwards, Carr, & Siegal, 2006). Resistance to new practices and approaches that assist diverse learners is prevalent in schools (Edwards, Carr, & Siegal, 2006). Lankford, et al. (2002) noted low-income, low-achieving, and non-white students, particularly those in urban areas, find themselves in classes with many of the least skilled teachers. A recent study reflected the effects of such a teaching population on major US cities, seventeen of which have dropout rates as high as fifty percent (America's Promise Alliance, 2008).

Teacher Population

Several scholars have pointed out that the vast majority of the teaching force is White, middle-class, while the student population is increasingly becoming more diverse, creating a lack of congruence (Gay, 2000; Katz, 1999), part of the challenge lies

in the fact that most teachers lack the proper skills and training to teach African American students (Banks, 2001; Irvine, 2003; Kunjufu, 2002). The crucial task at hand will be for all students in our rapidly growing diverse school population to receive a quality and effective education from highly trained and effective teachers. The more imminent task for African American students, who are failing at tragic rates, is a quality education which takes into account their specific cultural strengths (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Kunjufu (2002) observed that this task will lie "in the hands of White teachers" who comprised over ninety percent of the teaching population. With the already high percentage of White teachers continually growing and that of Black teachers declining, the future of academic achievement for all of our learners lies on the former (Kunjufu, 2002). However, several analyses (Irvine, 1988; Milner & Howard, 2004) show the adverse effects of a declining Black teacher population on achievement among African American students in our nation's public schools.

Declining Black Teacher Population

The number of African American teachers has been declining since the "desegregation of public schools in the United States" (Holmes, 1990; Lyons & Chesley, 2004; Milner & Howard, 2004). In the years (1954-1965) immediately after the Brown v. Board of Education decision, close to thirty eight thousand African American teachers and administrators in 17 states lost their positions" as a result of desegregation (Holmes, 1990; King, 1993). The number of African American teachers today remains at seven percent of the teaching population in public schools (NCES, 2008) and forecast call for

those figures to continue a downward spiral. The 239,000 Black teachers in America reflect a decline of eight percent from four years ago (NCES, 2008). This shrinking number has implications for African American student achievement as Black teachers may relate more to and be better familiar with the culture from which the students come. As Gay (2000) noted, it is inconceivable how educators can recognize and nurture the individuality of students if they do not know them. Gay (2000) further noted the importance for teachers to recognize, understand, or appreciate the pervasive influence of culture on their own and their students' attitudes, values, and behavior. Love & Kruger (2005) study of six successful urban schools teaching African American students, found those teachers believed that students' race and culture are essential elements in teaching them effectively. This leads to enhanced and enriched interactions by teachers with their students.

Classroom Instruction and Communication

African American students and other students of color in urban areas receive minimal quality of interactions with their teachers. Gay (2000) listed various instances of poor interactions with teachers such as being called on less frequently, criticized more and praised less, fewer direct responses to their questions and comments, more severe reprimands and discipline as well encouraged less to think intellectually. Irvine (1985) found negative attitudes and beliefs about black children existed among most teachers, particularly white teachers. Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse (2006) investigation with 129 white preservice teachers revealed an inclination to teach students from diverse cultures

but also a difficult task of preparing culturally sensitive teachers. Although teachers are willing to teach students from diverse cultures, proper training and effective implementation of that training is essential for the academic achievement of these students, specifically African American students. Important also is the establishment of trust between teachers and students who time together is highly significant towards successful academic performance. Irvine (1991) mentions teachers' personal and cultural attributes as well as their attitudes and behaviors towards African American students as critical elements. However, Irvine (2003) echoes what previous scholars (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Pang, 2001) state as being the most influential on the students' learning is how those teachers perform their role and duties in the classroom.

Students spend a considerable amount of time in school with their teachers. The impact of teachers on student is significant and important. That degree of importance is greater for urban African American students who may come to school lacking basic needs. The teacher's role becomes not only that of instructor, but as counselor, social worker, and caretaker. It is the concept of caring which must define the role teachers take with their students (Gay, 2000; Irvine, 2003; Pang, 2001). It is caring which Gay (2000) characterized as patience, persistence, facilitation, validation, and empowerment towards the students. This type of teaching allows students to achieve in spite of the numerous challenges they face at school and in their environment. Teachers accomplish this through a variety of measures which include concern for the students' emotional, physical, economic, and interpersonal conditions (Gay, 2000). It also includes

developing personal and meaningful relationships with their students by learning more about them, their environment and culture. Hale-Benson (1982) noted how teachers include career planning, cultural uplift, a commitment to lifelong learning, social, and emotional development, and opportunities to impact positively on the wider society in order to effectively educate African American students. This concern for students, a belief in their capabilities, and proper training offer teachers the confidence in their abilities to teach African American students.

Teacher Efficacy

The term efficacy is one of many terms originating from studies involving self efficacy and education. The concept of self-efficacy was initially proposed denoting a person's belief in their capacity to affect and change a course of events (Bandura, 1977). It originates from the concept of self-efficacy which is grounded on the Bandura's (1977) theoretical framework of social cognitive theory. Since that time, teacher efficacy has been proposed more specifically for the realm of education reflecting teachers' belief in their capacities to affect academic achievement for their students (Berman, McLaughlin, Bass, Pauly, & Zellman, 1996). Goddard, Hoy, and Hoy (2004) proposed the term collective efficacy beliefs to denote beliefs about the conjoint capability of a school faculty. Furthermore, Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy (2004) have suggested the deletion of the term teacher efficacy and replacing it with teachers' perceptions of efficacy, efficacy judgments, sense of efficacy, perceived efficacy, or efficacy beliefs. Most recently, (Dellinger, Bobbett, Olivier, & Ellett, 2008) have

introduced an instrument for assessing teachers' self-efficacy beliefs, Teachers' Efficacy Beliefs System—Self Form (TEBS-Self). This tool assesses individual teacher's beliefs about their capabilities to perform specific instructional tasks with their students. For the purpose of this dissertation, teacher efficacy and sense of efficacy will be used.

Teachers' efficacy is judgments about capabilities to accomplish a task (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004). Goddard, et al. (2004) further noted that teacher efficacy is specific to a particular task. Strong efficacy beliefs or a higher sense of efficacy leads to resilience in teacher making them more capable in their choices to tenaciously overcome obstacles and persist in the face of failure (Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy, 2004). The teacher with a strong sense of efficacy is more likely to look at their teaching practices as the cause of student failure as opposed to the students. They recognize their teaching practice can be effective and influential on students regardless of influences inside or outside the school (Tucker, et al, 2005). In the case for students who are underachieving at school and lacking motivation, the teachers with strong teacher efficacy are confident in their abilities to succeed with such students. Such teachers are more likely to reflect upon and change their instruction when students are not succeeding in their classroom. Tucker, et al (2005) found teacher efficacy to be one of the few teacher characteristics consistently related to student achievement.

The link between teacher efficacy and student achievement is grounded in the teacher's motivations and influences to achieve the desired goal of academic success for the students. Deemer (2004) further states that personal teaching efficacy is what influences the goals teachers promote in their classrooms. These goals are influenced

and driven by the teacher's personal belief that success can be obtained with the students regardless of their diverse background and/or social economic background. Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2007) state "that self-efficacy is a motivational construct" reflecting the teacher's own perceptions of as opposed to actual abilities to teach (p. 946). Knoblauch and Hoy (2008) found a similarity to this motivational construct in stating the beliefs that teachers hold regarding their teaching capabilities has a powerful influence on their teaching effectiveness. It is this motivation which allows teachers to develop strong teacher efficacy while pursuing avenues of success for their students.

Teacher efficacy is not similar to teacher expectations but may have an influence on them as judgments of personal capabilities influence the work and goals set forth in the classroom. Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2007) referred to social cognitive theory in explaining how low expectations and negative beliefs about certain students are likely put forth less effort in preparation and delivery of instruction. Early studies have demonstrated the effects of teacher expectations on student achievement serving as a self-fulfilling prophecy (Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Tschannen-Moran & Hoy (2007) concluded that self-efficacy beliefs also became self-fulfilling prophesies, validating beliefs either of capability or of incapacity. Good & Brophy (2002) showed the effects of teacher expectations on student achievement and how teachers demonstrate different behaviors and expectations towards different students. The effects can be detrimental to students who may not achieve to their potential or beyond based on the treatment, behaviors, and expectations of their teachers. Such is why teacher efficacy is seen as such an "important belief system" affecting student achievement (Ashton &

Webb, 1986; Collier, 2005).

Ashton (1984) gave several dimensions of teacher efficacy which serve as the development stages for which teachers may become more effective in their instruction. The dimensions of teacher efficacy are as follows 1) a sense of personal accomplishment 2) positive expectations for student behavior and achievement 3) personal responsibility for student learning 4) strategies for achieving objectives 5) positive affect 6) sense of control 7) sense of common teacher/student goals 8) democratic decision making. The high efficacious teacher will seek and engage in teaching strategies and practices which will promote their capacities to affect student outcome and change. Such teachers believe that they can positively impact the students' capacities to learn. These teachers are similar to the teachers in Ladson-Billings (1994) study of successful teachers of African American students in particular those who believe that not only their students are capable of excellence and they assume responsibility for ensuring that their students achieve that excellence. Such teachers have also established, through their efficacy beliefs, a strong rapport with students so they believe that they are working together to explore and understand the learning material (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Haberman, 1995). The teachers believe in themselves and their students, causing students to have confidence in themselves and the teacher.

The dimensions described by Ashton (1984) are also those portrayed by the successful teachers of African American children Ladson-Billings (1994) whose determination and insistence on academic achievement for all their students leads to successful academic outcomes. Common among these were their positive examples of

student behavior and achievement, personal responsibility for student learning and a sense of common teacher/student goals (Ladson-Billings, 1994). They portrayed a strong belief in their students while establishing strong bonds/ties between them. These teachers never expressed doubt about either their or their students' abilities. Despite references to obstacles present in the school these teachers through their high level of efficacy demonstrated a resiliency to those obstacles and challenges in the classroom and within the students' environment in order to achieve success for them at school (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008).

Unlike Ashton & Webb's (1986) description of the highly efficacious teacher, those with a low sense of efficacy are consumed by thoughts of their ineffectiveness and the student lack of abilities. These teachers are prone to believing that they cannot do a good job of teaching low-achieving students (Pang & Sablan, 1995). This is supported by studies that have teachers referring to the students' "lack of capabilities, knowledge, motivation, home environment, and behavior" as causes for their diminishing success at school as opposed to their teaching strategies and classroom management skills. These teachers also attribute lack of resources as factors contributing to the failures they incur with their students (Ware & Kitsantas, 2007; Tshannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). Their abilities to reflect on their personal responsibilities for student success are limited. Their abilities to change any negative beliefs and expectations about their teaching, their professions, and their students are also limited.

Research has pointed to the link between teacher beliefs and teacher expectation (Good & Brophy, 2002; Irvine, 1990; Hale, 2001). The achievements or lack thereof by

students is tied to the expectations teachers have for them in the classroom. Irvine (1990) suggested teachers' expectations for students vary by ethnicity. There exist a significant difference in many of the habits and styles which teachers have and those which some of their students bring into the classroom. Pang (2001) noted "teachers vary in their knowledge of children's culture and children who come to school with different levels of cultural knowledge. The highly efficacious teacher will seek and engage in habits and practices which will promote their capabilities to affect constructive change and overcome obstacles in the classroom. Conversely, teachers with strong self confidence and high sense of efficacy in their teaching abilities have high achievement expectations for their students. Teachers with a strong sense of efficacy also choose challenging activities and are motivated to try harder when confronted by obstacles. These teachers are not easily diverted (find article), they stay in teaching; they remain in the same school, choosing not to float around but remain dedicated to the students at their campus. This denotes a person's belief in his capacity to affect a course of action (Bandura, 1977).

Teacher efficacy along with positive beliefs about African American students is tied to the achievement of those students (Collier, 2005; Love & Kruger, 2005; Lynn & Hassan, 2000). Tucker et al. (2005) state that teacher efficacy is also related to racial attitudes and perceived ability to work with diverse students. Teacher efficacy represents the teacher's belief that the students can learn and their expectations for student learning (Proctor, 1984). The implications for African American students is very important as some studies have not only shown lowered expectations for African

American students (Terrell & Mark, 2000) but also a majority of White preservice teachers, for example, prefer placement "in majority White, suburban school settings" (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). Teacher efficacy allows a teachers' belief to change regarding the student's ability to learn, despite social, home, and peer influences (Tucker, et al., 2005). Willis (1995) noted the importance of a positive attitude and high expectations by teachers who teach African American students. Teachers who believe and expect their students can succeed in the classroom develop effective and engaging teaching practices to accomplish this task. Tucker, et al. (2005), noted teachers' sense of efficacy is one of the few teacher characteristics consistently related to student achievement. Teacher efficacy aids in teacher's satisfaction, priorities, and practices (Ashton & Webb, 1986). There is also a strong correlation with teacher efficacy and student performance (Ashton, 1984). This efficacy has implications for how teachers feel about their teaching abilities and the students' learning abilities.

Some teachers continue to blame the students' parents, environment, and the students themselves for their failures. Gay (2000) saw it as teachers attributing student failure to lack of intellectual ability and poor home environments rather than to the quality of their teaching. These are teachers with low-efficacy and essential poor performing educators whose students' academic developments are neglected. Tucker et al. (2005) observed how teacher with low-efficacy tend to "look of solutions outside of their own classrooms" when students are not achieving academically in the classroom. The high-efficacy teacher retains a belief in the students' abilities to learn and in their own capacity to foster academic achievement in African American students. Like the

successful teachers of African American students in Ladson-Billings (1994) work, they believe that students are capable of excellence and they assume responsibility for ensuring that their students achieve that excellence.

Efficacy is different from teacher beliefs in the sense that many beliefs do not necessary drive the approach a teacher may take to reach his her capabilities. A strong sense of efficacy leads to an increased attainment in performance and capabilities despite the skills of the individual. Efficacy leads to a heightened level of success and pursuit of success despite the present skills a person may hold. Efficacy represent a willingness, belief, and seeking of change for the improvement in one's skills and communication as a teacher. Positive beliefs about African American students can direct teachers towards having strong efficacy beliefs. At the same token, teachers with strong teacher efficacy already have positive beliefs about their students and communicate that to them daily through their interactions and classroom instruction. Payne (1994) noted they communicate this to students in as many ways possible and the significant teacher-student relationship that evolves positively influences motivation.

Teacher Beliefs

Teacher beliefs influence perceptions and judgments (Pajares, 1992). Teacher beliefs are linked to teacher efficacy in the sense of how teachers perceive the causes of teachers' or students' performances (Chester & Beaudin, 1996). Beliefs are also tied to expectations. If teachers believe African American students are prone to discipline problems then their focus is only on that and not academic achievement for students

deemed incapable of scholarly performance. They believe African American students are not as intellectual and knowledgeable as their White and Asian counterparts, therefore, they do not expect as much from these students. The expectations are low, represented by the low level quality of instruction received by African American students who are in fact capable of high levels of academic work and achievement. The teachers have such low expectations and minimal teaching standards for these students based on their beliefs. Fisher's (2005) study of high achieving and underachieving students, found underachievers referring to the prejudice and stereotypes on the part of their White teachers when asked to explain their lack of academic achievement. Some of the students referenced beliefs and perceptions as factors which allowed teachers to prejudge them before getting to know them as students (Fisher, 2005).

If teachers believe in their abilities to effective teach their African American students, then it reveals something about their beliefs in the students' capabilities to learn. It is these beliefs and therefore the teacher's perceptions which students recognize in the classroom. Payne (1994) tells us of the importance of such perceptions on the part of the teachers and students as the basic prerequisite to learning. Negative attitudes and stereotypes on the part of the teacher destroy this tenuous crucial bond hindering the learning environment in the classroom (Payne, 1994). The relationship between efficacy and beliefs is tied to these perceptions which will either bond or alienate students and teachers. The outcomes can be negative or positive to student learning based in part on whether perceptions are favorable towards the students.

Negative outcomes can be attributed to teachers with low teacher efficacy who

believe their African American students are incapable of high achievement and therefore have low expectations for those students. Further accelerating the challenges facing the students are teachers who believe these low achieving students are prone to becoming disciplinary problems (Gay, 2000). These expectations are the result of the teachers' beliefs about African American students who are perceived as being more problematic in the classroom when compared to other ethnic groups. A crisis can arise when students internalize their teachers' expectations leading to a deterioration of their academic performances and behaviors (Good& Brophy, 2002). The opposite occurs in cases when positive beliefs and expectations are retained by teachers with strong efficacy beliefs. These teachers establish a classroom environment where students are respected and nurtured. Pang (2001) noted this attitude on the part of teachers who demonstrate genuine concern for their students through "a caring-centered environment".

The teachers with high teacher efficacy do not retain such beliefs and expectations. These teachers know they are capable and believe their students are capable as well. When their students perform in the classroom or on standardized test, these teachers are pleased as opposed to surprised; because they held firm beliefs their students were "highly capable and intelligent". These teachers also do not hold beliefs that African American students are discipline problems or low achievers. They realize that past minimal performance on the part of the students was the direct result of not having been properly taught.

Two of Ashton's (1984) components to teachers' expectations were tied to teacher beliefs. Ladson- Billings (1994) in her interview with successful teachers of

African American children distinguish as believing students are capable of excellence and they assume responsibility for ensuring that their students achieve that excellence. Teachers with a strong sense of teacher efficacy hold strong beliefs about their students' abilities to succeed but also hold strong beliefs about teaching and what it entails (Foster, 1997; Henry, 1998; Ladson- Billings, 1994). These teachers see and incorporate the students' race and culture (Love & Kruger, 2005), but do not consider them as obstacles to their teaching and student achievement (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Through their beliefs about the students and their culture, they are able to form better relations with the students and their parents, fostering both an atmosphere of cooperation and involvement. One study (Lynn & Hassan, 1999) of a successful teacher of African American students, observed how students acquired learning skills on how to "explore their uncritical notions about race and skin color prejudice" (p. 50). The belief with this teacher is the importance of recognizing and helping students deal with the many challenges they face outside of the classroom and become more focused students in the classroom. A teacher's belief is an important component of teacher efficacy. It also has implications for the classroom and school climate.

Teacher beliefs not only pertain to how teachers feel about their students, but also how they feel about their roles as educators and in their attitudes about education in general. They believe that, like the successful teachers of African American students in Ladson-Billings (1994) study, teaching is a calling and a service to the community and society in general. These teachers also believe that knowledge is something held by both the teacher and student (Love & Kruger, 2005), therefore they believe in the necessity of

knowing their students and their culture in order to infuse that with the curriculum and classroom teaching practices. Brown and Medway's (2007) case study of six effective teachers teaching poor African American students, found them believing an immersion into the culture of the students they served. They also believed in "not lowering the expectations of success but making needed accommodations for them" (Brown & Medway, 2007, p. 535). These teachers believe in culturally relevant teaching that will impact learning to the degree of being engaging and effective for the students within an ideal school or classroom climate.

Classroom Climate

Teachers who have a high sense of efficacy help create the classroom climate. Teacher beliefs involve perceptions and judgments. What they do in the classroom with their students makes the climate better. The teacher's belief sets the tone of the classroom climate and can have implications for the school climate through collective efficacy. As Goddard, Hoy & Hoy (2004) point out "perceived collective efficacy refers to the judgment of teachers in a school that the faculty as a whole can organize and execute the courses of action required to have a positive effect on students" (p. 4). Learning occurs in an environment conducive to learning. Students learn best in a school that is structured, supportive, and affirming of high expectations. Purkey & Smith (1982) reported that factors such school climate, leadership, and quality instruction are frequently associated with effective schools. These factors contribute to student achievement in schools. Therefore, the climate within a school influences student

learning and teachers create that environment. The school is a mirror of the classroom practices of teachers as well as the leadership practices of administrators. Both teachers and administrators are responsible for creating a supportive school climate which fosters learning and improves student performance. Accordingly, the performance of students in schools is related to the quality of education they receive (Ladson-Billings, 1994). The quality of their education is an important component that establishes the school climate.

Establishing an ideal school climate entails administrators and staff working together and having shared commonalities (Lezotte & Bancroft, 1985). Students are also linked to these shared commonalities when teachers establish what Ladson-Billings (1994) called "a community of learners". Such attitudes of togetherness are fostered through cooperative grouping practices, hands-on learning, while assessing and meeting individual student needs. Ladson-Billings (1994), further stated this emphasis on learning in groups reinforces learning as a social activity, which helps maintain a sense of community. For students of color, particularly African American, developing a sense of community is essential to an effective learning culture and school climate.

A school climate must exist to empower not only teachers but students especially. The school environment must serve as a support system in which all the participants (administrators, teachers, students, and parents) are working cooperative together towards a common goal. Throughout many of our nation's schools, teachers and students lack a voice or attachment therefore feeling little involvement in the teaching/learning taking place. Nieto (2004) states that many students feel alienated,

and discouraged by school. The cultures and climates of many schools are such that students have very say in what they learn and see very little of themselves in the curriculum, lessons, strategies and materials (Hale-Benson, 1982). This lack of attachment and mental isolation from their learning creates a school climate where learning and the excitement for learning is stagnant.

In the case of African American students the school climate must be reflective of respect, care, safeguard, and community (Parsons, 2005). Hilliard (1992) contrasted the style of schools in American noting how they could and should function; divergent as opposed to convergent, humanistic instead of mechanical, sociocentric versus egocentric, and people focused instead of thing focused. These are only a few of several contrast made which allow the climate of the schools to be more conducive to learning and academic achievement. A school climate which is rigid and lacks novelty for instance lends itself to teachers and students feeling contempt and lacking enthusiasm for the work they are involved. These restraints put a burden on the pursuit and attainment of academic achievement. Nieto (2004) noted "curriculum, student placement, physical structure of schools, pedagogical strategies, assumptions about student ability, hiring of staff, and parent involvement" among organizational issues in schools which must be carefully considered for academic achievement involving students of color (p. 92). How staff works together with these organizational issues is just as vital as the issues themselves.

This aspect of working together through group efforts is what is known as cohesiveness. Brown and Medway (2007) reported a sense of cohesiveness within the

school climate of a school effectively teaching poor African-American students. Bandura (1986) defined this as collective efficacy whereby a group is willingly working together and persisting to remain that way for a common cause or goal. The school climate fostered an atmosphere of teachers sharing ideas, supporting one another, and establishing good rapport among one another (Brown and Medway, 2007). These are ideal situations whereby the presence of perceived collective efficacy is clear. Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy (2004) found this perceived collective efficacy to be "the judgment of teachers in a school that the faculty as whole can organize and execute the courses of action required having a positive effect on students" (p. 4). This collective efficacy is beneficial to the learning outcomes and promotes academic achievement for all student particularly poor, urban students. These are students who may need teachers who believe they can teach the students regardless of any possible low achievement, family support, and environment in which the student live. The cohesiveness and persistence of the teachers reflects the collective efficacy within some effective schools serving African American students whose teachers having strong efficacy beliefs.

Effective Schools

Effective schools serving African American students promote success for the students using staff and resources within the schools. Specifically, the schools rely on the climate they build within to promote and foster the academic success with their students. They build what has been referred to as a climate of expectation that student will learn (Edmonds, 1979; Lezotte & Bancroft, 1985; Slavin & Madden, 2006; Stinson,

2006). This climate of expectation among a school's staff promote collective efficacy beliefs due to the sense of cohesiveness, partnership, and support among staff members who expect and belief in success for their students. Effective schools are characterized by teachers whose expectation of the students are so well imbedded in the schools that they ignore studies attributing racial stratification (Ogbu, 1994), to low academic achievement among African American students. Effective schools have teachers whose driving force in their classrooms is lead by the expectation that all students can and will learn. Goddard, Sweetland, & Hoy (2000) discussed this drive among teachers whose quest for academic excellence contributes to the behavioral and environmental press of the school and is important to school success.

Edmonds (1979) conducted a classic study of effective schools in which he identified five characteristics commonly found among them. The characteristics included 1) an effective principals, 2) A school wide purpose understood by the entire staff, 3) a safe and orderly school climate, 4) high expectations shown by all teachers, 5) close monitoring of student progress through standardized testing. These characteristics are similar in nature as those found by other studies (Brown & Medway, 2007; Towns, Cole-Henderson, & Serpell, 2001) of effective schools serving poor and inner city students. They also reflect some of the practices found in innovative programs which develop collaboration among administrators, teachers, students, and parents (Slavin & Madden, 2006; Towns, Cole-Henderson, & Serpell, 2001) and promote high expectation within successful urban schools.

As seen with Ladson-Billings (1994) study, successful teachers of African

American students are not dependent upon administrators, fellow teachers, and staff to teach their students effectively. These teachers are able to reach and teach their students regardless of the numerous obstacles before them, including bureaucracy and administrators. However, scholars have shown not only the importance of the principal's leadership (Edmonds, 1979; Hale 2001; Irvine, 1991), but the impact effective administrators can have on teachers, students, and the entire school climate (Wahlstrom & Louis, 2008; Wilson, 1982).

Effective Principals

Edmonds (1979) first characteristic of effective schools are effective principals. He described these individuals as having "strong administrative leadership" while demonstrating great support for their teachers (Edmonds, 1979). These principals as described by Irvine (1991) were also great communicator with not only students, but parents, teacher, community leaders and business community and the church community. These effective principals have a clear presence and supportive role in the schools involving a high level of interaction with its occupants, particularly the students. They maintain a visible presence and availability to all the stakeholders of the schools, especially students and their parents (Wilson, 1982). Irvine (1991) noted these principals as being confident of their abilities to take on those "challenges and situations of high ambiguity and uncertainty" which are often found in urban schools. Like Ladson-Billings (1994) successful teachers who ignore mundane paperwork task that takes time away from instruction, Irvine (1991) principals often ignore imposed bureaucratic rules and regulations that are incompatible with their schools' needs and

goals. Not being complacent about the challenges and overcoming bureaucratic obstacles, reflects the strong efficacy beliefs the Ladson- Billings (1994) teachers and Irvine (1991) principals hold in their abilities to be effective in urban schools teaching African American students.

The impact of effective principals is both critical and far reaching when one considers successful academic outcome for African American students. Wahlstom & Louis (2008) noted effective principals have a direct impact on the teachers' effective classroom practices when they have established trust and shared leadership with those teachers. This shared leadership is clear in Wilson (1982) of one effective whose teachers respected and portrayed him as a senior colleague who works with and guides a group of professional teacher toward improved classroom outcomes. The case is clear here in how not only teachers perceive their teaching leader but how they sense their roles within the professional school climate the principal has worked with them to establish. The true beneficiaries are the students who receive positive interactions from their school principals who expectations for success is developed through continuous support for teachers and students alike. They facilitate teaching and learning conditions through a variety of leadership strategies and practices (Irvine, 1991). One of those methods noted by Edmonds (1982) is communication between the principal and teachers on the selection and use of ideal instructional strategies.

Comer (1980) noted the consensus and cooperation principals can gain from teachers, staff, parents, and students when they facilitate adequately harmonious relationships among diverse groups. The principal is the leader who can create bridges

and bipartisanship among all stakeholders of the school for the benefit of the students who will prosper under such a climate. Consensus building and power sharing is important because there is less dependence upon that one figure, the principal, regardless of how effective the individual maybe. Comer (1980) agreed that when an effective principal leaves a school, a dramatic decline in student achievement occurs because the source of success only rested upon the principal. The aim is to build a system whereby the instruments to achievement are developed, shared, and enacted so that all parties, including the students, and embodied with long term success (Comer, 1980).

School Wide Purpose

Edmonds second principle of effective schools is a school purpose which is understood clearly by everyone in the school. In order to understand the school's major purpose it is vital, through the principal's leadership role, that the major purposes are disseminated (Edmonds, 1982). School wide goals are common and frequently changed each year without teachers having the opportunity as a staff to decipher them. This creates circumstances in which the teachers' focus is not fully on the goals that have been created for academic improvement. This occurrence often leads to confusion, neglect, and lack of ownership over the goals whose purpose is vital and impact great if implement and used correctly. As noted in the introduction of this chapter in which national school standards cannot change the beliefs and teaching practices of teachers, the school wide goals can if the teachers feel they have a voice in how they are created and implemented. A properly implemented school wide purpose aids in the establishment mentioned earlier of cohesiveness within the school climate of effective

schools.

Shared leadership role and decision making opportunities which is characteristic noted earlier about effective principals is part of process which goes into the establishment of school wide purposes. This is clear in Copland's (2003) description of a longitudinal study of leadership called the Bay Area Reform Collaborative (BASRC). This collaborative sought ways to reculture schools in ways that support whole school change and allow for the continuation of the improvements brought forth by these changes (Copland, 2003). The shared decisions making process as well as collaboration and cohesiveness allowed the staff to "manage the challenges within their context and sustain the work, sharing the school's progress and challenges in the district and broader community" (Copland, 2003). Copland (2003) concludes that although and time consuming, reaching the goals established for a school requires "the collection and analysis of data that routinely sheds light on progress towards the fundamental goals of improving teaching and learning which is done through continued communication and dialogue by the teachers and staff (Copland, 2003). Reframing from shared decision making and collaboration sets the school, teachers, and students for failure in the context of the school wide purpose.

Nieto (2004) found that teachers who are not empowered through their involvement in school wide processes become disillusioned from having been kept voiceless. Nieto (2004) found this disempowerment of teachers to be a growing trend due to high stakes testing and standards affecting many schools. Empowerment was one of the characteristics which Ladson-Billings (1994) teachers through culturally

responsive teaching. These teachers were very critical of any district or school policies which prevented them from teaching their students effectively. Although the teachers did not have a voice in the school policies, they empowered themselves and their students by establish ideal teaching practices, strategies, and philosophies within their own classrooms. Edmonds (1982) description of school change and improvement involving both principals and teachers means that the latter must be given not only the responsibility as a stakeholder but also the shared control and voice.

A Safe and Orderly School Climate

Edmonds (1979) described this school climate as having an atmosphere that is orderly without being rigid, quiet without being oppressive, and generally conductive to the instructional business at hand. Haberman (1995) description of star teachers who are effective in teaching poor children, found them to be skillful in their classroom organization and management skills. Whether or not the school's climate was the case, at the minimum the children entered a classroom which was a semblance of the order and safety they needed in order to make their environment conducive for learning. This is important for urban children whose home environment may lack stability and structure. Edmonds (1982) observed two key factors on school safety and order; one being "teachers taking responsibility for all students, all the time" and the other being the school must avoid tangible evidence of institutional neglect. The former highlights the importance of teachers having the feeling that they are stakeholder in the school through their involvement in decision making processes. A clean and orderly school sends a message to the students that they are important and deserving of an ideal learning

environment.

In establishing and maintaining a safe, clean, and orderly school climate, the teachers and staff are sending a message to the students that they not only care about their learning, and learning environment, but also about them as individuals. Pang (2001) addressed this "ethic of caring" in how teachers view and interact with their students. Found within a caring and positive school climate is "safety, trust, respect, fairness, high expectations, and a welcoming environment" (Perkins-Gough, 2008). Pollard-Durodola's (2003) observation of one highly acclaimed school in Houston found its immaculate appearance constantly attended to by the custodians and principal alike despite the grim physical surroundings of the neighborhood. Cole-Henderson (2000) study of eight elementary and one elementary-middle school found these schools were effective in establishing safety and order by insuring that problems attributed to low-income urban schools" were not present in their schools. The students felt safe and protected which allowed their focus to remain on learning. By providing such a safe and orderly environment, teacher with high expectations for their students are able to demonstrate to them that they are sincere in their efforts.

High Expectations by All Teachers

The self-fulfilling prophecy mentioned early in this chapter demonstrates the positive or negative implications of interactions between teachers and students. More important the term shows the great influence and impact teachers can have on not only the students' classroom performances but also their lives. Student will perform in the manner in which their teachers expect them to perform (Nieto, 2004). In the class of

urban students whose teachers can have an even greater influence over their lives, teacher expectations are a vital area of teaching and learning (Irvine, 1991). Expectations are therefore linked to student achievement (Good & Brophy, 1974). St. Louis Public Schools use of the eMINTS (enhancing Missouri's Instructional Networked Teaching Strategies) had lead to increased student achievement by use of several strategies among which high teacher expectations in every classroom (Reese, 2005). A school climate within an effective school has teachers whose expectations for student achievement are high and deterministic.

Edmonds (1979) found this fourth principle of effective schools as a "climate of expectation in which no children are permitted to fall below minimum but efficacious levels of achievement. This climate of expectations was found in Brown & Medway (2007) effective teachers of poor African American children. These teachers not only demonstrated their expectations through a variety teaching and learning practices, but they also communicated it directly to the students. Among Ashton & Webb (1986) many descriptors of teachers with strong efficacy beliefs, is the presence of high expectations for student performance. These high expectations are not only grounded in the teachers' practices, but their teaching philosophies and beliefs. It is high expectations along with the positive "interpersonal interactions" between teachers and students which facilitate academic success for the students (Love & Kruger, 2005).

The importance of communicating high expectations consistently to all students is critical as students can sense being treated differently by their teacher (Irvine, 2003). Tettegah (1996) found that perception and attitudes vary based on differences in the

students' and teachers' backgrounds. Irvine (2003) further warns that students are affected by these different expectations through their achievement, self-concept, aspirations, and behavior. Studies (Belfiore, Auld, & Lee, 2005; McKown & Weinstein 2008; Singham, 2003) have shown how teacher expectations attribute to the achievement gap due to these varied expectations based on ethnicity. Clearly effective schools whose teachers have high expectations for their students are not an anomaly. Successful academic outcome as well as the narrowing of the achieving gap can be accomplish if more schools promote Edmonds's principles. Teachers are encouraged to believe that their African American students can learn and attain high levels of success in school.

Assessment of Standardized Tests

Edmonds last principle involving standardized testing touches on a sensitive topic within schools across the country. The federal No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) brought about the advent of using high stakes testing to insure that student were making substantial growth and yearly progress in the classroom (NCLB, 2002). Edmond (1982) acknowledged even before the heated arguments taking place today, that standardized testing at the time do not adequately measure the appropriate end of education but it was at the moment the best means of measuring whether or not students were making progress in school. Edmonds (1982) furthermore noted the importance of teachers not only assessing the students' performances on standardized tests but closely monitoring individual progress. Edmonds (1982) also addressed the issue of teachers teaching to the test and looking for other innovative ways, e.g. the arts, to teach basic skills to the students.

Wolf (2007) argues that regular assessment through standardized tests benefits the students through increased retention of the material, a focus of mastery, feedback on performance, and real world experience of test taking experiences. Wolf (2007) argues for not only more testing, more often, but expanded and varied material on the test so that teacher and students do not fall into the danger of shrinking the body of knowledge with which participants in the educational project are concerned. This ensures if teachers are to teach to the test, then they would essentially cover a wealth of the material in their instruction which will be covered on the test. Roediger & Karpicke (2006) observed increased long term retention by students who were tested on read material as opposed to student who reread the material. This is based on the testing effect which states that students will retain information better when they have successfully recalled it on a test. Edmonds (1982) expressed the need for students to learn minimum academic skills before they can successfully access the next level of schooling. Edmonds (1982) further noted that standardized tests were at the present time the most realistic, accurate rate, and equitable basis for portraying individual pupil progress.

The research and work of the above scholars demonstrate the benefits of standardized testing when used correctly as an assessment in monitoring and improving instruction for poor urban students. The key is in how test are used. High stakes testing and its assessment have been shown to have adverse effects for African American students (Grant, 2004; Oates, 2003). Another key is to avoid the atmospheres Grant (2004) states as teacher quality is undermined when teachers are anxious and concerned

about the impact of high-stakes tests. The principle of assessing test scores avoids this as Edmonds (1982) principle specifies the close monitoring of student progress by assessing the results from standardized testing. His aim is for educational excellence along with academic growth, not high test scores.

However, the highly efficacious teacher is not dependent upon an effective school or any of the five principles found within such schools, by way of administrative and faculty support, in order to be effective with her students. Teachers with high efficacy beliefs are usually that way in spite of the school climate in which they are teaching. Like some of the successful teachers of African American students in the Ladson-Billing (1994) study, these teacher teach in schools which others teachers are not effective at all and do not believe in their students' capabilities to learn. The highly efficacious teacher does not participate or indoctrinate herself with these beliefs and perceptions. These teachers exist within the school climate as a contradiction to assimilationist teachers who seem satisfied with the status quo (Ladson-Billings, 1994). They are effective and have strong efficacy beliefs based upon their beliefs in themselves and the students capabilities.

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

A teacher may believe in his ability to teach as well as the abilities of African American students to learn, yet may lack the necessary skills and training to attain achievement for this students. Some teachers may also lack the knowledge that their teaching carries the deficiency when it comes to academic achievement for African

American students. Parsons (2005) description of culturally relevant pedagogy's general area of target is achievement for all students. This denotes the development of effective teaching practices through the promotion of high expectations and academic excellence (Ladson-Billing, 1994). Central to this goal of achievement is an atmosphere of relationship building, community of learners, knowledge created and recycled, and learning collaboratively (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Howard's (2002) interviews with African American elementary and secondary students found those students descriptions of effective teachers as those who "make school seem like home" (p. 431). A teacher can only accomplish these tasks by believing in her capacity to develop meaningful relationships with her students and create classroom atmosphere that is engaging and similarly meaningful.

The link between education and culture has been established by numerous scholars (Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Hilliard, 1992; Ladson-Billing, 1994; Nieto, 2004; Pang, 2001). Gay (2000) noted that "culture is at the heart of all we do in the name of education". A teacher may believe in the academic potential of African American students, but may not challenge them to their full potential or may not use the proper strategies to engage them in academic thought. Brown (2003) found this to be the case noting the challenges consist of "inadequate knowledge of the strategies needed to connect to diverse students" (p. 278). Whether through communication patterns (Irvine, 1985; Irvine 2003), teaching strategies (Gibson & Dembo, 1984), and overall expectations (Good & Brophy, 2002), teachers may not be reaching African American students in the classroom. A crucial starting point for teachers is getting to know their

students. This means acquiring information about them through conversations, home visits, dialogues with parents and grandparents, and interactions both formally and informally. Teachers must dwell into the environment and culture of their students. Katz (1999) study of two effective urban schools found both schools had made and achieved genuine attempts to create linkages between the students, their families and the schools. The result was improved academic achievement and greater understanding of the students'" needs and improved delivery of services to meet those needs' (Katz, 1999, p. 509).

Culturally responsive classroom management is facilitated by teachers with high efficacy (Gay, 2000, p. 61). Gay (2000) further distinguished these teachers with strong efficacy beliefs as those who "use a greater variety and range of teaching strategies" while holding themselves accountable for the learning all the students including difficult learners (p. 61). The attitudes and beliefs teachers have towards African American students is an essential component of culturally responsive pedagogy. Attitudes beneficial towards learning and achievement are enhanced through nurtured relationship between teachers and students. Culturally responsive teaching entails establishing these relationships between students and teachers through classroom instruction and management. It is defined as teaching which involves knowing and incorporating the influence of culture on the teaching and learning processes (Irvine, 2003). Culturally responsive classroom management involves culturally responsive teaching practices. This then consist of what Ladson-Billings (1994) called different practices for different pedagogical situations and contexts. Through this pedagogy the strengths students bring

to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement. The culture of a student is brought into the classroom.

Therefore through establishing relationships and care with students, teachers can establish effective culturally responsive classroom management. However, before teachers can establish culturally responsive pedagogy in their classroom, they must engage in what Richards, et al. (2007) called, cognitive and emotional processes which is a personal dimension of culturally responsive pedagogy. One method of accomplishing this is by having a caring centered environment in the classroom whereby student are respected and taken into account within the instruction (Pang, 2001). "Caring for students" was one of three strategies observed by Brown (2003) in his examination of thirteen effective urban teachers. Establishing interpersonal relationship is one component of culturally responsive classroom management and the essence of caring for students (Gay, 2000; Haberman, 1995; Pang, 2001).

Education has a strong relationship to "cultures and heritages" (Gay, 2000). It relates to our society and values. As a diverse, multicultural society, our educational society must include that diversity and be responsive to the cultures which we are comprised. One of the challenges facing our educational system is that "teaching practices reflect European American cultural values" exclusively (Banks, 2004; Gay, 2000). The culture of the students which affects their behavioral and learning styles is not incorporated into the curriculum, learning, and teaching strategies. It is a twofold process whereby educators must first acknowledge that some African American children have a distinct learning style which facilitates their academic development. The next

step is to engage in what Hale-Benson (1982) noted as "the development of an appropriate social-psychological theory of educational process" (p. 5). Hale-Benson (1982) added that this theory would "identify the social, historical, and cultural forces that affect the development of learning styles in the Black community" (p. 5). Teachers are thus held to the task of not only knowing about their students and their background, but also how they learn best, based on the strengths brought from their cultures (Hanley, 1999; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Hale-Benson (1982) found that necessity to build bridges between the natural learning styles in the family and the novel styles of learning introduced in the schools. This is a form of "cultural synchronization" between the teacher and students in which differences in verbal/nonverbal communication are understood and recognized in the classroom environment (Irvine, 2003). Lack of cultural synchronization not only creates communication problems between teachers and students (Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994), but causes learning problems and behavioral challenges for culturally, linguistically, ethnically, economically diverse (CLEED) students (Webb-Johnson, & Carter, 2007; Monroe & Obidah, 2004). In order to provide what Gay (2000) says as more genuine educational equity and achieve excellence, teachers must incorporate classroom instruction in multiethnic cultural frames of references. Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) incorporates the social experiences of students into the curriculum and instruction while 'cultivating their academic and psychosocial abilities" (Gay, 2000). Through CRT the present use of a single culture frame of reference in schools which are failing African American students, will be eliminated. Instruction in

the classroom as well as the curriculum driving that instruction must be examined carefully if effective changes for African American student achievement are to take place. Teachers with high efficacious use culturally responsive teaching methods with the curriculum in their classroom instruction

Hale (2001) notes African American children favor instruction that is variable, energetic, vigorous, and captivating. Curriculum and instruction must be reflective of "Afro-Cultural themes of movement, verve, and communalism" (Boykin, 1978; Hale, 2001). The curriculum and instruction must recognize and affirm the students' culture. Gordon (2001), states, "most of the curriculum field, and indeed educational literature in both academy and popular culture, is grounded in the Euro-American regime of truth" (p. 184). The inclusion of an "African American conceptual system" is vital so students can recognize the "unique experiences" of their culture in the instruction (Gordon, 2001. p.184). Our school curriculum is based on European American values, ideas, beliefs, and culture. Therefore there is little instruction based on diverse culture models. This is where the limitations and ineffectiveness of instruction appears for many students of color.

The current and projected demographics suggest a cultural mismatch between teachers and their students (Gay, 2000; Pang, 2001). In order to make instruction meaningful and effective, teachers must dwell into the background knowledge, thus the culture of the students. Gay (2000) also found the need for teachers to "capitalize on students cultural differences" (p. 26). It provokes more involvement from students who feel a sense of belonging when some aspects of their lives or culture are reflected in

class instruction. This is reflective of good teaching practices and vital to any instruction involving Culturally Responsive Teaching (Gay, 2000).

In the call for school change and academic achievement for African American students, the classroom teacher and what is taught in the classroom remains a vital part of the process (Irvine, 2003). In spite of training received in teacher training program, workshops, and staff development, some teachers do not propose more diverse instruction, CRT, or multicultural education in their classroom (Alidou, Larke, & Carter, 2002; Carter, Webb-Johnson, Knight, 2005). If effective instruction is to take place in the classroom both the teachers and students must be joined together in the instruction. The culture of the students must be incorporated into the curriculum and instruction (Brown, 2004; Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 2004). Students must see a part of themselves in the instruction if meaningful learning is to take place and lifelong learners developed. It instills engagement and cooperation in the classrooms. Brown (2004) saw this cooperation developed when teachers "address students' cultural and ethnic needs as well as their social, emotional, and cognitive needs" (p. 267). The eventual aim is to use the often ignored strengths of African American students (Hale, 1982) while having them "identify with African and African American culture (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Several methods and strategies have been proposed in implementing CRT practices with African American students. Ladson-Billings (1994) listed making connections with the material, varied narratives, creativity, collaboration, and high expectations among instruction strategies. Boykin (1978) called for the utilization of

Black children's "richer movement repertoire" in learning a variety of concepts (p. 349). Hale (1982) also noted the use of movement in the curriculum as well as dance, music, environmental arts, fashion arts, and folklore. Culturally relevant teaching requires "research and reflection by teachers" (Gay, 2000; Hanley, 1999; Nieto, 2004). It also requires relinquishing many years of training and practice by teachers. It is a difficult task made easier when teachers become more aware and sensitive of the cultures their students bring into the classroom. Teachers, whose efficacy has developed and grown, use the students' cultures in the classroom while establishing links with the curriculum and instruction to make learning more effective. They are highly reflective of their teaching and their students' background.

Cultural Awareness

Culture is at the heart of everything we do as learners and educators (Gay, 2000, p.8). Culture has an impact and is a significant factor in our thought processes. There is clearly a strong relationship between culture and education (Boykin, 1978; Gay, 2000; Pang, 2001). Gay further states, "culture determines how we think, believe, and behave, and in turn how we teach and learn" (p.9). Culture is a reflection of our thinking. It has an impact on the manner in which students learn best. Boykin (1978) noted the importance of culture on learning in reference to African American students who respond best in school environment more in sync with their "adaptive strengths and styles". The thinking of an individual can in turn be impacted by any misperceptions, bias, and/or prejudices they have. The less one knows about another's culture the

greater likelihood that these prejudices can occur. Such is why cultural awareness is important. It is critical to the teaching and learning process because it impacts how teachers teach and not only how students learn but the manner in which they learn best.

Culture is vital in its incorporation into our teaching and the development of student achievement (Ladson-Billings, 1994). A student's individuality is based upon and influenced by his culture. Gay (2000) notes the difficulty in recognizing and nurturing students if the teacher knows so little about them. The individuality of students is deeply entwined with their ethnic identity and cultural socialization (Gay, 2000). Having cultural awareness helps teachers on the path of becoming what Ladson-Billings (1994) called tutors who "believe that students can improve and they believe it is their responsibility to help them do so" (p. 21). The highly efficacious teacher is cognizant of this vital component of teaching and uses it as an effective tool to learn more about their students with the purpose of establishing meaningful relationships and making learning highly effective and personal to the students.

Culture reflects how we think, learn, and behave (Pang, 2001). The impact of culture on learning is ever present for students and must be ingrained into the learning environment (Gay, 2000; Nieto, 2004). As Pang (2001) notes, culture is a "natural aspect of one's life "which affects how one thinks and acts (p. 260). Several scholars have defined culture as a vital component and tool for classroom instruction (Gay, 2000; Hilliard, 1992; Nieto, 2004; Pang, 2001). The awareness of a student's culture is then very important by teachers who must use it to assist students in their thinking and learning (Brown, 2003; Katz, 1999; Parsons, 2005). Teachers must not only be aware of

their students' culture but that of their own and how the differences in cultures are an asset to instruction as oppose to a constraint.

Ladson-Billings (1994) noted that importance of teachers understanding their own culture in order to "challenge their intrinsic assumptions". Teacher from backgrounds different than their students, tend to bring assumptions and views about the students, their parents, and communities (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Knapp & Woolverton, 2001). Such views often are often wrong, based on false perceptions rather than actual knowledge which teachers can only develop through communication and relationship building with their students. In the case for students from diverse backgrounds, teachers are unable to "deal more effectively" with them because of the mismatch in cultural backgrounds (Knapp & Woolverton, 2001, p. 556). The cultural mismatch is not as significant as what Gay (2000) described as the "cultural blindness" which is created within the environment of this mismatch. Gay (2000) describes "cultural blindness" when "prior experiences, community settings, cultural backgrounds, and ethnic identities of teachers and students" are not implemented in the teaching/learning process (p. 21). This leads further into what is described as a lack of "cultural congruence" between students, teachers, parents, and schools (Gay, 2000; Katz, 1999) or what Nieto (2004) described as "cultural discontinuities.

Cultural discontinuities according to Nieto (2004) have been described as the lack of congruence between home and school cultures. Several scholars (Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006; Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008; Garrett, 1995; Allen & Boykin, 1992) have addressed the issue of cultural discontinuities as an obstacle to teacher and student

relations and academic achievement particularly for students from diverse backgrounds and living in poverty. Cholewa & West-Olatunji (2008) have specifically noted the adverse effect cultural discontinuity has on these same students whose interaction patterns and culturally based language differences often result in students' subsequent punishment and referral for special education placement. While cultural discontinuities are prevalent and present challenges to the academic achievement of diverse learners, they according to Nieto (2004) develop not solely from "differing cultural values among groups" but out of the "socio political context of schooling" (p. 155). This implies the existence of other factors, besides the teachers' different culture, within the school which hinder academic achievement (Nieto, 2004). It is in this realm of the school where teachers with strong efficacy beliefs are effective in bridging the achievement gaps between culturally diverse students and schools.

A teacher with strong efficacy beliefs can negotiate through the numerous perceived obstacles and challenges present within a school in order to achieve academic success for the students of color. This includes recognizing these sociopolitical contexts of schooling and making what Nieto (2004) described as culture-specific educational accommodations. This calls for making modifications using cultural knowledge and experiences in the classroom so that instruction is compatible to the students' culture (Nieto, 2004).

Teachers who acknowledge cultural differences in the classroom as an asset are essentially acknowledging their students and the background knowledge they bring into the classroom. It is as if letting students know not only that they count but that they

bring to the table a wealth of knowledge which must be used in the classroom for learning. Highly efficacious teachers make use of culturally responsive teaching in order to make connections between home and school environments. This creates what Jordan (1985) called cultural compatibility whereby the students culture is used as a guide to promoting "academically desired behaviors in the classroom". Once again the bridge between the student culture, which they bring into the classroom through their learning and behavioral styles, and the school culture is developed (Jordan, 1985). Furthermore some of the debilitating and negatives messages of schools and society are less prevalent when teachers have accounted for cultural differences by making use of them in the classroom (Nieto, 2004).

Cultural awareness also represents teachers not only knowing their students but in the case of African American students, recognizing and discussing social issues, e.g. discrimination, racism, poverty, prejudices, equality, etc, which affect both them and their families. Howard (2002) found issues of race and power important to students who expressed their understanding of more complex factors influencing the learning environment. Developing and maintaining relationship with students, which is central to effective practices, calls for creating classroom discussions on matters important to their lives This not only gives students a voice but acquires for the teachers respect and trust from the students.

Teachers must capitalize on students' cultural differences as a resource (Gay, 2000). It calls for flexibility in the structure of the classroom and schools. While teachers must be aware that African American students need structure (Ladson-Billings,

1994), flexibility (Hilliard, 1992; Irvine, 2003) must be offered at times when students express their independence and creativity in thought. Teachers must also be aware that as culture is a reflection of the students' learning and behavioral styles, it is also influenced by the environment in which they live. Teachers must be cognizant of that environment to know the variety of social and economical elements their students are faced with daily. These are elements which may or may not affect their learning in the classroom. These are also element which should affect the role of the teacher with her students.

Irvine (2003) defined the role of some African American teachers as serving as mother figures which included traits and acts they would show with their own children. This is a result of not only having cultural awareness but consciously and willingly taking an assertive and caring role with their students. One of Ladson-Billings (1994) teachers saw her role with her students as part of an "extended family" and her classroom practices, behavior, and communication reflected that role (p. 62). Through the awareness of culture, the teachers believed it was not only their responsibility but their purpose as the classroom teacher to participate more fully and meaningfully with the students. The teachers are not only aware of the students, their needs, and culture, but they are sensitive to these, particularly culture.

Cultural Sensitivity

Teacher with a sense of efficacy are aware of their students' cultures and developed a respect and sensitivity to those cultures. The manner in which a teach

thinks about curriculum and instruction is based on his environment and educational background. Thus the methods and instructional practices used are a direct result of their own cultural experiences. These cultural experiences may reflect and influence preconceived notions, bias, and prejudices about other groups of people, other cultures. (Banks, 2001; Gay, 2000). As noted by Gay (2000), they perceive students, all of who are cultural agents, with inevitable prejudice and preconception. Teachers must therefore be aware of the individual differences of their students especially as they relate to that particular child's culture. Gay (2000) noted culture determines how we think, believe, and behave, and these, in turn, affect how we teach and learn. African American students come from a culture brimming with diversity and teachers must be aware of both that diversity as well as any bias which may affect their teaching abilities.

Martin Haberman (1995) noted in his assessment of effective teachers of urban students that they have to care about the soul of a child. With that said, teachers have to be sensitive to those aspects of a child's family, environment, and culture which are the attributes of their background. Zionts, et al. (2003) in their interviews with twenty four African American families of children with disabilities, found that most considered respect and treatment of their children as primary concerns. Teachers of African American students must possess the cultural sensitivity which will enable them to consider the realities affecting the students' environment. They must also be consciously aware that education presents a tremendous opportunity for the lives of students who come from environments prone to violence, poverty, and drugs. African American students from urban backgrounds pose a greater likelihood to experience these

challenges. Teachers also carry the responsibilities to build their knowledge base which includes the students' background.

As classroom become more diverse, teacher must be more cognizant of factors which can enhance or hinder classroom instruction. More importantly, teachers must make a conscience effort to meet the academic, physical, and emotional needs of their students. In the environment of culturally diverse classroom it calls for teachers examining themselves and their institutions for bias (Pang, 2001, p. 258) and challenging these inequities (Parsons, 2005). In the effort to be sensitive to those needs, teachers must be sensitive of all elements which affect the individual student. It is based on teachers recognizing, responding and acting appropriately to the students' culture on matters linked to classroom instruction and address further what Pang (2001) described as the inequities that can be found in school. Failing to address such issues causes what Irvine (1991) described as negative expectations by teachers and students themselves and in a pattern of differential teacher-student interactions in the classroom.

Culture is one of those elements and teacher must be sensitive to it if they are to promote not only academic excellence in their classrooms but a state of caring and trust (Gay, 2000; Howard, 2001; Parson, 2005). Cultural diversity is even more important for teachers teaching students from cultures different than their own (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006). In the case for African American students who experience a wide range of needs and challenges, the role of the teacher as a trusted caregiver is crucial. Teachers who are sensitive to students' culture are essentially acknowledging students' individuality and gaining the important elements of trust and respect from the students.

But in order for teachers to acquire cultural sensitivity they must be knowledgeable about their students' cultures so they can be effective caregivers and advocates of their students.

Being sensitive also calls for teachers to have the courage to speak out as proponents for their students. Carter, Felton, Hilliard, & Vold (1999) stress the need for teachers to be advocates for their students by tackling issues of racism, prejudice, and discrimination. These, like most teachers, must see color and be willing and able to discuss the numerous issues concerning diversity and race in our society. They must also see color without misperceptions or concerns on their part of being falsely labeled as having prejudices. Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse (2006) investigation of 92 White preservice teachers found "the task of preparing culturally sensitive teachers" to be enormous (p. 77). This is based largely in little of no training these teachers had with diversity and the lack of field experiences with culturally diverse students. Ladson-Billings (1994) observed an aspect of it in culturally relevant teaching which includes "questioning (and preparing students to question) the structural inequality, the racism, and the injustice that exist in society" (p. 128). As one of teachers interviewed in her qualitative study noted "I teach what the children need, not what the district wants" (p. 129).

High efficacy allows teachers to establish relationships with their students and their parents. These teachers are cognizant of the children's background and environment and display sensitivity, as well as, act on that knowledge. Brown and Medway (2007) state the recognition such teachers display of their students' need of

loving support and encouragement before they were actually ready to learn the material presented to them in the classroom (p. 535). Such teachers have developed essential communication practices with parents and use them and the students' community as effective partners in teaching and learning. These teachers have established communication with parents to the point of functioning in a partnership (Hale, 2001). African American parents are not being asked to support/volunteer in mass based on perceptions that they are not involved with their child's schooling. In fact one of the ten principles of Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (INTASC) (Carter & Larke, 2003) standards is for teachers to establish not only relationships with their colleagues and students, but with "parents, and agencies in the larger community to support students' learning and well-being". This would be challenging if teachers had prescribed feelings about the students' home environment and community. It would further be acerbated if those teachers expressed an unwillingness to get parents involved. Some parents may be reluctant to participate because of sensed perceptions of teachers' beliefs, a lack of trust, and/or the lack of a communal relationship between parents, teachers, and administrators.

In other cases the type of parental involvement in some schools does not match the culture of some African American families (Hale, 2001). "The time of working poor African American mothers is limited by time consuming modes of transportation and usually low paying jobs that offer minimal benefits and no vacations or provisions for respite" (Hale, 2001, p. 136). Some parents express a need to be involved for the purpose of watching over teacher-child interactions (Fields-Smith, 2005) as if a level of

distrust existed for the teachers among the parents. "In segregated communities before the implementation of Brown v. Board of Education, black parents, teachers, principals, and community leaders were bound by a common enemy and by a set of common expectations" (Fields-Smith p.132). Now African Americans are part of the mainstream and enveloped in the hierarchy of our social economic forces, where individualism and upward mobility drive most individuals. Those same relations established and flourished in the past are not as apparent in our present educational system, but are easily established with teachers with strong efficacy beliefs.

We find teachers with strong efficacy beliefs throughout our nation's schools, among all ethnic groups, and teaching all types of students. These are European American teachers teaching African American students or African American teachers teaching Asian students, or Latino American teachers teaching African American students. These are effective teachers who believe they can teach all and any students, regardless of that student's previous achievement (or lack of) in schools and regardless of the student's ethnicity. They see color in the sense of useful tool (incorporating culture into the curriculum and teaching practices) not as a determinant of the students' learning outcomes in school.

Summary

An assessment of the challenges facing African American students showed a bleak picture in academic achievement for African American students overall who lag far behind their European American and Asian American counterparts. The

achievement gap between these groups, particularly with European American and African American, continues to be substantially alarming. In critical subject areas of reading, math, and science, African American students are not showing significant growth as a group. Lending to this alarming trend, are the European American frame of reference whereby students in the vast majority of schools throughout the nation are being taught. While this frame of reference remains beneficial for most students including some African American students, the low achievement rates among numerous students within this ethnic groups points to a deficit within the school system (Lee & Slaughter-Defoe, 2001). Despite standards set by the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) for the diversity of students, teacher education programs and teachers specifically are not taking the necessary steps to effectively teach students of color.

Individual classes and schools which promote high academic achievement for African American students remain the exception but also show that these students are capable of achieving in the classroom when taught correctly and appropriately based on their culture and by teachers who are believe in their abilities to teach the students. The declining Black teacher population has been a factor leading to an absence of familiar relationships between teacher and students, as well as the reduction in efficacious teachers for African American students. These are teachers were known to have strong efficacy beliefs about their students through the cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity gained through their integration, presence, and reverence within the Black community. While teachers from all ethnic groups can and have been effective in their

instructional practices with African American students, the vast majority of the teaching field lacks the training, insight, and belief in the culturally responsive pedagogy, thereby making them low in their sense of efficacy.

Teachers with strong teacher efficacy are able to obtain a greater degree of success with their students particularly their poor urban students. These are teachers who recognize some of the deficits students may bring into the classrooms as a result of their home environment, but they do not use that as an excuse for the students' capacity to learn in their classroom. These teachers instead look at the strengths of African American students, particularly the distinct learning and cognitive styles which they bring into the classroom. The teachers with strong efficacy beliefs are emphatic about building and achieving successful academic outcomes for all their students, especially those who have not had success before in school. They are confident, capable, and caring which are attributes of successful teachers of African American students using culturally responsive teaching methods (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Chaskin and Rauner (1995) described caring as an umbrella concept that encompasses and connects a range of discrete subjects, such as empathy, altruism, prosocial behavior, and efficacy.

Teachers with strong efficacy beliefs are directed into exploring and using tools which will aid in the instruction and success for all their students. In the case of poor, urban students these teacher are able to develop cultural awareness and cultural sensitivity as they use culturally responsive teaching management in their classrooms. Their teacher beliefs reflect a positive optimism that student, particularly African American student are capable of success through their use of appropriate teaching

strategies. These strategies take into account the background and culture of the student. In order the student's race and ethnicity is recognize and use to implement effective teaching strategies and pave the way for successful outcomes. These teachers with strong efficacy beliefs have established a classroom climate which is caring, nurturing, and beneficial for success for their students despite their previous academic achievement and despite their social-economic backgrounds. The classroom climate therefore has become an effective asset for the success of the student, because of the use of culturally responsive pedagogy which includes cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity and culturally responsive classroom management.

As ideal classroom climates exist, there are also ideal and effective schools which are promoting high academic achievement for their African American students. Edmonds (1979) found five principles of effective schools which include, an effective principal, a school wide purpose, a safe/orderly school climate, 4) high expectations 5) assessment of standardized testing. These principles were highly effective in promoting not only success for students but also a firm belief in the students of their own capabilities to succeed. In order words, the confidence which was shown towards the students by the staff and the teachers was in turn passed on to the students themselves. An atmosphere that revolved around the belief and expectation that all students can learn promoted that exact outcome.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

This quantitative study examined five factors, teacher efficacy, teacher efficacy, culturally responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity of elementary school teachers in relation to teacher ethnicity within an urban school district in the southeastern part of the United States. The study further examined one of the factors, teacher efficacy, by describing characteristics of schools showing greater number of teachers with strong efficacy beliefs. The five factors are part of eight established from the Cultural Awareness and Beliefs Inventory (CABI) (Webb-Johnson & Carter, 2005). Research showed that the five factors of teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity, and culturally responsive classroom management were highly related to teacher perceptions and expectations for their students. These five factors pertain to the thoughts and actions of the teachers, making them the difference in the teachers' belief system.

The CABI was conducted during the 2005-2006 school year in the independent school district. The school district has previously earned recognition and won the Broad Prize Award for the best urban school district in the nation in 2009. The Award is earned by an urban school district making the greatest overall improvement in student achievement while reducing achievement gaps across all ethnic and income groups (School District Website, 2010). It is second best large school district in Texas for educating African American students and is ranked third among large school districts in

Texas in educating Latino students according to recent studies conducted by conducted by Texas A&M University, Texas A&M University-Prairie View, and Beloit College (School District Website, 2010). Presently the school district has earned an academic rating of "academically acceptable" by the Texas Education Agency (TEA, 2009).

Demographics of the Study

According to the Texas Education Agency (TEA) AEIS report (2009), the urban school district has over 61,000 students and was among the largest school district in Texas. During the school year in which the CABI was given the student population of the district was also over 50,000. The district is comprised of 72 schools which include 6 high schools, 4 ninth grade schools, 9 middle schools, 10 intermediate schools, 32 elementary schools, 1 Pre-kindergarten/kindergarten campus, and 7 early childhood/pre-kindergarten center schools. It employs over 8,400 employees. . In the elementary grades PK-4 the student to teacher ratio is 22:1 (School District's Website, 2010).

The teaching force consists of over a third European American as well as African American. Close to a quarter of the teachers is Hispanic American, while Asian/Pacific Islander and Native American together comprise about two percent (Table 3.1).

TABLE 3.1. Ethnicity of the Urban School District's Teacher Population

Ethnicity	No.	Percentage
European American	1,714	41
African American	1,511	37
Hispanic American	817	20
Asian/Pacific Islander	90	2
Native American	5	.1
TOTAL	4,138	100

The demographics for student ethnicity is a majority of close to two thirds Hispanic, one third African American, and less than six percent total for White, Asian/Pacific Islander, and Native American (Table 3.2). The number of students classified as economically disadvantaged is 85 percent and limited English proficient (LEP) is 32 percent. Students classified as in at-risk situations are 70 percent (TEA, AEIS report, 2009).

TABLE 3.2. Ethnicity of the Urban School District's Student Population

Ethnicity	No.	Percentage
Hispanic American	40,005	65
African American	18,116	30
European American	2,039	3
Asian/Pacific Islander	1,085	2
Native American	54	.1
TOTAL	61,299	100

Population

This study focused on a target population of in-service elementary teachers instructing grade Pre-Kindergarten through fourth grade in urban public schools within the United States. In the CABI, 54 campuses consisting of 3733 elementary and secondary classroom teachers were asked to participate in this study (Roberts-Walter, 2005). The elementary teachers were part of the 1873 teachers in the Pre-Kindergarten through twelfth grade sample who participated in the original CABI. A total of nine elementary campuses had teachers who participated in the original CABI study.

Sample

The sample for this study was 208 elementary teachers which consisted of about

5.5 percent of the teachers within the 54 schools that participated in the CABI study. The teachers taught within grades Kindergarten through fourth grade. These elementary school respondents were categorized by their ethnicity, gender, grade level, degrees earned and years of experience. Due to participants not indicating their ethnicity and the small number of other ethnic groups, those teachers were not included in the sample for this study. The sample for this study among the elementary teachers consisted of only European American, African American, and Hispanic American. European and Hispanic American teachers together represented over two thirds of the sample. African American teachers represented about a third of the sample (Table 3.3).

A comparison of the sample population to the district's populations reveals only slight differences. The number of African American teachers in the sample is eight percentage points higher than the district's population for the same ethnic group of teachers. European American teachers within the sample also represent a higher percentage by almost five points. Hispanic American teachers were the only underrepresented group by almost fifteen percentage points.

TABLE 3.3 Ethnicity of the Elementary School Teacher Sample

Ethnicity	No.	Percentage
African American	52	25.0
European American	91	43.8
Hispanic American	65	31.3

About half of the sample had less than six years of teaching experience. Within this percentage new teachers accounted for about a tenth of the sample. Teachers with 4 to 6 years and 1-3 years of teaching experience were each less than a fourth of the sample respectively. Those teachers with who had 7 through 9 years of teaching experience were also a little over a tenth of the sample. Teachers with over ten years of experience comprised a little over a tenth of the sample. (Table 3.4). The majority of the teachers (165) had a bachelor's degree, while 42 had a master's, and one teacher indicated having earned a doctoral degree. Among the grades taught, 43.8 percent taught in grades Prekindergarten through first, 14.9 percent in second, 22.1 in third, and 19.2 in fourth. The vast majority (86.5%) of the teachers was female and while male represented 13.5% of the sample.

TABLE 3.4. Years of Teaching of the Elementary School Teacher Sample

Years of Experience	No.	Percentage
1-11 months	28	9.5
1-3 years	64	21.6
4-6 years	71	24
7-9 years	36	12.2
10 or more years	35	11.8

Instrument

The original CABI instrument measured the responses given by teachers about their perceptions and attitudes on a number of factors including culturally responsive pedagogy and beliefs. The 46-item CABI was comprised of eight factors: (1) school climate, (2) home and community support, (3) teacher efficacy, (4) curriculum and instructional strategies, (5) teacher beliefs, (6) cultural awareness, and (7) culturally responsive classroom management (8) cultural sensitivity. Each respondent rated the forty-six items on a 1-4 point Likert scale using 4 as strongly agree, 3 as agree, 2 as disagree, and 1 as strongly disagree (Roberts-Walter, 2005). Five of those factors (1) teacher efficacy (2) teacher beliefs (3) culturally responsive classroom management (4) cultural awareness and (5) cultural sensitivity were used and analyzed for this study based on the relation to teacher's thoughts on perceptions and attitudes. These factors together constituted 23 items to be analyzed with regards to this study's examination of teacher efficacy and teacher ethnicity. One factor, teacher efficacy, will be used exclusively to examine the characteristics of schools whose teachers demonstrate higher efficacy beliefs.

Validity

The construct validity was determined from the original CABI descriptive, correlational study by internal consistency, content validity, convergent and divergent validity (Roberts-Walter, 2005). The CABI study calculated alpha coefficient to explore the internal consistency. The face and content validity of the inventory were approved

through a review of experts. The original study stated "that the inventory exhibited convergent validity when measures or variables highly correlate with those variables one would expect it to correlate" (Roberts-Walter, 2005).

Reliability

The original study investigated the reliability of the CABI through internal consistency methods. The reliability of the study was .83. The overall reliability was run again with this study using the elementary subgroup. Internal consistency was establish with Cronbach's alpha coefficient value of .80 calculated for the elementary subgroup. The reliability for each of the five factors was also calculated.

Research Design

This quantitative study used archival data collected from the CABI administered to teachers from an urban school district. The study focused exclusively on the elementary school teacher subgroup consisting of 208 teachers. The study examined the five factors (1) teacher efficacy (2) teacher beliefs (3) culturally responsive classroom management (4) cultural awareness and (5) cultural sensitivity about African American children for European American, African American, and Hispanic American teachers. The five factors served as the dependent variables and the ethnic groups as the independent variables. Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted to explore any differences which may exist among the ethnic groups regarding the five factors. Analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted on all the elementary schools to

obtain the efficacy means for their elementary teachers before analyzing documented data about each school.

Data Collection

The archival data from the original CABI was converted to a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) file format to examine the five factors (1) teacher efficacy (2) teacher beliefs (3) culturally responsive classroom management (4) cultural awareness and (5) cultural sensitivity about African American children. Further data was collected from each elementary school's Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) as reported by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). This data included the following characteristics about the schools: 1) Students in at-risk situation 2) Class sizes 3) Students that were economically disadvantaged 4) TEA school ratings 5) Number of experienced teachers 6) Retention Rates 7) Number of male teachers 8) Student mobility rates 9) Student/Teacher Ratio 10) Ethnicities of the teachers 11) Percentages of African American students 11) Standardized test scores for African American students

Data Analysis

A data file for grades kindergarten through fourth grade was developed from the original CABI data file. Processing of the statistical data from the CABI was managed through a Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS).

Research Question One

Are there differences in teacher's efficacy, beliefs, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity and culturally responsive teaching by ethnicity?

The relationship between the factors was analyzed among European, Latino, and African American teachers using a Multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) as the main test. In order to answer this research question the model was fitted for the three different ethnic groups: African Americans, European Americans, and Hispanic Americans. The MANOVA was conducted to establish if a statistically significant difference existed between the teacher ethnic groups regarding the five factors. Once the statistical significance was established, a Tests of Between Subjects was conducted to tell which of the five dependent variable (factors) had the significance due to ethnicity. The comparison between the factors was examined to reveal the difference in the relationship among the factors between different ethnic groups. Estimated Marginal Means were then calculated to establish the mean value for each ethnic group alongside each factor. Finally for question two Post Hoc Tests using Tukey HSD were made to make multiple comparisons of the mean difference among the ethnic groups based on each factor.

The post hoc test was conducted and analyzed by using each of the five factors as the dependent variable. The post hoc test was used with European American, Hispanic American, and African American as the independent variables to conduct multiple comparisons and establish which ethnic group is significantly different from the others based each one the five factors (dependent variables).

Research Question Two

What are the characteristics of schools whose teachers have high efficacy beliefs?

A one-way analysis of variance (ANOVA) was conducted using the factor of teacher efficacy as the independent variable to determine the mean for efficacy of each elementary school. A percentage of ten teachers in each school were noted as the number needed for it to qualify for the analysis. Documented information as reported by the Texas Education Agency (TEA) was analyzed to distinguish any notable characteristics for schools whose teachers have higher efficacy. The Texas Educational Agency (TEA) website documented Academic Excellence Indicator System (AEIS) reports for each school were analyzed for data on each of the schools within the urban district. TAKS test scores results, as well as student and teacher information, were also analyzed to determine consistent academic success for students of color, particularly African American students.

Summary

The chapter described the methods for analyzing the five factors from the CABI. Descriptors of the sample population and the instrument used for such were provided. An explanation was provided on the steps taken to answer both research questions for this study. Procedures involving data collection and data analysis were explained.

CHAPTER IV

RESULTS AND ANALYSIS

This quantitative study used data from the Cultural Awareness and Beliefs Inventory (CABI) to examine five factors (teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, culturally responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity by ethnicity among a sample population of 208 elementary teachers in grades kindergarten through fourth within a southeast Houston, Texas urban school district. A further analysis was made of the elementary schools whose teachers demonstrated strong efficacy beliefs. A Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS) was used for the data analysis. The school analysis was completed using data obtained from the Texas Education Agency (TEA) to ascertain information from each of the individual schools from which the elementary teacher sample represented.

The reliability and validity for the CABI had been established through a previous study (Roberts-Walter, 2005). The overall reliability for the 36-item CABI was conducted again using the sample size of 208 elementary teachers (Table 4.1). An alpha coefficient value of .84 was determined for this study using the sample group of elementary teachers which offered a "very good internal consistency" (Pallant, 2007, p. 98). This high Cronbach's alpha value (.84) as well as the sample size (208) allowed for the several of the items which had low values under .3. Several of the items obtained low item-total correlation values of less than .3 which would generally indicate they were measuring something different from the scale as a whole (Pallant, 2007, p.98).

TABLE 4.1 Item Analysis for 36-Item Cultural Awareness and Beliefs Inventory

Item No.	Item	Corrected Item-Total	Cronbach's Alpha, if
12	I feel supported by my building principal	.23	.84
13	I feel supported by the administrative staff.	.33	.84
14	I feel supported by my professional colleagues.	.22	.84
15	I believe I have opportunities to grow	.31	.84
19	I believe "all" students in my ISD are treated equitably regardless of race, culture, disability, gender or social economic status.	.22	.84
22	I believe the district has strong support for academic excellence from our surrounding community (civic, church, business).	.37	.84
23	I believe some students do not want to learn.	.34	.84
25	I believe there are factors beyond the control of teachers that cause student failure.	.09	.84
27	I believe I am culturally responsive in my teaching behaviors.	.38	.84
28	I believe cooperative learning is an integral part of my ISD teaching and learning philosophy.	.41	.84

TABLE 4.1 Continued

Item No.	Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha, if Item Deleted
30	I believe African American students consider performing well in school as "acting White."	.28	.84
37	I believe it is important to identify with the racial groups of the students I serve.	.06	.84
38	I believe I would prefer to work with students and parents whose cultures are similar to mine.	.37	.84
39	I believe I am comfortable with people who exhibit values or beliefs different from my own.	.35	.84
40	I believe cultural views of a diverse community should be included in the school's yearly program planning	.34	.84
41	I believe it is necessary to include on-going family input in program planning.	.14	.84
46	I believe that in a society with as many racial groups as the United States, I would accept the use of ethnic jokes or phrases by students.	.19	.84
47	I believe there are times when "racial statements" should be ignored.	.15	.84

TABLE 4.1 Continued

Item No.	Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha, if Item Deleted
48	I believe a child should be referred "for testing" if learning difficulties appear to be due to cultural differences.	.31	.84
49	I believe the teaching of ethnic customs and traditions is not the responsibility of public school personnel.	.26	.84
50	I believe Individualized Education Program meeting or planning should be scheduled for the convenience of the family.	.19	.84
51	I believe frequently used material within my class represents at least three different ethnic groups.	.27	.84
53	I believe in-service training focuses too much on "multicultural" issues.	.39	.84
56	I believe I have a clear understanding of the issues surrounding classroom management.	.30	.84
57	I believe I have understanding of the issues surrounding discipline	.32	.84

TABLE 4.1 Continued

Item No.	Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha, if Item Deleted
20	I believe my ISD families are supportive of our mission to effectively teach all students.	.41	.83
21	I believe my ISD families of African American students are supportive of our mission to effectively teach all students.	.43	.83
26	I believe the in-service training this past year assisted me in improving my teaching strategies.	.40	.83
31	I believe African American students have more behavior problems than other students.	.49	.83
32	I believe African American students are not as eager to excel in school as White students.	.51	.83
34	I believe students who live in poverty are more difficult to teach.	.53	.83
35	I believe African American students do not bring as many strengths to the classroom as their White peers.	.43	.83

TABLE 4.1 Continued

Item No.	Item	Corrected Item-Total Correlation	Cronbach's Alpha, if Item Deleted
42	I believe I have experienced difficulty in getting families from African American communities involved in the education of their students.	.46	.83
52	I believe students from certain ethnic groups appear lazy when it comes to academic engagement.	.54	.83
55	I believe I am able to effectively manage students from all racial groups.	.42	.83

The reliability was also conducted for each of the five factors Teacher Efficacy (TE), Teacher Beliefs (TB), Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM), Cultural Sensitivity (CS), and Cultural Awareness (CA) being used in this descriptive study. The Cronbach's alpha values were as follows: Teacher Efficacy (.35), Teacher Beliefs (.72), Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (.89), Cultural Awareness (.56), and Cultural Sensitivity (.56). Since each factor had a low number of items, analysis was conducted of the mean inter-item correlation to note if they fell within an

acceptable range of .2 to .4 (Briggs & Cheek (1986).

Teacher efficacy was a factor with 4 items (Table 4.2). The Cronbach's alpha value was .35 perhaps due to the low number of items. Two of the items (25 & 53) fell within the acceptable range of inter-item correlation. Items 49 and 23 had values of .12 and .15 respectively, slightly below the acceptable range. Two of the four items obtained a slightly higher alpha than the value for teacher efficacy when deleted. The mean inter-item correlation of the four items was at an acceptable range of .20.

TABLE 4.2 Item Analysis for Teacher Efficacy

Item No.	Item	Correct Item Correlation	Alpha, if Item Deleted
23	I believe some students do not want to learn.	.15	.36
25	I believe there are factors beyond the control of teachers that cause student failure.	.28	.19
49	I believe teaching of ethnic customs and traditions is not the responsibility of public school personnel.	.12	.36
53	I believe in-service training focuses too much on "multicultural" issues.	.24	.24

The Cronbach's alpha value for Teacher Beliefs was .72 (Table 4.3). Of the eight items pertaining to this factor, only one (item 36) obtained a higher alpha value (.80) when deleted. Item 36 also had a very low item correlation. Although the Cronbach's alpha value was above .7, the mean inter-item correlation was conducted for the eight items under Teacher beliefs and calculated above the acceptable range at .53. Item 36 did obtain a negative for the Corrected-Item Total Correlation under the item analysis for the TB factor; however, it did not have a negative value for the analysis of the 36 item CABI.

TABLE 4.3 Item Analysis for Teacher Beliefs

Item No.	Item	Correct Item Correlation	Alpha, if Item Deleted
36	I believe students that are referred to special education usually qualify for special education services in our school.	-.10	.80
38	I believe I would prefer to work with students and parents whose cultures are similar to mine.	.31	.71
30	I believe African American students consider performing well in school as "acting White".	.36	.70

TABLE 4.3 Continued

Item No.	Item	Correct Item Correlation	Alpha, if Item Deleted
42	I believe I have experienced difficulty in getting families from African American communities involved in the education of their students.	. 43	.69
35	I believe African American students do not bring as many strengths to the classroom as their White peers.	.57	.66
52	I believe students from certain ethnic groups appear lazy when it comes to academic engagement.	.58	.66
32	I believe African American students are not as eager to excel in school as Whites.	.63	.65
31	I believe African American students have more behavior problems than other students.	.68	.63

The Cronbach's alpha value for Culturally Responsive Classroom Management was .89. This factor had a very high internal consistency in light of containing only three items and the resulting high Cronbach's alpha coefficient value. Of the three

items pertaining to this factor, only one (item 55) obtained a significantly higher alpha value (.96) when deleted (Table 4.4). The mean inter-item correlation of the three items fell far above the recommended optimal range (.2 to .4) at .80.

TABLE 4.4 Item Analysis for Culturally Responsive Classroom Management

Item No.	Item	Correct Item Correlation	Alpha, if Item Deleted
55	I believe I am able to effectively manage students from all racial groups.	.66	.96
56	I believe I have clear understanding of the issues surrounding discipline.	.83	.81
57	I believe I have a clear understanding of the issues surrounding classroom management.	.90	.76

The Cronbach's alpha value for Cultural Awareness was .56. This low internal consistency of the five items pertaining to this factor, only one (item 37) obtained a slightly higher alpha value (.57) when deleted (Table 4.5). The mean inter-item correlation of the five items was at an acceptable range of .33.

TABLE 4.5 Item Analysis for Cultural Awareness

Item No.	Item	Correct Item Correlation	Alpha, if Item Deleted
37	I believe it is important to identify with the racial groups of the students I serve.	.22	.57
50	I believe Individualized Education Program meetings or planning should be scheduled for the convenience of the family.	.28	.53
39	I believe I am comfortable with people who exhibit values or beliefs different from my own.	.33	.50
41	I believe it is necessary to include on-going family input in program planning.	.37	.48
40	I believe cultural views of a diverse community should be included in the school's yearly program planning.	.44	.44

The Cronbach's alpha value for Cultural Sensitivity was .56. Each of the three items pertaining to this factor obtained a lower alpha values when deleted (Table 4.6). Due to the same number of items and the resulting low Cronbach's alpha value for the factor, the mean inter-item correlation was calculated and reported at .38. The mean score fell within the recommended range of .2 to .4 for inter-item correlation (Briggs and Cheek, 1986).

TABLE 4.6 Item Analysis for Cultural Sensitivity

Item No.	Item	Correct Item Correlation	Alpha, if Item Deleted
47	I believe a child should be referred "for testing if learning difficulties appear to be due to cultural differences.	.31	.55
46	I believe that in a society with as many racial groups as the United States, I would accept the use of ethnic jokes or phrases by students.	.41	.42
48	I believe there are times when "racial statements" should be ignored.	.42	.39

The Cronbach's alpha coefficients for TE, TB, CRCM, CA, and CS were .35, .72, .89, .56, and .56 respectively. Landis and Koch (1977) categorize the alpha coefficients for TB and CRCM as substantial, while the alpha coefficients for CA, CS and TE are considered "moderately reliable" and "acceptable" respectively. The factors of TB, CRCM, and CA each had one item which would cause a higher alpha for each factor if deleted. However, the improvement in the alphas for TB and CA would only be slight. The improved alpha for CRCM if one item (Item 55) was deleted would be the only one considered substantial. TE had two item which if deleted would cause a higher alpha. The deletion of either item would result in only a mere improvement of the alpha for TE. CS had no items which would improve its alpha.

The results from the reliability of the five factors showed only three items (items 50, 55, and 34) obtaining a higher alpha if deleted. The mean inter-item correlations of the four of the five factors fell within acceptable ranges for inter item correlation. Only CRCM had a mean inter-item correlation which exceeded the recommended range.

The initial CABI omitted 10 items. Two items (13 and 54) were omitted due to their relation to one factor each. Items 18 and 16 were related to one factor. Items 43 and 44 were related to a different factor. Four items (45, 29, 24, and 35) did not have sufficient factor coefficient for any factor. (Roberts-Walter, 1995). For this study no item were reversed for analysis due to the fact that items were reversed in the initial CABI study and no items were omitted from the analysis. No items among any of the factors in the study obtained a negative value for the Corrected-Item Total Correlation

Research Question One

Are there differences in teacher's efficacy, beliefs, cultural awareness, cultural sensitivity and culturally responsive teaching by ethnicity?

New variables were created in the original CABI in order to compensate for negatively worded items. According to Pallant (2007) this was done so that high scores reflected high levels of optimism in terms of the items. Based on descriptive statistics (Table 4.7) which calculated mean and standard deviation, there were only a few differences among the three teacher ethnic groups in terms of the five factors being analyzed. In terms of mean scores for the 23 total items pertaining to the five factors, the three ethnic groups had similar mean scores in the majority of those items. Careful examination of mean scores shows high optimism on each of the five factors and the majority of the items for those factors. Four items obtained low mean scores under 2.6. One of those items (Item 25) from Teacher Efficacy had mean scores below 2 for each of the three ethnic groups. Three other items (23, 36, and 42) had low mean scores below 2.6. Of these four items, two (Items 23 and 25) pertained to Teacher Efficacy and two others (Items 36 and 42) dealt with Teacher Beliefs.

In terms of mean, African American teacher had higher scores in all three items for Culturally Responsive Classroom Management, two of three items for Cultural Sensitivity, three of the four items for Teacher Efficacy, and six of the eight items for Teacher Beliefs. Therefore, of the five factors in this study, African American teachers obtained higher overall mean scores in four of the factors. Out of the twenty three items pertaining to the five factors, African American teachers had higher mean scores in

fourteen of those items. European American teacher had higher mean scores in five of the twenty three items and Hispanic American teachers had higher mean scores in four of the twenty three items.

The factor of Cultural Awareness was only factor in which African American teachers did not have a higher mean in any of the items. European American teachers obtained a higher mean than African American and Hispanic American in four (Items 39, 40, 41, and 50) of the five items for the factor of Cultural Awareness. European American teachers also obtained a higher for one item under Cultural Sensitivity. Hispanic American's four higher mean items fell under Teacher Belief (Items 36 and 42), Teacher Efficacy (Item 25), and Cultural Awareness (Item 37).

Large differences among the teacher ethnic groups were found in one item of Cultural Sensitivity, one item of Teacher Efficacy, and two items of Teacher Beliefs. Those items (23, 31, 42, and 48) reflected a higher mean for African American teachers than European American and Hispanic American teachers.

TABLE 4.7 Descriptive Statistics

Item No.	Item	Ethnicity	Mean	SD
25	There are factors beyond the control of teachers causing student failure	African American	1.70	.814
		European American	1.54	.615
		Hispanic American	1.75	.673
		Total	1.64	.693
49	Teaching of ethnic customs and traditions is not the responsibility of public school personnel	African American	3.28	.757
		European American	3.01	.771
		Hispanic American	3.13	.579
		Total	3.12	.720
53	In-service training focuses too much on multicultural issues	African American	3.36	.663
		European American	2.94	.603
		Hispanic American	3.04	.508
		Total	3.08	.616
23	Some students do not want to learn	African American	2.64	1.025
		European American	2.45	.926
		Hispanic American	2.62	1.009
		Total	2.55	.977
42	Experience difficulty in getting African American families involved in their children's education	African American	2.50	.974
		European American	2.40	.789
		Hispanic American	2.84	.714
		Total	2.56	.839
30	African American students consider performing well in schools as "acting-White"	African American	3.50	.707
		European American	3.33	.725
		Hispanic American	3.00	.770
		Total	3.28	.755
32	African American students are not eager to learn as Whites	African American	3.30	.763
		European American	3.00	.763
		Hispanic American	3.07	.790
		Total	3.10	.777
35	African American student do not bring as many strengths to classrooms as Whites	African American	3.36	.875
		European American	3.29	.732
		Hispanic American	3.16	.739
		Total	3.27	.775

TABLE 4.7 Continued

Item No.	Item	Ethnicity	Mean	SD
34	Students referred to special ed qualify for special ed	African American	2.38	.878
		European American	2.45	.870
		Hispanic American	2.60	.852
		Total	2.48	.866
38	Prefer to work with students and parents who have similar culture as mine	African American	3.12	.718
		European American	3.09	.640
		Hispanic American	2.80	.869
		Total	3.01	.744
52	Students from certain ethnic groups appear lazy when it comes to academic engagement	African American	3.22	.815
		European American	3.14	.670
		Hispanic American	2.96	.719
		Total	3.11	.729
31	African American student have more behavior problems than Whites	African American	3.20	.904
		European American	2.75	.893
		Hispanic American	2.55	.959
		Total	2.81	.945
57	I have a clear understanding of the issues surrounding discipline	African American	3.50	.614
		European American	3.43	.632
		Hispanic American	3.27	.560
		Total	3.40	.610
56	I have a clear understanding of the issues surrounding classroom management	African American	3.52	.614
		European American	3.45	.549
		Hispanic American	3.25	.517
		Total	3.41	.565
55	I am able to effectively manage students from all racial groups	African American	3.60	.639
		European American	3.40	.608
		Hispanic American	3.02	.652
		Total	3.34	.666
50	Individualized Education Program meetings or planning should be scheduled for the convenience of the family	African American	2.80	.857
		European American	3.00	.712
		Hispanic American	2.85	.678
		Total	2.90	.745

TABLE 4.7 Continued

Item No.	Item	Ethnicity	Mean	SD
41	Necessary to include on-going family input in program planning	African American	3.22	.679
		European American	3.23	.636
		Hispanic American	3.20	.730
		Total	3.22	.673
40	Cultural view of a diverse community should be included in the school's yearly program planning	African American	3.34	.626
		European American	3.28	.656
		Hispanic American	3.33	.668
		Total	3.31	.649
39	Comfortable with people who exhibit values or beliefs different from my own	African American	2.98	.892
		European American	3.33	.546
		Hispanic American	3.13	.668
		Total	3.17	.701
37	I should identify with the racial groups I serve	African American	3.08	.829
		European American	3.00	.796
		Hispanic American	3.15	.678
		Total	3.06	.770
47	There are times when "racial statements" should be ignored	African American	3.36	.921
		European American	3.18	.792
		Hispanic American	2.84	.898
		Total	3.12	.879
48	A child should be referred "for testing" if learning difficulties appear to be due to cultural differences	African American	3.22	.864
		European American	3.31	.608
		Hispanic American	3.09	.674
		Total	3.22	.707
46	In a society with as many racial groups as the U.S. I would accept the use of ethnic jokes or phrases by	African American	3.70	.544
		European American	3.49	.616
		Hispanic American	3.33	.668
		Total	3.50	.627

Using the mean scores from each item average mean was calculated for each factor (Table 4.8) by ethnicity. These calculations showed African American teachers having a higher average mean than European American and Hispanic American teachers regarding teacher beliefs, culturally responsive classroom management, and cultural sensitivity and teacher efficacy. European American teachers obtained a higher average mean for Cultural Awareness than African American and Hispanic American teachers. Hispanic American teachers had the lowest average mean score for each the five factors with exception to Cultural Awareness in which they had the second highest average mean. The average mean score by factor according to each ethnic group reflects very little difference according to ethnicity.

TABLE 4.8 Mean Score For Factors According by Ethnicity

Factor	TB	TE	CS	CRCM	CA
African American	3.1	2.7	3.4	3.5	3.0
European American	2.9	2.5	3.3	3.4	3.2
Hispanic American	2.9	2.6	3.1	3.2	3.1

In examining the differences in teacher's efficacy, teacher belief, culturally responsive classroom teaching, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity, a MANOVA was conducted using factor scores from the above five factors as the dependent variables and each of the three teacher ethnic groups as independent variables. Initially a multivariate test was performed to establish the existence of any statistical difference among the ethnic groups based on linear combination of the five factors (Table 4.9). A Wilk's Lambda value of .822 was generated showing a significant value of .000. The fact that it was less than .05 establishes that a statistically significant difference does exist between African Americans, European Americans, and Hispanic Americans with regards to the five factors of TE, TB, CRCM, CA, and CS. The overall multivariate test is significant based on a linear combination of the dependent variables (Pallant, 2007).

TABLE 4.9 Multivariate Tests

Effect		Value	Sig.
ethn_new	Pillai's Trace	.187	.000
	Wilk's Lambda	.822	.000
	Hotelling's Trace	.207	.000
	Roy's Largest Root	.129	.001

Upon establishing a significant result from the multivariate test, a careful examination of each dependent variable was made by conducting a Test of Between-

Subjects Effects to analyze the dependent variables (five factors) more thoroughly and establish which dependent variable alone had significant difference among the teacher ethnic groups (Table 4.10). According to Pallant (2007) it was first necessary to obtain a new alpha value by applying a Bonferrroni adjustment to the established alpha of .05. The Bonferrroni adjustment was made in order to reduce the chance of a Type 1 error since several analyses were being calculated (Pallant, 2007; Weinfurt, 1995). Due to the five dependent variables being investigated, the new alpha value upon which to judge the significance became .01. Careful examination of the resulting Sig. values showed that the ethnic groups were only significantly different for Cultural Sensitivity (.004). Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (.011), Cultural Awareness (.025), Teacher Efficacy (.086), and Teacher Beliefs (.064) did not have probability values less than .010 according to the new alpha established. The results of those factors did not show a significant difference according to the ethnicity of the teachers.

Once a significant value was shown for CS, further analysis with the Tests of Between-Subjects Effects was made through the use of effect size. The effect size for CS was calculated to assess the proportion of its variance that was explained by the ethnicity of the teachers (Table 4.10). Pallant (2007) states that partial eta squared effect size range from 0 to 1. Cohen (1988) notes effect sizes as .01 or 1% as small, .06 or 6% as medium and .138 or 13.8% as large. According to Table 4.9, CS had an effect size of .062 or 6%, which was medium. There was a significance difference for CS, which could be explained by ethnicity.

TABLE 4.10 Tests of Between-Subject Effect for Ethnic Groups

Dependent Variable	Sig.	Partial Eta Squared
Cultural Sensitivity	.004	.062
Culturally Responsive Classroom Management	.011	.051
Cultural Awareness	.025	.042
Teacher Efficacy	.086	.028
Teacher Beliefs	.064	.031

Finally a Post Hoc Test using Tukey HSD (Table 4.11) was used to conduct multiple comparisons of the mean differences among the different ethnic groups for the only significant dependent variable, CS. This test substituted the recommended one-way ANOVA on the significant dependent variable from the MANOVA (Pallant, 2007). The Post Hoc Test allowed for a thorough and complete comparison of CS with the independent variables. A mean difference of .593 among African American teachers and Hispanic American teachers was calculated for Cultural Sensitivity. This mean difference represented the highest contrast between any of the ethnic group of teachers. The lowest contrast was in the mean difference between African American teachers and European American teachers at .091. The mean difference between European American teachers and Hispanic American teachers was .502

TABLE 4.11 Pos Hoc Tukey HSD

Dependent Variable	Ethnic Group	Ethnic Group	Mean Difference
Cultural Sensitivity	African American	European American	.091
	African American	Hispanic American	.593
	European American	Hispanic American	.502

Teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, culturally responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity were the factors studied which also serve as the dependent variables for the MANOVA (Appendix A). The ethnicity of the teachers (African American, European American, Hispanic American, and Other) served as the independent variables for the MANOVA. Statistical significant difference was first established between the different ethnic groups through Multivariate Tests with a Wilk's Lambda value of .822; partial eta squared =.09. A Test of Between–Subjects Effects revealed that the significant difference among the independent variable (ethnicity of the teachers) lay only with the dependent variable, CS. This Sig. value of CS was the only one among the dependent variables less than the new alpha level of .01 after applying a Bonferroni adjustment. Further analysis of the Test of Between-Subject Effects revealed the Partial Eta Squared of .06 or 6% of the variance in CS explained by ethnicity. The Calculation of the mean scores through Descriptive Statistics for each ethnic group revealed higher mean levels (.255) for African American with the significant different

factor of Cultural sensitivity. Further analysis of the mean scores for CS was calculated with a Post Hoc Test, Tukey HSD. This additional analysis showed the highest mean difference for CS existed between African American and Hispanic American teachers. The lowest mean difference existed between African American and European American teachers (Appendix A).

Research Question Two

What are the characteristics of schools whose teachers have high efficacy?

In order to examine the characteristics of schools whose teacher have high efficacy it was necessary first to identify those schools among the represented sample by way of generating their overall mean for efficacy. School 3 was eliminated from the analysis due to the low number (6) of respondents representing 10% of its teacher population. The remaining schools used in the analysis of Question 2 had acceptable (30 to 40 percent), fair (40 to 60 percent), and high (over 60 percent) in percentage of teachers responding to the survey. The process of examining the nine elementary schools began with Descriptive Statistics which plotted mean scores and standard for each item of teacher efficacy by schools (Table 4.12). Schools were listed by items for teacher efficacy from highest to lowest mean score. Combined characteristics for the school were examined to ascertain commonalities among them as well as identify aspects of individual schools which made them distinguishable.

For Item 23 (Some students do not want to learn) School 9 had highest mean and School 6 had lowest mean. For Item 25 (There are factors beyond the control of teachers

causing student failure) School 7 had highest mean and School 9 had lowest mean. For Item 49 (Teaching of ethnic customs and traditions is not the responsibility of public school personnel) School 6 had highest mean and School 8 had lowest mean. For Item 53 (In-service training focuses too much on multicultural issues) School 4 had highest mean and School 9 had lowest mean. Item 25 was the item where every school had its lowest mean score and where all scores were below 2.

School 7 obtained high mean scores for three of the four items. School 9 obtained the lowest mean scores for two items (Items 53 and 25) and the highest score for one item (Item 23). School 6 had the highest mean score for one Item 49 and the lowest mean score for Item 23. Schools 2, 4, 6, and 7 each had high mean scores (three or above) for at least two items, while Schools 2, 4, and 5 had low mean scores (2.5 or below) for a least two items. Schools 5 and 8 did not obtain a mean score above 3 in more than one item. School 1 had no mean scores above 3 for any item.

TABLE 4.12 Item Mean Scores for Teacher Efficacy by School

Factor	School	Mean	Standard Deviation
Item 23	School 9	2.92	.996
Some students do	School 7	2.85	1.014
not want to learn	School 8	2.59	1.008
	School 1	2.53	.624
	School 2	2.49	.970
	School 4	2.32	.820
	School 5	2.32	1.057
	School 6	2.23	.898
Item 25	School 7	1.76	.663
There are factors beyond	School 4	1.74	.562
control of teachers	School 8	1.73	1.032
causing student failure	School 5	1.63	.761
	School 6	1.60	.621
	School 1	1.53	.800
	School 2	1.51	.506
	School 9	1.38	.506
Item 49	School 6	3.27	.583
Teaching of ethnic	School 5	3.21	.713
customs and traditions	School 9	3.15	.801
is not the responsibility	School 4	3.11	.963
of public school personnel	School 2	3.05	.510
	School 7	3.02	.724
	School 1	2.88	.781
	School 8	2.86	.889
Item 53	School 4	3.26	.562
In-service training focuses	School 8	3.14	.710
too much on “multicultural	School 6	3.13	.730
issues”	School 2	3.03	.584
	School 7	3.02	.651
	School 5	2.95	.405
	School 1	2.94	.429
	School 9	2.85	.689

Further calculations were made with mean scores for each item, generating a mean score for teacher efficacy by school (Table 4.13). School 7 obtained the highest mean score (2.8) for teacher efficacy, while Schools 1, 2, and 5 had the lowest mean score (2.5). School 4 had the second highest mean for teacher efficacy and three schools (Schools 6, 8, and 9) had similar mean scores (2.6). For the purpose of identifying characteristics of schools whose teachers have high efficacy, Schools 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 will be used.

TABLE 4.13 Overall Mean Score for Teacher Efficacy by School

Schools	Mean
School 7	2.8
School 4	2.7
School 8	2.6
School 9	2.6
School 6	2.6
School 5	2.5
School 2	2.5
School 1	2.5

Once the mean score for efficacy was calculated, an analysis was conducted of each elementary school's Academic Excellence Indicator System Report as reported by the Texas Education Agency for the 2005-2006 school year. Data were gathered (Table 4.14) on African American student performance on the Texas Academic Knowledge and Skills Test (TAKS) from each of the eight schools being analyzed to assess their level of academic achievement. The analysis of student performance was based on those schools which showed high mean for teacher efficacy in order to list them as characteristics of schools whose teachers have high efficacy.

The five schools, identified for this study as having teacher with high efficacy, had various levels of achievement for their African American students. Three of the five schools (Schools 7, 8 and 9) were rated as exemplary schools by the Texas Education Agency (TEA). The other two were rated recognized (School 4) and acceptable (School 6). With exception to School 6 and School 9 (score were not reported), three of the schools had passing rates above the ninetieth percentile for Writing with their African American students.

School 6 had the lowest academic rating among all schools for the above mentioned school year in which the CABI was given. The rating of academically acceptable, the second lowest rating afforded to schools by Texas Educational Agency. School 6 also had the lowest passing percentage for individual and overall tests (58%) for African American students which in the subjects of Reading, Math, and Writing. Schools 7 and 8 were the only schools among the five with Math scores (99%) and all test passing scores (91%) above the ninetieth percentile. School 7 also obtained the

highest percentage for commended in all tests (27%) for African American students. Based on TEA standards for rating schools, it can be concluded that School 9 did have some passing rates above the ninetieth percentile for its African American students. Excluding School 6, all of the schools, including those with lower mean for teacher efficacy, show very high passing percentages for their third and fourth grade African American students. These rates are above national assessment scores for African American fourth graders and contrast the achievement gap with White students (NAEP, 2005).

TABLE 4.14 TAKS Passing Percentages for African American Students (3rd/4th Grades)

Schools	Reading Passing	Math Passing	Writing Passing	All Test Passing	Commended For All Tests	Rating
School 7	91	99	99	91	27	Exemplary
School 8	99	93	99	91	7	Exemplary
School 9	*	*	*	*	*	Exemplary
School 4	86	77	95	72	3	Recognized
School 6	78	67	89	58	5	Acceptable
School 5	92	85	93	85	7	Exemplary
School 2	93	81	91	75	3	Recognized
School 1	82	79	95	72	2	Recognized

***** Not reported

Upon establishing the mean levels for efficacy and TAKS performance results, further examination was conducted regarding teacher information on ethnicity to determine the ethnic makeup of schools with high efficacy means (Table 4.15). Three (Schools 4, 6, and 8) of the five schools with high teacher efficacy have over 25% of their teachers as African America. School 6 had the highest percentage of African American teachers (41%). The presence of so many African American teachers in this posed a greater likelihood of an affinity and identify with the African American students. The presence also posed ability by those teachers to create cultural congruence (Katz, 1999) and relationship building (Ladson-Billings, 1994) with the students

All five schools had over 40% their teachers whose ethnicity was European American. School 9 had a significantly high percentage of European American Teachers (81%) which was close to national teacher percentages for that ethnic group. No school had a very high percentage or majority (over 45%) of African American or Hispanic American teachers. All the schools had a higher percentage of African American teachers than the state average (9%), but only school 6 (41%) and school 4 (34%) had high average of African American teachers than the district average (34%). The five schools, with the exception of School 9, had a multicultural staff which included a favorable number of all three ethnic groups. Schools 4, 6, 7, and 8 as a group had a fairly proportionate number of teachers from the three ethnic groups for their student of color.

TABLE 4.15 Ethnic Distribution of Teachers by Percentages

Schools	African American	European American	Hispanic American	Other Native American Pacific Islander
School 6	41	41	19	0
School 4	34	50	14	2
School 8	25	66	9	0
School 9	14	81	5	0
School 7	12	49	39	0
School 5	19	51	25	6
School 2	29	52	19	0
School 1	27	69	2	2

The number of teachers, with zero to over twenty years teaching experience, was calculated for the five schools with high teacher efficacy (Table 4.16). Schools 4, 6, and 7 had near or over half of their teachers with less than six years of experience. These figures were well above the district (40%) and state (37%) averages for teachers with similar years of experience. Four of the five schools had a disproportionate number of their teachers with 1 to 5 years of teaching experience. This figure is reflective of national figures showing must teachers leave the profession after five years. This explained the smaller number of teachers among each of the experienced groups of six years of more. The small number of experienced teachers reflected national standards

for urban schools which do not retain teachers for an extended number of years.

Only School 4 (18%), School 8 (27%) and School 9 (29%) had significant number of teachers with over twenty years of experience. The rates for Schools 6 and 7 reflected a descending order in number of teachers as years of experience ascended. School 6 and 7 did not acquire or retain a vast number of experienced teachers unlike Schools 4, 8, and 9. In addition to having a low percentage in teaching experience, the teachers at School 6 averaged fewer years with the district than any other school across all grade levels. This was vastly different for Schools 8 and 9 which had no beginning year teachers for the school year 2005-2006. Schools 8 and 9 showed an ability to retain not only their experienced teachers but their entire teaching force from the previous year. This retention in teachers, specifically experienced teachers, help promote an urban school environment whereby the staff can work jointly over a number of years to promote successful academic outcomes for their students of color.

TABLE 4.16 Experienced Teachers by Percentages

Schools	Beginning	1-5 yrs	6-10 years	11-20 years	20+ years
School 6	11	44	22	13	9
School 4	8	40	12	22	18
School 7	7	44	30	13	7
School 9	0	19	33	19	29
School 8	0	48	11	14	27
School 5	8	44	24	13	11
School 2	6	57	15	14	9
School 1	6	35	13	16	30

The ethnic distribution of students was charted for all schools to establish whether a majority or minority of a particular ethnic group may be present at any of the campuses (Table 4.17). Three (Schools 7, 8, and 9) out the five schools had a majority of Hispanic American students, well above the school district's trend (61%) of majority Hispanic American students. They also exceeded the state's percentage (45%) of Hispanic students. Only two of the schools, 6 (66%) and 4 (53%), had a majority of African American students exceeding district (32%) and state (15%) averages for school enrollment with this ethnic group. The percentage of African American students for School 8 also surpassed the state average. Schools 7 and 9 had the lowest percentages of African American students at 8% and 6 % respectively. All five schools had 5% or less

of their student population as European American. None of the five had over 2% of combined Native American, Pacific Islander, or other student ethnic group.

TABLE 4.17 Ethnic Distribution of Students by Percentages

Schools	African American	European American	Hispanic American	Other Native American Pacific Islander
School 6	66	2	29	2
School 4	53	3	42	1
School 8	18	8	69	5
School 7	8	1	91	.3
School 9	6	5	89	.4
School 5	16	3	81	0
School 2	33	2	64	1
School 1	58	6	36	1

In order to further describe characteristics of the schools with high teacher efficacy information regarding retention rates, percentage of male teachers percentage of economically disadvantaged, in at-risk situations, mobility, class sizes, and student/teacher ratios was gathered (Table 4.18). These characteristics are often cited by teachers as being obstacles and challenges contributing to the lack of academic achievement among African American students.

Grades kindergarten through fourth retention rates (Table 4.16) for each of the five schools was above the district average of 7.9% and more than doubles the state average of 3.5%. In particular, second grade retention rates were high for all five schools. These second grade retention rates were calculated due to the fact that standardized testing (TAKS) starts in the third grade. In two of the schools (Schools 7 and 9) retention rates for second grade were six times higher than the state average of 3.5% and near double the district retention rate of 12.1%. School 6 at 20% retention for the same grade was well within reach of those expanding figures. School 4 at 17% retention for second grade was almost at a rate of five times that of the state average. School 8 at 11% retention was three times that of the state average.

While the retention rates for third and fourth grade are not as high as second grade, they far exceed those of the district and state. Schools 6 and 7 schools with surpassed the district's rate (7.9%) in retention of third graders and all five schools were near or above the state's rate of 3.3%. In fourth grade School 4 was the only one that had higher retention rates than the district. It, along with Schools 6 and 8, had higher rates that the state for fourth grade. All five schools retained many of their second grade students at rates above the district's already high percentage and well above retention around the state. This was occurring at a period before students enter third grade where high stake testing commenced.

TABLE 4.18 Retention Rates by All Grades

Schools	K	First	Second	Third	Fourth
School 9	2	22	23	7	0
School 7	13	11	21	12	.7
School 6	11	9	20	10	3
School 4	15	11	17	4	5
School 8	1	8	11	3	2
School 5	2	10	17	9	2
School 2	5	11	14	8	9
School 1	11	12	15	9	6

Percentages for male teachers at each school ranged from a low of 5% for School 9 to high of 21% for School 7 (Table 4.19). Three of the schools (Schools 6, 7, and 8) had a male teacher population of over 10%. The schools did not vary much in their number of economically disadvantaged students. All five schools were within the district average (78%) and well above the state (56%) averages for the 2005-20006 school year. School 7 had the highest number (89%) and Schools 4 and 8 the lowest (79%). Similar figures were found for the schools' percentages of students in at-risk

situations which all schools exceeded the state average (49%) and three of the schools (Schools 7 and 9) exceeding the district average (69%). School 7 had the highest number (85%) and School 8 had the lowest number (63%) of students in at-risk situations. As school located within an urban school district, all the schools had a sizeable number of students that were economically disadvantaged and in at-risk situations.

Figures for mobility were varied in ranges according to the district (24%) and state (21%) averages (Table 4.19). School 7 had lowest mobility (21%) matching the state rate. Schools 4 and 6 had highest (32%) mobility rates and surpassed the district and state percentages. Three schools (Schools 4, 6, and 9) had averages above both the district and state rates. The average class size for third and fourth grades combined was once again another characteristic which varied among the group of five schools with high teacher efficacy. Schools 4, 5, 7, and 9 had average class sizes well below both the district (23) and at the state rate (19). Schools 6 and 8 had averages below that of the district and above the state. The ratio for students per teacher was also calculated with only School 8 falling within the same range as both the district and state ratios of 15. School 9 had a very low student to teacher ratio of 12:1 well below the others, while School 1 had the highest at 17:1. The overall low number of students per teacher is rare for most urban schools whose ratios are much higher.

TABLE 4.19 School Descriptors by Percentages

Schools	Male Teachers	Economically Disadvantaged	In At Risk Situations	Mobility	Average Class Size Grades 3/4	Student Per Teacher
School 6	13	84	64	32	22	16
School 8	13	79	63	23	20	15
School 4	8	79	64	32	18	14
School 7	21	89	85	21	18	16
School 9	5	86	74	28	16	12
School 5	15	88	78	25	18	14
School 2	13	86	76	15	22	14
School 1	8	86	54	30	21	17

While the five schools whose teachers had high efficacy varied in their characteristics, there were some commonalities which must be noted (Table 4.20). All five schools had a high number of economically disadvantaged students but retained their students at very high rates. Schools 4 and 9 had small class size averages, low student to teacher ratio, high retention rates, and a high percentage of experienced teachers. Schools 7 and 8 had low mobility, a high number of students in at-risk situations, and a significant number of male teachers. Schools 4 and 6 were similar in

their high number of African American teachers and students. Schools 7 and 9 had similarities of being rated exemplary schools, high retention rates, high number of economically disadvantaged students and a high number of students in at-risk situations.

Schools 7 and 9 had well under half the percentage of African American teachers and much less African American students than School 6, yet had higher percentages of students that were economically disadvantage and in at-risk situations. These schools along with School 4 fared better than School 6 in their test scores for African American students while having both similar and distinctive characteristics.

As schools located in an urban setting, the five schools had a number of characteristics which other urban schools lack. Each school had students who were in at-risk situations, economically disadvantaged, low student to teacher ratios, and fairly distributed number of ethnically diverse teachers, and teachers with high levels of efficacy. With one exception (School 6) the schools had high passing rates on standardized testing for their African American students. However, the passing rates declined as the percentage of African American students increased by schools. Despite characteristics which present both favorable and unfavorable circumstance, the schools as a whole succeeded in developing academic success for their African American students on their standardized tests.

Schools 7 and 8 were rated as exemplary and had passing test scores for their African American students in the top percentile for the three subject tests of reading, math, and writing. The overall test scores were higher than most schools in the group, including those with higher teacher efficacy mean. The ethnic make up the teachers was not a contributing factor as it was varied like the other schools. The teachers at both of these schools taught student who were in at-risk situations yet were able to attain academic success with their students. The only attributing factor is that teachers taught their African American students on an effective level to obtain such high test scores. The success of Schools 7 and 8 with lower percentages of African American teachers shows the ability to reach and foster academic success for African American students is possible with any teacher. The possibility of academic success can manifest itself if teachers are willing to see use culturally appropriate pedagogy (Hale, 2001).

Table 4.20 Characteristics of Schools with High Teacher Efficacy

Characteristics	School 4	School 6	School 7	School 8	School 9
At-risk Situations			**X**		**X**
Class Sizes Low	**X**		**X**		**X**
Economically Disadvantaged	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Exemplary Rating			**X**	**X**	**X**
Experienced Teachers	**X**			**X**	**X**
High Retention	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**	**X**
Male Teachers		**X**	**X**	**X**	
Mobility Low			**X**	**X**	
Student Teacher Ratio Low	**X**			**X**	**X**
African American Teachers High %	**X**	**X**			
African American Students High %	**X**	**X**			
Test Scores for African American Students Low		**X**			

Summary

This chapter discussed the results of data analysis conducted on five factors: Teacher Efficacy (TE), Teacher Beliefs (TB), Culturally Responsive Classroom Management (CRCM), Cultural Awareness (CA), and Cultural Sensitivity (CS) from the Cultural Awareness and Beliefs Inventory (CABI) using an elementary sample of teachers from nine campuses. The analysis was conducted on the five factors as they relate or may be impacted by the ethnicity of the teachers. A further analysis was conducted on one factor, Teacher Efficacy, by examining characteristics of the schools whose teachers showed higher efficacy beliefs.

Using the elementary sample, the reliability of the study was ascertained with a Cronbach's alpha coefficient of .84. The reliability of each of the factors was also determined with high reliability for two factors (CRCM; .89 and Teacher Belief; .72) and lower values for Teacher Efficacy; .35, Cultural Sensitivity; .56, and Cultural Awareness; .56).

A multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) was conducted using factor scores to determine if there was a statistically significant difference in any of the five factors based on the ethnicity of the teachers. Descriptive Statistics calculated mean scores for the three teacher ethnic groups on twenty three total items for the five factors. African Americans teachers obtained higher mean scores than European American and Hispanic American on the majority of the items. A statistical significant difference was first established among the different ethnic groups through Multivariate Tests with a Wilk's Lambda value of .822; partial eta squared =.09. It was determined through Tests

of Between-Subjects Effects that there was significant difference among the three teacher ethnic groups in CS once a new alpha value was established. The new alpha value was set higher through a Bonferroni adjustment to reduce the chance of a Type 1 error. Effect size (.06) was medium with 6% of the variance in CS that could be explained by the ethnicity of the teachers. After the means scores was established, Post Hoc Test using Tukey HSD was conducted to determine how much the ethnic groups differed from each other on the factor of CS using mean scores. African American and Hispanic American had the highest mean difference among the teachers.

The analysis of the schools whose teachers demonstrated high mean levels for TE was made using Descriptive Statistics which plotted the TE mean according to each of the four items for that factor. Once the mean levels were established and schools with higher means for TE identified, descriptors for schools (with a high TE mean) were analyzed using the Academic Excellence Indicator System as reported by the Texas Education Agency. Analysis of student, teacher, and test data showed four out of the five schools with high mean scores for efficacy also had high TAKS passing percentages for their African American students along with high accountability ratings of exemplary and recognized. Similarities and differences were found among five schools. However, the only characteristics in which all the schools had a commonality were in high retention rates and high number of economically disadvantaged students.

The lack of several or many common characteristics among the five schools demonstrates several patterns. Each school is located in an urban environment, but represented by its own set of challenges i.e., higher mobility and number of students in

at-risk situations. Some schools had characteristics which may have been both detrimental and/or beneficial. For instance, School 7 had a very large percentage of male teachers and a small percentage of experienced teachers, yet obtained an exemplary rating. School 9 was in contrast as it had a large percentage of experienced teachers, a small percentage of male teachers and had a rating of exemplary. School 8 had both high percentages of male teachers and experienced teachers while achieving an exemplary rating. Schools 4 and 6 had high numbers of African American students and teachers yet their achievement levels were lower than Schools 7, 8 and 9.

The absence of experienced teachers in Schools 6 and 7 reflects lack of staff stability. It shows a missed opportunity for new and experienced to work jointly over time to create successful learning outcome for their students. However, only one these schools (School 6) had poor standardized test performances with its African American students. This is justified by the high retention rates among all the schools. This common characteristic of high retention rates held by all the school shows how ineffective the teachers may actually be with their students of color particularly, African American students. This high retention rates among the schools contrast their high levels of teacher efficacy. The high retention rate for the schools in second grades particularly presented concerns about their overall high passing percentages in third and fourth grade. The other trend was the declining test passing rates among the schools as their African American student population increased.

The other common characteristic among all five schools (high number of economically disadvantaged students) is one which teachers with high efficacy

effectively deal with without leading to retention for the students. The teachers in Schools 4, 6, 7, 8 and 9 showed higher mean scores for items 49 and 53 but their mean scores for items 23 and 25 were much lower. This contrast the attitudes and beliefs that teachers with high efficacy should have, especially with regards to item 25 (there are factors beyond the control of teachers causing student failure) which had the lowest mean score for all the schools.

CHAPTER V

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

Studies have shown the continuing challenge of attaining achievement for African American students (Garibaldi, 1997; Irvine, 2007). While these studies are clearly showing progress for African American students in some areas, they present findings which conclude that African American students remain far behind in many areas of academic achievement in grades kindergarten through twelve. The National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) studies during the years 1992, 2005, and 2007 showed African American average scale scores in reading grades 4th, 8th, and 12th to be lower than those of White and Hispanics students (2007). Similar findings were found in science, writing, and mathematics (NAEP). When one considers urban schools, the picture for African American students is bleaker, showing a dire need for the closing of the achievement gap (Lewis, James, Hancock, Hill-Jackson, 2008).

The National Assessment of Educational Progress (2005) reports that urban schools with higher concentration of poverty have 4th grade students scoring significantly lower in mathematics assessment than other 4th graders in schools with a lower percentage of poverty. The schools in the study had percentages of over Additional findings among these schools show the students being taught by a large number of teachers with less than five years experience, reflecting a high teacher turnover rate and lack of teacher retention (Tschannen-Moran and Hoy, 2007). These figures have implications for African Americans and our nation through the schooling

years and beyond. The drop-out rate for African Americans is almost double that of White Americans among 16 through 24 year olds (NCES, 2008). The path to higher education and likelihood for success is stark for African American when compared to their White and Hispanic counterparts. The number of bachelor's degrees earned increased for White, Black, and Hispanics; however the gap here between White (66%) and Blacks (50%) and Hispanics (34%) widened from 1971 to 2007 (NCES, 2008). This is a consistent trend originating from the primary grades into secondary and finally to the figures seen after college graduation.

The purpose of this study was to examine teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, cultural responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity as they relate to ethnicity among elementary school teachers using archival data from the Cultural Awareness and Belief Inventory (CABI). This study also examined school characteristics within the elementary campuses whose teachers showed strong efficacy beliefs.

The reliability for the entire scale as well as each individual factor was conducted. In order to examine the five factors as they related to the ethnicity of teachers, a multiple comparison analysis (MANOVA) was conducted using factor scores to ascertain if there was a significant difference. The existence of 5 five factors (dependent variables) and 4 ethnic groups (independent factors) made it necessary to conduct a multivariate analysis of variance (MANOVA) which calculated the statistical significance of the effects of the independent variables on the dependent variables (Weinfurt, 1995). In substitution of performing univariate ANOVAs for each dependent

variable to follow up on the multivariate significance, multivariate contrasts were made using Post Hoc Test with Tukey HSD. This was done to compare the set of dependent variables simultaneously using their means (Weinfurt, 1995). Once significance was established, further analysis was completed to see where the significance lied among the five factors with respect to the teacher's ethnicity. It was determined that there was a significant difference among the three teacher ethnic groups with respect to cultural sensitivity. Tests of Between-Subjects Effects concluded that African American and Hispanic American teachers had the greatest difference in terms of cultural sensitivity.

One factor, Teacher Efficacy was explored further through Descriptive Statistics calculating mean scores for each item to determine which schools represented by the CABI respondents had teachers showing high levels of teacher efficacy. Characteristics of the individual schools as well as collective characteristics were explored to note patterns and commonalities among the schools.

Research Question One

Are their differences in teacher's efficacy, beliefs, culturally responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity by ethnicity?

Studies suggest African American teachers are likely to affiliate with the diversity and experiences of their African American students (King, 1993; Foster, 1995; Nieto, 1999). Among the contributions Irvine (2003) noted that African American teachers bring for their African American students are: serving as cultural translators whose culturally based teaching styles offer higher expectations than their White peers.

This affinity with the students allows some African American teachers to avoid "cultural discontinuity" (Nieto, 2004) and the "deficit syndrome" (Gay, 2000) which create learning/teaching barriers between them and African American students.

Multivariate tests from the MANOVA established that there were statistically significant differences among the three teacher ethnic groups when the five factors (teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, culturally responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity) were combined. The analysis of descriptive statistics from the MANOVA also showed African American teachers had a higher mean than the two other teacher ethnic groups in terms of factor scores for teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, culturally responsive classroom management, and cultural sensitivity. While there were differences among in the five factors according to ethnicity, these differences are small and of minimal significance according to the results from the MANOVA. The descriptive statistics calculating mean per item by teacher ethnicity demonstrated almost an equal amount of optimism by the three teacher ethnic groups for the majority of each item. Mean averages for each factor reflected small differences whether those mean scores were high or low. Accordingly, the three groups of teachers had more similarities in each factor as opposed to significant differences in little of one group (African Americans) having slightly higher scores.

Results from the MANOVA did not indicate a significant difference in Teacher Efficacy according to ethnicity. According to descriptive statistics, two of the four items with lowest mean scores dealt with Teacher Efficacy. These two items had low mean scores for all three teacher ethnic groups. The low mean scores on these items for

Teacher Efficacy represented a stark contrast based on the high mean in other items under this factor. While some items scores (Items 49 and 53) allude to teachers having high efficacy, other items scores (Items 23 and 25) reflect the teachers having low levels of teacher efficacy. These results reflect Ashton's (1984) description of developmental stages of teacher efficacy in which teachers grow more effectively in their expectations, treatment, and instruction of their students. The results show that the three groups of teachers still developing in their teacher efficacy. Ashton (1984) observed the various levels of teacher efficacy, noting that it is a developmental process acquired over time.

Descriptions by scholars (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Gay, 2000; Pang, 2001) of teachers with high efficacy do not reference the ethnicity of the teachers as being important but rather observe the ability of all teachers trained in culturally responsive teaching practices as being effective instructors. Average mean scores for each teacher ethnic group showed more optimistic than pessimistic views regarding teacher efficacy. Despite that one item (Item 25) was very low, the three groups appeared to show developing teacher efficacy in a positive direction. Kunjfu (2002) pointedly notes that the teacher's race is not the utmost or crucial factor when it comes to the academic achievement for African American students.

Teacher Belief was another factor where a significant difference was not found according to the ethnicity of the teachers. African American teachers had the highest mean scores for six of the eight items while Hispanic American teachers had highest mean scores for the other two items. African American teachers had the highest average mean score at 3.1 with European American teachers closely behind at 3.0. The results

demonstrate very little difference among the ethnic groups when it comes to teacher beliefs. The mean scores reflect the optimistic views teacher should hold and retain about education despite the challenges presented at the schools (Richardson, 2003). The mean scores reflect the opposite of the poor opinion Ladson-Billings (1994) states teachers have on their jobs. The three groups of teachers also appear to have mostly favorable views of African American teachers despite the literature which states the contrary (Fisher, 2005; Gay, 2000; Payne, 1994).

Culturally Responsive Classroom Management was the factor with highest mean score. African American, European American, and Hispanic American teachers each had mean scores above 3.2. For item under this factor, each group had mean scores above 3.0. This factor showed no significant difference when the ethnicity of the teachers was considered. While the teachers in this study were perceived as having high optimism for Culturally Responsive Classroom Management, the literature (Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Ladson-Billings, 1994) states that develop of cultural pedagogy entails much more than mere thoughts and perception, but rather includes actual skills and practices on the part of the teacher. Teachers may perceive, as the teachers in this study, that their teaching strategies are effective for all their students, while students may describe those same practices as being meaningless and ineffective. The common and key ingredient is the student's culture which must be implemented into the teaching practices and classroom curriculum.

While the results of the mean scores per item for this factor do not dispute the arguments of scholars however, they do not affirm or prove the crucial element of

teachers using a variety of teaching practices centered on their students' cultures (Gay, 2000). The use of culturally appropriate and effective pedagogy is a teaching strategy that has to occur in the classroom. The only manner of implementation is through the learning environment created by the teacher and experienced by the students in culturally responsive classroom management. The results from the mean scores prove that all teachers from any ethnic group can favorable view on this factor and actually use it in the classroom with their students. However, the achievement gap, lack of academic attainment for many students of color, and drop rates for African Americans, are some of realities noted by scholars (Brown, 2003; Irvine, 2001; Nieto, 2004) that prove culturally responsive teaching practices are not being used in most classrooms across the nation.

The descriptive statistics showed European American teachers as having a higher mean in cultural awareness than African American and Hispanic American teachers. There was no significant difference for this factor based on ethnicity according to the MANOVA. The ability of a teacher to hold favorable view on the culture of students is dependent more on the culture of the teacher as opposed to the teacher's ethnicity. Cultural blindness (Gay, 2000) and cultural discontinuities (Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008; Nieto, 2004) occur between teachers and students hindering academic achievement. These obstacles to learning are the result of a lack of communication and relationship building between teachers and students that must be implemented and facilitated by the teacher. Nieto (2004) further argued that the cause lies in the school culture as opposed to the culture or ethnicities of the teachers. Therefore, it is dependent on each individual teacher to promote an atmosphere of relationship building

with all their students.

The results from the mean scores agree with literature which points to context of the school (Nieto, 2004) and not the ethnicity of the teachers. The findings from this study showing European American teachers with higher levels of Cultural Awareness than African American and Hispanic American demonstrate the argument brought forth by scholars who see modifications needed in the culture of the schools instead of the ethnicity of the teachers.

Only one factor, Cultural Sensitivity, was significantly differently by ethnicity. This factor, according to an additional test of Effect Size, had a variance of only 6% which could only be explained by the ethnicity of the teachers. That significant difference was not found for the other four factors of teacher beliefs, culturally responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and teacher efficacy. Scholars (Gay, 2000; Hale; 2001; Irvine; 2007, Ladson-Billings; 1996) point to need for effective teachers using effective strategies which reflect the students' culture when teaching students of color particularly African American students. However, additional scholars (Brown & Medway, 2007; Kunjufu, 2002) point out those effective teachers can be from any ethnic group so long as they hold belief and strategies that are beneficial for the academic attainment of African American students.

The five factors are linked to the academic achievement of African American students through the arguments of scholars (Gay, 2000; Hale, 2001; Hillard, 1992; Howard, 2002; Irvine, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Pang, 2001; Parsons, 2005) championing culturally responsive teaching practices. Gay (2000) noted the link

between culturally responsive classroom management and teacher efficacy, whereby teachers with the latter facilitate the former. Ladson-Billings (1994) further that the achievement for African American student lie in the instructional quality of their education. This instruction is dependent on the beliefs, attitudes, expectation, training, and skills of the teacher. According to their mean scores on the factors, the teachers in this study appear to have the receptive attitudes needed to implement appropriate instruction for their African American students. The high levels of optimism in Culturally Responsive Classroom Management specifically by the three ethnic groups agree with the literature (Gay, 2000; Pang, 2001) which calls for a willingness and openness on the part of the teachers to use these culturally specific practices.

While the results from the factor were favorable and optimistic for each group of teachers, they do reflect a contradiction to item scores for another factor Teacher Efficacy. For instance optimism on Items 55 (I am able to effectively manage students from all racial groups) and Items 57 (I have a clear understanding of the issues surrounding classroom management) of Culturally Responsive Classroom Management, does not match the pessimism on Item 25 of Teacher Efficacy (There are factors beyond the control of teacher. It can stated that as these three ethnic groups of teachers are not much different in being willing and able to teach their African American students, they lack the specific culturally responsive teaching skills and practices which would enable them to become highly effective educators who have developed what Hale-Benson (1982) described as social-psychological education theory. This theory has root in the belief that African American students and other students of color have distinct learning

styles based on their cultures.

The results from the MANOVA and the accompanying descriptive statistics reveal that African American teacher may have a greater optimism towards most the five factors than European American and Hispanic American teachers. The results also reveal that European American and Hispanic American are just as likely and capable of have high optimism toward the factors and in some cases even greater than African American teachers. It reveals that although differences exist between the factors with regards to ethnicity, the three teacher ethnic groups are capable of acquiring optimism when it comes to academic outcomes for their African American students.

Research Question Two

What are the characteristics of schools whose teachers have high efficacy beliefs?

Descriptive Statistics comparing mean scores was conducted for each item of teacher efficacy showing several schools having high mean values for teacher efficacy. The mean score was then calculated using the mean scores for each item of teach efficacy. School 3 was eliminated from the analysis due the low number of teacher respondents to the study. Schools 4, 6, 7, 8, and 9 had the highest mean value of the nine schools in the sample. When the characteristics of these schools were identified, it was concluded that the schools had as many similarities as they had differences. The schools as a whole had only three similarities: high retention rates for all their students, large percentage of students that were economically disadvantaged, and teacher who had

high efficacy.

School 6, like School 4, had a large percentage of African American teachers and students. The large percentage African American teachers may have more familiarity with African American students (Milner & Howard, 2004) and are perceived as positive role models (Irvine, 1988). While this characteristic could have benefitted the students greatly, it was not the case for only one School 4 based on another characteristic which was present for it but absent in School 6. School 4 had experienced teachers which School 6 lacked. This presence of experienced teacher which was prevalent in School 4 could have added to the recognition, understanding, and appreciation present with the African American teachers. NCES (2003) statistics show that close to three quarters of African American teachers nationwide have less than five years experience. An absence of knowledge and teaching strategies existed in School 6 as a result of it lacking of experienced teachers.

The high percentage of African American students in Schools 4 and 6 and their lower test scores schools lower tests scores than Schools 7, 8, and 9 may be a sign that the teachers in this school are not instructing the students properly. The challenge of using culturally responsive teaching lies with all teachers despite their own culture/ethnicity. The teachers at School 6 which is majority African American are not reaching their African American students when the standardized test scores are considered. What may have been seen as a characteristic benefitting this large population of African American students at School 6 became thus an example from the results with Question 1 of this study. Although African American teachers retain a

higher mean for Culturally Responsive Classroom Management than their European American and Hispanic American counterparts, that difference is minimal.

School 6, with its majority of African American students, was a school which needed the most experienced and effective teachers who could substantially have had experience with culturally responsive teaching strategies. Hale (2001) mentioned the critical need to recognize and teach African American student from a perspective linked to their culture. Teachers who have been trained in culturally responsive teaching and/or taught African American students successfully recognize that culture play a central role in effective instruction with theses and other students of color (Love & Kruger, 2005). These two characteristics (few experienced teachers and developing teacher efficacy) were linked to a third characteristic of low test scores for African American students.

One of those schools (School 6) was characterized with low high test scores with African American third and fourth grade students when an analysis was made of each school's Academic Excellence Indicator System. It earned a rating of academically acceptable which is low based on TEA standards. The other schools had fairly high to very high test scores and ratings with the same measure. School 6 which had over half of their teachers with six years or less experience also ranked lowest in teacher efficacy than the other four schools. Their low teaching experiences, as well as their shorter time period teaching in the urban district, made these teachers have a less efficacy. The teachers as a whole in School 6 had not had the substantial years of teaching and gaining effective instructional strategies with urban student populations in order to develop their efficacy (Tschannen-Moran & Hoy, 2006). The school was lacking in its small number

of experienced and teachers working in the urban district who could share effective strategies with the new and less experienced teachers.

Schools 7, 8, and 9 achieved high test scores for their African American students and ratings of exemplary. While the populations of African American students were lower for theses schools than Schools 4 and 6, an excellent measure of achievement was being made with the students. They scores did not reflect a large achievement gap if any with their European American and Hispanic American peers. The African American students who were testing in grades third and fourth had very high scores, signaling that effective teaching with these students was occurring. These results show the effectiveness of these schools and their teachers despite the social and environmental challenges within the school's environment. The students achieved well on the standardized tests due to instructional practices of their teachers. While standardized tests are not the sole means of assessing student learning and academic achievement, they do provide a level of student progress (Edmonds, 1982; Wolf, 2007).

African American teachers face the same challenges to teach African American students and endure the similar shortcoming as other teachers when it comes to ensuring the students achieve in school. School 5 is a testimony to those shortcomings. Howard (2002) maintains the effectiveness in teaching African American students lies in the pedagogical practices of the teachers but those practices must be culturally responsive. Gay (2000) noted how culturally responsive classroom management is promoted by high teacher efficacy. The teachers at School 6 did not achieve the level of teacher efficacy which the teachers in Schools 4 and 7 and these two schools had high test scores with

their African American students. The large percentage of African American teachers in School 6 did not account for higher test scores for its African American students. Its lower teacher efficacy among the group may have accounted and/or contributed to lower test scores. Having a higher percentage of teachers from the same ethnic group as the students is not an answer or guarantee for success academic outcomes. However, hiring teacher with and promoting the development towards high teacher efficacy establishes the foundation for academic achievement.

An orderly school climate was among the characteristics Edmond (1979) described for effective schools teaching students of color. Experienced teachers add to the order, organization, and stability of a school. Purkey and Smith (1985) listed staff stability as one of nine organizational and structural variables which contribute to successful learning outcomes. School 6 had the second lowest percentage in teachers with experience over six years. The percentage of beginning teachers for School 6 ranks higher than the other elementary schools as well as the averages for the district and state. School 6 had other characteristics which may have affected the academic performances of its students. This school lacked a significant experienced staff which may have contributed to lack of stability and order. The school did not have a staff consistently working successfully together over an extended period of time on academic achievement for its students. There was also a lack of experienced teachers to serve as mentor who could advise and guide new teachers particularly with culturally responsive teaching practices for its high population of African American students. These characteristics of the school hinder staff and school cohesiveness (Brown and Medway 2007), teacher

empowerment (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Nieto, 2004), and interpersonal relationships (Love & Kruger, 2005).

Tucker et al. (2005) state that teachers with strong efficacy beliefs tend to stay committed in their teaching efforts for a longer period of time place somewhere else. The low percentage of experienced teachers explains how this school had the lowest test scores. New teachers and those teachers with little experience at this school may not have had the opportunity to be mentored by those experienced teacher who hold vast knowledge to successful teaching practices. The teachers with little or no experience have not been able to see successful classrooms managed by teachers with years of building success with their students. A school climate is reflective of how staff members work together toward the goal of teaching students successfully. Schools successfully teaching African American students had a strong bond and cohesion between teachers (Brown & Medway, 2007). As schools located within an urban environment, the five schools were similar to other inner city schools in the having many students that were both economically disadvantaged and in at risk situations. The teachers at these schools are working with students who are potential drop out candidates later on in middle or high school. As teachers who had high teacher efficacy, these two factors did not affect the group of schools as a whole considering the students performance on the standardized tests. Students in at-risk situations need teacher who believe in the students' abilities to succeed and their own teaching practices to help them succeed.

School 9 which was rated as an exemplary campus, had the lowest student to teacher ratio and average class size. This especially low ratio of 12 to 1 and average

class size of 16 provided an environment where teacher could have build relationships and better understanding with their African American students and improved academic achievement (Katz, 1999). Such relationships are essential components and practices of culturally responsive teaching (Ladson-Billings, 1994). The high average class size of 22 in School 6 contributed to less time dedicated to the instructional needs of individual students due to extra demands brought on by a large class. Time spent with student is important if teachers are to address the cultural and ethnic needs students of color (Brown, 2003). It also helps establish a classroom environment of trust and cooperation between teacher and students (Brown, 2003).

School 9 had an ideal school climate with its low number of students in its classrooms. Some teachers teach successfully in urban schools where the classroom and school climate is not often ideal. They are successful despite negative or positive factors within the classroom and outside the school (Brown, 2003; Tucker, et al, 2005). Low class size and student to teacher ratio helped accommodate some of the successful practices of culturally responsive teaching. These characteristics, however, were not necessary for the teacher with high efficacy to be successful with students.

High student mobility hinders the sense of community which is a characteristic of effective schools (Purkey & Smith, 1985; Walker, 2000) and of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000). Schools 7 and 8 had low mobility and high test scores, while Schools 4, 6, and 9 had high mobility and only one (School 9) had high test scores. These high student mobility rates could have obscured the development student teacher relationships. This high level of students moving in and out the school made in difficult

to have consistent and present cases of establish bond, communication, and relationships between students and teachers. Therefore in the final analysis, this school had high mobility rates for teachers and students resulting in a lack of both stability and an experienced staff which are characteristics of effective schools. This mobility by the teachers is an uncommon characteristic of those with high efficacy due to their common dedication to their students and strong pursuit of success for their students Knoblauch & Hoy (2005).

The high retention rates at the five schools especially in second grade put into question the successful test scores as well as the level of efficacy the teachers may have. An effective school, principal and teachers who have high teacher effective could not such tolerate high retention rates due that fact that it is uncharacteristic their school wide purpose for student success (Edmonds, 1979; Lezotte, 1985). The high retention rates among the schools, especially the ones with high test scores, are synonymous with attributed student failure to the student as opposed to the teacher (Gay, 2000). The teachers and administrator sense the students lack the intellectual abilities thus must be retained. Although the teacher had high efficacy, Tucker et al (2005) conclude that these teachers are low in their efficacy.

The beliefs by the teachers in this study were evident in the effectiveness of their instruction. Knoblauch and Hoy (2008) noted link between what a teacher thinks about her abilities to teach effectively and actual teaching effectiveness. The levels of teacher efficacy identified in these schools were present in most of the instructional practices and eventual academic outcomes for these students. The teachers in this study had an

overall optimism about teacher efficacy and had an even high optimism about teacher beliefs. They attitudes, beliefs, and expectations became their self-fulfilling prophesies (Good & Brophy, 2002; Tchannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007) validated through the success on most their African American students' standardized test scores.

The strong correlation Collier (2005) points to between teacher efficacy and student performance is not evident in the retention rates for these schools. If the teachers believe in their students' success, like teacher with high efficacy should, then the level of achievement as well as the promotion rates at the schools would rise. As the test scores in most of these schools are high, their retention rates should be low.

Overall, the schools have similar as well as distinguishing characteristics, especially with regards to the ethnic distribution of teachers and students. The five schools had high mean teacher efficacy scores and their African American students had well to excellent TAKS results with the exception of one school. The results from the schools' test scores demonstrate how students in at risk situations can achieve academic success if taught properly by teachers who have experience and hold effective teaching strategies for their students of color.

The purpose of considering this factor with regards to mean teacher efficacy was to consider if the presence or majority of one particular ethnicity for teachers and/or students could be a common characteristic among schools with high teacher efficacy mean values. The analysis of the schools shows overlapping characteristics among the schools ranking both high and low in teacher efficacy mean. The only distinguishing characteristic which isolated one or more schools from the other appeared to have

existed with School 6 which did not have the higher percentage of experienced teachers as the other schools with high achievement scores for their African American students. The lack of experienced teachers results in an absence of mentorship in which effective classroom strategies and instruction can be shared. The lower test scores are evidenced by the lack of effective instructional practices acquired, practiced, and modeled to other teachers by seasoned teachers. The new teachers and those with few years of experience lack model role models from which they can acquire effective strategies which promote academic success school wide.

Analysis of the elementary schools points to the crucial elements within the elementary school years where students' time with a teacher has the potential of exerting a huge impact on their learning and lives. Within this environment teachers can reach students, particularly African Americans who come to school in the early primary years with great motivation and energy, but lose that zest in the later primary grades and early secondary grades. While some teachers, particularly European American, may hold positive beliefs about diversity, culturally responsive teaching, and their African American students in general, they must take the next step in immersing themselves into the culture of their students and integrating practices/strategies with those cultures. This is the road into developing stronger efficacy beliefs which will be effective in student achievement and positive academic outcomes for African American students.

The presence of experienced and properly trained novice teachers who believe in their abilities to teach African American is part of the initial steps for academic achievement and the closing of the achievement gap. While the need for effective

African American teachers is great, the greater need lies in effective teachers from any ethnic groups who can use culturally responsive teaching practices to promote academic achievement for all their students.

Conclusions

Post Hoc Test showed the most statistical difference existed with African Americans and Hispanic Americans teachers in relation to cultural sensitivity. The issue in education, thus, is the fact that many teachers believe they are doing the best job possible teaching their students. They believe that other factors e.g., poverty, parental involvement/support, discipline, etc. exist beyond their control and concern which are affecting whether or not the students are learning despite "their best intentions and efforts". This study showed evidence of that belief by the low mean scores which teachers gave for Item 25 (There are factors beyond the control of teachers causing student failure). These teachers may not see a need to use culturally responsive teaching practices explaining the large difference in the mean from the study. The fact that they do not see African American students as having their own unique leaning style may hinder them from increasing their use of culturally responsive classroom management while remaining less culturally sensitivity to the needs of the students. The link to teacher efficacy is that these teachers do not see themselves able to reach students who they perceive as being difficult learners with little support from their home (Tucker et al., 2005).

Such thinking may be logical since some teachers initially use these issues as for

causes having low expectations for their students. They simply do not believe in the students own skills, capabilities, and/or intellectual capacity, thereby believing there is no cause for changing anything in their instructional strategies and expectations for the students. Teachers with low sense of efficacy may not necessarily question their self worth or capacities when it comes to teaching. Some may not be aware that it is their teaching skills and attitudes about their abilities to teach which should be reflected upon. As Goddard, Hoy, & Hoy (2004) noted, the teachers may "suffer no diminishment of self-esteem" which may be a prerequisite for change and improvement. Such teachers feel they are doing enough. They have confidence in their teaching and feel when students are not performing, it is a reflection of the student intellectual abilities or backgrounds as oppose to their teaching practices.

As student resiliency reflects a student's ability to succeed in school regardless of teachers' expectations and beliefs, teacher efficacy reflects a teacher's resilience against a school culture or societal beliefs about his/her students' abilities. The teacher with a developed efficacy is resilient to the point that nothing can prevent the success of his/her students. It is as Tschannen-Moran, Hoy & Hoy (1998) noted "how resilient they are in dealing with failures" (p. 203). She believes in her abilities to reach her students. These teachers feel they are responsible and capable of student performance and achievement. The student's previous performances, behaviors, so called lack of motivation, peer influences, and home support are irrelevant to the teacher's capacity to effectively teach the student. Tschannen-Moran, Hoy and Hoy (1998) concluded "teachers with a high level of efficacy believed that they could control, or at least strong

influence, student achievement and motivation" (p. 202).

The challenge remains what Gay (2000) remarked to as teachers who are unwilling to "hold themselves and their teaching accountable for the achievement of difficult learners" (p.61). Understanding and recognizing these challenges are the first step while training for and imparting the necessary tools/strategies is the second step.

Among the challenges facing European American teachers when relating to and teaching students of color is the realization that they must take specific steps to reach their students. Teachers who proclaim a color-blind approach in their teaching practices are not only ignoring "the realities of racism in this country" (Irvine, 2003) but are essentially diminishing the possible effectiveness of their teaching practices. Teachers who proclaim a color blind approach may indeed be seeking to treat all of their students the same lacking any prejudice and ill will towards students of color. Irvine (2007) further stated that these are attempts by teachers to avoid being classified as "insensitive or, worse, racist" (xvii). As they choose to ignore color and culture they choose to ignore the very makeup and fabric of students creating obstacles for enhanced teacher student relationships and diminished cultural synchronization. One of the strategies entails the long held belief that both schools and teachers should recognize that the academic strengths of African American students lie in their home, family, environment, and culture (Boykin, 2003; Hale, 2001; Hillard, 1992). This cultural awareness is, however, a challenge also faced by African American teachers.

African American teachers in this study had the lowest mean value for cultural awareness, while European Americans had the highest for the factor. The mean

difference between the two groups for cultural awareness suggest what Milner and Howard (2007) observed as a deficit in cultural awareness on today's African American teachers who are less familiar with the "cultural context" of their African American students. The period before school desegregation, African American teachers resided within the same community as their students and more familiar with the culture of their students (Milner and Howard, 2007, p. 286). Kunjufu (2002) noted the clash of cultures presently between Black teachers and Black students whose class and values are dissimilar. Gay (2001) also alluded to the importance of a cultural blindness which affects all teachers regardless of their ethnicity. The challenge of cultural discontinuity (Lovelace & Wheeler, 2006; Cholewa & West-Olatunji, 2008; Nieto, 2004; Garrett, 1995; Allen & Boykin, 1992) between teachers and students is one faced by teachers from all ethnic groups including African American teachers. Further results from the MANOVA support those scholars who see the impact on the academic achievement for African American will lie on the efficacy beliefs of the teachers and not their ethnicity.

Researchers have examined perceptions of European American teachers about teaching African American students. The MANOVA showed statistical difference between European American and Hispanic American teachers for cultural sensitivity. Some studies have shown an unwillingness to work with African American students (Pang & Sablan, 1995). Additional studies demonstrate favorable attitudes and perceptions European American teachers have towards working in diverse classrooms (Walker-Dalhouse & Dalhouse, 2006) and the academic capabilities of diverse students (Tettegah, 1996). Results from MANOVA descriptive statistics showed European

American teachers having the highest mean for cultural awareness. Furthermore, studies (Ladson-Billings, 1994; Brown & Medway, 2007) of successful teachers of African American students demonstrated that such effective teachers can be of a different ethnicity. The desire, willingness, and commitment to teach African American students is possible among any ethnicity so long as that teacher holds a firm belief they can teach the students with the use culturally specific pedagogy (Brown, 2003).

While Irvine (1991) noted the need for colleges to recruit and train black teachers, Kunjufu (2002) alerted that the future of achievement for African American students lies in White teachers who not only comprise the buck of the teaching force but will be the vast majority of the teaching population. This figure continues to rise while the number of Black teachers in our nation's schools is declining (Irvine, 1988; Milner & Howard, 2004).

There are legitimate concerns which exist for the decline in the Black teacher population as well as the poverty and other socioeconomic factors affecting African American students. Kunjufu (2002) echoed this by observing "the most important factor impacting the academic achievement of African American children is not the race and gender of the teacher but the teacher's expectations" (p. 17). The need is greatest in having effective teachers whose efficacy allows them to belief in their capacity to teach and in their student's capacity to learn. Furthermore these teachers have to have an awareness of their students' background and culture as well as develop sensitivity to those cultures by using culturally responsive teaching practices.

Despite the arguments of scholars (Ford, Grantham, & Whiting, 2008) pointing

to various causes for failure among African American students, there is success being attained by select teachers and schools throughout the nation. Teachers with strong efficacy beliefs are teaching their students effectively and promoting successful outcomes in particular for African American students. These teachers assume that the role they play in teaching and learning is the critical factor in promoting success for their students (Tshannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007). They are undeterred by circumstances which other may see beyond their control. Teacher with strong efficacy beliefs perceive success and future success in the classroom as linked to their abilities as teacher. Therefore, these teachers are more likely to persist in light of setbacks (Tshannen-Moran & Hoy, 2007) and working with the most difficult students (Tucker, et. al., 2005). These teachers are also confident in their abilities to effectively work with African American students (Tucker, et. al., 2005) since they hold attitudes which would enable them to acquire cultural awareness, culture sensitivity, and cultural responsive classroom management. The academic achievement for diverse students including African American students can be increase by increasing teacher efficacy beliefs (Tucker, et al p. 30, 3rd column).

While scholars (Collier, 2005; Dellinger, Bobbett, Olivier, & Ellett, 2008; Tucker, et al., 2005) indicate that the development of strong teacher efficacy beliefs is inclusive of all teachers regardless of their ethnicity, other scholars (Irvine, 1988; Milner & Howard, 2004) point out that African American teachers are more prone to have knowledge about the social and culture frames of reference upon which African American student should receive their instruction. It is from this cultural frame of

reference which African American students attain greater academic achievement as noted by effective schools. It is also noted among teacher from various ethnic groups who have developed effective instructional practices by way of culturally responsive teaching with their African American students.

The call for teachers to establish a deep commitment (Haberman, 2002) and care (Pang, 2001) for their students should not be taken lightly. All teachers regardless of their ethnicity must be prepared to take on the challenge of acknowledging first that African American students learn from a distinct way (Hale, 2001) and the use of culturally responsive teaching (Gay, 2000; Ladson Billings, 1995; Irvine, 2007) is essential to for successful academic outcomes. With the continued declined of African American teachers and increase of European American teachers, the latter will be largely responsible for facing this unique but "sacred" challenge.

The impact of Brown vs. the Board of Education Supreme Court decision was more significant than simply European American teachers teaching and continuing to teach African American students (Lyons & Chesley, 2004). The impact was on teachers who traditionally taught from a European frame of reference and continued to teach that way with learners who needed their culture integrated into the curriculum. The impact was also on African American teachers whose own integration into the school system made accountable to effectively teach all children. Brown's impact continues to this day while the academic achievement of African American students remains low. The importance of culturally responsive teaching is evident by teachers who use of such practices have impacted the education of students of color, specifically African

American students (Brown & Medway, 2007; Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Implications for Further Study

The results from this study suggest a need for continuous research in the area of teacher beliefs and efficacy. Several suggestions for continued research are as follows:

1. Conduct a qualitative study of the schools whose teachers demonstrated high levels of efficacy beliefs. This is important because a qualitative study can reveal why the teachers had a high sense of efficacy. A study such as this could provide insights to educators about programs that could increase the level of efficacy for teachers.
2. Replicate the study in relation to newly arrived Hispanic teachers from outside the United States whose may not have exposure to culturally responsive teaching practices. A study could give show the level of teacher efficacy they have when working with students of color in urban settings.
3. Replicate the study with charter schools serving primarily African American students. This study would reveal whether the charter schools serve as an effective alternative to teaching African American students. The study would also reveal characteristics of those campuses which are attaining academic achievement for their students.
4. Conduct a quantitative study on resiliency of African American students from the same urban school district to determine the impact of teacher beliefs and efficacy on their learning. Finding the resiliency of students from the district

would shed light on the impact the schools are having on the individual students. The importance of the study lies in the insight given on students' feelings about school and themselves as learners.

5. Conduct a correlational study of effective schools for African American students and teachers with high teacher efficacy. Such a study can show the extent to which teacher efficacy and effective schools are related. It is important to know that effective schools are successful due to the presence of teacher with high teacher efficacy.
6. Conduct a similar quantitative study using the segmented portion on characteristics of effective schools using individualized assessment as a measure of student success. This is important because student assessments are effective tools for measuring academic growth and development.
7. Conduct a study quality study comparing elementary schools' standardized test performances and retention rates over an extended period of time to note if they have continued to improve achievement among its African American students. It would be important to see if the schools have curved their retention rates particularly in second grade while continuing to have successful academic outcomes for their African American students. It is also important to see which students (Hispanic or African American) are being retained more than others.

Summary

This chapter discussed the findings from an analysis of differences in five factors from the Cultural Awareness and Belief Inventory (CABI) in terms of teacher ethnicity. It also discussed the characteristics among schools whose teacher had high efficacy. It was found that although there was only one factor (Cultural Sensitivity) which was statistical different among the ethnic groups of teachers that difference was not very large. The African American teachers had a higher mean than the other two teacher groups in terms of the other four factors but not by a wide margin. The analysis of the results signaled that teachers regardless of their ethnicity and culture can develop skills and effective teaching practices which can benefit their African American students. Teacher must be truly dedicated to the task of building relationships with their students through positive interaction and communication. The characteristics of the schools showed a variety of similarities and differences which ultimately should not have hindered the effectiveness of the teachers who had high efficacy. The characteristics of the schools included failure outcomes for African American students. The teachers who reported to have high efficacy were still developing their efficacy and had not yet reached a level in which they demonstrated being high effective with their African American students.

The study itself was a discussion and summary of the analysis of five factors. The study sought to find if any differences existed between three teacher ethnic groups in terms of teacher efficacy, teacher beliefs, cultural responsive classroom management, cultural awareness, and cultural sensitivity. The study also identified regarding

characteristics of several schools within an urban school district whose teachers had higher levels of teacher efficacy according responses given on the CABI.

The lack of academic attainment among African American students in the United States has been subject of constant studies amid speculations concerning causes. The quality of education and lack of being identified as an ethnic group with distinct cultural learning styles has been two of many attributes to the challenges. Widespread beliefs among scholars and teachers about solutions to these challenges have been as prevalent as beliefs about the abilities of African American students and their teachers. This study could provide insights into the challenges facing not only African American students but also their teachers. The research on effective teaching strategies for African American students shows that a critical need lies on the teachers who believe in the students' abilities to learn and in their own capabilities to teach them effectively.

In the study's attempt to answer the two research questions a MANOVA was conducted using the five factors from the CABI as the dependent variables and the teachers' ethnicities as the independent variables. Multivariate test found significant difference in terms of ethnicity but further tests showed that only Cultural Sensitivity had a difference which was minimal. The results represented what scholars state that any teacher from any ethnicity can be effective in their teaching practices with students of color. These teachers must, however, be dedicated in their belief that African American students are very capable of academic excellence and culturally responsive teaching practices are one of the tools to make that a reality.

The comparison of the schools found five of the eight schools having teachers

with high efficacy. The characteristics of those schools were identified and various similarities and differences were found. One characteristic either negatively impacted or complimented another characteristic. The presence of one characteristic i.e., male teachers became obsolete with the absence of experienced teachers in School 6. The analysis of the results showed some of the characteristics being reflective of schools with teachers having high efficacy, while other characteristics were not reflective.

The presence of teachers with high teacher efficacy can lead to successful academic outcomes for students of color. African American students specifically are lagging across crucial subject areas (USDOE, 2005) and lack the proper instructional practices within school (Hale, 2001). Teacher efficacy has a strong link to academic achievement (Tucker, et al, 2005) due to the successful practices and belief held by the teacher. Teacher holding such high teacher efficacy can look beyond factors outside and inside the school and focus their instruction on building success for their students (Tucker, et al, 2005). While the characteristics identified within the schools may be beneficial or detrimental to students, the individual responsible for either using or overcoming these is the teacher.

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APPENDIX A

CULTURAL AWARENESS AND BELIEFS INVENTORY

Cultural Awareness and Beliefs Inventory

Please give responses to the following survey using your scantron sheet. *Write only the name of your school on this sheet.* After writing the name of your school on this sheet, begin with question # 1 on the scantron sheet. Questions 1 – 11 are basic questions about yourself. Question # 12 starts the actual survey about your perceptions.

This survey will assist us in understanding your perceptions of our current challenge in meeting the needs of "all" learners in your ISD. This is a voluntary survey and it is your choice to participate. Your responses will assist in constructing staff development that will meet the unique and immediate concerns of the district. It is important that your responses be truthful. **Do not write your name, all information from individuals will be kept confidential.**

When completed, return the Survey and your scantron sheet to the designated person.

Write the name of your school here: _____

Basic information – write on scantron sheet:

1. Gender
A. Female
B. Male

2. Type of Degree
A. Bachelor's
B. Master's
C. Doctorate

3. Years of Teaching
A. 1-11 month
B. 1-3 years
C. 4-6 years
D. 7-9 years
E. 10 or more years

4. Current Grade Level
A. Pre-K- 1st grade
B. 2nd grade
C. 3rd grade
D. 4th grade
E. None of the above secondary

5. Current Grade
A. 5th grade
B. 6th grade
C. 7th grade
D. 8th grade
E. None of the above

6. Current Grade
A. 9th grade
B. 10th grade
C. 11th grade
D. 12th grade
E. Multiple

7. Certification
A. Early Childhood
B. Elementary
C. English/LA/Reading
D. Science
E. None of the above

8. Certification
A. Social Studies
B. Mathematics
C. Special Education
D. Gifted/Talented
E. None of the above

9. Certification
A. Bilingual Education
B. The Arts
C. Physical/Health Ed.
D. Technology
E. Other – not listed

10. Ethnicity
A. African American
B. Arab American
C. Asian American
D. Bi-racial American
E. None of the above

11. Ethnicity
A. European American
B. Hispanic American
C. Native American
D. Pacific Islander
E. Other – not listed

Answer the questions on the scantron sheet using the following scale:

(A) = Strongly Agree (B) = Agree (C)= Disagree (D) Strongly Disagree

12. I feel supported by my building principal. **A B C D**

13. I feel supported by the administrative staff. **A B C D**

14. I feel supported by my professional colleagues. **A B C D**

15. I believe I have opportunities to grow professionally as I fulfill duties at my ISD. **A B C D**

16. I believe we spend too much time focusing on standardized tests. **A B C D**

17. I believe my contributions are appreciated by my colleagues **A B C D**

18. I need more support in meeting the needs of my most challenging students. **A B C D**

19. I believe "all" students in my ISD are treated equitably regardless of race, culture, disability, gender or social economic status. **A B C D**

20. I believe my ISD families are supportive of our mission to effectively teach all students. **A B C D**

21. I believe my ISD families of African American students are supportive of our mission to effectively teach all students. **A B C D**

22. I believe the district has strong support for academic excellence from our surrounding community (civic, church, business). **A B C D**

23. I believe some students do not want to learn. **A B C D**

24. I believe teachers should be held accountable for effectively teaching students who live in adverse circumstances. **A B C D**

25. I believe there are factors beyond the control of teachers that cause student failure. **A B C D**

26. I believe the in-service training this past year assisted me in improving my teaching strategies. **A B C D**

27. I believe I am culturally responsive in my teaching behaviors. **A B C D**

28. I believe cooperative learning is an integral part of my ISD teaching and learning philosophy. **A B C D**

29. I develop my lessons based on Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS). **A B C D**

30. I believe African American students consider performing well in school as "acting White." **A B C D**

31. I believe African American students have more behavior problems than other students. **A B C D**

32. I believe African American students are not as eager to excel in school as White students. **A B C D**

33. I believe teachers engage in bias behavior in the classroom. **A B C D**

34. I believe students who live in poverty are more difficult to teach. **A B C D**

35. I believe African American students do not bring as many strengths to the classroom as their White peers. **A B C D**

36. I believe students that are referred to special education usually qualify for special education services in our school. **A B C D**

37. I believe it is important to identify with the racial groups of the students I serve. **A B C D**

38. I believe I would prefer to work with students and parents

whose cultures are similar to mine. **A B C D**

39. I believe I am comfortable with people who exhibit values or beliefs different from my own. **A B C D**

40. I believe cultural views of a diverse community should be included in the school's yearly program planning. **A B C D**

41. I believe it is necessary to include on-going family input in program planning. **A B C D**

42. I believe I have experienced difficulty in getting families from African American communities involved in the education of their students. **A B C D**

43. I believe when correcting a child's spoken language, one should model appropriate classroom language without further explanation. **A B C D**

44. I believe there are times when the use of "non-standard" English should be accepted in school. **A B C D**

45. I believe in asking families of diverse cultures how they wish to be identified (e.g., African American, Bi-racial, Mexican). **A B C D**

46. I believe that in a society with as many racial groups as the United States, I would accept the use of ethnic jokes or phrases by students. **A B C D**

47. I believe there are times when "racial statements" should be ignored. **A B C D**

48. I believe a child should be referred "for testing" if learning difficulties appear to be due to cultural differences. **A B C D**

49. I believe the teaching of ethnic customs and traditions is not the responsibility of public school personnel. **A B C D**

50. I believe Individualized Education Program meetings or planning should be scheduled for the convenience of the family. **A B C D**

51. I believe frequently used material within my class represents at least three different ethnic groups. **A B C D**

52. I believe students from certain ethnic groups appear lazy when it comes to academic engagement. **A B C D**

53. I believe in-service training focuses too much on "multicultural" issues. **A B C D**

54. I believe I address inappropriate classroom behavior even when it could be easily ignored. **A B C D**

55. I believe I am able to effectively manage students from all racial groups. **A B C D**

56. I believe I have a clear understanding of the issues surrounding classroom management. **A B C D**

57. I believe I have understanding of the issues surrounding discipline **A B C D**

Please answer the following questions with a written response

<u>on the back of your scantron sheet</u>.

Question A. What is your greatest behavioral management concern as you reflect on your professional responsibilities and the learners you serve?

Question B. What racial, ethnic, and/or socio-economic concerns do you have as it relates to your role as a teacher?

Question C. What leadership concerns do you have as it relates to your ISD?

VITA

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