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Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and its Impact on Student
Achievement

By
Mandalinn Browning

A Dissertation Submitted to the
Gardner-Webb University School of Education
in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Education

Gardner-Webb University
2018

Approval Page

This dissertation was submitted by Mandalinn Browning under the direction of the persons listed below. It was submitted to the Gardner-Webb University School of Education and approved in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Gardner-Webb University.

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Abstract

Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and its Impact on Student Achievement. Browning, Mandalinn, 2018: Dissertation, Gardner-Webb University, Teacher Cultural Sensitivity/Self-Ability/Student Perceptions/Student Achievement

The study examined if there is an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and its impact on student academic achievement. The researcher was looking to determine if there are any correlations between what teachers and students perceive as culturally sensitive teaching. The researcher administered a teacher and student cultural sensitivity survey to determine what each of them saw as the characteristics of a culturally sensitive teacher. These findings were then analyzed to determine if having or not having these characteristics was a factor in student academic achievement.

The study took place in a high school with tenth graders taking English II during the spring semester of 2016. The reason it was in an English II class was because all students are required to take this class to graduate, and it would produce the closest depiction of the actual student population of the school.

The findings indicate that there are some positive relationships between teacher perceptions and student academic success. Even with some positive relationships, there still are not enough data to determine if this is an accurate portrayal of the research questions. The researcher was unable to determine a true association between teacher and student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and its relationship to academic success.

Future researchers looking into this study may want to consider having a more diverse teacher population to determine if there are any correlations between gender, race, or other cultural differences and the academic performance of students. Another recommendation for further research would be to determine if there are any relationships between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic achievement based on student gender, ethnicity, achievement levels, and SES.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

The decision of *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) paved the way to equalize educational opportunities for all students regardless of racial differences. The right not to be discriminated against on the basis of race, color, or national origin was explicitly guaranteed by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 (Brown, Losen, & Wald, 2002). Those protections were expanded to students with disabilities (SWD) in the Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act of 2004 and to educational outcomes for all children in the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (Cortiellia, 2006). Even more recently, the Every Student Succeeds Act provides an equal educational opportunity for all students. It was a bipartisan reform act to provide equal education (Every Student Succeeds Act 2017), yet continuing racial and ethnic disparities in education ranging from the achievement gap (Ladson-Billings, 2006) to disproportionality in special education (Donovan & Cross, 2002) to drop-out and graduation rates (Wald & Losen, 2007) have led some to question the extent to which the promises of *Brown v. Board of Education* have been fulfilled (Blanchett, Mumford, & Beachum, 2005).

Not only is there a national change in legislation with regard to creating an equalized educational opportunity for all students, there is also concern for closing the achievement gap. National assessment data have shown the achievement gap has narrowed over time but still persists in reading and mathematics (Camera, 2016). In mathematics, although student achievement has increased, African-Americans rank narrowly below their Hispanic and Native American counterparts and significantly below White and Asian counterparts (Camera, 2016). The same is true for low socioeconomic students, SWD, and English language learners; although their overall achievement is improving, students still rank considerably below high socioeconomic students, students

without disabilities, and students who are English proficient (Garrett, 2014).

Teachers are a powerful force in the lives of students; what teachers perceive, believe, say, and do can disable or empower students (Kea & Utley, 1998). The findings that teachers treat children of different genders, races/ethnicities, or abilities in ways that may have deleterious consequences for subgroups of children have been a recurrent theme in classroom research (Melnick & Raudenbush 1986). With a teaching force in most school districts in this nation that is predominantly White and female (Zumwalt & Craig, 2005), the possibilities of cultural mismatch or racial stereotyping as a contributing factor to student achievement cannot be discounted. There is some indication that teachers do make differential judgments about achievement and behavior based on racially conditioned characteristics (Skiba et al., 2011). The reality is that cultural diversity in the schools results in differences in how the world is viewed by students and classroom teachers (Plata, 2008).

Classroom teachers have culturally embedded ways of doing things as well as likes and dislikes and know what they value and what they do not value. Each attribute and behavior internalized by students and teachers is learned from their respective cultural groups (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). Do these personally embedded cultural understandings come through in the classroom? Do students notice the cultural understandings? What impact do personally embedded cultural understandings have on the student? Through this study, the researcher sought to identify perceived teacher cultural insensitivities and examine teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom and the association between teacher and student perceptions of cultural sensitivity and student achievement.

Background

Four decades of research findings have consistently revealed a correlation between teacher expectations and student achievement (e.g., McKown & Weinstein, 2008; Rubie-Davies, Peterson, Sibley, & Rothenthal, 2015; Timperley & Phillips, 2003). Research in educational settings has repeatedly shown that teacher expectations predict student achievement mainly because they are accurate (see Brophy, 1983; Jussim, 1991; Jussim & Eccles, 1995, for reviews). Some prior research that supports the theory is Jussim and Eccles (1992). Jussim and Eccles (1992) and Brophy (1983) were the first to explicitly assess and compare self-fulfilling prophecy, perceptual bias, and accuracy (Jussim, Eccles, & Madon, 1996). Both of these studies assessed other models that were more complex versions of the model presented in Figure 1. In brief, Jussim et al. (1996) assessed whether teacher perceptions early in the school year predicted changes in achievement (by controlling for previous achievement) over and above changes accounted for by motivation (self-concept of ability, value placed on math, effort).

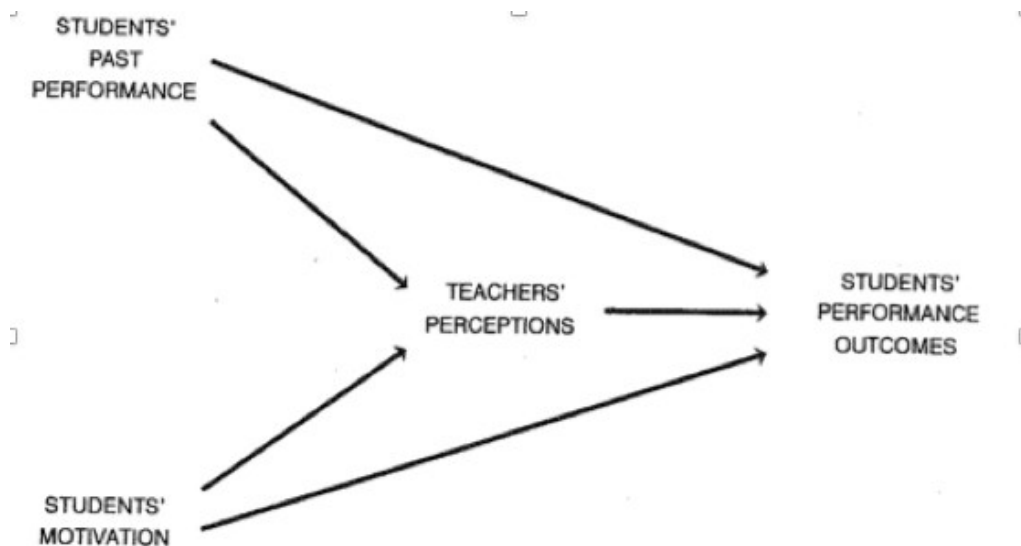


Figure 1. Conceptual Model of Relationships between Teacher Perceptions and Student Achievement.

More recent studies such as Timperley and Phillips (2003) supported this, stating, “teachers’ beliefs about students’ potential academic achievement become their goals for the students and shape their daily classroom decisions and actions, including what they believe to be appropriate curricular and instructional practices” (p. 628). Researchers have described how accurately and astutely elementary students perceived teacher verbal and nonverbal differential treatment of both high-achieving and low-achieving students. Rubie-Davies (2006) discovered that over a school year, elementary student self-perceptions in academic areas changed “in accordance with teachers’ expectations for their classes” (p. 550).

Teacher perceptions that were strongly linked to appropriate factors such as previous grades, standardized test scores, teacher perceptions of in-class performance, and student motivation are largely accurate. (The multiple correlation of these factors with teacher expectation variables ranged from approximately .6 to .8; Jussim et al., 1996).

Results from both studies also provided considerable evidence of predictive accuracy. The zero-order correlation between teacher expectations early in the year and the student achievement late in the year equals expectancy effects (influences of teacher expectations on student achievement) plus predictive accuracy (teachers basing their expectations on factors that influence student achievement; Jussim et al., 1996).

Statement of Problem

In today’s classrooms, there is a continued pattern of increased diversity. Data from the Educational Research Service (1995) and the National Center for Educational Statistics (2000) indicated an increase in the diversity of the school-age population. According to Cohn and Caumont (2016), Americans are more racially and ethnically

diverse than in the past, and the U.S. is projected to be even more diverse in the coming decades. Teacher preparation programs are adequate at teaching how to instruct using their subject areas but are limited in the instruction they provide on how to teach multicultural classrooms. Teachers are placed into classrooms with underdeveloped skills and strategies to help effectively educate diverse cultures. Teachers may not consider adding student cultural perspectives to the instructional process, because they may not have the skills to do so, especially if they are novice teachers whose teacher education programs excluded information on how to integrate culturally related phenomena into the curriculum (Plata, 2008). Since there is a limited amount of focus on cultural sensitivity in teacher preparation programs, teachers bring to the classroom personal ideas and perceptions of students. To change negative attitudes toward culturally and linguistically different students, teachers must dismantle encapsulated beliefs about student motivation, aspirations, expectations, and intellectual capabilities (Howard, 2001). Laszloffy and Habekost (2010) discovered that while it is possible to have cultural awareness without sensitivity, the reverse is not possible. To the extent that sensitivity is the translation of awareness into meaningful action, all sensitivity requires some awareness. It is possible that teachers are aware of different cultures but may not be sensitive to the differences of cultures in the classroom. There is a need for teachers to not just be aware of the distinctive cultures but also be sensitive to them in order to reach students. Plata (2008) indicated that cultural sensitivity sets the tone for classroom teacher reactions to student exhibited social behaviors and academic performance. Therefore, Plata also made the connection that teacher cultural sensitivity is judged on the basis of reactions to student social behaviors, appearance, and academic performance.

Brophy (1983) and Jussim (1991) have indicated that research in educational

settings has repeatedly shown that teacher expectations predict student achievement. Since research has shown that cultural sensitivity has an effect on student learning, the researcher is seeking to determine if teacher and student perceptions of cultural sensitivity differ in the classroom and if this has an impact on student achievement.

Purpose of Study

The researcher sought to provide insight for educators on teacher and student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom and the effect it has on student achievement. The study also explored the association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability.

This study looked at a viewpoint that is not commonly acknowledged, the student. Studies such as Brattesani, Weinstein, and Marshall (1984) have focused on the teacher and the possible biases in the classroom; but few have tried to decipher these actions, words, or perceptions from the student standpoint. Is what students see teachers doing, saying, and inferring affecting student achievement? This study was different from most because few have looked at these issues from the student perspective and tried to find a connection to what is viewed as not culturally sensitive that may affect academic success. Specifically, this study worked to answer the question, “what impact does student perception of teacher cultural sensitivity within the classroom have on student self-concept perceptions and academic achievement?”

Significance of the Study

It is well known that student motivation to learn is influenced by daily experiences in the classroom. On the basis of classroom experiences, the experiences set expectations for future learning (Blöte, 1995).

The significance of this study will provide future researchers with what student

perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity may look like in a classroom. The correlation between what the teachers think is cultural sensitivity and what the students see as cultural sensitivity will provide a foundation for future studies and what culturally sensitive classrooms should entail. The researcher hopes to provide insight for educators on how teacher cultural sensitivity affects student achievement in the classroom and if the perceptions between teachers and students on teacher cultural sensitivity differ.

Using this research will also help provide a foundation for teacher preparation programs to include cultural training and preparation for preservice teachers. Few preservice teachers express a preference for teaching in a setting that includes students of ethnically and racially diverse backgrounds which are different from their own, and even fewer feel that they are well prepared to teach these students (Gilbert, 1995). Olmedo (1997) called for a change in this; and in order to have an impact on this reality, the teacher education program will need to change. Many educators have written about the need for multicultural awareness and sensitivity as necessary components of effective teacher preparation programs for the urban environment (Avery & Walker, 1993; Banks, 1994; Cochran-Smith, 1991; Garcia, 1984; Haberman, 1987, 1991; Nieto, 1992; Rios, 1993; Rogus, 1987; Ross & Smith, 1992; Tatum, 1992). Due to the lack of preparing future teachers for today's culturally sensitive classrooms, this study could demonstrate the importance of incorporating preservice teacher training on cultural sensitivity into college and university levels. It may also push higher educational entities to provide classes and to also help future teachers become more aware of biases and how student academic achievement is affected. Teachers will be able to benefit from the insight to adjust practices, actions, or verbiage to promote an equal and culturally sensitive environment for all students. Educationally, the researcher hopes to reveal the

importance of providing culturally sensitive services to future teachers and improve the effect culturally sensitive teachers can have on students.

Public school classrooms in the United States consist mainly of White teachers instructing increasingly culturally diverse student populations (Bryan & Atwater, 2002). The disturbing reality is that many teachers continue to respond in ways that inadequately address the complexities of teaching and learning in a multicultural nation (Grant, Tate, Banks, & Banks, 2001; Howard, 1999). Although much has been written about the need for multicultural knowledge and skills as a necessary component of teacher preparation, very little has been done to design teacher education programs and research agendas that specifically address the beliefs that teachers hold about multicultural influences on teaching and learning (Olmedo, 1997). Many educators have written about the need for multicultural awareness and sensitivity as necessary components of effective teacher preparation programs for the urban environment (Avery & Walker, 1993). The American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (1991) addressed the preparation of teachers to provide appropriate instruction to diverse students:

Institutions of higher education and the schools, colleges and departments of education should be committed to ensuring that the education of all prospective teachers is culturally relevant to the needs of all youngsters and is more focused towards their needs, aspirations, and culturally influenced learning styles.

(“Minority teacher supply and demand”)

Research Questions

Despite the increasing diversity of population in education, little research exists with regard to what students encounter in the classrooms on a daily basis and how these actions, observations, or words affect the classroom experience and academic

achievement.

1. To what extent is there an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability?
2. To what extent is there an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance?
3. To what extent is there an association between teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance?
4. To what extent is there an association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity?
5. What are student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom?

Theoretical Framework

As stated by Jussim et al. (1996),

The conceptual model assumes that student backgrounds (previous grades and test scores, motivation, self-concept, etc.) influence both teacher perceptions and students' future performance outcomes. Figure 2 shows how the model further indicates a connection between teacher perceptions of students and student academic outcome; this is captured by the thin horizontal arrow. Conceptually, this arrow represents self-fulfilling prophecies. The thin vertical arrow represents the idea that various proposed moderators may increase or decrease the self-fulfilling influence of teacher expectations on student achievement. The short thin arrow represents the possible influence of various aspects on teacher perceptions. The long thin arrow represents the controls we have included in assessing relationships between teacher perceptions and students' future

performance. (pp. 296-297)

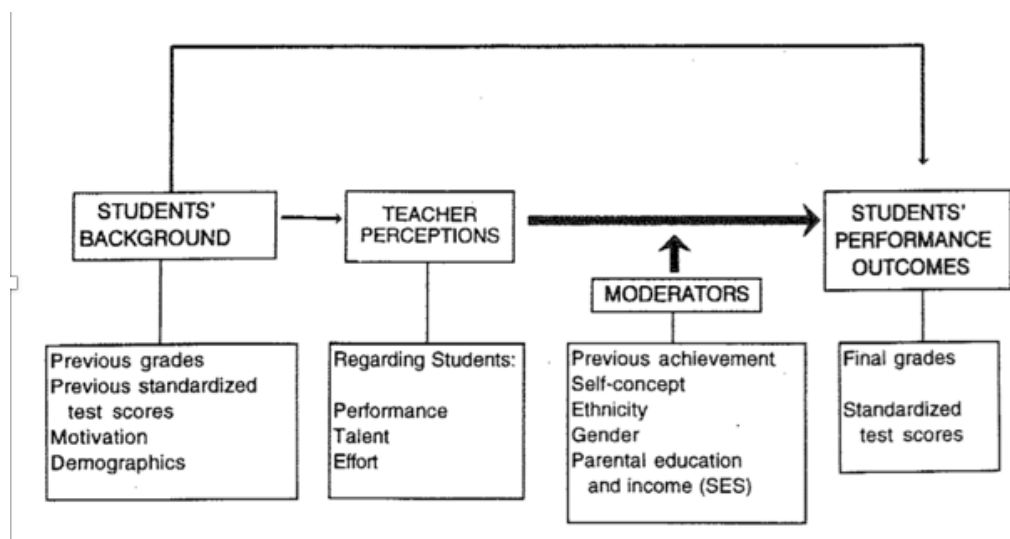


Figure 2. Conceptual Model of Relationships between Teacher Perceptions and Student Achievement.

Accuracy and the Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

Another theoretical framework this researcher used is the self-concept ability. This theory is defined as the sum of all attitudes and assessments an individual possesses about his or her own abilities and competencies (Meyer, 1984). Several analyses have shown a moderate positive correlation between general self-concept of ability and academic performance (Hansford & Hattie, 1982). In addition, the correlation observed between the academic self-concept of ability and academic performance appears to be twice as strong (Mboya, 1993). As a result, high academic self-concept of ability is associated with higher grades, while low academic self-concept of ability often accompanies lower grades (Schöne, Dickhäuser, Spinath, & Stiensmeier-Pelster 2003).

Framework for Cultural Sensitivity in the Classroom

Howard (2015) designed a framework which helped the researcher to determine what culturally sensitive classrooms should include. This framework involves seven

principles that teachers can use to evaluate their classrooms to see if they are culturally responsive classrooms for all students. These principles were created by observing 11 different teachers over a 2-day period.

Assumptions

The following assumptions were recognized in this study.

Choosing the English II classes in the high school as the research subjects provided a current representation of the school's population due to the fact that all students have to take the English II End-of-Course (EOC) test. Since all students have to take this class, it was filled with all ability levels, ethnic backgrounds, genders, and races of the school.

The researcher assumed that all participants would be honest and give truthful answers when answering the survey questions. Anonymity and confidentiality was preserved, and the participants volunteered and had the opportunity to withdraw from the study at any time with no ramifications.

Limitations

The following limitations were recognized in this study.

1. The researcher's position at the school in which the study is taking place.
2. The honesty of the participants.
3. Participants fear of retribution if not answering questions in the way they think the researcher wants them to.
4. Fear from teachers that they may be evaluated on their responses.
5. Possible lack of the diversity in teachers who are involved in study.
6. Possible lack of representation of the school population.
7. Lack of diversity in teacher gender and race who teach the English II classes.

8. May not be representative of the population of any other school or the nation.
9. Any correlations found could be specific to the study site.
10. Attrition of participants.
11. Time.
12. Data collection methods.
13. Researcher bias/subjectivity.
14. Limitations in participant ability/willingness to share or describe their experiences.

Delimitations

The following delimitations were recognized in this study.

1. Small participation size.
2. Inclusion/exclusion criteria (how the researcher defined the population of interest).
3. Research questions or problem the researcher chose to examine.
4. Theoretical framework.
5. Methodological framework or paradigm chosen.
6. Variables the researcher chose to measure in study.

Deficiencies in the Literature

Studies such as Brattesani et al. (1984) have focused on the teacher and their possible biases in the classroom; but few have tried to decipher these actions, words, or perceptions from the student standpoint. In all the literature related to cultural sensitivity and education, there is a deficiency in the research of using student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and the correlation of academic achievement.

Another finding is the lack of providing preservice teachers with cultural

sensitivity training. Olmedo (1997) stated that the teacher education program will need to change. Many educators have written about the need for multicultural awareness and sensitivity as necessary components of effective teacher preparation programs for the urban environment (Avery & Walker, 1993; Banks, 1994; Cochran-Smith, 1991; Garcia, 1984; Haberman, 1987, 1991; Nieto, 1992; Rios, 1993; Rogus, 1987; Ross & Smith, 1992; Tatum, 1992).

Research Design

The research design of the study was the mixed-methods approach. Mixed methods is characterized by a focus on research problems that require (a) an examination of real-life contextual understandings, multi-level perspectives, and cultural influences; (b) an intentional application of rigorous quantitative research assessing magnitude and frequency of constructs and rigorous qualitative research exploring the meaning and understanding of the constructs; and (c) an objective of drawing on the strengths of quantitative and qualitative data gathering techniques to formulate a holistic interpretive framework for generating possible solutions or new understandings of the problem (Research Guides, 2010). The mixed-methods study hoped to provide some insight for educators on how teacher cultural sensitivity affects student achievement in the classroom and if the perceptions between teachers and students on teacher cultural sensitivity differ. This study was a mixed-methods approach, which incorporated elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, this study followed the convergent parallel mixed methods design (Figure 5). In this approach the researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzed them separately, and then compared the results to see if the findings confirm or disconfirm each other. The key assumption of this approach is that both qualitative and quantitative

data provide different types of information and together they yield results that should be the same (Creswell, 2014).

A survey was administered to the English teachers about their own personal cultural sensitivity. This allowed for a baseline of what the teacher may or may not believe is their cultural sensitivity. This was compared to another survey that was administered to students in each classroom to evaluate what they feel the cultural sensitivity is of their current teacher.

Prior to the beginning of the semester, the participating teachers assessed themselves and their cultural sensitivity through a survey that was adapted from a framework created by Howard (2015) of what the seven principles for culturally responsive teaching looks like. Students who were enrolled in each English class that semester then took a child-friendly worded version of the teacher self-assessment of their teachers' cultural sensitivity to compare the results.

The students enrolled in the English classes also took a self-concept ability survey to measure their own ability level in English. The teachers were also asked to assess current student ability levels in their class. This helped to determine if what the students see as the student ability will compare to what the teachers see as that student's ability. At the end of the semester, the final EOC score and classroom grade were used to either confirm or dispute what the perceptions of the teacher or students were on their ability level.

Teachers were given some basic prior information about their students with the following information: name, age, parent (guardian) names, home address, phone number, who they live with, and siblings. Teachers were asked to rate each student as either a fast or slow learner based on the information they had been given.

Definitions of Terms

Academic self-concept of ability. Comprises all the evaluations an individual makes concerning his or her own abilities in the academic field, such as assessments on subject-specific competencies (Schöne et al., 2003).

Conceptual model. “This model assumes that student backgrounds (previous grades and test scores, motivation, self-concept, etc.) influence both teacher perceptions and students’ future performance outcomes. The model further assumes that teacher perceptions may also influence student performance outcomes” (Jussim et al., 1996, pp. 296-297).

Culture.

The term culture, as it pertains to the teaching model presented here, is used as an umbrella concept that includes all of the dimensions of diversity, including, but not limited to, race, ethnicity, nationality, class, gender, sexual orientation, religion, age, and ability. (Laszloffy & Habekost, 2010, p. 334)

Cultural competence. “The term cultural competence is defined as the presence of both cultural awareness and sensitivity whereby awareness refers to a state of cognizance of, insight into, and knowledge about diversity issues” (Laszloffy & Habekost, 2010, p. 334).

Culturally relevant pedagogy. Pedagogy that would propose to do three things: produce students who can achieve academically, produce students who demonstrate cultural competence, and develop students who can both understand and critique the existing social order (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Culturally responsive teaching. Teaching and leading in such a way that more students across more of their differences achieve at a higher level and engage at a deeper

level more of the time without giving up who they are (Howard, 2015).

Culturally relevant teaching. Instruction and curriculum believed to improve the academic performance of culturally diverse students (Callins, 2006) and the self-esteem of the racial, ethnic, and linguistic minority student population (McCarthy, 1994). Reflected in teaching methods this can include but is not limited to instructional materials used to teach a lesson, the activities used to teach a concept in a lesson, the examples used in a lesson that allows students to link the concepts being learned to their previous experiences and knowledge bases, the learning strategies allowed for students to learn a lesson (individual versus cooperative learning), and the methods used to assess achievement (Plata, 2008).

Cultural self-awareness. Personal insight into how their values, beliefs, experiences, attitudes, language, and customs have been molded by their cultural groups (Howard, 2001; Leigh, 1998; Osborn, 1996).

Cultural sensitivity. A state of attunement to, emotional resonances with, and meaningful responsiveness to the needs and feelings of others. It is the ability to recognize how the dimensions of diversity shape reality in inequitable ways. It is the ability to anticipate another's perceptions and feelings and to modify and adjust one's behaviors so as to make another feel comfortable and understood in terms of one or more of the dimensions of diversity (Laszloffy & Habekost, 2010, p. 336). It is a cognitive construct comprising perceptual schemata of values, beliefs, and attitudes learned from a cultural group. It is culturally based and is learned (Plata, 2008).

Self-concept of ability. The sum of all attitudes and assessments an individual possesses about his or her own abilities and competencies (Meyer, 1984).

Self-concept. Self-esteem, self-identity, and self-concept—educators use these

terms to devote the totality of meanings, feelings, and attitudes children maintain about themselves. Self-concept refers to cognitive activity: children's awareness of their own characteristics and of likenesses and differences between themselves and others (Marsh, Craven, & Debus, 1998).

Self-fulfilling prophecy. Idea that one's expectations about a person can eventually lead that person to behave and achieve in ways that confirm those expectations (Tauber, 1998). Self-fulfilling prophecy, a term coined by Merton in 1948, means that students perform in the ways teachers expect. Student performance is based on subtle and not-so-subtle messages from teachers about his or her worth, intelligence, and capabilities (Trice, 2003).

Teacher expectations. The result of teacher regular interactions with their students in the classroom and how they interpret those interactions to determine the abilities of that student.

Summary

Jussim et al. (1996) suggested there are few contexts more important for investigating self-fulfilling prophecies than teacher expectations for their students. Ever since Rosenthal and Jacobson's (1968) seminal and controversial (e.g., Elashoff & Snow, 1971) Pygmalion study, writers in both scholarly journals and the popular press have implicated teacher expectations as a major perpetrator of injustices and inequalities based on ethnicity, social class, and gender (see Wineburg, 1987, for a review). Chapter 2 of this study reviews the research and findings in relation to this thought process. The remainder of the study focuses on answering the research question, "how do student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity influence their academic performance?"

Chapter 2: Literature Review

Introduction

The purpose of the research was to seek insight for educators on teacher and student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom and the effect it has on student achievement. The study also explored the association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability.

This review of literature of a mixed-methods study focuses on substantiating the research problem and posing possible questions or hypotheses that need to be addressed (Creswell, 2014). The current review includes subject areas associated with cultural sensitivity, classroom teacher cultural sensitivity, student self-concept of ability, and academic achievement and how these topic areas can be associated in order to show how the research fits with larger contextual ideas.

Cultural Sensitivity and the Classroom

Schools have the rare privilege of being a setting where individuals from varied cultural backgrounds and different languages, values, beliefs, and worldviews come together for an extensive period for a common purpose: to acquire an education (Plata, 2008). The issue that most educators face is that there is not a one-size-fits-all model in order to educate those who come bearing outside cultural experiences. The reality is that cultural diversity in the school results in differences in how the world is viewed by students and classroom teachers (Plata, 2008). Both teachers and students bring with them their culturally embedded ways of doing things that can also affect their success in the classroom. The differences seen in the classroom are representative of the makeup of the nation. There are many dimensions of culture identity, according to Banks (1994),

including gender, sexual orientation, skin color, socioeconomic status (SES), nationality, religion, and exceptionality; and in order to be effective in the classroom, educators have to exhibit an appreciation of cultural sensitivity.

Cultural sensitivity refers to a state of attunement to, emotional resonances with, and meaningful responsiveness to the needs and feelings of others. It is the ability to recognize how the dimensions of diversity shape reality in inequitable ways. It is the ability to anticipate another's perceptions and feelings and to modify and adjust one's behaviors so as to make another feel comfortable and understood in terms of one or more of the dimensions of diversity (Laszloffy, & Habekost, 2010).

Shealey and Callins (2007) said that demonstration of cultural sensitivity requires teachers to “learn about the culture represented in their classrooms and translate this knowledge into instructional practices” (p. 196) and that culturally mediated instruction is “characterized by the use of culturally mediated cognition, culturally appropriate social situations for learning, and culturally valued knowledge in curriculum content” (p. 196).

Framework for Cultural Sensitivity

Howard (2015) identified a framework for culturally sensitive classrooms. Howard (2015) suggested that there is a framework in which teachers can create a culturally sensitive classroom by following the seven principles listed below:

- Students are affirmed in their cultural connections.
- Teachers are personally inviting.
- Learning environments are physically and culturally inviting.
- Students are reinforced for academic development.

- Instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners.
- Classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control.
- Interactions stress collectivity as well as individuality.

The first three principles are seen as the front porch of learning, which are seen as intentionally teacher-centered behaviors. Principle 1, students are affirmed in their cultural connections, refers to the idea of incorporating some of the following strategies (Howard, 2015): using examples from student lives, redlining, driving while black, profiling, making personal connections across cultures, multicultural images in the artwork, décor, career options, multicultural content integrated into regular lessons, inclusion of diverse authors/experts/contributors to the field, encouraging students to explore their own interests in project assignments, a lot of emphasis on culture in the classroom, teachers sponsor trips to different cultural settings, and photos of past students showing the diversity of the school and school-wide opportunities for students to learn about their own and other cultures.

Howard (2015) also identified some possible barriers or missed opportunities to utilize this principle. Some possible missed opportunities include disciplines where it feels like a stretch to make diverse culture, a bare, sparse classroom environment that looks like kids do not live there; students looking at the racial makeup of a class to determine whether it will be easy or difficult; and stereotypes, insensitive comments, hurtful language ignored or tolerated or using the phrase, “That’s so gay.”

Principle 2 involves the teacher being personally inviting (Howard, 2015). Some examples include welcoming students at the door, friendly informal demeanor, sharing examples from their own experience, relaxed environment, beginning class right away

engaged in activity, gentle approach to high-energy or possibly disruptive students, clearly communicating their employment of the students, and having high expectations of everyone.

Some of the possible barriers or missed opportunities in Principle 2 are staying only in front of the room, engaging only small numbers of students in discussions, slowing the class startup while taking roll at the beginning, nonverbal messages that communicate low expectations, using sarcasm and put-downs with students, and managing the classroom by intimidation (Howard, 2015).

Principle 3 focuses on making the learning environment culturally and physically inviting (Howard, 2015). Some examples include décor in room reflects content of course, visuals of career options related to the course, student work/projects displayed prominently, music played during small group work time, multicultural images, soft lighting initially as students enter, interesting things to look at and read on walls, and personal interests of the teacher are evident in the room décor.

Possible barriers to Principle 3 are if the room is bare and sterile, the structure of the room makes interaction difficult, and the teacher and student spaces are rigidly defined (Howard, 2015).

Principle 4 involves students being reinforced for academic development. It is creating the belief that students are intelligent and that teachers are looking for ways to catch students being smart (Howard, 2015). Examples include a lot of student work on display, key concepts are explained clearly on posters, “Thank you for correcting my mistake,” “Jose, didn’t you say something earlier about this case,” individualized pacing of lessons, asking students to think and discover the scientific process, review and reinforcement of past learning, “Great question,” students are encouraged to submit work

for local and regional contests, step-by-step clear sequencing of learning, holding to high expectations – “Everyone is writing now,” “I know it’s hard, but if you get this habit now it will be a lot easier,” complimenting students for positive feedback heard from another teacher, going to study skills class to work with students they have in their class, encouraging students to apply for higher level courses and other special focus programs, and catching students being smart.

Howard (2015) also provided some possible barriers or missed opportunities in this principle. Some of these barriers include large class sizes that make it difficult to get to the disengaged students, finding ways to reinforce abilities that teachers do not see, having all different abilities paced the same, allowing some students to languish in nonengagement, not reinforcing students for trying even when response is wrong, having a lack of ethnic/racial/economic diversity in higher level classes, accepting mediocrity, not finding ways to accommodate for differences when the district-driven focus on test results is so narrowly scripted, and also answering the question, “Sometimes I forget that for every assignment I give, there are some students who can’t do the work. How do I deal with this”?

Principle 5 focuses on the instructional changes that are made to accommodate differences in learners (Howard, 2015). This principle looks for differentiation and shifting practices to where students are. Examples include allowing students to switch roles when one feels uncomfortable in an assigned classroom interaction; creating an environment where students can concentrate in a way that fits their learning style; valuing diverse learning styles—ways of paying attention; calling on a wide variety of ethnic and style-different students, proactive strategies for getting access to technology for students who do not have that access at home; paying attention to cultural and religious nuances

and social interactions, awareness and responsiveness to the tensions in the home country and the way these can impact immigrant students; and valuing, learning from, and incorporating into instruction the different languages the students bring to the classroom.

Possible barriers or missed opportunities from teachers in Principle 5 are difficulty of accommodation in some disciplines, recruitment and retention of Black and Hispanic students to some programs they do not see as their “turf,” accommodating if a student is not there, failing due to nonattendance, not providing language diverse students with access to the content in different languages, and teaching from only one modality of intelligence or learning style (Howard, 2015).

Principle 6 involves the classroom being managed with firm, consistent, loving control (Howard, 2015). This focuses on the art of preempted respect and classroom management. Some examples include seating arrangement used as preventative strategy, small groups used as a preventative strategy, potentially volatile students handled gently, allowed space within the structure, “Can we refocus,” strong messages of caring and respect, teachers teaming to create consistent strategies for disruptive students, high expectations for a learning-centered environment, “You know what the routine is,” “Thank you. Now I know you are listening,” teachers of different racial and cultural groups cover each other’s backs and approach the students in a consistent way, school-wide expectations clearly communicated to everyone, and teachers and administrators are mutually supportive in their behavioral interventions.

Possible barriers identified by Howard (2015) to Principle 6 include difficult pairs allowed to sit or work together, combinations of several high maintenance students in the same class, disproportionate energy given to one student, interactive classes with high energy and high maintenance students can be “the longest 50 minutes in a teacher’s day,”

unclear or mixed messages from faculty and administrators, and playing favorites or playing students against each other.

Principle 7 focuses on interactions that stress collectively as well as individually. Howard (2015) described it as how we learn together and how we learn alone. Examples include small-group discussion regularly built into lessons; large-group discussion regularly built into instruction; individual work on problem-solving; teamwork on problem-solving; thoughtful formulation of small groups to get maximum diversity of gender, ethnicity, and ability in each team; checking for individual understanding among members of a team; direct teaching of skills for working effectively in teams; personal journaling; allowing students to pick their own small groups initially, then gradually moving them toward more diverse groups; excellent examples of Socratic dialogue; and diversity leadership and cultural awareness workshops for students that focus on cultural competence skills.

Possible barriers for missed opportunities that were identified by Howard (2015) for Principle 7 are loose or unclear guidelines/expectations for teamwork; some students need to learn how to work in a team; lack of forethought about team membership; missed opportunities to use peer tutoring; some kids share naturally, but for others it needs to be encouraged/taught; and structure of the room prevents/discourages small group work.

One drawback as illustrated by Ortiz and Flanagan (2002) stated when classroom teachers perceive themselves to come from a group possessing values, beliefs, and ability superior to culturally diverse students, these perceptions may influence their ability to accurately perceive, understand, and integrate into classroom practice the meaning students attach to their own experiences, beliefs, values, and expectations. In order to have a culturally sensitive classroom, teachers also have to be culturally sensitive

themselves; part of this involves being culturally self-aware.

Culturally Self-Aware

Gallavan and Ramirez (2005) stated effective teacher education should guide preservice and practicing teachers in comprehending and facilitating educational concepts and pedagogical practices that examine and promote equality for all learners. Teachers and young learners benefit from sundry opportunities to recognize their self-identities and to celebrate both individual and shared cultural characteristics, while increasing an appreciation of others and society (Gallavan & Ramirez, 2005). Teacher cultural characteristics frequently do not match the cultural characteristics reflective of their young learners, and teachers may not be cognizant that young learners do not see and operate in the world as the teacher does. Critical pedagogy frequently fails to occur when dissonance lies between teacher backgrounds, beliefs, and behaviors and those characterizing their young learners (Gallavan & Ramirez, 2005).

Cultural self-awareness is a first step toward understanding how factors of culture, race, ethnicity, SES, acculturation, language, and the interaction between these variables affect culturally diverse student learning (Plata, 2008). It is imperative that teachers develop insight into how values, beliefs, experiences, attitudes, language, and customs have been molded by their cultural groups (Howard, 2001; Leigh, 1998; Osborn, 1996). Gaining self-awareness about how perspectives are developed helps teachers understand underlying reasons for problems that culturally diverse students encounter in the educational system (e.g., low academic performance, low standardized achievement test performance, overrepresentation in special education, alienation, high drop-out rates; Ogbu, 1992). To teach successfully in culturally diverse classrooms, school teachers need to become more aware of their own multicultural perceptions as their beliefs and

behaviors affect the academic and social skill development of the students (Taylor & Quintana, 2003). Being culturally self-aware is only one aspect of a culturally sensitive teacher.

Culturally Sensitive Teachers

In the educational setting, classroom teachers are key professionals charged with the responsibility of transmitting important social and academic knowledge and skills (Plata, 2008). Since culture is the backdrop within which teaching and learning take place (Schnell, 2007), it is important that teachers provide a culturally sensitive environment. Knowledge of cultural differences is one of the basic requirements for achieving cultural sensitivity (Buchtel, 2014). Cultural sensitivity sets the tone for classroom teacher reactions to student exhibited social behaviors and academic performance (Plata, 2008). Teacher cultural sensitivity is judged on the basis of their reactions to student social behaviors, appearance, and academic performance (Plata, 2008).

Everyone uses their cultural background to “filter” what they perceive in the classroom (Buchtel, 2014). Just like students, classroom teachers have culturally embedded ways of doing things as well as likes and dislikes, and they know what they value and what they do not value. Each attribute and behavior for students and teachers is learned from their respective cultural groups (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002). When classroom teachers perceive themselves to come from a group possessing values, beliefs, and abilities superior to students who are culturally diverse, the perspectives may influence the ability to accurately perceive, understand, and integrate into classroom practices the meanings students attach to their own experiences, beliefs, values, and expectations (Ortiz & Flanagan, 2002); thus, classroom teachers need to be on guard

against the unintentional or intentional use of power to condemn students to subordinate roles based on stereotypes (Fiske, 1993) or racial, cultural, and/or language differences (Hanson, 1992).

If classroom teachers have personal agendas or allow personal experiences, beliefs, values, and expectations to dominate the teaching of culturally and linguistically different students, they may ignore, distort, or underemphasize the student motivations, aspirations, expectations, and intellectual capabilities to learn (Plata, 2008). As educators take a closer look at what encompasses awareness and sensitivity of diversity and cultural ethnicity, they need to understand just what is involved in multi-ethnic education. For many, it is learning about oneself as well as understanding the next-door neighbors who may be different in culture, age, abilities, or even spoken language (Mims & Morris, 1999).

If teachers are to be successful in teaching culturally diverse pupils, they must affirm at least three beliefs: First, children who are limited-English speakers, who are from culturally diverse backgrounds, and who are from economically depressed families are worthy of an education equal in quality to that provided to children from the mainstream group and from economically advantaged circumstances; second, racial, ethnic, and linguistically different children have the capability to achieve equal to that of children from the mainstream group; third, teachers are obligated to seek out and use culturally relevant teaching strategies and instructional material to bring these beliefs to fruition (Plata, 2008).

Since classroom teachers are not obligated to include multicultural viewpoints in instruction, culturally relevant instruction depends on teacher cultural sensitivity and willingness to react appropriately. A culturally sensitive and culturally competent teacher

appreciates, values, and celebrates similarities and differences within, between, and among a heterogeneous student population (Singh, 1996).

Characteristics of Culturally Sensitive Teachers

Callins (2006) suggested that to develop a culturally relevant curriculum, classroom teachers need to consider the developing characteristics thought to be essential in providing culturally responsive teaching. The following are characteristics included in a culturally sensitive classroom and with a culturally sensitive teacher.

Communicating high expectations. There is a pervasive message that students will succeed on the basis of not only genuine respect for them but also beliefs in their capabilities.

Using active teaching methods. Teachers require students to be actively involved in providing input about instruction and the teaching skills.

Facilitating learning. The teacher is not only an instructor but a guide, a mediator, and a consultant/advisor.

Maintaining positive perspectives on the parents and families of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Develop trust by maintaining communication with parents about their children's school progress and including parents and community members in classroom activities.

Manifesting the willingness to gain knowledge of student cultures. Integrate knowledge of student cultures into culturally responsive instructional and behavioral management practices.

Providing culturally mediated instruction. Have instruction reflect student ways of learning and use real situations, experiences, and language from student everyday lives.

Including small group instruction and cooperative learning. Organize instruction around low-pressure, student-controlled learning groups that assist in the development of academic language.

Due to the lack of effective teacher education programs for preservice and practicing teachers in comprehending and facilitating educational concepts and pedagogical practices that examine and promote equality for all learners, not all teachers are provided the opportunity to learn how to be culturally sensitive or to minimize their own bias and perceptions of students (Gallavan & Ramirez, 2005).

Teacher Perceptions

Perceptions are influenced by biases that operate in the egocentric view individuals use to interpret their social structure and are directly affected by social, ethnic, and cultural affiliations. These differences in the backgrounds of the individuals often lead to perceptual disparities and social incompatibilities in interpersonal interactions (Sheets, 1996). Teacher gender, experience, and ethnicity were important determinants of their respect for students (Cooper & Good, 1983).

According to Cooper and Good (1983), in exploring teacher classroom experience, the study found that teacher experience influenced their perceptions of students. While new teachers were prone to rate all student ethnicities higher than veteran teachers, they rated Asian students highest, regardless of SES. Teacher perception is shaped by society's influence on the teacher, while teacher expectation is the educator's direct influence on the student. For example, a teacher may have the perception that Latinos and African-Americans, for whatever reasons, will not do well in school. Therefore, the teacher's expectations are that Latinos or African-American students will not do well in his or her particular classroom (Cooper & Good, 1983). Cooper and Good concluded that

teacher perception can be interpreted as the cause, while teacher expectation is viewed as the effect.

There has been research to confirm that there are teachers who have certain perceptions of student ability based on factors including their gender, SES, and race. Studies of teacher ratings of their perceptions of Black and White students generally conclude, on average, that teachers have more negative attitudes and beliefs about Black children regarding potential for success, ability, and behavior (Melnick & Raudenbush, 1986). Oates (2003) stated in his study that it showed the preliminary models predicting favorable teacher perceptions reveal evidence of anti-Black bias among White teachers, and race neutrality among African-American teachers. The combination of this pattern and evidence that (a) White teacher perceptions border on being significantly more consequential to the performance of African-American students (vis-a-vis White) and (b) the impact of African-American teacher (especially race neutral) perceptions on performance do not differ significantly across race, imply that teacher perceptions altogether foster perpetuation of the Black-White scholastic performance gap (Oates, 2003). The impact of teacher perceptions on test performance shows signs of being especially pronounced in the racially dissonant White teacher/Black student context, the very context where teacher perceptions seem especially likely to be unfavorable (Oates, 2003).

Black and Hispanic individuals most often contend with negative stereotypes and intellectual abilities more generally (Oates, 2003). Teachers held higher expectations for White students than for Mexican-American students, whereas expectations for Blacks and Mexican-Americans did not differ (Melnick & Raudenbush, 1986).

At school, economically disadvantaged students are further hobbled by the stigma

of poverty. Recent research documents the persistence of teacher misperceptions concerning the cognitive abilities of low-income students (Foster, 2008). Prime and Miranda (2006) have shown that teachers continue to simplify higher level curricula in science and mathematics based on the beliefs that economically disadvantaged students *cannot* learn abstract concepts and are *unlikely* to ever use them (Prime & Miranda, 2006). “Teacher expectations influence the standardized test scores of students from lower SES backgrounds more strongly than they influence the standardized test scores of students from higher SES backgrounds” (Jussim et al., 1996, p. 307). Cole (2008) suggested that prejudice against the poor of any race is a factor that influences or works against the academic achievement of disadvantaged students.

As for gender, teacher expectations influence girl grades more strongly than they influence boy grades (Jussim et al., 1996, p. 301). Figure 3 clearly shows that boy grades are virtually unaffected by teacher perception of talent, whereas girl grades are affected. The effects are quite small but show a positive correlation.

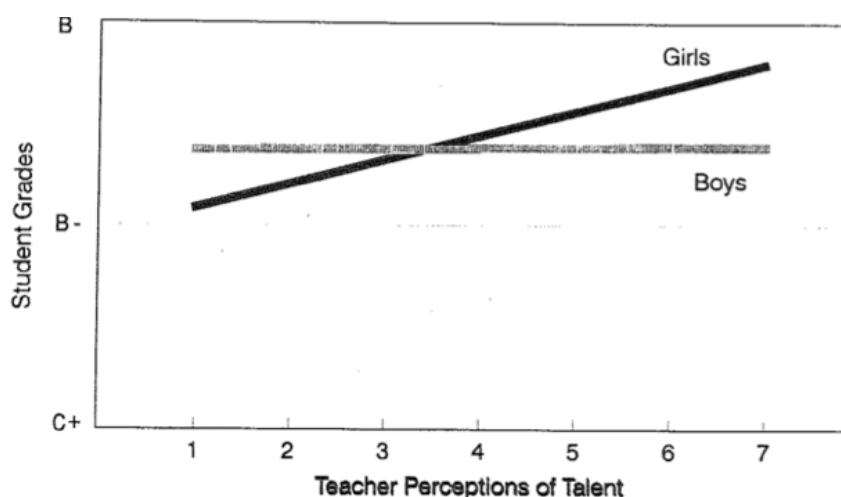


Figure 3. Teacher Expectations Influence Girl Grades More Strongly than They Influence Boy Grades.

A study of early adolescent students found that a factor tapping student perceptions of support, interest, and respect they received from teachers was the most influential single component of academic motivation, effort, and achievement (Wayman, 2002). According to Bamburg (1994), the expectations teachers have for students and the assumptions made about their potential have a tangible effect on student achievement. Students tend to internalize the beliefs teachers have about their ability. Students rise and fall to the level of expectations of teachers (Bamburg, 1994).

Teacher Perceptions and Student Achievement

Past studies conducted by Jussim (1989), and Jussim and Eccles (1992) have shown that when assessing whether teacher perceptions early in the school year predicted changes in achievement (by controlling for previous achievement) over and above changes accounted for by motivation (self-concept of ability, valued placed on math, effort), teacher perceptions of performance significantly predicted changes in student self-concept of math and ability in the sixth-grade year. These two studies were the first to explicitly assess and compare self-fulfilling prophecy, perceptual bias, and accuracy (Jussim et al., 1996). The model they followed was the conceptual model, identified earlier in the study, which assumes that student backgrounds (previous grades and test scores, motivation, self-concept) influence both teacher perceptions and student future performance outcomes. The model also further assumes that teacher perception may also influence student performance outcomes (Jussim et al., 1996).

One area in which they found no evidence of the connection of teacher perceptions and student achievement is when teachers assumed that higher achievers were working harder, whereas there was no evidence that the students who received the higher grades actually worked any harder than their peers. In fact, the students who

received low grades reported spending more time on homework than the other students (Jussim, 1989; Jussim & Eccles, 1995).

There is both accuracy and inaccuracy in teacher perceptions. Teacher perceptions were largely accurate because they were most strongly linked to appropriate factors: previous grades, standardized test scores, teacher perception of in-class performance, and student motivation (Jussim, 1989).

Due to the findings of these studies, the perceptions of teachers can also have an effect on how students feel about themselves, or their self-concept. The next section looks at how teacher expectancy can feed into student self-concept and ultimately turn into a self-fulfilling prophecy.

Teacher Perceptions and Effects on Student Self-Concept

Teachers often lack an awareness of the quality and quantity of interactions with perceived high and low expectancy students. Under such conditions, teachers may inadvertently have differentiated treatment of these specified students. Analogously, student motivation and achievement can be affected by the perception of teacher behavior as related to expectations (Cooper & Good, 1983).

Considerable research has identified ways in which teachers treat high and low expectation students differently that may account for the expectancy-confirming impact of teacher expectations. For example, relative to low expectancy students, teachers demonstrate a positive bias in evaluating the work of high expectancy students (Jussim, 1998; Jussim & Eccles, 1992; Jussim et al., 1996); provide more response opportunities and praise and less criticism (Brophy, 1983); provide more challenging instruction (Brophy, 1998; Jussim, 1989); and interact in ways that are warmer and more accepting (Babad, 1992).

Several researchers have proposed that children's interpretations of differential treatment have implications for perceptions of their own abilities and performance expectations (Weinstein & Middlestadt, 1979). Support for this view comes from studies reporting that student perceptions of teacher perceptions of their abilities partially mediate expectancy effects, especially in older grades (Kuklinski & Weinstein, 2001).

A number of studies have found that teacher perceptions of a student's conformity to classroom behavior norms lead to lowered teacher expectations of student academic skills and result in differential treatment of students (Bennett, Gottesman, Rock, & Cerullo, 1993; Brophy & Good, 1974; Jussim 1989). Edmonds (1986), in a study comparing the effectiveness of schools in fostering student academic achievement, found evidence suggesting that some teachers systematically varied behaviors according to student characteristics; for example, race, SES, and academic performance. Such treatment, when presented, may indirectly inform students about expected behavior and thereby affect self-image and motivation (Brattesani et al., 1984).

A student mediation model of teacher expectation effects proposes that students acquire information about their abilities by observing the differential teacher treatment accorded high and low achievers, then students revise their own achievement expectations and subsequently perform according to the expectation perceived (Brattesani et al., 1984). Classic social psychology suggests that stereotypes are inaccurate and lead to biased perceptions of targets and would lead teachers to develop erroneous expectations for these students, which would then create self-fulfilling prophecies (Jussim et al., 1996). Research in educational settings has repeatedly shown that teacher expectations predict student achievement mainly because they are accurate (Brophy, 1983; Jussim, 1991; Jussim & Eccles, 1995).

Although negative teacher expectations are not identical to failure, the researcher speculated that such expectations could readily produce effects analogous to those associated with failure; that is, if students must bear the brunt of inappropriately low teacher expectations and if students belong to a stigmatized group, their enhanced vulnerability to negative school events may render them more susceptible to self-fulfilling prophecies (Jussim et al., 1996). It is possible that students who perceive that their teachers possess negative attitudes towards them feel rejected; and this perception, in turn, fosters undesirable classroom behavior (Wayman, 2002).

A study extended beyond Babad's (1990) research as far as the relations between teacher expectancy, perceived teacher behavior, and student self-concept are concerned. The following is a description of the mediating variables, teacher expectancy and student self-concept, originating from Darley and Fazio (1980) and Rosenthal (1985). Teacher expectancies influence teacher behavior toward the student. This behavior is perceived and interpreted by the student who, as a result, can change his/her self-expectations into the direction of teacher expectations, creating a different self-concept of ability (Laszloffy & Habekost, 2010).

Student Self-Concept of Ability

Self-concept refers to cognitive activity: children's awareness of their own characteristics and of likenesses and differences between themselves and others (Marsh et al., 1998). Self-concept researchers (e.g., Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2002) have maintained that academic self-concepts are constructed based on various frames of reference; one of which involves social comparison processes, whereby students compare their own achievement with the average achievement of other students in the learning context (e.g., school or class) and use this relativistic, inter-individual evaluation as a basis to form

their academic self-concepts. Following this social comparison, the big-fish-little-pond effect (BFLPE; Marsh, 1987) model predicts the following: “Students have lower self-perceived academic skills and lower academic self-concepts when they compare themselves with more able students, and higher self-perceived academic skills and academic self-concepts when they compare themselves with less able students” (p. 287). As the visual representation in Figure 4 shows, the BFLPE model posits that while individual student academic achievement has a positive predictive relation to student academic self-concept (i.e., the higher my academic achievement, the more capable I see myself; the lower my academic achievement, the less capable I see myself), the average achievement of students in a given learning context (context-average achievement) has a negative predictive relation to individual student academic self-concept (i.e., the smarter the peers in general, the less capable I see myself). In other words, student academic self-concepts are associated with and can be predicted by the juxtaposition of their own academic achievement and the average achievement of their peers in the learning context. In support of the BFLPE model, research has shown that in a selective program where gifted students are grouped together, the ability grouping appeared to lower academic self-concepts (Marsh, Chessor, Craven, & Roche, 1995). At the other end of the spectrum, intellectually challenged students had higher academic self-concepts in a special needs class than when they were placed in a mixed-ability (ungrouped) class (Marsh, Tracey, & Craven, 2006).

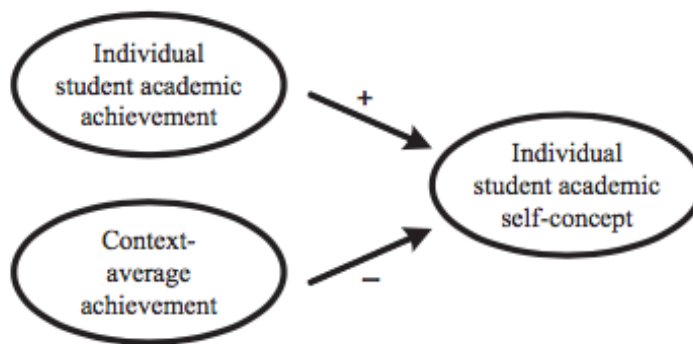


Figure 4. *Visual Representation of the BFLPE Model (adapted from Liem, McInerney, & Yeung, 2015). The plus sign refers to a positive predictive association between individual student achievement and academic self-concept, and the negative sign refers to a negative predictive association between context-average achievement and student academic self-concept.*

Achievement motivation theorists (Bandura, 1982) have long suggested that individual achievement-related beliefs and attitudes play an important role in academic environments. According to Pintrich and Schunk (1996), for example, students with positive self-perceptions of their competence are more likely both to perform better and to engage in an adaptive manner in academic tasks than those with negative self-perceptions. Similarly, students who value and are interested in specific academic tasks are more likely to perform better, learn more, and be more adaptively engaged in those tasks (Pintrich & Schunk, 1996).

According to this theory, expectancies and ability beliefs refer to student beliefs about their competence in upcoming tasks and in a given task at hand. Concepts closely similar to these are perceived competence (Harter, 1982) and self-concept of ability (e.g., Nurmi & Aunola, 2005).

There are a large number of studies on the relations between academic performance and self-concept of ability. The studies have shown on the one hand that

self-concept of ability contributes to subsequent academic achievement (for review, see Valentine, DuBois, & Cooper, 2004). For example, studies by Eccles and her colleagues (Wigfield & Eccles, 2002) found that among adolescents, self-perception of ability is one of the strongest performances even when controlled for the previous level of performance. Similarly, Marsh, Trautwein, Lüdtke, Köller, and Baumert (2005) found that self-concept of ability predicts both grades and standardized test scores among seventh graders. On the other hand, academic achievement has also been found to provide a basis for positive self-concept. Marsh et al. (2005) found that academic achievement predicted subsequent self-concept of ability among seventh graders. The results have been interpreted to mean that self-concept of ability and academic performance form a reciprocal cycle with a high self-concept of ability, leading to increased investment and performance, which in turn leads to further increases in self-concept of ability in related domains (Eccles et al., 1983; Marsh et al., 2005). It has also been found that the associations between student academic performance and self-concept become stronger in later school years (Denissen, Zarrett, & Eccles, 2007).

Predictions about how self-concept and its factorial structure evolve with age have been proposed from a variety of theoretical perspectives. Shavelson, Hubner, and Stanton (1976) hypothesized that self-concept becomes more differentiated with age. Marsh (1984, 1990), expanding on the Shavelson et al. hypothesis, proposed that self-concepts of very young children are consistently high but that with increasing life experience, children learn their relative strengths and weaknesses; so with increasing levels of age, mean levels of self-concept decline and individual self-concept becomes more highly correlated with external indicators of competence (e.g., skills, accomplishments, and self-concepts inferred by significant others).

Student self-concepts can also be connected to the conceptual model. The conceptual model assumes that student backgrounds influence teacher perceptions and student future performance outcomes (Jussim et al., 1996).

Student Perception of Teacher Treatment

Students in this study are seen as the perceivers, which means the behavior is focused towards the students and in which they perceive what is seen as the real intention. Perceiver expectations may be confirmed for any of at least three reasons: two that involve influence of expectations on behavior or perceptions and one that does not. First, perceiver expectations sometimes produce self-fulfilling prophecies: The initially erroneous expectations may cause targets to act in ways consistent with the expectations (Darley & Fazio, 1980; Rosenthal & Jacobson, 1968). Second, expectations may lead to perceptual biases: Perceivers may interpret, remember, and/or explain target behaviors in ways consistent with their expectations. This type of expectancy confirmation exists in the mind of the perceiver rather than in the behavior of the target (Darley & Fazio, 1980; Eccles & Jacobs, 1986; Jussim, 1991; Miller & Turnbull, 1986). Self-fulfilling prophecies and perceptual biases both represent perceiver expectations creating (or “constraining”) social reality, either creating an objective social reality (when self-fulfilling prophecies change target actual behavior) or a subjective social reality (when perceptual biases influence perceiver evaluations of target behavior). In contrast, expectations also may accurately reflect or predict social reality without influencing either objective target behavior or even subjective perceptions of that behavior (Brophy, 1983).

According to Babad (1990), when using the Teacher Treatment Inventory (TTI), he found the items of the student self-rating list had very low variances and most of the

students felt they were treated like anybody else in their classroom. There were three factors teachers and students agreed on about teacher differential behavior. As far as learning support and pressure were concerned, low achievers received more learning support and less pressure from their teachers. With regard to emotional support, teachers and students did not agree. Students perceived higher emotional support to low achievers (Blöte, 1995).

With regard to praise and criticism, however, teachers and students held opposing views. Furthermore, student perceptions of their own treatment were found to be related to teacher expectancy (the expectancy based on teacher interactions with their students) as well as to student school self-concept (Plata, 2008). Wayman (2002) stated one aspect of poor teacher-student relationships results from student perceptions that teachers treat students differently according to ethnic background.

As far as students are concerned, criticizing was perceived as behavior towards the low achiever, whereas the teachers did not perceive differential behavior of themselves on this point (Wayman, 2002). Students also perceived that teachers gave positive feedback to good students and negative feedback to weak students, whereas the teachers did not perceive their own behavior on this point as very differential. In their perception, good and poor students got the same amount of criticism, and poor students got some more praise (Wayman, 2002). Regardless of what teacher perceptions are, students tend to have a different view of teacher treatment.

Several studies show that students do perceive differences in the ways teachers work with high and low achievers (Brattesani & Weinstein, 1980). When asked to rate hypothetical male and female high and low achievers for the teacher behaviors they received, students reported more negative feedback, more teacher direction, and more

work and rule orientation directed toward low achievers but higher expectations, more opportunities, and choice of tasks directed towards high achievers (Brattesani et al., 1984).

Brattesani et al. (1984) found in a study of the effects of specific teacher behaviors that student perceptions of teacher structuring and reacting (but not soliciting) were more critical in influencing achievement than the observed teaching behaviors alone. Student perceptions of teacher treatment also play a critical role in current theorizing about the mediation of teacher expectancy effects in the classroom. Beyond the direct effect that differential teacher treatment might have on student achievement (e.g., through the provision of learning opportunities), this treatment may also indirectly inform students about expected behavior and thereby affect student self-image and motivation (Brattesani et al., 1984). This indirect influence pathway of influence rests, in some measure, on student perceptions and interpretation of the meaning of teacher behaviors and, once aware, on the incorporation of cues into students' own expectations for performance (Brattesani et al., 1984). Students with low self-concept ratings report that certain teachers are sharply critical of pupil behavior (Conchas, 2006).

Self-Fulfilling Prophecy

Self-fulfilling prophecy, a term coined by Merton in 1948, means that students perform in the ways teachers expect. Student performance is based on subtle and not so subtle messages from teachers about his or her worth, intelligence, and capabilities (Trice, 2003). This is also known as the Pygmalion effect, the theory holding that higher expectations of a person lead to higher performance. The opposite can also be true: If low expectations are placed on someone, they are more likely to perform poorly (Moeny, 2014). How does this relate to the expectations that teachers hold for students and may

inadvertently show in their treatment of students and its effect on student self-fulfilling prophecy?

Teacher expectations influence the standardized test scores of students from lower SES backgrounds more strongly than the standardized test scores of students from higher SES backgrounds. Students from lower social class backgrounds were drastically more vulnerable to self-fulfilling prophecies than were more well-off classmates. Teacher perceptions independently influence performance via self-fulfilling prophecies and perceptual biases (Jussim et al., 1996).

The evidence that stereotypes lead to self-fulfilling prophecies that exacerbate or perpetuate social inequalities is currently extremely weak, except for gender. Social psychology research on stereotypes suggested a possible explanation for this pattern: Teachers rely on stereotypes in developing expectations for students from stigmatized groups; and because such expectations will often be inaccurate, they are also more likely to be self-fulfilling (Jussim et al., 1996).

Summary

Chapter 2 outlined the framework of culturally sensitive classrooms, the characteristics of culturally sensitive teachers, teacher perceptions, and teacher perceptions of cultural sensitivity and how they relate to student feelings about themselves and their achievement. It also focused on how student self-concept can be affected by teacher treatment and how student perceptions of teacher treatment can lead to the self-fulfilling prophecy. The methodology chapter indicates the purpose of the study, research questions, the research design and approach, setting, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis used to conduct the study.

Chapter 3: Methodology

Introduction

The intent of the study was to provide awareness for future educators on teacher and student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom. By using the perceptions and determining the effect the perceptions have on student achievement, the study explored the association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability.

This chapter includes the research methods which also involve the forms of data collection, analysis, and interpretation the researcher proposed for the study (Creswell, 2014).

As stated before, one part of the study that has not been completely researched before is the lack of information from student perspectives and being able to compare responses with what the teachers' own self-reflection results are with regard to cultural sensitivity. This study bridged that gap and provides new evidence to determine if there is an association between what both the teacher thinks and what the student thinks. It also looked to see if there is a correlation between the abundance or lack of cultural sensitivity and the impact on student academic achievement in that class.

In order to answer the research questions, the researcher conducted a mixed methods research approach in which both qualitative and quantitative data were collected and analyzed.

The researcher conducted research in three phases to answer the research questions. The first phase identified teacher and student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom. The first phase also helped to determine to what extent there is a significant difference between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher

cultural sensitivity. The second phase compared the relationship between teacher and student perceptions of student academic abilities in the class. The third phase determined to what extent there is an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance.

Research Design and Approach

This study was a mixed-methods approach, which incorporated elements of both quantitative and qualitative approaches (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, this study followed the convergent parallel mixed-methods design (Figure 5). In this approach, the researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzed them separately, and then compared the results to see if the findings confirmed or disconfirmed each other. The key assumption of this approach is that both qualitative and quantitative data provide different types of information and together yield results that should be the same (Creswell, 2014).

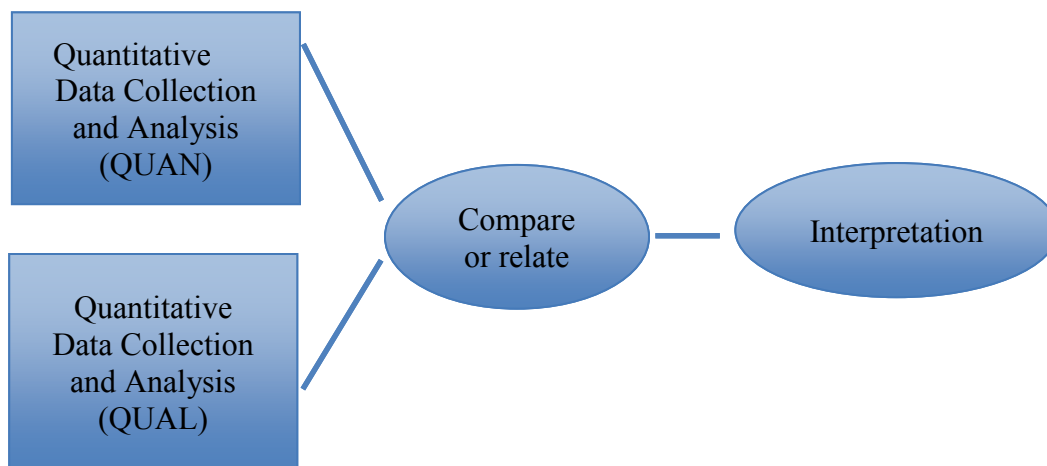


Figure 5. Convergent Parallel Mixed Model.

Research Questions

The study answered the following questions.

1. To what extent is there an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability?
2. To what extent is there an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance?
3. To what extent is there an association between teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance?
4. To what extent is there an association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity?
5. What are student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom?

While the researcher was analyzing the data, it became apparent that Research Question 4 needed to be adjusted due to the fact that the way the data were going to be run would not give the researcher the information needed in order to answer the research question. The question was changed from “to what extent is there an association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity” to “compare the difference between student and teacher cultural sensitivity.”

Null Hypothesis for each Quantitative Research Question

1. There is no association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability.
2. There is no association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance.

3. There is no association between teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance.
4. There is no association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity.

Research Setting

The setting for this study was a high school in a school district that is nestled in between the urban metropolitan area between two urban cities in a southern state. The high school has a good mixture of urban and rural school settings, which makes it attractive to many families relocating to the South. For the purposes of this study, this school district will be referred to as Children Can School System (CCSS). For the 2016-2017 school year, CCSS documented approximately 32,000 students enrolled in the school system. The district is known for its innovative education, which has served the community for nearly 100 years. Within this district, there are 19 elementary schools, eight middle schools, eight high schools, and five nontraditional schools serving this community. This study specifically focused on one of the traditional high schools within the CCSS district.

The North Carolina Department of Public Instruction (NCDPI) publishes the NC Report Card. The NC Report Card is a means of publicly displaying individual school as well as school district performance on the North Carolina EOC examinations as required by No Child Left Behind (Garrett, 2014). Since the 2001-2002 school year, NCDPI has an online record of report cards to track district standardized test performance. By measuring the percentage of students proficient and then further disaggregating the proficiency data into student subgroups, the report card also provides insight into the existence of achievement gaps (Garrett, 2014).

For the purpose of this study, the high school in which the researcher conducted the study will be referred to as High School 1 (HS1). Depending on the year, HS1 serves over 1,200 students and tends to have a smaller percentage than the state and the rest of the district for students taking advanced classes but does lead the county and state in students participating in career and technical courses. They have a very diverse population, which includes a 42.96% free and reduced lunch rate. Table 1 shows the population and demographics of HS1.

Table 1

2016-2017 Student Population of HS1 based on Grade, Ethnicity, and Gender

Grade Level	Total in Grade	Asian	Black American	Hispanic	American Indian/Alaskan Native	Two or More	Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	White
9 th	327 146/181	6 5/1	87 36/51	49 22/27	1 1/0	12 3/9	0 0/0	172 79/93
10 th	328 169/159	6 3/3	72 38/34	72 35/37	1 1/0	9 3/6	2 1/1	166 88/78
11 th	305 143/162	8 6/2	61 24/37	60 23/37	0 0/0	10 4/6	0 0/0	166 86/80
12 th	284 147/137	2 2/0	60 25/35	50 22/28	0 0/0	7 5/2	0 0/0	165 93/72
Total	1244 605/639	22 16/6	280 123/157	231 102/129	2 2/0	38 15/23	2 1/1	669 346/323

During the 2014-2015 school year, HS1 reported that 69.5% of its White students were proficient on EOC exams. Within the same test reporting year, as shown in Tables 2 and 3, 38.3% of African-American (Black) students were proficient compared to 69.5% of White students, a 31.2% gap in student achievement scores for these subgroups. The comparison of White student performance with Hispanic student performance (41.0%) yields a 28.5% gap in achievement. Comparing White student performance to multi-

racial student performance (32.0%), the gap persists at 37.5%. SWD was 13.7% and Limited English Proficient (LEP) was 13.3%, making for a difference in achievement of 55.8% for SWD and 56.2% for LEP students.

Table 2

2014-2015 Subgroup Proficiency as Measured by the North Carolina EOC Exams

All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	LEP	SWD
56.8	69.5	38.3	41.0	-	-	32.0	13.3	13.7

Table 3

The 2014-2015 Academic Achievement Gaps

Subgroup	Blacks	Hispanics	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	LEP	SWD
Gaps in comparison to White Students	31.2	28.5	-	-	37.5	56.2	55.8

During the 2015-2016 school year, HS1 reported that 75.2% of its White students were proficient on EOC exams. Within the same test reporting year, as shown in Tables 4 and 5, 39.1% of African-American (Black) students were proficient compared to 75.2% of White students, a 36.1% gap in student achievement scores for these subgroups. The comparison of White student performance with Hispanic student performance (57.1%) yields a 17.9% gap in achievement. Comparing White student performance to multi-racial student performance (63.6%), the gap persists at 11.6%. SWD was 13% and LEP was 56.4%, making for a difference in achievement 62.2% for SWD and 56.2% for LEP students.

Table 4

2015-2016 Subgroup Proficiency as Measured by the North Carolina EOC Exams

All Students	White	Black	Hispanic	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	LEP	SWD
54.6	75.2	39.1	57.1	-	-	63.6	18.8	13

Table 5

The 2015-2016 Academic Achievement Gaps

Subgroup	Blacks	Hispanics	American Indian	Asian/Pacific Islander	Multi-Racial	LEP	SWD
Gaps in comparison to White Students	36.1	17.9	-	-	11.6	56.4	62.2

Participants of the Study

Subjects for the study consisted of seven English II classrooms. Two of these seven English II classes were English II honors. There were 74 students involved in this study. There were 31 males and 43 females in the student sample population. The teacher sample consisted of four teachers who are all female and all at different stages of their educational career but did teach English II during the spring semester (Table 6).

Table 6

Teacher Years of Experience

Teacher	Years of Experience
T1	9
T2	13
T3	4
T4	18
T5	18

Note. Classes 4 and 5 were taught by the same teacher. Class 4 was a regular class, and Class 5 was an honors class.

Data Collection Instrumentation and Materials

The researcher used the look for indicators in Howard's (2015) Principles for Culturally Responsiveness Teaching to create a framework of what culturally sensitive classrooms should include. Using the seven principles of Howard (2015), the researcher created questions that illustrated if the principle was being utilized in the classroom (Appendix A). Questions were created for teachers and students that ask the same thing but in different wording, so students would be able to understand what the question was asking. The teacher survey was piloted by three teachers to determine if the wording of the questions was bias free, clear, and understandable (Appendix B).

The second survey that was administered to both teachers and students measured student self-concept ability in that class (Appendices C & D). The questions were adapted and used for this study by Nieto and Booth (2010). These questions were used to compare teacher and student concepts of what they are able to achieve in that class academically.

Using the EOC testing results also helped to determine if there was an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance. The EOC results were collected at the end of the semester and used to analyze and determine if there is a connection between the two.

Quantitative Data

The study included the participants of second semester English II classes and their teachers at HS1. The researcher had the teachers who are involved in the research complete a survey towards the end of the second semester that was designed by adapting other surveys to fit the researcher's objective. The questions were adapted from Howard's (2015) Seven Principles of Culturally Responsive Teaching and also from a

study conducted by Nieto and Booth (2010). The survey measured the teacher's own personal cultural sensitivity and then was compared to a survey that was given to the students, which also measured their perceptions of their teacher's cultural sensitivity.

The student survey asked the same questions as the teacher survey but was worded in more student-friendly terms. Both surveys were aligned to ask the same questions in order to make the answers more reliable to the researcher. This survey was administered to the students after the teacher cultural sensitivity self-reflection survey was collected from all teachers.

Both surveys were self-administered and consisted of 25 opinion statements using a 5-point Likert scale (e.g., 5=strongly agree, 4=agree, 3=neutral, 2=disagree, 1=strongly disagree). The questions and responses to these 25 statements were categorized into seven areas: (a) students are affirmed in their cultural connections; (b) teachers are personally inviting; (c) learning environments are physically and culturally inviting; (d) students are reinforced for academic development; (e) instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners; (f) classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control; and (g) interactions stress collectivity as well as individuality creating a multicultural environment using multicultural methods and materials.

The second survey was given to both teachers and students to evaluate what they think that student's self-concept ability is in that class. This survey was adapted from a survey given by Nieto and Booth (2010). This survey also used the 5-point Likert scale but had different meanings associated with their ratings (e.g., 5=very good, 4=above average, 3=average, 2=below average, 1=not at all good).

The EOC test was used to sample a student's knowledge of subject-related concepts as specified in the North Carolina Standard Course of Study and to provide a

global estimate of the student's mastery of the material in a particular content area. The North Carolina EOC tests were initiated in response to legislation passed by the North Carolina General Assembly – the North Carolina Elementary and Secondary Reform Act of 1984 (North Carolina EOC Tests, n.d.). The EOC test scores were also used to see if there was an association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of their self-concept ability in that class.

Qualitative Data

The qualitative questions were added to the end of both the teacher and student cultural sensitivity surveys to gather additional data that may not be able to be identified through the quantitative analysis. These questions were created by the researcher and also piloted with the survey prior to administration.

Validity and Reliability

Validity and reliability were determined, and the accuracy and consistency of the surveys and EOC tests were confirmed. Validity is when the results of the measurement process are accurate, and reliability is to determine to what extent we can say the data are consistent (Huck, 2012).

The content validity of the surveys was confirmed when they were piloted by three staff members not involved in the study to determine if the questions were accurate and determined what the researcher was trying to find out. The wording was analyzed by the piloted group to determine if the content validity was valid and matches the framework of the seven principles of culturally responsive teaching, which the questions were created to measure. The piloted group was given the seven principles of culturally responsive teaching and asked to evaluate if the questions were relevant based on the framework. Any questions that were not relevant were eliminated from the survey prior

to administration to the participants.

The validity of the EOC English II exam was determined by content validity and concurrent validity. Content validity is the degree to which the various items collectively cover the material that the instrument is supposed to cover (Huck, 2012). This was determined by having the items carefully aligned to the content standards, and the North Carolina Department of Education also contracts to have independent alignment studies of its assessments. Concurrent validity is a type of criterion-related validity in which the new test is administered at the same time data are collected on the criterion variable; then it is termed as being concurrent valid (Huck, 2012). North Carolina correlates student performance with other measures to conduct this type of validity check.

To confirm the reliability of the English II EOC, the internal consistency reliability was used. This test was used to determine the degree to which their measuring instruments process internal consistency. To the extent that these parts hang together and measure the same thing, the full instrument is said to possess high internal consistency reliability. This assessment was used for the first time during the 2012-2013 school year. One procedure for determining the internal consistency of a test is coefficient alpha (α). Coefficient alpha estimates reliability of test scores constructed in terms of the domain sampling model. Test scores must be reliable if any valid inferences are to be made on examinee performances. The North Carolina Statewide Testing Program meets or exceeds industry norms for reliability. The indices below are measures of internal consistency as calculated by Cronbach coefficient alpha. The reliability of the English II test and the corresponding forms are shown in Figure 6.

EOG English Language Arts/Reading Reliabilities (Edition 4)

	Form		
Grade	A	B	C
3	0.91	0.92	0.91
4	0.89	0.90	0.88
5	0.90	0.88	0.89
6	0.89	0.91	0.89
7	0.89	0.90	0.89
8	0.88	0.88	0.88

EOC English II Reliabilities (Edition 1)

	Form					
EOC	A	B	C	M	N	O
English II	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.89	0.90	0.89

Figure 6. Reliability of the North Carolina English II EOC Reliabilities.

Data Collection

Preceding collecting any consent forms from parents or students, the researcher had individual conversations with the teachers who possibly would be participating to explain the process. The researcher provided them with the consent form and then waited to see which teachers consented to participate. Once the teachers consented, the researcher sent home a consent form to the students in those English II classes to obtain parent/guardian approval for their child's participation in the study. Once the consent forms were collected, Phase 1 of the study began.

Data were collected in three phases for the purposes of this study. The first phase consisted of administering the cultural sensitivity survey to the English II teachers involved and their students. This survey was administered by the researcher with approximately 4 weeks left in the semester. This time frame provided them both with enough time to get to know each other and also to get used to daily routines. Prior to the distribution of the surveys, the researcher precoded the surveys for each class with a

different number-letter (e.g., 1-A, 1-B, 1-C, 1-D). This provided autonomy to the participants involved but also provided a way for the researcher to compare the two surveys students took to see if there were significances between the cultural sensitivity and self-concept ability of that particular subject. Only the researcher had access to the names of the participants. Each completed survey was placed in a sealed envelope provided by the researcher and returned. The completed and sealed surveys remained in a locked cabinet until it was time to code the data.

Phase 2 began after Phase 1 was complete to ensure the teacher and students had adequate time to know each other and gauge their abilities in that class. The teachers and students were given a precoded survey that matched the precoded number/letter of their cultural sensitivity survey. This allowed the researcher to analyze the data from the same student in order to look for any associations. This questionnaire gauged each student's ability in the class from the teacher's perspective and the student's perspective. This survey was adapted from the Self-Concept Ability survey also used by Nieto and Booth (2010).

The third phase of the data collection consisted of collecting the EOC English II scores from the classes that participated in the study. Once all data were collected, the researcher began to analyze the data to determine if there were associations between the variables.

Data Analysis

For each research question, there were different ways to analyze the data collected. Research Question 1 asked to what extent was there an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perception of student ability? To analyze this data, the researcher used the teacher's questionnaire identifying the student's ability in

the subject area and the student's self-concept ability of the subject to run a Pearson's R test to determine if there was an association between the two.

When looking to determine to what extent there is an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance, the researcher used chi square to compare each question to the mean of the EOC scores collected at the end of the semester.

Another Pearson R test was run to help answer to what extent is there an association between teacher perceptions of cultural sensitivity and academic performance. This identified if there was an association between cultural sensitivity and the academic performance of the student in that class.

To answer the question about comparing the difference between student and teacher cultural sensitivity, the researcher descriptively reported the results from teacher surveys compared to student surveys of that class. The researcher then looked for patterns associated with the literature review to determine if there were answers from the survey that correlated with the review. This question was further analyzed in the following question: "To what extent was there a statistically significant difference between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity?" A standard score was run to focus attention on a single score within the data rather than on the amount of dispersion that exists among the scores (Huck, 2012). The specific standard score test that was run is a *t* test which produced a *t* score that indicated how many standard deviations a particular raw score lies above or below the group mean.

For the purposes of this study, the continued use of the Pearson's R test was to determine if there was a significant difference between two correlational coefficients (Huck, 2012). The chi-square test was used to compare the median of two groups. These

tests were run using IBM's Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS). The data were input using the specific teacher's code as to keep the anonymity of the teacher. The program was password protected and all surveys were destroyed after the information was entered.

The procedures for the qualitative survey questions were collected from those questions and then used to provide the descriptive results of the survey and design a chart to show the findings.

Protection of Participant Rights

All data that were collected were held in confidentiality. The teachers and students both received a paper in which they signed to either accept participation in the study or to deny it. The paper also addressed the confidentiality of the researcher and its participants. These papers were placed in an envelope and then locked in a file cabinet.

When collecting the data, participant identity was held in private and only known to the researcher. There was a number/letter system assigned to each participant that was only used to compare participant responses in multiple surveys. All data that were collected from a class were placed in a labeled envelope and, when not in use by the researcher, locked in a cabinet to provide confidentiality.

Permission to conduct this study was obtained from the Gardner-Webb Institutional Review Board (IRB). This board is designed to monitor and supervise the researcher and the ethics of the study.

Summary

While using the above procedures and analysis of data, the researcher was able to indicate if there was a true association between cultural sensitivity of teachers from the perception of the students and then see if it affected student achievement in that subject

area. The following chapters describe the results of the data being analyzed and what further steps can be taken to delve deeper into this subject area. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the results of the study and a discussion about the possible indications the study will have on the future.

Chapter 4: Results

Introduction

With the continued diversity of our ever-changing classrooms, teacher preparation programs are in need of additional training and supports to effectively handle the new types of students who will be entering the classrooms. Teacher training programs are adequate at teaching how to instruct using their subject areas but are limited in the instruction they provide on how to teach multicultural classrooms. Teachers are placed into classrooms with the underdeveloped skills and strategies to help effectively educate our diverse cultures. Teachers may not consider adding student cultural perspectives to the instructional process; because they may not have the skills to do so, especially if they are novice teachers whose teacher education programs excluded information on how to integrate culturally related phenomena into the curriculum (Plata, 2008). Since there is a limited amount of focus on cultural sensitivity in teacher preparation programs, teachers bring to the classroom personal ideas and perceptions of students. It is possible that teachers are aware of different cultures but may not be sensitive to the differences of cultures in the classroom. There is a need for teachers to not just be aware of the distinctive cultures but also be sensitive to them in order to reach students. Plata (2008) indicated that cultural sensitivity sets the tone for classroom teacher reactions to student exhibited social behaviors and academic performance. Therefore, Plata also made the connection that teacher cultural sensitivity is judged on the basis of reactions to student social behaviors, appearance, and academic performance.

This chapter includes the presentation of the results organized by research questions followed by summary of the results. The following are the research questions for which the researcher was looking to provide results.

Table 7

Research Questions and Analysis

Research Question	Data Analysis Strategy	Test
1. To what extent is there an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perception of student ability?	The researcher used the teacher's questionnaire identifying the student's ability in the subject area and the student's self-concept ability of the subject are to run a Pearson's R test to determine if there is an association between the two.	Pearson R
2. To what extent is there an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance?	The researcher used chi square to compare each question to the mean of the EOC scores collected at the end of the semester.	Chi square
3. To what extent is there an association between teacher perceptions of cultural sensitivity and academic performance?	This identified if there is an association between cultural sensitivity and the academic performance of the student in that class.	Pearson R
4. Compare the difference between student and teacher cultural sensitivity.	The researcher descriptively reported the results from the teacher surveys compared to the student's surveys of that class. The researcher then looked for patterns associated with the literature review to determine if there were answers from the survey that correlated with the review.	Pearson R
5. What are student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom?	A standard score was run to focus attention on a single score within the data rather than on the amount of dispersion that exists among the scores (Huck, 2012). The specific standard score test that was run is a <i>t</i> test which will produce a <i>t</i> score that indicates how many standard deviations a particular raw score lies above or below the group mean.	<i>t</i> Test Descriptive Results

Data Results

Research Question 1: To what extent is there an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability? In Class 1, almost all questions showed a statistically significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability, except Question 6, which did not show a descriptively significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability in data (Table 8). This rejection of the null hypothesis implied there was an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability in Class 1. The order of correlation strength in the statistically significant questions is Question 5 > Question 4 > Question 3 > Question 2 > Question 1; in which Question 5 was a positively strong magnitude, and Questions 1, 2, 3, and 4 were the positively moderate magnitude.

Table 8

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Self-Concept Ability and Teacher Perceptions of Student Ability

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Class=1		
Q1	.478*	0.045
Q2	.480*	0.044
Q3	.553*	0.017
Q4	.582*	0.011
Q5	.712**	0.001
Q6	-0.059	0.817

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

In Class 2, the second question showed a statistically significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability. The second question result showed that there was an association between student self-concept

ability and teacher perceptions of student ability in Class 2. The strength of the correlation in Question 2 was positively moderate magnitude (Table 9).

Table 9

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Self-Concept Ability and Teacher Perceptions of Student Ability

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Class=2		
Q1	-0.269	0.258
Q2	.612*	0.026
Q3	0.178	0.561
Q4	0.224	0.462
Q5	0.299	0.322
Q6	. ^a	.

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

a. Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.

In Class 3, the second and fifth question results showed the statistically significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability. The second and fifth question results showed there was an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability in Class 3. Question 2 had stronger correlation strength than Question 5; both of them were positively moderate magnitude correlation (Table 10).

Table 10

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Self-Concept Ability and Teacher Perceptions of Student Ability

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Class=3		
Q1	0.107	0.166
Q2	.615*	0.019
Q3	-0.148	0.629
Q4	0.223	0.443
Q5	.609*	0.021
Q6	. ^a	.

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

a. Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.

In Class 4, the fifth question showed a statistically significant relationship

between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability. The fifth question results showed that there was an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability in Class 4. The strength of the correlation in Question 5 was positively strong magnitude (Table 11).

Table 11

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Self-Concept Ability and Teacher Perceptions of Student Ability

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Class=4		
Q1	0.000	1.000
Q2	-0.354	0.351
Q3	0.000	1.000
Q4	-0.069	0.859
Q5	.821**	0.007
Q6	a	.

** Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

a. Cannot be computed because at least one of the variables is constant.

In Class 5, the second and fifth question showed the statistically significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability. The second and fifth question results showed there was an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability in Class 5. Question 5 had relevant stronger correlation strength than Question 2. Question 2 had positively moderate magnitude correlation, and Question 5 had positively strong magnitude correlation (Table 12).

Table 12

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Self-Concept Ability and Teacher Perceptions of Student Ability

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Class=5		
Q1	0.401	0.080
Q2	.489*	0.029
Q3	0.261	0.267
Q4	0.379	0.110
Q5	.707**	0.000
Q6	0.016	0.948

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Among five classes, almost all questions showed the statistically significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability, except Question 6 showed the descriptive significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability in the data. The order of correlation strength in the statistically significant questions were Question 5 > Question 2 > Question 4 > Question 3 > Question 1; in which Questions 2, 3, 4, and 5 had positively moderate magnitude, and Question 1 had positively weak magnitude (Table 13).

Table 13

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Self-Concept Ability and Teacher Perceptions of Student Ability

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> Value
Class=all		
Q1	0.236*	0.043
Q2	0.482**	0.000
Q3	0.353**	0.002
Q4	0.423**	0.000
Q5	0.657**	0.000
Q6	-0.050	0.675

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 2: To what extent is there an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance? Howard's (2015) Principles of Culturally Sensitive Classrooms identifies seven principles to which the survey questions for students and teachers were aligned. The following chart shows the alignment of the principles to the questions (Table 14).

Table 14

Howard's (2015) Seven Principles of Culturally Sensitive Classrooms Aligned to Survey Questions

Question Number	Student Question	Teacher Question	Principle Aligned to
1	My English II teacher includes multiple views and opinions in classroom lessons.	I include multiple views and opinions in classroom lessons.	1: Students are affirmed in their cultural connections.
2	My English II teacher shows respect for my culture.	I show respect for my student's culture.	1: Students are affirmed in their cultural connections.
3	My English II teacher enjoys working with people from different cultural backgrounds.	I enjoy interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds.	1: Students are affirmed in their cultural connections.
4	My English II teacher gets to know me before they form an opinion of my abilities.	I wait before forming an opinion of my student's abilities.	1: Students are affirmed in their cultural connections.
5	My English II teacher demonstrates open and trusting relationships with his/her students.	I demonstrate open and trusting relationships with my students.	2: Teachers are personally inviting.
6	My English II teacher values my input and opinions.	I value student input and perspectives.	2: Teachers are personally inviting.
7	My English II teacher's tone of voice is caring and respectful.	My tone of voice demonstrates care and respect.	2: Teachers are personally inviting.
8	My English II teacher respects the values of people from different cultures.	I respect the values of people from different cultures.	2: Teachers are personally inviting.
9	My English II teacher is open-minded to the views of students from different cultures.	I am open-minded to people from different cultures who are different from me.	2: Teachers are personally inviting.
10	My English II teacher welcomes me at the door.	I welcome my students at the door.	2: Teachers are personally inviting.
11	My English II teacher displays student work in and outside of the classroom.	My students work is showcased both in and out of the classroom.	3: Learning environments are physically and culturally inviting.
12	My English II teacher's classroom decorations show an understanding and appreciation of people who are different than them.	My classroom decorations show an understanding and appreciation of people from different cultures.	3: Learning environments are physically and culturally inviting.

(continued)

Question Number	Student Question	Teacher Question	Principle Aligned to
13	The learning expectations are clearly communicated to me for this class using a variety of approaches.	My learning expectations are clearly communicated using a variety of approaches.	4: Students are reinforced for academic development.
14	My English II teacher expresses a confidence in my learning ability and intelligence.	I express a confidence in my student's learning ability and intelligence.	4: Students are reinforced for academic development.
15	My English II teacher frequently checks to make sure I understand what is being taught.	I frequently interact with individual students to check for understanding.	4: Students are reinforced for academic development.
16	My English II teacher holds high expectations for all students.	I hold high expectations for all students.	4: Students are reinforced for academic development.
17	I am provided with assignment choices to show my understanding of what has been taught in my English II class.	My students are provided choices when demonstrating their understanding of lessons.	5: Instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners.
18	My English II teacher considers my learning style when teaching.	I address a variety of learning styles in my lesson delivery.	5: Instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners.
19	My English II teacher adjust instruction to be challenging or less challenging based on my needs.	I adjust instruction to be more challenging or less challenging based on student need.	5: Instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners.
20	I am actively engaged in learning most of the time in my English II class.	My students are actively engaged in learning most of the time.	6: Classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control.
21	My English II teacher addresses potentially disruptive behavior.	I effectively redirect potentially disruptive behavior.	6: Classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control.
22	Discipline issues are handled by my English II teacher in a respectful manner.	Discipline issues are handled in a respectful manner.	6: Classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control.
23	My English II teacher respects the way people from different cultures act.	I respect the way people from different cultures behave.	6: Classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control.

(continued)

Question Number	Student Question	Teacher Question	Principle Aligned to
24	My English II classroom is setup for both small group and individual work.	My classroom setup facilitates both small-group and individual work.	7: Interactions stress collectively as well as individually.
25	Students are able to work effectively as individuals and in groups in my English II class.	My students are able to function effectively both as individuals and as group members.	7: Interactions stress collectively as well as individually.

When analyzing Class 1, results showed that Questions 6, 9, 14, and 21 had the statistically significant relationship between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and their EOC scores. Questions 6 and 9 had negatively moderate magnitude correlations, Question 14 had negatively moderate low magnitude correlation, and Question 21 had positively moderate magnitude correlation in Class 1 (Table 15).

Table 15

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Class 1

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Q6	-.611**	0.007
Q9	-.641**	0.004
Q14	-.494*	0.037
Q21	.489*	0.039

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

**. Correlation is significant at the 0.01 level (2-tailed).

When looking at the seven principles and the relationship between the teacher and student responses, there was no association between responses of the teacher or student in Class 1 (Table 16).

Table 16

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Class 1 Aligned to the Principles of Culturally Sensitive Classroom Framework

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> Value
Sum scores of students are affirmed in their cultural connections	-0.148	0.557
Sum scores of teachers are personally inviting	-0.446	0.063
Sum scores of learning environments are physically and culturally inviting	0.013	0.959
Sum scores of students are reinforced for academic development	-0.363	0.139
Sum scores of instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners	-0.250	0.318
Sum scores of classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control	0.236	0.346
Sum scores of interactions stress collectivity	-0.019	0.942
Sum scores of Questions 1 to 25 (Total Scores)	-0.257	0.303

When analyzing Class 2, results showed Questions 8 and 24 had the statistically significant relationship between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and their EOC scores. Questions 8 and 24 and the sum scores of “classroom was managed with firm, consistent, caring control” had positively moderate magnitude correlation in Class 2 (Table 17).

Table 17

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Class 2

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Q8	.616*	0.025
Q24	.619*	0.024

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

When looking at the seven principles and the relationship between the teacher and student responses, there was no association between responses of the teacher or student in Class 2 except in Principle 6: Classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control. The sum scores of “classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control” had the statistically significant relationship between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and their EOC scores. They had positively moderate magnitude correlation in Class 2 for this principle (Table 18).

Table 18

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Class 2 Aligned to the Principles of Culturally Sensitive Classroom Framework

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> Value
Sum scores of students are affirmed in their cultural connections	0.131	0.670
Sum scores of teachers are personally inviting	0.228	0.453
Sum scores of learning environments are physically and culturally inviting	0.383	0.196
Sum scores of students are reinforced for academic development	0.135	0.660
Sum scores of instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners	-0.007	0.981
Sum scores of classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control	.651*	0.016
Sum scores of interactions stress collectivity	0.246	0.418
Sum scores of Questions 1 to 25 (Total Scores)	0.293	0.331

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

When analyzing Class 3, the result showed only Question 19 had the statistically significant relationship between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and their EOC scores. Question 19 had positively moderate magnitude correlation in Class 3 (Table 19).

Table 19

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Class 3

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Q19	.539*	0.047

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

There was no statistically significant relationship between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and their EOC scores or with the Seven Culturally Sensitive Classroom Principles (Table 20).

Table 20

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Class 2 Aligned to the Principles of Culturally Sensitive Classroom Framework

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> Value
Sum scores of students are affirmed in their cultural connections	0.020	0.945
Sum scores of teachers are personally inviting	-0.032	0.915
Sum scores of learning environments are physically and culturally inviting	0.065	0.826
Sum scores of students are reinforced for academic development	-0.035	0.904
Sum scores of instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners	0.282	0.329
Sum scores of classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control	0.139	0.636
Sum scores of interactions stress collectivity	0.025	0.934
Sum scores of Questions 1 to 25 (Total Scores)	0.084	0.775

When analyzing Class 4, the result showed Question 25 and sum scores of interactions stress collectivity had the statistically significant relationship between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and their EOC scores. Question 25 and sum scores of interactions stress collectivity had negatively moderate magnitude correlation in Class 4 (Table 21).

Table 21

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Class 4

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Q25	-.688*	0.040
Sum scores of students are affirmed in their cultural connections	0.124	0.751
Sum scores of teachers are personally inviting	-0.415	0.267
Sum scores of learning environments are physically and culturally inviting	-0.015	0.970
Sum scores of students are reinforced for academic development	-0.045	0.909
Sum scores of instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners	-0.022	0.955
Sum scores of classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control	-0.429	0.249
Sum scores of interactions stress collectivity	-.691*	0.039
Sum scores of Questions 1 to 25 (Total Scores)	-0.270	0.483

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

When analyzing Class 5, none of the individual questions, seven sum scores of measured areas, or their total scores showed the statistically significant relationship between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and their EOC scores (Table 22). Results did not reject the null hypothesis, “there is no association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance.”

Table 22

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Class 5

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Q1	-0.078	0.744
Q2	-0.248	0.292
Q3	-0.307	0.188
Q4	-0.028	0.908
Q5	-0.161	0.511
Q6	-0.129	0.586
Q7	-0.210	0.375
Q8	-0.34	0.142
Q9	-0.398	0.082
Q10	-0.199	0.400
Q11	-0.191	0.420
Q12	0.034	0.888
Q13	-0.047	0.843
Q14	-0.085	0.722
Q15	-0.056	0.814
Q16	-0.175	0.461
Q17	-0.130	0.584
Q18	-0.043	0.858
Q19	-0.338	0.145
Q20	-0.173	0.467
Q21	-0.049	0.838
Q22	-0.144	0.545
Q23	-0.316	0.175
Q24	-0.008	0.972
Q25	-0.100	0.675
Sum scores of students are affirmed in their cultural connections	-0.184	0.438
Sum scores of teachers are personally inviting	-0.251	0.285
Sum scores of learning environments are physically and culturally inviting	-0.083	0.727
Sum scores of students are reinforced for academic development	-0.111	0.641
Sum scores of instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners	-0.210	0.375
Sum scores of classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control	-0.230	0.330
Sum scores of interactions stress collectivity	-0.065	0.785
Sum scores of Questions 1 to 25 (Total Scores)	-0.209	0.377

When analyzing the five classes together, none of the individual questions, seven principles sum scores of measured areas, or their total scores showed the statistically

significant relationship between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and their EOC scores (Table 23). Results did not reject the null hypothesis, “there is no association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance.”

Table 23

Pearson Correlation Result of Student Perceptions of Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and EOC Scores for Five Classes

	Pearson Correlation	<i>p</i> value
Q1	0.047	0.690
Q2	-0.126	0.283
Q3	-0.022	0.854
Q4	0.116	0.329
Q5	0.022	0.853
Q6	-0.062	0.599
Q7	-0.112	0.341
Q8	-0.063	0.596
Q9	-0.107	0.366
Q10	-0.100	0.399
Q11	0.142	0.226
Q12	0.072	0.539
Q13	0.063	0.597
Q14	0.091	0.442
Q15	0.091	0.439
Q16	0.115	0.328
Q17	-0.026	0.828
Q18	0.083	0.490
Q19	0.027	0.820
Q20	0.103	0.383
Q21	0.207	0.076
Q22	0.006	0.962
Q23	-0.129	0.272
Q24	0.108	0.362
Q25	-0.168	0.154
Sum scores of students are affirmed in their cultural connections	0.049	0.681
Sum scores of teachers are personally inviting	-0.084	0.478
Sum scores of learning environments are physically and culturally inviting	0.152	0.195
Sum scores of students are reinforced for academic development	0.108	0.361
Sum scores of instructional changes are made to accommodate differences in learners	0.070	0.551
Sum scores of classroom is managed with firm, consistent, caring control	0.066	0.578
Sum scores of interactions stress collectivity	-0.024	0.837
Sum scores of Questions 1 to 25 (Total Scores)	0.040	0.732

Research Question 3: To what extent is there an association between teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance? According to the descriptive statistics and scatterplot (Figure 7), results showed teachers who had higher scores in teacher cultural sensitivity and distribution of student academic performance were narrower (less variance) than teachers who had lower scores in teacher cultural sensitivity and distribution of student academic performance (relevant higher variance; Table 24).

Table 24

Descriptive Statistics of Student Academic Performance and Teacher Response in Teacher Cultural Sensitivity

Class	N	Student EOC		Teacher Cultural Sensitivity	
		M	SD	M	SD
Class=1	18	84.28	5.98	4.36	0
Class=2	13	71.31	9.18	4.44	0
Class=3	14	77.93	8.91	4.28	0
Class=4*	9	70.33	13.73	4.04	0
Class=5*	20	82.80	10.96	4.04	0

*Classes 4 and 5 were taught by the same teacher. Class 4 is a regular class, and Class 5 was an honors class.

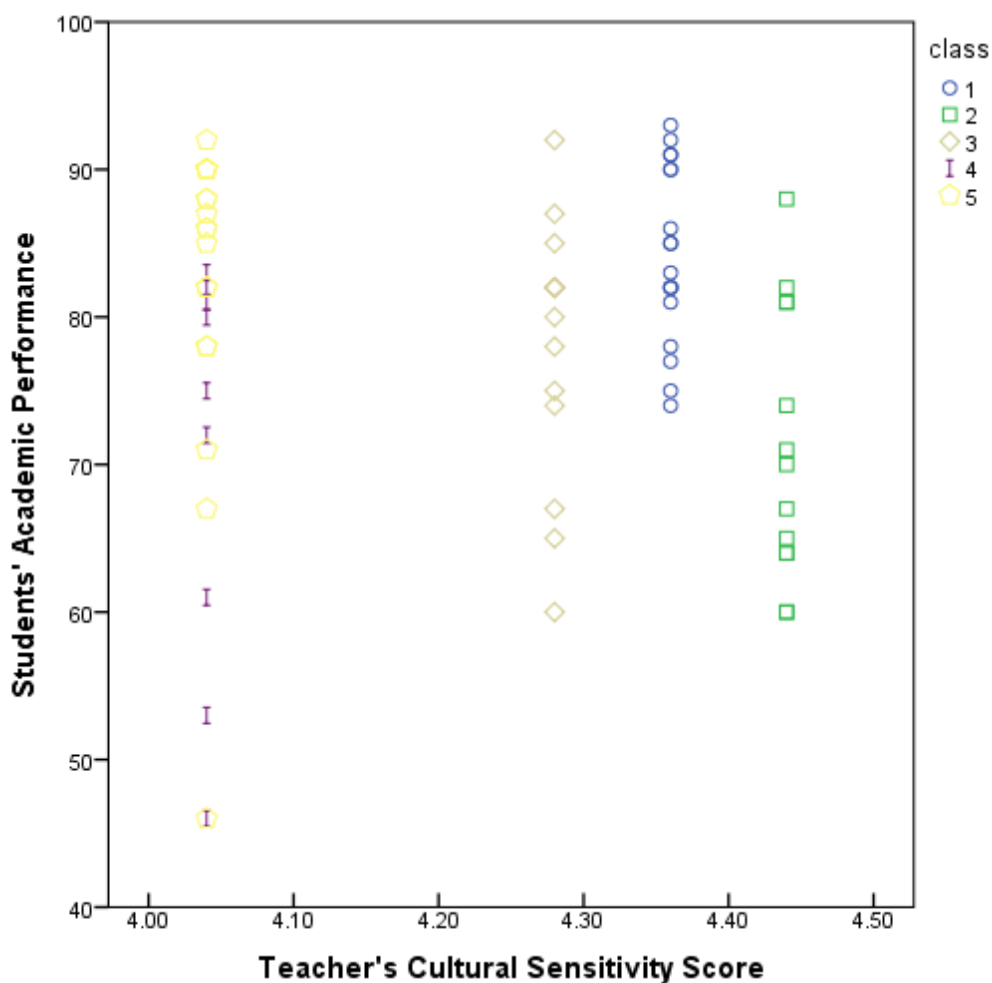


Figure 7. Scatterplot of Student Academic Performance and Teacher Responses in Teacher Cultural Sensitivity.

Research Question 4: To what extent is there an association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity? Results showed there was a statistical mean difference between teacher cultural sensitivity scores and student responses to their teacher's cultural sensitivity in Classes 1, 2, 3, and 4. There was no statistical mean difference between teacher cultural sensitivity score and the score students gave their teacher's cultural sensitivity in Class 5. The t value will be positive if the first mean is larger than the second and negative if it is smaller (Table 25).

Table 25

Paired t Test Student Responses in Teacher Cultural Sensitivity and Teacher Response in Teacher Cultural Sensitivity

Class	N	Student		Teacher		t-test	p value
		M	SD	M	SD		
Class=1	18	4.51	0.27	4.36	0.00	2.324*	0.033
Class=2	13	4.07	0.46	4.44	0.00	-2.892*	0.014
Class=3	14	4.56	0.42	4.28	0.00	2.519*	0.026
Class=4	9	3.48	0.61	4.04	0.00	-2.732*	0.026
Class=5	20	3.81	0.82	4.04	0.00	-1.283	0.215

*. Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed).

Research Question 5: What are student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom? When analyzing the qualitative data with the open-ended question on the teacher and student surveys, there were several patterns that were recognized for Question 26 which asked, “what does cultural sensitivity mean to you” (Table 26)?

Table 26

Patterns Found in Teacher and Student Responses for Question 26

Pattern	Number of Student Responses	Number of Teacher Responses
Judgment	4	0
Respect/Accepting/Tolerance	40	4
Understanding/Knowing	11	3
Sensitivity/Awareness	8	4
Equality	5	0
Origin	11	0

When analyzing the qualitative data with the open-ended question on the teacher and student surveys, there were several patterns that were recognized for Question 27, which asked, “what do you think makes a teacher culturally sensitive” (Table 27)?

Table 27

Patterns Found in Teacher and Student Responses for Question 27

Pattern	Number of Student Responses	Number of Teacher Responses
Respect/Accepting/Tolerance	21	4
Understanding/Knowing	17	0
Sensitivity/Awareness	2	0
Equality	8	2
Personal Opinion/background	5	0
Experience/Class Interaction	20	1
Ignorance	2	0

When analyzing the qualitative data with the open-ended question on the teacher and student surveys, there were several patterns that were recognized for Question 28, which asked students to “list three things your teacher does that you consider to be culturally sensitive” (Table 28).

Table 28

Patterns Found in Student Responses for Question 28

Pattern	Number of Student Responses
Respect/Acceptingness/Tolerance	34
Understanding/Knowing	10
Equality	13
Adding cultural diversity in class/assignment	18
Additional resource to support students	8
None	7

Data Analysis Strategy

For each research question, there were different ways to analyze the data collected. Table 29 illustrates the research questions, the data analysis strategy, and the test run by the researcher.

Table 29

Research Questions and Analysis

Research Question	Data Analysis Strategy	Test
1.To what extent is there an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perception of student ability?	The researcher used the teacher's questionnaire identifying the student's ability in the subject area and the student's self-concept ability of the subject are to run a Pearson's R test to determine if there is an association between the two.	Pearson R
2.To what extent there is an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance?	The researcher used chi square to compare each question to the mean of the EOC scores collected at the end of the semester.	Chi Square
3.To what extent is there an association between teacher perceptions of cultural sensitivity and academic performance?	This identified if there is an association between cultural sensitivity and the academic performance of the student in that class.	Pearson R
4.Compare the difference between student and teacher cultural sensitivity.	The researcher descriptively reported the results from the teacher surveys compared to the student's surveys of that class. The researcher then looked for patterns associated with the literature review to determine if there were answers from the survey that correlated with the review.	Pearson R
5.What are student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom?	A standard score was run to focus attention on a single score within the data rather than on the amount of dispersion that exists among the scores (Huck, 2012). The specific standard score test that was run is a T-test which will produce a T-score that indicates how many standard deviations a particular raw score lies above or below the group mean.	<i>t test</i> / Descriptive Results

For the purposes of this study, the continued use of the Pearson's R test was to determine if there was a significant difference between two correlational coefficients

(Huck, 2012). The chi-square test was used to compare the median of two groups. These tests were run using the IBM's SPSS. The data were input using the specific teacher code as to keep the anonymity of the teacher. The program was password protected and all surveys were destroyed after the information was entered.

The procedures for the qualitative survey questions were collected from those questions and then used to provide the descriptive results of the survey and design a chart to show the findings. The data were analyzed for repetitive words or phrases from the open-ended questions, and those patterns were compared to the literature review to determine if there was a correlation between the two.

Summary

The data analyzed showed there were no significant findings that indicated any association between cultural sensitivity and academic achievement. There are some small significances in each class with certain questions but nothing that indicates any of the research questions can be seen to have either a relationship or association with each other. In Research Question 1, almost all questions showed the statistically significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability, except Question 6 showed the descriptive significant relationship between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability in the data. In Research Question 2, most classes did not find any significant significance with Howard's (2015) Seven Principles of Culturally Relevant Classrooms. In Research Question 3, results showed teachers who had higher scores in teacher cultural sensitivity and distribution of student academic performance were more narrow (less variance) than the teachers who had lower scores in teacher cultural sensitivity and distribution of student academic performance (relevant higher variance). Results for Research Question 5 showed there is

a statistical mean difference between teacher cultural sensitivity scores and student responses to their teacher's cultural sensitivity in Classes 1, 2, 3, and 4. There was no statistical mean difference between teacher cultural sensitivity score and the score students gave their teacher's cultural sensitivity in Class 5. The following chapter focuses on a discussion about the possible indications the study will have on the future.

Chapter 5: Discussion

Introduction

While there has been limited teacher training on cultural sensitivity in many teacher preparation programs, the current study provides more evidence that supports this would be beneficial to the profession. While the biggest finding supports that the perceptions of teachers and students on what makes a teacher culturally sensitive are very similar, these can be areas on which to focus the training for prospective teachers. The purpose of the study was to determine if there was a relationship between teacher and student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom and the effect it has on student achievement. The findings will help to determine what types of actions need to be addressed pending the results (i.e., professional development, classes, or training).

The research questions the researcher chose to answer are as follows.

1. To what extent is there an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability?
2. To what extent is there an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance?
3. To what extent is there an association between teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance?
4. To what extent is there an association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity?
5. What are student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom?

This chapter depicts a summary of the study and results; interprets the findings of the study; and discusses implications for practice, limitations, recommendations for

further studies, and reflection.

Summary of Study

This study was a mixed-methods approach, which incorporated elements of both qualitative and quantitative approaches (Creswell, 2014). Specifically, this study followed the convergent parallel mixed-methods design (Figure 5). In this approach, the researcher collected both quantitative and qualitative data, analyzed them separately, and then compared the results to see if the findings confirmed or disconfirmed each other.

There were three phases of data collection of the study. The first phase consisted of administering the cultural sensitivity survey to the English II teachers involved and their students.

Phase 2 began after Phase 1 was completed to ensure that the teacher and students had adequate time to know each other and gauge their abilities in that class. The teachers and students were given a precoded survey that matched the precoded number/letter of their cultural sensitivity survey. This allowed the researcher to analyze the data from that same student in order to look for any associations. The survey included questions that allowed both the teacher and student to indicate their perceptions of student ability in the course. This survey was adapted from the Self-Concept Ability survey used by Nieto and Booth (2010).

The third phase of the data collection consisted of collecting the EOC English II scores from the classes that participated in the study. Once all the data were collected, the researcher analyzed the data to determine if there were associations between the variables.

Interpretation of Findings

The researcher interpreted the findings of the study by analyzing student and

teacher responses to survey questions and running statistical tests to determine if there were any associations between them.

Research Question 1

To what extent is there an association between student self-concept ability and teacher perceptions of student ability? Self-concept researchers (e.g., Skaalvik & Skaalvik, 2002) have maintained that academic self-concepts are constructed based on various frames of reference; one of which involves social comparison processes, whereby students compare their own achievement with the average achievement of other students in the learning context (e.g. school or class) and use this relativistic, inter-individual evaluation as a basis to form their academic self-concept. Using the results from the student concept ability survey given to both the teacher and student, there was a positively moderate magnitude for Questions 2, 3, 4, and 5. This means the answers the students and the teacher gave about student academic ability were similar. The research by Brophy (1983) and Jussim and Eccles (1995) confirmed that teachers usually have a good knowledge about their students and ability levels and that most students have a realistic understanding about their ability in specific subject areas.

The researcher was able to find that the answers the students and teachers gave about student academic ability were similar. This could indicate that student performance is based on subtle and not so subtle messages from teachers about his or her worth, intelligence, and capabilities (Trice, 2003). If a teacher has lower or higher expectations of student abilities, the student may perform that way. The teachers can develop these expectations based on their own sense of cultural sensitivity and their perceived bias. This shows the importance of the teachers being culturally self-aware.

Research Question 2

To what extent is there an association between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance? According to the findings, there were no associations between cultural sensitivity and academic performance. Since there are no associations, there are also no implications for practice.

Research Question 3

To what extent is there an association between teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic performance? All teachers who participated in the study answered the same cultural sensitivity survey and those surveys were descriptively compared with the mean of class EOC scores. Upon reviewing the mean EOC scores for each teacher and class, the researcher found some interesting outcomes.

In Class 1, the mean of the teacher cultural sensitivity survey showed that the teacher rated herself high, with a mean of 4.36. When looking at the mean EOC scores of her students, it showed that her students also scored high with a mean of 84.28. This class illustrates that where the teacher felt she was culturally sensitive, the students performed well academically.

When comparing the data from Research Questions 3 and 4, there are some interesting findings. The perception of the student's teacher cultural sensitivity in Class 1 is somewhat similar with a student mean of 4.51 and a teacher mean of 4.36. This appears to show that there is a strong positive correlation in what the students and teacher thought of the teacher cultural sensitivity. When comparing teacher cultural sensitivity to the achievement of the students on the EOC scores, this class shows a positive association. This means that student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity could have positively impacted student achievement as indicated by the mean

EOC scores and could have caused an increase in the student EOC mean score.

In Class 2, the teacher rated herself even higher in her own cultural sensitivity with a mean of 4.44, and those students scored second to last of the sample classes with a mean of 71.31 EOC score. This indicates that while the teacher thought she may have been culturally sensitive, her students may not have agreed and may not have performed well on the EOC. It could also mean that the culturally sensitive teacher has no effect on student achievement.

The teacher in Class 2 had a higher mean score when rating herself in cultural sensitivity (4.44) than the students did (4.07). The students did not rate the cultural sensitivity of their teacher as high as the teacher did; and in the EOC scores, the mean was a low 71.31. This indicates a strong negative correlation. This could prove that there is a negative association to what students perceive as culturally sensitive and how they perform academically.

In Class 3, the teacher mean cultural sensitivity score was 4.28, and the students EOC score had a mean of 77.93. This is an interesting find since it can also indicate that teacher cultural sensitivity scores of themselves could be lower than what the students thought and that is why they performed better on the EOC, or again that the cultural sensitivity of the teacher has no association to the academic success of the student.

Class 3 shows that there is a significant positive correlation between the student and teacher responses to teacher cultural sensitivity. The student mean was 4.56, while the teacher mean was 4.28. This means that both felt the teacher was culturally sensitive. While both indicated the teacher was culturally sensitive, the students scored in the mid-range for EOC scores with a mean of 77.93.

In Class 4, there was a low teacher cultural sensitivity mean score of 4.04 and the

lowest EOC mean score of all five classes with a mean of 70.33. This could show that there may be an association between teacher cultural sensitivity and student achievement since both scores were low.

The teacher and student comparison of teacher cultural sensitivity shows a negative association between the two means, 3.48 student and 4.04 teacher. When including the EOC score as well, the students were the lowest mean of all five classes. This could show that the teacher was not perceived by the students as culturally sensitive and that had an impact on their scores or that there is no association between the two variables.

In Class 5, the teacher scored herself with a mean of 4.04 in cultural sensitivity; and while the score was low, her students still performed the second best of all five classes. This may prove that there is no association between academic success and teacher cultural sensitivity.

There is a negative correlation between teacher and student responses to the teacher cultural sensitivity in Class 5. The student mean was 3.81, and the teacher mean was 4.04. What was interesting in Class 5 was that the class scored the second highest in all five classes with a mean of 82.80.

Prior research has not been able to find an association with teacher cultural sensitivity and student achievement because there are no direct studies related to this specifically. Overall, there is a wide variance in student scores on the EOC but little differences in which teachers rated themselves in cultural sensitivity. There is no pattern that can indicate confirmation or denial of the association of the two variables. The researcher cannot indicate a pattern within the data to confirm or disconfirm this research question.

Research Question 4

To what extent is there an association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity? To determine if there was an association between student perceptions and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity, the researcher compared teacher responses to her assigned students' collective perceptions to the student perceptions of that teacher's cultural sensitivity. In all classes, except Class 5, there was a significant comparison. In Classes 2 and 5, they were significantly different in a negative way; and in Classes 1 and 3, they were significantly different in a positive way. Classes 1 and 3 had a higher academic performance from their students and a higher cultural sensitivity score. Class 5 was too close to be either significantly positive or negative.

As indicated above, when comparing the data in Research Questions 3 and 4, there were some interesting findings. In Class 1, the teacher mean of her cultural sensitivity survey showed she rated herself high, with a 4.36 mean. When looking at the mean EOC scores of her students, it showed that her students also scored high with an 84.28 mean. This class illustrates that where the teacher felt she was culturally sensitive, the student performed well academically.

The teacher in Class 2 had a higher mean score when rating herself in cultural sensitivity than the students did, which was 4.07. The students did not rate the cultural sensitivity of their teacher as high as the teacher did; and in the EOC scores, the mean of 71.31 was low. This indicates a strong negative correlation. This could prove that there is a negative association to what students perceive as culturally sensitive and how they perform academically.

Class 3 shows that there is a significant positive correlation between student and

teacher responses to teacher cultural sensitivity. The student mean was 4.56, while the teacher mean was 4.28. This means that both felt the teacher was culturally sensitive. While both indicated the teacher was culturally sensitive, the students scored in the mid-range for the mean of the EOC scores with a 77.93.

In Classes 2 and 5, teacher and student comparisons of teacher cultural sensitivity show a negative association between the two means, 3.48 student and 4.04 teacher. When including the EOC score as well, the students were the lowest mean of all five classes. This could show that the teacher was not perceived by the students as culturally sensitive and that had an impact on their scores or that there is no association between the two variables.

There is a negative correlation between teacher and student responses to teacher cultural sensitivity in Class 5. The student mean was 3.81, and the teacher mean was 4.04. What was interesting in Class 5 was that the class scored the second highest in all five classes with an 82.80 mean. Prior research has not been studied to show the association between the two variables from this study, so there are no true findings to support or disprove this association.

Research Question 5

What are student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom? When analyzing the short answer responses from both teachers and students, the researcher made some connections between their responses and the framework of culturally sensitive classrooms by Howard (2015). The open-ended questions were designed to help the researcher to determine student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom. When looking at the themes coded from the responses, there were some similarities to the principles by Howard

(2015); and those same characteristics were identified from both teacher and student responses.

Principle 1 states that students are affirmed in their cultural connections, meaning that teachers make personal connections to student lives. The two phrases or themes that were coded from the open-ended questions that fit this principle are understanding/ knowing and adding cultural diversity in class/assignments. Understanding/knowing was found in Classes 1, 2, and 4 student responses. This finding can be contributed to the fact that a teacher needs to be able to apply lessons and academia to student cultures; and in order to do so, they need to be understanding of student cultures. The data from all three open-ended questions show that both students and some teachers see the importance of understanding and knowing and their importance to cultural sensitivity (Table 30).

Table 30

Patterns of Codes from Open-Ended Questions 26, 27, and 28

Question Number	Pattern	Student Responses	Teacher Responses
26	Understanding/Knowing	40	4
27	Understanding/Knowing	17	0
28	Understanding/Knowing	10	-

In Question 28, the students overwhelmingly responded in one class that adding cultural diversity in class and assignments was one of the things their teacher does that they considered culturally sensitive (Table 31). This directly relates to Howard's (2015) Principle 1, since it alludes to the fact that this teacher makes personal connections to student lives, and students recognize this as a factor in making their classroom more culturally sensitive.

Table 31

Student Responses to Open-Ended Question 28 that Teachers Add Cultural Diversity in Class and Assignments

Question	Student Response frequency
List 3 things that your teacher does that you consider to be culturally sensitive?	18-Total Class 1: 2 Class 3: 2 Class 4*: 1 Class 5*: 13

*Classes 4 and 5 were taught by the same teacher. Class 4 is a regular class, and Class 5 was an honors class.

Howard's (2015) Principle 5 refers to teachers making instructional changes to accommodate differences in learning as a factor that affects cultural sensitivity. Students again in Question 28 responded with frequency that their teacher also provides additional resources to support students (Table 32). This directly correlates with Principle 5 and the effectiveness of cultural sensitivity in the classroom and Howard's (2015) principles of a culturally sensitive classroom.

Table 32

Student Responses to Open-Ended Question 28 that Teachers Make Instructional Changes to Accommodate Difference in Learning is a Factor that Affects Cultural Sensitivity

Question	Student Responses
List 3 things that your teacher does that you consider to be culturally sensitive.	8-Total Class 2: 3 Class 3: 3 Class 4*: 1 Class 5*: 1

*Classes 4 and 5 were taught by the same teacher. Class 4 is a regular class, and Class 5 was an honors class.

Principle 6 states that culturally sensitive classrooms are managed with firm, consistent, and caring control. One of the words that was seen in all open-ended questions that confirms this as what students perceive as a culturally sensitive classroom

was respect/acceptingness/tolerance (Table 33). The principle states that it focuses on the art of preempted respect and classroom management. The importance of this quality to Gary Howard, students, and teachers reinforces this characteristic as important to cultural sensitivity in the classroom.

Table 33

Student and Teacher Response Frequency for Open-Ended Questions with Answers Including Respect/Acceptingness/Tolerance

Questions the responses were seen as a pattern	Student Responses	Teacher Responses
26: What does cultural sensitivity mean to you?	40-Total Class 1: 12 Class 2: 5 Class 3: 4 Class 4*: 5 Class 5*: 14	4
27: What do you think makes a teacher culturally sensitive?	21-Total Class 1: 6 Class 2: 1 Class 3: 4 Class 4*: 3 Class 5*: 7	4
28: List 3 things that your teacher does that you consider to be culturally sensitive.	34-Total Class 1: 13 Class 2: 5 Class 3: 7 Class 4*: 4 Class 5*: 5	-

*Classes 4 and 5 were taught by the same teacher. Class 4 is a regular class, and Class 5 was an honors class.

Implications for Practice

The current study may help to provide insight for implications for practice. The researcher found that while analyzing Research Questions 3 and 4, the classes that had a high mean for teacher cultural sensitivity for both student and teacher surveys also seemed to have higher EOC means. The researcher concluded from the findings of the

study that if students and teachers perceive the teacher has a high cultural sensitivity, student academic achievement on the EOC may increase. The descriptive statistics and scatterplot (Figure 7) results show teachers who have higher scores in teacher cultural sensitivity and the distribution of student academic performance are more narrow (less variance) than the teachers who have lower scores in teacher cultural sensitivity and the distribution of student academic performance (relevant higher variance; Table 24). According to Plata (2008), cultural sensitivity sets the tone for classroom teacher reactions to student exhibited social behaviors and academic performance (Plata, 2008). If classroom teachers have personal agendas or allow personal experiences, beliefs, values, and expectations to dominate the teaching of culturally and linguistically different students, they may ignore, distort, or underemphasize student motivations, aspirations, expectations, and intellectual capabilities to learn (Plata, 2008). Therefore, current administrators and counselors should consider teacher culture sensitivity when scheduling students, especially those who lack motivation or struggle academically. Shealey and Callins (2007) said that demonstration of cultural sensitivity requires teachers to “learn about the culture represented in their classrooms and translate this knowledge into instruction practices” (p. 195). To do this, current university or college educational programs can implement courses in undergraduate and graduate degrees to address the culturally sensitive part of teaching for those going into the profession.

Not only is it important to learn about culture through training, but it is imperative that teachers also are aware of their own cultural biases. Gaining self-awareness about how perspectives are developed helps teachers understand underlying reasons for problems that culturally diverse students encounter in the educational system (e.g., low academic performance, low standardized achievement test performance,

overrepresentation in special education, alienation, and high drop-out rates; Ogbu, 1992). To teach successfully in culturally diverse classrooms, school teachers need to become more aware of their own multicultural perceptions as their beliefs and behaviors affect the academic and social skill development of their students (Taylor & Quintana, 2003). Cultural self-awareness is a first step toward understanding how factors of culture, race, ethnicity, SES, acculturation, language, and the interaction between these variables affect culturally diverse student learning (Plata, 2008). Plata's (2008) research also inferred that teachers need to be aware of their own cultural sensitivity and that it influences student learning. Districts can help to eliminate cultural biases by having teachers do self-assessments on personal cultural sensitivity to use as a baseline for professional growth which, in turn, will help them identify areas that affect student learning. These areas then can be worked on through the Individual Growth Plan of teachers.

For teachers who have multiple years of experience in the profession, it is also suggested that ongoing professional development be provided to introduce the importance of cultural sensitivity. According to Desimone, Porter, Garet, Yoon, and Birman (2002), if the professional development has these six key features—reform type, duration, collective participation, active learning, coherence, and content focus—the professional development was found to be related to an increase in teacher self-reported knowledge and skills and changes in teaching practice. Therefore, as long as the professional development has those features, it can be beneficial to introduce it to increase teacher performance. Through Phase Five: Systemic Transformation and Planning for Change, Howard (2015) stressed the importance of the growth of your school at the organizational level and how to use this to plan appropriate professional development to lead to positive student outcomes.

Implications for the District

The researcher recommends that the school district in which the study took place implement the following: give their teachers the survey determining their own cultural sensitivity and provide professional development that would be differentiated depending on their scores (levels of cultural sensitivity).

To teach successfully in culturally diverse classrooms, school teachers need to become more aware of their own multicultural perceptions as their beliefs and behaviors affect the academic and social skill development of students (Taylor & Quintana, 2003). Prior to the school year beginning, each teacher would take the survey to determine their level of cultural sensitivity. There would three levels the teachers would be divided into based on their mean score of cultural sensitivity (high, moderate, low). These mean scores would be determined by teacher population scores of the district.

Based on the levels of cultural sensitivity, professional development would be developed and differentiated. For those teachers who are on the lower means of cultural sensitivity, they could be trained in the work of Howard (2015) and follow his phases: “Phase One: Tone and Trust, Phase Two: Personal Culture and Personal Journey, Phase Three: From Social Dominance to Social Justice, Phase Four: Classroom Implications and Applications, and Phase Five: Systemic Transformation and Planning for Change” (Howard, 2015, p. 5). This professional development should be used as a basis to demonstrate the importance of cultural sensitivity and how to apply it to classroom instruction.

For those with moderate cultural mean scores, the professional development could be centered around Callins’s (2006) characteristics of a culturally sensitive classroom with culturally sensitive teachers.

Communicating high expectations. There is a pervasive message that students will succeed on the basis of not only genuine respect for them but also belief in their capabilities.

Using active teaching methods. Teachers require students to be actively involved in providing input about instruction and the teaching skills.

Facilitating learning. The teacher is not only an instructor but a guide, a mediator, and a consultant/advisor.

Maintaining positive perspective on parents and families of culturally and linguistically diverse students. Develop trust by maintaining communication with parents about their children's school progress and including parents and community members in classroom activities.

Manifesting the willingness to gain knowledge of student cultures. Integrate knowledge of student cultures into culturally responsive instructional and behavioral management practices.

Providing culturally mediated instruction. Have instruction reflect student ways of learning and use real situations, experiences, and language from student everyday lives.

Including small group instruction and cooperative learning. Organize instruction around low-pressure, student-controlled learning groups that assist in the development of academic language.

This professional development can work on implementing these practices into daily instruction. Since the current study confirmed that teachers and students have the same perceptions of cultural sensitivity and many of the patterns found connected to Callins's (2006) characteristics, using this as a framework for professional development

can help teachers understand the importance of cultural sensitivity in the classroom and help them to incorporate it into their instruction.

Teachers who present high cultural sensitivity scores can then look at some of the patterns that were discovered through the study that students identified as important and teachers did not, such as judgment, equality, origin, understanding/knowing, experience/class interactions. Those teachers then can create practices that incorporate those characteristics into daily lessons to enforce the perceptions the students had of culturally responsive teachers.

In order to get teacher buy-in, there would need to be an emphasis on the data that showed where a teacher had higher cultural sensitivity scores, there was a lower variance of student academic performance which, in turn, showed that the classes with a higher mean for teacher cultural sensitivity for both teachers and students also seemed to have higher EOC means. The researcher concluded from the study that if students and teachers perceive the teacher has a high cultural sensitivity, student academic achievement on the EOC may increase. Therefore, teachers with higher cultural sensitivity are able to translate their knowledge of cultural sensitivity into their instructional practices.

Limitations

While the study was conducted in an ethical and correct fashion, there were some limitations that may have contributed to the results. One of those limitations is that the sample population was very small. There were only four teachers who participated in the study with a total of 74 students. Not only does this small sample population limit the possible results that could show there is a relationship between cultural sensitivity and student academic performance, but it is also limited because it involved only one high

school within one district.

Another factor that may have impacted the results could be that the district in which this study was conducted also went through training with Gary Howard about being culturally sensitive in the classroom. This training was then disseminated through the schools by administrators and teams. This may be a limitation on the study because since there was an active incorporation of professional development on cultural sensitivity, the results may have been skewed and not as reflective of the real issue nationwide.

The final limitation is that the teacher population that was used was not a diverse population. All teachers who participated were women and Caucasian.

Recommendations for Further Study

While this study may not have proven statistically significant between teacher cultural sensitivity and student academic achievement, there is a further need to conduct more studies like this in order to get a more accurate depiction of the effect it may have. The research has shown that there is a correlation in previous studies, but in the current study the small sample size may have impacted the results.

There are many dimensions of culture identity, according to Banks (1994), including gender, sexual orientation, skin color, SES, nationality, religion, and exceptionality; and in order to be effective in the classroom, educators have to exhibit an appreciation of cultural sensitivity. The findings of this research show the importance of cultural sensitivity and how it plays an important role in education. Teachers who utilize culturally sensitive practices in the classroom may see higher academic growth in their students. Educators need to be implementing these practices in their classrooms, not only for possible academic growth but for betterment of the classroom environment overall.

Gaining self-awareness about how perspectives are developed helps teachers understand underlying reasons for problems that culturally diverse students encounter in the educational system (e.g., low academic performance, low standardized achievement test performance, overrepresentation in special education, alienation, and high drop-out rates; Ogbu, 1992).

Future researchers looking into this study may want to consider having a more diverse teacher population to determine if there are any correlations between gender, race, or other cultural differences and the academic performance of students. This may provide additional perspectives of what students may perceive as cultural sensitivity from different viewpoints.

Another recommendation for further research would be to determine if there are any relationships between student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and academic achievement based on student gender, ethnicity, achievement levels, and SES.

Reflections

Overall, the researcher set out to determine if there was an impact on student achievement based on student perceptions of their teacher's cultural sensitivity. The research that was stated in the literature review confirms with many studies that there is a correlation between the two, but the study that was conducted here did not show any relationship. The researcher believes that some of the limitations the study faced may have contributed to these findings. One area that did show some interesting discoveries was the fact that in all classes, except in Class 5, there was a significant comparison when looking at the response of student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and the student EOC scores. In Classes 2 and 5, they were significantly different in a negative way; and in Classes 1 and 3, they were significantly different in a positive way. Classes

1 and 3 had higher academic performance from their students and a higher cultural sensitivity score. This may indicate that if students think a teacher has a higher cultural sensitivity, they may perform better on the EOC; and if students do not have a positive perception of teacher cultural sensitivity, they may not perform well on the EOC.

Characteristics of culturally sensitive teachers, according to Callins (2006), include communicating high expectations, using active teaching methods, facilitating learning, maintaining positive perspective on the parents and families of culturally and linguistically diverse students, manifesting the willingness to gain knowledge of student cultures, providing culturally mediated instruction, and including small group instruction and cooperative learning. While the results from this study are not overwhelmingly supportive of the research, there are still small indications that there is some relevance to the research already conducted.

The researcher made connections with the current study and one of Callins's (2006) characteristics of culturally sensitive teachers. This connection was seen between Callins's characteristic of manifesting the willingness to gain knowledge of student culture and the answers to the open-ended question that asked teachers and students to identify three things teachers do that they consider culturally sensitive. Callins's characteristic focuses on manifesting the willingness to gain knowledge of student cultures which includes integrating knowledge of student cultures into culturally responsive instructional and behavioral management practices. The findings from the survey question found that there were key characteristics that were identified by teachers and students alike that support this characteristic of culturally sensitive teaching by Callins. The key patterns that were most often identified from the qualitative question responses were respect, acceptance, tolerance, understanding, knowing, equality, adding

cultural diversity in class assignments, and additional resources to support student (Table 28). With the characteristics that were identified from the patterns, these are indications that the students saw these from their teachers, therefore identifying them as culturally sensitive. Callins focused on teacher ability to gain knowledge of student cultures, and integrating that knowledge of student cultures into their instruction and behavior management practices is supported by the responses from the students. The key words that were identified that support that the teacher was focused on the ability to gain knowledge of student cultures were respect, acceptance, tolerance, understanding, and knowledge. The key patterns that were identified that support the teachers using their knowledge of student cultures to integrate into instruction were adding cultural diversity in class assignments and additional resources to support students. Furthermore, what students and teachers thought made the classroom and teacher culturally sensitive were also identified as the same things they saw as what their teacher does that is culturally sensitive.

The largest finding of the study relates back to Research Question 5, “what are student and teacher perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom?” The qualitative responses from teachers and students indicated there was a correlation between student and teacher responses and what they thought to be culturally sensitive in the classroom. The key patterns of respect, acceptance, tolerance, understanding, and knowledge were also found to be key patterns found in teacher responses. Since both teachers and students recognized the same key characteristics, this can allow the researcher to conclude that regardless of if you are a teacher or a student, the perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity in the classroom are similar. Buchtel (2014) found that knowledge of cultural differences is one of the basic requirements for achieving cultural

sensitivity. Cultural sensitivity sets the tone for classroom teacher reactions to student exhibited social behaviors and academic performance (Plata, 2008). Since classroom teachers are not obligated to include multicultural viewpoints in instruction, culturally relevant instruction depends on teacher cultural sensitivity and willingness to react appropriately. A culturally sensitive and culturally competent teacher appreciates, values, and celebrates similarities and differences within, between, and among heterogeneous student population (Singh, 1996).

Another reflection the researcher had was the fact that there are limited studies that focus on student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity, which may also indicate why the results of this study did not show any real positive relationship with the two. There is a need for more studies focused on student perceptions of teachers that use a larger sample population and teacher sample that is more diverse. Having a more diverse teacher and student sample would be able to show if there is a larger correlation with the previous studies.

Summary

The previous research proves there are some positive relationships between teacher perceptions and student academic success. Even with some positive relationships, there still are not enough data to determine if this is an accurate portrayal of the research questions. The researcher was unable to determine a true association between teacher and student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and its relationship to academic success.

There was a connection between the literature review and the findings of the study that proved to be accurate. The characteristics discussed by Callins (2006), Singh (1996), and Buchtel (2014) were found in the qualitative research question responses of

many of the student responses and some of the teacher responses. These connections showed that the research question regarding student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity was validated and that students, teachers, and previous research have identified that the main characteristics that allow teachers to be perceived by their students as culturally responsive are accurate.

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Appendix A

Teacher Cultural Sensitivity Survey- Student Survey

Teacher Cultural Sensitivity Survey- Student Survey

Participant Code _____

Dear Participant:

Please take a moment to complete this survey. The answers that you provide will help a research study examining how student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity and its relationship to student achievement. Your participation is voluntary. Information will be confidential. Your privacy will be protected and your name will not be shared with anyone.

Please answer the questions using the following Likert scale for your answers. Circle the number that best answers the question.

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

1. My English teacher includes multiple views and opinions in classroom lessons.

1 2 3 4 5
2. My English teacher shows respect for my culture.

1 2 3 4 5
3. My English teacher enjoys working with people from different cultural backgrounds.

1 2 3 4 5
4. My English teacher gets to know me before they form an opinion of my abilities.

1 2 3 4 5
5. My teacher demonstrates open and trusting relationships with his/her students.

1 2 3 4 5
6. My English teacher values my input and opinions.

1 2 3 4 5
7. My English teacher's tone of voice is caring and respectful.

1 2 3 4 5
8. My teacher respects the values of people from different cultures.

1 2 3 4 5
9. My English teacher is open-minded to the views of students from different cultures.

1 2 3 4 5
10. My English teacher welcomes me at the door.

1 2 3 4 5
11. Student work is displayed both in and out of the classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

12. My English teachers classroom decorations shows a understanding and appreciation of people who are different than them.

1 2 3 4 5

13. The learning expectations are clearly communicated to me for this class using a variety of approaches.

1 2 3 4 5

14. My English teacher expresses a confidence in my learning ability and intelligence.

1 2 3 4 5

15. My English teacher frequently checks to make sure I understand what is being taught.

1 2 3 4 5

16. My English teacher holds high expectations for all students.

1 2 3 4 5

17. I am provided with assignment choices to show my understanding of what has been taught in my English II class.

1 2 3 4 5

18. My English teacher considers my learning style when teaching.

1 2 3 4 5

19. My English teacher adjusts instruction to be more challenging or less challenging based on my needs.

1 2 3 4 5

20. I am actively engaged in learning most of the time in my English II class.

1 2 3 4 5

21. My English teacher addresses potentially disruptive behavior.

1 2 3 4 5

22. Discipline issues are handled by my teacher in a respectful manner.

1 2 3 4 5

23. My English teacher respects the way people from different cultures act.

1 2 3 4 5

24. The classroom is setup to for both small-group and individual work.

1 2 3 4 5

25. Students are able to work effectively as individuals and as group members.

1 2 3 4 5

Culture: the beliefs, social practices, and characteristics of a racial, religious, or social group.

26. What does cultural sensitivity mean to you?

27. What do you think makes a teacher culturally sensitive?

28. List 3 things that your teacher does that you consider to be culturally sensitive?

Appendix B

Teacher Cultural Sensitivity Survey-Teacher Survey

Teacher Cultural Sensitivity Survey-Teacher Survey

Participate Code _____

Dear Participant:

Please take a moment to complete this survey. The answers that you provide will help a researcher studying how student perceptions of teacher cultural sensitivity impact student achievement. Your participation is voluntary and your information will be kept confidential. Your privacy will be protected and your name will not be shared with anyone.

Please answer the questions using the following Likert scale for your answers. Circle the number that best answers the question.

1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Neutral 4=Agree 5=Strongly Agree

1. I include multiple views and opinions in classroom lessons.

1 2 3 4 5

2. I show respect for my student's culture.

1 2 3 4 5

3. I enjoy interacting with people from different cultural backgrounds.

1 2 3 4 5

4. I wait before forming an opinion of my student's abilities.

1 2 3 4 5

5. I demonstrate open and trusting relationships with my students.

1 2 3 4 5

6. I value student input and perspectives.

1 2 3 4 5

7. My tone of voice demonstrates care and respect.

1 2 3 4 5

8. I respect the values of people from different cultures.

1 2 3 4 5

9. I am open-minded to people from different cultures who are different from me.

1 2 3 4 5

10. I welcome my students at the door.

1 2 3 4 5

11. My students work is showcased both in and out of the classroom.

1 2 3 4 5

12. My classroom decorations show an understanding and appreciation of people from different cultures.

1 2 3 4 5

13. My learning expectations are clearly communicated using a variety of approaches.

1 2 3 4 5

14. I express a confidence in my student's learning ability and intelligence.

1 2 3 4 5

15. I frequently interact with individual students to check for understanding.

1 2 3 4 5

16. I hold high expectations for all students.

1 2 3 4 5

17. My students are provided choices when demonstrating their understanding of lessons.

1 2 3 4 5

18. I address a variety of learning styles in my lesson delivery.

1 2 3 4 5

19. I adjust instruction to be more challenging or less challenging based on student need.

1 2 3 4 5

20. My students are actively engaged in learning most of the time.

1 2 3 4 5

21. I effectively redirect potentially disruptive behavior.

1 2 3 4 5

22. Discipline issues are handled in a respectful manner.

1 2 3 4 5

23. I respect the way people from different cultures behave.

1 2 3 4 5

24. My classroom setup facilitates both small-group and individual work.

1 2 3 4 5

25. My students are able to function effectively both as individuals and as group members.

1 2 3 4 5

26. What is cultural sensitivity to you?

27. What do you think makes a teacher culturally sensitive?

28. List 3 things you do in your class that makes it culturally sensitive for students?

Appendix C

Student Perceptions of Academic Self-Concept Ability-Student Survey

Student Perceptions of Academic Self-Concept Ability-Student Survey

Participant Code _____

Please answer the questions using the following Likert scale for your answers. Circle the number that best answers the question.

1=Well below average 2=Below average 3=Average 4=Above Average 5=Well above average

1. What is your opinion of your ability in this English II class?

1 2 3 4 5

2. How would you rank yourself if you were to compare yourself to your peers in your English II class?

1 2 3 4 5

3. Compared to most of your other school subjects, how well do you do in English II?

1 2 3 4 5

4. How well do you think you will do in English II this year?

1 2 3 4 5

5. What grade do you expect to earn in this English II class?

A B C D F

6. Do you think you will pass the EOC in English II?

Yes No

Appendix D

Teacher Perceptions of Student Ability Survey-Teacher Survey

Teacher Perceptions of Student Ability Survey-Teacher Survey

Participant Code _____

Please answer the questions using the following Likert scale for your answers. Circle the number that best answers the question. The survey will be completed separately for each individual student within the English II classes.

1=Well below average 2=Below average 3=Average 4=Above Average 5=Well above average

1. What is your perception of _____ ability in your English II class?

1 2 3 4 5

2. How would you rank _____ if you were to compare them to the peers in their English II class?

1 2 3 4 5

3. Compared to most of your other school subjects, how well do you perceive _____ in English II?

1 2 3 4 5

4. How well do you think _____ will do in English II this year?

1 2 3 4 5

5. What grade do you expect _____ to earn in this English II class?

A B C D F

6. Do you think _____ will pass the EOC in English II?

Yes No