PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHERS’ ATTITUDES AND UNDERSTANDINGS ABOUT CULTURALLY RELEVANT PEDAGOGY AND TEACHING AFRICAN AMERICAN MALE STUDENTS AT URBAN HIGH SCHOOLS

Dissertation

Presented in Partial Fulfillment of the Requirements for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy in the Graduate School of The Ohio State University

By

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Education

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2011

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Abstract

The purpose of this study was to analyze high school physical education teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy (CRP) and teaching African American males within urban high schools. The participants were 40 certified physical education teachers randomly sampled from two large urban high school districts. The research design was descriptive survey (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). Data were collected with a demographic questionnaire and a Teachers’ Attitudes about African American Male Students survey scale, which was developed and validated for this study. The teachers’ demographic data were analyzed descriptively. The scale data were analyzed using descriptive and inferential procedures (Shavelson, 1988). The physical education teachers expressed mostly favorable attitudes about teaching African American male students. However, the teachers' attitudes tended to vary as a function of their gender and ethnic status. For example, the female teachers tended to ascribe greater importance to teaching in a culturally relevant manner than did the male teachers. Moreover, the African American teachers had higher mean scores on the scale's dimensions of culture and communities; establishing social relationships; and the importance of using and understanding CRP than did the White teachers. The findings and implications are discussed regarding the teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American males at urban high schools.
Dedication

The labor, perseverance and completion of this dissertation are dedicated to my mother, Betty M. Collins; great-grandmother, Ellen C. Johnson; and grandfather, Henry Collins. You were the most loving, caring, and understanding people that I have ever known. I love you very dearly and will remember you always.
Acknowledgments

First, I would like to thank my Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ, for all of His blessings. I truly feel that this has been an opportunity for me to experience His power through many life lessons while progressing towards the attainment of this degree.

I would like to thank Shalun Lewis, I love you and I always will. Too, I would like to thank my parents, Betty J. (posthumous) and Frankie L., for all of your love, support, and parental guidance throughout my life. I thank God for each of you as you have instilled a love for education and people into me that I will never forget. Also, I would like to thank the best sisters in the world: Lakimberly, Coledia, Typhanie, and Natalie for all of your support and encouragement throughout this process. You all have a special place in my heart forever. To my grandmothers, Ollie and Leola, I love you dearly as you have loved me unconditionally throughout everything that has taken place in my life. I would like to thank all of my family for your numerous displays of support during my time at The Ohio State University.

I would like to thank Dr. Samuel R. Hodge, my advisor, for your countless hours of dedication to my professional growth, professional expertise, and tireless dedication to the education of all. Without you, the attainment of a Ph.D would still be a far-fetched dream for me as well as other ethnic minority students. It is my sincere hope that you continue to lead others down this educational path. You have taught me more than I have ever imagined and I am eternally indebted to you and your family. I would also like to
thank Drs. Dixson and Gardner for their support during this process. Your guidance and professional knowledge has helped me to attain this feat.

I must give thanks to the faculty and staff at Grambling State University. Thank you for the nurturance and care that you gave to me during my matriculation as an undergraduate at this prestigious university. Specifically, thank you Dr. Willie Daniel for believing in me. I have always admired you and how you conducted business with students as well as your fellow colleagues. I thank you for pushing me to step outside of my comfort zone to pursue this terminal degree. Also, I would like to thank all of the teachers of East Carroll Parish that played a role in this process. I will never forget my hometown of Lake Providence, Louisiana and the lessons that were learned. Additionally, I would like to thank Mrs. Rita Love, Mrs. Cora Holmes, Mrs. Jean Bell, and Mrs. Audrey Landers (godmother) for being there for me during the most difficult portion of my young adult life. I can never repay you for what you have done for my family and me.

I would also like to acknowledge my golfing buddies from Lake Providence- Glenn Dixon, Michael Kelly, and Andy Brister for the helpful discussions and outings that we had that helped to make my way easier.

To my Union Grove Church family, I cannot fully express my gratitude for your spiritual guidance during my time in Columbus. Pastor Johnson, I thank you for allowing me to serve in such a loving church home. It is my prayer that I may be able to find a church home that will continue to shape my spiritual growth as Union Grove has.
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Specialization: Physical Education Teacher Preparation

Minor Fields: Research in Education
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Chapter 1: Introduction

Data from the United States (US) Census Bureau show that the US population is growing larger and more diverse (El Nasser, 2008). These changing demographics will continue as immigration and domestic population growth excels (El Nasser, 2008). Our schools and communities are consequently experiencing demographic shifts (American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education, 1990; Banks, 1991). Although White students encompass over half of the school-age population, African American, Hispanic, and Asian students make up close to 40% of school enrollments (Hodgkinson, 2002). Student diversity, and in-turn, cultural heterogeneity, continues to rise (Rodriguez & Sjorstrom, 1995), however the teacher workforce in the US has remained constant. That is most teachers are English-speaking, White females who may have limited exposure or knowledge of cultures outside of their own (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Most teachers’ lack of exposure and knowledge about students from culturally, ethnically, economically, and linguistically diverse backgrounds hinders their ability to meet the needs of such students (Gay & Kirkland, 2003).

Teachers must reflect on and recognize the need to address issues associated with student diversity, which should include use of culturally relevant pedagogies. Education scholars have pointed out cultural differences potentially existing between teachers and students from diverse backgrounds (Burden, Hodge, O’Bryant, & Harrison, 2004). This is
especially evident in today’s mostly White teacher workforce and the diverse student populations in urban schools (Garmon, 2004; Shakespear, Beardsley, & Newton, 2003).

Typically, urban schools are situated in improvised or modest communities (Lalas, 2000). Students in high poverty schools Students in urban school districts, mostly African Americans, Hispanics, Native Americans, and poor Whites, are exposed to many educational, economical, and social problems (Williams & Williamson, 1992). Because of or in addition to such issues, these students are more likely to underachieve from an academic standpoint (Miller, 1995). They also tend to underperform on state-mandated proficiency tests (Plata & Robinson, 1998) and tend to have below average academic outcomes (U.S. Department of Education, 2006). In fact, a high percentage of African American and Hispanic students in urban communities tend to perform lower on standardized tests than White peers in suburban school districts. They also have higher dropout rates, limited parental involvement in school affairs, and worsening school infrastructures (Noguera, 2003). Further, African Americans and Hispanics tend to be less physically active compared to White peers (Myers, Kagawa-Singer, Kumanyika, Lex, & Markides, 1995) and often experience inadequate and marginalized physical education programs at their schools (Ward & O’Sullivan, 2006). Clearly, teachers must be fully aware of the need to equip their students with the knowledge and skills necessary to learn in the midst of troubled situations.

Cultural responsiveness in teaching

Advocates of social justice pedagogies continue to push for educators to come to a greater understanding of diverse student populations, including their cultures, languages, and learning styles (Spalding, Klecka, Lin, Odell, & Wang, 2010). Teachers cannot
properly educate all students without knowledge and skills in the use of social justice pedagogies (Gay & Howard, 2000; Gay, 2003). Teachers need to acquire a working understanding of cultural responsiveness (Cartledge, Kea, & Ida, 2000; Casteel, 1998; Necochea, 1997). Social justice frameworks such as that of multicultural education impart knowledge and skill for serving all students better (Gay, 2003). Teachers must be knowledgeable of and have experiences with various types of cultures. Use of such knowledge and skill will permit students to not feel pressured to abandon their cultures (Fine, 1986; Fordham, 1988) or to assimilate to the majority culture (Elenes, 1997) for attaining academic success. A lack of cultural responsiveness means the needs of students from diverse backgrounds will not be met, but rather they will experience marginalization or cultural assimilation at best, and most likely school disconnect and failure.

The need for culturally relevant pedagogies in today’s schools should not be understated. African American students, males in particular, are undoubtedly in need of the benefits that this approach to teaching offers. While there have been gains made in the graduation rates of African American students, African American male students still are exposed to a multiplicity of negative academic outcomes (Whiting, 2006). Among these are disproportionately (a) excessive dropout, suspension, and expulsion rates; (b) poor test scores on classroom and standardized tests; and (c) low grade point averages (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005; Whiting, 2004). Additionally, African American/Black male students, especially those from poor communities, have a lower likelihood to have the vital resources needed to achieve academically (Hodge, Harrison, Burden, & Dixson, 2008b). Livingston and Wirt (2004) reported that students from families with low incomes, including African American male students, were extremely
susceptible to dropping out of school than students from families that attained high incomes. Also, it is important to note that traditionally schools have not been places where African American students, particularly males, have felt a sense of belonging. As African American males progress through school, they become less engaged as it pertains to academics, have learned to underachieve and often fail to recognize the importance of or even disregard schools as entities that develop them holistically (Ferguson, 2001; Ford, 1996; Ogbu, 2003, 2004; Whiting, 2004).

In addition to schools not being places where African American males feel a sense of belonging, it is argued that the traditional mainstream content in classes puts them at a disadvantage. Arguably, not receiving culturally relevant instruction, coupled with difficulties such as being stereotyped in a negative manner, low socioeconomic status, and high risk neighborhoods all create complex barriers for African American males (Hodge, Burden, Robinson, & Bennett, 2008a; Spencer & Dornbusch, 1990). Another factor that has to be taken into account is the fact that African American men and women have endured racial injustices, discrimination and social intolerance in all facets of society, including the educational system. Typifying racial intolerance are systematized and institutionalized practices of marginalizing and devaluing African Americans (Jones, 1991). Of concern, African American males in particular are far less likely to graduate from high school or attend and finish college than their White peers (Harvey & Anderson, 2005; Holzman, 2004; Schouten, 2004). Thus, there is a great need to address the negative academic outcomes of African American male students. With that said, it is important that there are studies in which researchers seek ways to address issues
associated with better educational services that will aid African American male students (Swanson, Cunningham, & Spencer, 2003).

Since children and youth, at any age, do not enter classrooms or schools void of a distinct culture (Benson, 2003), it is important to recognize that various cultures exist within American schools and that students' cultures must be infused in the daily practices of teachers. To ensure the delivery of equitable and just experiences to all students, teachers as well as teacher candidates must be cognizant of the challenges involved in today's classrooms (Colville-Hall, MacDonald, & Smolen, 1995). Further, there is a need for all educators to respond to the cultures within schools. A medium for such response is the use of culturally responsive pedagogies. Gay (2000) and Ladson-Billings (1995a) spoke favorably of teachers being prepared in this manner, presuming that classroom practices that are connected to the cultures and experiences of the students, cultural referents, become more relevant and learned in an easier manner. It is necessary to personify teaching practices that aid a diversity of students to ensure the delivery of an appropriate education (Plata & Robertson, 1998). In order for social justice to occur, equitable practices that are culturally responsive must be in place in all classrooms so that all students have a chance at success (Jacobs, 2006). Once teachers are prepared in a manner that allows them to deliver content in culturally relevant ways, African American male students will be able to reap the academic benefits of this pedagogical approach.

Statement of the Problem

Teachers have a great responsibility to ensure that equitable pedagogy is practiced in classrooms. With increasing student diversity, teachers must not ignore the vast array of cultures that are present in our schools. In that light, there is a need for implementing
culturally relevant pedagogies in physical education programs. Ladson-Billings (1995b) described culturally relevant pedagogy as a “theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate” (p. 469). Culturally relevant pedagogy is an approach to teaching that all in-service teachers should take advantage of so that all students are able to learn.

A need for this approach to pedagogy was discussed in one of the major tenets of the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB). Supporters of NCLB claim its mandates provide students with equitable educational opportunities (Sunderman, Kim, & Orfield, 2004). More relevant in physical education, teachers are to adhere to the standards set forth by the National Association for Sport and Physical Education (NASPE) which speak to diversity as well as personal and social responsibility (Tannehill, 2001). To present an equitable and high quality education to all students, teachers must come to a greater understanding of student diversity to achieve equitable pedagogical practices. Furthermore it is argued that students are being required to repress their own cultural understandings in favor of assimilation to a traditional Euro-American mainstream culture, and that these practices in educational systems needed to be done away with (Wallace, Acker-Hocevar, & Sweatt, 2001). There is a need for teachers to address the negative academic outcomes that have become associated with a diverse student population; this can be accomplished by teachers gaining a greater understanding of the diverse student populations that exist within the schools of today. Hence the current study focuses on physical education teachers and their attitudes toward and understandings of one such group, African
American males, who are most likely to underachieve, drop-out, or fail academically in US urban schools.

Teacher preparation programs need greater efforts so that classrooms typically have teachers who are knowledgeable of various cultures (Mitchell, 1987). Most teacher preparation programs, including physical education teacher education (PETE) programs, expose students to a minimal number of classes that review some materials that deal with multicultural knowledge (Burden et al., 2004). Instead, these programs must find ways to instill content of various cultures throughout their curriculums in order to aid teachers with knowledge of other cultures (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge, Tannehill, & Kluge, 2003; O’Bryant, O’Sullivan, & Raudensky, 2000; Sparks, 1994; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). After the completion of degree programs, practicing teachers must continue to expand on their multicultural knowledge, political acuity, and socio-cultural competence.

In addition to teacher educators addressing the needs of a diverse student population, in-service teachers should be prepared to instruct in ways that allow all students to learn. Because all too often African American male students underachieve in schools, especially in urban settings, it is vital to investigate alternative means that will lend support to their academic success (Ogbu, 2003, 2004). Urban school settings have become places synonymous with academic failure, particularly for African American males. African American males in urban schools face many difficulties that have an adverse effect on their academic outcomes. Among these are failing to succeed on standardized and classroom assessments, dropping out of school, and being expelled at a high rate (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005; Whiting, 2004). When African American males are not properly educated, there is a greater likelihood of them
disconnecting with schools and even the society at-large, thus, exposing African American males to more distressing situations (Boyd, 2007); some of these situations include imprisonment, unemployment, and suicide (Boyd, 2007). In physical education, male students, and African American male students in particular (Hodge, Kozub, Dixson, Moore, & Kambon, 2008c), tend to hold strong beliefs in their ability to do well within sports and physical activity (Xiang, McBride, Guan, & Solmon, 2003; Xiang, McBride, & Bruene, 2006; Xiang, McBride, & Guan, 2004). African American students are also apt to feel capable of success in physical education despite statistics that show overall negative outcomes with them in other subject areas (Graham, 1994; Lay & Wakstein, 1985). As with other subject areas, African American males tend not to participate in class activities that they perceive are of no particular relevance to them (Gao, Lee, & Harrison, 2008). To aid in the academic success of all students, “it is important for physical educators to create a learning environment that is engaging [and] has meaningful content” (Gao et al., 2008, p.246). With that, Woodland (2008) suggested that the traditional approaches to education and teaching needed to be “reimagined” (p. 537).

Ladson-Billings (1995a) articulated a curricular and philosophical orientation, a mindset, and pedagogical approach to teaching termed *culturally relevant pedagogy* that challenges traditional pedagogical practices. In culturally relevant pedagogy, teachers use all of the students’ experiences that occur in their home lives to broaden the knowledge of all students within the class (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). This approach to instruction uses multiple sources of data and pedagogies to promote learning in the classroom. Culturally relevant pedagogy has been deemed an approach to instruction to empower students in holistic ways (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). In this conception of learning and
pedagogical application, all students are expected to experience academic success (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). As teachers continue to gain an understanding on culturally relevant pedagogical skills, more students, including African American males, will have a greater chance to experience school progress (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Today, more than ever, there is pressing need for determining, analyzing and theorizing on the attitudes and understandings of teachers in regards to culturally relevant pedagogies and teaching of African American males at urban schools.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study was to analyze high school physical education teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students within urban school districts. The following research questions guided this study:

1. What are the attitudes of physical education teachers about African American males’ cultures and communities?
2. What are the attitudes of physical education teachers about African American males’ knowledge, learning, and performance?
3. What are the attitudes of physical education teachers about establishing social relationships with African American males in and beyond the physical education setting?
4. What are the attitudes of physical education teachers about the importance of using culturally relevant pedagogy in teaching African American males at urban high schools?
5. What understandings do physical education teachers have about culturally relevant pedagogy?

**Definition of Terms**

The following terms were used throughout the study. To ensure clarity, the meanings of the various terms have been defined below.

*Asian*. The term Asian is used by the U.S. Census Bureau in reference mostly to any of the original peoples of the Far East, Southeast Asia, or the Indian subcontinent including Cambodia, China, India, Japan, Korea, Malaysia, Pakistan, the Phillipine Islands, Thailand, and Vietnam ([www.census.gov](http://www.census.gov)).

*African American*. This term is used as an ethnic identifier in its historical and contemporary context, referring to Black Americans as well as other individuals of African ancestry (e.g., Afro-Caribbeans, Ghanaians, Kenyans, Nigerians, and Haitians) who reside in the US (Hodge et al., 2008c).

*Black* is used as an identifier of race or ethnicity by the U.S. Census Bureau in reference mostly to African Americans in United States of America and other people (e.g., Black Africans, Afro-Caribbean) of African ancestry (Hodge, Kozub, Robinson, & Hersman, 2007).

*Cultural competence*. Cultural competence can be defined as a teacher’s ability to display knowledge of and show respect to students from multiple cultural backgrounds (Columna, Foley, & Lytle, 2010). Additionally, culturally competent teachers make possible and value the educational contributions that these students make within the classroom (Teel & Obidah, 2008).
Culturally relevant pedagogy. Culturally relevant pedagogy is a set of principles, a conceptual framework, mindset, and pedagogy that uses aspects of each student's cultural heritage to support and inform the teaching-learning process (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). It emphasizes student academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b).

Culture. Culture can be defined as a dynamic system of social values, cognitive codes, behavioral standards, worldviews, and beliefs used to give order and meaning to our own lives as well as the lives of others (Delgado-Gaitan & Trueba, 1991).

Diversity. When speaking of diversity, this term refers to the differences that exist between and among groups of people. In this study, diversity refers to “differences associated with gender, race, national origin, ethnicity, social class, culture, religion, age, and ability/disability, but it can also be extended to include differences in personality, sexual orientation, veteran status, physical appearance, marital status, and parental status” (DeSensi, 1995, p. 34).

Ethnicity or ethnic group refers to “the cultural heritage of a particular group of people” (Coakley, 2008, p. 284) and includes the familial practices, backgrounds, and traditions of a particular group of people (Columna et al., 2010).

Hispanic, non-White. The term is used to identify race or ethnicity of individuals of Hispanic, Chicano/a, Cuban, Latino/a, Latin American, or Mexican American cultural heritage. In US urban schools, these persons are mostly Hispanic or Latino and other individuals of Latin American or other Spanish ancestry (Hodge et al., 2008c).

Minority. The term minority is used as it was reported in works that were cited in the paper. Historically this term has been associated with persons of dark skin groups
(e.g., Black and Hispanic people). The term is not preferred because in an increasingly diverse and larger world population it lacks global validity (the *majority* of people in the world are persons of color) and the term often imparts a negative connotation toward such individuals (Burden et al., 2004; Coakley, 2004).

*Multicultural Education.* Multicultural education is the course of action within educational contexts in which students are exposed to diversity that is created to meet the needs of pluralistic society by promoting the acceptance and appreciation of cultural pluralism (Sparks, 1994). It involves alterations in the entire school environment in order to generate equitable educational chances for all students (Banks & Banks, 1991; Sleeter & Grant, 1987). It is intended to empower all students to become well-informed, caring citizens in an otherwise ethnically polarized society (Banks, 1993).

*Native American.* This term refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of North and South America (including Central America) and who maintain tribal affiliation or community attachment (www.census.gov). In the US, Native American people are recognized through state and federal governments by their tribal affiliations and communities (Garrett, 1999).

*Race.* This term is largely known as a social construct (Malley-Morrison & Hines, 2007) and is used to categorize persons based largely on their visible biological features and not supported by genetic factors (Coakley, 2004; Loury, 2002).

*White, non-Hispanic.* This term refers to a person having origins in any of the original peoples of Europe, the Middle East, or North Africa (www.census.gov). The term is also used to include Anglo (White) descendants from both European and non-European countries (Hodge & Stroot, 1997).
Delimitations of the Study

This study was delimited to include only certified physical education teachers who had taught physical education for at least three years within urban school districts in the state of Ohio. Specifically, these teachers were instructors in Cleveland and Columbus public school districts.

Limitations of the Study

This study sampled certified physical education teachers in Ohio. Therefore the researcher cannot make any generalizations about any other physical education teachers or teachers of other subject-areas in any other states. Moreover, this study included teachers who had at least three years or more of physical education teaching experience in urban areas. Hence no generalizations can be made since lesser experienced teachers were not included in this study.
Chapter 2: Literature Review

Today, America is experiencing a dynamic transformation as it relates to becoming a more diverse country. Multiple culturally distinct groups may reside in the same neighborhoods, and likewise children and youth from these diverse groups co-exist in schools (El Nasser, 2008). With this, it is imperative that key personnel within the field of education including governmental officials, community leaders, teacher educators, and both pre-service and in-service teachers come to the realization that many cultures exist and adjustments for their successes need to be made in policies and practices in schools (Banks, 2001). This suggests that teachers should navigate classroom discourse with respect to the various cultures that exist within the classroom (Howard, 2003).

In order to effectively aid teachers in the dissemination of knowledge for all students, supporters of social justice and advocates of equitable pedagogical practices must continue to strive for improved educational outcomes for all students (Banks & Banks, 2004). Over the years, many scholars have spoken of aligning teacher practices with the culture of students (Au, 1980; Jordan, 1985; Ladson-Billings, 1994). Gay (2000, 2002), one of the initial researchers of culturally responsive approaches to teaching, spoke of ways to address the cultural disconnect that occurs between teachers and students. Gay (2000, 2002) stated the achievement of a diverse population of students would be enhanced if teachers would respond to the cultures that exist within classes.
That is teachers need to be cognizant of the fact that culture is an integral part of the classroom experience.

Pedagogies that involve culture have become prevalent in the extant educational literature. Of those that have contributed meaningfully in the field, Ladson-Billings is among the most recognized scholars as the author of numerous works on culturally relevant pedagogy. This pedagogical approach promotes collective empowerment that rests on three criteria: (a) academic success, (b) cultural competence, and (c) critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Many approaches that involve culture are, more often than not, very similar. Brown (2007) pointed out the different terminologies that are used to advocate for teaching that responds to the culture of diverse student populations, which includes: *culturally compatible* (Jordan, 1985); *culturally congruent* (Au & Kawakami, 1994); *culturally relevant* (Ladson-Billings, 1990); and *culturally responsive* (Erickson, 1987; Gay, 2000). For purposes of this current review, terminologies from various authors are used as they appear in the literature; but Ladson-Billings’ (1995) discourse on culturally relevant pedagogy is the most common terminology used and is a primary focus of this study. Culturally relevant teaching focuses on the use of aspects of students’ various cultures to aid in teaching students in effective ways.

In order for all students, including African American male students, to reap the benefits of a culturally relevant approach to teaching, colleges of education as well as classroom teachers must be open to learning about the aforementioned approach. With regards to the history of education in this country, such actions are warranted as African American students have had to endure many educational hardships (Banks, 2002). Also, the ever-changing demographics of society and schools should alert educators of the need
to be equipped with learning strategies to aid all students, hence a need for culturally responsive teaching. Culturally responsive teaching should not be limited to any particular subject matter; it should and can be involved in all subject areas, including physical education.

*Importance of Physical Education*

In 2005, the 2nd World Summit on Physical Education was held in Magglingen, Switzerland. The Summit organizers, called for stronger international status of physical education in school politics and in everyday school life as essential and integral for education as well as for human and social development (International Council of Sport Science and Physical Education, 2005). In schools worldwide, physical education has become an important medium for guiding children and youth in the process of living a physically active life (Hodge, 2010). To ensure high quality programs, physical education teachers must develop culturally relevant instructional goals and task progressions that lead to student success. High quality physical education programs promote knowledge, positive social interactions, skill acquisition and improvement, regular moderate to vigorous physical activity (MVPA), and healthy sports. These activity areas are essential for children and youths’ health and well-being and represent essential components of a healthy lifestyle, along with healthy dietary habits, tobacco free living, and avoidance of other substances harmful to health (World Health Organization, 2003). It is this current researcher’s position that all students should be given ample opportunities and support to engage in physical activities and sports that are culturally relevant and meaningful.
A Glimpse of the History of Education

A look back into US history beckons for a change in various aspects of society especially within school systems, as those persons who were not part of the dominant Euro-American population were forced to fight for the right to receive a high quality education. Current social inequities that hinder a diverse student population from being properly educated have been a part of US society from the beginning of the educational system (Ryan, 2006). This struggle for equitable practices and social justice holds true for those persons who have recently settled in this country as they were encouraged to succumb to the popular language and culture upon entering the country (Banks, 2002). This was and remains true for Black people as well a look into the past reveals quite a struggle.

Historically, African Americans have been hindered by America's White male hegemonic educational system (Anderson, 1988; Bond, 1969; Bullock, 1967; Harris, 1992; Johnson; Weinberg, 1977; Woodson, 1919). A look back in history tells of how Black people, in addition to other ethnic minorities, had to struggle to attain the right to a proper education. Prior to emancipation, Black slaves were not allowed to gain any literacy or numeracy skills (Foster, 1997), which caused them to have fewer of these skills; thus putting them at an educational deficit. Additionally, Black families were constantly separated from their families which put Black people in jeopardy of losing certain aspects of their culture (Freeman, 2006). In addition to Black Americans having to encounter this ordeal, many people entering the US often have to surrender their languages and cultures (Banks, 2002). During the time that persons from outside of the US were coming to the country, several attempts were made to prove that certain groups
were inferior, including Black people (Banks, 2002). With that said, it is important to note that Euro-Americans were in control of the government and all entities that were associated with the government, including schools (Banks, 2002). Thus this group was responsible for the types of knowledge that were being disseminated throughout the US (Banks, 2002). With control of the entire body of government, Euro-Americans were able to control the people that were allowed to enter the US; leading to the Immigration Act of 1924 (Banks, 2002). With this act, controversy among various groups seemed to be more prevalent.

There are no greater tensions that have been recorded among the people in the US than the tensions between Black and White people (Banks, 2002). The American Dilemma, a probe initiated by President Lyndon B. Johnson, was formed to look into the race relations among the previously mentioned groups (Banks, 2002). This probe led the lead investigator to determine that the cause of the calamity between these two groups was racism (Banks, 2002). Black people had come to a point where they felt it was vital to establish themselves as equal citizens and be presented with equitable opportunities (Banks, 2002). In an attempt to address the horrible conditions of race relations that existed in the US, Black Americans, in addition to those that supported them, began a civil rights movement (Banks, 2002). After years of having those persons referred to as ethnic minorities; that is, mostly Blacks, Hispanics, Asians, and Native Americans live as second-class citizens, the Civil Rights Act was enacted in 1964, calling for the equitable treatment of ethnic minorities such as Black Americans, women, immigrants, and persons with disabilities (Banks, 2002). This period of US history also allowed for the equitable treatment of other groups to come into law such as Public Law 94-142, the Education of All
Handicapped Children Act (1975), which is now PL 108-446, Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act (IDEA) of 2004, to ensure that all students with disabling conditions received a proper education (Banks, 2002, IDEA, 2004).

During the period in history when Black Americans initially started to overtly fight for civil rights, one of the main forums was the school system, as special attention was given to the knowledge being disseminated in the classroom (Banks, 2004). As the civil rights movement created opportunities for Black Americans to experience an equitable education, there were still many inadequacies and inequities as it pertained to how and where these students were taught, and as to what they could learn under inadequate and inequitable conditions. Banks (2002) shed light on the fact that the literature that was being disseminated to school-aged children via textbooks was dominated by Whites. This fact led to many negative academic outcomes on groups that were not a part of the dominant Euro-American group (Banks, 2004). Banks (1993) alluded to the fact that mainstream academic knowledge was ever-present in schools. Mainstream knowledge consisted of “the concepts, paradigms, theories, and explanations that constitute traditional and established knowledge in the behavioral and social sciences” (p.8). This knowledge had a Western European (White) viewpoint, even though there is no claim to all researchers and educators of the same group shared in these beliefs. Transformative academic knowledge consisted of “concepts, paradigms, themes, and explorations that challenge the mainstream academic knowledge and expand the literature” (Banks, 1993, p.9). Educators and researchers involved in both knowledge bases were at odds due to the fundamental assumptions as to how knowledge is constructed. Those who contributed to mainstream academic knowledge felt that their knowledge was not swayed by human
interests, yet those who believed in transformative knowledge felt that it was just the opposite and very much influenced by White Americans (Banks, 1993).

Banks (1993) alluded to the position that the literature that was being disseminated was not telling the whole story as it relates to US history. Farrell (1992) stated that when students are educated in inequitable educational systems, differences will become prevalent as it pertains to the access that some students may have. This also affects future employment, job security and income. Educational inequities can be seen in the type of knowledge that is disseminated in the schools, especially pertaining to which culture dominates the literature. Few students are aware of vital contributions of Black, Hispanic, and other marginalized groups in all subject areas across the curriculum (Bennett, 1995). It is important to note that if one group controls the literature that is disseminated, then the students of this group will be expected to achieve at a greater rate (Villegas, 1988).

Relating to only one form or type of knowledge has an ethnocentric orientation and will not adhere to the various cultures that exist within schools. This type of orientation excludes, minimizes, or ignores diversity (Hodge, 2003). DeSensi (1995) described Bennett’s (1991) model of the intercultural sensitivity that all programs should ascend to:

The ethnocentric stage includes the denial of, defense against, and minimization of difference. The denial of difference indicates that one does not recognize cultural differences, perhaps due to isolation or intentionally separating oneself from it. Dehumanization of individuals is the result of isolation or separation. Defense against difference involves the recognition of cultural difference accompanied by a negative evaluation of most variations from one’s native culture. Within this phase, individuals become more negative as the difference
between individuals or groups increases. The minimization of difference involves recognizing and accepting superficial cultural difference, but at the same time holding that all human beings are essentially similar. (p.36)

Further DeSensi (1995) talked about the move toward ethnorelativism that allows for differences to be accepted and accommodated, such as adhering to the various cultures in schools. In physical education, Hodge (2003) mentioned that faculty must do what is necessary to move toward ethnorelativism. Once ethnorelativism is accomplished in US schools and society, cultural sensitivity between various cultures can be accomplished (DeSensi, 1995).

Cultural sensitivity is “determined by one's positive or negative reactions to another person's mores, values, beliefs, performances, appearances, or behaviors, especially when they are seemingly different than one's own” (Plata & Robinson, 1998, p.116). The overall effect of cultural insensitivity can possibly lead to a diverse student population to feel inadequate in regards to their self-esteem and self-worth and hinder these students from being academically successful (Plata & Robertson, 1998).

Education has been used, intentionally or not, as a primary channel through which there has been an attempt to have conformation. From school literature to teaching styles, this occurrence is made evident. For example, Freeman (2006) suggests that teaching styles and curriculums that fail to mention the contributions made by various diverse populations to the betterment of our world is unacceptable. In particular, the culture and contributions of Black people is one such culture that has been lessened in some instances (Freeman, 2006). The intent to willingly allow cultures to be lost or forgotten can cause a multitude of problems in society (Freeman, 2006). One such negative outcome is that
those students whose culture is disregarded in schools will more likely disassociate with the educational process; thereby leading to negative academic outcomes, including dropping out of school. When occurrences such as dropping out of school and tracking take place, the human potential of these individuals will not be utilized properly and will likely lead to these students being placed in situations where they are unprepared or underprepared for gainful employment (Freeman, 2006). It is imperative that teachers and teacher educators see the value in properly educating all students. Clearly America’s teachers must realize the empowered positions that have as they are responsible for the holistic advancement of students, including educational and intellectual advancement, so that they rise to their fullest potential (Bennett, 1986). Teachers must seek to help all students gain the most from their educational experiences, especially with the diverse classrooms that teachers face now and into the future.

The Divide

The US is in the midst of a historical influx of various groups of immigrating people and their cultures (Banks, 2001; Sleeter & Grant, 1987). As the nation changes, schools will mirror the changes that occur within the country, especially pertaining to the cultural and racial make-up of US schools (Swisher & Swisher, 1986). In 2000, the US Census Bureau estimated that 34% of youths age 15-19 were from those groups that are students of color (i.e., Black and Hispanic), with another estimation that this number will rise to 46% within the next three decades (US Census Bureau, 2000). It would seem that being that the student population has dramatically changed that the workforce would resemble some of the change in classrooms. However, there are substantial findings that state this is not so. Currently, schools in the US are being staffed by a large proportion of
White teachers (over 80%), even though student diversity continues to increase (Ludwig, Kirshstein, Sidana, Ardila-Rey, & Bae, 2010). This is relevant as students of color have traditionally not received educational opportunities that have been equitable (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). This status quo is not new in the field of education as Zimpher and Asburn (1989) reported that 95% of elementary school teachers were middle-class, Whites. In teacher education, including PETE, scholars have noted the remarkable gap in cultures between students and teachers (Burden et al., 2004). With reports on disparities between teachers and students, diverse cultures will play an increasingly important role in the future of America’s educational system.

Banks (1971) described culture as “the unique behavior patterns, belief systems, artifacts, and other man-made components of a society or community within a society (p. 114). Each student's interaction within her or his culture has a direct impact on the student's beliefs, self-esteem, goals, and self-worth; thus shaping his or her life into the future (Plata & Robertson, 1998). Hence, the cultures of all students are of the utmost importance as their cultures are the foundations from which they gain knowledge and base their actions (Swisher & Swisher, 1986). Thus, culture is a very important aspect of the educational process as each student’s culture must be seen as such (Thuron, 1972). When the culture of a student is acknowledged within the confines of the classroom, teachers transmit messages that students are cared for and appreciated as individuals (Swisher & Swisher, 1986). This makes it possible for students to feel valued and part of the educational experience.

Culture is very important, however, it is often the most misconstrued part of the educational process. African American and other students of color often bring contrasting
aspects of their home culture to the Euro-American culture that is common at most US schools. This can lead to them being labeled as defiant (Gay, 2002). Labeling of students of color as uncooperative often leads to them being disciplined in manners which are not consistent with their White peers (Gay, 2002). For example, the manner in which many Black children exert emotional energy in the many forms of communication may be interpreted as disobedience or attention deficit (Gay, 2002). Hispanic children may be labeled unmotivated as they display a reluctance to participate in classroom discussions and Asian children may be labeled in the same manner if they do not participate in conversations with teachers (Gay, 2002). Culture and its importance to schools and teachers must be acknowledged and addressed. There are not many places where many cultures co-exist more so than in urban schools. Outley and Witt (2006) insisted that since many cultures do co-exist in urban settings, it is vital that educators continue to expand on their knowledge of various cultures. Though this reference is made to parks and recreation settings, it is applicable to physical education in urban areas as well.

Urban Communities and Schools

Hill (2004) stated that:

Urban, we know is the environment of a city; a complex hub of human endeavor, a place of dense population of diverse peoples, an important location for financial and governmental affairs and a rich center of cultural imagination and artistic creation. Urban areas are some of the most contradicting areas of our world, where the extremes of our civilization co-exist- the richest of the rich and the poorest of the poor, the most privileged and the most disenfranchised live and work here in large concentrations (p. 119).
As we look into urban schools, it is important to study some important variables and understand the need for multicultural education. Among the most important is that of contextual variables as there are many subcultures within these settings (Ward & O’Sullivan, 2006). Talbert, McLaughlin, and Rowan (1993) defined context as those places where teachers carry out their duties regardless of the subject matter being taught. It is interesting to note that the authors also make mention of the conditions under which teachers instruct as well. A perusal of the literature would suggest that the term “urban” is typically linked to students who attend schools in inner city areas that are comprised of mostly Black, Hispanic, and poor White students. Anyon (1995) reiterated this point that most large cities across the US have a high percentage of these students. Argon (1998) reported that 575 urban school districts serve over 11 million students in various portions of the US. Urban schools serve a vastly sorted group of students in areas that have become synonymous with economic hardships and ethnic diversity (Lalas, 2000). Urban schools have become places that serve a large population of Black youths as well more and more immigrants are being educated in urban schools as well (Suarez-Orosco & Suarez-Orosco, 2001). Children in urban areas usually reside in areas where domestic and gang violence, drugs, and poverty exist (Williams & Williamson, 1992). Argon (1998) summarized some of the problems associated with urban schools such as overcrowded classrooms, social and discipline problems, little to no parental involvement, as well as dilapidated school buildings. These common problems need to be addressed as they can have an adverse effect on the educational process. Researchers and educators have reported on how schools in these areas have come to be.
A historical look at the development of urban schools offers an explanation of the current status of schools. During the period of the 1970s and 1980s, many people sought to live in settings outside of major cities due to fact that many wanted to farm (Ward & O’Sullivan, 2006). Eventually, families sought to live closer to industrialized areas in order to attain a better standard of life for all members of the family, including the school-aged children (Ward & O’Sullivan, 2006). Tyack and Cuban (1995) reported that this move was advantageous being that more monies were allotted for students in urban areas as opposed to rural areas. As time progressed, desegregation played a pivotal role in the make-up of schools located in urban areas (Jacobs, 1998) as these places became synonymous with poverty due to the lack of financial capital. A phenomenon known as “White flight” became common when schools integrated across the US and middle-class White people left homes and schools in urban areas and settled in suburban areas (Jacobs, 1998).

Specific to the greater Columbus area, Gregory Jacobs (1998) wrote a very telling book entitled Getting around Brown: Desegregation, Development, and Columbus Public Schools. Jacobs wrote about how the city of Columbus, Ohio dealt with the Brown et al. versus the Board of Education decision. He also tells of the decision of the Sixth District Court judge Robert Duncan in the case of Penick v. Columbus Board of Education. Judge Duncan ruled that “the defendants were guilty of intentionally creating and maintaining an illegally segregated school system” (Jacobs, 1998, p. 4). Within the contents of the book, Jacobs also mentions sociologist James Coleman and quotes some of Coleman’s’ sentiments as it pertains to the public school dilemma: “the emerging problem with regard to school desegregation is the problem of segregation between central city and
suburbs; in addition, current means by which schools are being desegregated are intensifying that problem rather than reducing it” (p. 131). Coleman goes on to state that the resegregation process or “White flight” phenomenon, wiped out tax bases within the city as businesses, mostly White people, and their money moved out of the city which contributed to the failings of urban schools and the decline of industries in American cities (as cited by Jacobs, 1998).

*Black Males in Urban Schools*

Students, particularly African American males, in urban schools often experience academic failure more so than their White peers who attend suburban schools. Too, it cannot be overstated that most times children and youths educated in urban areas are attending schools which are older structures and the conditions under which they are being educated (Noguera & Akom, 2000). In reference to reports on the academic achievement gaps have remained largely constant for years as students of color (e.g., particularly Black, Hispanic, and Native American) tend to fall short in comparison to their White peers (Noguera & Akom, 2000). Performance scores for Black students, including African American male students, have been below that of their White peers in many subject areas for over the past three decades (Kao & Thompson, 2003). Likewise, Hispanic and Native American students lag behind White students in regards to reports on achievement in math (Miller, 1995). Moving into the future, standardized test scores will play a pivotal role in the matriculation of students, but current statistics show that students of color lag behind their White peers in areas of standardized testing (Steptoe, 2004). On ACT scores, Plata and Robertson (1998) reported that White students scored
an average of 21.3 points in comparison to Black students, 17.0, and Hispanic students, 18.4 points.

Arguably, the most stigmatized group in the US, Black males are stereotyped at both ends of the spectrum (Cunningham, 1993, 2001; Hodge et al., 2008a; Stevenson, 1997). The stereotyping ranges from notions of superior athletes to unintelligent and lazy individuals to criminals and gangsters. Troubling, such stereotypes, along with other factors such as high unemployment and under-employment and economic struggle, as well lack of social and political capital play an intricate role in disadvantaging Black males (Hodge et al., 2008a; Hodge et al., 2008b; Swanson, Cunningham, & Spencer, 2003). A closer look at this group makes it obvious that researchers need to pay more attention to the types of outcomes that are associated with Black males. Black males rank among the most frequent who choose to leave school, get suspended, expelled or kicked out of school, score poorly on tests, attain low grades, have a high rate of administrative referrals for disciplinary reasons, are placed in special education programs, and are vastly underrepresented in gifted education (National Center for Educational Statistics, 2005; Whiting, 2004).

In physical education, however, males usually believe they will and are expected to succeed in comparison to the female peers (Xiang et al., 2003; Xiang et al., 2004; Xiang et al., 2006). African American male students tend to hold such beliefs and expectations in addition to having high self-esteem despite negative achievement reports (Graham, 1994; Hodge et al., 2008a; Lay & Wakstein, 1985). Gao, Lee, and Harrison (2008) stated that African American male students exhibited a greater likelihood not to participate in
activities that they felt were not relevant. So it is imperative that teachers engage all students using culturally responsive pedagogies to do so (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

With the aforementioned information, it is of the utmost importance that steps are taken to ensure that quality educational opportunities are presented to Black males. It is important to note that schools have not been entities where Black students, including Black males, have felt a sense of belonging. As Black males progress through school, many of them become less engaged as it pertains to academics, have learned to underachieve, devalue school, and disregarded schools as places that develop them in a positive, holistic manner (Ferguson, 2001; Ford, 1996; Ogbu, 2003, 2004; Whiting, 2004). In addition to schools not being places where Black males feel a sense of belonging, the content in classrooms has been mentioned to put them at a disadvantage as well (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Societal structures such as a lack of culturally competent instruction, in addition to difficulties such as negative stereotypes, low socioeconomic status, and high risk neighborhoods help in the formation of complex barriers for Black males (Hodge et al., 2008a; Spencer & Dornbusch, 1990). Another factor that has to be taken into account is the fact that Black males have had to endure racial intolerance in all facets of society, including the educational system (Banks, 2002). With racial intolerance comes traditional practices associated with White male hegemony that result in certain groups of people being devalued, such as Black people (Jones, 1991). With that said, it is important that there are studies that seek to understand how to better serve African American male students (Swanson, Cunningham, & Spencer, 2003).

It is also important to note that educational practices, including pedagogical practices and student placements, tend to favor White students and hinder students of
color, which can be seen in many phases of the educational system (Noguera & Akom, 2000). Tracking attempts to group students in accordance to their academic capabilities and be taught using a curriculum that is specifically tailored to their determined needs (Rubin & Noguera, 2004). For years, urban educators and Black scholars have deemed tracking as inequitable (Slavin, 1993; Tate, 1994; Welner & Oakes, 1996; Wheelock, 1992). This is because it reinforces inequities in education (Rubin & Noguera, 2004). Noguera and Akom (2000) asserted that Black students, particularly African American males, have a higher likelihood of not being included or considered for accelerated learning classes. Low expectations on the part of the teacher tend to result in urban youth (e.g., Black males) being placed in an academic category that is not conducive to getting a quality education (Villegas, 1988). Villegas (1988) further stated that when this placement occurs, students are subjected to pedagogical practices and information that has an onus on the deficit model. In addition to being tracked, Black youth often attend schools where most students are economically deprived, classrooms are overcrowded, and they are not challenged academically (Foster, 1989). Most classes located in urban schools do not allow for students to engage in creative and higher order thinking processes (Means & Knapp, 1991). Foster (1989) stated that in most cases, students are not allowed the opportunity to engage in higher order thinking due to predetermined teacher beliefs about the ability level of students. However, there are students that succumb to leaving school entirely as dropping out of school is another problem associated with those students who populate urban schools (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005; Whiting, 2004). There is a need to combat these problems as Black and Hispanic students usually comprise a large percentage of dropouts in
comparison to their White peers (National Center for Education Statistics, 2005). In spite of the lack of performance, teachers must not lower the standards when working with students in urban areas.

Often overlooked in the achievement gap literature are the cultural factors that come into play such as the role that students’ racial identity and how this factor can affect their beliefs about their personal academic achievement (Noguera & Akom, 2000). Noguera and Akom (2000) noted that school plays an important part in shaping racial identities being that it is one of the first social locations where people from different backgrounds interact. From the beginning of school, students start to develop what Jackson (2003) refers to as “identity watersheds” which shapes how students will respond to such activities as completing homework assignments, using standard English, and choosing to obey rules in which each has meaning to youth and their peers. These activities have a profound effect on school performance. An activity may be performed at home such as homework, and another may be performed at school such as asking for help from the teacher (Jackson, 2003). Identifiers such as not using proper English and failure to complete homework assignments have been linked to students of color and can have adverse effects on their education. This statement is solidified as Jackson (2003) stated that in schools where students of color are educated, these identifiers “are given more power by powerful forces of ethnic, class, culture, and language divisions such that choices essential to school success may be seen as betrayal of group solidarity, denial of ethnic heritage or rejection of family and friends” (p. 582). This suggests that peer groups play an intricate role in shaping the academic orientation of students (Noguera & Akom,
These and other academic problems lead these students to take non-participatory roles in various subjects.

**Studies of Urban Schools**

Griffin (1985) discussed the environment in a qualitative study of contextual factors affecting a physical education program at an urban junior high school. In Griffin’s study four thematic clusters emerged. First, outdoor activity space was a nuisance as the school used public grounds to conduct outdoor activities, leaving the teachers with limited control over the setting. Having to walk 15 minutes to and from the site also led the teachers to ask that physical education be condensed into one 90-minute block instead of twice a week for 45 minutes.

Second, Griffin found that policies from the central office affected how teachers were to administer grades as front office personnel forced teachers to account for such things as attitudes. Also, teachers had few professional development opportunities. The lack of professional development opportunities discouraged physical educators from implementing new ideas, leading to the belief that the central office was a hindrance instead of a helping entity. Third, she found that professional support for teachers only came from the principal; however there were no programs in place to improve the pedagogical practices of the teachers. This theme speaks to the fact that teachers may have had no opportunities to learn to carry on culturally relevant practices within their classes as well. The unique qualities of urban schools emerged as the fourth and last thematic cluster as teachers mentioned having to deal with various aspects of student diversity. Teachers felt that it was difficult dealing with racial, economical, and cultural diversity that was amalgamated with typical problems in urban schools such as poverty,
racism, and violence. Further exploration into urban schools revealed that teachers have to deal with internal factors that come into play.

McCaughtry, Barnard, Martin, Shen, and Kulinna (2006) explored the challenges of teachers in urban schools and found that emotions come into play. The five challenges they found were: “(a) insufficient instructional resources, (b) implementing culturally relevant pedagogy, (c) dealing with community violence, (d) integrating more games into curricula, and (e) teaching in a culture of basketball” (p. 486). In regards to the first challenge, insufficient instructional resources, the authors stated that 60% of the teachers lacked a budget to purchase necessities for class, leaving some to purchase equipment out of their own pockets. Due to a lack of materials, teachers had to limit the content that students learned and limited diverse content leaving teachers frustrated with having to instruct classes with limited resources and sympathetic for students whose misbehavior was perceived to stem from boredom. Second, three key issues were found with respect to the challenge of implementing culturally relevant pedagogy in physical education. These issues had to do with (a) local relevance of new lesson activities, (b) diverse representations and language usage, and (c) communication abilities in working with students who spoke multiple languages. The teachers found it difficult to make decisions as to whether to introduce activities outside of those that students regularly participated in during physical education. Yet they felt that it was important that students were exposed to a variety of activities so that they could participate with other students outside of their communities. As for diverse representations and language usage, the teachers saw a need for language usage and visual representations to reflect the cultures that existed within the school. Most teachers complained about dated or standardized curriculums that they
were forced to modify as they felt it did not meet the needs of the students of color that populated the school. Additionally, the teachers were cognizant that there needed to be visual representations that were appropriate (e.g., displayed students of color engaging in multiple activities) for the students. For communicating with students who spoke multiple languages, the teachers found it difficult to structure relevant lessons for those students who used English as a second language. The teachers also expressed concerns about the large amount of time that was needed to clearly articulate directions to these students pertaining to lesson content. Overall, frustration was expressed as the teachers tried to implement culturally relevant practices into their physical education classes. Third, teachers expressed emotions of depression and fear due to the impact of community violence and in physical education violent behaviors were being displayed more frequently in classes. Teachers were fearful for their students as well as themselves feeling that they needed to stay on guard at all times at school.

Pertaining to the fourth challenge was the need for integrating more games into the curriculum, where emotions of guilt and remorse surfaced in the teachers as they felt that most of the time in classes should be spent playing. This aforementioned guilt came into play as a majority of the time was spent on behavioral issues and teachers felt that the remaining time should be spent on game play, even at the expense of not teaching skills. The teachers felt remorseful as these games were of relative importance to the teacher as there were few opportunities to partake in recreation outside of the school. Finally, satisfaction and frustration were emotions expressed about the dominate culture of basketball in physical education. These teachers were happy that the students were
having a chance to participate and be actively involved in class, but they became frustrated when the students only wanted to partake in this activity.

Kozol (2005) discussed inequities in urban schools referring to the standard curriculum, lessons, bulletin boards, rewards, and sanctions. The number of students present in classes is also a major factor as urban classrooms of today put many students at a disadvantage as these classrooms are often overcrowded (Kozol, 2005). Weiner (2000) spoke about this problem in discussing urban teacher preparation. Specifically, Weiner (2000) mentioned the report from the Council of Great City Schools (1995) that stated that urban schools serve a large, highly diverse population, which leads to overcrowded classes. Reese and Johnson (1988) found that the larger the school, the more teachers were likely to be dissatisfied with their job. In addition to the large number of students that could be served by teachers, the diversity of the student body could also be problematic. With that, the fact that urban schools serve a diverse student population could result in these students not being properly educated. Overcrowding in schools can be problematic in many ways (Johns & Espinoza, 1992; Williams & Williamson, 1992; Stephan, Varble, & Taitt, 1993). From an economic standpoint associated with the White flight phenomenon, urban schools did and still fall short of the monetary contributions that are needed for proper maintenance. In addition to this phenomenon, political and social ramifications play a huge role in the condition of public schools (Lortie, 1975; Kantor & Brenzel, 1992; Jacobs, 1998) such as the loss of businesses and the jobs in urban areas (Ward & O’Sullivan, 2006).

Despite the problems faced in urban schools, teachers must continue to strive to provide better experiences for the students in these environments. Hollins and Guzman
(2005) stated that one of the most pressing needs in the US is to provide equitable and high quality schooling for all, especially for economically deprived students, students of color, students who are English Language Learners, and students in rural and urban areas. Though Hollins and Guzman (2005) made a valid point, the process of “schooling” needs to be examined. Importantly, Shujaa (1994) differentiates the processes of schooling versus educating. Shujaa asserts that schooling seeks to continue the trend of enabling one group of students (i.e., White citizens) while putting other students at a disadvantage (particularly African American and Hispanic, and the poor). Whereas in educating teachers seek to communicate positive aspects of all cultures and instruct in ways that allow for all students to gain valuable knowledge of various cultures and to be more empowered (Shujaa, 1994).

To reiterate, Shujaa (1994) argued that schooling seeks to continue to emit hegemonic practices to students and force students to assimilate to the belief of the dominant society. Instead, the ultimate goal of all educators should be to focus on educating all students and to making their cultures relevant aspects of school practices (Shujaa. 1994). Teachers must not force students of color to assimilate to one culture rather; teachers should use the culture of each student as an aid in achieving success in schools (Ladson-Billings, 1995). The practice of using students' cultures as a positive instrument in classrooms aids in the assurance that socially just principles are at work.

Social Justice

It is common for advocates of social justice to view education as a necessary portion of living in a just society (Liston & Zeichner, 1991), especially in addressing cultural gaps between educators and their students. Social justice involves teachers
recognizing and valuing diversity and differences within their classrooms and using these differences as instructional moments within their pedagogies (Bigelow, Christensen, Karp, Miner, & Petersen, 1994; McDonald, 2008; Stables, 2005). So the goal for social justice is to aid all people in realizing their full potential (Freeman, 2006). In advocating for social justice, it is important to analyze policies and procedures that allow for equitable services to be rendered as opposed to rewarding a select few (McDonald, 2006). In order for social justice to occur, factors such as underfunding, lack of resources, outdated facilities, and a lack of highly qualified teachers in urban areas must be addressed as these factors have been prevalent for many years (Darling-Hammond, 1995; McDonald, 2006; Tyack, 1995; Weinberg, 1977). Teachers need to realize that in order for social justice to come to fruition, equitable pedagogical practices must be exercised in the classroom so that all students have a chance at success (Jacobs, 2006). There is a need to address the needs of teachers as teachers may feel underprepared to educate students from diverse populations who may not share a similar culture (Stroot & Whipple, 2003). If teachers are not prepared to teach those students from various cultures different from their own culture, they can and will participate in a process that will destroy the very culture of their students, thereby causing assimilation (Gay, 2000). It is important to note to that curriculums do not usually include information on various ethnic groups (Gay, 2003). In recent years, there has been increasing advocacy for use of social justice pedagogies. In this text, social justice is conceptualized as an overarching term “to cover projects that differ in their focus [e.g., culturally relevant pedagogy, antiracist pedagogy, intercultural teaching, multicultural education] but share the common aim of preparing teachers to recognize, name, and combat inequity in schools and society” (Spalding et al.,
Chubbuck (2010) defined social justice teaching as having of three essential parts:

- [It] comprises those curricula, pedagogies, and teachers’ expectations and interactional styles that will improve the learning opportunities (and, by implication, life opportunities) of each individual student, including those who belong to groups typically underserved in the current educational context.

- Socially just teaching also includes the transformation of any educational structures or policies that diminish students’ learning opportunities. Socially just teachers understand how structural inequities of schools can impede student learning, and they will challenge and, ultimately, work to transform those structures [which includes] everything from teacher demographics to funding disparities to policies that affect student learning.

- Socially just teachers recognize the need to look beyond the school context and transform any structures that perpetuate injustice at the societal level as well. They will act for this transformation; they will also provide curriculum and instruction that challenge all their students to envision themselves as active citizens with the power to transform unjust structures. (pp. 198-199)

In an editorial for the *Journal of Teacher Education*, Spalding et al. (2010) used the hammer metaphorically as part of their discourse about learning to teach for social justice. They compared the hammer to the tools (theories, ideologies, epistemologies, and practices) used for learning and teaching social justice. In this metaphorical tool box there are such hammers as multicultural education, culturally responsive teaching, and culturally relevant pedagogy, which are “powerful tools for striking blows against racism, ableism, sexism, and the other ideologies that marginalize students in schools” (Spalding et al., 2010, p. 191). Such tools should be implemented in teacher education programs for preparing teacher candidates to address the needs of a diversity of students (Gay, 2003).
Multicultural Education

Multicultural education is the educational process in which there is exposure to diverse populations and learning occurs as to how to meet the needs of such a vast array of individuals, including understanding and appreciating the cultures that exist within all groups (Banks, 1993; Sparks, 1991). Swisher and Swisher (1986) defined multicultural education as the “translation of equity rhetoric into programmatic practice as it recognizes the differences in human behavior as they are influenced by the culture and ethnicity of the individual” (p. 36). Multicultural education challenges all persons involved to understand themselves, establish and enhance relationships between and within cultures, and abolish discriminatory acts in society (Banks, 1993). Ming and Dukes (2006) articulated the purpose of multicultural education as preparing responsible students to exist in the world, teaching students to value the culture of all students, and addressing school reformations efforts to ensure equitable practices in all facets of society. Sleeter and Grant (1999), Bennett (2001), and Banks (1992) hold similar beliefs in that successful implementation of multicultural education practices call for institutional changes in all facets of the educational process including the curriculum, instructional materials and all of the behaviors of classroom teachers, including pedagogical practices.

In order for schools to be agents of the change that is needed in the US, multicultural education should be an integral part of each school’s curriculum (Garcia, 1980; Sparks, 1994). When the component of an education that teaches about various types of culture is presented to students, students will become more knowledgeable of various cultures and able to co-exist with others who may or may not share their culture (Sparks, 1994). Furthermore, Bennett (1990) suggested that to fully accept multicultural education and its
concepts schools, including teachers and students, must do away with racist and hegemonic practices, develop broader knowledge bases of various cultures, present equitable opportunities for all students, and develop students so that they are equipped with the skills necessary to live in a society of multiple cultures. The author continues that this can only be accomplished through culturally responsive practices.

In order to realize culturally responsive practices, Sims (1983) asserted that school curriculums should be infused with various components of multicultural education. When various cultures are not recognized or respected in school curriculums, students may feel pressured to abandon their cultures and assimilate to the culture that is being presented in schools (Sims, 1983). Sims (1983) said a viable way in which teachers can address the lack of multicultural aspects in the curriculum is to infuse all subjects with multicultural content. An infused curriculum approach has been recommended by other authors as well (Butt & Pahnos, 1995). Specific to the teacher, the knowledge she or he acquires is of the utmost importance as those who are ignorant of multiple cultures impede the process of realizing the aim of equitable and socially just classrooms (Sims, 1983).

Gay (1983) took a look at the emerging field of multicultural education as it was slowly becoming a topic of interest and necessity in education. Further Gay asserted that "When civil rights and cultural consciousness movements of the 1960’s reached college and school campuses, racial minorities included curriculum relevance among the list of demands" (Gay, 1983, p.5). In such a curriculum, many felt that those people who had been excluded in society for an extended period of time (e.g., Black, Hispanic) would be uplifted by including their histories within school curriculums (Gay, 1983). There is also ethnic literacy, which is advocated for as a means to educate all school-aged children and
not merely students of color (Gay, 1983). Further Gay (1983) insisted that the inclusion of ethnic or multicultural education in school programs should not be dependent on whether there are other ethnicities that are reported to be present in the school population. Gay makes it clear that multicultural education is meant for all, not just a select few.

Baker (1977), Banks (1973), Boyer (1974), Gay (1971), Grant (1973, 1978), Hilliard (1974), and Sizemore (1972) have all played an important role in multicultural education. In the *Handbook of Multicultural Education* (Banks & Banks, 2004), noted scholar John Banks contended that if multicultural education is to become a steady and viable portion of the educational process, there must be an understanding of what it entails. With that said, Banks (2004) outlined the dimensions of multicultural education, which involves (Figure 2.1): (a) content integration, (b) knowledge construction, (c) prejudice reduction, (d) equity pedagogy, and (e) an empowering school culture and social structure.

![Figure 2.1 Dimensions of Multicultural Education.](image)
Content integration. This dimension deals with “the extent to which teachers use examples, data, and other information from various cultures to illustrate key concepts, principles, generalizations, and theories in their subject area or discipline” (Banks, 2004, p.4). All students should be made aware of the contributions by various cultural groups within our society (Villegas, 1988). Banks (2004) mentioned some of the prominent Black scholars such as Williams (1882-83), DuBois (1935, 1973), Woodson and Wesley (1922), Quarles (1953), and Logan (1954) and their contributions to the knowledge base that could be infused into curriculums at the school and college levels. Woodson (1933) spoke against the fact that public schools were only giving partial accounts of history by only teaching about the European civilization and not telling any other group of people, including Black people, of their rich history. Initially, efforts in teaching about various cultures materialized into ethnic studies. As time progressed, the need for a multicultural approach to education was necessary as more and more people of different cultures moved into the US for various reasons (Banks, 2004). With the introduction of a multicultural approach to education, there were intentions of disseminating more knowledge of various racial and cultural groups to curb discriminatory acts and create peace within the citizenry (Banks, 2004).

Knowledge construction. This dimension tells of “how social, behavioral, and natural scientists produce knowledge and how the implicit cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspectives, and biases within a discipline influence how knowledge is constructed within it” (Banks, 2004, p.4). In this dimension, teachers make them aware and help students to understand the ramifications that socio-political and racial class issues have on knowledge building (Banks, 2004). This facet of multicultural education
was discussed earlier, pointing to the varying depictions of America’s history. For example, compared to Black people, European (White) Americans generally have views that are in direct contrast to each other. One depiction of the slave period, as written by some White scholars, describe slaves as persons who were content with their enslaved status, leading happy, peaceful lives (Banks, 2004). This false depiction is offensive. Nonetheless, such distortions of the plight of slaves were disseminated in schools in numerous textbooks (Banks, 1969). With that, it is vitally important that information with historical accuracy is presented by teachers in schools (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

_Prejudice reduction._ This dimension of multicultural education “describes the characteristics of children’s racial attitude and discusses ways in which children can foster more democratic attitudes and values” (Banks, 2004, p. 5). It is important to note that children become aware of race at early ages (Aboud, 1988; Lasker, 1929; Phinney & Rotheram, 1987; Ramsey, 1998). Thus it is important that we develop their knowledge of various cultures and address any qualms that may arise through proper education (Banks, 2004). In the realm of prejudice reduction, teachers should make concerted efforts to include materials and images of all people (Banks, 2004). In cases of classrooms that contain only one ethnic/cultural group, teachers should still make committed efforts to teach about multiple cultures due to the multiple cultures that exist in society (Banks, 2004). This pedagogical approach will result in a greater likelihood that students are properly educated and acts of discrimination and prejudice can be reduced (Banks, 2004).

_Equity pedagogy._ Regardless of the literature that exists within a setting, teachers who employ the use of equitable pedagogical practices use multiple methods and materials that aid all students in the classroom setting (Banks, 2004). Equity pedagogy
was initially discussed by Lewis (1965) in a portrayal of the life of a Puerto Rican family. A concept of cultural deprivation stemmed from the aforementioned work and led to much discussion about cultural deprivation. The basis of cultural deprivation was that students from economically challenged households could achieve academically, but socialization experiences in their neighborhoods were not similar to those students from middle-class neighborhoods (Banks, 2004). Cultural deprivationists felt that the “major focus of educational reform must be to change the students by enhancing their early socialization experiences” (Banks, 2004, p.18). Entering into the 1970s, critics of a cultural deprivation model contested the idea that children failed in schools because of the socialization process. These critics, cultural difference theorists, emphasized culture more so than cultural deprivation theorists (Ramirez & Castanada, 1974) in addition to listing cultural characteristics of students (Hale, 2001; Ramirez & Castanada, 1974). Cultural difference theorists claimed that “students are not having academic success because they experience serious cultural conflicts in schools” (Banks, 2004, p.19). Today, many scholars such as Banks (2001), Gay, (2000), Ladson-Billings (1994, 1995), see the need to include aspects of various cultures into the curriculum of schools. With the current and future population growth (El Nasser, 2008), it is imperative that all educators see the need for the implementation of equitable pedagogical practices (Banks, 2004).

**Empowering school cultures and social structures.** This conception is used to address issues concerning “grouping and labeling practices, sports participation, disproportionality in achievement, and the interaction of the staff and students across ethnic and racial lines” (Banks, 2004, p. 5). These issues must be addressed so that all students, including students of color, may be properly educated and empowered (Banks,
It is important that schools, teachers, and students each have their own cultures (Benson, 2003; Chepyator-Thompson, 1994; Banks, 2004). To empower various cultures, changes must be made at multiple levels (Banks, 2004).

To keep students from being labeled as the problem in the educational process, multicultural education becomes increasingly important as it pertains to teacher education programs (Banks, 2004), including PETE programs. Sparks and Verner (1995) stated that “physical education is a specialized body of knowledge that includes orientation to the psychomotor, cognitive, and affective domains” (p. 171). Physical education is a cultural practice (Kirk, 1992), where teachers can address issues of social justice and student diversity (Hodge, Lieberman, & Murata, 2012). The issues include expanding physical education curriculums, making the learning environment more inclusive and socially just, and taking steps to reduce bias and prejudice (Hodge et al., 2012). Too many physical education classes have a standard curriculum which insinuates that there is one style of learning, one motivation, and one set of needs (Zakrajsek & Carnes, 1981). An example of differences may include how a group of individuals may prefer individual sports while another group may enjoy group activities (Burden, Hodge, & Harrison, 2004). The knowledge of the various ways in which youth choose to participate is important to the training of PETE teacher candidates.

Teacher Workforce and Preparation

Under Public Law 107-110, the No Child Left Behind Act (NCLB) of 2001, the responsibility of providing an appropriate education sets with each individual school district, regardless of the environmental, financial, and social state of the district. However, the fulfillment of NCLB mandates ultimately sits upon the shoulders of the
The preceding assertion implicitly and many scholars more explicitly have asserted that a workforce of teachers who are well-prepared and highly qualified, motivated, and caring is essential to students' educational successes. A highly qualified teacher, as defined in the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act*, is one who has obtained full State certification as a teacher or passed a particular State's teacher licensing examination, and holds a license to teach in that particular State (United States Department of Education [USDE], 2004).

NCLB was signed into law by President George W. Bush on January 8, 2001 as an amendment to Title I of the *Elementary and Secondary Education Act* (ESEA) of 1965. More succinctly, ESEA was amended by Public Law 107-110 NCLB. More recently, President Barack Obama called for *re-envisioning* the federal government's role in education through the reauthorization of the NCLB. Specific to high-poverty school districts, commonly these are urban districts, the Obama administration asserts that:

> Our proposal will maintain formula grants to high-poverty school districts, while making significant changes to better support states, districts, and schools, including middle and high schools, in improving achievement for all groups of students, including low-income and minority students, English Learners, and students with disabilities. (USDE, 2010, p. 8)

This type of *re-envisioning* will require more appropriate teacher preparation across colleges and departments of education throughout the US. Jointly, the American Association of Colleges for Teacher Education (AACTE) and the American Institutes for Research (AIR) released a report titled, *An Emerging Picture of the Teacher Preparation Pipeline* (Ludwig, Kirshstein, Sidana, Ardila-Rey, & Bae, 2010), on the nation's teacher workforce and teacher preparation programs. Presented next are selected findings from the report germane to teachers and teacher preparation.
In 2007-2008, there were nearly 4 million men and women employed as teachers at schools in the US (Table 2.1). Most teachers (85.5%) were employed at traditional public schools and there were twice the percentage of teachers at elementary schools than those working at high schools.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Total number of teachers</th>
<th>3,898,420</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Public</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional public</td>
<td>85.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter school</td>
<td>1.9%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Private</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>12.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Bureau of Indian Education schools</strong></td>
<td>0.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>School Level</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elementary</td>
<td>60.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Secondary</td>
<td>30.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combined</td>
<td>9.2%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Average Age</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 30 years old</td>
<td>17.7%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30 to 49</td>
<td>49.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50 to 54</td>
<td>13.1%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>55 and older</td>
<td>19.5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Years of Full-Time Teaching Experience</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 4 years</td>
<td>20.3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Four to nine years</td>
<td>27.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ten to 14 years</td>
<td>16.0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fifteen years or more</td>
<td>36.1%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.1 Demographic Data on the Nation's Teacher Workforce


Further the report reconfirms that "the pool of teacher candidates is not as diverse as the students in U.S. schools, despite many years of innovative recruitment and financial strategies" (Ludwig et al., 2010, p. 4). In 2007-2008, over 80 percent of the public school teachers were White. In this report, the teachers were mostly White citizens native to the US. In contrast, Black and Hispanic teachers each made up about 7% of the teaching
force. In the report, the data about Black teachers reflect mostly African American citizens native to the US. Likewise the term Hispanic reflects US citizens whose ancestry is Hispanic, Chicano/a, Cuban, Latino/a, Latin American, or Mexican. On location, inner cities were the only community types were Black and Hispanic teachers represented more than 10% of the total teaching population (Table 2.2).

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Community Type</th>
<th>White</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>Asian</th>
<th>Hispanic</th>
<th>Other</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>All public schools</td>
<td>83.1%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>7.1%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Traditional public</td>
<td>83.3%</td>
<td>6.9%</td>
<td>1.2%</td>
<td>7.0%</td>
<td>1.6%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Charter school</td>
<td>72.9%</td>
<td>12.3%</td>
<td>2.6%</td>
<td>9.3%</td>
<td>2.8%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 2.2 The Racial Composition of the Current Teacher Workforce, 2007-2008


It is estimated that there will be a need to hire 435,000 new teachers by the year 2015 and 445,000 additional new teachers by 2018 (Ludwig et al., 2010). There are differences in the beliefs of deans and department chairs of professional preparation programs and the beliefs of school principals and teachers. A 2006 MetLife survey of deans, department chairs, school principals (elementary/secondary), and teachers revealed that:
• Deans and department chairs were much more likely to believe that their teacher candidates were prepared to teach than either principals or practicing teachers believed.

• Engaging families in supporting their children’s education tended to be the area for which all groups rated teachers’ preparedness the lowest.

• With the exception of deans/department chairs, at least a fifth of all groups rated the following areas as ones in which teachers were not very prepared or not at all prepared: (a) engaging families in supporting their children’s education, (b) maintaining order and discipline, and (c) working with children with varying abilities.

• The 2008 MetLife survey reported that teachers’ perceptions of their preparation had improved; 67% of teachers (compared to 46% in 1984) agreed that they were prepared to do a good job in the classroom.

• In addition, 51% of principals agreed that the quality of new teachers coming into the profession was stronger than it had been in earlier years. (Ludwig et al., 2010, p. 10)

Trend and distribution data are presented in the AACTE and AIR report on enrollment in education and non-education degree programs; institutional diversity; student diversity in schools, colleges, and departments of education; and degree completion, as well as the attributes of faculty in professional education programs (Ludwig et al., 2010). The report shows that most full-time faculty in professional education programs in fall of 2007 were White (78%) next were Black (10%) and Hispanic (4%) faculty, which generally reflects the racial or ethnic composition of teacher candidates in their programs. Similarly, full-time adjunct faculties of professional education programs were also similar in race and ethnicity to teacher candidates in their programs with 78% White, and 7% Black and 3% Hispanic adjunct faculty members. There is no indication that the diversity of the workforce will change dramatically in the
near future. In their summary, Ludwig and colleagues (2010) answer the question: "What we learned from the report?"

- Preparation programs are meeting 21st-century needs, with nearly all institutions ensuring that their candidates are prepared to incorporate technology into their instructional strategies and with most public institutions and almost half of private ones now offering distance-learning opportunities for education students.

- Enrollment in teacher preparation programs has decreased slightly over the last 2 years, although schools’ staffing projections point to the need for a major teacher hiring increase in the next 5 to 7 years.

- Diversity of teacher candidates and faculty remains a concern, and those minority students on the path to becoming teachers are enrolled in higher proportions in part-time and non-degree programs.

- The pipeline for teachers in critical shortage areas such as STEM [science, technology, engineering, and mathematics], ELL [English Language Learners], and special education remains insufficient to meet the growing needs of our P-12 classrooms. (p. 32)

The National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), an organization responsible for the development of criteria defining quality teacher education programs asked that multicultural education be given special attention in schools by stating that “provisions should be made for instruction in multicultural education in teacher education programs” (NCATE, 1982, p. 4). Additionally, NCATE (1982) stated that multicultural education “should receive attention in courses, seminars, directed readings, laboratory and clinical experiences, practicum, and other types of field experiences” (p. 4). In addition to NCATE, the field of physical education has standards that require teachers to adhere to issues of diversity within the physical education setting. NASPE standards require that teachers aid students in the development of respect for individual and group differences (Doolittle & Demas, 2001). Also, students are to be
responsible for their personal well-being as well as that of the society in which they exist (Parker & Hellison, 2001).

Teachers must become aware of student diversity so as not to gain a distorted view of the multiple cultures that exist (Stroot & Whipple, 2003). When there are inaccurate assessments of the diverse student populations, many times those persons who make these assessments lack multicultural education, especially in teacher preparation programs (Gay, 2002). It is imperative that teacher preparation programs, including PETE programs, address knowledge construction and emphasize how important it is for teachers to self-reflect (DeSensi, 1995). Williams and Williamson (1992) told of beginning physical educators experiencing shock as they began teaching careers in urban schools where students of color are primarily educated. If teachers do not make gains in the multicultural knowledge necessary to teach students of color, teachers will not gain an understanding of the unique aspects of various cultures (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Various ways in which to convey this knowledge have been investigated.

Sparks and Verner (1995) sought to identify and compare the effects of various multicultural education courses on the perceived knowledge and attitudes of teacher candidates. Sparks and Verner studied discipline-specific and integrated classes and discipline-specific and integrated field-based experiences. Classes were primarily course work and the field-based experiences allowed students the opportunity to interact with people of various ethnicities, disabilities, and cultural backgrounds, thereby giving them the ability to apply multicultural concepts previously learned. They found that “perceptions in multicultural knowledge and attitude among teacher candidates can be effectively enhanced in either a discipline specific or an integrated approach within a
classroom setting” (Sparks & Verner, 1995, p. 176). Moreover Burden et al. (2004) called for infusing diversity training throughout PETE curricular. An infusion approach would allow multiple opportunities for teacher candidates to self-reflect and rid themselves of biases that would hinder the education of all students, including African American male students (Hodge et al., 2003; Sparks, 1994). This reflection should aid teachers in becoming more cognizant of the benefits of learning of other cultures.

In addition to learning of other cultures, teachers need to learn to assess their personal culture and themselves. Being that the US teacher workforce is predominately White, a lack of knowledge coupled with a reluctance to change attitudes and behaviors, may prohibit most teachers from understanding the deep-rooted prejudices that Black, Hispanic, and other groups deal with routinely (Sparks, Butt, & Pahnos, 1996). In order for the cultures of all students to be appreciated in classrooms, teachers must recognize the cultures that they themselves bring into that setting (Chepyator-Thompson, 1994). Freire (1998) reiterated this point stating this recognition of their own cultures will allow teachers to recognize the cultures that students bring to school. Gay (2002a) mentioned that attitudes toward diversity needed to be addressed as it can become a hindrance to the implementation of culturally relevant pedagogies. In order to counter biases, stereotypic beliefs, and anxieties about, and lacking an awareness of multiple cultures, teachers must engage in reflective praxis (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge, 2003; Hodge et al., 2003; McIntyre, 1997; Valli, 1995). Self-reflective praxis is especially needed for neophyte teachers as most of them are oblivious to their beliefs about student diversity (Schultz, Neyhart, & Reck, 1996). Su (1997) echoed this sentiment stating that beginning White American teachers have minimal awareness of the prevalence of racism in society and its effect on
pedagogical practices and schools. One of the most compelling statements that can be made about self-reflection is that it is necessary in changing the fate of a diverse student population (Gay & Kirkland, 2003). Teachers who self-reflect engage in critical thinking as it pertains to their views of the current diverse student population (Pang, 2001). During this time, teachers must analyze their feelings, attitudes, and perceptions of all students and determine how this will affect their practices (Ming & Dukes, 2006). Again an awareness of the effects of teachers’ perceptions and attitudes towards diverse student populations is vital in determining the future of these students. There are statistics that show the probability that teachers will not encounter students with like cultures (Fox & Gay, 1995). It is of the essence that teachers examine themselves critically before they can go forth and commit to a culturally responsive mode of teaching. Gay and Kirkland (2003) suggest it is important that teachers know “who they are as people, understand the contexts in which they teach, and questioning their knowledge and assumptions are as important as the mastery of techniques for instructional effectiveness” (p. 181). Teachers must be committed to adapting their pedagogical practices to help all students develop in a holistic manner, especially students of color (Stephen, Varble, & Taitt, 1993).

In discussing teachers, it is also essential to note the role teacher educators play in developing teachers to be equipped to teach in culturally relevant ways. Teacher educators must be cognizant of the role that they play in producing teachers that will be change agents in schools and communities (Yadav & Koehler, 2007). Teacher educators must also be aware of the impact that teacher preparation programs can have on the attitudes and beliefs of teacher candidates (Ball, 1988; Bird, 1991; Weinstein, 1990). It is vital that departments and colleges of education address the changes that are necessary to
adapt to the dynamic classrooms that are present in many schools (Banks, 1995). Our schools now more than ever need teachers dedicated to enhancing their knowledge of various cultures and committed to teaching all students justly (Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 1999). Pertaining to multicultural education and awareness, teachers must see themselves as agents of change and role models that can have a positive impact on the students that will become citizens and leaders in society (Sparks & Verner, 1995).

Pine and Hilliard (1990) suggested that teachers use the variations in culture as an occasion to create a successful environment where all are able to learn. Teachers that purposefully incorporate aspects of various cultures into their classrooms do so by incorporating components of all students’ cultures, accepting and affirming cultural beliefs, and discussing various cultural groups’ similarities and dissimilarities as well as prejudices that each group may encounter (Hernandez, 1989). Gay (2000) asserted that teachers’ knowledge about and attitudes that pertain to cultural differences play a pivotal role in whether diverse student populations are afforded equitable educational opportunities. Gay (2000) continued to state that the most successful manner in which to develop students from diverse populations is through culturally responsive pedagogies. Culturally responsive pedagogy is a method of teaching that will incorporate aspects of students’ cultures in the acquisition of knowledge. Teacher preparation programs have a daunting task as they must stride to make sustained efforts to address the lack of diversity within the field of teaching, including field placements in cultures other than their own and self-evaluations. DeSensi (1995), McIntyre (1997), and Valli (1995) claimed that graduate students who were not afforded the opportunity to work in settings with people cultures different from their own would likely cause these graduate students to not be
able to address their reservations and apprehensions about people from cultures different from their own. This is vital information as the current teacher workforce may be oblivious to the effects that prejudices and discriminatory practices can have on the educational process (Su, 1997). These teachers also have a greater likelihood to educate students who are different from them from a cultural aspect (Fox & Gay, 1995).

There must also be sustained efforts made to significantly increase the presence of teachers of color in physical education. Still today, too few PETE programs assertively recruit or retain such teachers (Hodge, Robinson, & Collins, 2007). Greater efforts put forth over time must be made to reverse the trend of the lack of diversity in preparation programs. In fact, Hodge (2005) stated that more genuine efforts needed to be made to recruit and retain students of color so that teachers can make valuable contributions to the field of physical education. There are various ways in which students of color can be recruited and retained into PETE programs such as offering campus visits to prospective students, providing monetary incentives, providing programmatic support as well as faculty mentoring (Hodge, 2005). With more teachers of color present in schools, students of color will have more opportunities to make connections with teachers who may share their culture (Irvine, 1990; Villegas, 1997). With the addition of Black teachers into school systems, students of color may find hope in their presence and aspire to become a professional as well (Stewart, Meier, LaFollette, & England, 1989). If students of color do not see professionals of color, these students will likely not aspire to attain such positions and may not view themselves in a positive manner (Mercer & Mercer, 1986). The presence of professionals of color also bodes well for White students.
White students can be enabled in this scenario as they will be able to view others in a positive manner (Graham, 1987; Irvine, 1988).

As for the practice of multiculturalism in physical education, the question of whether this specialized body of knowledge should be infused with multiculturalism was addressed by Bridges, Crawford, Heckerthorn, Lestician, and Setzer (1995). A relevant point was brought out by Bridges et al. (1995) as they asserted that physical education teachers definitely need to address multicultural issues in their classes. The authors pointed out that multicultural issues need to be addressed in order to ensure that students attain a proper education. Wessinger (1994) stated that aspects of multiculturalism needed to be introduced in all curriculums, even where there are students who have similar cultures. In this approach, negative assumptions and beliefs can be addressed through multicultural education (Wessinger, 1994).

Swisher and Swisher (1986) reiterated the need for teachers to include facets of multicultural education within the physical education setting. The authors attempted to impress upon the reader that physical educators must take notice of the diverse student populations and be prepared to instruct in culturally responsive ways. With this, all students will reap the benefits of being properly educated (Swisher & Swisher, 1986). Zakrajsek and Carnes (1981) noted that physical educators may be choosing to disregard the fact that students will benefit from pedagogies that adhere to various aspects of culture. The authors stated that many physical educators “foster and perpetuate a method of teaching that supports a singular learning concept for all students based on one kind of motivation, one style of learning, and one set of learning needs” (Zakrajsek & Carnes, 1981, p. 5). In such an approach to teaching, there are often disconnections between
students’ home cultures and a school’s monoculture (Swisher & Swisher, 1986). In order to avoid such cultural disconnections, efforts to become culturally competent are required on behalf of teachers (Columna, Foley, & Lytle, 2010).

Butt and Pahnos (1995) discussed the aforementioned areas in explaining the necessity of a multicultural focus in schools being that school populations are growing more diverse. They discussed ways in which teachers could establish a safe learning environment which is instrumental in developing culturally relevant classrooms. Those components of the learning environment included the atmosphere of the classroom as well as the teaching strategies. In addition to respecting each individual culture within the classroom, the authors asserted that the physical environment must include multicultural aspects that are present within and outside of the classroom. With teaching strategies, Butt and Pahnos (1995) suggested that lessons must include techniques that will allow students to foster an understanding of each culture’s similarities and differences.

Sparks and Wayman (1993) surveyed the attitudes and understandings of physical educators in urban schools and those in rural settings towards aspects of multicultural education and on what impact these factors had on their actual teaching. To carry out the study, Sparks and Wayman developed a Multicultural Physical Education instrument for exploring attitudes and knowledge. They examined teachers’ demographic information, understandings and knowledge about multicultural education practices and concepts, their attitudes toward physical education and their pedagogical practices in relation to multicultural education. There were statistically significant differences found between those teachers in urban and rural environments; where the teachers in rural areas had less understanding of games with specific ethnic origins. Both groups had similar
understandings of multicultural issues relating to males' and females' contributions to society. There were significant differences in the teachers' attitudes and beliefs, where teachers from the rural areas more so believed in explaining cultural backgrounds as well as more rural respondents thought there should be more opportunities with the curriculum to enhance intergroup interactions. The authors concluded that all teachers need to make greater efforts to include various components of multiple cultures so that each culture is seen as relevant (Sparks & Wayman, 1993).

Sparks et al. (1996) analyzed the knowledge, experiences, and attitudes of certified physical education teachers as it pertained to multicultural education. The *Multicultural Physical Education* instrument developed by Sparks and Wayman (1993) was used to survey teachers on these variables. Sparks et al. found that 38% of the physical education teachers disagreed with the concept of multicultural education and its usefulness to increase an understanding of cultures and diversity. They reported that 42% of the physical educators understood issues of stereotyping being a personal bias while the remaining percentage thought this labeling was associated with data and/or cultural norms. For racial aspects, two of every three respondents believed that race dealt with similar people, cultures, and heritages whereas, one in three claimed race related to physical attributes. Further analysis showed that 253 of the 348 respondents thought discrimination was an anonymous act based on judgment, making it an attitude while 27 respondents had difficulty in distinguishing between prejudice and discrimination. Concerning attitudes, there was a general consensus of positive attitudes toward multicultural education as a large percentage felt they should aid students in cultural competence although 8% did not know if it was important. Though attitudes were
generally positive, no plans on how to develop content in this area emerged from the respondents. Knowledge about multicultural education was reported as being high as well. Another finding was that the physical educators who were surveyed believed that multiculturalism has relevance as a significant piece in today’s society and should be an integral part of the content taught within physical education. Lastly, respondents in urban areas reported more substantial multicultural experience than those in rural areas (Sparks et al., 1996).

Likewise, Stanley (1997) examined cultural pluralism. In this work, she developed the *Pluralism and Diversity Attitude Assessment* (PADAA) scale. The scale was revised for analyzing respondents' appreciation, value of, discomfort with, and implementation of cultural pluralism. Using the scale, PETE teacher candidates were surveyed. Results indicated that “teacher candidates appreciate and value differences between individuals” (Stanley, 1997, p. 244). She also found that these mostly White PETE teacher candidates were uncomfortable being around people who may not share the same culture and may be different from them (Stanley, 1997). This speaks directly to the fact that these teacher candidates are unlikely to instruct in culturally responsive ways (Stanley, 1997); which will not allow for diverse student populations to be properly educated. Later, Tjeerdsma et al. (2000) surveyed students within the Georgia State University’s PETE program and evaluated their experiences. Using Stanley’s (1997) PADAA instrument, results revealed that “students tend to appreciate and value differences between people” (Tjeerdsma et al., 2000, p. 463). Though teacher candidates reported being comfortable with diversity, they were not likely to implement aspects of various cultures into their teaching (Tjeerdsma et al., 2000). When teachers are apprehensive to include aspects of multiculturalism into
their pedagogical practices, social justice cannot be attained and equitable educational opportunities are not presented to all students (McDonald, 2006).

Indeed, the infusion of multicultural aspects into the classroom is done so with the hope that all students will be engaged in the content. Tannehill and Zakrajsek (1993) analyzed students’ attitudes toward physical education. Specific to physical education, more than half of the students felt that this subject should “improve fitness, teach team sport skills, playing team sports, individual sport skills playing individual sports, dance skills, or recreational games” (Tannehill & Zakrajsek, 1993, p. 79). In order to aid in this improvement, physical education curriculums “must be designed to reflect the needs and interests of all adolescents” (Tannehill & Zakrajsek, 1993, p. 82). The authors saw the need for physical educators to be more open to the ideals of a culturally relevant approach to classroom instruction and curricular formats to promote success for all students, including African American males.

**Culturally Relevant Pedagogy/Teaching**

In response to achievement gap data that has been mentioned throughout the extant educational literature, Ladson-Billings (2006) proposed that we should turn our focus away from achievement gap discourse and more toward an education debt discourse. Ladson-Billings (2006) defined the education debt in terms of the educational systems’ lack of providing adequate resources to students of low-income neighborhoods. With this education debt, other problems were exacerbated (e.g., crime, low wages). Additionally, Ladson-Billings (2006) explained that the debt that the U.S. has incurred is not limited to the school walls, but stated that the US education debt results from years of inequitable policies and decisions. With this refocusing, the world of education should take
responsibility for Black students’ underachievement (especially males) and move toward alleviating US society of these great injustices. It is the belief of the current researcher that this move toward equitable practices must take place within the classrooms where teachers engage students, including African American male students, on a daily basis.

Foster (1995) explained that “teachers must accept the institutional goal of promoting cognitive growth; teachers’ roles must not be confined to developing academic skills but includes the holistic growth of the student” (p. 576). This statement implies that the culture of students must be included in the educational process. In regards to culture and its importance within the classroom setting, there are approaches that exist within the literature that share commonalities. Both culturally responsive and politically relevant teaching stem from culturally relevant pedagogy. Pertaining to culturally responsive teaching (CRT), Geneva Gay, a progenitor of culturally responsive teaching, scholar, and staff developer, has been a teacher of this concept for over a quarter of a century (Banks, 2000). CRT can be defined as “using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of references, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them as it teaches to and through the strengths of students” (Gay, 2000, p. 29). Gay, along with other scholars and researchers such as Kathryn Au, Roland Tharp, Lisa Delpit, and Jacqueline Irvine have garnered interest in the achievement of economically deprived students and students that do not make up the majority White population. Gay (2000) and others attempted to inform the educational community of the positive influences that this approach to teaching gives all students, including the underserved African American male student. Gay (2000) mentioned that the foundation of the theory looks at economically deprived schools and
students and the connection to underachievement in regards to test scores. Also, another aspect that undergirds this theory is the fact that students who are economically deprived can achieve at higher rates if schools would draw on aspects of their lived experiences (Gay, 2000).

CRT has the following characteristics (Gay, 2000, p. 29):

- It acknowledges the legitimacy of the cultural heritages of different ethnic groups, both as legacies that affect students’ dispositions, attitudes, and approaches to learning and as worthy content to be taught in the formal curriculum.
- It builds bridges of meaningfulness between home and school experiences as well as between academic abstractions and lived sociocultural realities.
- It uses a wide variety of instructional strategies that are connected to different learning styles.
- It teaches students to know and praise their own and each other’s cultural heritages.
- It incorporates multicultural information, resources, and materials in all subjects and skills routinely taught in schools.

In addition to the aforementioned characteristics of CRT, Gay (2002a) described five important areas that teacher candidates need to adhere to in working with a diversity of students. The areas were first becoming knowledgeable about various cultures, and second incorporating aspects of various cultures into teaching practices (Gay, 2002). Third, teachers should give respect and fourth they must show acceptance of various cultures and finally they must build effective communication between students of various cultures (Gay, 2002).
CRT is described as validating, comprehensive, multidimensional, empowering, transformative, and emancipatory (Gay, 2000). CRT can be used across various subjects and settings; thus, engaging students and enhancing their opportunities to learn. This ability to use culturally responsive teaching in a multiplicity of subjects and settings validates its usage. As for its comprehensive use, culturally relevant teaching involves the betterment of the whole child. Ladson-Billings (1992) stated that teachers who employ the use of culturally responsive teaching present more assistance to children, enabling them to improve on their academic performance. Multidimensional CRT “encompasses curriculum content, learning context, classroom climate, student-teacher relationships, instructional techniques and performance assessments” (Gay, 2000, p. 31). Bennett (1995) made an interesting note that teachers often have low expectations of students of color, including African American males, and do not challenge them academically. Gay (2000) asserted that “Empowerment in the form of culturally responsive teaching translates into academic competence, personal confidence, courage, and the will to act” (p. 32). Gay goes on to mention that empowerment will allow students to grow in a holistic sense. The transformation process occurs as the culture of all students is accepted, affirmed, and regularly included within the classroom setting (Gay, 2000).

Continuing the attempt to locate the disconnection between students of color and schools, Ladson-Billings (1989, 1991, 1992, 1994, 1995a, 1995b) conceptualized culturally relevant pedagogy. Today, culturally relevant pedagogy is widely advocated and applied in educational research and practice. It is a conceptual framework that advocates three main criteria: academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness (Young, 2010). Ladson-Billings (1995b) emphasized those three criteria in
defining culturally relevant pedagogy as a “theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools (and other institutions) perpetuate” (p. 469). There are many studies to which the concept of culturally relevant pedagogy emerged, but, Ladson-Billings (1995b) mentioned the work of Irvine (1990) as of particular importance. Irvine developed “cultural synchronization” as “the necessary interpersonal context that must exist between the teacher and African American students to maximize learning” (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 468). Irvine (1989) examined teacher-student relationships as well as social factors that may affect students. Both Ladson-Billings and Irvine viewed Irvine's 1989 study as a key cog in dismantling the untruths that are disseminated in cultural deficit models that educators usually attach to Black students, including African American male students. Ladson-Billings saw the need to address the educational plight of Black students, especially as it pertained to the importance of their culture being included in the educational process. In so doing, she conceptualized and coined the phrase culturally relevant pedagogy.

Culturally relevant pedagogy is defined as an approach to teaching that is intended to educate all students and not just a select few through the medium of cultural relevancy (Ladson-Billings, 1992). Teachers who practice culturally relevant pedagogy view their students as valuable and seek to present them with equitable educational opportunities that will develop them to their fullest potential (Ladson-Billings, 1994). In her original work Ladson-Billings articulated three major tenets under girding culturally relevant pedagogy: (a) academic success, (b) cultural competence, and (c) critical or sociopolitical consciousness. These tenets are described below:
• **Academic success**—despite social inequities and hostile classroom environments, students must develop their academic skills such as literacy, numeracy, technological, social, and political skills in order to be active participants in a democracy (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 160).

• **Cultural competence**—culturally relevant pedagogy requires that students maintain some cultural integrity as well as academic excellence. Fordham and Ogbu (1986) reported a phenomenon of Black students “acting White” because of the fear of being ostracized by their peers for demonstrating interest in and succeeding in academic and other school related tasks (Ladson-Billings, 1995, pp. 160-161).

• **Sociopolitical consciousness**—culturally relevant pedagogy does not imply that it is enough for students to choose academic excellence and remain culturally grounded if those skills and abilities represent only an individual achievement. Beyond those individual characteristics of academic achievement and cultural competence, students must develop a broader sociopolitical consciousness that allow them to critique cultural norms, values, mores, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities. (Ladson-Billings, 1995, p. 162)

Teachers who implement culturally relevant pedagogies must be cognizant of its three pillars of academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness, when planning lessons (Ladson-Billings, 2006). There must be sustained and purposeful effort by teachers in order for culturally relevant practice to be experienced by all students (Shujaa, 1995). Shujaa (1995) went on to state that teachers must go through a process of introspection. This will hopefully allow them to come to realize that all students will
benefit from culturally relevant pedagogies. If, and when, teachers critically examine themselves and their pedagogies, then equitable pedagogical practices will be ever-present in classrooms and all students will be presented with frequent opportunities to succeed academically (Gay & Kirkland, 2003).

Responding to the culture that exists within the educational system is vital in determining whether aspects of various cultures will be disseminated (Huber, Huger, & Parscal, 1992). To ensure that all students receive a quality education, teachers must impart culture into all parts of the educational experience (Gay, 2002). This includes the content instructors employ in the classroom as it must include aspects of all cultures. With this, students as well as teachers are able to acknowledge, accept, and appreciate the differences that are present within their classrooms and society (Sparks, 1994).

Pertaining to culturally relevant pedagogies in physical education, Hastie, Martin, and Buchanan (2006) conducted a study in which the researchers decided to teach stepping, a series of synchronized movements, to Black students. They used a video tape to display the techniques used in stepping. Students were separated into groups and proceeded to make up routines. The stepping unit was one that the students deemed to be relevant which was evident as those students who were inconsistent participants in the class became involved totally in the content of the class. The instructors were concerned that the students would not take to the lesson well as they had not been introduced to regular routines and regulations in class. The authors, who were White instructors of the unit on stepping, mentioned that they felt awkward about teaching this unit because they had very little knowledge as it pertained to stepping. An important note was that the students noticed that the instructors were apprehensive about teaching the unit on
stepping and may not have been able to perform all of the moves necessary to assemble a routine. This example gives credibility to the fact that all teachers need to be knowledgeable of and comfortable with aspects of various cultures. As the students realized that their teachers were apprehensive about teaching this unit, the students felt empowered by taking on more of a leadership role as the teachers served as facilitators. In a role of facilitator, the instructors were able to observe the students' cooperative abilities as they aided each other with the content of the lesson. This example of implementing culture into classroom practices can serve as an example of how Black students can achieve if and when an infusion of culture occurs within the classroom.

Theoretical Framework

Ladson-Billings (1995b) proposed a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy that stemmed from her investigation (Ladson-Billings, 1994) of eight successful teachers of African American students. Three criteria emerged as tenets of culturally relevant pedagogy: (a) the production of students who achieved academically through various forms of assessment, (b) the ability to demonstrate cultural competence, and (c) the ability to develop a critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). With academic achievement, teachers were instructors in classrooms where students performed at high levels as these teachers used alternate forms of assessments (Ladson-Billings, 1994). This was in direct contrast to traditional forms of assessment that mainly focus on standardized testing. Additionally, teachers felt strong obligations to students to help them to attain academic success. With cultural competence, teachers provided ways for students “to maintain their cultural integrity while succeeding academically” (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 476). The third criteria, critical consciousness, involved
teachers helping students to “recognize, understand, and critique current social inequities” (p. 476). In helping students to develop a critical consciousness, teachers aided the students in recognizing inequitable practices as well as sources of these inequities (Ladson-Billings, 1995b).

Building on her 1994 study of teachers who exemplified culturally relevant teaching, Ladson-Billings (1995b) articulated three theoretical propositions as underpinnings of culturally relevant pedagogy. These were: (a) the conceptions of self and others held by culturally relevant teachers, (b) the manner in which social relations are structured by culturally relevant teachers, and (c) the conceptions of knowledge held by culturally relevant teachers (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 478).

Pertaining to the conception of self and others, teachers should demonstrate a commitment to the conceptions of themselves in addition to the students in the classroom. Culturally relevant teachers “(a) believe that all students are capable of academic success; (b) see their pedagogy as art- unpredictable, always in the process of becoming; (c) saw themselves as members of the community; (d) see teaching as a way to give back to the community; and (e) believe in a Freirean notion of “teaching as mining” (Freire, 1974, p.76) or pulling out knowledge” (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, pp. 478-479). With these conceptions, teachers would gain and demonstrate a stronger commitment to students.

Social relations were deemed as interactions in the classroom that were seen as vital to the success of the student. With this, culturally relevant teachers should pay close attention to social interactions as these interactions are vital in helping students to achieve academically, become culturally component, and critically conscious (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). With social interactions, teachers who seek to implement culturally relevant
pedagogies: "(a) maintain student-teacher relationships, (b) demonstrate a connectedness with all of the students, (c) develop a community of learners, and (d) encourage students to learn collaboratively and be responsible for one another" (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 480).

The third proposition, the conception of knowledge, deals with how teachers think about knowledge in the classroom. With conceptions of knowledge, Ladson-Billings proposed that culturally relevant teachers believe that “(a) knowledge is not static, it is shared, recycled, and constructed; (b) knowledge must be viewed critically; (c) teachers must be passionate about knowledge and learning; (d) teachers must scaffold, or build bridges, to facilitate learning; and (e) assessment of knowledge acquisition must be multifaceted, incorporating multiple forms of excellence” (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 481). An important note on the conceptions of knowledge pertains to the reciprocity that takes place in the classroom setting (Ladson-Billings, 1995b).

As the nation continues to become larger and more diverse educators, including physical educators, must continue to seek to find ways to ensure that all students are properly and meaningfully included in the educational process. The history of education has recorded the continued failures of educators in their quest to educate students of color (Banks, 2004). Without proper inclusion in the educational process, African American male students will continue to lag behind their White peers academically and even into the workforce. One such suggestion posed by researchers is for educators at all school levels to become culturally sensitive and competent so as to cater to the needs of all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). The need for cultural sensitivity and competence is much needed in all schools, especially urban schools where students of color make up a
large percentage of the school population. Toward equitable and socially just education for all students, Ladson-Billings advocates culturally relevant pedagogy. This curricular orientation and pedagogical approach to teaching empowers students to become academically successful, culturally competent, and develop a critical consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Likewise, physical education classrooms, especially in urban settings, should adhere to incorporating components of culturally relevant approaches to teaching by including multicultural content and engaging in various modes of instruction so that all students may succeed. It is the current researcher’s belief, and that of numerous educators and researchers, that culturally relevant pedagogy practices will aid all students in their pursuit of educational success.
Chapter 3: Methods

The purpose of this study was to analyze high school physical education teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students within urban school districts. In this chapter, the research design, participants and sampling, instrumentation, and data collection and analysis procedures used in the study are discussed.

Research Design

The research method was descriptive survey (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). This methodology allowed the researcher to access physical education teachers at multiple high schools within two large urban school districts. A survey approach was used to collect and analyze responses on teachers' understandings and attitudes about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students at urban high schools. Surveys are techniques in which data are gathered by asking questions of a group of respondents (Ary, Fisher, & Razavieh, 2002). This descriptive form of research is widely used in the field of education, including physical education (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). When using surveys, researchers usually try to gather information on an important topic to ascertain the views of a large number of people. This is vital, especially in the field of education as there are many people that are affected and involved within the field. With
surveys, the researcher sets out to determine the current practices and insights of a certain population within a particular field (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). The researcher should also peruse the literature to understand what other researchers have discovered pertaining to the subject (Ary et al., 2006). In this current survey study, the researcher’s perusal of the extant literature led to an inquiry of teachers' understandings and attitudes about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students. As stated earlier, scholars have asserted that teachers need to develop equitable pedagogical praxis so that all students, especially African American male students, attain a proper educational experience (e.g., Banks & Banks, 1989; Beauboeuf-Lafontant, 1999; Gay, 2000, 2003; Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995). With that in mind, the current researcher set out to analyze physical education teachers’ understandings and attitudes about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American males in urban schools.

Stated differently, the current researcher determined that the dependent variables of teachers' attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American males at urban high schools were important to analyze. It is important to come to a greater understanding of attitudes as they represent people's inclinations to respond to others in positive, negative, or neutral ways (Azjen & Fishbein, 1980). It was deemed necessary to analyze the attitudes of teachers who teach African American males being that disproportionately these students have academic difficulties. Fraenkel and Wallen (1990) stated that the sample for the study should be chosen from a suitable population that will contribute meaningful data to the study. With that in mind, the current researcher deemed that the sample would be drawn from certified high school physical education teachers with at least three years of experience teaching within urban
areas in Ohio. The teachers must have had a minimal of three years of experience teaching physical education at urban schools. Teachers with at least three or four years of experience enter into what Katz’s (1972) called the renewal stage of development and thus were believed to have had enough years of experience to become competent in their pedagogies. Moreover, this criterion was used because three years is the minimal number of years of experience teaching whereby teachers typically use various innovative methods to enhance their physical education programs (Stroot & Whipple, 2003).

Participants and Sampling

The participants ($n = 40$) were African American and White male and female physical education teachers sampled from high schools within two major urban school districts in the Midwestern part of the US. More specifically, a random sample approach (Thomas & Nelson, 2001) was used whereby the researcher targeted at random 50 certified physical education teachers from the total population of physical education teachers across two urban school districts. The researcher explicitly defined the target sample as certified physical education teachers in urban school districts. All physical education teachers in the selected districts who matched those criteria were eligible for the study and had an equal chance at being selected for inclusion in the study (Ary, Jacobs, Razavieh, & Sorenson, 2006; Vincent, 1995). Two of the original four targeted urban school districts in the state of Ohio approved the researcher’s request to conduct the study in their districts. The approving districts were Cleveland Public Schools (CLPS) and Columbus (COPS). Both CLPS and COPS districts educate students from culturally, ethnically, economically, and linguistically diverse backgrounds. In the CLPS district, 82.4% of the students were students of color; that is, Black, Hispanic, Asian, Native
American, or multi-racial adolescents (National Center of Educational Statistics, 2008). In the COPS district, 61.5% of the students were Black, 27.6% White, 5.5% Hispanic, 2.8% multi-racial, as well 1.8% of the students were Asian/Pacific Islands and less than 1% Native Americans (www.columbus.k12oh.us).

Prior to initiating the data collection process, the researcher compiled a list of all certified physical education teachers located in the urban school districts. In developing the list, the researcher initiated contact with key personnel including school districts’ human resource offices, administrators, and physical education department heads. After the population frame list was generated, the researcher drew 50 names, at random, of teachers to seek their consent and agreement to participate in the study. He also mailed a demographic questionnaire and survey scale to each of them for completion at their schools. Forty of the fifty teachers surveyed responded with completed and usable surveys. Hence the response rate was high at 80 percent.

It is worth noting however that the researcher encountered difficulties securing participants for the study. Several teachers within the approved urban school districts chose not to participate in the study and this was due to their hesitancy to respond to some items within the survey scale. Moreover, the researcher sought permission to conduct the study in two additional school districts within the state but was denied. In one case, a large urban school district located in southern Ohio denied the researcher’s request to conduct the study in their district. Members of that particular district’s Research Evaluation and Testing Committee felt that some items contained within the survey scale were “offensive and inflammatory” in nature (District Research Committee,
personal communication, December 18, 2009). Another large urban school district simply denied permission to the researcher to conduct the study in their schools.

The construction or selection of an existing instrument is common to descriptive survey studies (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990). In this study, a newly constructed survey scale titled, *Teachers’ Attitudes about African American Male Students* was used to gather data on the key variables under study. The construction and use of the instrument is discussed in the next section of this chapter.

**Instrumentation**

The data sources were a teacher demographic questionnaire and a survey scale. Both instruments were developed and validated for this study. Descriptive data about the teachers and their schools (e.g., teachers’ ethnicity, gender, school location, and age) was collected using a demographic questionnaire constructed for this study.

The *Teachers’ Attitudes about African American Male Students* (TAAMS) survey scale was designed for this study to assess teachers’ understandings and attitudes about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American males at urban high schools. The TAAMS instrument has a 5-point Likert-type scale and respondents were asked to indicate their level of disagreement, uncertainty, or agreement with each TAAMS statement. In generating the original 40 statements for the TAAMS instrument, the researcher conducted an extensive review of the literature in this area including examination of existing scales designed to assess teachers’ attitudes on culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching students from diverse cultures. The scale developed by Love and Kruger (2005) was of particular usefulness in that regard.
The TAAMS survey consists of 32 statements (Appendix A) that were constructed to measure five dimensions or constructs. These dimensions are discussed below. The TAAMS uses a Likert-type scale and has the following anchors for scoring: $1 = \text{strongly disagree}$, $2 = \text{disagree}$, $3 = \text{unsure}$, $4 = \text{agree}$, and $5 = \text{strongly agree}$. The scoring of the negatively phrased statements (Items #2, 4, 5, 6, 10, 11, 14, 18, 20, and 25) was reversed to obtain proper total and subscale means (Antonak & Livneh, 1988; Ary et al., 2006). TAAMS scores were analyzed descriptively from the participants’ responses for each item on the scale. The closed-ended format allowed the respondents to mark their level of agreement or disagreement to each scale item and for the responses to be tabulated easily (Ary et al., 2006). Some items appearing on the TAAMS scale were conceptualized from Love and Kruger’s (2005) scale dimensions, which were designed to measure teachers’ culturally relevant attitudes in general education and to determine which variables (i.e., knowledge, social relations, students’ race, ethnicity, culture and community, learning and academic capabilities, academic successes and failures, and importance of culturally relevant teaching) correlated with student achievement.

In that conception, the TAAMS scale was constructed with five dimensions. The scale items are worded to reflect dimensions of (a) culture and community (Items 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 21, 23, and 31); (b) student knowledge, learning, and performance (Items 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 14, 18, 25, 28, 29, and 32); (c) relationships (Items 15, 16, and 24); (d) understanding culturally relevant pedagogy (Items 13, 17, 19, 22, 26, and 30); and the perceived (e) importance of culturally relevant pedagogy (Items 3, 8, 20, and 27).
Validity and Reliability of TAAMS

To assess the validity of an instrument, the researcher must analyze the accuracy and representativeness of the data gathered to an intended purpose (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). A valid instrument gives the researcher confidence that it measures what it purports to measure (Desimone & Le Floch, 2004). It is critical to survey instrument development that the researcher(s) construct questions or statements that are easily understood by the respondents (Punch, 2003). In this study, the researcher established content validity of the TAAMS survey. Specifically, the TAAMS was originally evaluated for content relevance (Messick, 1989) by a panel of well-established teacher educators in general education and physical education. Panelists were selected, based on their established reputations as leaders in research on issues of culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching in urban schools. A cover letter, copy of the instrument, and a rating sheet were sent through electronic mail (e-mail) with the document attached to each panelist. The panelists were asked to assess critically the TAAMS on: (a) parsimony and completeness, (b) accuracy, (c) suitability, and (d) utility (Antonak & Livneh, 1988).

Originally, the TAAMS scale contained 40 items designed to assess physical education teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students in urban schools. The panelists judged 35 of the original 40 items to be content valid for assessing teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American males in physical education at urban high schools. Further, the results of Cronbach’s (1951) alpha analysis (coefficient) indicated that the original Items 3, 14, and 17 were unreliable and therefore were also eliminated from the scale. In all, eight of the original 40 items were deleted.
from the instrument. The remaining 32 items were edited or reworded as warranted. However, the small and disproportionate sample sizes in this current study prevented the researcher from determining the scale’s construct validity using exploratory psychometric procedures (Antonak & Livneh, 1988; Hair, Anderson, Tatham, & Black, 1995). Future efforts should be made to address this shortcoming.

Reliability. The reliability of an instrument refers to consistency and stability of responses by respondents (Punch, 2003). Reliability and validity are intertwined in that if survey items are not answered in a consistent (i.e., reliable) manner, the validity of the study comes into question (Ary et al., 2002). Reliability “p pertains to the consistency, or repeatability, of a measure” (Thomas & Nelson, 2001, p.185). It is important to note that validity and reliability are dependent upon each other as tests that are not reliable cannot be deemed valid (Thomas & Nelson, 2001). There are three common approaches to determine reliability, and these are: (a) test-retest reliability, (b) alternate forms reliability, and (c) internal-consistency measures of reliability (Ary et al., 2002).

Cronbach’s alpha analysis was used to estimate reliability of the TAAMS scale. This internal-consistency measure proved to be useful and appropriate in determining the scale's consistency in measuring what it purports to measure (Ary et al., 2002). The internal-consistency procedure requires “only a single administration of one form of a test” (Ary et al., 2002, p. 256). Using Cronbach’s alpha (1951), the researcher was able to estimate the TAAMS scale’s internal-consistency for the dimensions of: (a) culture and community, (b) student knowledge, learning, and performance, (c) social relations, (d) understanding culturally relevant pedagogy, and the (e) importance of culturally relevant pedagogy were .47, .46, .30, .61, and .35 respectively. These estimates are modest to
weak, which suggests additional refinement of the scale's dimensions is needed for future use (Cronbach & Shavelson, 2004; Salkind, 2004).

**Procedures**

Following content validation procedures, the TAAMS survey was administrated to a sampling of high school physical education teachers. Quantitative data were collected during the 2009-2010 school year, using a mailed survey approach (Thomas & Nelson, 2001) to collect teacher demographic information and their responses to the TAAMS instrument. In conducting research using mailed survey techniques, a researcher should adhere to several important guidelines. Ary et al. (2006) outlined six basic steps that researchers should adhere to in collecting survey data: (a) planning, (b) defining the population, (c) sampling, (d) constructing the instrument, (e) conducting the survey, and (f) processing the data.

First in the planning stage, the researcher should determine if the survey method is the best alternative in answering the research question(s) involved in the study (Ary et al., 2006). Ary et al. (2006) stated that surveys are typically used to answer questions that pertain to attitudes in addition to other behaviors in which there are no observations. The current researcher deemed descriptive survey research an appropriate and economically feasible strategy to collect data for analyzing the understandings and attitudes of a geographically dispersed sample of physical education teachers with regard to culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students.

Defining the population, the second basic step, involved the researcher determining the sample for the study (Ary et al., 2006). This step permits generalization of the results to certified high school physical education teachers within selected urban school districts.
who have three or more years of teaching experience (Ary et al., 2002; Thomas & Nelson, 2001). The researcher was able to identify all of the individuals (i.e., certified high school physical education teachers with three or more years of teaching experience within the selected urban school districts) that fell into this population, or sampling frame, which allowed for the determination of the appropriate sample size. All of the participants were identified as certified high school physical educators with three or more years of teaching experience in large, urban school districts located within the state of Ohio. Identifying participants from the population frame was accomplished through communication with school principals, administrators, and human resource personnel in the school districts involved in the study. To most feasibly and economically gather responses from participants in a large geographic area (i.e., large urban school districts in several cities located across the state of Ohio), the researcher felt that it was necessary to use a mailed survey approach.

Third, the researcher selected a sample from the population that was deemed appropriate (certified physical education teachers in urban schools) for the study. Of importance, the researcher addressed the possibility of sampling error. Sampling error is the difference between samples and populations (Ary et al., 2006; Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). To minimize sampling error, the researcher must ensure that the sample surveyed is representative (typical) of the population under study (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2000). For this study, the researcher selected the appropriate sample using a random sampling approach, which will be described later in the document.

Further the current researcher designed the TAAMS scale to sample physical education teachers at secondary schools in urban districts on their understandings and
attitudes about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American males. To that end, mailed surveys were sent to a sample of 50 physical education teachers at their respective high schools in two major urban school districts. The teachers were asked to indicate their level of disagreement or uncertainty to agreement on the survey items.

Specifically in autumn 2009, the TAAMS scale was mailed to certified physical education teachers who taught in urban schools. The teachers were asked to respond to the TAAMS scale by indicating their level of agreement or disagreement with each of the scale's items. Enclosed in the mailing were a demographic questionnaire, the TAAMS scale and a cover letter. The cover letter articulated (a) the purpose of the study, (b) a request for their voluntary participation in the study, (c) an assurance of confidentiality, (d) an offer to share the results with them upon request, (e) an expression of gratitude, and (f) instructions on completing the TAAMS. The researcher stressed the purpose and importance of the study in the request for the teachers’ voluntary participation. Further, he guaranteed that the information gathered in the questionnaire would only be used by the researcher and ensured them of their anonymity and confidentially. The teachers were not asked to put their names on any portion of the demographic questionnaire nor the TAAMS survey. Lastly, the researcher offered the respondents an opportunity to ascertain the overall results of the study upon request.

The data gathered from a survey can inform areas of education that may help address problems in the field. On this point, Thomas and Nelson (2001) asserted that information gathered in surveys is critical to solving problems that are present in the educational community. In this current survey, the researcher used the TAAMS scale to gain information on physical education teachers’ understandings and attitudes about
culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students in urban schools. From information gained in the study, the researcher was able to extrapolate meaning about the understandings and attitudes of physical education teachers have regarding culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students in urban school districts. Properly conducted surveys can inform areas of education such as providing information about teachers and their pedagogical practices, which might be crucial to improving their practices or even leading to school reform (Desimone & Le Floch, 2004).

Data Analysis

Teachers’ demographic data were analyzed with descriptive statistics and using their responses on the TAAMS total scale, the sample was examined for normalcy and homogeneity with an Anderson-Darling Normality Test (Normal Probability Plot) linear pattern (Devore & Peck, 1993). In addition, an analysis of covariance (ANCOVA) test was chosen to check for homogeneity and equivalency of the sample on key attribute variables (gender and ethnicity), using experience level as a covariate. ANCOVA was used on TAAMS survey total scores to remove any systematic differences among participants from the within-groups error term (Shavelson, 1988).

For more insight, item responses specific to the five dimensions of the TAAMS survey were analyzed separately using a series of one-way ANOVA tests. The ANOVA test is a parametric statistical technique used for comparing mean scores of two or more samples on a single factor (Gravette & Wallnau, 1992; Levin, 1983). ANOVA tests are used for analyzing group differences with two or more independent samples, each consisting of at least ten cases, where sample data are obtained from survey or other
research designs (Shavelson, 1988). The ANOVA test requires interval or ratio level data [analyze mean scores], assumes an underlying continuous distribution, and is computed with an F statistic (Levin, 1983; Thomas & Nelson, 2001). The parametric ANOVA test was used in this study for comparing groups on gender and ethnicity variables (Gravette & Wallnau, 1992; Levin, 1983).

More specifically, the researcher used a series of one-way ANOVA tests to analyze the physical education teachers’ attitudes and understandings as a function their gender and ethnicity (attribute variables) on each of the five dimensions of the TAAMS survey (dependent variables). Because conducting multiple one-way ANOVA tests raises the probability of a Type I error, Bonferroni adjustment was used (Vincent, 1995). The Bonferroni adjustment was achieved by dividing the single test alpha by the number of tests to be performed (Vincent, 1995). In this study, the adjusted alpha level was set at .01 (alpha = .05 divided by number of comparisons = 5) for determining group differences as a function of gender specific to responses on each of the five dimensions of the TAAMS survey. The adjusted alpha level was also set at .01 for determining group differences as a function of ethnicity specific to responses on each of the five dimensions of the survey.

Where statistical significance was revealed, practical significance was also estimated using a correlation $r^2$ statistic, which is an estimate of true variance that the ranked independent variable(s) (i.e., groups) accounts for in the ranked dependent variable(s) (Rosenthal, 1994; Thomas, Nelson, & Thomas, 1999). Typically, effect size values of > .10 are required to be considered substantial (Tolson, 1980; Vincent, 1995). MINITAB statistical software (1996) was used for data analyses. Minitab is a commonly
used statistical package for use across many academic disciplines with a wide range of statistical analysis capabilities (Butler, Rothery, & Roy, 2003; Meyer & Krueger, 2003).
Chapter 4: Results

The purpose of this study was to analyze high school physical education teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students within urban school districts. In this chapter, the results of the data analysis procedures used in the study are discussed. First, descriptive demographic data about the participants are presented. Second, the inferential results are given. Finally, descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations) representing the teachers’ responses on the five subscales (dimensions) of the TAAMS survey are given and interpreted in connection with the research questions used to guide this study.

Demographic Results

All forty participating teachers held physical education certification and had three or more years of experience teaching physical education in urban schools (Table 4.1). The teachers’ mean age was 45.3 years with a standard deviation of 8.6 and range from 25 to 60 years. More male \( n = 23, \ 57.5\% \) than female \( n = 17, \ 42.5\% \) teachers participated in the study. Most respondents were White \( n = 25, \ 62.5\% \) followed by 15 Black \( 37.5\% \) teachers and all of the teachers worked in large urban school districts. Specifically, there were 22 \( 55\% \) respondents (teachers) from Cleveland Public School District and 18 \( 45\% \) from Columbus Public School District in Ohio (Table 4.1).
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| Means | 45.3 | 18.1 | 3.9 | 4.0 | 3.8 | 3.7 | 3.6 | 3.86 |

**Table 4.1** Teachers’ Demographic Data and Mean Scores TAAMS Dimensions

*Note. CLPS = Cleveland Public Schools; COPS = Columbus Public Schools; D = Dimension; Yrs<sup>Exp</sup> = Years experience teaching physical education in urban schools.*

*Note. D1 = Dimension 1: culture and community; D2 = Dimension 2: student knowledge, learning, and performance; D3 = Dimension 3: relationships; D4 = Dimension 4: understanding culturally relevant pedagogy; and D5 = Dimension 5: importance of culturally relevant pedagogy.*
All of the teachers had taught physical education for at least three years prior to the conduction of this study. Katz’s (1972) developmental model for teachers posits that teachers begin to become competent in their teaching practices during their third or fourth year of teaching. This period, called the renewal stage, involves a teacher’s quest for innovative methods in which to enhance the atmosphere within the classroom, including his or her pedagogical practices (Stroot & Whipple, 2003). Of particular importance, it is likely that participants in this study were either in the renewal or maturity stage of teacher development (Katz, 1972), and therefore would have engaged in efforts to improve their pedagogical practices in a manner to ensure that all students had opportunities to succeed.

In the current study, the teachers had an average of 18 years of experience teaching in urban schools. In fact, 37 of the teachers (92.5%) were in the maturity stage, which is Katz’s final stage of teacher development. This stage is typified by teachers’ questioning the meaning of their teaching praxis, schools and student conditions, as well larger societal issues. For example, they may question the influence of dominant cultural norms on the educational experiences of African American and other children and youth of color. In this stage, teachers are likely to ask questions and connect their work to issues within their own classrooms, their schools and even to larger social, cultural, and political issues. Those teachers who are culturally responsive tend to reflect and act on social justice issues through their pedagogies and even beyond. Though likely in the renewal or maturity stages of teacher development, this does not necessarily mean that the pedagogical practices of the teachers in the current study were culturally relevant.
Inferential Results

Statistical evidence of the sample's normalcy and homogeneity was demonstrated by way of an Anderson-Darling Normality Test (Normal Probability Plot) using sampled respondents' summed TAAMS mean scores. According to Devore and Peck (1993), a substantial linear pattern by a normal probability plot, as illustrated with the current sample, illustrates population normality and provides evidence that the researcher can appropriately use analysis of variance procedures. As such an ANCOVA test, with experience (92.5% of the teachers were in the maturity stage of development) as a covariate, was used on the TAAMS total scale mean scores across groups to check for homogeneity and equivalency of the sample on attribute variables. ANCOVA results revealed that the teachers were not significantly different as a function of their ethnicity ($F = 0.94, p = 0.34$) or years of experience teaching ($F = 0.00, p = 0.99$). However they did differ significantly as a function of gender ($F = 6.68, p = 0.01$) with an alpha set a priori at .01. In this sample, female teachers had an overall higher mean score ($M = 4.0$) on the total scale than did the male teachers ($M = 3.8$). Gender differences were analyzed further for each of the TAAMS survey dimensions and will be discussed next.

For additional insight about the teachers' attitudes and understandings, a series of one-way ANOVA tests were used to search for gender and ethnicity differences on each of the five dimensions of the TAAMS survey. Five independent single factor ANOVA tests indicated that the female and male teachers were not significantly different in their mean scores for items representing the five hypothesized dimensions (i.e., *culture and community*; *student knowledge, learning and performance*; *relationships*; *understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy*; and *importance of culturally relevant pedagogy* of the
TAAMS instrument. Though the single factor ANOVA test results on the dimension of Understanding Culturally Relevant Pedagogy was non-significant at the conservative .01 probability level; the test results approached significance at, $F (1, 39) = 4.44, p = .04$, where the female teachers had a higher mean score ($M = 4.0$) on this dimension than the male teachers ($M = 3.6$).

Further analysis using separate one-way ANOVA tests indicated that the African American and White teachers were not significantly different in their mean scores for items representing the five dimensions of the survey. More specifically, ANOVA tests revealed that the teachers were not significantly different in their responses to survey items on culture and community ($F = 0.08, p = 0.78$); student knowledge, learning and performance ($F = 0.19, p = 0.66$); relationships ($F = 0.37, p = 0.54$); understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy ($F = 0.30, p = 0.59$); and importance of culturally relevant pedagogy ($F = 3.15, p = 0.84$) as a function of their ethnicity. Even though the ANOVA test results were non-significant, the Black teachers' mean scores were slightly higher than those of the White teachers on four of the five scale's dimensions. Specifically, the Black teachers' mean scores were 3.90 for culture and community, 3.80 for relationships, 3.82 for understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy, and 3.85 for importance of culturally relevant pedagogy, compared to 3.85, 3.69, 3.73, and 3.50 respectively for the White teachers. The exception was the dimension labeled student knowledge, learning and performance where the White teachers' mean score of 4.0 was slightly higher than the African American teachers' mean score of 3.96.
Descriptive Analysis of Teachers’ Responses to TAAMS Subscales

In this section, the mean scores and standard deviations on each of the TAAMS subscales (dimensions) are presented item-by-item for interpretation purposes.

Cultures and Communities

Descriptive statistics on the teachers’ responses to Items # 4, 6, 10, 11, 12, 21, 23, and 31 (Culture and community) of the TAAMS scale are presented in Table 4.2. Data pertaining to teachers’ attitudes about African American males’ culture and community revealed that many of the teachers held favorable views of the culture and community of these students. Thirty-four teachers (85%) disagreed with the negatively phrased statement that teachers should not waste their time becoming more knowledgeable about the racial and cultural background of African American males (Item 4). Alternatively, four teachers (10%) agreed that teachers should not waste time learning about their African American male students, and two (5%) were undecided. In addition to a majority of teachers feeling that it was necessary to acquire knowledge about the cultural and racial backgrounds of African American males, most of the teachers (n = 30, 75%) tended to disagree that African American male students would fail due to their culture differing from the dominant Eurocentric culture of most schools (Item 6); eight (20%) teachers agreed that African American male students would indeed fail due to their culture being different from that which exists in schools, and two teachers (5%) were undecided about this statement.
Item 4. Teachers should focus their efforts on delivering high-quality teaching and not waste time becoming knowledgeable about the racial and cultural backgrounds of African American males. (Negatively phrased)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>$n = 10$</td>
<td>$n = 5$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$M$</td>
<td></td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>4.60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>$SD$</td>
<td></td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 6.</td>
<td>African American males fail because their culture is so different from that which exists in the schools. (Negatively phrased)</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 10.</td>
<td>In order to be successful in PE, African American males often have to give up some parts of their culture.</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>1.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 11.</td>
<td>The cultural identity of African American males adversely affects their learning in PE. (Negatively phrased)</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>1.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 12.</td>
<td>African American males’ culture is appreciated and affirmed when they are allowed to lead lesson activities.</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 21.</td>
<td>The cultural backgrounds and experiences that African American males bring to my PE class matters greatly.</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.60</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 23.</td>
<td>All African American males bring unique strengths to PE.</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 31.</td>
<td>Parents/legal guardians of African American males are a valuable asset to their learning.</td>
<td>$M$</td>
<td>$SD$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Table 4.1. TAAMS Descriptive Results: Culture and Community Dimension

Also pertaining to culture (Item 10), most Black and White teachers ($n = 28$, 70%) disagreed with the statement that African American male students should be forced to give up some part of their culture in order to be successful in school; seven teachers (18%) agreed that they should, and five teachers (12%) were undecided. Thirty teachers (75%) disagreed that the cultural identity of African American students adversely affects their learning in the physical education setting (Item 11); six teachers (15%) disagreed,
and four teachers (10%) were unsure. Further the Black and White teachers tended to agree that the culture of African American males is appreciated and affirmed when students are allowed to lead lesson activities (Item 12) as 27 teachers (67.5%) responded in this manner; four teachers (10%) disagreed, and nine teachers (22.5%) were unsure. Three of the Black male teachers disagreed with Item 12 in addition to one White female. Additionally, White male (n = 4) and female (n = 3) teachers (n = 7, 77%) constituted the highest percentage of participants who were unsure about this statement.

The current researcher found it troubling that 38% of the teachers disagreed with (n = 7, 17.5%) or were uncertain about (n = 8, 20%) the importance of the cultural heritage and experiences that African American male students bring to their physical education programs (Item 21). However, twenty-five teachers (62.5%) agreed that African American male students' cultural heritage and experiences were important. Three White and three Black male teachers were among those teachers who disagreed with this position. Additionally, four White male teachers (50%) made up the largest percentage of undecided participants. Most teachers (n = 35, 87.5%) thought that African American male students brought unique strengths to the physical education setting (Item 23) while only a few were undecided (n = 3, 7.5%) and a smaller percentage disagreed with this statement (n = 2, 5%). Many of the teachers held favorable attitudes towards the parents of African American male students as twenty-four teachers (60%) believed that they were valuable assets to student learning in physical education (Item 31), but six teachers (15%) disagreed, and 10 teachers (25%) were unsure. Of note, White teachers made up a large percentage of the teachers who disagreed (5 of 6, 83%) as well those who were undecided (7 of 10, 70%). In summary, Black and White teachers’ attitudes tended to vary regarding
the culture and communities of African American male students. Generally, the White teachers were more uncertain in their attitudes towards the culture and communities of African American male students.

Knowledge, Learning, and Performance

Descriptive statistics for items on the teachers' responses to the TAAMS survey scale Items 1, 2, 5, 7, 9, 14, 18, 25, 28, 29 and 32 (Knowledge, learning, and performance dimension) are presented in Table 4.3. Nearly all of the teachers' had favorable views about African American males’ knowledge, learning, and performance. Thirty-nine teachers (97.5%) held very favorable views of the learning capabilities of all African American male students (Item 1), while only one teacher (2.5%) thought that African American male students were incapable of learning.
### TAAMS Survey Dimension

#### Student Knowledge, Learning, and Performance

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Black</th>
<th>White</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Male</td>
<td>Female</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 1. All African American male students are capable of learning physical education (PE).</td>
<td>$M = 4.80$</td>
<td>$4.92$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 0.4$</td>
<td>$0.3$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 2. The parents/legal guardians of African American males are often a barrier to these students learning. (Negatively phrased)</td>
<td>$M = 3.10$</td>
<td>$3.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 1.4$</td>
<td>$1.2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 5. African American males do not come to PE with much knowledge about being a physically educated person. (Negatively phrased)</td>
<td>$M = 2.80$</td>
<td>$3.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 1.3$</td>
<td>$1.2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 7. African American males can learn to live healthy even if they come from less fortunate economic backgrounds.</td>
<td>$M = 4.60$</td>
<td>$4.58$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 0.5$</td>
<td>$0.5$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 9. In PE, the health-related fitness of African American males must be measured in more ways than standardized tests (e.g., Physical Best, Fitnessgram).</td>
<td>$M = 4.10$</td>
<td>$3.17$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 0.9$</td>
<td>$1.3$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 14. Some African American males are allowed to fail because they are not all capable of learning what it is to be physically educated. (Negatively phrased)</td>
<td>$M = 4.50$</td>
<td>$4.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 0.5$</td>
<td>$0.5$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 18. Most African American male students are incapable of peer learning or learning collaboratively. (Negatively phrased).</td>
<td>$M = 4.30$</td>
<td>$4.42$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 1.1$</td>
<td>$1.2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 25. African American male students are only going to learn so much, and it really does not matter what I do to help them. (Negatively phrased).</td>
<td>$M = 3.40$</td>
<td>$4.25$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 1.4$</td>
<td>$1.4$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 28. There are negative stereotypes (lazy, undisciplined, and overtly aggressive) associated with African American males that make some PE teachers feel hopeless in trying to help them.</td>
<td>$M = 2.90$</td>
<td>$3.17$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 1.1$</td>
<td>$1.2$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 29. Knowledge attainment in PE can be achieved by African American males, regardless of their family situations or backgrounds.</td>
<td>$M = 4.10$</td>
<td>$3.92$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 0.7$</td>
<td>$1.0$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Item 32. African American male students can learn to live physically active lives even if they come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.</td>
<td>$M = 4.20$</td>
<td>$4.92$</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>$SD = 0.8$</td>
<td>$0.3$</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Regarding Item 2, most teachers (n = 24, 60%) disagreed that the parents of African American male students and learning were barriers to their learning; ten teachers (25%) agreed that parents were indeed barriers to African American males learning in physical education and six teachers (15%) were undecided. Of the teachers who agreed with or were undecided about this statement, six teachers (37.5%) were White females, five (31.25%) were Black males, and four (25%) were White males. Interestingly, twenty-two teachers (55%) disagreed that African American males did not come to class with knowledge of being a physically educated person (Item 5), sixteen teachers (40%) agreed that such students did not come to class with much knowledge pertaining to being physically educated, and two (5%) were undecided about this statement. Black males (n = 6; 37.5%) and White females (n = 6; 37.5%) had the highest percentage of agreement with the previous statement. Similar to teachers’ attitudes about African American male students ability to learn in physical education, most all of teachers (n = 38, 95%) also thought that African American male students were capable of learning to live healthy lives regardless of the economic background from which they might come (Item 7); two (5%) teachers thought that these students were incapable of learning in such a negative economic situation.

As for the health-related fitness of African American males (Item 9), twenty-four teachers (60%) thought that there should be multiple forms of testing in this area, twelve teachers (30%) disagreed, and four teachers (10%) were undecided on this statement. Fifty percent of those who disagreed with this statement were White males (n = 6).
Thirty-eight teachers (95%) thought that African American students were not allowed to fail due to their inability to learn to be physically educated (Item 14) and two teachers (5%) reported that they agreed with this statement. The surveyed physical education teachers strongly believed that African American male students were not incapable of learning collaboratively or from their peers (Item 18) as thirty-three teachers (82.5%) disagreed with this statement; four teachers agreed (10%) or were undecided ($n = 3$, 7.5%) about the statement. Thirty teachers (75%) disagreed with the statement that African American male students are only going to learn so much and it does not matter what they do in physical education to help African American male students (Item 25), while seven teachers (18%) agreed and three teachers (7%) were undecided.

Twenty teachers (50%) agreed that there are negative stereotypes that are associated with African American male students that make physical education teachers feel hopeless in trying to help them (Item 28); fourteen teachers (35%) disagreed with this statement, and six teachers (15%) were undecided. White females ($n = 7$) and White males ($n = 5$) accounted for 65% of the total, the highest percentage of agreement with this statement.

Thirty-five teachers (87.5%) thought that knowledge attainment in physical education could be achieved by African American males regardless of their familial situation or background (Item 29). On the other hand, three teachers (7.5%) felt that knowledge attainment could not be attained in this situation, and two teachers (5%) were undecided on the matter. In addition to being able to attain knowledge regardless of their familial situation or background, most teachers also believed that African American males could learn to live physically active lives despite being from economically
deprived backgrounds (Item 32) as thirty-seven teachers (92.5%) agreed, one teacher (2.5%) disagreed, and two teachers (5%) were undecided.

Generally, the female teachers ($M = 4.04$) sampled tended to hold slightly more favorable attitudes pertaining to African American males’ knowledge, learning, and performance than did the male ($M = 3.98$) teachers. Both Black ($M = 3.97$) and White ($M = 4.03$) teachers tended to hold modestly favorable attitudes about African American males’ knowledge, learning, and performance.

*Establishing Relationships with African American Males*

As for teachers’ attitudes about establishing social relationships with African American males (Item 15), thirty-six teachers (90%) felt that they could have a positive impact on African American male students, but, two (5%) disagreed, and two (5%) were undecided. Nearly all teachers surveyed responded that the success of African American males is highly dependent on student-teacher relationships (Item 16) as thirty-nine teachers agreed (97.5%) while one teacher (2.5%) was undecided. Eighteen teachers (45%) disagreed with that statement that African American male students are the top students in their classes and they look forward to having them in class (Item 24). In contrast, two teachers (5%) agreed, and twenty teachers (50%) were unsure. Overall, most of the Black and White teachers tended to report that it was vital to establish social relationships with African American male students. Descriptive statistics for items on the teachers’ responses to the TAAMS survey Items 15, 16, and 24 (*Relationships* dimension) are found in Table 4.4.
TAAMS Survey Dimension | Black | White
--- | --- | ---
Relationships | Male \( n = 10 \) | Female \( n = 5 \) | Male \( n = 13 \) | Female \( n = 12 \)

**Item 15.** PE teachers can have a positive impact on African American male students.

- **M**: 4.10
- **SD**: 1.3
- **M**: 4.60
- **SD**: 0.5
- **M**: 4.31
- **SD**: 0.5
- **M**: 4.17
- **SD**: 0.9

**Item 16.** For African American males, success in PE is highly dependent on student-teacher relationships.

- **M**: 4.40
- **SD**: 0.7
- **M**: 5.00
- **SD**: 0.0
- **M**: 4.46
- **SD**: 0.5
- **M**: 4.67
- **SD**: 0.5

**Item 24.** African American males are my top students in PE; therefore, I always look forward to having them in my classes.

- **M**: 2.40
- **SD**: 1.0
- **M**: 2.80
- **SD**: 1.3
- **M**: 2.08
- **SD**: 1.0
- **M**: 2.50
- **SD**: 0.8

**Table 4.4.** TAAMS Descriptive Results: Relationships Dimension

*Understanding Culturally Relevant Pedagogy*

Descriptive statistics for items representing responses to the TAAMS scale Items 13, 17, 19, 22, 26, and 30 (*Understanding culturally relevant pedagogy*) appear in **Table 4.5.**
TAAMS Survey Dimension | Black | White
---|---|---
**Understanding Culturally Relevant Pedagogy** | Male | Female | Male | Female

**Item 13.** PE teachers should always help African American male students to recognize and question social inequities that exist within and outside of the school environment.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 13</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>PE teachers</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.54</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.58</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Item 17.** Culturally relevant pedagogy is an approach to teaching that calls for teachers to use each student's prior knowledge and lived experiences to educate them in a holistic manner.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 17</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culturally relevant pedagogy</td>
<td>3.90</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>3.62</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Item 19.** African American males should be responsible for some of the knowledge dissemination that occurs in PE classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 19</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>African American males</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.2</td>
<td>4.40</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>4.00</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>4.25</td>
<td>0.8</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Item 22.** Culturally relevant pedagogy is a curriculum model that lends itself well to teaching African American male students self and social responsibility through cooperative learning.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 22</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Culturally relevant pedagogy</td>
<td>3.30</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.80</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>3.69</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>3.92</td>
<td>0.7</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Item 26.** Sometimes I play the role of student to allow my African American males to teach concepts, values, or skills in my PE classes.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 26</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Sometimes</td>
<td>3.50</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.4</td>
<td>3.15</td>
<td>1.1</td>
<td>2.92</td>
<td>1.2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Item 30.** In culturally relevant pedagogy, teachers use the students' lived experiences to broaden the knowledge of all students.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item 30</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
<th>M</th>
<th>SD</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>In culturally relevant pedagogy</td>
<td>3.70</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>4.20</td>
<td>0.8</td>
<td>3.85</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>4.08</td>
<td>0.5</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Table 4.5. TAAMS Descriptive Results: Understanding Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Dimension

Thirty-two teachers (80%) believed that this was a responsibility of physical education teachers to help African American male students critique social inequities within and outside of school (Item 13). However, six teachers (15%) disagreed, and two teachers (5%) were undecided about such a responsibility. On TAAMS Item 17, thirty-one teachers (77.5%) correctly agreed that culturally relevant pedagogy is an
approach to teaching that uses each student’s prior knowledge in the educational process. One teacher (2.5%) disagreed, and eight teachers (20%) were undecided about this understanding.

Additionally, thirty-three teachers (82.5%) believed that African American male students should be responsible for some of the knowledge dissemination in physical education classes (Item 19), three teachers (7.5%) disagreed with this position, and four teachers (10%) were undecided. In another statement on culturally relevant pedagogy, thirty teachers (75%) believed that this type of pedagogy allowed teachers to promote African American males’ self and social responsibility through cooperative learning (Item 22). Yet four teachers (10%) disagreed with the statement, and six teachers (15%) were undecided.

Twenty-four teachers (60%) agreed that physical educators should occasionally play the role of student to allow African American male students to teach concepts, values, or skills in physical education (Item 26). However, thirteen teachers (32.5%) did not concur with the statement, and three teachers (7.5%) were undecided. White male teachers comprised the highest percentage (n = 6; 46.2%) of teachers who disagreed with the notion of playing the role of student within physical education. Finally, most teachers (n = 31, 77.5%) correctly understood that culturally relevant pedagogy uses students’ lived experiences to broaden their knowledge of all students (Item 30), but nine teachers (22.5%) were undecided on this matter and none of the teachers were in disagreement with the statement. In summary, the female teachers tended to respond in ways that displayed a greater understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy than did the male teachers.
Importance of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Descriptive statistics for items on the teachers' responses to the TAAMS survey Items 3, 8, 20, and 27 (Importance of culturally relevant pedagogy) are in Table 4.6. Overall, male teachers tended not to ascribe to or were uncertain about the importance of teaching in a culturally relevant manner. The African American teachers tended to ascribe greater importance to implementing culturally relevant pedagogies than did the White teachers, who were uncertain as a whole. Overall, twenty-three teachers (57.5%) believed that culturally relevant pedagogy is important to the success of students due to the recognition of the importance of each student’s cultural background (Item 3), but nine teachers (22.5%) disagreed with this position, and eight teachers (20%) were undecided. White male teachers (n =5) constituted the highest percentage (55%) of disagreement with this statement, followed by White female teachers (n = 2, 22%). Twenty-nine teachers (72.5%) agreed that culturally relevant pedagogy was important to the success of African American male students because it empowers them by recognizing their culture, language, ethnicity, gender, and other variables that define student difference (Item 8); six teachers (15%) did not believe that this statement was true, and five teachers (12.5%) were undecided. Acknowledging African American historical figures and their contributions to the field of physical education and sport (Item 20) was an area that the teachers believed was important as thirty teachers (75%) agreed with this statement, but four teachers (10%) disagreed, and six teachers (15%) were undecided about this statement.
Table 4.6. TAAMS Descriptive Results: Importance of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy Dimension

Moreover, twenty-six teachers (65%) claimed to have understood the importance of teaching in a culturally relevant manner, whereas nine teachers (22.5%) had a lack of understanding on the importance of this concept, and five teachers (12.5%) were undecided as to whether or not they should teach in a culturally relevant manner (Item 27); White male ($n = 4$; 44%) and Black male ($n = 4$; 44%) teachers were responsible for the highest percentage among participants who disagreed with the aforementioned statement. Also, two teachers among the White Black males were unsure about the importance of teaching in a culturally relevant manner.
Chapter 5: Summary, Discussion, Recommendations, and Conclusions

This chapter is comprised of five major sections. First, the researcher summarizes the study’s method and results. Second, mindful of the research questions, the researcher discusses the findings as interpretable within the theoretical framework of culturally relevant pedagogy and the extant literature in this area. Third, implications of the findings are articulated with recommendations for teacher educators and physical education teachers. Fourth, recommendations for future research are identified. Finally, conclusions are presented.

Summary

The purpose of this study was to analyze high school physical education teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally relevant pedagogy and teaching African American males within urban high schools. The participants were 40 certified physical education teachers randomly sampled from two large urban high schools in Ohio. These participants were 23 (57.5%) men and 17 (42.5%) women. Most of them \( n = 25 \) were self-identified as White (62.5%) and there were 15 Black (37.5%) participants as well.

The research design was descriptive survey (Fraenkel & Wallen, 1990) and data were collected with a demographic questionnaire and the Teachers’ Attitudes about African American Male Students survey scale. On the scale, the 40 physical educators expressed understandings and attitudes about teaching African American male students in
regards to: (a) culture and communities; (b) knowledge, learning, and performance; (c) establishing social relationships in and beyond the physical education setting; (d) the importance of using culturally relevant pedagogies; and (e) understanding culturally relevant pedagogies. An initial ANCOVA test was conducted and indicated that the teachers' attitudes and understandings did not differ on the total TAAMS scale (i.e., all five scale dimensions combined) as a function of their ethnicity or years of experience teaching. However ANCOVA revealed a significant difference in responses on the total scale as a function of the participants' gender. The female teachers had a higher mean score on the total scale than did the male teachers. Mostly both groups held favorable attitudes toward teaching African American male students. Moreover the female teachers tended to have a better understanding about the conception of culturally relevant pedagogy than did the male teachers. Further the Black teachers tended to ascribe higher importance to culturally relevant praxis than did the White teachers, particularly in comparison to the White male teachers.

Specific to the TAAMS scale’s five dimensions and although the Black and White physical educators’ attitudes varied, they tended to express favorable attitudes toward the cultures and communities of African American males and their families. For example, most (85%) teachers agreed that time should be spent in becoming more knowledgeable about aspects of the cultures of African American students. On the scale's dimension of knowledge, learning, and performance, the female teachers held slightly more favorable attitudes about African American male students than the male teachers. Likewise, the Black physical educators held slightly more favorable attitudes overall about African American male students than did their White colleagues. Specific to the dimension of
establishing relationships, ninety-eight percent of the teachers believed that the school-related success or failure of African American male students was largely influenced by their relationships with teachers. The teachers (90%) also mostly believed that they could establish positive relationships with African American male students. Results on the last two dimensions of teachers' (a) understanding, and (b) attitudes about the importance of implementing culturally relevant pedagogy, indicate overall that they lacked adequate understandings, and were unsure about the importance of using culturally relevant pedagogies in teaching African American male students in physical education programs at urban schools. Interestingly, the female physical educators had a greater understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy than did the male teachers sampled. Similarly, the Black physical educators ascribed greater importance to teaching in culturally relevant ways than did their White colleagues, but they did not have a better understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy. The study's findings and interpretations of those findings are discussed in greater detail in the next section of this chapter.

Discussion

Cultures and Communities

The high school physical educators sampled overwhelmingly agreed that time should be spent on becoming more knowledgeable about aspects of race and culture of African American male students. Additionally, most of these physical educators agreed that the culture of African American male students was important and should not be dismissed or absent during their educational experiences. This attitude pertaining to the importance of culture for students is aligned with the tenet of cultural competence within the theoretical framework of culturally relevant pedagogy. It is important that students be
allowed to remain true to their cultural heritages while matriculating through schools (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). The current researcher agrees with this positioning given that the extant literature pertaining to the importance of and knowledge acquisition of various cultures confirms that it improves the academic outcomes of all students. To be an effective physical educator in the present-day US, it is imperative to attain a positive attitude towards diverse cultures (Torrey & Ashy, 1997). Since teachers apply knowledge that has been received in teacher training programs and put this knowledge into practice, it is within reason to believe that teachers who expand their multicultural knowledge base can take steps to enhance the academic success of students who occupy current classrooms. However there is reason to believe that most teachers are not well prepared to teach in schools where multiple cultures exist (Columna, Foley, & Lytle, 2010). Cities in Crisis 2009 - Closing the Graduation Gap reported that most teachers and principals believe that they were not very prepared or not prepared at all to teach the students at their schools (Swanson 2009).

As the landscape of US schools continues to change at historical rates, teachers must be prepared to teach a diversity of students (Columna et al., 2010; Torrey & Ashy, 1997), which requires understanding various cultures. Ladson-Billings (1995b) reiterated this sentiment stating that gains in knowledge made about the culture of students allows teachers to become culturally sensitive, a necessity for teaching all students. Respect for nuances in all cultures is mandatory for successful pedagogical practices (Rodriguez & Sjostrom, 1995). Additionally, Columna et al. (2010) stated that teachers must become culturally competent in order to ensure equitable educational opportunities for all students. Cultural competence involves the consistent act of respecting and valuing the
cultural differences that each student brings to the academic setting (Columna et al., 2010). With that, culturally responsive teaching has become a necessity within the schools of today (Ladson-Billings, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 200, 2006).

It is important that physical education teachers display an attitude that reflects the underpinnings of culturally relevant pedagogy, as teachers who strive for cultural relevance believe that they are members of the communities in which they practice their pedagogical skills (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). The current researcher stresses the importance of gaining a greater understanding of the community of African American students. Greater understanding of the communities of African American male students is a prerequisite to successful teaching and developing an attitude conducive to their success (Torrey & Ashy, 1997). This in turn will afford African American male students greater chances to secure better futures. Communities whose citizens have engaged in quality educational experiences will be better positioned to attain higher qualities of life (Swanson, 2009). With that, school personnel, including physical education teachers, must make efforts to acquire and maintain relationships with the communities in which they reside. Ladson-Billings (1995b) reiterated that culturally relevant teachers saw themselves as integral components of the community of their students; this integration into the community would allow students and teachers to forge relationships that bode well for positive academic outcomes for all students, including African American male students. Once relationships are forged with the members of the school’s community, there can be a greater understanding of the needs of the students, thereby increasing their educational resilience and decreasing negative academic outcomes (Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010). Moreover, biases and prejudice views can be eliminated as teachers,
including physical education teachers, become cognizant of the communities of African American students (Banks, 1994).

Indeed, collaborative efforts between schools and communities are necessary to enhance the academic success of all students, including African American male students. The literature suggests that greater collaborative efforts with the community of African American males can lead to enhanced social relations, higher achievement, and positive academic progress (Koonce & Harper, 2005; Ladson-Billings 1995b). Such efforts may also increase the opportunities to attain the social capital necessary to meet and maintain these goals (Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010). In addition, Moore-Thomas and Day-Vines (2010) stated that reciprocity is achieved in that schools are better able to gain the “cultural skills and insights they need to fully engage in ways that most benefit students and lead to quality educational experiences” (p.53). With that, it is extremely important to focus on the benefits of teachers gaining a greater understanding of students as well as students gaining an understanding of their peers (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Therefore, it is imperative that teachers view the culture and communities of African American male students with favorable attitudes.

*Knowledge, Learning, and Performance*

In general the forty teachers sampled agreed that African American male students were capable of learning and able to lead healthy lives despite their familial or economic situations. This finding was in conjunction with the fact that many of the teachers (75%) believed that what happens in the physical education matters. These results speak to the finding that the teachers had positive attitudes about their students’ capabilities. This positive outlook, this attitude, is important as teachers who have such attitudes are more
prone to teach in culturally relevant ways. Though the data revealed such positive attitudes, only 55% of the teachers surveyed agreed that African American male students come to class with knowledge of being physically educated. This view of African American males leaves room for educating them through culturally relevant praxis toward becoming physically educated citizens. This view in connection with the previous finding suggests that although the teachers held mostly positive attitudes about African American male students they also believed that such students lacked knowledge about living physically educated lifestyles. In contrast and less likely, this attitude could suggest also that the teachers may not believe that their students are capable of being successful in physical education. Teachers of students of various cultures must believe that all students can succeed, especially those teachers of African American students, and especially African American males. It is important to note that African American students have lacked the educational achievement levels of their White peers since the inception of integrated schools (Young, Wright, & Laster, 2005). This lack of educational achievement may cause teachers to view African American students from a deficit model perspective (DeSensi, 1995), and they may not create needed opportunities for those students to be highly involved in class discourse, including leadership opportunities. Void of culturally relevant praxis in schools, for example, health concerns associated with physical inactivity of African American youths will continue to mount (Kriska, 2000; McKenzie, 2003; USDHHS, 1999).

Allowing all students the opportunity to lead lesson activities can lead to students becoming more willing to participate in future lessons and enhance cultural sensitivity among the class (Sparks et al., 1996). Torrey and Ashy (1997) stated that opportunities to
lead lesson activities in physical education should be made available to all students regardless of their cultural background. With opportunities to lead, teachers may become more aware of the manner in which students learn within the physical education setting. Also, Ladson-Billings (1995b) asserted that allowing students opportunities to lead classroom ventures will enhance student-teacher and peer relationships. Mutual respect for each individual in the classroom is bolstered and reciprocity is gained as each person learns from and about each other.

Less than half (40%) of the physical education teachers surveyed reported that they do not believe in or were undecided about the need to use multiple forms of student evaluations. This may mean that these teachers did not have a great understanding of the many ways that students become knowledgeable. Importantly, teachers must come to the realization that this practice falls short of the framework of practicing culturally relevant pedagogy. All school personnel, including physical education, must come to realize that their actions, including pedagogical and testing practices, are vital to the achievement of African American students (Moore-Thomas & Day-Vines, 2010). All teachers, including physical education teachers, must realize that students learn in various ways (Young, Wright, & Laster, 2005), meaning that teachers must be equipped to help students to learn and to assess them in various ways (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). In short, “the nature of learning, how it is assessed, and the skills taught are critical to the educational and social success of African American males” (Donnor & Shockley, 2010, p. 44). Additionally, as teachers display cultural sensitivity (e.g., allowing various students to lead activities, testing in multiple ways), students as well as teachers will learn to accept cultural differences, allowing students to progress holistically (Torrey & Ashy, 1997).
These actions are involved in multicultural education which allow for and encourage the participation of various cultures in the educational process (Birkel, 2000; Chepyator-Thompson, You, & Russell, 2000; Payne & Welsh, 2000).

In addition to cultural sensitivity, teachers must continue to strive at becoming culturally competent. Columna et al. (2010) asserted that culturally competent teachers subscribe to “a set of congruent behaviors and attitudes that come together in a system, agency, or among professionals that enable them to work effectively in cross-cultural situations” (p. 298). Because many teachers will begin their careers in schools whose students are culturally, ethnically, and economically different from themselves (NCES, 2003), it is important that teachers make concerted efforts to become culturally competent. Cultural competence is a desirable quality of effective and socially just PETE teacher candidates and practicing physical educators. (Columna et al., 2010; Hodge et al., 2012). Too often, teachers mistake cultural competence as a way to learn about other students and neglect to learn about themselves (DeSensi, 1995). The failure to engage in introspection results in teachers being unaware of the biases that they have within. DeSensi (1995) reiterated this point stating that culturally competent teachers eventually are aware of personal bias as well as the importance of diversity in their pedagogical practice.

A finding of concern brought forth by the current study is that half of the teachers surveyed believed that there are negative stereotypes associated with African American males, leaving them feeling hopeless in trying to help them. This belief reiterates the fact that teachers as change agents need to become more knowledgeable about various cultures to counter stereotypic views about African American males (Hodge et al.,
A teacher’s acceptance of any negative stereotypic beliefs denotes a lack of connectedness between the teacher and African American students, as identified in the discourse of culturally relevant teaching. Plausibly, teacher preparation programs could play a vital role in the reduction or even elimination of stereotypes that teachers may take into the physical education context (Harrison & Lawrence, 2004; Hodge et al., 2008a). Irwin (1999) stated that when diversity training is withheld in teacher training programs, there is a greater possibility that teachers leaving these programs will have stereotypical views of students who are not like them. When teachers internalize stereotypic views about certain students, their pedagogical practices become compromised and do not benefit all students. Kozol (2005) stated that such stereotypical beliefs and biases can impact teaching in a profound way and likened this type of instruction to educational apartheid. To the contrary, it is imperative that teachers become culturally competent and do away with preconceived stereotypes (Hodge et al., 2008a; Meaney, Bohler, Kopf, Hernandez, & Scott, 2008).

Establishing Social Relationships

Pertaining to the third research question, the teachers in this study believed that they could have a positive effect on the lives of African American male students. They believed that forging positive social relationships would have a positive impact on the success of African American male students. Teachers who strive to use culturally relevant pedagogy effectively understand that educational success, cultural competence, and the critical consciousness of students, especially African Americans, can hinge on positive student-teacher relationships (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). It is very beneficial, and often necessary, that African American male students encounter positive student-teacher
relationships. Decker, Dona, and Christenson (2007) stated that as student-teacher relationships are enhanced, students showed gains in socially acceptable behaviors, increased engagement in class activities, and educational outcomes. It is reasonable to suggest that establishing positive relationships with African American male students will help to reduce negative educational outcomes such as absenteeism, and high dropout and suspension rates. This may also lead to African American male students’ improved focus and effort, which in-turn may help improve scores on class assignments and standardized tests (Cooper & Jordan, 2003). However, if educational failings are not overcome, African American males are more apt to fall further behind and succumb to social misfortunes such as unemployment and poverty, which are common to many urban communities (Cooper & Jordan, 2003). It is reasonable to believe that the student-teacher relationship is one of the most significant social elements in ensuring the educational success of African American males (Cooper & Jordan, 2003). Teachers, including high school physical education teachers, can play a pivotal role in the nurturing and supporting of students as well as addressing and adhering to their needs (Cooper & Jordan, 2003). Cooper and Jordan (2003) stated that such personal relationships can create a culture within the school, creating an environment that would positively affect the academic success of African American students, including males. Teachers who strive to use culturally relevant pedagogies effectively must interact with African American male students in affirming ways as they seek to offset negative educational outcomes and images within the school. This will do much to help to bridge the gap between school personnel and African American male students (Cooper & Jordan, 2003).
With survey research, it is important to phrase questions in an appropriate manner in addition to having no ambiguity so that participants easily understand the questions (Gay, Mills, & Airasian, 2006). Although the scale underwent content validation, in hindsight it is evident that Item 24 on the TAAMS survey scale was confounded and worded rather ambiguously. Item 24 reads, “African American males are my top students in physical education; therefore, I always look forward to having them in my classes.” Nearly half (45%) of the teachers’ responses to that statement indicated two separate issues: African American males were not the top students in their physical education programs and the teachers did not look forward to having them in classes. As a result, interpretation of this finding is dubious and speculative at best. For future use of the TAAMS survey scale, it is imperative that the researcher(s) either revises Item 24 for greater clarity or eliminates it.

Understanding Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

As for their understanding about culturally relevant pedagogy, most of the teachers displayed understandings that are cause for concern. These veteran physical education teachers demonstrated a general lack of knowledge pertaining to the meaning and conceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy. Most of the teachers incorrectly assessed this teaching approach as one that focused on behavior management strategies. This finding is consistent with the literature in that most teachers do not have a good understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy and its impact on students and their success (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). The conceptual framework of culturally relevant pedagogy advocates the elements of academic success, cultural competence, and sociopolitical consciousness. Additionally, it is an approach to teaching that “helps
students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenges inequities that schools [and other institutions] perpetuate” (Ladson-Billings, 1995b, p. 469). Ladson-Billings (1995b) described culturally relevant pedagogy as a student-centered “theoretical model that not only addresses student achievement but also helps students to accept and affirm their cultural identity while developing critical perspectives that challenge inequities that schools [and other institutions] perpetuate” (p. 469); most of the teachers in this current study failed to indicate this focus correctly. All teachers must understand that when culturally relevant teaching does not occur, cultural aversion does occur and the needs of at least some students are being neglected (Irvine, 1990); in particular, physical educators must take responsibility for ensuring that all students are welcomed and appreciated within their programs, regardless of their socio-cultural backgrounds. The fact that the physical education teachers surveyed were not aware of and not teaching in culturally relevant ways may be due to their lack of preparation and understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy.

Culturally relevant teachers have the intrinsic drive to ensure that they have exhausted all resources in order to attain academic success for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). This theoretical underpinning of culturally relevancy exhibits a quality that must be present in all teachers and must be exhibited in the pedagogical practices of all teachers, including physical education teachers. Because culturally relevant approaches to teaching have not been fully understood or practiced within numerous US schools of today, students, particularly African American males, are not able to reap the benefits of such teaching (Davis, Ramahlo, Beyerbach, & London, 2008).
Culturally relevant teaching rests on three propositions, wherein students must (a) have educational success, (b) develop cultural competence, and they (c) develop a sociopolitical and critical consciousness. Experiencing educational success requires students to develop the skills (e.g., literacy, numeracy, health wise physical activity behaviors) necessary to become positive contributors within the world in which we live (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Teachers must develop their educational practices in a manner that allow the strengths of all students to come to the forefront where they experience positive educational gains (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). In physical education, this should include learning about the importance of African Americans engaging in regular moderate to vigorous physical activity for healthy living, for example.

Developing and maintaining cultural competence allows students to not feel the need to abandon their culture or have a sense of exclusion within schools (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Students, including African American male students, must be able to feel as if the culture that they bring into the school setting has relevance (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Finally, teachers must help students to develop a critical consciousness by helping them to create “a broader sociopolitical consciousness that allows them to critique the cultural norms, mores, values, and institutions that produce and maintain social inequities” (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, p. 162). By developing this type of socially just consciousness, students will be able to and feel comfortable with speaking out against inequities that exist in all facets of society, including the schools which they attend. In physical education, a sociopolitical consciousness might mean, for example, speaking out against race-based stereotypic views about African Americans and athletic versus intellectual capabilities (Hodge et al., 2008a, 2008b, 2008c; Hodge et al., 2012). A
teacher’s failure to inform students about such issues is paramount to educational malpractice. It means continuing to advantage some students, usually White males, while other students, typically African American and other students of color are marginalized and placed at a disadvantage in our schools and society at-large. Teachers who strive to use culturally relevant pedagogy effectively should help develop and affirm African American male students’ self-esteem, self-respect, and social consciousness (Hodge et al., 2008a; Hodge et al., 2012). Doing so will serve to help empower such students (Ladson-Billings, 1995a).

Importance of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy

Specific to the findings about teaching African American males at urban high schools, the Black teachers tended to ascribe more importance to the position that they need to instruct in culturally relevant ways than did the White teachers. White male teachers devalued, that is, they disagreed with the stated importance of culturally relevant pedagogy in teaching African American male students. This finding is of concern as the teachers surveyed taught in urban schools with mostly African American and other students of color who shared little in common with them economically, socially, and culturally (Haberman, 1999; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). Teachers who are committed to teaching in culturally relevant ways view their pedagogical practice as an art form and they are willing to change to meet the needs of various students rather than remaining standardized (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Important too, teachers who strive to use culturally relevant pedagogies effectively must give back to the communities from where their students come by giving students a complete educational experience that will serve them well as they move into society (Ladson-Billings, 1995b).
When teachers come to realize the need to instruct in culturally relevant ways, schools will be able to reduce, if not eliminate, the “educational debt” (Ladson-Billings, 2006) owed to students of color. Within this educational debt, Ladson-Billings (2006) referred to the comparisons between students of color and White students and the gaps in standardized test scores, dropout and expulsion rates, advanced placement classes, and admission to postsecondary institutions which favor White students. When teachers are not prepared to teach in ways that value the cultures of all students, teachers display a biased approach to instruction, favoring or adhering to the needs of some students and neglecting others (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, Mavi & Sharpe, 2000). With such neglect, students tend to disengage in class activities. However, culturally relevant pedagogies might be used to engage students who attend urban schools as these students are increasingly disengaged (Wright, Li, & Ding, 2007). When students sense most any type of preferential treatment in the learning environment and they start to disengage, their participation within the environment is affected in negative ways. This can potentially lead to educational disinterest and eventual underachievement, or even school failure (Mavi & Sharpe, 2000).

**Recommendations for Teachers and Teacher Educators**

In light of the current study's findings, which indicate that high school physical education teachers may not fully understand conceptions, nor grasp the importance of culturally relevant pedagogy, an important recommendation is that such teachers must engage in introspective self-reflections about their beliefs in teaching African American males. Further, they must experience relevant professional development training. What's more, PETE programs must re-examine curricular offerings to ensure that teacher
candidates are prepared to teach in socially just and culturally relevant ways (Burden et al., 2004; Hodge et al., 2012; Timken & Watson, 2010).

In order to implement culturally relevant practices effectively, physical education teacher candidates as well practicing teachers must engage in reflective or self-awareness activities (Hodge et al., 2003; Tsangaridou & O’Sullivan, 1994, 1997). There must be emphasis placed on the importance of a teacher’s pedagogical practices and the role this plays in the current and future success of students. Teachers, including physical education teachers, must display caring attitudes that move beyond affection and achieve a greater sense of commitment to their profession and practice (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Teachers must view themselves as essential cogs to student success from the moment they enter each classroom. Teachers who strive to use culturally relevant pedagogies effectively see themselves as vital to the current educational success of students while simultaneously investing in their future success (Ladson-Billings, 1995b).

In order for teachers to move toward more culturally relevant pedagogies, teachers must be aware of their feelings as they relate to their importance to the profession as well as their feelings towards students from diverse backgrounds. While teachers in the current study reported that it was important for African American male students not to abandon their culture upon entrance into schools, few teachers seemed to believe this wholeheartedly as many reported a lack of understanding of culturally relevant pedagogy. Student success need not include the abandonment of culture, but rather, teachers should include aspects of culture within the activities of the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Additionally, teachers in the current study reported that they believed that there was only so much that African American male students would learn and the stereotypes associated
with these students was detrimental to their learning. This attitude is in direct contrast to culturally relevant teaching as culturally relevant teachers hold to the notion that all students are capable of learning and attaining success (Ladson-Billings, 1995b). Teachers must make every effort to ensure that these types of attitudes are confronted and done away with to ensure equitable opportunities for all; teachers need to develop and exhibit passionate, caring attitudes towards all their students (Morrison, Robbins, & Rose, 2008).

Without self-awareness, teachers may begin or continue to teach physical education from an ethnocentric perspective (Burden et al., 2004). In such cases, the pedagogical practices of these teachers will be limited due to their limited knowledge, interactions and relationships, and experiences in working with a diversity of students (Hodge, 2003). Self-awareness activities are necessary to address such concerns as these activities allow for teachers to be “present” (Rodgers & Raider-Roth, 2006, p. 284) when teaching, including in physical education settings. Rodgers and Raider-Roth (2006) stated that a teacher is present when “wide awake to one’s self, to one’s students and to their learning in such a way that learning is served through skillful and compassionate analysis and access to both subject matter knowledge and pedagogical strategies” (p. 284). Thus, becoming present suggests that teachers would become agents of change and teach in culturally relevant ways.

Self-reflective journaling is one such method that allows teacher candidates and practicing teachers to become more aware of their biases, fears, and the effects of their practices within physical education (Hodge et al., 2003; Schon, 1987; Tsangaridou & O’Sullivan, 1994). It is necessary for teacher candidates and practicing teachers to engage in self-reflective praxis to become aware of the beliefs and assumptions they may have of
themselves as well as their students (Hodge et al., 2003; Kyles & Olafson, 2008; Stanley, 1995). Ladson-Billings (2000) also wrote about teachers writing autobiographies as ways to become more self-aware. Hollins (1990) commented that autobiographies are ways in which teachers can be re-socialized and gain a different view of selves in society. This altered viewpoint is necessary being that the society in which we live is ever-changing.

In addition to engaging in self-awareness activities, teachers must take part in high quality professional development (Torff & Byrnes, 2011). Professional development opportunities must be offered in order to aid in the development or transformation of the current pedagogical practices of most physical education teachers (Kulinna, McCaughtry, Martin, Cothran, & Faust, 2008). However, many physical educators may participate in professional development activities that are not “powerful enough, specific enough, or sustained enough to alter the culture of the classroom and school” (Fullman, 2007, p. 35). To guard against this type of inadequacy, professional development activities should be offered persistently throughout the academic year, should be relevant to specific fields of study, and should be constructed for use in everyday activities of schools (Garet, Porter, Desimone, Birman, & Yoon, 2001; Torff & Byrnes, 2011). Practicing physical educators must be exposed to socially just and culturally relevant ideas and strategies to advance their teaching efficacy (Timken & Watson, 2010). They must seek professional development opportunities that offer innovative pedagogical practices and enhance their ability to work in culturally relevant ways with the diverse student populations that exists within schools. Professional development usually occurs in large group, after-school settings, but, mentoring using a mentor-protégé relationship, has also been used as a professional development approach (Kulinna et al., 2008). In either approach, it is
important that teachers have a voice in the professional development activities that are offered (Kulinna et al., 2008). With their input, teachers will be able to address concerns that will benefit them and as they learn new practices (e.g., culturally relevant pedagogy) to improve the educational experiences of all students.

Liken to practicing teachers engaging in self-reflections and relevant professional development, PETE programs must do more to properly prepare teacher candidates for diverse school settings (Columna et al., 2010; Hodge et al., 2003). PETE programs curricular should be infused with diversity training (Burden et al., 2004). An infusion approach would enhance the cultural sensitivity of teacher educators as well as teacher candidates (LeRoux, 2001). Far too often teacher preparation programs use one or two classes to expose teacher candidates to aspects of multiculturalism (Burden et al., 2004; Ladson-Billings, 2000). With obvious insufficiencies of this method, PETE programs should look to enhance their programmatic efforts to ensure intercultural understanding and sensitivity (Burden et al., 2004).

The dissemination of multicultural knowledge is an important step in properly equipping teacher candidates to be able to instruct all students. Also, this step would help to alleviate a persistent problem that has been prevalent in the educational field: that is, too many teachers who lack an understanding of culture attempting to teach students from various cultures (Morrison et al., 2008). Knowledge of various cultures is a necessity in places where multiple cultures exist in order to help all parties involved (Outley & Witt, 2006). Educators, including physical educators, should seek to gain multicultural knowledge and communicate the positive cultural aspects of all students and instruct in a manner that will allow all students opportunities to attain academic
success (Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Shujaa, 1994). In addition to gaining multicultural knowledge, teacher candidates should have field experiences where they work with a multiplicity of students from diverse cultures (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge et al., 2003; O’Bryant et al., 2000; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). Using the conceptions of culturally relevant pedagogy to work with a multiplicity of such students will enhance the pedagogical practices of physical education teachers (Columna et al., 2010). Requiring teacher candidates to engage in field experiences with diverse student groups will allow them to better understand the intricacies of urban schools and communities and be able to better meet the needs of students within these communities (Ladson-Billings, 2000).

Additionally, physical education teacher educators must realize the important role they play in changing the viewpoints of teacher candidates (Burden et al., 2004). Further teacher educators must make the necessary steps to include “diversity training that promotes multicultural, multiethnic, and disability awareness throughout the curriculum” (Burden et al., 2004, p. 177).

Importantly, Ladson-Billings (2000) outlined specific strategies for teacher education programs in order to prepare teachers who implement culturally relevant pedagogies. First, teachers should engage in the process of writing autobiographies. With this, teachers can “consciously re-experience their own subjectivity when they recognize similar or different outlooks and experiences” (King & Ladson-Billings, 1990, p. 26). This process helps teacher candidates to reflect during their coursework as well as during field experience (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Second, Ladson-Billings (2000) suggested that field experiences be restructured so that teacher candidates gain an opportunity to work with students from various cultures. Many times, teacher candidates are assigned field
placements that lack diverse student populations and this type of placement can be a hindrance to their ability to work in other types of settings. Third, Ladson-Billings (2000) suggested that teacher candidates become familiar with situated or culturally specific pedagogies. This type of pedagogy helps the teacher candidate to make connections between the home culture of the student and the culture that exists within the school (Ladson-Billings, 2000). Finally, teacher candidates must have access to practicing teachers who have experienced success in teaching diverse student groups (e.g., African American males). Ladson-Billings (2000) stated that teacher candidates should be able to visit classroom experts in order to become teachers who are competent and willing to implement culturally relevant pedagogies. These culturally competent pedagogues should function under the belief that all students can attain academic success, become culturally competent, and develop a sociopolitical consciousness.

Ladson-Billings (2000) asserted that, ideally, teacher education programs must take steps to eliminate all forms of racism so that teachers present equitable and socially just pedagogical practices. Further she suggests that as racism is a learned mindset, which is manifested in adverse behaviors, teacher educators should take steps to ensure that teacher candidates unlearn it. Lastly, PETE programs need to more actively seek, admit and retain a larger pool of African American teacher candidates who in-turn will increase the African American teacher workforce (Burden et al., 2004).

**Recommendations for Future Research**

Results of the current study further confirm the need for additional research to gain a greater understanding of the attitudes of high school physical education teachers about culturally relevant pedagogies and teaching African American male students at urban
high schools. These studies are necessary in order to ensure equitable practices are present in schools of today. Studies need to be conducted pertaining to in-service physical education teachers and their effectiveness at implementing culturally relevant pedagogies; research needs to be conducted regarding teachers who are deemed to effectively use culturally relevant pedagogies and how they do so. Ladson-Billings (1994) discussed the efforts of eight teachers and their determination to teach their students in a culturally relevant manner. Similar studies should be conducted in physical education to understand the various aspects that comprise cultural relevancy (e.g., content, lesson activities, and student evaluations) in teaching physical education.

Additionally, studies need to be conducted that further investigate teachers' attitudes and understandings about teaching African American students, and socially just pedagogies as a function of their professional preparation, and gender, cultural, or racial differences. In the current study, for instance, the female teachers tended to have a greater understanding of culturally relevant practices than did the male physical education teachers. Moreover, the African American teachers tended to ascribe greater importance to culturally relevant practices than did their White colleagues, particularly White males. Devaluing of culturally relevant pedagogies is particularly troubling given the composition of the US teacher workforce. It is critically important that all teachers reach a greater understanding and come to know the importance of this student empowering approach (Ladson-Billings, 1990, 1992, 1994, 1995a, 1995b, 2000, 2006; Timken & Watson, 2010).

Future research also needs to be conducted on professional development training available to practicing teachers. For example, longitudinal studies that evaluate the
effectiveness of professional development workshops focused on the implementation of culturally relevant practices should be an area of inquiry. Properly structured workshops that help physical education teachers gain a greater understanding of diverse cultures and communities, and how best to establish positive relationships, as well the implementation of culturally relevant practices, are necessary for helping African American male students to succeed in schools and beyond.

Specific to PETE teacher candidates, future studies need to be conducted pertaining to the attitudes of teacher candidates toward implementing culturally relevant pedagogy in physical education. This area of inquiry can also examine gender, cultural and/or racial differences among teacher candidates and their beliefs about teaching African American male students and the use of culturally relevant pedagogies to do so. Although teacher candidates tend to value diversity, most of them have minimal understanding about how to implement strategies that help all students (Stanley, 1997). As such, studies should be undertaken that investigate teacher candidates and use of culturally relevant practices during field placements. Diverse placements (i.e., a mix of urban, rural, and suburban schools) should allow teacher candidates to engage in the types of pedagogical exercises that will serve today's diverse student populations. With schools in the US continuing to become more diverse, culturally relevant and inclusive practices in physical education are of the utmost importance (Columna et al., 2010; Hodge et al., 2012).

Investigations should also be conducted pertaining to the attitudes of teacher educators towards the infusion of multicultural content throughout PETE programs. Columna et al. (2010) stated that research should also be done to gain a greater understanding of how to increase competency levels of teachers pertaining to
implementing culturally relevant practices. Teacher education programs can and should offer great opportunities to enhance the understanding of culturally relevant pedagogical practices and can play a pivotal role in this process. There should also be studies that detail the steps that are necessary in implementing aspects of multiculturalism and culturally relevant practices into PETE programs. Programmatic changes are often challenging (LeRoux, 2001); however, the need to address the concerns of students should help teacher educators to meet these challenges.

**Conclusions**

The attitudes and pedagogical practices of teachers are critically important to establishing positive and inclusive cultures within the classroom (Columna et al., 2010). When teachers have little to no exposure to culturally relevant pedagogies, they are much less likely to embrace student diversity in their schools and tend to largely ignore or view the various cultures that exist within schools as problematic (Reese & Johnson, 1988) and/or difficult (Griffin, 1985). Cothran and Ennis (1999) stated that the educational dilemmas (e.g., maintaining identity, engagement) such as not practicing culturally relevant pedagogies in physical education will endure until an understanding and acceptance of various cultures occurs. To ensure the practice of culturally relevant pedagogies in today’s schools, teacher education programs must communicate the importance of educating all students.

Moreover, teacher preparation programs must help prepare students with a “more thorough knowledge of specific cultures of different ethnic groups, how they affect learning behaviors, and how classroom interactions and instruction can be changed to embrace these differences” (Gay, 2002b, p. 114). To do so, teacher educators must seek
to change the traditional programmatic approaches of PETE programs, an ongoing dilemma for decades. Locke (1995) stated that “despite the attempts of teacher education to infuse new methods and materials into the traditional physical education curriculum, it has remained essentially unchanged in the last twenty years” (p. 219). Arguably when teacher education programs neglect, ignore or marginalize the cultural diversity that exists within schools (e.g., not providing multicultural knowledge, lack of field placements in culturally diverse settings), teacher candidates are more likely to enter schools with stereotypical views of students (Irwin, 1999).

Both PETE teacher candidates and practicing in-service teachers must make efforts to eliminate inequitable pedagogical practices; this knowledge starts with greater self-awareness. Simply stated, teachers must come to know themselves, including becoming aware of personal bias (DeSensi, 1995). Such a heightened awareness may lead teachers to come to know the importance of considering student diversity to inform their pedagogical practices. Positive attitudes about student diversity and teaching in culturally responsive ways are essential to teaching physical education (Torrey & Ashy, 1997). Lastly, teachers should strive to acquire the knowledge and pedagogical skillfulness required to use culturally relevant pedagogies effectively. Teaching is a dynamic process (Morrison et al., 2008) as such teachers must always seek ways to enhance their practice.
References


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Schouten, F. (2004, April 28). Town that resisted in ’59 tries to right a wrong: VA county shut schools rather than desegregate. *USA Today,* p. 5D.


Appendix A

Teacher’s Attitudes about African American Male Students

The purpose of this study is to analyze high school physical education teachers’ attitudes and understandings about culturally-relevant pedagogy and teaching African American male students within urban school districts.

Responses to the questions included in the survey may cause a certain level of uneasiness or discomfort. However, the responses that you give for the attached questionnaire will only be viewed by the co-investigator of the study. Upon receiving the mailed questionnaire, the data will be locked away at the private residence of the co-investigator.

You are not required to take part in this project but completion of the questionnaire will alert the researchers of your consent to participate. Although completion of this questionnaire is voluntary, this is part of a very important research project. Therefore, your participation in this process will be greatly appreciated. If you choose to participate in this study, you may skip individual questions and may stop at any time without penalty. However, with your input, valuable knowledge will be added to the field of education, including physical education, on how to better serve the African American male population. The questionnaire will only take 20-30 minutes to complete.

There is a small risk of breach of confidentiality but all efforts will be made to keep [specify what will be kept confidential, e.g. “everything you tell me] in the strictest confidentiality. I will not link your name to anything you say in the text of my dissertation or any other publications. If you are willing to participate, please fill out the survey and return it to the co-investigator in the self-addressed stamped that has been provided.

For questions, concerns, complaints, or if you feel as if you have been harmed as a result of taking part in this study, you may contact Samuel R. Hodge @ hodge.14@osu.edu

For questions about your rights as a participant in this study or to discuss study-related concerns or complaints with someone who is not part of the research team, you may contact Ms. Sandra Meadows in the Office of Responsible Research Practices at 1-800-678-6251.
Please fill in all information.

AGE: ___________ (years)

Gender: Male __________ Female __________

ETHNIC/CULTURAL BACKGROUND _________________________________

CITY IN WHICH YOU TEACH: (Circle One)

    Cleveland      Columbus       Dayton       Akron

GRADE LEVEL(S)/SUBJECT(S) THAT YOU TEACH:
    _________________________________

YEARS OF TEACHING EXPERIENCE IN PHYSICAL EDUCATION:________

PLEASE LIST COLLEGE(S) YOU ATTENDED AND DEGREE EARNED AT
THE COLLEGE (PLEASE WRITE THE NAME OF THE COLLEGE; e.g., Ohio State
University): ______________________________________________
                      _________________________________

PHYSICAL EDUCATION TEACHING-CERTIFICATE GRANTING
INSTITUTION

                      _________________________________

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Directions

In this survey, I would like you to tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with the following statements. There is no right or wrong answer. Your opinions are what matter. Please take your time and answer each of the questions to the best of your ability. This survey is applicable to African American male students only.

Each question is followed by five choices. Draw a circle around the letter corresponding to your choice. Mark only one letter for each statement. Key points to keep in mind:

(a) Answer every question, even if it doesn't seem to apply to you very well.

(b) Answer what is true for you as honestly as you can. Please do not circle something because it seems like the "right thing to say."

(c) Circle your answer to each of the questions.
Teacher Attitudes about African American Male Students (TAAMS) Survey
(Collins & Hodge, 2011)

1. All African American male students are capable of learning physical education (PE).

2. The parents or legal guardians of African American male students are often a barrier to these students learning in PE. (Negatively phrased)

3. Culturally relevant pedagogy and curriculum are really important to the success of teachers because it recognizes the importance of students’ cultural backgrounds.

4. Teachers should focus their efforts on delivering high-quality teaching and not waste time becoming knowledgeable about the racial and cultural backgrounds of African American male students. (Negatively phrased)

5. African American male students do not come to PE with very much knowledge about being a physically educated person. (Negatively phrased)

6. African American male students fail because their culture is so different from that which exists in the schools. (Negatively phrased)

7. African American male students can learn to live healthy even if they come from less fortunate economic backgrounds.

8. Culturally relevant pedagogy is important to the success of African American male students because it empowers them by recognizing their cultures, languages, ethnicities, gender, and other variables that define student difference.

9. In PE, the health-related fitness levels of African American male students must be measured in more ways than standardized testing (e.g., AAHPERD Physical Best, Fitnessgram).

10. In order to be successful in the PE, African American male students often have to give up some parts of their culture. (Negatively phrased)

11. The cultural identity of African American males adversely affects their learning in the PE. (Negatively phrased)

12. African American male students’ culture is appreciated and affirmed when they are allowed to lead lesson activities.

13. PE teachers should always help African American male students to recognize and question social inequities that exist within and outside of the school environment.

14. Some African American male students are allowed to fail because they are not capable of learning PE. (Negatively phrased)

15. PE teachers can have a positive impact on African American male students.

16. For African American males, success in PE is highly dependent on student-teacher relationships.
17. Culturally responsive teaching is an approach to teaching that calls for teachers to use each student’s prior knowledge and lived experiences to educate them in a holistic manner.

18. Most African American male students are incapable of peer learning or learning collaboratively. (Negatively phrased)

19. African American male students should be responsible for some of the knowledge dissemination that occurs in PE classrooms.

20. Acknowledging African American historical figures and their contributions to the field of PE and sports has minimum effects on African American male students’ academic performance. (Negatively phrased)

21. The cultural backgrounds and experiences that African American male students bring to my PE class matters greatly.

22. Culturally relevant pedagogy is a curriculum model that lends itself well to teaching African American male students self and social responsibility through cooperative learning.

23. All African American male students bring unique strengths to PE.

24. African American males are my top students in PE; therefore, I always look forward to having them in my classes.

25. African American male students are only going to learn so much, and it really does not matter what I do to help them. (Negatively phrased)

26. Sometimes I play the role of student to allow my African American male students to teach concepts, values, or skills in my PE classes.

27. I understand that it is important that I teach in a culturally relevant manner.

28. There are negative stereotypic beliefs (e.g., lazy, undisciplined, aggressive) associated with African American males that make some PE teachers feel hopeless in trying to help them.

29. Knowledge attainment in PE can be achieved by African American males, regardless of their family situations or backgrounds.

30. In culturally relevant pedagogy, teachers use the students’ lived experiences to broaden the knowledge of all students.

31. The parents or legal guardians of African American students are a valuable asset to their learning in PE.

32. African American male students can learn to live physically active lives even if they come from economically disadvantaged backgrounds.