INTERCULTURAL SENSITIVITY: REVELATIONS IN EXAMINING
AFROCENTRIC PEDAGOGY

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Paper presented at the Fifth Annual Hawaii International Conference on Education,
Honolulu Hawaii, January 6-9, 2007

Abstract:

  Research illustrates that African American students are not successful in a Eurocentric model of education. Thus, an Afrocentric model has been created; however, there remains a lack of usage of this pedagogy in schools and educational institutions. This study analyzes the levels of Intercultural Sensitivity of individuals in a graduate student class in Multicultural Education to Afrocentric Pedagogy in order to understand the likelihood of usage post-graduation. The perceptions of graduate students in an eight-week course on Afrocentric Pedagogy were examined through the lens of Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. Quantitative and Qualitative data was collected in order to track students' perceptions through their progression in the course through pre and post survey, and web journal postings. A significant number of participants illustrated a lack of Intercultural Sensitivity to Afrocentric pedagogy. Themes of Intercultural Sensitivity were evident based upon the racial and sexual background of students.

Background

At the end of an Afrocentric Pedagogy[1] class in fall of 2005, students were asked

to respond to the question; how is what you learned in this class going to shape your

pedagogy? During this time period one student in the class who was also a local

elementary school teacher stated:

> I can understand the point of all of this (Afrocentric pedagogy), and I can see its
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> historical importance and how it would benefit students, but to be perfectly
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> honest, in my class I'm not going to do it, because I don't agree with it (personal
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> communication, 2007).

This statement is indicative of the uncertainty that exists within teacher education

with regard to the receptiveness of students to alternative pedagogies and teaching

methodologies designed to impact African American[2] students. This statement raises

important questions. Will students in Afrocentric pedagogy classes utilize the information

taught? On the other hand, will they recognize the historical importance and benefits of

Afrocentric pedagogy but refuse employ its principles within the classroom?

The education of African American students in the United States is in a state of

crisis. Socio-economic and political inequalities have prevented Blacks from achieving a

firm educational foundation in America. Nelson (2004) points to the inherent lack of

parity in the American form of democracy. As a result, Nelson notes that American

institutions of education have not properly created educational equality for minority

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[1] Afrocentric Pedagogy. A specific method of pedagogy designed for individuals of African descent which focuses on empowering African American students and re-educating students with Afrocentricity in mind.
[2] African American. Generational descendants of enslaved Africans brought to the United States prior to the 1900's. Used interchangeably with the word Black.

students. As such, "with each day that passes, these students get farther and farther behind their more affluent counterparts" (p. 9).

An analysis of data regarding the statistical standpoint of African Americans academic achievement reveals poor success rates in all levels of education. With regard to nationwide high school graduation rates National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) found that African Americans completed high school at a rate of 84% whereas Caucasian completed at a rate of 92% (2003, p. 40). Additionally, NCES (2005) reported that Blacks represented 11.8% of *status dropouts* (16-24 year old not enrolled in school and without a degree) whereas Caucasian represent only 6.8% of these dropouts. Orfield, Losen, Wald and Swanson (2004) is critical of statistical data of African American graduation rates and notes that current statistics are far more assuring then the actual data. These researchers found that only 50% of African Americans entering high school will graduate by 12th grade. Both findings illustrate the grave situation facing African American achievement in education.

While African Americans are under-represented in terms of graduation rates, research reveals that they are over-represented in terms of suspension rates, retention rates and enrollment in special education. According to the NCES (2003), 35% of African Americans have been suspended or expelled in K-12 as compared to 15% of Caucasians. This report also noted that blacks were also more likely than white to be retained than whites. In fact, 18% of African American students have been retained in at least one grade in their school career as compared to only 9% of Caucasians (p. 38). With regard to special education African Americans are over-represented in enrollment in

the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) as compared to Caucasians,

Hispanics and Asian/Pacific Islanders. Fifteen percent of African Americans are served

by IDEA as compared to 11% of whites and Hispanics and 6% of Asian/Pacific Islanders

(p. 32).

The plight of education for Black students has reached a magnitude of

monumental significance (Kunjufu, 1984). Overall, the U.S. educational system has been

unsuccessful in educating African Americans (Hale-Benson, 1986). In 1994, Ladson-

Billings wrote that African American students are failing on all gauges of student success

including testing, suspension and expulsion rates as well as graduation rates. The

aforementioned statistical data regarding African American graduation, retention and

suspension rates as well as special education placement rates reveals a correlation

between current data and that collected in the 1980's.

As a result of the aforementioned issues facing African Americans, educators and

researchers have been forced to look critically at the current systems model of education

in order to find new methods and pedagogies to ensure success for all students, regardless

of race. One branch of pedagogy that has emerged specifically to address the issue of

African American underachievement in education is Afrocentric pedagogy.

Afrocentric pedagogy is the educational methodology by which Afrocentricity is

advanced. According to Asante (1987), Afrocentricity is the process of setting African

principles, standards and mores as the foundation for viewing African traditions, customs

and conduct. Afrocentric pedagogy is a polarized educational methodology in

comparison to traditional models of instruction which utilize Eurocentrism rather than Afrocentrism as their foundation for evaluating phenomenon.

Afrocentric pedagogy has been propounded by researchers as an appropriate and culturally relevant approach to addressing the ills of Eurocentric education (Asante, 1992; Levine, 2000), the trivialization of Africans in the American curriculum (Peterson, 1999; Howard-Hamilton, 2000), miseducation and de-education (Woodson, 1933; Akbar, 1985) and the need to embrace culturally distinct learning styles (Murrell, 2002; McPhail, McPhail & Smilkstein, 2002). It acknowledges the historical subjugation of African Americans in the U.S educational system and grounds the process of teaching and learning with African culture[3].

Though there remains of great body of literature regarding Afrocentric pedagogy which extols its importance and successes, scholars have become critical of its apparent lack of usage in the classroom. McPhail et al. (2002) states that the existing body of knowledge regarding teaching and learning has not positively impacted the academic success of students of color, most specifically African American students. Additionally, Ladson-Billings and Henry (1990) writes that:

> The so-called minority student is becoming a majority in urban schools, the Black teaching force is decreasing, the white teaching force is increasing but would rather not teach in schools and communities where Black Americans are the majority (p. 84).

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[3] Culture. Includes forms such as rites, rituals, legends, myths ,artifacts, symbols, language, ceremonies and history (Irvine 2001) as well as values, family structures, clothing, and hairstyles, food, flag, allegiance …literature, music…and entertainment (Kunjufu 1989).

With this in mind, teacher preparation programs must begin to train a new cadre of professionals with a dedication to the African American community, and knowledge of pedagogies that will increase student success. This charge becomes even more important when one considers that the African American student population will be increasing from 33.5 to 41.5 million by year 2020 (NCES, 2003). As such, the consequences of today's actions will impact millions of students nationwide.

Hilliard, 1995 states that teacher education programs who are preparing future educators to teach African Americans and other educationally under-represented students, "must require some level of proficiency in cultural knowledge about African people or other people" (p. 24). Simply put, educators must have a clear understanding of a students' culture in order to best serve them in a traditionally Eurocentric system.

This statement establishes the need for teachers to have Intercultural Sensitivity[4] toward African American culture and Afrocentric pedagogy. Hilliard (1995) states that methods of instruction advanced in teacher education have "been used to rationalize domination and itself has sometimes been a tool of domination" (p. 14). Afrocentric pedagogy is imperative to the educational success of African Americans who have faced generational opposition to their educational success due to the fact that it addresses the socio-political, economic and historical woes of our educational system (Hilliard, 1995; Murrell 2002; Kunjufu, 1984).

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[4] Intercultural Sensitivity. The level of an individuals understanding, acceptance and affirmation of non-dominant cultural frames and viewpoints.

Teachers who do not exhibit high levels of intercultural sensitivity will be less likely to engage alternative pedagogies (such as Afrocentric pedagogy) that is designed to address the needs of the Black student population. Overall, this paper presents research and concepts that contain many important pedagogical methods that are believed to benefit the African Americans as well as Hispanic and Native American students. It is directly focused on addressing educational issues most pertinent to African American students.

The purpose of this study is to determine the level of Intercultural Sensitivity of individuals in a graduate class in Afrocentric pedagogy at a four-year public university in Northern California. The class, which is comprised, of current and future educators will be analyzed through a variety of mechanisms based upon Bennett's (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS) in order to measure their engagement to the pedagogy. DMIS was selected as the theoretical framework for this study due to the fact that it evaluates an individual's level Intercultural Sensitivity by ranking their perception of Intercultural phenomena. Bennett's DMIS views one's development of intercultural sensitivity on a continuum in which denial (staunch ethnocentrism) is the absence of intercultural sensitivity is at one end and integration (ethno-relativism) the presence of intercultural sensitivity is at the other.

Bennett's (1993) research on intercultural sensitivity recognizes four intermediate points between ethnocentrism and ethno-relativism. In order from ethnocentrism to ethno-relativism they are defense, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation. Intercultural Sensitivity is imperative for individuals (especially educators) who are seeking to operate

in a diverse society with historically underrepresented students. Future educators who demonstrate characteristics of ethno-relativism will be best prepared to receive and utilize classroom material that will benefit the African American community. Overall, this study will seek to address the following questions:

Q1. What levels of intercultural sensitivity do students in the class exhibit toward Afrocentric pedagogy based upon Bennett's framework?

Q2. What does the data reveal about variance of intercultural sensitivity based upon demographic factors such as race and gender?

This study focuses on one graduate classroom, which limits the number of participants and thereby may affect the general findings and prevents an in-depth analysis of individuals' levels of intercultural sensitivity based variance in demographic and workplace settings. This study examines a class within the department of Bilingual Multicultural Education (BMED), which invariably will have a high concentration of individuals who exhibit high levels of intercultural sensitivity because they self-selected themselves to be in a major that focuses on bilingual and multicultural educational issues. Additionally, this study is limited by the fact that the course is not a traditional full semester course but rather an eight-week condensed course. Though typical for the BMED program it is not typical for all graduate educational programs at CSUS.

This study is imperative in order to better understand whether individuals who being prepared for roles as future educators exhibit high levels of intercultural sensitivity.

Individual perceptions of the Afrocentric pedagogy may play a role in whether the pedagogy will be utilized. Hilliard (1995) states:

> Given that there are so many African children who are served by the schools, and given the notoriously low levels of academic achievement for these children, it borders on professional malpractice to continue to offer teacher training that is unaffected by the academic <u>knowledge base that does exist</u> about African people, but which his unknown and therefore unused. (p. 26)

As a result, students who are taught Afrocentric pedagogy and fail to engage it in their educational professions will be ignoring a large body of academic research specifically intended to improve the educational status of African American students. Due to the generational and detrimental repercussions of traditional educational pedagogy, students who fail to engage Afrocentric pedagogy will arguably be continuing the ineffective system of education that has plagued the African American community since slavery.

This study is a first step toward a self-analysis of the teacher educations advancement of individuals into the educational system and whether or not those individuals are prepared to serve all racial populations.

Review of Literature

This review of literature will begin by providing a brief overview regarding the educational development and mis-education of African Americans in the United States. This review will also address the reasoning for Afrocentric pedagogy with a focus on the following areas: 1) Eurocentrism and Eurocentric Values; 2) Cultural Death; 3)

Trivialization of Blacks in the Curriculum; 4) Deficit Education; and 5) Learning Styles and African American Vernacular English. Additionally, models of Afrocentric pedagogy will be presented.

Africa is the birthplace of civilization (Hilliard, 1995; Karenga, 1997; Asante 1991). As settlement occurred throughout the world new civilizations and racial groups were developed. Ethnic and cultural diversity evolved throughout the world, including those societies which continued to inhabit the continent of Africa developed similar cultural patterns which inevitably includes the systems of education (Hilliard, 1995). While there remains a myriad of African cultures, the similarities in these cultures permeates the continent and can be contrasted with that of Eurocentric cultures (Dei, 1994).

Philosophy received its birth in Africa, as a result of the Ancient Egyptians (Asante, 1991). Hilliard, 1995 writes that educational systems with ranking designations first originated in the Nile Valley. In West Africa, while much of the western world was still in its developmental stages (Onwauchi, 1972), universities emerged, prior to and during the Middle Ages, which promoted the religious and intellectual development of students (Diop, 1987; Karenga, 1993). Diouf (1999) states that there were a plethora of academic institutions in African pre-enslavement including the renowned learning centers of Kokki and Pire in Senegal, Timbuktu and Jenne in Mali, Kong in the Ivory Coast, Kano in Nigeria [and] Bouna in Ghana. These institutions taught multiple fields of study including science, mathematics, arts, language, writing and medicine (Karenga, 1993).

The education developed by Africans during the pre-colonial period was holistic in nature as well as socially and culturally relevant to the experiences and challenges of African life (Rodney, 1973). The African system for transmission of knowledge was predominantly oral prior to the Islamic influx, thus their existed a profusion of oral histories, proverbs, laws, and traditions (Franklin & Moss, 1988).

Onwauchi (1972) states that African societies educated their youth through stories and legends that taught the ethical and moral values of the community. The purpose of the education was to communicate social relationships, spiritual[5] principles, honor and humility towards familiar and communal elders, respect for their word and abstinence from negative actions. Youth were informally trained to be innovative, to provide for their needs, and to communicate.

Many Africans could read and write in non-English languages prior to enslavement (Diouf, 1999); however slave owners sought to strip African slaves of their indigenous culture and education in order to maintain the hierarchal structure of antebellum slavery. African slaves experience cultural genocide with respect to their identities as well as familiar and political structures (Karenga, 1993). The educational process employed in Africa was replaced with brutal systems of control, which sought to prevent the education of slaves and turn them against one another.

According to Yanuch (1995), many states, enacted harsh laws which prohibited the education of slaves in the areas of reading and writing these laws called slave codes

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[5] Spiritual. Relating to supernatural beliefs, customs, and rites of Christianity.

bore a wide variety of punishments for both slaves and Caucasians alike (Goodell, 1968; Cornelius, 1983). Some slave owners secretly taught their slaves how to read; many of these owners were Christians (Cornelius, 1983). All in all, enslaved Africans were deprived of education. In addition, free black were prohibited from attending white schools and were relegated to educational institutions that maintained their inferior social status. In the north, the plight of black education was similar to that of the south in which rejection of education to African Americans was commonplace (Hope-Franklin, 1976).

Prior to the Emancipation Proclamation of 1863 (a decree from President Abraham Lincoln which proclaimed the freedom of slaves) hundreds of self-governing schools were created by African Americans. Slaves viewed literacy as an avenue to freedom, thus the ability to read and write was highly prized among African slaves (Perry, Steele & Hilliard, 2003). However, the educational attainment of African Americans in these schools were severely inhibited by the need to overcome the generational effects of the slave codes, as well as three hundred years of little to no formal educational instruction. Ratteray (1992) states that these institutions existed in both the Northern and Southern States. These schools were autonomous in nature and were supported by the communities in which they thrived (Hilliard, 1995).

For instance, in Mississippi State African Americans of all statuses (slaves, former-slaves, run-a-ways) established schools on deserted land. The teachers in these institutions were not highly educated and their students were of all age ranges, yet the schools were well supported by their local communities operating off funding raised by the local black communities. These funding plans predated state sponsored education

(Span, 2002). By the early 1900's more than 250 post-secondary education institutions

emerged for African Americans, in addition to the primary and secondary institutions

(Hope-Franklin & Moss, 1988).

The dismal educational success of African Americans in the United States

corresponds to vision of President Andrew Johnson, as proclaimed in his (1866) letter to

Benjamin B. French which states:

> Everyone would, and must admit, that the White race was superior to the Black,
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> and that while we ought to do our best to bring them up to our present level, that,
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> in doing so, we should, at the same time raise our own intellectual status, so that
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> the relative position of the two races would be the same.

The desire for white supremacy, as articulated by President Johnson mirrors the

educational attainment of African Americans to this day.

The method by which this goal was fulfilled was through segregation. By 1885,

the vast majority of states in the south had established segregated education as the law of

the land (Hope-Franklin & Moss, 1988). In 1896, the case of *Plessy v. Ferguson* further

engrained legalized racial segregation in public facilities, which impacted schools

nationwide. With regard to the period of segregation, Kunjufu (1989) notes that the

schools that African Americans attended were far below par with regard to both the

structures of the buildings and the curriculum materials. Fairclough (2000) describes

African American schooling during the 1920's and the dismal facilities in which they

operated, noting that the buildings were run down, cold, lacking light and bathrooms as

well as basic necessities such as tables. Furthermore, Fairclough (2000) notes that the

teacher-student ratios were exorbitantly low with some schools placing up to seventy-five students with one teacher.

In 1954, the landmark case of *Brown v. the Board of Education of Topeka* had a two-fold impact on African American life. First, it prohibited the practice of de jure racial segregation in systems of public education, commonly referred to as 'separate but equal'. Secondly, the ruling revoked racial segregation in all pubic systems and facilities (Snipes & Water, 2005). According to Peterson (1999), it was expected that the ruling would result in African Americans achieving an equal education as Caucasians, however the process of educational integration was very slow. It would take years of further rulings and deliberations to solidify the verdict (Snipes & Water, 2005).

Unforeseen effects took place during this turbulent period. In examining a post-integration educational system, (Kunjufu 1989) writes that integration resulted in the loss of significant numbers of African Americans teachers and resulted in Black administrators assuming roles as teachers or losing their jobs all together. Additionally, a curriculum that was once culturally-centered in an educational methodology that ensured that learning was motivating and relevant to the lives of students was eliminated (Asante, 1992). Teachers who understood the plight of their students were replaced with faculty who lacked a cultural foundation and educational methodologies that positively impacted the learning of African American students (Peterson, 1999).

Progress since the integration of public schools has been slow, segregation continues to persist (Kunjufu, 1989). African American students are concentrated in urban schools and schools districts. African Americans in the nation's largest urban

centers attend schools which are more segregated than the vicinities in which they come

from (Logan, Stowell & Oakley (2002). In an examination of racial segregation in

schools since the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education*, Johnson (1995) states

that "large urban schools of the north are more segregated now then they were in 1954"

(p. 17). Dittman (2004) notes that urban schools enrollment is comprise primary of low-

income African American and Latino students.

Today, many Afrocentric scholars are positively reminiscent of the pedagogy

utilized in Africa and in Jim Crow schools, though they are not supportive of legally

imposed policy of segregation). Asante (1992) advocates combining the African-centered

education students received prior to integration with current methods and avenues of

instruction for the betterment of African students. Asante states:

Of course, segregation was legally and morally wrong, but something was given

to black children in those schools that was just as important in some senses as the

new books better educated teachers, and improved buildings of this era. (p. 29)

Hilliard (1995) affirms that a plethora of exceptional Black schools existed during

the era of segregation. Most importantly, these schools benefited from a culturally-

centered education. O'Daniel (1994) writes that African American retained significant

control and power over the operations of their schools and "could administer curriculum,

instruction, and discipline with the full support and consensus of the community" (p. 10).

The foundations of western thought and education are based upon Eurocentrism

and Eurocentric values. The American educational system, in its current form, maintains

this value system (Kunjufu 1989; Hilliard 1995; Peterson 1999; Cooney, 1995; Irvine &

Armento, 2001). This system is used as a method of socialization for under-represented

individuals and is adverse to educating black children. Every field of academic

scholarship is impacted by Eurocentrism thereby rooting the cornerstone of modern

beliefs in Europe's historical past (Milam, 1992).

  The perception that education is a "white thing" rather than a "black thing" often

emerges from the minds of African Americans, a remark reminiscent of the slavery area

of black education. Redd (1993) states that many African Americans are raised to believe

that academic achievement is for Caucasians. Levine (2000) notes that this is due to the

fact the African American has been given minimal attention in the American curriculum.

(Kunjufu, 1989) believes that this idea is maintained in educational curriculum when one

considers that "Hippocrates, Columbus, Washington, and Lincoln are still the 'Great

White Fathers'" (p. 11). The end result is a curriculum that is dominated by Eurocentric

values and history (Hilliard, 1995).

  Eurocentrism has created an atmosphere in the public education system that

automatically empowers white children noting that both white culture and language are

supported in the American classroom. As a result, the information presented in the

classroom builds upon white's students self-perceptions while negating that of other

groups (Asante, 1992; Boateng, 1990). Unlike Asian students in Asia, African students in

Africa and white students in America, African American students lack a culturally

centered and empowering classroom.

The cultural values of under-represented groups are incompatible with the values and culture of the white American middle class. As a result, tension is created between the two classes as the socialization process takes form (Irvine & Armento, 2001).

Education in the United States is structured around, and maintains, the current social, political and economic order (Hilliard, 1995; Cooney 1995; Kunjufu, 1989). Boykin (2000) notes that schools socialize all students in a manner that underscores multiculturalism and which, acculturates non-whites to European culture.

The education that children receive in the United States is both educational as well as socio-political in that it upholds hierarchal structures. According to Pollard and Ajirotutu (2000), this activity imbues values of subjugation, class hierarchy and systems of power. These values permeate the entire educational process in the United States and produce a social acceptance of this behavior.

There is a connection between workforce demands and the socialization process that occurs in education. In a capitalistic society, these demands are supported by an educational system that ensures a lower-class of service workers is prepared to sustain the balance of unskilled labor needed to maintain the economic system. Kunjufu (1984) affirms this notion through the connection of educational socialization to manpower needs in labor production. He notes that schooling is based upon labor demands and therefore a specific set of the population is destined to receive variance in schooling in order to uphold those demands. As a result, a process of institutionalized social stratification begins in which African Americans assume the lower end of the economic

rung of the American labor force while Caucasians are placed into superior roles within the economic structure.

Many authors write about the detrimental aspects of students who engage in Eurocentric curriculum (Asante 1992; Murrell, 2002). Cooney (1995) notes that in order for African Americans to succeed in the Eurocentric model of education, they must be socialized to the dominants groups' culture, which is incompatible with the culture that is found in the students' home. With an understanding of this phenomenon Asante (1992) writes the "the fact that an African-American or an Hispanic person in order to master the white cultural information- has had to experience the death of his or her own culture does not register with most teachers" (p. 29).

As a result of being forced to experience 'cultural death' African American children have been taught to disregard their primary culture and embrace the values and mores of the dominant culture. Racial discrimination has become so engrained into the social fabric of American society that even African American educators struggle with unlearning the racism, biases and social structures learned within the system (Levine, 2000). According to McPhail, McPhail and Smilkstein (2002), assimilation is forced upon students who do not embrace the Eurocentric culture of education. The process of assimilation places African American students at a psychological and academic disadvantage.

Researchers believe that African American history has been trivialized in the current educational system (Peterson 1999; Irvine & Armento, 2001; Kunjufu 1989; Howard-Hamilton, 2000; Murrell, 2002). This trivialization is seen in the omission of

African American history and culture in curriculum. This practice raises severe psychological concerns for African Americans, impacting their self-perceptions and esteem (Shujaa, 1995). As a result, when Black history has addressed in the curriculum, it has been limited to limited sporadic events. Murrell (2002) notes that African American history and culture has been limited to single day celebrations, food, and minimal celebrations that are simply a "fancier way of marginalizing children of color" (p. 41).

Irvine (2001) states that some teachers believe that by adding minimal cultural celebrations into the classroom (which do not infuse alternative culture principles into the curriculum) that they are being culturally- relevant in nature. With regard to this approach, Peterson (1999) notes that these approaches to black history do not positively impact the success of African American students in the classroom. Howard-Hamilton (2002) suggest that in order to properly address African American history and culture into the curriculum, schools employ readings and texts on African Americans in a manner which includes them as an essential part of the curriculum.

The traditional model of education takes a deficit approach to educational issues of inequality (Murrell, 2002). As such, everyone but the educational system is blamed for the dismal performance of African American students. With regard to teacher perceptions, Kunjufu (1989) notes that scores of teachers still believe that the achievement gap between African American and Caucasian children is rooted in students' academic ability. This statement illustrates the fact that at least some teachers take a student deficit approach to educational underperformance.

Hilliard (1995) concurs that the deficit model is in effect in the American educational system. The poor performance of African American students is blamed on the students, their families and communities as well as African American culture itself. Researchers believe that these viewpoints lack a historical understanding of the mis-education of African-Americans in the United States.

Researchers have noticed striking differences between the learning styles of African Americans and Caucasians. These learning styles are so different that Kunjufu (1984) states that in order for educators to achieve a successful curriculum that they must account for the culture and learning styles of students prior to designing a curriculum. Kunjufu (1984) notes that African American children "bring a higher verve to the classroom [than white students] that is being labeled hyperactive rather than being considered a challenge to a curriculum that may be irrelevant, thereby perpetuating boredom and defeating our object of self-discipline" (p. 42). Kunjufu notes that the one-dimensional learning style of banking education (a typical Eurocentric model) differs from the learning styles of African American students.

Nelson (2004) remarks that the inability to connect with students learning patterns allows students to become disengaged with the curriculum and degrades their self-perception. McPhail et al. (2002) provides an exemplary analysis of the learning styles of African Americans state that:

> African American learners utilize strategies that are rather universalistic, intuitive, and, most importantly, person-oriented. This cognitive style contrasts markedly from that of learners who are most successful in the Euro-centric schooling

process, and who employ an information processing strategy that is sequential,

analytical, or object-oriented. (p. 5-6)

Boykin (2000) affirms the different learning styles that African Americans

possess. He notes that African Americans thrive in academic environments which

capitalize on their culture verve (vitality and energy), as well their sense of community.

Additionally, he states that Eurocentric values of individualism and rivalry are rejected

within African American culture. Hale-Benson (1986) affirms that African American

learning styles are different from that of Eurocentric styles. She states that African

American culture shapes this method of knowledge acquisition throughout the mental

development of students, which impacts how academic tasks are address as well as

behavioral methods seen in classrooms. It is important to note that the identified learning

styles occur as a result of culture, not biological inferiority or superiority of certain races

as was the dominant claim of much research from the 1800's to mid 1900's.

According to Heath (2000) slave traders worked to separate Africans with the

same language in the Americas, in order to maintain power over them. Despite this fact,

African Americans in the United States still employ speech patterns which contain

elements of African language. These speech patterns have been termed Ebony Phonics

(Ebonics), African American Vernacular English (AAVE) and Soul Speak (hereafter

used interchangeably) (Gordon, 2004; Rickford & Rickford, 2000; Perry & Delpit, 1998;

Heath, 2000). According to Asante (1991), these language patterns have survived in

American society despite Eurocentric culture. Soul Speak employs a vocabulary,

pronunciation and grammar structure different from that of English (Rickford &

Rickford, 2000).

For instance, in Soul Speak there are Zero copula -- that is, the absence of *is* in

"she in the same grade." *Is* and *are* are called copulas because they couple, or join, a

subject (in this case, "she") and a predicate (what's said *about* the subject). In addition to

zero copula there are multiple other grammatical forms which are distinct in nature.

Hollie (2001) notes that African Americans have historically taught that Ebonics

represents ill-educated speech. Additionally, African American students who speak

standard English are viewed as having a high academic potential and capability (Irvine,

1990). Hollie notes that Ebonics is spoken in various forms throughout the Diaspora and

is part of a greater language system that exists throughout North, South and Central

America. Afrocentric scholars regard African American Vernacular English as an African

language with an English dialect, rather than the traditional view in which the language is

referred to as an English language with an African dialect. Overall, this difference is

essential for the validity of using the language as part of classroom instruction for African

American students. Woodson (1933) notes that Black English was mocked and ridiculed

in educational institutions, a practice that continues today in which AAVE is viewed by

teachers as poor English or slang. This viewpoint limits the usage of AAVE as a

culturally-relevant asset in the educational process of African American students. Using

AAVE in conjunction with English and teaching students how to code switch (the

conscious process of transitioning from AAVE to English and vice versa) is shown to

increase the success rates of students (Hollie, 2001).

There exists an integral relationship between Culturally Relevant pedagogy[6] and African-Centered Pedagogy. Simply put, culturally-relevant pedagogy is the umbrella under which African-centered pedagogy, Native American-centered pedagogy, Hispanic-centered pedagogy and other culturally based pedagogies exist. A foundational belief of culturally-relevant pedagogy is expressed by Hilliard (1995), who states the culturally-relevant pedagogy for African Americans requires an understanding of the socio-historical and culture background of non-European groups.

Ladson-Billings (1995) states that there are three cardinal suppositions of culturally relevant pedagogy: 1) students must have educational achievement as a result of the pedagogy; 2) student must obtain a deeper understanding of their native culture; and 3) student must be able to critically analyze systems in order to challenge power structures. Ladson-Billings and Henry (1990) state that culturally-relevant pedagogy serves a two-fold agenda. They state that

> ...culturally relevant pedagogy for Afro-North American students has a double
> agenda that cultivates (and recaptures, if necessary) the child's Black identity and
> prepares him or her for life in the wider society (which entails resistance and
> rejection of dominant norms and values that are oppressive). (p. 83)

There are multiple frameworks that exist for Afrocentric pedagogy. These frameworks share the common mission of re-educating African Americans against racial

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[6] Culturally Relevant Pedagogy. Using student's culture to empower students to be able to critically examine educational content and process and ask what role they have in creating a truly democratic and multicultural society (Ladson Billings & Henry, 1990).

oppression and educational genocide. The following is an examination of a series of those frameworks.

Murrell (2002) presents a model of Afrocentric pedagogy, which utilizes a tri-fold approach for activity evaluation, which includes teacher practice, activity and performance. The model features five cardinal practices of Afrocentric pedagogy; 1) engagement and participation practices; 2) identity development practices; 3) community integrity practices; 4) practices of inquiry and; 5) meaning making practices.

1) Engagement and Participation Practices - are provisions and engagements utilized by the instructor to establish the significance of the activity and to galvanize and promote student involvement with the activity as well as with one another. Murrell espouses three main points of engagement and participation practices: 1) employing classroom activities that create productivity towards social consciousness and self-reflection and which utilize the socio-cultural background of students, 2) instituting African methods of knowledge transmission and establishing new traditions of methods for knowledge transmission and 3) addressing generational issues facing African Americans from a historical perspective.

2) Identity Development Practices - are classroom activities that promote internal investigation, reflection and meaning. Murrell (2002) presents three main points for identity development practices; a) creating multiple opportunities for the oral development of students and utilizing cultural recognizable role models, experiences and circumstances; b) emphasizing the usage of information in multiple contexts and encourage investigation of curriculum content; and; c) focusing on interpersonal

interaction for the purpose of developing initiative within students; as well as creating

systems to encourage inner-exploration and meaning for students as individuals and as

members of a community.

3) Community Integrity Practices - are classroom interactions that promote

academic and social organization of students within their community. Murrell (2002)

discusses three main points for community integrity practices; a) creating familiar

societal bonds as coping mechanisms for shared inimical conditions. Murrell defines this

as "evoking fictive kinship" and encourages student knowledge and understanding of the

concept (p. 72). Additionally, teachers should encourage the development of

engagements and establishment of associations with a focus on African American

traditions; b) emphasizing the usage of collaborations and communal success; and c)

utilizing culturally relevant communication patterns.

4) Practices of Inquiry - are classroom interactions that promote critical

engagement and examination of phenomena. Murrell (2002) identifies three main points

of practices of inquiry a) encouraging the establishment of "collective memory" and

employing cultural stories, poetry and legends from the "collective memory" of African

Americans, b) utilizing culture (more specifically "cultural modeling") as a method of

admission instruction into subject matter; and c) establishing goals to be met and

anticipating accomplishments in a manner that is unmistakably understood by

participants.

5) Meaning-Making Practices - are classroom interactions that utilize students'

culture in order to increase knowledge acquisition. Murrell (2002) notes three main

points of meaning making practices 1) creating understanding of theories of knowledge as they differ between Afrocentrism and Eurocentrism and encouraging literacy activities that support classroom engagements, 2) utilizing literature that builds upon and addresses premises established from main texts and encouraging cultural examination of media for the purpose of exploring fallacies presented regarding African Americans and 3) developing activities that cultivate and develop skills and critical examination of symbols.

Ginwright (2004) is critical of Murrell (2002) based upon the belief that Murrell's model does not properly address the everyday life experiences (social, cultural, political and economic) of students. As a result, Ginwright (2004) presents five principles to re-correct Afrocentric education to meet the needs of urban America: 1) encourage students to critically address hierarchal power constructs and systems within American society; 2) emphasize the relationship and correlation between racial individuality and maturity with issues of social justice and equity; 3) education of students in methods of changing paradigms and constructs in society; 4) allowing and educating students to organize collaboratively; and 5) the embracement of urban adolescent culture.

Lee, Lomotey and Shujaa (1990) advance seven primary principles of an effective African-centered pedagogy, these principles are; 1) encouraging the acceptance and usage of African culture and knowledge banks; 2) utilizing a system of raised frameworks of generative communal and cultural systems and practices; 3) employing and developing African language patterns (i.e. ebony phonics, soul speak, African American Vernacular English etc); 4 strengthens relationships and associations within the

African American community with a focus on service toward others (i.e. relatives, extended family, community, country and the African Diaspora); 5) encourages healthy social interactions; 6) encourages self-determination and sufficiency within the African American community while not negatively impacting those principles for other racial groups; and 7) promote cultural stability and critical evaluation of phenomena.

Dei (1994) discusses several facets of Afrocentric pedagogy. He states that Afrocentric pedagogy should: 1) recognize the struggle of the underprivileged; 2) explore the world and its history from an African-centered viewpoint; 3) allow students to become the generative force of their own knowledge acquisition; 4) recognize the importance of non-dominating perspectives from multiple cultures; 5) emphasize the importance of communal and group success and work rather than individualistic success; and 6) should elevate African self-perception in a manner than recognizes the standpoint Africans in the world.

Kifano (1996) notes that the Mary McLeod Bethune Institute (MMBI) (an Afrocentric school located in Los Angeles California in the Crenshaw district) utilizes a five-point Afrocentric model. The integral aspects of this model are: 1) understanding and construing the world from an African-centered viewpoint; 2) developing and utilizing decisive and investigative analysis of phenomena as well as innovative thinking; 3) inspiring service to the African American and greater communities; 4) developing a positive self-image and self-definition as well as placing an emphasis on principles; and 5) the absolute affirmation of honor for diversity and variation in humanity.

Eyo (1991) also espouses a model of Afrocentric pedagogy. In this model are five primary points that comprise a truly Afrocentric model of instruction, they are "inclusivity, complementarily, wholeness, communal concern and morality" (p. 16). All of these points are described as attributes that are in opposition to the current Eurocentric educational system.

Lomotey (1992) notes that Independent Black Institutions (IBI) utilized three primary points in their construction of Afrocentric pedagogy. First, they utilize a familiar style model, which create a pseudo family structure within their institutions. Lomotey states that this model encourages students to embrace their teachers as they would their own parents. Parent participation is encouraged and as a result, parents are seen as pseudo-teachers. In this model, both parents and teachers assume dual roles in rearing and educating the students. The second point of the IBI model of Afrocentric pedagogy is the usage of the embracement of the "doctrine called *Kawaida,* which puts forth a set of values called the *Nguzo Saba* (Kiswahili for "The Seven Principles of Blackness)".

The seven principles of Kawaida are Unity, Self-Determination, Collective Work, Cooperative Economics, Purpose, Creativity and Faith (Karenga, 1997; Lomotey, 1992). The third point of Afrocentric pedagogy employed in the IBI model is Revolutionary Pan-Africanism (RPN). RPN is utilized in three main ways: 1) a method of schooling designed to eradicate the current model of education; 2) establish pan-African unity and identity; and 3) recognize the validity of African Americans as "a nation within a nation" (Lomotey, 1992, p. 458).

Many authors contend that Maat (an African based value system) is a cardinal aspect of Afrocentric pedagogy (Hilliard, 1995; Lee et. al; 1990; Karenga, 1990; Ginwright 2004; Murrell 2002). Occasionally termed the "Kemetic Quality of 'order', 'justice,' 'righteousness' and 'balance'" (Asante, 1990, p. 89). Maat is a series of principles which became attributed to, and deified in, the Ancient Egyptian Goddess Maat. Maat is based upon several principles including; 1) truth; 2) justice; 3) propriety; 4) harmony; 5) reciprocity; 6) balance; and 7) order (Ginwright, 2004; Murrell, 2002). Karenga (1990) notes that Maat is a value system that is widespread throughout the continent of Africa. As such, with the variation in religious beliefs the principles themselves become more apparent in Africa and African American culture than does the religious aspect of Maat. In Afrocentric schools, Maat is often used as a code that all students are urged to abide by similar to the individual classroom rules displayed in K-12 education. Behavior is related back to these concepts in order to educate Black children to the Afrocentric paradigm.

Irvine (2000) writes that there are three main points in relationship to Afrocentric pedagogy and teachers: 1) the teacher must understand that an Afrocentric curriculum depends upon a shift in structures, systems and paradigms. These areas currently maintain the embodiment of Eurocentric structures; 2) African American teachers must, especially those who teacher Afrocentric curriculum cannot continue to dwindle in numbers; and 3) there is a need to alter the current method of teaching in order to be cognizant of in-class interface.

There is a plethora of models of Afrocentric pedagogy and all of these models capitalize on different aspects of African history and culture. All in all, these models share in common several principles; they challenge Eurocentric socio-cultural norms, seek educational equity, embrace African American history, culture and learning styles as an asset, account for the generation needs of African Americans in order to increase their success in academia. Afrocentric pedagogy is needed in order to reclaim the educational legacy that Blacks enjoyed in Africa and to continue the struggle for racial equality that has endured both during and after African enslavement in the Americas.

<div align="center">Methodology</div>

The researcher employed a mixed-methods research design. This study consisted of collection and analysis of both quantitative and qualitative data, with an emphasis on the latter. The data collected was used to provide information focusing on the research questions as previously outlined.

The purpose of this study is to examine the perceptions (or levels of engagement) of graduate students in the department of Multicultural Education (BMED) at a Northern California public four year university with regards to the inclusion of Afrocentric pedagogy. The perceptions of students were examined through the framework of intercultural sensitivity throughout the duration of an eight-week course on Afrocentric pedagogy.

Data were collected in order to document students' perceptions through their progression in the course through two methods: 1) two surveys (pre and post survey) and 2) web journal postings/blogs. This study sought to determine whether students were

engaged with, and demonstrated some understanding of, the sociopolitical goals of Afrocentric pedagogy during their transition through the course. Additionally, this study sought to determine whether students' perceptions were impacted by factors such as race and gender.

The theoretical framework which was employed in this study was the Bennett (1993) Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS). Historically, inter-group relations have resulted in negative consequences, thus establishing the need to address and change our innate intercultural conduct. DMIS is a model that views an individual's intercultural sensitivity development on a continuum ranging from Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism. Ethnocentrism is defined as "assuming that the worldview of one's own culture is central to all reality" (p. 30). Ethnorelativism is "the assumption that cultures can only be understood relative one another and that particular behavior can only be understood within a cultural context" (Bennett, 1993, p. 46).

Bennett's (1993) research on Intercultural Sensitivity recognizes six stages between ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. The first three stages of the model (denial, defense and minimization) are associated with ethnocentrism; the second three stages (acceptance, adaptation and integration) are linked to ethnorelativism. Each of these stages has multiple sub-stages characterized by the viewpoints of individual's in their transition to ethnorelativism.

The first stage associated with Ethnocentrism is Denial. Individuals in this stage give no regard to cultural dissimilarities. As such, a person in this stage assumes that

cultural dissimilarities take place elsewhere even when confronted with cultural difference. There are two sub-stages to the denial stage; they are isolation and separation.

Isolation can take place in a variety of ways ranging from physical isolation to familiar isolation (isolating oneself to events, activities and culture that are familiar). The second sub-stage in the denial stage is separation. Separation is defined as "the intentional separation erection of physical or social barriers to create distance from cultural difference as a means of maintaining a state of denial" (Bennett, 1993, p. 32). Sometimes the sub-stages of isolation and separation can become intertwined. On an international level, separation can be seen in the purposeful relationship between two countries, termed *nationalistic separation.* Perspectives of individuals in the denial stage are characterized by a lack of knowledge rather than negative perceptions of other races.

The second stage of ethnocentrism is defense. The Defense stage

...refers to a posture intended to counter the impact of specific cultural differences perceived as threatening. The threat is to one's sense of reality and thus to one's identity, which at this point is a function of that one cultural reality. (Bennett, 1993, p. 34-35)

As a result, individuals in this stage recognize the reality of cultural variance and create a defense to it. There are three primary sub-stages of defense; they are denigration, superiority, and reversal. According to the developmental model of intercultural sensitivity the defense stage occurs after the denial stage.

In the denigration sub-stage individuals exhibit defense by exhibiting opposition towards cultural difference. Bennett notes that "this derogatory attitude toward difference

is generally called negative stereotyping" (p. 35). In some circumstances individuals who exhibit traits of the sub-stage of denigration also exhibit traits of the *denial* stage. The primary aspect that separates the *denial* stage from the *defense* stage is the understanding of cultural variance.

The next sub-stage in the *defense* stage is superiority; "this form of defense emphasizes the positive evaluation of one's own cultural status, not necessarily the overt denigration of other groups" (p. 37). In this sub-stage, variance in culture is deemed inferior to the culture of the individual in question. When viewed on an international level, we can see the exemplification of this sub-stage in the classification of countries (as opposed to the United States) as either developed or developing.

Interestingly, developed countries exhibit cultural patterns that are similar to our own, whereas, developing countries exhibit cultural patterns that are dissimilar to our own. According to Bennett, the sub-stage of superiority is higher than that of denigration in that cultural variance is viewed as less vile; rather it is seen as simply inferior. Furthermore, cultures (such as African Americans in the United States) that have been subjugated in society will linger in the denigration sub-stage of defense, especially as it relates to the dominant culture. This is due to an overly positive view of their own cultures.

The final sub-stage in the defense stage is reversal. According to the model, not all individuals transition through the sub-stage in order to minimization stage. However, it is apparent that a significant number of individuals do. In this stage, individuals reverse the superiority stage, giving more importance to other cultures rather than their own.

Individuals from this stage should be educated by emphasizing that people from all cultures exhibit cultural insensitivity.

The last stage in ethnocentrism is minimization. Minimization can be best described as an individual who attempts to hide difference with an emphasis on the cultural similarities (p. 41). In this stage, individuals minimize the difference between cultures. Bennett notes that individuals who focus on similarities often assume these similarities exist based upon their own culture. There are two sub-stages in the minimization stage: physical universalism and transcendent universalism.

Physical universalism focuses on the basic actions of life that all individuals have in common. Furthermore, this viewpoint assumes that all cultural variance is merely elaborations of fundamental biology. As a result, cultural variance is considered irrelevant and physical universals that all humans shared are given ultimate importance. According to Bennett, this stage is typically associated with individuals viewing other cultures through their cultural worldview.

Transcendent universalism is similar to physical universalism in that there is a shared experience among all individuals. However, in this sub-stage, there is a focus on transcendent principle, law, or imperative, rather than biology. Unlike the physical universalism sub-stage this viewpoint does not consider cultural variance to be irrelevant. Individuals in this sub-stage give importance to cultural variance. This importance is given merely for the purpose of altering another individual's perspective in order to align with their own principles, law or imperatives.

The acceptance stage is characterized by the viewpoint that cultural variance is both recognized and valued. This stage represents the first stage in the transition between ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism. There are two primary sub-stages in the acceptance stage; they are respect for behavior difference and respect for valued difference.

In the first sub-stage, individuals recognize that behavior differs between cultures. This resolve to accept culturally relative behavior relates to behavior that is both verbal and non-verbal in a nature. Typically this acceptance is seen in verbal behavior such as language and cultural expression differences between cultures. A more important step is the acceptance of non-verbal cultural relativity.

The next sub-stage is the respect for valued difference. In this sub-stage individuals begin to accept that values are culturally relative. In this sub-stage one begins to recognize one's own cultural paradigm in understanding and evaluating variance in cultural values. In this sub-stage individuals respect variance in cultural values but do not necessarily agree with them.

Adaptation represents the next stage in ethno-relative development. In this stage understanding and respect for cultural variance is increased. Bennett distinguishes between adaptation and assimilation in that adaptation refers to increased cultural relativity without losing an individuals own culture. This is in opposition to assimilation in which ones own culture is lost due to the new cultural assimilation. There are two sub-stages in the adaptation stage, they are empathy and pluralism.

In the empathy sub-stage, individuals become culturally adaptive by empathizing with the cultural experiences of others. Essentially, individuals in this sub-stage attempt

to place themselves in the cultural shoes of other individuals. The pluralism sub-stage has two primary aspects; philosophical pluralism and internalized multiculturalism or biculturalism. In this sub-stage, individuals realize that cultural variance must be seen solely through the eyes of each individual culture. Overall, in this sub-stage cultural relativity becomes more pure, a clear advance from the acceptance stage.

A person in the integration stages views the world through cultural relativity. This individual can see the world through various cultural lenses and can isolate each lens to exclude their own cultural background in evaluating cultural phenomenon. This stage has two primary sub-stages; they are contextual evaluation and constructive marginality.

In the contextual evaluation sub-stage, individual's actions are guided through by the context in which they are. As a result, an individual in this sub-stage would evaluate the context and then integrate their actions within an ethical frame to meet the cultural context in which they are.

The final sub-stage of the integration stage within the operation of an ethnorelative person is constructive marginality. In this sub-stage, individuals utilize a cultural identity that does not subscribe to a dominant culture. Cultural identification in associated with other individuals who exhibit constructive marginality rather than the primary cultural origin.

DMIS is model for understanding individuals' intercultural sensitivity in their transition from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism. Typically, identification of an individual's placement on the model is accomplished through the Individual Development Indenticator (IDI) assessment system. This system uses a series of

questions to ascertain an individual perceived placement on the model and their actual placement. The IDI system will not be employed in this study due to the fact that the system is to place individuals' cultural sensitivity or lack thereof; not their cultural sensitivity specifically to a pedagogy. In this study, DMIS will be used as a model to analyze perceptions to pedagogy, specifically Afrocentric pedagogy.

DMIS has been utilized in a wide variety of settings including academia and the corporate world. Van Hook (2000), in examining DMIS, suggests that the students be tracked for Intercultural Sensitivity in teacher pre-service classes in order to encourage students to embrace differences and to aid instructors in the educational process. Similarly, this study will track students based upon DMIS to evaluate students' levels of Intercultural Sensitivity to Afrocentric pedagogy to better understand students' stages of openness to the pedagogy.

The research subjects for this study were the graduate students enrolled in the Multicultural Education class on Afrocentric Pedagogy. As such, no recruitment or selection criterion were for participants other than enrollment in the course.

Informed Consent

Informed Consent was obtained through a written form distributed on the first day of class which informed the students of the project and their participation (Appendix A). Any student who did wish to sign the consent letter was excluded from participation.

Confidentiality

To ensure the anonymity of participants, each individual was asked to provide an alias name to be used for reference purposes. Alias names were collected on the pre-

survey. Students who did not provide an alias name were assigned one by the researcher.

Alias names provided by researcher were structured using the word *participant* with a

corresponding number for each participant as the pre-surveys were received (e.g.

participant 1, participant 2 and so forth).

As previously stated, data was collected from participants through two methods;

1) two surveys (pre and post survey); and 2) web journal/blog postings. This section is

dedicated to describing that process.

Pre-Survey

The pre-survey gauged students' preconceptions and knowledge regarding

Afrocentric pedagogy prior to their engagement in the class. Students were assigned an

initial stage leveling (e.g. denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation,

integration) based upon the Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. Questions were developed

in order to extract the corresponding traits for each stage within the model. Questions

were presented to participants in two formats: a five-point Likert scale format and an

open-ended essay format. Pre-surveys were administered during the first class session in

conjunction with the Informed Consent form that was required for participation in this

study. In this survey, non-identifiable demographic information wascollected from the

participants such as the participant's race, sex, primary language, and the school setting.

Post-Survey

Post surveys were administered on the final day of class in order to assess

students' post-conceptions to the subject material presented and their willingness to

incorporate Afrocentric frameworks and principles into their school/work sites. Similar to

the pre-survey, post-surveys were analyzed through the Model of Intercultural Sensitivity and students were leveled based upon the various stages within the model. In conjunction with final writing submissions, the post-survey was used as an ending point in the study in order to assess whether, and to what degree, students' levels of Intercultural Sensitivity transitioned throughout the duration of the course. Similar to the pre-survey, questions were presented to participants in a five-point Likert scale format and an open-ended essay format.

Web-Postings

The class required students to post "What/Why Responses." These responses were posted weekly via the Internet to the professors' webpage on the CSUS website. There are eight What/Why Responses were assigned in two parts. The first part was a response to the assigned readings on Afrocentrism which was to be posted prior to attending each class session. The Afrocentric Pedagogy Syllabus for 2006 states that students are to discuss:

> three things you learned (include ideas that interest you, challenge your thinking
> or beliefs, b) the reason or reasons they are/are not meaningful, and c) what
> implications this information has for you as a classroom teacher OR as a critical
> educator. For example, how will this information influence your teaching or your
> community involvements/projects/work?

The second posting was to be a follow up response to the classroom dialogue. The follow-up response was to be posted within 24 hours after each class. Students were allowed to blog on comments made by other student as well as the professor. Students

were encouraged to discuss new things that they learned as well as challenging concepts that they encountered.

Blogs represented the majority of the material used for the weekly assessment of students in the course. The themes in students' responses were analyzed collectively every week, using a journal response rating scale developed by the researcher based upon the model of Intercultural Sensitivity (see Appendix C).

In summarizing this section, there are three areas of data collection: 1) two surveys (pre and post survey); 2) web journal postings; and 3) audio/video recording of one classroom session. These areas of data collecting were analyzed over the course of the EDBM 220B class, which provided a clear picture indicating the students' levels of Intercultural Sensitivity and growth (if any). The information collected in these three areas had an overlapping effect, such that each area of data collection brought the other areas of data collection into a clearer focus.

Findings

This section will present the findings from this study. Data will be presented in four primary sections: 1) an analysis of pre-post survey data; 2) a presentation of five students' journal-blog entries and background information on participants, 3) an examination of the professor's background information and journal blog entries and 4) an overview of emergent themes, with a focus on ethnocentric participants. Each analysis of blog entries is examined in relationship to Afrocentric pedagogy through the framework of DMIS. Throughout the examination of blogs', key points with excerpts are underlined to place emphasis upon specific sections of the students' comment.

The pre-survey was distributed during the first session in the Afrocentric pedagogy class. Twelve of the fourteen individuals in the class participated in the pre-survey. The post-survey was distributed at the end of the last class session. Eleven individuals participated in the post-survey (one of the original 12 students surveyed was absent).

Work Setting

The participants in this study represented a variety of school and work site settings. None of the participants worked in rural schools. According to the pre-survey, the majority (50%) of the respondents were employed in urban schools, whereas only 16.7% of the respondents stated that they were employed in suburban schools. A significant portion of participants (33.3%) did not work in any educational institution. These students represented a wide variety of workforce sectors, including a biotechnical company, management retail, and a funeral home.

Work Levels

Data was collected from the participants in the pre-survey regarding the school site (K-8, 9-12, 16+) that the respondents were either currently working in, or planned to work in post-graduation. The vast majority of participants (50%) responded that their school sites were or would be elementary schools. None of the participants responded that their work sites or future work sites were or would be middle schools or high schools. A significant portion of the participants (33.4%) responded that their current work sites or future sites would be in institutions of higher education, with 16.7% specifically designating community college sites, and 16.7% responding with four-year

college sites. Two participants marked that they would be or were working at educational

sites outside of the K-16+ educational system. One of these participants illustrated a

desire to work as a community educator and the other stated, "no response."

In terms of ethnicity, the participants in the study (75%) were of non-white

backgrounds. African Americans and Caucasian participants were evenly matched, with

each group constituting 25% of the overall class population. Additionally, Asian

Americans and Latinos were also evenly matched (though to a lesser degree than

Caucasians and African Americans). Each group represented 16.7% of the overall

participants. Two respondents marked "Other" and filled in a race that more

appropriately identified their racial background. One participant is of mixed heritage and

wrote "China/Xicana." Through qualitative in-class data collection, the researcher

learned that this participant is racially Chinese, yet culturally Mexican (Xicana). The

other participant that marked "Other" was Brazilian.

Approaching Class with an Open Mind

In the pre-survey, participants were asked whether they felt that they were

approaching the class with an open mind. Only one respondent stated that they strongly

agreed with that statement, whereas the majority (50%) of participants stated that they

agreed with the statement. Some participants were either neutral or opposed to

approaching the class with an open mind. As a result, twenty-five percent of participants

stated that they somewhat agreed and 8.3% of participant stated that they strongly

disagreed with the statement.

In the post-survey, all participants (100%) as opposed to 58.3% in the pre-survey, stated that they either strongly agreed or agreed that they had approached the class with an open mind. This resulted in 63.6% stating that they strongly agreed with the statement and 36.4% stating that they agreed with the statement. No individuals in the post-survey somewhat agreed or strongly agreed with the statement. This is in opposition to data collected in the pre-survey, which illustrated that 25 somewhat agreed and 8.3% strongly disagreed with the statement that they had approached the class with an open mind.

Intention of Utilizing Information Learned

In the pre-survey students were asked if they were approaching the class with the intention of utilizing the information learned in their school sites or future workplaces. Of the respondents, 58.3% strongly agreed and 33.3% agreed with the aforementioned statement. Only one person responded differently and marked "Not Applicable."

In the post-survey, all participants (100%) marked that they either strongly agreed or agreed that they had the intention of utilizing the information learned in the class. This resulted in an overwhelming majority (81.8%) of respondents strongly agreeing with the statement and 18.2% agreeing with the statement. No individuals in the post survey marked "Not Applicable."

Importance of Multiculturalism

In the pre-survey, respondents were asked about their feelings regarding multiculturalism. Specifically, each respondent was asked if they believe that multiculturalism was important. The majority of respondents (50%) stated that they strongly agreed with that statement. The remaining 50% of respondents were broken

down evenly between agreeing (25%) with the statement and somewhat agreeing (25%) with the statement.

In the post-survey, 90.9% of the respondents either strongly agreed or agreed with the statement that they believed multiculturalism was important. Individuals who strongly agreed represented 63.6% of the participants. Respondents who marked "Agree" represented 27.3% of the respondents. Only one student chose an alternative response; that individual marked "Other" and failed to supply reasoning for the answer. In contrast to the pre-survey, no participants marked that they somewhat agreed with the statement.

Importance of Afrocentrism

The pre-survey sought to determine student preconceptions of Afrocentrism. As a result, participants were asked to respond to whether they believed that Afrocentrism was important. Of the respondents, 41.7% strongly agreed with the statement and 33.3% agreed with the statement. A significant portion of the remaining respondents (25%) somewhat agreed with the statement in question.

The post-survey saw a significant increase in the number of participants that strongly agreed that Afrocentrism was important. Of the participants, 81.8% strongly agreed with the statement. Unlike the pre-survey, in which 33.3% agreed, no participant marked that they agreed with the statement. Additionally, only 9.1% of the participants marked that they somewhat agreed with the statement, in contrast to 25% in the pre-survey. Finally, one participant marked "Other," and failed to provide reasoning for their answer.

Promotion of Multiculturalism

Participants were asked to rate their work sites or school sites in terms of promoting multiculturalism. Participants were asked to use a scale ranging from "Excellent" to "Poor." None of the participants in the pre-survey rated their respective sites as "Excellent." Of the participants, 8.3% rated their sites as "Good" and the majority (50%) rated their sites as "Average." Twenty-five percent of the respondents initially believed that their sites were either "Below Average" or "Poor" at promoting multiculturalism. Of the participants who responded, 16.7% believed their sites to be "Below Average" and 8.3% stated that their sites were "Poor" Two individuals failed to respond to the question.

In the post-survey, the responses were more widespread. Similar to the pre-survey no individuals marked that their sites were excellent at promoting multiculturalism. Up from 8.3% in the pre-survey, 27.3% believed that their sites were good at promoting multiculturalism. Down from 50% in the pre-survey, only 18.2% rated their sites as"Average." In the post-survey more individuals believed that their sites were either "Below Average" or "Poor." In the pre-survey, 25% of the respondents marked accordingly, whereas in the post survey 45.5% stated that their sites were either "Below Average" or "Poor" at promoting multiculturalism. As a result, 27.3% marked that their sites were "Below Average" and 18.2% marked that their sites were "Poor." Only one individual chose not to respond to the question and marked "Other."

Promoting Ethnically/Racially Sensitive Pedagogy

In the pre-survey, student respondents were critical about the performance of their school sites in promoting ethnically/racially sensitive pedagogies in the classroom. None

the participants stated that their school sites were "Excellent" or "Good" with this objective. A significant portion (33.3%) stated that their sites were "Average," while 25% stated that their sites were "Below Average." Only one respondent rated their site as "Poor." Many students (33.3%) failed to respond to the question.

In the post-survey, more students viewed their schools' performance in promoting ethnically/racially sensitive pedagogy favorably. Of the participants, 9.1% believed that their school sites were "Excellent" and 18.2% were "Good" at promoting these pedagogies. Contrary to the 33.3% that stated that their sites were "Average" in the pre-survey, only 18.2% of post-survey respondents stated that their sites were "Average." Many participants still viewed their sites as performing negatively. As a result, 27.3% rated their sites as "Below Average" and 9.1% as "Poor." The percentage of students that chose not to answer the question was 18.2%.

Utilizing Afrocentric Pedagogy

Respondents were asked to rate their openness to utilizing Afrocentric pedagogy in their school sites or future school sites. Of the participants, 58.3% viewed their openness as positive, which resulted in 33.3% of students rating their openness as "Excellent" while 25% rated their openness as "Good." The participants who viewed their openness as "Average" and "Below Average" were evenly split at 16.7% each. One respondent chose not to respond.

In the post-survey, significantly more students (81.8%) rated their openness as positive. This resulted in 27.3% rating their openness as "Excellent" and 54.5% as "Good." In opposition to the pre-survey in which 16.7% rated their openness as

"Average," no individuals (0.0%) rated their openness as such. Of the students, only 9.1% rated their openness as "Below average." No individuals rated their openness as "Poor" and one individual opted not to answer the question.

Utilizing Culturally Compatible Pedagogy

In the pre-survey, participants were asked to rate their openness to utilizing cultural compatible pedagogy in their school sites or future school sites. The vast majority (75%) rated their openness as positive. This resulted in 50% of respondents rating their openness as "Excellent" and 25% rating their openness as "Good." Of the respondents, 16.7% marked themselves as "Average." No participants viewed their openness as "Below Average" or "Poor." One student chose not to respond.

In the post-survey, more respondents (89.9%) viewed their openness as positive as opposed as 75% in the pre-survey. However, fewer participants (45.5%), in contrast to 50% of respondents in the pre-survey, rated their openness as "Excellent." Additionally, more participants (36.4%) viewed their openness as "Good," compared to 25% in the pre-survey. No participants viewed their openness as "Average" and only one participant viewed their openness as "Below Average." No individual stated that their openness was "Poor." One participant chose not to answer the question.

Knowledge Base of Afrocentric Pedagogy

In order to understand student pre-knowledge of Afrocentric pedagogy, each respondent was asked to rate their knowledge base of the pedagogy. Only 16.6% of participants believed that their understanding of Afrocentric pedagogy was positive. As a result, only 8.3% of students rated their knowledge as "Excellent." Similarly, the same

percentage (8.3%) of participants rated their knowledge as "Good." A significant portion of students (33.3%) rated their knowledge as "Average" Twenty-five percent of respondents rated their knowledge as "Below Average" and 16.7% as "Poor." One student chose not to respond to the question.

Post-survey results revealed that students' knowledge base of Afrocentric pedagogy increased after the class. Of the respondents, 18.2% rated their knowledge as "Excellent." A noteworthy increase was seen in students who scored their knowledge as "Good." In the pre-survey 8.3% rated themselves as "Good," while in the post survey, 45.5% marked "Good." A small drop was seen in the number of students who marked "Average." In the post-survey, 27.3% rated their knowledge as "Average." No students scored their knowledge base as "Below Average" or "Poor." One student chose not to respond.

Knowledge Base of Culturally Compatible/Relevant Pedagogy

Students were asked about their knowledge base regarding culturally compatible and culturally relevant pedagogy. Only 8.3% of participants rated their knowledge as "Excellent" in the pre-survey. A large portion (33.3%) rated their knowledge as "Good." Nevertheless, the largest segment of the respondents (41.7%) marked "Average." Of the participants, 8.3% of students rated their knowledge base as Below Average." No respondents rate their knowledge as "Poor" and one student chose not to respond.

The vast majority of students rated their knowledge base positively (72.7%) in the post-survey. This resulted in 18.2% of students rating their knowledge as "Excellent" and 54.5% as "Good." Of the remaining students that responded to the survey (18.2%), all

marked their knowledge base of culturally compatible and culturally relevant pedagogy as "Average."

Openness to Utilizing Centric Pedagogy/Principles

Students who responded to the pre-survey were overall favorable (50%) to utilizing race-specific (or centric) pedagogy or principles at their work sites. Of the 50% of participants who viewed their openness as favorable, 16.7% rated their openness as "Excellent" and 33.33% as "Good." Students who viewed their openness as "Average" represented 16.7% of the respondents. No students viewed their openness as "Below Average;" however one student viewed their openness as "Poor." A significant portion of respondents (25%) chose not to answer the question.

Post-survey results revealed that students were much more open to utilizing centric pedagogy or principles in their work sites. According to the data collected, 81.8% of respondents viewed their openness as favorable. The results indicated that 27.3% of respondents viewed their openness as "Excellent" and 54.5% as "Good." No students responded with "Average," "Below Average" or "Poor." A significant, yet more minimal, group (as compared to the pre-survey data) of students chose not to respond. These students represented 18.2% of the respondents.

Summary

Overall, transitions were seen in student self-perceptions. Survey data on students' pre-conceptions about Afrocentrism and culturally-relevant pedagogy revealed that there was a general apprehension to the Afrocentric pedagogy. Post-survey data revealed that participants believed that they were more open to the principles of

Afrocentric pedagogy and more critical of their work environments than they were in the pre-survey. These transitions illustrate that the class had a positive impact upon students with respect to their intercultural sensitivity. They also illustrate the importance of Afrocentrism in that it challenges Eurocentric paradigms and structures. It can be postulated that the initial reaction to Afrocentric pedagogy and culturally-relevant pedagogy was lower in the pre-survey in comparison to the post-survey due to the fact that the majority of students in the class had been educated in a Eurocentric educational system. As a result, acceptance of the pedagogy required students to examine arguments, principles, and phenomenon from an alternative approach.

This section will review journal postings/blog selections from five students who illustrate ethnorelative or ethnocentric traits based upon the framework of DMIS. DMIS in this study focuses upon students' perceptions of Afrocentric pedagogy. Each participant's background information is provided and is comprised of information disclosed in pre-post surveys, as well as journal postings. Two ethnorelative blogs and three ethnocentric blogs are presented. Ethnorelative blogs findings are addressed first. This section is a presentation of five students' journal blog entries, with an analysis of these blogs in relationship to Afrocentric pedagogy through the framework of DMIS. Each individual is introduced with their background information. Throughout the examination of blogs, key points with excerpts are underlined to place emphasis upon specific sections of the students' comment.

Joy Rubbie Background

Joy Rubbie is an African American female student who is self-described in blogs as both "fairly quiet" and a "Christian." Joy Rubbie was an undergraduate major in the sciences and currently works for a Biotech company. Her future plan is to work in a four-year college. Her primary language is English.

Joy Rubbie Blogs.

The first journal posting submitted by Joy Rubbie was on November 1, 2006, prior to the second class session. In this posting she illustrates an openness towards, and support of, Afrocentric Pedagogy (clear aspects of ethnorelativism). This theme is continued throughout her duration in the course. In her posting, she stated:

> From the little that I know and have learned about Afrocentric Pedagogy I will
>
> inform my mother who is a teacher about the issues and their causes
>
> (Eurocentrism). I will encourage her to infuse Afrocentric principles into her
>
> curriculum not from a Multicultural Education perspective but from an
>
> Afrocentric perspective.

In the aforementioned post, Joy writes that she wants to encourage her mother who is a teacher to infuse the pedagogy into her class. Her statement exhibits qualities that are difficult to classify due to the brevity of her point. However, her level of Intercultural Sensitivity towards the curriculum is ethnorelative in nature and borders between the Adaptation and Integration stages with an emphasis on the latter.

According to Bennett (1993), the Adaptation phase is characterized by an understanding and respect for cultural variance (in this case Afrocentric pedagogy). It is clear that Joy is still attempting to understand more about the pedagogy due to beginning

statement, "From the little that I know". However, her statement also exhibits characteristics of the Integration stage. Bennett notes that individuals in the Integration stage can see the world through various cultural lenses. Due to the fact that Joy states that she wants to have her mother incorporate the pedagogy, it is clear that she seeks to integrate what she has learned and employ what is used, thereby honoring the cultural lens of African Americans.

In follow up to the second week of class, Joy exhibited further signs of ethnorelativism. She opened her blog by stating that she was excited about the class and discussed her personal background (i.e. faith, race, sex). Most importantly, she asked other students in the class to be open minded to the conversations and pedagogy. On November 3, 2006, she stated:

My understanding from some of the other blogs is that people are too afraid of saying things because of "hurt" feelings getting involved…I want everyone to say how he or she feels … because at the same time we do need a better understanding of how the world thinks and works. I bring in an open mind wherever I go…

Two primary points (underlined above) can be taken from this post. First, she notes that she wants others to speak freely in the class in order to promote a free exchange of ideas regarding the pedagogy and their perceptions to it. Secondly, she states that she brings an open mind to the dialogue.

Her blog is ethnorelative in nature and indicates that her phase of Intercultural Sensitivity is that of Integration. Bennett notes that there are two stages of Integration;

they are Contextual Evaluation and Constructive Marginality. The difference is that in

Contextual Evaluation, an individual's actions are guided through, evaluated in and then

integrated within, their own cultural context. In the second phase, individuals utilize a

cultural identity that does not subscribe to a dominant culture. In her blog, we see that she

is open to other cultural frames; however, as previously stated she opened her blog by

describing herself in terms of her own cultural context (i.e. personal background). In fact,

she opened the blog with this information. As a result, her statement can be best

classified as in the Contextual Evaluation sub-stage of the Integration stage.

On November 8, 2006, prior to the third class session, Joy posted a blog which

opened with a quote from Murrell (2002) that states "the goal of education is not to

prepare children to fit within the present system, but to revolutionize the system toward

the promise of democracy" (p. 76). After this statement, she wrote:

> With this in mind regarding Afrocentric pedagogy we must consider that the
>
> pedagogy itself is designed to respond to struggle. Specifically, it meets the needs
>
> of African American Students. Considering the fact that Afrocentrism is blatantly
>
> different from that of Euro centrism we must ask whether Afrocentric pedagogy
>
> inherently demands segregation. I believe that due to the fact that schools are not
>
> currently educating blacks that segregation is the only alternative.

This statement illustrates her support for Afrocentric pedagogy, but it also gives

insight to her belief that the pedagogy must exist within a separate cultural context. This

further validates the fact that she is in the Contextual Evaluation sub-stage of the

Integration stage. This can be drawn from this posting because she sees the pedagogy as

best operating within its own cultural context. Though it could be said that she is

exemplifying elements of ethnocentrism due to the fact that she is pushing for

segregation (commonly associated with the Denial/Defense stages), her comment is

based upon the notion of creating an environment that best suits the pedagogy. Therefore,

her comment is ethnorelative because she is attempting to evaluate the pedagogy and

examine teaching through various cultural lenses.

Prior to the fourth class session on November 15, 2006, Joy posted another blog.

This blog illustrates her fervent desire to infuse Afrocentric pedagogy into the curriculum

in schools. It also illustrates her perception of multiculturalism (which is in line with that

of the Afrocentric pedagogy). In her blog she states:

> Multiculturalism is a small way of looking at a huge picture. This type of
>
> pedagogy is not about "teaching about diversity", it's about teaching towards our
>
> worldview but also teaching a way that African Americans learn and it honors the
>
> voice of African Americans, which is far deeper than multiculturalism. This type
>
> of pedagogy is so different from Euro centric practices… Maybe a K-12 school
>
> should be opened up to African American kids exactly how we have HBCUs and
>
> see how well the kids will do.

As can be seen from the posting, Joy notes that honoring the voice of different

ethnic groups (African Americans in this instance) is an important aspect of pedagogy.

This blog further illustrates that she is ethnorelative and believes that all experiences

should be respected and understood. This blog shows that she is a champion for

Afrocentrism and that she is still in the Integration stage within the Contextual Evaluation sub-stage.

On November 29, 2006, prior to the sixth week of class Joy posted a blog regarding the experiences of oppressed groups. In this blog she states that it is important for pedagogy to include and honor the voices of these groups and writes that by doing so positive changes can be seen.

> The five guiding principles that Ginwright discussed was actually an excellent way to refocus Afrocentric reform without taking anything away. It just added a crucial part which is to honor the voices of the people that are oppressed. At the end he gave examples of different coalitions that honored the voices of students and they actually have made some positive changes. This book was an excellent way of refocusing Afrocentrism.

In the aforementioned journal write-up, we see further evidence of the integration states of DMIS. However, in this section, Joy exhibits initial signs of the second sub-stage of the Integration stage, Constructive Marginality. This can be seen by the statement regarding the importance of honoring all oppressed people's voices. This illustrates that Joy, while not denying her own culture, is able to see the importance of multiple cultural frames of operation within pedagogy. Additionally, it shows her willingness to utilize pedagogy that does not subscribe to one dominant culture but recognizes multiple cultural identities.

Overall, it is clear from the five blogs analyzed that Joy Rubbie is in the Integration stage of the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity. By examining

multiple blogs it is clear that she is passionate and supportive of Afrocentric Pedagogy

and that believes that all educational pedagogy should honor the individual voices of

students. Though in the final blog she exhibited at least initials signs of the Constructive

Marginality sub-stage of the model; her blogs more clearly illustrates that she was in the

first sub-stage of the model, Contextual Evaluation.

Doogy Background

Doogy is an African American male student who works in a funeral home.

Doogy's future plan is to work in the community college. His primary language is

English.

Doogy Blogs.

On November 3, 2006, Doogy posted a blog regarding his perception of

Afrocentric pedagogy. Doogy appears very passionate about his support of Afrocentric

Pedagogy. Additionally, the demeanor in which he approaches conversation about the

pedagogy is interesting in that he take a pseudo-instructor role. This role can be seen in

his continual statements regarding the need for students to be open-minded about the

pedagogy. Doogy's postings appear negative in nature with respect to his belief that

individuals in the class will actually utilize the information taught. He writes as if he has

ownership of the pedagogy itself thereby emphasizing the passion that he has for

Afrocentric pedagogy. In one instance his posting appear prophetic in nature in which he

predicts that the class will have problems with buying into the pedagogy. In this regard he

states that the validity of his proposal is something that I can relate to and understand but

I am sure is going to be a hard sale for those who do not wish to acknowledge that they

have played a unknowing role in the underdevelopment of African America children by way of education.

On November 3, 2006, shortly after his previous post on that day Doogy posted another blog. In his blog he pleads with his colleague twice to keep open minds regarding the pedagogy. He argued that the basis for the need to be open minded is based upon the premise that Afrocentric pedagogy is the method in which African Americans will be uplifted. Moreover, he states that the success of African Americans should be based upon a religious or spiritual conviction. Doogy writes:

> If there is something that we do not understand about the lives of others we should do a short historical analysis, make a friend in that arena, and go forth with an open mind, if possible. The idea that we have to love all the kids should make us all look critically and with an open mind of African centered pedagogy... Please do not look at this as a mindless point on the road to your Master's. You must look at this as a developmental point so that you can help all students not just those who you wish to. In education it is a divine conviction that we fall under higher penalties in the realm of life if we mis-lead those who we have a controlling factor in there learning.

Overall, Doogy would be best classified by the Integration stage of DMIS. According to Bennett, individuals in this stage view the world through various cultural lenses and isolate those lenses to exclude their own cultural backgrounds. Doogy's post appears ethnorelative in nature. Doogy views other students in his class as ethnocentric,

as exhibited by his ingrained anger and distrust towards others, especially non-African

Americans. It is interesting to consider if the class was on another topic unrelated to

African Americans whether Doogy would still be considered ethnorelative. In terms of

the sub-stage of the model, Doogy exhibits at least initial signs of the Contextual

Evaluation sub-stage. This will be discussed further in other blogs.

On November 16, 2006, Doogy posted a blog in response to the fourth week of

class. During the previous session there was an irate discussion between Doogy and

Participant #2. In this conversation, Doogy accused Participant #2 of purposefully asking

questions that he felt were unrelated to the course content in order to detract from the

discussion on Afrocentric pedagogy. Participant #2 insisted that she was asking questions

in order to better understand the foundation for the pedagogy. As an observer in this class

session, it did appear that Doogy's comments (though blunt in nature) bore some merit.

In this blog, Doogy begins by offering an apology for his "lack of academic word usage"

(expletives). In addition, Doogy states:

> As educators and future educators and administrators we have a duty to digest and
>
> spread the seed that is given us…I feel that the distractions have come to a point
>
> where it is no longer funny but offensive. I know that there are not dumb or stupid
>
> questions but there are questions that are irrelevant to the class and its goal. We
>
> owe each other the respect to be heard but it must be done in a form of relevancy.

It is clear from this posting that Doogy still sees his role as a pseudo-instructor in

that he is attempting to protect the viability of the class. This is accomplished by his

fervor to maintain an intense conversation on Afrocentric pedagogy and not to get side-tracked with what he deems as irrelevant discussions and/or questions.

As previously stated, Doogy's actions can be best characterized by the Integration stage of DMIS. It is apparent that his goal is to ensure that other students in the class transition from what he sees as ethnocentric or Eurocentric behavior to embracing Afrocentric pedagogy. In this blog he places an importance on respect for other voices; this statement further illustrates his internationalization of Afrocentric points in that one of the primary tenets of Afrocentric pedagogy is to honor unheard voices.

On November 16, 2006, shortly after posting his blog for that day, Doogy posted another blog. In that blog, he further illustrates his disdain for individuals who in his mind change the direction of the topic. Then he begins to address another problem that he sees in the class, the lack of dialogue or apparent disengagement from some students. In his posting, he states:

> We aid dialogue by remaining in a consistent format concerning topic. We impede dialogue by producing questions that are not concerned with that dialogue...Silence to me is not a contribution as all of the teachers in this class know. It shows either a lack of out of class preparation and or indifference. These topics are hot and are on the minds of us all.

Overall, his blog illustrates that he is in the Contextual Evaluation sub-stage of the integration stage. This fact can be seen in that his actions are guided through by the context in which they are (in this case an Afrocentric class). As a result, his actions are integrated to meet the cultural context of the class. The researcher is reluctant to place

Doogy, as well as other African American students, in the final sub-stage of the

Integration stage because the environment in the class is an Afrocentric environment

which is more likely to adhere to their own cultural values. Thus, these individuals cannot

exhibit a cultural identity that does not subscribe to a dominant culture due to the fact that

the class is based upon ingrained cultural concepts within African/African American

culture.

After his November 16, 2006, post, Doogy waited more than three weeks to post

another blog. On December 4, 2006, Doogy posted three blogs within one hour of each

other. None of these blogs give clear insight to his feelings towards Afrocentric

Pedagogy. However, on December on December 13, 2006, Doogy notes that rather than

watching in film in class that he had previously seen, he focused on the facial expressions

of students towards the video.

> Being that I had viewed this film 3 times prior to Saturday, I thought that I would
>
> be interesting to get the facial expressions of the people viewing and then their
>
> comments later. At this time I choose to withhold my comments.

Though no indication is giving in his posting regarding the outcome of his

investigation into the nonverbal behavior of students who chose not to engage in

classroom dialogue it can be inferred from the tone of his post that the outcome showed

negative results. Doogy's comments illustrate that he has internalized the notion that

without infusing Afrocentric principles into the school system that black students will not

succeed. This, coupled with the fact that he is an African American has led him to

become a champion for Afrocentric pedagogy and serve as a watchdog for his

community by focusing on student perceptions to the pedagogy. Interestingly, this study is proposed to accomplish the same goal.

On December 19, 2006, Doogy posted a journal blog. In this blog, he discusses the importance of Afrocentric pedagogy and then talks about his personal observations of student behavior with regard to the pedagogy. In his blog he states:

Afrocentrism is a way that needs to be put into focus for African American students and it needs to be taught to everyone so we can learn like everyone wants to learn the ways of China, Mexico, Spain and other areas. Put Afrocentrism on a platter like this country tries to do everything else. Afrocentrism is pitted as a joke and needs to be taken seriously. My future is in jeopardy.

Overall, there are two primary themes that can be seen through Doogy's postings. First and foremost, he is an avid supporter of Afrocentric Pedagogy and has internalized its principles. Secondly, Doogy takes an authoritative role and ownership of the pedagogy in a manner that places him in a pseudo-instructor role in which he becomes a watchdog for student perceptions of the pedagogy. All in all, his postings illustrate that he is in the Integration stage of DMIS and most likely in the Contextual Evaluation sub-stage.

Sydney's Background

Sydney is a Caucasian female who is currently working in management retail. Her primary language is English.

Sydney's Blogs.

On November 3, 2006, Sydney posted a journal blog following the second week of class. In this posting, Sydney opens by arguing against the idea that all humans are

descendants of Africans due to the fact that she is a creationist. Then, Sydney progresses

into a dialogue regarding the environment of discussion taking place in the course. In her

blog she states:

> I think an important thing to remember for the future is that we cannot make each
>
> other the target for the injustices that the races we represent have committed. With
>
> that said…I realize that in reality the nature itself of my question diminishes and
>
> devalues the suffering and discrimination that African Americans have endured.

This blog illustrates that Sydney understands that her actions underscores the

suffering that African Americans have endured. Sydney is very open in this blog and

throughout the rest of her blogs regarding her White privilege and racist views. Her blog

illustrates key characteristics of the Defense stage of DMIS. In the Defense stage, an

individuals see cultural difference as threatening.

In this blog Sydney states that she should not be blamed for the racial injustices of

her forefathers. This statement is then followed by another statement illustrating that she

knows this view is diminishing of African American history. What is most interesting in

her blog is that she is open about the fact that she has racist views. It would be assumed

that after such as a comment there would be further dialogue regarding her feelings.

However, she then transitions to this statement:

> But I have to argue, look at the history of civilization. Jewish people couldn't hide
>
> what they were very well, slaves in the Roman Empire were physically marked to
>
> identify them as slaves. Even today women can't hide, Middle Easterners can't
>
> hide.

In this statement we see that rather than explaining what she describes as an openly racist statement. She further underscores it by equating African American suffering to other suffering throughout the world.

Overall, this blog illustrates key aspects of the Superiority sub-stage of the Defense stage. In this stage, defense is expressed a high view of one's own culture than an outright denigration of other cultures. This can be seen in her statement in which she defends her perceived White privilege by stating that she recognizes that her comment "diminishes and devalues the suffering and discrimination that African Americans have endured." While not outright slander of African Americans is seen, what can be seen is an inferred high view of her own culture in that she attempts to diffuse the statement with other stories of suffering. Her superiority, though only inferred in this blog, becomes more apparent in future blogs.

On November 26, 2006, prior to the sixth week of class, Sydney posted a journal blog. She begins the blog by stating that she was disappointed to see that the Afrocentric project mentioned in Ginwright's book did not work. This statement seems promising, especially in comparison to the previously mentioned blog. However, what follows further illustrates that she is in the Superiority sub-stage of the Defense stage. In this blog she states her disagreement with Ginwright that hip-hop culture should be embraced in schools as a culturally relevant method of teaching Afrocentric pedagogy. In response Sydney states:

> I understand his logic, but what is going to happen to these same kids that
> graduate thinking that it's okay to enter the workforce with language, dress, etc.

that is hip hop. It certainly isn't acceptable in any occupation that I know of (unless you're a hip hop rap artist) to show one's underwear, wear ball caps sideways, gold necklaces or frankly display African style dress.

In this blog we see that Sydney's perception of hip-hop is negative; this is illustrated by her description of how she views that culture (underlined above). While her tone is of consideration of the future success of the students, it doesn't take into account that students in Afrocentric classes are taught to code switch and develop their double consciousness. Furthermore, the Superiority sub-stage can be seen in what she states immediately following the aforementioned excerpt.

The world of work is business casual, business professional or in working class jobs-uniforms. But isn't the point for these children of Afro centric education to break their own "glass ceiling" and be able to obtain jobs that are progressively better than working class jobs?!

This response gives insight to what Sydney views as a dominant cultural frame. In this blog she juxtaposes African American culture/dress with Eurocentric culture/dress. It is important to note that she presents African American culture in a negative manner and then talks about Eurocentric values. Also, Sydney confuses a cultural artifact of "youth" with that of Black culture. This clothing is not representative of Black dress, though it is representative of the dress of Black youth and other youth. In this blog, Sydney clearly cannot operate with multiple cultural frames in mind -- a key component of an ethnorelative individual.

Sydney's Superiority sub-stage can be further seen in a November 21, 2006, blog,
also on the subject of hip-hop. In this journal posting she is explaining that she disagrees
with Ginwright's version of Afrocentric pedagogy in that it engages hip-hop culture as a
culturally-relevant platform for education. In her blog she states:

> One point that Ginwright makes that I would need strong argumentation about is
> that hip-hop culture "provides an identity that challenges racist practices……"
> What exactly is Ginwright referring to when he speaks of racist practices? I will
> tell you that my filter as a white woman that has grown up watching the hip-hop
> culture personified around me, it only reinforces and affirms my racist ideas and
> stereotypes.

This statement illustrates Sydney's placement in the Superiority sub-stage of
DMIS. Bennett notes that in this sub-stage, variance in culture is deemed inferior to the
culture of the individual in question. This blog shows that her viewpoint of hip-hop
culture is based upon her dominant cultural frame as a "White woman." Then she
explains that as a "White woman," her viewpoint of hip-hop culture strengthens her
admittedly racist ideas and stereotypes.

Sydney's comments were very difficult to dissect due to the apparent struggle
within herself to embrace Afrocentric pedagogy. At one point on November 26, 2006, the
same blog in which she refers to hip-hop culture with negative connotations she
states, "I have to say I could hardly wait to get to the end of this book. I was anxious to
see if the Afro centric project worked and was very disappointed that it didn't." Even
with this statement in mind, it is clear that her own dominant culture prevented her from

being able to truly embrace Afrocentric pedagogy. Overall, Sydney rarely spoke directly regarding her feelings of Afrocentric pedagogy; however, her viewpoints were clear regarding her placement in the Superiority sub-stage of the Defense stage of DMIS.

Carly's Background

Carly is a white female who works in management retail. She her primary language is English.

Carly's Blog.

On November 2, 2006, Carly posted her first blog in the class. Carly begins her blog by posing a series of unanswered questions regarding her viewpoint of the pedagogy. Nowhere in this statement does she describe her feelings toward, or perceptions of, Afrocentric pedagogy. This pattern is common throughout all of her postings. Participant #1 states:

> Is African American pedagogy the answer? Is equity pedagogy the answer? My understanding of equity pedagogy is when the teacher modifies the curriculum in a way that incorporates different teaching styles that includes diverse racial, cultural, and different economic groups.

In terms of the actual tenets of the pedagogy that she either supports or opposes, her posting illustrates that she does understand that Afrocentric pedagogy seeks to infuse the history of African Americans not currently in the curriculum. In the same posting she states:

> I think that it is important for all people of all races and cultures to study and understand the slave trade and the kidnapping of over 20 million people from the

Ivory Coast. All children need to understand the horrific event that has affected

every person that has walked on this earth's surface.

While it is clear that she is in support with at least one of the essential tenets of

the pedagogy (reclamation of African/African American history), it is also clear in this

blog that there is apprehensiveness towards the pedagogy. This can be seen her statement:

I think this type of teaching process is exciting, but how honest will people be

because they are too worried about what others will think of them. Plus, how can

people be completely honest without offending someone?

This blog illustrates a high-level uneasiness with the possibility that Afrocentric

pedagogy may offend individuals in the class, though the reason for the uneasiness

towards the pedagogy is never explained.

In this blog, recurring themes from the first blog begin to take form. This blog

though ambiguous in nature illustrates Carly's discomfort with Afrocentric pedagogy.

This blog is show in order to illustrate Carly's style of response, which includes a series

of questions followed by either a quote, song lyric, vague statement or regurgitation of

what an author has stated. In this case, this blog illustrates a vague statement in which she

neither answers the question posed nor explains her feelings towards Afrocentric

pedagogy. For instance, Carly asked as series of unanswered questions:

What is multicultural education? Is it equity in education or does that promote

more impediments than advantages? ... Does multicultural include gender issues

or people with disabilities?

Then Carly begins discussing an unrelated topic which is loosely related to the readings but not directly related to Afrocentric pedagogy. In this case, the topic is origin coaching:

> In the introduction the author used coaching as an analogy to teaching. He said, "A coach is the teacher who focuses on practice not on things unrelated to the actions of hitting and diving." In this statement the author is saying that the coach teaches the skill needed to hit the ball and that is all. I believe that teachers and coaches have many similarities in their practices, but there is also a big difference. Teachers are required to push the curriculum that is already scripted for them. Little creativity is allowed due to time constraints and content. Coaches do more than teach the skills that are necessary to be successful at a sport; they learn what motivates the child and uses that to help them flourish.

Then Carly begins to talk about the discomfort resulting in discussing Afrocentric pedagogy:

> I think this type of teaching process is exciting, but how honest will people be because they are too worried about what others will think of them. Plus, how can people be completely honest without offending someone?

Then Carly finishes by posing more unanswered questions followed by vague statements:

> Is African American pedagogy the answer? Is equity pedagogy the answer? My understanding of equity pedagogy is when the teacher modifies the curriculum in a way that incorporates different teaching styles that includes diverse racial,

cultural, and different economic groups. It is sad that so many children adapt to schooling as a routine without meaning.

Overall, her postings in this first blog can best be characterized as ethnocentric in nature. This is due to the fact that she is seen avoiding direct statements about the pedagogy in the first excerpt and illustrating an attitude of concern about individuals' feelings towards the pedagogy in the third excerpt. The only discussion related directly to Afrocentric pedagogy was a regurgitation of what the author said about the pedagogy and a series of unanswered questions, followed by more vague statements.

On November 2, 2006, Carly posted a follow-up blog in response to the discussion in class. She opens her blog by noting the universalism of everyone in the class with regard to thoughts, beliefs and experiences. In her blog she states:

> We all bring different experiences and beliefs to the discussions. We often times expect people to be where we are in our thoughts; however, that is arrogant thinking. We can not pressure people to think like we think, but instead realize that every word uttered by us is an experience. Who better to learn from than one another?

Her blog would appear ethnorelative in nature due to the fact that she discusses the importance of multiple cultural frames; however, the method in which this statement is presented is defensive in nature. This can be seen by the fact that she negatively addresses students who discussed their feelings in class and referred to others in the class as unwilling to listen. She then goes on to refer to the class itself as a reflection of societal hierarchy.

I think that it is unfortunate that people are not willing to listen to what people are

saying without taking the comments personally and acting as such. I appreciate

passion through productive communication and channel it in a productive manner.

I found it interesting that our class was a reflection of our societal system. I think

that there is no hierarchy to oppression and we should realize that everyone's pain

is legitimate and we need to learn not to inflict an additional pain on one another.

Overall, Carly seems to be illustrating characteristics of the defensive stage.

According to Bennett, this stage can be identified by actions, "intended to counter the

impact of specific cultural differences perceived as threatening" (p. 34). In light of her

statements in which she castes the classroom dialogue as negative and then is derogatory

towards the class herself with the aforementioned underlined statement, it appears as

though she is deflecting or countering the cultural difference in opinion that she is facing.

On November 8, 2006, prior to the third class session, Carly posts another blog

that can be is a string of unanswered questions, quotes and vague dialogue. However,

within this verbiage one clear point is beginning to emerge; Carly is uncomfortable with

Afrocentric pedagogy. In her blog she states:

The school system here in the states is failing all students and some sort of

revolution needs to take place. Is African centered pedagogy the answer? Will the

children in the community that are not Black be allowed to attend these schools?

If not, will they be the next generation of children to be miseducated?

This is not the first time that Carly has asked about the validity of Afrocentric pedagogy.

Twice in her first blog she states:

> Is African American pedagogy the answer?...... Is African American
>
> pedagogy the answer?

Carly's continual posing of this question gives insight to her perception of Afrocentric pedagogy. It appears as though she is unclear about whether Afrocentric pedagogy is the answer to the ills of the educational system. This may be the reason why Carly has a pattern of avoiding dialogue about the pedagogy and why she has placed unanswered questions, lyrics, quotes and vague statements regarding Afrocentric pedagogy.

Even more interesting is the statement that Carly closes this blog with. In this statement, Participant #1 openly admits that she is struggling with Afrocentric pedagogy, however, the reason that she states that she is struggling is that she is not from the status quo mentality. In her blog she states:

> I am having a hard time with this book because I do not come from the status quo
>
> mentality... All people should be able to have the opportunity to be successful and
>
> if that is incorporating African American pedagogy, then I am in support of
>
> equality. If African centered pedagogy transform the students and they are
>
> thriving in this environment, do they become the oppressors and if so why?

It seems that when one considers the combination of blogs that Carly is in the Superiority sub-stage of the Defense stage. In the underlined excerpt above Carly shows that she is struggling with Afrocentric pedagogy due to the fact that she is worried about a reversal of power as a result of the pedagogy. This statement indicates her position in the Superiority sub-stage of the Defense stage.

According to Bennett (1993), individuals in the Superiority sub-stage are characterized by viewing variance in culture as inferior to the culture of the individual in question. While Carly never specifically states that her culture is more superior, her avoidance of the subject seems to indicate a more superior viewpoint or pedagogy that Afrocentric pedagogy. Additionally, it can be stated that she does deem Afrocentric pedagogy as inferior due to her reoccurring statements concerning whether Afrocentric pedagogy is the answer.

On November 15, 2006, prior to the further week of class Carly posted a blog. This blog had two important themes that could be extracted from it. First and foremost, Carly continues in her style of posing a series of unanswered questions:

> How was your self identity developed and is it transforming because of your current school experience? I want to know how doing well in school is equated with being "White" and what exactly does that mean? ... Was I conforming to the system so I could get what I wanted or was that exactly how the system was set up?... I want to be informed why this is the solution to the academic struggles that African Americans face? Will this lead to a reduced amount of Black men in prison? Is there a direct correlation to the education system and crime? If so, will African American pedagogy change the faces of the prison system? And last, how will the system be implemented and by whom?

Carly's questions are very defensive in nature and come across as aggressive, rhetorical questions rather than questions truly seeking an answer. Afterward, Carly poses a question regarding the nature of the acceptance of Afrocentric pedagogy into the

curriculum. Her statement illustrates her uneasiness towards the possible implementation of Afrocentric pedagogy with regard to the specific.

> If the school system is a reflection of society, then how would African American pedagogy benefit the population that it is trying to educate? Who is going to re-write the history books so that they reflect the truth about how America came about and how race became the only thing that matters?

Overall, this blog shows that Carly remains in the Superiority sub-stage of the defense stage due to the fact that she is worried that Afrocentric pedagogy will result in a shift of power. While it is not clearly stated that her worry derives from the desire to maintain her cultures power, it can be inferred by the defensives of her statements as well as her increasing hostility towards the pedagogy.

On November 17, 2006, Carly posted a blog in follow-up to the fourth week of class. In this blog she talks asks whether there are scholars who are African American that disagree with the pedagogy. In her blog she states:

> There are many names of influential African American people that I have no prior knowledge of. How does one go about finding out how these people have impacted or influenced African American culture? Are there black scholars that discount African American pedagogy?

This is an interesting question to ask when one considers that on November 8, 2006, Carly was having a hard time with the book. Additionally, only two days earlier on November 15, 2006, she was asking basic questions about the pedagogy regarding how it could benefit the population it is designed to serve. These statements illustrate that Carly

lacks a basic understanding of the pedagogy. As a result, her desire to examine the other side of the Afrocentric coin without a true understanding of Afrocentric pedagogy seems to illustrate her desire to negate the pedagogy rather than to truly understand both sides. This further illustrates her placement in the Defense stage of DMIS.

On November 27, 2006, Carly posted a blog prior to the fifth class session. This blog included a reoccurring question that has permeated Carly work since the first blog regarding the validity of Afrocentric pedagogy. In her blog she states:

> Is African centered pedagogy the answer to rejuvenating this community? Would African centered pedagogy exclude educating the non-black at McClymond's High School? Could the Latino, Asian, and White children learn from this pedagogy and help them be prepared for a future in education or a job of their choice?

From this blog it is clear that Carly still has concerns regarding the basic principles and success of the pedagogy. Again this excerpt is characterized by a series of unanswered questions that seemingly attack Afrocentric pedagogy without truly addressing its principles.

Bennett notes that individuals in the Defense stage recognize the reality of cultural variance and create a defense to it. In this case, Carly has created a defense to Afrocentric pedagogy by creating a series of questions that hint at its inferiority but never actually address the pedagogy itself. As a result, she consistently chips away at what she perceives as shortfalls in the pedagogy through her questions without ever having to discuss the answers to those questions.

All in all, more can be judged from her statements from what she did not say rather than what she did. Overall, it is clear from the excerpts taken from Carly's postings that she is in the Defense stage and the Superiority sub-stage of DMIS. Her tone towards Afrocentric pedagogy is very negative and she has developed ways to negate the pedagogy without appearing too antagonistic.

One theme that was apparent throughout her writings was her continual question about whether Afrocentric pedagogy was the best method of instruction (or answer) for students. This statement was seen four times in her writings prior to November 28, 2006. On November 29, 2006, this student stated, "It was decided, without input from the students, that African centered pedagogy was the answer." From this statement it is clear that Carly has a negative perception of the pedagogy. Her word usage of "it was decided" insinuates that the pedagogy was forced upon the students, thereby suggesting an unsupportive perception of Afrocentric pedagogy.

Shakira's Background

Shakira is a student of Brazilian descent whose future plans consist of working in a community college. Shakira is a female student whose primary language is Portuguese.

Shakira's Blogs.

On November 1, 2006, Shakira posted a journal blog prior to the second week of class. Shakira started her blog by stating the following regarding Murrell (2002), the author of the first book in the class:

I must confess I carry some prejudice against people that find they have an answer for it all. I found the preface and introduction to be too self centered, and as a

consequence started the book unhappy with his "I have THE answers for African American Education" statements.

It is clear from the aforementioned statement that Shakira is very negative (at least initially) towards Afrocentric pedagogy. She characterizes this negative view not in relationship to race but in her view that the author is a know it all and is self-centered. Immediately after making this statement, Shakira states the following:

I don't know if it is for my lack of the cultural background necessary for the reading or…my language learning process. But…I could not reach him in some parts of his discourse.

In this statement we see that Shakira is having trouble with the pedagogical concepts presented by Murrell in his book. She states two primary reasons that she believes this problem may be arising. Regardless of which problem it is, her statement illustrates placement in the Defense stage of DMIS. Bennett notes that individuals in this stage counter the impact of specific cultural differences perceived as threatening. Furthermore, Bennett explains that these cultural differences, when encountered, challenge the individual's primary identity or cultural reality.

Overall, her placement in the Defense stage can be seen by her statements immediately following the above excerpt. She finishes her blog by stating a series of three statements which seek to question the legitimacy of Afrocentric pedagogy and its method of addressing the U.S. educational system. In her blog she is critical of Murrell definition and viewpoint of schooling:

Although he states that education is not a synonym to schooling, so far, I have

only seen a redefinition of a system of teaching and learning that aims at

performance and comfort levels inside the classrooms.

Her disagreement with the purpose of education as expounded by Murrell:

Murrel talks a lot about methodology in a one size fits all view. I personally do

not believe in systems of education for freedom. Systems are per se coercive,

tendentious, hegemonic and stereotypical.

As well, note the centrist view that Afrocentric pedagogy takes in addressing the issues

that African American students face in the educational system:

Finally, although I feel the author was very successful at combining relevant

theories into proposing a more efficient pedagogy, I feel that contextualization,

socialization of knowledge, meaning making etc should be objectives common to

all students in the American educational system.

These statements are most interesting when one considers that this is only the

second class session and there has been little progression yet through the book.

Additionally, Shakira states in future posts that she has little knowledge of African

American issues as well as Afrocentric pedagogy. Overall, these statements illustrate her

negative demeanor towards the pedagogy prior to a full understanding of it.

On November 8, 2006, Shakira posted a journal blog prior to the third week of

class. In this blog Shakira begins by stating, "I am still fighting to understand some of

Murrell's writings on the book." As a result, this excerpt further solidifies the remarks

made in the previous paragraph regarding her minimal understanding of the pedagogy

coupled with a negative attitude to Afrocentrism. After making this statement, Shakira

goes on to state the following:

> I feel that there are some interesting aspects of his pedagogy that deserve
>
> attention….Murrell is very fortunate in creating a methodology that may be easily
>
> taught and managed by African American Educators within the contemporary
>
> American Status Quo.

Two important points can be taken from this excerpt. First and foremost, her

language regarding Afrocentric pedagogy with the usage of the word "some" (as

underlined above for emphasis) illustrates that Shakira is not receptive to the

comprehensive strategy of the pedagogy. Secondly, Shakira notes that Afrocentric

pedagogy can be easily taught and managed by African Americans in the current

American status quo. This statement, though hard to understand, seems to indicate that

this pedagogy can only be easily understood by the African American middle class. Later

in this blog Shakira begins to establish further evidence of her defense towards

Afrocentric pedagogy. Shakira states:

> Secondly, because I believe in no magic for change, I personally feel that there is
>
> no recipe for critical thinking, and therefore I do not believe it here is a simple
>
> way to "train" teachers in practice with the necessary skills to address the needs of
>
> AA or any other oppressed groups. This blog illustrates that Shakira does not
>
> believe that Afrocentric pedagogy has the ability to change that status of African
>
> American education. This excerpt is clearly ethnocentric in nature when Shakira's

previous statements regarding Afrocentric pedagogy from November 1, 2006, are taken into account.

On November 15, 2006, prior to the fourth week of class Shakira posted a journal blog. In this blog she stated:

> According to Murrel mainstream culture differs from AA. Considering that in order to be successful in the American (USA) society, you have to join the mainstream, and considering my AA colleagues as successful people, my first question is: What are the parts of your ethnic and racial heritage that you sacrificed to join the mainstream and which are the tools that enable you to operate well in your community, of scientists, educators etc.

The statement above starts with the assumption that African Americans who have made it in society have joined the mainstream culture. Furthermore, Shakira states that these students have been forced to "sacrifice" their cultures in order to do so. This statement does not take into consideration the double consciousness of African Americans and the major emphasis within Afrocentric pedagogy of embracing both cultural frames. This statement emphasizes Shakira's inability to operate with multiple cultural frames in mind.

The point raised above seems to establish that Shakira is in the Superiority sub-stage of the Defense stage. Bennett notes that individuals in this sub-stage address defense through a positive evaluation of their own culture. Additionally, Bennett notes that variance in culture is deemed inferior to the culture of the individual in question. While she does not outright denigrate African American culture, she views Eurocentric

culture as the dominant culture with the positive evaluation that without the sole support

of this culture, African Americans would be unable to succeed in American society.

Overall Shakira's blogs illustrate her negative perception of Afrocentric pedagogy and

her placement within the Defense stage and Superiority sub-stage of DMIS.

Jennie's Background

Jennie is a woman who is ethnically Chinese and culturally Xicana. She current

works in an urban K-12 school. Her future plan in to work in a community college. Her

primary language is Spanish.

Jennie's Blogs.

On November 2, 2006, Jennie posted a blog prior to the second week of class.

This blog began with a quote, one by prominent author Michael Eric Dyson and the other

a traditional Hispanic greeting which was translated from Spanish to English. Jennie then

points to a point made in one of the readings regarding the implementation of Afrocentric

pedagogy, she states:

> In his example of the teacher who "attempted to coax the young man" to read
>
> books written by multi cultural authors, only to have him "retort emphatically, 'I
>
> know, Ms. L. But I'm not multi. I'm Black!' My immediate response to this
>
> sentence was "Mr. Murrell, But I'm not Black. I'm multi." I am multicultural and
>
> bilingual and I am sure there are many individuals of African ancestry residing in
>
> America who are also like me "multi".

This statement illustrates a veiled ambivalence towards Afrocentric pedagogy

based upon the notion that it is a centric pedagogy. African Americans in the United

States are descendants of slaves, many however are comprised of multiple racial groups. In American society African Americans regardless of mixture have been referred to by society simply as African Americans. The 1896 ruling of Plessy v. Ferguson can substantiate this fact.

With these points in consideration it becomes clear that Jennie lacks a basic understanding of African American history and cultural patterns that permeate the culture and create the need for Afrocentric pedagogy. Regardless of this knowledge base, it is apparent that Jennie's statements are ethnocentric in nature. An analysis of another excerpt from this blog allows us to further classify her perceptions of Afrocentric pedagogy. Jennie states:

> I get a sense from all this reading that he has "the" answer, or "the" one size that fits everyone, and that all African American students who live in urban settings are the "same" and it leaves me wondering about the African American students in the rural settings of this country and the education they have been and are receiving.

This statement illustrates that Jennie is in the Defense stage of DMIS. In this ethnocentric stage, individuals perceive cultural differences (in this case Afrocentric pedagogy) as threatening. In both blogs, Jennie is defensive and attempts to reduce the importance of a centric pedagogy by noting the diversity within society that prevents this approach.

Between November 2, 2006, and November 15, 2006, Jennie's blogs were ambiguous and quote heavy. They appeared to support Afrocentric pedagogy but never

made a declaration in any such matter. Then on November 15, 2006, Jennie posted a blog

after the fourth week of class. In her blog she states:

> I acknowledge Murrell's effort as another voice to begin to remove the variables
>
> that create this "condition". Not being a classroom teacher I end up feeling that it
>
> is still a one size fits all approach, except in his case it seems he is saying that it
>
> just fits some better than others. At this point in my life I still cannot
>
> simplistically separate my heart from my brain. I feel I understand Murrell
>
> cerebrally but my spirit just cannot applaud him. Perhaps a lot of this is my age. I
>
> have heard, seen, read and felt much in my 60 years of life. And as much as I like
>
> to talk and ask questions one would think I should practice "silence" in class…

In this blog it is apparent that Jennie does not have a positive perception of

Afrocentric pedagogy. Her opposition is made clear by the statement regarding her

spiritual inability

to embrace the pedagogy. In fact, preceding her comment regarding her viewpoint of

Afrocentric pedagogy, she states that she will become silent in class.

This statement further illustrates her placement on the defense stage of DMIS.

Moreover, it suggests that she has reverted back to the Denial stage in that she has

isolated herself mentally from the class. Isolation and Separation are cardinal indicators

of the Denial Stage. Bennett notes that in some circumstances individuals who exhibit

traits of the sub-stage of denigration also exhibit traits of the *denial* stage. As a result, it is

clear that Jennie is in the denigration sub-stage of the defense stage which allows her to

mentally transition to and from the denial stage in order to maintain her defense of cultural variance.

On November 24, 2006, Jennie posted a blog prior to the fifth week of class. In her blog she reverts back to the Defense stage by attempting to transition the dialogue on Afrocentric pedagogy to a dialogue on class. In her blog she states:

> It is from this relative position that the notion of wealth and poverty exists and vice versa! And having created a middle class the hegemonic society can now say "see it's not about race it's about class"…I wonder if "middle class" income teachers and administrators who say they are proponents of Afrocentric theory, will approach the implementation of the AA curriculum from a class rather than race viewpoint?

While some of the points Jennie makes are valid, it simply does not directly relate to Afrocentric pedagogy. Her questions seek to transition the pedagogy of culture to focus on class. This statement is in line with previous statements made by Jennie which sought to focus more globally on issues facing children in school rather than employing a racial centric pedagogy.

On December 8, 2006, Jennie posted another journal blog. However, in contrast to previous blog, the information inferred from this blog is not based upon what Jennie stated, but what she did not state. In her blog she simply posted two words, "no comment." This action further illustrates her toggling to and from the defense and denial stages.

Her transition is exhibited in two ways: 1) her statement that she would be silent and, 2) her refusal to participate in the only non/verbal outlet in class, the blog. Her last journal posting on December 11, 2006, followed a similar pattern to the December 8, 2006 blog. However, in her final blog, rather than simply stating no comment, she posted a quote. No dialogue was given to justify the importance of the quote, its relationship to Afrocentric pedagogy or her perception of the pedagogy.

Overall, many of Jennie's postings avoided her perceptions of Afrocentric pedagogy. Rather they focused on filling posting space with quotes, poems, regurgitations of what an Afrocentric researcher has stated or vague statements. It is clear from her postings that when these methods do not work that simple avoidance of discussion or even nonverbal communication will take place.

This section presents background information collected from the instructor during an interview that took place on Tuesday, August 8, 2006, between 1:00 and 2:30 in Dr. Yvette Anderson's office. The data provided focuses on the instructor's background, epistemology and philosophy as it may impact the classroom engagement to Afrocentric pedagogy. Pseudonyms are provided for the Universities that she attended and are provided in order to ensure anonymity.

Professor journal postings are also addressed in this section. As the instructor of the Afrocentric pedagogy class, Dr. Yvette Anderson asked students to respond to web-postings on her website. The blog served multiple purposes in that it allowed the instructor to communicate as a whole with the class between sessions for assignment

instructions, assigned additional readings, and most importantly to give students prompts to respond to.

This study was most interested in Dr. Anderson's prompts that resulted in reaction to classroom dialogue. The purpose of analyzing these prompts was to determine Dr. Anderson's view (if any) of the class's Intercultural Sensitivity. While Dr. Anderson's posting on her view of the class's Intercultural Sensitivity did not extend throughout the whole class ample data was provided from the commencement of class to the first Saturday session.

Professor's Background

Dr. Yvette Anderson is in her sixth year of teaching at a public four-year university in Northern California. Five of those six years have been as a tenure track teacher. In 1992, she received a Bachelor of Arts degree in journalism with a public relations emphasis from Green State University. In 1994, Dr. Yvette Anderson obtained a Master of Arts degree in education from the University of California Bay. Her master's thesis focused on African American language varieties.

In 1996, after returning to Green State University she acquired a second Bachelor's Degree in English. After attending Mustang University, she received her doctorate (PhD) in Education. Her dissertation is titled, "Walking the Tightrope: How High Achieving African American Students Negotiate Their Social and Academic Identity".

Dr. Anderson designed the Afrocentric pedagogy course. She gained the background needed for the designing of the course from literature that she read while in

her PhD program at Mustang University. Dr. Yvette Anderson's educational philosophy is to prepare students to operate effectively in the development, implementation and analysis of educational policies and programs affecting the academic lives of low income, culturally and linguistically diverse students in K-12 public schools, and at the university level (personal communication, 2006). Currently, Dr. Anderson is engaging her educational philosophy through work with community organizations and promotion of student achievement at her university.

There were three clear reemerging topical areas that were raised throughout the interview; lack of support for African American issues, changing paradigms and pedagogies and classroom encounters with Afrocentrism.

Lack of Support for African American Issues

Dr. Yvette Anderson has consistently encountered professors and colleagues who lacked the desire to impact issues that are important to African Americans. During her PhD program at Mustang University, Dr. Anderson encountered no professors in the education department who truly had an understanding of African American issues and/or were vested in such issues. As a result, Dr. Anderson had to engage professors outside of her department who were able to work with her. There was so little support from her department that Yvette initiated most of her readings on African Americans and Afrocentrism.

After becoming a professor at a public four-year university in Northern California, Dr. Anderson began to create courses within the Multicultural Education department that looked at educational issues through an Afrocentric lens. Though the

department supported it with votes, there was definitely a reluctance to do so. As a result, when asked whether she felt she had the support of her department and fellow faculty members she stated;

> yes and no, yes in terms of the fact that they don't try to undermine my efforts, no in terms of the fact that they are not engaged or committed to issues regarding African Americans from a centric perspective.

Changing Paradigms and Pedagogies

Another reoccurring theme was the fact that multicultural education has taken an overly broad view of ethnic issues. Dr. Yvette Anderson stressed that in multicultural education teachers often talk about issues regarding African Americans, Latinos and Native Americans as if they have one world view and background. Dr. Anderson states:

> Diversity often times was a catch all lets examine this situated-ness of all people and kind of examine everybody's perspective and that's fine and well and good but then there are times when we need to be centric. And look at particular groups experiences; because there is differences, there are differences. Yes, multiculturalism is wonderful, it is important, but sometimes we need to step out of the lens of looking at everyone and become more focused in looking at particular groups.

The professor also noted that the department was weary of classes that approached multicultural education from a centrist view. She stated her department has historically taken the broad multicultural view, rather than the centrist view except with regards to her Afrocentric class and a Hmong literacy class.

Dr. Yvette Anderson's comment is similar to that of Peter Murrell's (2002), who is highly critical of multicultural education. He believes the multiculturalism has been created to educate Caucasians about minorities in general.

Classroom Encounters with Afrocentrism

Students encountering Afrocentrism had difficulty understanding it due to the fact that it is a world view as well as pedagogy. Dr. Anderson stated:

Students had difficulty with comprehending Afrocentrism. Many came into the class with preconceived notions that Afrocentrism is anti-white when it actually is not. After students were able to get past this notion, man saw Afrocentrism as a plausible method for teaching all students, not just African Americans.

The professor noted that the Afrocentric class was extremely diverse in terms of race, religion and socioeconomic status. The class was structured in such a manner that it required everyone to participate with resulted in intense dialogue. She stated that at more than one class session people were confronted with their westernized worldview and when it was challenged, had a hard time dealing with it.

Dr. Anderson mentioned that during one class session, half the class left crying as they began to deal with the highly emotional content. On many occasions students admitted that racism towards African Americans had been embedded from childhood. Particularly interesting was that this embedded racism was not only mentioned by white students, but other minority students as well.

Professor Journal/Blog Postings

On the second week of class, Dr. Anderson posted a journal blog which began by praising the eagerness to post by one student in the class named Tyrone. The blog also supported Tyrone's comment that change evokes discomfort and used that statement as an avenue to address the whole class. With regard to the whole class, Dr Anderson stated on November 2, 2006:

> People are speaking honestly about how they are challenged to conceptualize the ideas that are represented in this text currently. This is a good thing and i hope that we all can be critical about the content and relate this content to our own experiences and world view -- "situated cognitive theory" folks…Now the challenge is to not negate how others perceive and articulate their world view because their perspectives are valid (culturally situated).

It is clear in this response that some individuals in the class are exhibiting signs of defense. This is due to the aforementioned underlined statement which addresses the apparent negation of others' perceptions. It appears in this statement that the professor is referring to student perceptions of Afrocentrism. Furthermore, the professor feels that it is necessary to state that alternative world views and perspectives are valid.

These statements seem to indicate that some individuals in the class are in the sub-stage of Denigration. Bennett (1993) notes that individuals in the Denigration sub-stage have a "derogatory attitude toward difference" (p. 35). Typically this sub-stage is accompanied by verbal hostility. The professor's attempt to quell negative perceptions

and open the door for dialogue seems to indicate an attempt to address an apparent

negation and denigration of cultural difference.

There were two blog postings in follow-up to the second class session. The

second posting both addressed knowledge of African American history and openness to

Afrocentrism and Afrocentric pedagogy. On November 3, 2006 Dr. Anderson wrote:

Next, I realize that people have a general lack of knowledge about the historical

experiences of African Americans. This gap will be off-set by the historical

content that I will integrate through the films… Lastly, I think our dialogue the

other night was lively, powerful, and necessary. And I agree with many

comments. But I think an important one is that people are already trying to

"discredit" a knowledge base that they have yet to learn and fully understand. So I

would encourage all to continue their critical reading and attempts at

understanding (in full).

Similar to the previous post, individuals in this class session are clearly exhibiting

signs of the defense stage. In this post, the professor is addressing some students'

apparent attempts to "discredit" Afrocentric pedagogy. According to the post this defense

is unwarranted with respect to the fact that the individuals in question are discrediting the

pedagogy without a sufficient knowledge base of the pedagogy to do so.

Bennett (1993) notes that individuals in the Defense stage perceive culturally

variant phenomenon as threatening. Judging by the professor's remarks in this section, it

seems that individuals in this class are acting in alignment to the Defense stage. Again, it

seems as though the professor is referring to *defense* actions that are in the Denigration

sub-stage. This is due to the fact that the individuals in the class to which the professor is referring are discrediting Afrocentrism.

In follow-up to the fourth class session, Dr. Anderson made a statement regarding her feelings about how some students viewed the content in the classroom. On November 16, 2006 Dr. Anderson stated:

Now, I feel frustrated at times when I perceive a tendency to deflect issues or perceive a lack of willingness to examine a perspective that emanates from anothers "world view". And yes, there are times when i sense a desire to deflect from the content of the text because the reading content is challenging or the issues are complex.... The 3 authors that we are reading are all African American educators. Their scholarship is informed by both research and experience. So, is it possible for you as (a business person, a graduate student, a teacher, a community educator, an administrator, a parent/grandparent, or as a citizen of a democratic, pluralistic, hierarchical, stratified country) to step outside of your own "lens" and give credence to "cultural knowledge", and validate the perspectives of scholars who happen to be writing from a point of view as an educator, a social scientist, and a community "insider"?

There are few primary points (underlined above) that can be construed from the post above. First and foremost, it is clear from the statement above that some students in the class are still revealing signs of ethnocentrism. Bennett (1993) discusses how individuals can regress and progress through stages of intercultural sensitivity. From the

first underlined statement, it is apparent that the individuals who were previously showing signs of defense may have regressed to the Denial stage.

The first sub-stage in the Denial stage is Isolation. Isolation can be seen in multiple contexts. For some, it emanates in physical isolation; for others it can be seen in what is described by Bennett as relatively pure isolation. When one reverts to relatively pure isolation they do not experience or validate cultural variance (in this case Afrocentric pedagogy). Rather, they become indifferent to cultural variance and as a result, difference is "overlooked through processes of selective perception" (p. 31). Clearly, from the aforementioned statement, we see that students are in effect mentally isolating themselves from the class. It can first be seen in their deflection of issues (possible denigration) and then by their lack of willingness to give credence to the viewpoints raised (relatively pure isolation).

Finally, we see the professor provide a challenge to the students in the last underlined section. The professor begins by singling out the majority of students by directing the question to students' background (e.g. graduate student, teacher, community educator, etc.) The professor then asks students to open their minds in the class. In the ethnorelativism stage respect is given to cultural variance and individuals begin to operate within multiple cultural frames. By asking students to step outside of their own cultural lens, the professor is seeking a transition from ethnocentrism to ethnorelativism.

In an additional follow-up to the fourth class session, Dr. Anderson responded to a question that she asked students to answer regarding a student's apparent silence in the classroom. On November 17, 2006, Dr. Anderson wrote:

Also, I need to clear any misunderstanding that may have arisen from my questions and [Carly's] response. I do not think any conclusions have been drawn by me. I think my statement was "How does silence contribute to the class or how does silence communicate perhaps indifference, disinterest, or a lack of engagement?". The operative word here is "perhaps" and certainly does not encapsulate the totality of human response. I also find it interesting that the first part of the question (preceding the "or") was missed -- "How does silence contribute to the class?" (p.)

According to Bennett's model, the Denial stage of DMIS can result in relatively pure isolation. This stage as previously discussed in the November 16, 2007, post had become the modus operandi for students in the class who (for various reasons) did not want to engage in the course curriculum. As a result, the professor gave an assignment in which students were to discuss their catatonic state in the classroom. After giving the assignment, some students questioned the purpose of the assignment. This blog was a response to a student question regarding the nature of the assignment given. Overall, the mental isolation of students is noted by the professor who then begins to employ strategies to reopen dialogue on Afrocentric pedagogy.

Prior to the first Saturday class session Dr. Anderson wrote a blog regarding student engagement to the course curriculum. This post noted that there was a clear positive shift in at least some of the participants' level of engagement. On November 20, 2006, Dr. Anderson stated:

As I read the posts thus far, I see a shift in the manner that individuals are

engaging. Immediately, I see that the discourse has changed, e.g., leaning more

toward critical inquiry as it relates to reading the text. Thus, the insights are

grounded in the text and Ginwrights' "positionality". Great!

The last post written by the professor that discussed student engagement to the

pedagogy noted that there was a dramatic shift in the mental isolation of some students.

While it is not clear that students perceptions of Afrocentric pedagogy were ethnorelative

it is clear that there was some positive development.

In this section, questions posed earlier will be examined including; 1) what levels

of Intercultural Sensitivity do students in the class exhibit, 2) Do these levels reveals

Intercultural sensitivity themes based upon race and gender? Additionally, emergent

themes from ethnocentric participant journal entries will be discussed.

Overall

Of the fourteen participants in the class, five were ethnocentric (35.7%) and nine

were ethnorelative (64.2%) based upon DMIS. As a result, the majority of participants

illustrated signs of openness towards Afrocentric pedagogy as well as a desire to infuse

principles of Afrocentric pedagogy into their worksites. With respect to the six stages of

DMIS, placement of participants were as follows; 0- denial stage, 4- defense stage, 1-

minimization stage, 3- acceptance stage, 2- adaptation stage and 4- integration stage.

By Race

Placement themes in DMIS based upon race were evident in some cases. For

instance, all of the four African Americans were overwhelmingly ethnorelative with

respect to Afrocentric pedagogy and placed in the integration stage of the model. Chicano/Latinos were all ethnorelative with one participant placing in the adaptation stage, and one in the acceptance stage of the model. Themes for Whites, Asians, and Indians were less apparent. For instance, only one Indian-American participated in this study and this individual was ethnocentric and placed in the minimization stage of DMIS. White participants were split with three participants who were ethnocentric and two that were ethnorelative. Finally, Asian-American participants were also split with one participant showing signs of ethnocentrism and the other ethnorelativism. See Table 1 for details.

Table 4.1

DMIS By Race

NAME	RACE	SEX	CENTRIC/RELATIVE	STAGE
Jennie	Asian	Female	Centric	Defense
Linda	Asian	Female	Relative	Acceptance
Doogy	Black	Male	Relative	Integration
Joy Rubbie	Black	Female	Relative	Integration
Tyrone	Black	Male	Relative	Integration
Tameka	Black	Female	Relative	Integration
Gupree	Indian	Female	Centric	Minimization
Jose	Mexican	Male	Relative	Adaptation
Maria	Mexican	Female	Relative	Acceptance
Carly	White	Female	Centric	Defense
Joshua	White	Male	Relative	Adaptation
Sydney	White	Female	Centric	Defense
Shakira	White	Female	Centric	Defense
Karen	White	Female	Relative	Acceptance

By Sex

Themes for participants based upon race were apparent. Males were supportive

Afrocentric pedagogy (based upon DMIS). All of the male participants were

ethnorelative with two in the integration stage and two in the adaptation stage of the model. Females were evenly split with five showing signs of ethnocentrism and five showing signs of ethnorelativism. It is important to note that three out of the four Caucasian females were ethnocentric, with all of those three placing in the defense stage of DMIS. See Table 2 for details.

Table 2

DMIS By Sex

NAME	RACE	SEX	CENTRIC/RELATIVE	STAGE
Carly	White	Female	Centric	Defense
Sydney	White	Female	Centric	Defense
Jennie	Asian	Female	Centric	Defense
Shakira	White	Female	Centric	Defense
Gupree	Indian	Female	Centric	Minimization
Joy Rubbie	Black	Female	Relative	Integration
Karen	White	Female	Relative	Acceptance
Tameka	Black	Female	Relative	Integration
Linda	Asian	Female	Relative	Acceptance
Maria	Mexican	Female	Relative	Acceptance
Doogy	Black	Male	Relative	Integration
Joshua	White	Male	Relative	Adaptation
Tyrone	Black	Male	Relative	Integration
Jose	Mexican	Male	Relative	Adaptation

Emergent Themes for Ethnocentric Participants

Four themes emerged from students who exhibited ethnocentric characteristics:1) there was an avoidance of discussion in journal blogs which often was evidenced by blogs containing series of unanswered questions, regurgitations of authors' points, off subject discussions or withdrawal from participation; 2) There were clear misconceptions of the African Americans and Afrocentric pedagogy were witnessed with the majority of students expressing a lack of understanding of African/African American history; 3) There was a concern with mechanical processes rather than pedagogy; 4) There was a perceived arrogance for those who supported Afrocentric pedagogy evidence by a clear disdain for those individuals, their cultural frames and their diversity of beliefs.

Conclusions

Overall the findings from this study reveal two important points to consider. First and foremost, despite the fact that the participants in this class were students in a Multicultural Education post-graduate program, their responses revealed that more than one-third (35.7%) were ethnocentric. This is a very interesting point to consider, especially when one understands that the Multicultural Education program at the university in question is dedicated to developing teachers and educators who desire to work in non-white communities. As a result, it cannot be assumed that all individuals in Multicultural Education programs have the Intercultural Sensitivity to positively impact non-white communities.

The second important factor to consider is that 75% of the white female participants in this study were ethnocentric in nature (exhibiting central tenets of the

defense stage of DMIS). With consideration that the vast majority of the teaching force in the United States is comprised of Caucasian females, the fact that these women's ideals may parallel the idea of other White teachers is alarming. While the findings of this study cannot be generalized nationwide, statewide or even locally due to the marginal number of participants, this data gives one a glimpse into the dismal reality facing African American students in the current educational system.

In this section, four recommendations are presented as a result of the findings from this study. These recommendations are designed to promote Afrocentric pedagogy within the curriculum of teacher education programs and better identify students who will be willing to utilize these principles within their teaching pedagogy:

1. Many of the participants in the study noted that they lacked a foundation in African/African American history. As a result, all students in this program should be required to take a series of Black history courses in order to better understand the reasoning for, and need, of Afrocentric pedagogy.

2. The idea that African-Centered pedagogy is only for African Americans must be demystified. Unlike Eurocentrism, Afrocentrism does not require the detriment of other groups for its success. However, many individuals struggled with this concept due to the fact that they have been educated in a Eurocentric value system.

3. Teacher education programs must begin to more seriously evaluate the potential success of the individuals in which they are educating. This point becomes especially important for those programs which will bestow post-graduate degrees in Multicultural Education.

When one graduates with a degree in Multicultural Education, it is naturally assumed that they are equipped with the tools, strategies, desire and pedagogy to positively impact non-white communities. However, for those students who graduate and do not possess the desire to implement those strategies, they arguably become more dangerous.

In essence these individuals become the educated opposition (those who possess the knowledge and lingo of Afrocentric pedagogy, but lack the desire to advance its principles). These individuals may be better equipped to articulate an argument against the pedagogy in whole or part, thus derailing the efforts needed to improve the education of African American children. With this problem in mind, education programs must begin to evaluate these individuals.

The researcher suggests that DMIS be used to evaluate individuals in education program in order to identify those individuals who exhibit signs of ethnocentrism. DMIS can be utilized as part of the tool to identify these students using teacher feedback. Ongoing evaluations should be conducted at least once a semester, in order to better understand the quality of educators that are being developed by the program. For those students that continue to exhibit signs of ethnocentrism during multiple evaluation interventions must be put into place. These interventions could include: 1) assignment of courses in African/African American history; 2) interviewing African American students in low performing schools; and 3) intensive faculty mentorship.

The continuation of students who do not exhibit signs of ethnorelativism should be considered in education programs. Just as a math teacher with poor academic

knowledge of mathematics would not be allowed to teach so to should all educators who do not exhibit signs of ethnorelativism. If they are permitted to teach, they may continue to perpetuate a model of education that has led to the generational detriment of African Americans in the United States.

Is Afrocentric pedagogy the answer? This question was raised by many participants in this study. When properly employed with a desire for change the answer is a resounding…Yes. However, as evidenced by this study, students who do not exhibit a high level of intercultural sensitivity toward the pedagogy may be less likely to properly employ the pedagogy. These students do not lack the academic ability or intellectual talent to engage Afrocentric pedagogy, rather their barrier is simply their openness towards it. Universities must continue to raise expectations of teachers to improve the state of African American education in the United States. By demanding more from their students, universities can become a part of the solution in educating African Americans for a better tomorrow.

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