

## ABSTRACT

**DISSERTATION:** Exploring Multicultural Consciousness in Culturally Responsive Novice Teachers

**STUDENT:** Karen A. Dowling

**DEGREE:** Doctor of Philosophy

**COLLEGE:** Teachers College, Ball State University

**DATE:** July 2012

**PAGES:** 229

This qualitative, multisite case study, framed by a constructivist perspective, addresses a deficit in the literature regarding multicultural consciousness of culturally responsive novice teachers. Existing studies identify the importance of culturally responsive pedagogy and the impact of the field of multicultural education on pedagogy that considers teaching and learning of nonmainstream student populations. These studies are inadequate due to their: lack of specific strategies for gaining and sustaining multicultural consciousness in P-12 schools, quantitative nature, or emphasis on preservice teacher education as opposed to in-service teachers in contact with nonmainstream students in the school context.

The significance emphasized was the impact of culturally responsive pedagogy and its impact for narrowing the achievement gap regarding nonmainstream students. The themes that emerged, dimensions of multicultural consciousness, led to implications for: education, an ethic of care, "Otherness," intrinsic motivation, advocacy, and reflexivity. It was concluded that the sustainability of a multicultural consciousness in context is less

persuasive than the case findings for gaining consciousness for culturally responsive pedagogues, yet, all dimensions should be expounded upon for further study and better understanding of the relevant and persisting concern for nonmainstream student achievement.

*Keywords:* multicultural consciousness, culturally responsive pedagogy