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The Effects of Online Anti-Bias Training on In-Service Educator Multicultural Competence

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Abstract

The student population in the United States is becoming increasingly diverse, while the teaching base remains primarily white and female. One skill that helps educators form connections with students and decrease their biases is cultural competence. Thus, educators are often encouraged (and at times required) to participate in professional development training to increase their knowledge in this area. Although previous research has examined educator benefits from professional development trainings in general, and from trainings related to cultural competence, there is limited research into the benefit of online trainings intended to increase educator cultural competence. In this study, 17 educators completed an online training titled, "Critical Practices for Anti-Bias Education." Additionally, they completed the Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale before and after the training to assess differences in multicultural competence. Results obtained using IBM SPSS software indicated a statistically significant difference between pretest and posttest scores. Participants also completed an adapted version of the Usage Rating Profile-Intervention Revised (URP-IR) after the training to measure the acceptability and feasibility of the training. Overall, participants ranked the training as acceptable and feasible. This study supports the use of online anti-bias training to increase multicultural competence.

Keywords: cultural competence, educators, teachers, anti-bias education, online professional development

Acknowledgements

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The Effects of Online Anti-Bias Training on In-Service Educator Multicultural

Competence

Between 1998 and 2018 there was a 41.6% increase in the proportion of minority

students enrolled in United States (U.S.) public schools (Hussar et al., 2020; United States

Department of Education [ED], 2015). These students made up 37% of total students in 1998 and

over half (52.4%) of students enrolled by 2018 (Hussar et al., 2020; ED, 2015). While the

student population continues to grow in diversity, the educator base has not. Most educators in

the U.S. are White (79%) and women (76%), meaning many educators are working with students

with different backgrounds, identities, and ideals than their own (Hussar et al., 2020; ED, 2015).

This difference in identities can lead to a disconnect between educators and students, and even

lead to differential treatment of students with identities different than those of the educator (Gay,

1975; Robison-Cimpian et al., 2014; Sorhagen, 2013). Cultural competence is a way for

educators to connect with their students.

To be culturally competent is to have sufficient knowledge about the systems within

which different individuals live and process information (Fuentes, 2019; Hofstede, 1997). These

systems (cultures) can include race, ethnicity, gender, sexuality, religious affiliation, country of

origin, language spoken, among many other identities (Hofstede, 1997; Li & Krakowski, 2001).

Culturally competent educators tend to have a better understanding and communication with

students and their families, key components to student success (Banks, 2019; Brophy & Good,

1970; Tattum & Tattum, 1992). Additionally, researchers have shown a positive relation between

cultural competence and teacher performance (Beuckelaer et al., 2012; Burgess & Evans, 2017).

Aspects of culture such as student ethnicity, gender, and socio-economic status have

previously been shown to affect educators' expectations for students (Gay, 1975; Robison-

Cimpian et al., 2014; Sorhagen, 2013). Teacher expectations for students are important, as they

have repeatedly been shown to be correlated with student achievement (Flanagan et al., 2020;

O'Connell et al., 1974; Rubie-Davies et al., 2020). This is especially true of elementary school

teachers (Robison-Cimpian et al., 2014; Sorhagen, 2013). Underestimation of a student in first

grade is linked to poorer later achievement for that student when compared to students

who were attributed proper expectations in elementary school (Sorhagen, 2013). Teacher

expectations for at-risk children are most highly related to their later achievement (Hinnant et al.,

2009). Many children that are within the at-risk category are also culturally diverse (Hinnant et

al., 2009; Kominski et al., 2001).

Multiple teacher training programs have worked to increase teacher cultural competency

(e.g., Colombo, 2007; Flory & Wylie, 2019; Tucker et al., 2005). As individuals increase their

cultural competency, they combat their biases (Courtois et al., 2009; Cross, 2012). Continued

education for educators is believed to benefit students (Avalos, 2011; Yoon et al., 2007). The

means by which educators participate in continuing education is evolving. Online professional

development for educators has become increasingly popular (Parsons et al., 2019; Tallent-

Runnels et al., 2006). Programs, including those focused on anti-bias education, are provided

online. Anti-bias education is a form of equity pedagogy that emphasizes the value of differences

in those from various cultural, social, and racial groups (Derman-Sparks & A.B.C. Task Force,

1989; Hyland, 2010). By providing these resources online, they are more easily accessible to

those who may not have otherwise had that training (Bates et al., 2016). In a country that is

becoming increasingly diverse, it is important for all educators to be able to access education that

increases their cultural competence. This study will be conducted to extend the research line

about online professional development training provided by school psychologists for educators'

cultural competence.

Literature Review

Educator Cultural Competence

Culture & Cultural Competence Defined

Culture is a key aspect of an individual's identity and world view (Fuentes, 2019;

Hofstede, 1997; Li & Krakowski, 2001). It is the system in which an individual lives, as well as

how they process thoughts and actions (Fuentes, 2019; Hofstede, 1997). Examples of cultures

include race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, country of origin, and sexuality (Hofstede, 1997; Li

& Krakowsky, 2001). According to Merriam-Webster (2020), competence is the "quality or state

of having sufficient knowledge, judgment, skill, or strength (as for a particular duty or in a

particular respect)." Cultural competence is then, having a sufficient knowledge of and skills

relating to the aforementioned system (Fuentes, 2019; Hofstede, 1997). In relation to education,

cultural competence is composed of four key areas: valuing diversity, being culturally self-

aware, understanding the dynamics of cultural interaction, and institutionalizing cultural

knowledge (NEA Human & Civil Rights Department, 2008). To value diversity is to recognize

and appreciate the differences between individuals (NEA Human & Civil Rights Department,

2008). Cultural self-awareness is possessing an understanding of one's own cultures and how

those influence their beliefs and actions (Lu & Wan, 2018; NEA Human & Civil Rights

Department, 2008). The dynamics of cultural interaction include awareness of historical,

locational, and relational impacts on the interactions between cultures (NEA Human & Civil

Rights Department, 2008). Institutionalizing cultural knowledge within the school setting

includes incorporating students' culture into the learning environment to better serve them (NEA

Human & Civil Rights Department, 2008). Incorporating these aspects of cultural competence are beneficial for the school system as a whole, especially as the U.S. student population becomes more diverse (Hussar et al., 2020; ED, 2015).

Growing Diversity in the Schools

The student population in United States (U.S.) public schools is growing in diversity. In 1998 minority students made up 37% of total students enrolled in public schools (ED, 2000). By 2018 that value increased to 52.4% of students identifying as Black, Hispanic, Asian, Pacific Islander, American Indian/ Alaskan Native, or Two or More Races (Hussar et al., 2020). While the student population continues to become more diverse, the teaching population is not. Most teachers in the U.S. as of 2018 are White (79%) and female (76%; Hussar et al., 2020). If the educator base is primarily of a differing background than students, it is important for them to possess cultural competence in order to better relate to students and prevent potential biases (Courtois et al., 2009; Cross, 2012).

It is important to note that educators do not need to be culturally diverse for diverse students to have positive outcomes (Dee, 2005; Howsen & Trawick, 2007). However, educators being culturally competent does encourage positive outcomes for students (Banks, 2019; Brophy & Good, 1970; Tattum & Tattum, 1992).

Impact of Cultural Competence

Considering U.S. educators are working with students of different backgrounds, educator cultural competence is imperative to both student and educator success (Beuckelaer et al., 2012; le Roux, 2002; NEA Human & Civil Rights Department, 2008; Tucker et al., 2005). In a study by Beuckelaer and colleagues (2012), 440 faculty members and 1219 students across four universities completed an online survey that utilized the Multicultural Personality Questionnaire

to measure educator multicultural competence and performance. The researchers found that teachers that were more culturally competent scored higher in at least one dimension of teaching performance when compared to those who were not as culturally competent (Beuckelaer et al., 2012). In a study by le Roux (2002), educators that were found to be culturally competent communicators were also found to be more effective in their teaching practice. According to the NEA Human & Civil Rights Department, (2008), culturally competent educators have also been shown to help students connect lesson materials with their lived experiences. Researchers have also demonstrated the importance of other school staff members possessing cultural competence, including school psychologists (Davies et al., 2015; Fisher et al., 2020), social workers (Canfield, 2014), and occupational therapists (Grandpierre et al., 2018). These studies suggest that cultural competency is positively related to educator performance. To further understand the relation between cultural competence and educator practice, it is important to examine the effect when cultural competence is not present.

Short Comings

There are some traits known to negatively impact cultural competence in White preservice educators. These characteristics include perfectionistic discrepancy, vertical individualism, and racial color blindness (Wang et al., 2014). Perfectionistic discrepancy is the measure of whether one perceives that they are not achieving the high standards they set for themself (Slaney et al., 2001). Discrepancy is the negative facet of perfectionism (Slaney et al., 2001). Vertical individualists are those that believe that people differ along a hierarchy, where inequality is accepted and societal rank determines one's privileges (Wang et al., 2014). Those who adhere to this ideology tend to resist diversity (Wang et al., 2014). Racial color blindness is a perspective typically taken by White Americans in which they attempt to not see or

acknowledge racial differences (Neville et al., 2000). Racial color blindness has been shown as a means to reject the concept of systemic racism (Neville et al., 2000). These traits negatively affect the development of cultural competence in White preservice educators, which can be especially detrimental in highly diverse schools (Banks, 2019; Brophy & Good, 1970; Tattum & Tattum, 1992).

The White racial frame is an aspect of systemic racism in which the American White view of society is the dominant perspective (Bracey et al., 2017; Feagin, 2013). The White racial frame helps to rationalize and continue racial inequality (Bracey et al., 2017; Feagin, 2013). Perpetuating this social view is damaging (Feagin, 2013; Sue, 2010). In a study, when looking at the educators and leaders of schools with predominantly African American students, researchers found that school leaders and educators were immersed in the White racial frame with their daily practices (Toure & Thompson Doursey, 2018). The researchers conducted over 80 hours of classroom observations and interviewed school leaders, educators, and students. The results showed that school leaders and educators were emersed in the White racial frame and often displayed racial color blindness when faced with issues pertaining to race and culture (Toure & Thompson Doursey, 2018). Additionally, research into the biases of preservice educators revealed that the educators consistently ranked traditionally European-Christian and Asian surnamed authors as significantly better communicators than traditionally Latino surnamed authors when looking at the same piece of writing (Demetrulias, 1991). This difference in perceived communication skills suggests a bias towards favoring the written communication skills of European-Christian and Asian surnamed individuals. To combat biases such as those discussed above, cultural competence training programs have been developed.

Cultural Competence Training

Several programs have aimed to increase cultural competence and related skills in educators. Teachers who participated in a program to increase efficacy in working with diverse students resulted in increased culturally sensitive teacher self-efficacy after completion (Tucker et al., 2005). In this program 62 teachers participated in a 6-hour workshop on effective teaching practices for culturally diverse students (Tucker et al., 2005). Measures of culturally sensitive teacher self-efficacy posttest scores were analyzed (Tucker et al., 2005). A significant main effect in the treatment condition was indicated in the results (Tucker et al., 2005). Similarly, in a study by Flory and Wylie, (2019) educators who participated in four workshops to increase their cultural competency found that the workshops increased educators' knowledge of their students and their home communities. This increased knowledge influenced their teaching practices and increased their respect for their students (Flory & Wylie, 2019). These studies suggest that cultural competence is not constant, but instead can be improved upon and lead to changes in teaching practices.

Anti-bias Education

Multiculturalism builds upon cultural competence and encourages individuals to value cultural pluralism (Fernandez et al., 2020; Song, 2020). As an ideology reflected in multiculturalism, anti-bias education is a form of equity pedagogy that emphasizes the value of differences in those from various cultural, social and racial groups (Derman-Sparks & A.B.C. Task Force, 1989; Hyland, 2010). More specifically, whereas multiculturalism tends to focus on teaching children about different cultures, anti-bias education focuses on teaching children that differences are beneficial (Derman-Sparks & A.B.C. Task Force, 1989). Similarly for educators,

examining the benefits of differences and diversity increases their awareness and understanding of cultural contexts (Derman-Sparks, 2011).

Anti-bias education is based on Empowerment Theory (Escayg, 2019; Rappaport, 1987). Empowerment is the process in which people gain control over issues that are of concern to them (Rappaport, 1987). Empowerment takes place at varying levels, including psychological, community, and organizational (Zimmerman, 1995). At the organizational level, empowerment enhances members' skills and provides them with support (Zimmerman, 1995). Community empowerment enhances the quality of life of those within the community through individuals organizing to improve their collective lives (Zimmerman, 1995). At the individual level is psychological empowerment. This area of empowerment effects the other two in that individuals are the basis of organizations and communities. Psychological empowerment can be observed in individual's behaviors, actions, skills, and competencies (Zimmerman, 1995). Anti-bias education defines empowerment as individuals, "having the intellectual and emotional ability to confront oppression and work together to create a more just society" (Derman-Sparks & A.B.C Task Force, 1989, p. 5).

The core goals of anti-bias education for educators include increasing awareness and understanding of cultural contexts, examining what students have learned in respect to the benefits of diversity, understanding prejudices, and having conversations with peers and families about anti-bias education (Derman-Sparks, 2011). These goals are taught in four domains, identity, diversity, justice, and action (Teaching Tolerance, 2016). By affirming different cultures, anti-bias education helps teach students and educators to work together in an inclusive manner (Derman-Sparks et al., 2015). Additionally, the emphasis placed on partnering with families helps to promote these skills in students and educators (Derman-Sparks, 2011). Anti-

bias education for educators is not always widely available, therefore, providing educator professional development in this area would address this gap.

Educator Professional Development

Purpose

Professional development allows in-service educators to continue learning and growing in their pedagogical methods. It covers a range of topics that benefit educators and students from interventions specific to a core subject to social emotional learning techniques (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017; Garet et al., 2001). Educator professional development is important for educational improvement (Dede et al., 2009; Duţă & Rafailă, 2014). Title II of the Every Student Succeeds Act (2015) allocates billions of dollars annually for schools to implement continuing education programs for educators (US Department of Education, 2020). Additionally, state laws require educators to complete a set amount of continuing education hours to maintain their license (Jaquith et al., 2010). For example, the state of Colorado requires teachers to complete 90 clock hours of professional development in order to renew their license (Colorado Department of Education, 2020).

Benefit

Professional development is thought to positively benefit student achievement. When successful professional development takes place, educators gain knowledge and enhance their skill base. Better knowledge and skills are thought to improve classroom teaching which then improves student achievement (Avalos, 2011; Garet et al., 2001; Yoon et al., 2007). In a national survey of educators, researchers found that professional development led to the enhanced knowledge and skills of teachers, which was found to have a substantial positive influence on changing teaching practice (Garet et al., 2001). Additionally, in a systematic literature review of

111 articles related to educator professional development, Avalos (2011) found that professional development can lead to changes in educator cognition, beliefs, and practice. Educator professional development leading to improved teaching practice and increased student achievement was also supported in this review (Avalos, 2011). Similarly, in a review of 1,300 studies addressing the impact of elementary educator professional development on student achievement, researchers found that when educators participated in substantial professional development (more than 14 hours) there was a positive and significant effect on student achievement (Yoon et al., 2007).

Limitations

Several studies have found that professional development increases educators' knowledge of the subject and impacts instructional practices but does not positively impact student achievement (Garet et al., 2016; Randel et al., 2016). This begs the question, what limits the success of professional development? Known factors that impede positive outcomes include inadequate resources, unclear vision of what high-quality instruction requires, lack of time to plan and implement new methods, and lack of foundational knowledge on the topic by educators (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Additionally, there has been repeated criticisms of single-day workshops for providing a superficial understanding of the subject matter and not allowing enough time for educators to digest the material (Yoon et al., 2007). The training that will be provided in this study will address each of these factors.

Improvement

Some have suggested that improving the quality of educator professional development requires a shift in view from development towards learning (Easton, 2008; Opfer & Pedder, 2011). Instead of professional development, educators should focus on professional learning.

Professional learning incorporates many of the aspects of successful professional development and adds data collection and analysis, direct application to the classroom, emphasis on continued learning, and reliance on expertise within the school (Easton, 2008). When considering these guidelines, school psychologists would make great implementers of professional learning as they are experts of school systems, learning, behavior, and mental health with significant data collection and analysis backgrounds (National Association of School Psychologists, 2020). Concepts of professional learning can be implemented in various settings, including online.

Online Professional Development

Research into the possible effects of the location of preservice educator training on cultural competence revealed no significant connection between location of training and educator cultural competence (McKoy, 2013). This implies that cultural competence can be developed (or stagnated) in any location. Online professional development programs for educators have become increasingly popular (Brysch, 2020; Parsons et al., 2019). In 2019, most educators surveyed across 41 states reported having taken advantage of online professional development opportunities (Parsons et al., 2019). These online programs offer the same professional development material but in an online format.

Effectiveness

Several studies have shown online professional development programs to lead to positive impacts such as increased educator knowledge, increased student achievement, and increased school and educator success (Dash et al., 2012; Magidin de Kramer et al., 2012; Shaha & Ellsworth, 2013). These are similar findings to in-person professional development. Studies comparing the effectiveness of online versus face-to-face professional development have shown

no differentiated effects based on the mode of training (Fishman, et al., 2013; Powell et al., 2010; Yoon et al., 2020).

Furthermore, there are several benefits of online professional development compared to in-person. One of the main benefits of online professional development is that it can be easily incorporated into an educator's busy schedule (Dede et al., 2009; Yoon et al., 2020). Many educators have little extra time in their day to attend professional development sessions, and even less time to attend those that occur over the course of several days (Dede et al., 2009; Yoon et al., 2020). Online professional development offers a convenient way for educators to continue their education at their own pace, on their own schedule, making it much more convenient for them (Dede et al., 2009; Yoon et al., 2020).

Another major benefit of online professional development is that it offers a path for on-going support via online communities (Dede et al., 2009; Yoon et al., 2020). One of the aspects of successful professional development is continued reflection on the subject matter (Darling-Hammond et al., 2017). Online forums offer easy access to groups to continue conversations regarding the training. Additionally, these discussion boards may increase participation from those who would otherwise not participate in in-person discussions (Dede et al., 2009). Greater participation leads to more ideas shared and knowledge gained. Online discussion groups can also offer much-needed support to entry-level educators (Dede et al., 2009).

Additional benefits to online professional development include, greater diversity in participants, incorporation of resources that may not be available at the local level, virtual simulations offering a variety of experiences, ability to offer immediate training for problems that arise, access to colleagues with similar interests, and reduced costs (Bates et al., 2016; Dede

et al., 2009; Yoon et al., 2020). Due to the benefits of online professional development, this researcher will utilize it as a means to provide training in this study.

Summary

In summary, U.S. public schools are becoming increasingly diverse in their student population (ED, 2015; Hussar et al., 2020). When there are differences in identities, such as the one between educators and students, a disconnect may occur between the groups. This disconnection can lead to differential treatment of students (Gay, 1975; Robison-Cimpian et al., 2014; Sorhagen, 2013).

Cultural competence may help educators connect with students of different backgrounds than their own. Additionally, research has shown that educator cultural competence is related to positive outcomes for both educators and students (Beuckelaer et al., 2012; NEA Human & Civil Rights Department, 2008). One way for educators to increase their cultural competence is through professional development trainings (Flory & Wylie, 2019; Tucker et al., 2005). Training in anti-bias education has been shown to help educators increase their awareness and understanding of cultural contexts by examining the benefits of differences and diversity (Derman-Sparks, 2011).

Purpose of the Current Study

Although there has been extensive research into anti-bias education and online educator professional development separately, there is an absence of research into online programs involving anti-bias education. There is also limited insight on school psychologists providing these opportunities, despite school psychologists' training in these areas. In this study the researcher aims to answer the following:

1) Does participating in an online training on anti-bias education increase educators' cultural competence? It is hypothesized that participation in the online training will increase educators' cultural competence.

2) Do participants find this training acceptable and feasible? It is hypothesized that educators will find this training to be acceptable and feasible.

Method

Participants

Seventeen elementary-school (Early Childhood Education – Fifth grade) educators participated in this study. An A Priori sample size estimation conducted using G*Power 3.1 suggested that at least 15 participants would be needed to attain statistically significant results (α = .05) with a moderate effect size (d = .8) and 80% power (1- β = .8). Fifty-nine educators signed up for the study and seventeen completed the training and measures. This cohort of educators was utilized due to the influence early-education educators have on student achievement and the development of student attitudes towards diversity (Derman-Sparks, 2011; Flanagan et al., 2020; O'Connell et al., 1974; Porterfield & Scott-Little, 2019; Rubie-Davies et al., 2020). Participant demographics including age, gender, race/ethnicity, educational attainment, any previous anti-bias training, and years of experience were collected (Appendix A). A majority of participants were White (76.47%), women (88.24%), and between the ages of thirty-six to forty-five (52.94%; Table 1).

Materials

Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education- Intervention

The *Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education* professional development was chosen due to the four modules aligning well with empowerment theory and the anti-bias domains as they

relate to educators' instruction, classroom culture, family and community engagement, and leadership (Teaching Tolerance, 2016). The overall training objectives of the program were (a) to increase self-awareness and cultural competency; (b) develop strategies to facilitate family and community relationships; (c) identify ways to cultivate a respectful and accepting classroom for all; (d) recognize instructional tools and strategies that incorporate anti-bias ideology. Teaching Tolerance provides this professional development on their website for anyone who would like to use it. Approval to use these materials for this study was obtained from Teaching Tolerance. This training was delivered asynchronously via four, 1-hour trainings using Google Classroom (Appendix C). Participants were provided slideshows with audio reordered over the slides to guide them through the training.

Measures

Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS)

Educators participated in a pre- and posttest assessment to evaluate the effects of workshop participation. The Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS) is a 16-item 6-point Likert scale assessment meant to measure educator cultural competence with adequate psychometric evidence (Appendix D; Spanierman et al., 2011). There are two factors on the MTCS, multi-cultural teaching skill (MTCS skill) and multicultural teaching knowledge (MTCS knowledge; Spanierman et al., 2011). MTCS skill is composed of 10 items and has a coefficient alpha of .83 (Spanierman et al., 2011). MTCS knowledge is composed of 6 items and has a coefficient alpha of .80 (Spanierman et al., 2011). The total scale has an alpha of .88 (Spanierman et al., 2011). Multivariate analyses of variances (MANOVAs) were conducted on the two factors of the MTCS. Results indicated that there were no differences of the factors between in-service and preservice educators or between males and females (Spanierman et al.,

2011). There was a significant difference on those with multicultural training, with those who had a greater number of hours of multicultural training scoring higher in both factors (Spanierman et al., 2011). Validity estimates for the assessment were established by comparing the MTCS with other multicultural competency scales including the Educator Multicultural Attitude Survey (TMAS). Pearson product momentum correlation between the MTCS and the TMAS was .51, a significant, positive association (Spanierman et al., 2011). To calculate a participant's score on the MTCS, the researcher added the total points allocated to each item that was indicated. The higher the score, the greater multicultural competence an educator possesses.

Usage Rating Profile-Intervention Revised (URP-IR)

An adapted version of the URP-IR was administered to educators following completion of the training to determine whether participants found the training to be acceptable and feasible (Appendix E). It was adapted by replacing "intervention" with "workshop" or "strategies/ activities." The URP-IR is a 29-item measure with 6 subscales, Acceptability, Understanding, Feasibility, Family-School Collaboration, System Climate, and System Support (Chafouleas et al., 2011). Acceptable internal consistency reliability (between .72 and .95) of all subscales was found when examining the reliability of the scale (Briesch et al., 2013). Results of exploratory and confirmatory factor analyses as well as reliability analyses have supported this measure (Briesch et al., 2013). For each subscale, except for System Support, the higher the score the higher social validity of the training.

Procedure

Following approval from Eastern Illinois University's Institutional Review Board, recruitment began. Recruitment took place using a cold email sent out asking for participants and offering a chance at a small incentive ($50 Amazon gift card) if they participated in the study.

Additionally, posts in school newsletters, educator discussion boards, and social media were used. All participants completed a 4-hour online workshop designed to instruct educators on anti-bias education practices. This workshop was divided into four, 1-hour sessions that educators completed asynchronously, at their own pace. The materials for this training came from Teaching Tolerance, a project from the Southern Poverty Law Center (Teaching Tolerance, 2016). The researcher led this workshop. At the time of this study, the researcher was a school psychology intern and had met the expectations for knowledge of the ten National Association of School Psychology's (NASP) standards for training in data-based decision making and accountability, consultation and collaboration, school-wide practices to promote learning, family-school collaboration, research, and program evaluation, as well as diversity in development and learning (National Association of School Psychologists, 2010). This training makes this researcher equipped to provide this workshop for educators. All educators participated in a pre- and post-intervention assessment, using the Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS). Procedural fidelity was documented using a checklist to ensure that each of the training areas were covered during the workshop (Appendix B). Additionally, usage reports from the online program used for the training were assessed to examine educator fidelity in the training. Each participant that was included in the study completed in entirety the pre-test, each module, and the post-test.

Results

Research Question 1

A total of 17 participants completed the MTCS (Table 1). To ensure treatment integrity, participants' data were included only if they completed each portion of the training entirely. This included the pre-test, all four modules of the online training, and the post-test. On average, the

time between the pretest and posttest was 18.64 days. In order to answer the first research question (i.e., Does participating in an online training on anti-bias education increase educators' cultural competence?), the assumptions of a T-Test for Dependent Means were tested. The Kolmogorov-Smirnov Test was significant (<.001) indicating that differences were not normally distributed.

Due to differences not being normally distributed, a Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test was run rather than a T-Test for Dependent Means. A Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test is a nonparametric test used with ordinal data that violate normal distribution (MacFarland & Yates, 2016). This method of analysis allows researchers to determine if there are group differences in the medians (MacFarland & Yates, 2016). A Wilcoxon Signed Ranks test was conducted on the MTCS pretest and posttest ratings. At an alpha level of .05, results indicated that there was a significant difference between Pretest (*Mdn* = 68.00) and Posttest (*Mdn* = 71.00), z = -2.27, *p* = 0.02 (two-tailed) (Table 2). A medium effect size was obtained (*r* = 0.39).

Research Question 2

When examining the second research question (i.e., Do participants find this training acceptable and feasible?) the results of the adapted URP-IR were analyzed. On the URP-IR participants ranked their agreement with statements using a six-point Likert scale (1- Strongly Disagree, 2 – Disagree, 3 – Somewhat Disagree, 4 – Somewhat Agree, 5 – Agree, and 6 – Strongly Agree). On average participants ranked Acceptability (*M* = 5, *SD* = 0.71) and Feasibility (*M* = 5, *SD* = 0.67) as a "5 – Agree" indicating that they overall agree that the training was acceptable and feasible. Additionally, the Understanding (*M* = 5, *SD* = 0.54), Family-School Collaboration (*M* = 5, *SD* = 1.03), and System Climate (*M* = 5, S*D* = 0.82) subscales were also on average ranked as a "5 – Agree." The subscale, System Support (*M* = 3, *SD* = 1.28), is the

only subscale that is reverse coded; therefore, lower scores are desired. On this subscale the average ranking was a "3 – Somewhat Disagree" (Table 2).

Discussion

This study examined the effects of an online anti-bias training on educators' multicultural competence. Many educators are working with students who have different backgrounds than their own (ED, 2015; Hussar et al., 2020;). Researchers have shown that these cultural differences can lead to a disconnect between educators and students, as well as differential treatment of minority students (Gay, 1975; Robison-Cimpian et al., 2014; Sorhagen, 2013). Cultural competence is one way for educators to connect with their students and decrease their biases (Courtois et al., 2009; Cross, 2012). One way to increase knowledge in an area is through continued education. Online professional development for educators has become increasingly popular (Parsons et al., 2019; Tallent-Runnels et al., 2006). Programs for teaching anti-bias education, can be accessed online. While the U.S. continues to increase in diversity, it is important for all educators to have access to education that increases their cultural competence. Previously researchers have analyzed the effectiveness of both anti-bias education and online educator professional development separately (Derman-Sparks & A.B.C. Task Force, 1989; Derman-Sparks, 2011; Parsons et al., 2019). There is also limited research into school psychologists providing an online anti-bias training, despite their training in this area.

In this study, a total of 17 elementary (Early Childhood Education – Fifth grade) educators completed a four hour online anti-bias training, as well as the MTCS and an adapted URP-IR. Participants included 13 teachers, one social worker, two school psychologists, and one occupational therapist. According to the demographic survey, 76.5% of participants had previously received information on or completed a course dedicated to cultural competence or

anti-bias education. The MTCS was used as a pre- and posttest scale. First, participants' MTCS

scores were analyzed. The median score on the pretest was 68, and on the posttest was 71. It was

hypothesized that participation in the online anti-bias training would increase educators' cultural

competence. This hypothesis was supported, as there was a significant difference ($p = .02$)

between the pretest and posttest scores with a medium effect size ($r = 0.39$; Rosenthal, 1994).

Previous studies have shown the ability to increase teacher cultural competency through

professional development training (Flory & Wylie, 2019; Tucker et al., 2005). This continuation

of the research suggests that the cultural competence of educators can be improved through anti-

bias training, even if they have previously received training in this area.

The second research question examined the acceptability and feasibility of the anti-bias

training. An adapted URP-IR was used to assess this. It was hypothesized that educators would

find the training acceptable and feasible. Results indicated that overall educators agreed that the

online anti-bias training was acceptable and feasible. One possibility for why the participants

reported the training to be acceptable and feasible may be due to the incorporation of

professional learning practices. Aspects of professional learning that were used in this training

include, direct application to the classroom, emphasis on continued learning, and reliance on

expertise within the school (Easton, 2008). Additionally, online professional development

trainings have previously been shown to be easily accessible for teachers (Dede et al., 2009;

Yoon et al., 2020). This also could have increased participants' perception of the training as

being feasible and acceptable. The URP-IR subscale, System Support ($M = 3$, $SD = 1.28$), was

the only subscale that was reverse coded; therefore, lower scores were desired. On this subscale

the average ranking was a "3 – Somewhat Disagree." This indicated that participants "somewhat

disagreed" that they would need support from others to implement the material they learned in

the training. System Support having a more neutral result could be due to participants wanting to access support from their colleagues in the areas of the training. For example, one of the modules asks participants to have an "accountability buddy" or a colleague to help hold them accountable in implementing the training in their practice. They would need additional support to use this practice.

Overall, the results indicated that there was a statistically significant difference between the pretest and posttest MTCS scores. This suggests that participation in the online anti-bias training contributed to an increase in participants' multicultural competence. Additionally, participants ranked the training to be acceptable and feasible, suggesting that the training met their expectations and required a reasonable amount of effort to complete.

Limitations and Future Directions

This study purported to measure the effects of an online anti-bias training on educator multicultural competence. Statistically significant results were obtained; however, identification of some limitations may support improvements into future research in this area. First, the sample size in this study was small (n = 17). It was difficult to recruit participants for this study despite offering incentives (e.g., Continuing Education Credits and chance at a gift card) and pursuing multiple recruitment avenues. In future studies, having a larger more representative sample would lead to more generalizable results. Additionally, most of the educators that participated in the study were teachers. Some other professionals such as school psychologists, social workers and occupational therapists participated as well. It would be helpful if future researchers examine group differences among the different educators.

Future research could also prioritize having educators from various settings in their training. For instance, most of the educators in this training were from an urban setting. Having

educators from varying geographic areas such as rural and suburban schools would improve this line of research. This would be beneficial due to providing a more representative sample of participants in the study. Additionally, individuals in different geographic regions tend to have different experiences and exposure to different cultures, which may impact the results (Macnab et al., 2010).

Threats to internal validity should also be considered including history, testing, and selection bias. Due to participants completing the training asynchronously, several outside factors could have influenced their results. For example, they could have participated in other multicultural trainings or read books related to the subject matter. To alleviate this possibility in the future, a timeframe for when each module is to be completed could be used (e.g., Module 1 must be completed between 5:00pm and 8:00pm on a specific date). Additionally, using the same measure for the pre and post-test could have led to familiarity with the assessment and skewed their answers. For example, if from the pre-test participants gathered that the training was examining multi-cultural competence, they may alter their answers in the post-test to ones they believe the researchers want (Melnyk et al., 2019). Future studies may consider using similar but different scales for the pre- and post-test, such as randomizing the questions between pre- and post-test. Also, using a control group who does not receive the training would also strengthen the results. Selection bias is another factor to consider as participants volunteered to participate in the study (Melnyk et al., 2019). Using a whole school or district as a sample may lead to more representative information as everyone would participate, not just those willing to volunteer.

Originally, this study intended to use an experimental design. Due to participation constraints, that design was not feasible. Future research may benefit from using an experimental design as it offers the researcher(s) greater control and may lead to more conclusive results. If

the control group were to participate in an unrelated training, but still take the same pre- and post-test, more information could be gathered as to whether the training itself was influencing results or if outside factors were at play.

Additionally, it would be beneficial to measure the lasting impact of the training on the educators' multicultural competence. For example, educators could complete the MTCS immediately after completing the training, then again one month later, and again six months after the training. This could help show whether the training has long term effectiveness. Also, the training could take place over a longer time span to support the effectiveness. Previous researchers have demonstrated that one-time professional development events are less effective than those that occur over time (Joyce & Showers, 2002). Ensuring that the training takes place over more than one day would be beneficial.

Implications

Given the growing diversity among students in the United States, it is important that educators have the skills to support all students (ED, 2015; Hussar et al., 2020). One skill that supports connections between educators and students and decreases biases is cultural competence (Courtois et al., 2009; Cross, 2012). It is important to provide educators with tools to build and improve their cultural competence. One way to support this growth is through professional development opportunities (Flory & Wylie, 2019; Tucker et al., 2005).

This study supports the use of an online anti-bias professional development training as a tool for increasing multicultural competence among elementary educators. Having a four-hour training that is available to educators online that significantly increases their multicultural competence is a great asset. It can help support educators' growth in this area in a relatively short amount of time.

Conclusion

In conclusion, the results of this study suggest that participation in an online professional development training focused on anti-bias education led by a school psychologist significantly increased educator multicultural competence, as measured using the MTCS. This suggests that educators benefit from online trainings related to increasing cultural competence. Additionally, participants in the training overall ranked the professional development as being acceptable and feasible. These results suggest that the training provided the participants with the information they were hoping to gain, and that the training was manageable for them to complete.

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Appendices

Appendix A – Educator Demographics Form

Thank you for participating in this project. Please note that all names on this and other forms will be

Educator Demographics Form

removed and replaced with an ID number. Names will not be shared with anyone outside this project.

TEACHER INFORMATION

Name: _____**Today's Date**: _____
        First   Middle Initial   Last   Month   Day   Year

School: _____   **E-mail:** _____

Birthdate: _____   **Grade(s) Currently Teaching:** _____
        Month   Day   Year

Please indicate your gender: Male   Female   Prefer not to answer

Ethnicity: Hispanic or Latino   Not Hispanic or Latino

Race:

White	American Indian or Alaskan Native
Black or African American	Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
Asian	I prefer not to provide an answer

How many years of teaching experience do you have? _____

On average, how many students are present in your classroom at one time? _____

On average, <u>not</u> counting yourself, how many educators/paraprofessionals are present in your classroom at one time? _____

Please indicate whether you have special and/or general education certification:

General education certification	General & special education certifications
Special education certification	Not currently certified

What is your highest level of education completed? (check one)

High School/GED	Master's/Specialist
Associate's	Master's plus _____ credits
B.A./B.S.	Doctorate (e.g., PhD, JD)

During your educator preparation program, did you complete a course devoted entirely to cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices? (check one)

I took a course devoted primarily to cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices

I received information about cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices as part of other course(s)

Both, I took a course devoted primarily to cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices and I received information about cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices as part of other course(s)

I did not take a course devoted primarily to cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices or receive information about cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices as part of other course(s)

Have you participated in formal professional development activities related to cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices since beginning teaching (i.e., in-service training or workshop)? (check one)

Yes

No

Which is the best estimate of the amount of time spent participating in formal professional development activities related to cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices since beginning teaching?

None	4-5 days
<1 day	5-10 days
1 day	>10 days
2-3 days	

Did your participation in formal professional development activities improve your ability to implement anti-bias educational practices?

Strongly disagree

Disagree

Agree

Strongly Agree

Not applicable, have not participated in formal professional development activities related to cultural competence/ anti-bias educational practices

Thank you for completing this form!

Appendix B – Procedural Integrity Check List

Anti-Bias Professional Development Procedural Integrity		

Date: _____   Educator ID: _____

Start Time: _____   End Time: _____

Training Components	Occurrence	Non-occurrence
1. Opening salutation		
2. Let participants know what they will need for that training		
3. Explain session purpose		
a. Provide an overview of the material		
b. Provide goals for the session		
4. Offer opportunities to reflect on current practices and how to incorporate materials into their classroom		
5. Provide video examples		
6. Wrap-up with review of session		
7. Closing salutation		

Appendix C - Teaching Tolerance Training Materials

Instruction- Goals

Define	Define critical engagement with material
Explore	Explore differentiated instruction methods
Identify	Identify key components of cooperative and collaborative learning
Explore	Explore methods for making real-world connections to instruction
Evaluate	Evaluate grading procedures to look at more value-based assessments and evaluations

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

7

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

7 Main Components:
1. Building & drawing upon intergroup awareness, understanding and skills
2. Creating classroom environments that reflect diversity, equity and justice
3. Engaging families and communities in ways that are meaningful and culturally competent
4. Encouraging students to speak out against bias and injustice
5. Making the implementation of anti-bias curriculum part of larger individual, school and community action
6. Supporting students' identities and making it safe for them to fully be themselves
7. Using instructional strategies that support diverse learning styles and allow for the development of critical thinking skills
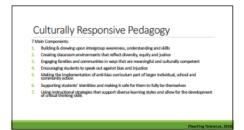
[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

8

Culture & Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

Culture: a wide range of identity groups and communities
- E.g., gender, ability/ disability, religion, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, race, ethnicity, language, nationality, etc.

Culturally responsive pedagogy deals with identity issues in all groups and communities

How do you incorporate culture in your classroom?
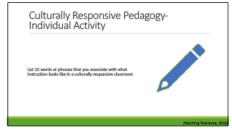
[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

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Culturally Responsive Pedagogy

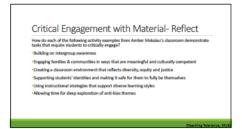Engages learners in student-centered learning that values their lives and what they bring to their own learning

Teaches students to critically engage with meaningful social issues and to build bridges across difference (within and outside of school)

Addresses a range of learning styles and multiple intelligences

Is supported by authentic, holistic evaluation that is consistent with anti-bias and social justice values

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

10

Culturally Responsive Pedagogy- Individual Activity

List 10 words or phrases that you associate with what instruction looks like in a culturally responsive classroom

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

11

Critical Engagement with Material

Think about what the teacher does to establish a means for students to be critically engaged

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

12

Critical Engagement with Material- Reflect

How do each of the following activity examples from Amber Makaiau's classroom demonstrate tasks that require students to critically engage?
•Building on intergroup awareness
•Engaging families & communities in ways that are meaningful and culturally competent
•Creating a classroom environment that reflects diversity, equity and justice
•Supporting students' identities and making it safe for them to fully be themselves
•Using instructional strategies that support diverse learning styles
•Allowing time for deep exploration of anti-bias themes

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

13

Critical Engagement with Material- Apply

In the first column, write down five instructional activities you have used this week

Then fill in the other two columns for each activity

In what ways do your classroom lessons showcase student-led activities?

In what ways might you do more to encourage critical engagement?

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

14

Differentiated Instruction

Adapting instructional strategies to fit the different needs, backgrounds, skill levels, talents, and learning profiles of individual students

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

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Differentiated Instruction

Areas with opportunity for differentiation:
• Language background and proficiency
• Cultural styles and forms of expression
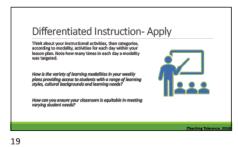• Learning differences, IEPs and other special needs

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

16

Differentiated Instruction- Reflect

In the interview, how are the following areas explicitly addressed?
•Cultural background
•Forms of expression
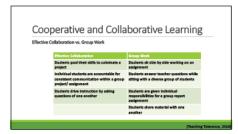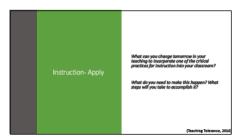•Learning difference
•Learning styles
•Special needs

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

17

Differentiated Instruction

Focus on how she incorporates the following to meet her students' needs:
•Culture
•Forms of expression
•Learning differences
•Special needs

[Teaching Tolerance, 2016]

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5-minute break

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Classroom Culture

HONORING STUDENT EXPERIENCE

CLASSROOM SETUP & STRUCTURE

SHARED INQUIRY & DIALOGUE

SOCIAL & EMOTIONAL SAFETY

VALUES-BASED BEHAVIOR MANAGEMENT

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Classroom Culture

Review:
- **Culture** refers to a wide range of identity and community characteristics
- **Culturally Responsive Pedagogy:** engages identities and identity issues across all groups and communities
- allows all students to be their full selves.
- asks teachers to lead by example in matters of respect and inclusivity.
- encourages both students and teachers to speak up against bias, bullying and exclusion.
- encourages deep exploration of complex and challenging issues.
- ensures that everyone's voices and participation are valued.
- recommends teachers and students both participate actively in teaching and learning.
- values respect, diversity and equity.

(Teaching Tolerance, 2016)

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Classroom Culture- Goals

Identify	Identify thoughtful classroom setup and structure that honor student experience
Establish	Establish norms for shared inquiry and dialogue
Establish	Establish how to create social-emotional learning safety in the classroom
Analyze	Analyze behavior management practice to ensure value-based components

(Teaching Tolerance, 2016)

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Classroom Culture- Individual Activity

Think about a classroom that makes you feel safe

List 5-10 characteristics of that classroom

Think about a classroom that makes you feel unsafe

List 5-10 characteristics of that classroom

(Teaching Tolerance, 2016)

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Honoring Student Experience

- A sense of openness and cultural humility
- An asset-based view of youth, groups, or experiences that may be unfamiliar
- A commitment to avoiding and challenging stereotypes
- A willingness to let students define their own identities

(Teaching Tolerance, 2016)

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Questions?

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Thank You!

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Hyland, N. E. (2010). Social justice in early childhood classrooms. *Young Children*, 1-7. Retrieved October 16, 2020, from http://www.ececompsat.org/docs/dld-socialjustice.pdf

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Appendix D – Multicultural Teaching Competency Scale (MTCS)

Directions: Rate your agreement with the following statements on a scale of 1-6 with 1 indicating Strongly Disagreeing and 6 indicating Strongly Agreeing.

Item	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
1. I integrate the cultural values and lifestyles of racial and ethnic minority groups into my teaching.						
2. I plan many activities to celebrate diverse cultural practices in my classroom.						
3. I plan school events to increase students' knowledge about cultural experiences of various racial and ethnic groups.						
4. My curricula integrate topics and events from racial and ethnic minority populations.						
5. I make changes within the general school environment so that racial and ethnic minority students will have an equal opportunity for success.						
6. I consult regularly with other educators or administrators to help me understand multicultural issues related to instruction.						
7.* I rarely examine the instructional materials I use in the classroom for racial and ethnic bias.						
8. I often include examples of the experiences and perspectives of racial and ethnic groups during my classroom lessons.						

9. I often promote diversity by the behaviors I exhibit.					
10. I establish strong, supportive relationships with racial and ethnic minority parents.					
11. I am knowledgeable about particular teaching strategies that affirm the racial and ethnic identities of all students.					
12. I have a clear understanding of culturally responsive pedagogy.					
13. I am knowledgeable about racial and ethnic identity theories.					
14. I am knowledgeable of how historical experiences of various racial and ethnic minority groups may affect students' learning.					
15. I understand the various communication styles among different racial and ethnic minority students in my classroom.					
16. I am knowledgeable about the various community resources within the city that I teach.					

*Reverse scored item

Appendix E – Adapted Usage Rating Profile Intervention Revised

Directions: Consider the Critical Practices for Anti-bias Education that you just completed when answering the following statements. Choose the number that best reflects your agreement with the statement, using the scale provided below.

	Strongly Disagree (1)	Somewhat Disagree (2)	Disagree (3)	Agree (4)	Somewhat Agree (5)	Strongly Agree (6)
1. This workshop is an effective choice for addressing a variety of problems.						
2. I would need additional resources to carry out the strategies/ activities learned in this workshop.						
3. I would be able to allocate my time to implement the strategies/ activities from this workshop.						
4. I understand how to implement the strategies/ activities discussed in this workshop.						
5. A positive home-school relationship is needed to implement the strategies/ activities.						
6. I am knowledgeable about the strategies/ activities procedures.						
7. The workshop provided a fair way to handle students' behavior problems.						
8. The total times required to implement the strategies/ activities from the workshop would be manageable.						
9.* I would not be interested in implementing procedures from the workshop.						
10. My administrator would be supportive of my use of strategies/ activities from this workshop.						

11. I would have positive attitudes about implementing strategies/ activities from this workshop.					
12. This workshop is a good way to learn about anti-bias practices.					
13. Preparation of materials needed for the strategies/ activities from this workshop would be minimal.					
14. Use of strategies/ activities from this workshop would be consistent with the mission of my school.					
15. Parental collaboration is required in order to use strategies/ activities from this workshop.					
16. Implementation of strategies/ activities from this workshop is well matched to what is expected in my job.					
17. Material resources needed to implement the strategies/ activities from this workshop are reasonable.					
18. I would implement the strategies/ activities from this workshop with a good deal of enthusiasm.					
19.* The strategies/ activities from this workshop are too complex to carry out.					
20. The workshop strategies/ activities are consistent with the way things are done in my system.					
21. The strategies/ activities from this workshop would not be disruptive for students.					
22. I would be committed to carrying out the strategies/ activities from this workshop.					
23. The workshop strategies/ activities easily fit in with my current practices.					

24. I would need consultative support to implement the strategies/ activities from this workshop.						
25. I understand the strategies/ activities from this workshop.						
26. My work environment is conducive to implementation of strategies/ activities like the ones from the workshop.						
27. The amount of time required for implementation would be reasonable.						
28. Regular home-school communication is needed to implement the strategies/ activities.						
29. I would require additional professional development in order to implement these strategies/ activities.						

*Reverse coded

Table 1.

Participant Demographics

		n	%
Sex			
	Female	15	88.24
	Male	2	11.76
Race			
	Asian	1	5.88
	Black or African American	1	5.88
	White	13	76.47
	Prefer not to Answer	2	11.76
Ethnicity			
	Hispanic or Latino	5	29.41
	Not Hispanic or Latino	12	70.59
Age			
	18-25	2	11.76
	26-35	4	23.53
	36-45	9	52.94
	46-55	1	5.88
	56-65	1	5.88
Highest Degree Held			
	Bachelor's	8	47.06
	Master's / Specialist	4	23.53
	Master's Plus Credits	5	29.41
Years of Experience in Education			
	0-5 years	4	23.53

	6-10 years	3	17.65
	11-15 years	7	41.18
	16 or more	3	17.65
Previously Received Information on/ Completed a Course Dedicated to Cultural Competence/ Anti-Bias Education			
	Yes	13	76.47
	No	4	23.53
Previous Time Spent on PD Related to Cultural Competence/ Anti-bias Education			
	None	1	5.88
	Less than 1 day	2	11.76
	1 day	1	5.88
	2-3 days	2	11.76
	4-5 days	2	11.76
	6-10 days	4	23.53
	More than 10 days	5	29.41

Table 2.

MTCS Results

	Mdn	*SD*
Pre-Test	68.00	9.81
Post-Test	71.00	15.83

Effect Size: r = 0.39