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A correlational study comparing the relationship between school leader intercultural development, selected demographic variables, and student achievement

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A CORRELATIONAL STUDY COMPARING THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN SCHOOL LEADER INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT, SELECTED DEMOGRAPHIC VARIABLES, AND STUDENT ACHIEVEMENT

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction

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by

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DEDICATION

This dissertation is dedicated to my granddaughter, Samantha Joy, and all children, everywhere. May they grow up loving one another and respecting each other's differences. May God bless them with a world that knows peace!

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VITA

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ABSTRACT

Public schools in the 21st century are faced with multiple challenges, many of which are guided by State and Federal mandates aimed at closing the achievement gap that continues to exist between our White, Non-Hispanic children and children of color, and a growing number of children living in poverty. From No Child Left Behind to the ESEA Flexibility Initiative, adoption of the Common Core, and most recently, the Every Student Succeeds Act (ESSA), school leaders have been called on to provide greater accountability, more uniform instruction, higher academic standards, and stricter teacher evaluation standards. Amidst this flood of managerial and instructional demands, public school leaders are faced with meeting the needs of increasingly racially, ethnically, linguistically, and economically diverse school populations. No longer is it enough to be an effective school leader; today's school leaders must also be culturally competent, and must possess the transformational leadership skills that can guide their schools toward becoming culturally responsive institutions.

This study, utilizing the intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v3) developed by Mitchell R. Hammer (2012) as the base instrument, examines the relationship between the intercultural development of school leaders, selected demographic variables, and student achievement. The focus of the study involves 53 school leaders and 18 different schools in Illinois. Through correlations of school leader IDI (v3) results, self-reported demographic data, and in-depth reviews of publicly available school data, knowledge of how a school leader's intercultural development impacts student achievement is explored.

Key words: cultural competence, intercultural development, school leader, IDI, student achievement

A Correlational Study comparing the Relationship between School Leader Intercultural Development, Selected Demographic Variables, and Student Achievement

Chapter I: Introduction

America has undergone extensive change and challenge in the first decade and a half of the 21st century. The once heralded and later highly debated *No Child Left Behind* Act of 2001; 9-11, ISIS, and the continuing War on Terror; huge technological advances pioneered by the innovation talents of such leaders as former Apple® CEO, Steve Jobs; the election and re-election of our first Black President and the nomination of our first female for President; the huge influx of immigration and the ensuing impact on our immigration policies; the Global and Financial crisis of 2008 and its lingering economic effect, among other National challenges, have changed the face of our Nation.

While much commentary has ensued over the challenges this great Nation has faced, it has, perhaps, not been better summarized than in the words of Former Secretary of State, Condoleezza Rice, in her speech before tens of thousands at the Republican National Convention on August 29, 2012. Although her speech was delivered to delegates of the Republican Convention, it was televised and viewed by millions and, no doubt, aimed at sending a message to <u>All</u> of America—paraphrased in brief, she stated that in order to remain the strong Nation our forefathers imagined and countless individuals have fought for, and in order to sustain "a balance of power that favors freedom," (para.9) we must continue to believe we are the land of boundless opportunity and unlimited horizons (Rice, 2012). Perhaps one of the most notable portions of her speech: "We must continue to welcome the world's most ambitious people to be a part of us . . . Americans have believed that you might not be able to control your circumstances, but you can control your response to circumstances, and your greatest ally in controlling your response to your circumstances has been a quality education" (Rice, 2012, para 25). While Rice (2012)

referred to all of our challenges in deep measure, a significant portion of her speech referred to the inequality of our educational system, particularly for new immigrants, our minorities, and our poverty-stricken. No doubt, her most often quoted statement from that speech has been that, in essence, education for ALL is "the civil rights issue of our day" (Rice, 2012, para. 28). Several years have passed since Rice's memorable speech, yet equity in education continues to stand at the forefront of our National concerns.

State and Federal policies regarding education, changing patterns of immigration, increased levels of poverty, and sweeping technological advances requiring more highly trained graduates, particularly in the areas of math and science, have placed growing demands on our public schools. While each of these factors has put huge pressure on our schools and school leaders, the immigration challenge and increasing level of poverty in our schools have possibly created some of the most difficult challenges for educators to bridge.

According to Steven Camarota, the Director of Research for the Center on Immigration Studies, the first decade of the 21st Century "may have been the highest for immigration in our Nation's history, with more than 13 million new immigrants (legal and illegal) arriving" (para. 1) in the U.S. (Camarota, 2011). However, this number continued to grow in the second decade of the 21st Century. Between 2010 and 2014, 5.2 million new immigrants arrived in the United States (Camarota & Zeigler, 2015). In July of 2014, the nation's immigrant population hit a record high of 42.4 million (Camarota et al., 2015).

This explosive increase in immigration has had a huge impact on our public schools. In 2012, Steven Camarota, the Director of Research for the Center on Immigration Studies, estimated that one in five students in our public schools was from an immigrant household, and "of these students, 78 percent speak a language other than English at home" (Camarota, 2012).

Further, Census data tells us that many of our immigrant children live in poverty, overcrowded households, lack health care, and have parents that not only do not speak English, they have less than a high school degree (Camarota, 2012).

According to the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS), an ongoing statistical survey conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau, approximately 10.7 million school-age children (20 percent of children 5 to 17) lived in poverty in 2014 (National Center for Education Statistics [NCES], 2015). This percentage was higher in 2014 than it had been over a decade earlier, in 2000, when it was only 15 percent (NCES, 2015).

No doubt, our leaders have been well aware of these changing demographic patterns, and have worked ardently to insure an educational system that meets the needs of ALL children. In January of 2001, only three days after taking office, George W. Bush, the 43rd President of the United States, announced his framework for bipartisan education reform, *The No Child Left Behind Act*, commonly referred to as NCLB (U.S. Department of Education [USDOE], 2002). In doing so, President Bush emphasized "his deep belief in our public schools, but an even greater concern that 'too many of our neediest children are being left behind', despite the nearly $200 billion in Federal spending since the passage of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA) of 1965" (USDOE, 2002, para. 1).

The No Child Left Behind (NCLB) Act was signed into law by President Bush in January of 2002. It was sold with the guarantee that, at last, no child would be left behind; "the poor would have the same as the rich and the strong arm of the government would make it so" (Mathis, 2003, p. 679). Thus, with great fanfare, and "public support for equality, periodic testing, and highly qualified teachers" (p. 679), it received substantial bipartisan support (Mathis, 2003).

NCLB was praised by civil rights advocates for its promise to improve "education for children of color, those living in poverty, new English language learners, and students with disabilities" (Darling-Hammond, 2007a, p. 11). By setting annual test-score targets for subgroups of students, based on achieving *100 percent proficiency by 2014*, tying targets to school sanctions for failure to meet target goals, and requiring schools to hire *highly qualified teachers*, NCLB was hailed as a victory for American children, particularly those underserved by public schools (Darling-Hammond, 2007a).

In 2006, the Center on Education Policy released a report on the ten major effects of NCLB on American education. After carefully monitoring the implementation of NCLB for four years, they broadly concluded that NCLB was having a major impact on American public education. There was more testing and accountability, more attention paid to how and what was being taught, greater attention paid to low-performing schools, and teacher qualifications, and scores on reading and math tests had risen (Jennings & Rentner, 2006). However, at the same time, they concluded that some of the provisions of the act caused persistent problems. The testing and accountability of students with disabilities and English language learners was troublesome as were some of the increased requirements set forth without the necessary funding provided (Jennings et al., 2006).

As Congress considered reauthorization in 2007, the arguments against NCLB grew stronger. Among the arguments voiced by critics was too much of a focus on testing versus investing; the law did not address the educational inequalities plaguing the nation; there was a narrowing of curriculum as a result of NCLB; and the complicated accountability scheme and unrealistic targets were preventing productive reform and punishing the neediest schools and students (Darling-Hammond, 2007a).

In 2010, The Rand Corporation printed a report synthesizing their findings about the implementation and results of NCLB, which included data from two previous longitudinal studies contracted by the U.S. Department of Education and data from a third study funded by the National Science Foundation. They concluded that NCLB had succeeded in its intent to establish a nationwide accountability system focusing on student outcomes and improvement of the lowest performing schools. However, it fell short in several areas including: too narrow a focus on only two academic areas (math and reading), and reliance on narrow tests that resulted in a narrowing of the school curriculum, a lack of emphasis on the development of critical-thinking and problem-solving skills, and teachers focusing on some students at the expense of others (Stechner, Vernez & Steinberg, 2010).

In 2011, the Center on Education Policy, a national independent advocate for public education, released a report indicating that U.S. schools failing to make AYP had reached an all-time high; 48% of the U.S. schools did not make AYP (Annual Yearly Progress) under the No Child Left Behind Act in 2011, an increase from 39% in 2010 (Usher, 2011). Their data, based on performance reports submitted to the U.S. Department of Education, indicated that three of the four largest states, Florida, California, and Illinois, had 65 to 89% percent of the students fail to make AYP in 2011 (Usher, 2011).

In February of 2011, Andrew J. Coulson, Director of the Center for Educational Freedom at the CATO Institute, addressed the U.S. House of Representatives' Committee on Education and the Workforce regarding the impact of the Federal Government's involvement on America's classrooms. Citing Federal spending since Congress's first attempt to improve the quality of instruction in schools through the National Defense Education Act (NDEA) of 1958, Coulson described how Federal dollars aimed at improving education in the areas of math and reading

have skyrocketed while educational improvement has remained flat or declined. Despite the huge Federal dollars spent, the goal of raising overall achievement and closing the achievement gaps between minority and White students as well as high and low income students has resulted in a depressing outcome (Coulson, 2011).

Cautioned, cajoled, and guided by volumes of research, testimonies such as Coulson's, reporting by the best scholars, educators, governmental leaders and philanthropists of our time, and a push by the White House to speed up work on reauthorization, Congress remained embattled and torn through 2011 in the rewrite of NCLB—an effort aimed at closing the achievement gap and educating ALL students.

In September of 2011, without reauthorization of NCLB and growing concern over the unattainable goals set by NCLB and the number of schools deemed as failing, President Obama announced the ESEA Regulatory Flexibility Initiative. The ESEA flexibility initiative or waiver encouraged states applying to focus on "rigorous and comprehensive State-developed plans designed to improve educational outcomes for all students, close achievement gaps, increase equity, and improve the quality of instruction" (USDOE, 2012a, para. 1). The ESEA flexibility waiver released states from some of the unrealistic and punitive aspects of NCLB and enabled states and schools to design their own solutions to their most important needs while still encouraging accountability (USDOE, 2012a). By April of 2014, 43 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico had been approved for ESEA waiver requests (The White House [Press Release], 2014).

In tandem with the ESEA flexibility waivers, new measures for teacher and administrator licensure and evaluation, more rigorous *common core* standards, better student assessments, an increase in early childhood education programs, and better use of data systems arose. While

states and school districts made extensive efforts to move schools forward and insure an education for ALL students, standardized test results continued to show gaps between subgroups, particularly between Black and Hispanic students and their White and Asian peers (NCES, 2015).

One of the biggest cross-national assessments given every three years, PISA (Program for International Student Assessment), placed the United States well behind the other participating countries in the most recently released results (Desilver, 2015). The assessment, coordinated by the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD), measures the performance of 15-year old students on an international assessment focusing on science, math, and reading literacy. Based on the 2012 PISA rankings, released in December of 2013, the United States ranked 35th in math, 27th in Science, and 24th in reading out of the 64 participating countries (Desilver, 2015; NCES, 2015). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) data, the 2012 U.S. scores are not measurably different from the average scores in previous PISA assessment years (NCES, 2013), essentially indicating the U.S. is still falling behind other industrialized countries and adding credence to Coulson's testimony that despite the extensive Federal dollars spent, results are bleak at best.

If the United States is to remain a world power, "a quality education", as Former Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice (2012) stated, "is our greatest ally" (para.25). The importance of educating ALL children becomes increasingly important as we examine demographic trends, employer demands, and the ever-growing gap between the preparedness of our workforce and the skills the economy requires (Balfanz, 2012; Goldin & Katz, 2007).

The Problem

With all of the expert effort, revitalized programs and financial dollars invested in supporting our neediest children, our educational system still struggles in meeting the needs of many of our youth, primarily children of color and poverty (NCES, 2015). As evidenced by the PISA scores, our Nation continues to fall behind educationally that of other industrialized countries, and the question asked by all is *why*?

The demographic face of our school classrooms has changed dramatically over the last decade with more children of color, more children needing to learn English as a second language, and more children from poverty (Camarota, 2012). Yet, teacher and school administrator demographics have changed relatively little. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) 2015 Profile of Teachers in the U. S., during the 1993-94 school year, 87% of public school teachers were White, 27% were males and 73% were females. That same report indicated that in the 2011-2012 school year, 18 years later, 82% of public and private school teachers were White, only a 5% difference, and the number of males in the field decreased to 24% while the number of females increased to 76% (NCES, 2015).

As teachers move up through the ranks and become administrators, understandably, our school administrators mirror the available teaching force, resulting in an overwhelmingly White majority of school administrators. According to the NCES 2015 Digest of Education Statistics, during the 1993-194 school year, 84% of public school principals were White; during the 2011-2012 school year, 80% of the public school principals were White, a change of only 4 percentage points over 18 years (NCES, 2015).

Though research indicates that an educator does not have to share the same race or ethnicity of their students to be effective (Ladson-Billings, 1995, 2009; Nieto, 1999, 2010, 2013;

Tan, 2001;), many teachers and administrators, according to multiculturist Geneva Gay, are still operating within educational systems based on the "middle-class, Eurocentric frameworks that have shaped school practices" (Gay, 2010b, p. 22).

Much of the conversation about improving education in America has centered on test scores, accountability, increased rigor, common standards, and insuring qualified teachers and effective administrators. Far less attention has been paid, despite the immense work of leading multiculturists, toward educators' examination of cultural awareness, cultural development, and the impact of culture on student achievement.

As Sonia Nieto (2010) discussed in the prologue to the 10th Anniversary Edition of her acclaimed book, *The Light in Their Eyes*, education is not just about the characteristics of our students and teachers (or administrators). The sociopolitical context of education must take into account individuals' beliefs, values and practices; institutional decisions and practices; the collective collaboration within an institution, most often based on the vision and direction of the school leader; and the ideology held, consciously or subconsciously, by a specific (local) society (Nieto, 2010). For educator transformation and school reform to take place that truly emphasizes a multicultural education that meets the needs of ALL students, we must rethink our roles within the changing world in which we live (Nieto, 2010).

The transformation that Nieto (2010) refers to can only begin through self-awareness. In a demographically changing landscape, the future success of our students depends on educators' willingness to examine beliefs, both conscious and unconscious, and consider how their beliefs impact educational practices. Responding to the achievement gap in our demographically changing society requires deep introspection and an honest appraisal of cultural awareness through a sociocultural lens. The development of such awareness can be aided by a cultural

development inventory such as the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory). The IDI can serve as a baseline for cultural assessment that productively guides intercultural development. However, providing both opportunity and access to such intercultural development within an educational setting begins with those responsible for setting the vision for their schools—the local school leader. Until the school leader embraces the need for cultural awareness and examines his or her own cultural sensitivity, it is doubtful that the change needed to close the achievement gap will occur.

Statement of Purpose

It is the focus of this paper to examine the intercultural development of school leaders and their impact on student achievement in a multicultural environment. This research focuses on school leaders from 18 suburban schools in the Midwestern state of Illinois. These schools, like many in the suburban Midwest, have witnessed significant demographic change in recent years and like many schools all over the U.S., despite technologically and financially supported efforts, continue to witness gaps in the performance of children of color, low socioeconomic status, and English Language Learners. The primary assessment for this research is based on a highly researched international instrument, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v3), which measures individual and group cultural development (Hammer, 2012a). While this instrument has been used widely by businesses worldwide as well as post-secondary institutions, according to its author, Dr. Mitchell Hammer, it has been used only minimally within elementary and secondary public education, and such research is sorely needed (M. Hammer, personal communication, April 18, 2013). Results of the IDI assessment will be correlated with self-reported demographic data and publicly available school data to determine if any correlations

exist between level of school leader intercultural development, various demographic and school-related variables, and student achievement.

Research Questions

The primary question that will guide this correlational research study seeks to answer:

RQ1. How does a school leader's intercultural development correlate with student achievement in a demographically changing, culturally diverse school?

Research Sub-questions

- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader demographic variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader experience?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory), student demographics, and student achievement as measured by the annual State tests (PARCC)?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI, school climate factors as measured by the 5Essentials survey, and student achievement as measured by the annual State tests (PARCC).

Significance of Topic

Through extensive training by the IDI staff as well as support from the school administration of the schools being studied, the IDI assessment was administered to 53 school leaders. Results of the assessment were compared to self-reported school leader demographics

provided through the IDI and publicly available school demographic, school climate, and school achievement data to determine if there is any relationship between school leaders' level of cultural development and student achievement. School leaders from 20 different schools and several support programs were invited to participate in this study. The results of this study will be used to assist schools and school leaders in the creation of personal and school-wide professional development programs focused on cultural awareness and growth, and will add to the limited research on school leaders and cultural development.

Key Definitions

The following terms are used throughout this study. In order to promote understanding and avoid any misunderstanding, the key terms used are defined below.

Academic Early Warning – a label placed on a school that was not meeting proficiency targets under NCLB, resulting in expanded state requirements and services

Academic Watch – a label placed on a school that repeatedly did not meet NCLB proficiency targets resulting in additional requirements and services and possible state takeover if the school did not improve.

Acceptance - the fourth step on the Intercultural Development Continuum; considered an intercultural and global mindset in which individuals recognize and have appreciation for patterns of cultural difference as well as acknowledge certain commonalities within their own culture (Hammer, 2012b).

Achievement Gap - refers to a disparity on academic measures between groups defined by ethnicity, gender or economic status

Adaptation - the top stage within the Intercultural Development Continuum; individuals at this stage can shift perspectives and change behavior to adapt performance in ways that are culturally acceptable (Hammer, 2012b).

AMO (annual measurable objective) – yearly targets in reading and math as described in a State's ESEA flexibility waiver for each subgroup

AYP (adequate yearly progress) – statewide accountability system, part of NCLB, that insured all children made academic progress; measured through standardized State tests administered at least twice during grades 3-8, and again in grade 11 in Illinois

Best Practices – methods or techniques that consistently show results

Common Core - State standards initiative outlining the knowledge and skills K-12 students should know; initially focused on math and English standards

Culture – beliefs, customs, values, art, etc. of a particular group

Cultural competence – ability to interact effectively with people from different backgrounds and cultures

Cultural Disengagement – the degree of connection or disconnection one has toward a primary cultural community (Hammer, 2012b).

Cultural Sensitivity – the sensitivity one has toward cultures different than their own

DACA- acronym for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals, announced by President Obama in 2012; closely resembles provisions of Dream Act limiting deportation of certain youth

Defense - the second step within the DMIS framework; individuals with a defense worldview tend to experience their culture as the only one (Bennett, 2004).

Demographics – statistical data relating to a population or a particular group (i.e., age, ethnicity, gender, economic level, education, etc.)

Denial - the lowest level on the Intercultural Development Continuum; individuals at this level do not recognize differences in perceptions and behavior as cultural; may even distance themselves from cultural groups; tend to stereotype and have little interest in learning about diverse communities (Hammer, 2012b).

Differentiated instruction **–** varying instructional delivery methods, learning activities and methods of assessment to meet the different learning styles, interests and abilities of a diverse group of students within a classroom

Disadvantaged Children – refers to students who are lacking economically, have learning disabilities, or have limited English proficiency

Discipline Referral Rate – the number of times a student is referred to a dean for disciplinary infractions in a given school year

Diverse – refers to varied, not homogeneous populations (i.e., a highly diverse student body might include varied ethnicities or varied socioeconomic levels)

Diversity – a mix of differences around such factors as nationality, ethnicity, age, gender, sexual orientation, socioeconomic status, physical or mental ability, education, and/or religion

DMIS - acronym for Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity, a research-based model originally developed by Dr. Milton Bennett to guide cultural development (Bennett, 2004)

Dream Act **–** acronym for development, relief and education for alien minors; provides a conditional path to citizenship for undocumented youth meeting certain qualifications; youth must complete college or two years of military service. Various versions presented to Congress without passage; certain states have developed their own version of the Dream Act.

ESEA – refers to the Elementary and Secondary Act, first signed into law in 1965 to insure equal access to a quality education for all children; revised seven times prior to revision in 2001 with the No Child Left Behind act (New America Foundation, 2014).

ESEA Flexibility Initiative – an opportunity for States and local school districts to refine school and student accountability by individually tailoring the needs of their schools and districts rather than relying on some of the unreachable and punitive measures outlined by No Child Left Behind (USDOE, 2012a).

ESSA (Every Student Succeeds Act) – a bipartisan measure, signed into law in December of 2015, reauthorizing the 1965 Elementary and Secondary act and replacing the No Child Left Behind Act; narrows the federal government's involvement in elementary and secondary education, shifting accountability to the States, but retains the requirement of annual standardized testing (The White House, 2015).

Ethnocentric (ethnocentricism) - an intercultural orientation where one believes their culture is central to reality (Bennett, 2004).

Ethnorelative (ethnorelativism) - an intercultural orientation at the polar opposite of ethnocentricism; an orientation where one believes their culture is just one reality among many possibilities (Bennett, 2004).

5Essentials Survey – A system designed to measure and drive school improvement from an organizational perspective; stakeholders participate in a survey about their school providing a picture of the school's climate and effectiveness (Klugman, Gordon, Sebring, & Sporte, 2015)

High minority – Refers to a student population that is more than 50 percent black, Hispanic, Asian, and/or American Indian

High performing – Refers to schools whose students consistently hit academic targets

High poverty – Refers to a student population in which 50 percent or more of the students are on free and reduced lunch

High School – secondary education grades 9 through 12

Illegal Immigrant – a person who crosses national borders without permission, violating immigration laws

Immigrant **–** a person who comes to another country of which they are not a native to settle

Immigration – the act of moving into another country, which is not native, to settle

Integration - the last stage of cultural development in Bennett's DMIS model on Intercultural Sensitivity; a stage in which one can easily move "in and out of different cultural worldviews" (Bennett, 2004, p. 72).

Intercultural Competence - the capability to shift cultural perspective and appropriately adapt behaviors to cultural differences and commonalities (Hammer, 2012b, p. 29).

Intercultural Development – the development of *Intercultural Competence*

Intercultual Development Continuum (IDC) - A continuum on which the current version of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v3) is based; involves five stages along the continuum beginning with denial at the far left of the continuum and moving to adaptation at the far right (Hammer, 2012b).

Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) – a 50-item, cross-cultural, valid and reliable assessment of intercultural competence (Hammer, 2012a).

Intercultural Mindset - a cultural mindset in which an individual recognizes and appreciates patterns of cultural difference between people, and, ultimately, can adapt behavior and performance in culturally appropriate ways (Hammer, 2012a).

ISAT - abbreviation for the Illinois Standard Achievement Test given to students in grades 3 through 8; measures achievement in reading and math

MAP - abbreviation for Measures of Academic Progress, an interim assessment given several times a year to students to measure their academic growth

Minority – sociologically, refers to those who are different racially, ethnically, or politically than the larger group of which they are a part; smaller in number; a smaller group as opposed to the majority

Monocultural Mindset - A mindset at the lower end of the Intercultural Development Continuum; a mindset in which an individual has less capability for understanding and responding to cultural differences in others (Hammer, 2012a).

NCLB – short form for No Child Left Behind Act of 2001

PARCC (The Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers) – a computer-based standardized state assessment that is aligned to revised state standards and assessment criteria; incorporates Common Core. The first operational tests were given in 2015.

Polarization - a cultural orientation with a judgmental mindset; often sees differences in others with an "us vs. them" mindset (Hammer, 2012b, p. 28)

Poverty – income level at or below a certain threshold as defined by the U.S. Census Bureau (redefined annually based on inflation and family size; Poverty level for one person in 2015 was set at $11,770; for an average family of 4 it was set at $24,250) (Federal Register, 2015).

Professional Development – refers in this study to training and development aimed at improving the ability of teachers and school leaders to better meet the needs of all students

Proficiency/proficiency targets – refers to ability to meet academic goals

PSAE – abbreviation for the Prairie State Achievement Exam, the Illinois State Achievement Test administered to all grade 11 students from 2001 to 2014; measured achievement in reading, math, science and writing.

Race to the Top – a $4.35 billion competitive educational grant program aimed at encouraging educational innovation and reform (USDOE, 2009)

School Climate – refers to the quality and character of a school from safety to social interaction and acceptance to values, norms and organizational structures; reflects the student's educational experience and school life.

School leader – a building level leader, includes both building administrators and teacher leaders

School to Prison Pipeline – terminology that refers to the school practice of pushing students out of school, particularly children of color, through suspension and expulsion, and, in effect, contributing to the dropout problem and growing prison population (Amurao, 2013).

STEM education – education in the fields of science, technology, engineering and math

Subgroup **–** group within a larger group; used in reference to NCLB, includes ethnic groups of Black, White, Hispanic, Asian, Alaskan-Pacific Islander, Native American, and multi-racial as well as limited English proficiency and disadvantaged sub groups.

Transformational Leadership - A form of leadership in which the leader is able to change or transform individuals within the organization; transformational leaders are concerned with developing personal connections and motivating followers for the greater good (Northouse, 2010).

Value Added - a term often used in teacher evaluation to measure students' test score gains with an individual teacher

Waiver – refers to the voluntary ESEA flexibility initiative, an opportunity which provided educators and State and local leaders with flexibility regarding specific requirements of the No Child Left Behind Act

Key Assumptions

The key assumptions of this study are:

1. That the self-reported on-line IDI survey data is completed accurately and honestly.
2. That the archived and public data provided has been accurately reported.

Limitations of Study

Limitations are particular features of the study that could negatively impact the study or over which the author has no control (Roberts, 2010). The primary limitations of this study are based on the limited number of school leaders and schools being studied. Other variables, such as individual student, teacher, or school leader issues, not measurable through demographic or archival data, may impact the results.

Threats to Validity

There are several factors that could impact the validity of this research.

1. Maturation of participants between the time the State Achievement Tests are completed, IDI is administered, and public data is released.
2. Possible loss of subjects over time
3. Generalizability of the outcome across a broader population due to the limited number of participants and the focus on a limited number of schools

Summary

The face of our Nation has changed greatly in the last decade and a half, and, perhaps, nowhere has that been felt more deeply than in our public schools. The changing patterns of immigration, increased levels of poverty, and sweeping technological advances have undeniably

placed growing demands on our public schools. Add to that a Congress stalled for more than eight years in reauthorizing NCLB, resulting in stop-gap measures and new demands, the National somewhat controversial push for establishing the Common Core Standards and new assessments, and the effort to stretch declining dollars to meet all of these requirements, many of our public schools have struggled to keep up. With so many areas to focus on, professional development programs aimed at dealing with building cultural development often take a backseat to other demands (Boske, 2009). Moreover, such instruments as the IDI and the research provided through such assessments are either unknown to elementary and secondary public school institutions and/or unaffordable in time and/or dollars (personal communication, April 2013). However, without such base-line assessments and research, schools may continue to provide professional development programs that do little to deliver the focused training needed by school leaders and their staff members to change their cultural awareness and overall cultural development. Thus, sadly, the achievement gap so widely discussed may continue.

As Gary Howard (2006a) so aptly stated, "as diversity grows, so must we" (p. 1). Schools, not just our urban schools, but suburban and rural schools that were once predominantly White, middle-class schools, are experiencing changing demographics and a rapid growth of students of color, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and students living in poverty (Howard, 2006a; NCES, 2015).

Ellen Summerfield (1997) posed a question in her book on multicultural living that can still be asked today: "Does the Statue of Liberty's welcome, *Give me your tired, your poor/your huddled masses yearning to breathe free, . . .* still express a deeply held truth about the United States, or has our attitude toward immigrants changed?" (p. 78). While her book was written nearly two decades ago to both shed light on the multicultural issues of the time and encourage

the development of skills and understandings necessary to live amicably in a changing world, her concerns still ring true today.

It is hoped that this study serves as a small basis for further research and a call to action, the call to action that President Obama (White House, 2010) and multiculturist Geneva Gay (2010b) have referred to as a "moral imperative" (p. 250)

Chapter II: Literature Review

The discourse on student achievement and the achievement gap ranges far and wide. It has been the source of much legislative debate, huge reform and funding effort, poignant research, and grave concern for educational and political leaders for many years. Yet, according to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2015 report, Black and Hispanic children, in particular, continue to score significantly behind their White and Asian American peers (NAEP, 2015).

Tyrone C. Howard, in his book, *Closing the Achievement Gap in America's Classrooms: Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools* (2010), introduces his work by imploring educators to understand that our collective fates depend on closing the achievement gap, stating that the achievement gap is "perhaps the single most pressing and perplexing issue thus far in the 21st century" (p.1.) Condoleezza Rice, former U.S. Secretary of State, in her August 2012 address to the Nation, called education the "civil rights issue of our day" and described the crisis in K-12 education "a threat to the very fabric of who we are" (Rice, 2012, para. 27 & 28). The National Education Association, citing the demographic shift in school populations and the growing rate of poverty among school children, stated in a report presented at their 2015 *Closing the Gaps Symposium* that "achievement outcomes are more urgent than ever" (National Education Association [NEA], 2015).

Demographic trends reported by the Center for Public Education warn that the achievement gap, (predominantly gauged since *No Child Left Behind* between minority subgroups and their White peers), will have increasingly serious consequences for America as schools are called on to educate more and more students of color and Hispanic origin (Crouch, Banks Zakariya, & Jilandari, 2012). El Nasser (2004) stated census projections indicate that by

2050, the White population, so prevalent since the founding of the Country, may constitute only 50% of the population, profoundly redefining American Society at every level (El Nasser, 2004). In August of 2014, as public schools reopened for the 2014-2015 school year, *Education Week,* announced that America's schools were about to reach a milestone where the majority of the Nation's K-12 students would be children of color, surpassing the number of white students (Maxwell, 2014).

Our schools sit at the forefront of opportunity to not only improve educational outcomes, but to insure a strong future for America. Education has long been believed to be the *great equalizer*, moving individuals from *mediocrity to success* (Mann, 1848; Rice, 2012*).* To continue to do so, however, requires that our educational institutions carefully re-examine both their practices and their belief systems (Gay, 2010b; Nieto, 2002, 2010, 2013, 2014). Creating mission and vision statements that state support for the needs of ALL children, redesigning licensure and evaluation standards for educators that state the importance of cultural diversity, and mandating legislation, among other efforts, to close the achievement gap and support the needs of ALL students—will this be enough if our intrinsic beliefs are not deeply examined and aligned with the needs of our changing demographic society? No doubt, such an examination requires deep reflection, difficult conversations, strong leadership and potential changes in ideology and pedagogy (Nieto, 2014), but there is a great deal of research and support to guide our way.

It is the aim of this literature review, through the voices of policy analysts, concerned researchers and leading multiculturists, to address our need as educators to take action to respond to our changing world while also shining a light on the path educational leaders can take to meet that need within their demographically changing schools. Part I of this literature review will

provide an overview of the demographic change our Country is facing, analyze the impact of the achievement gap on our future, and briefly review the history of legislation and other efforts aimed at educating the needs of ALL children. Part II will examine the meaning of culture, the role culture plays in education, and the development of a culturally responsive pedagogy. Through a constructivist perspective and a sociocultural lens, with an emphasis on equality, social justice and transformation, emphasis is placed on developing culturally responsive practices in our schools. Part III examines the transformational role of school leaders in guiding change, the impact school leaders have on student achievement, and provides insight on research-based tools that can bridge the gap between theory and practice in developing cultural awareness and cultural responsivity.

The amount of research that has contributed to understanding and closing the achievement gap is, to say the least, daunting. While this review can only briefly touch upon some of this significant research, effort has been made to provide yet another voice to some of the dedicated leaders and researchers who have gone before, individuals dedicated in their pursuit of an equal education for ALL children.

Part I – Examining the Challenge

The Changing Face of Our Nation.

The October 2013 issue of National Geographic Magazine, the 125th Anniversary photo issue of the publication, vividly depicts through photos the changing face of America. It is a face that no longer represents the White, Anglo-Saxon, Protestant population as the majority that once comprised much of America. Instead the photo journalists of this issue and author of the article, "The Changing Face of America" captured the essence of our American culture today--a diverse

mix of multi-hued individuals rich in racial and cultural background (Funderburg & Schoeller, 2013).

While for many years border states such as Texas and California witnessed an ever-increasing wave of immigrant children enter their schools, much of the Midwest, other than the major inner cities, had not experienced any real demographic shift until recent years. When the October 2013 Illinois School Report Card was released, the data showed dramatic shifts in ethnic and racial makeup in the suburban communities surrounding Chicago, with the greatest change in the number of Hispanic students attending what was once predominantly White suburban schools. The 2013 Illinois School Report Card indicated that minorities made up nearly half the students in Illinois public schools, of which Hispanic students comprised the largest minority (24%). The report card also indicated that the teaching staff within the State remained predominantly White (83.3%) and female (76.9%) (Illinois Interactive Report Card (IIRC), 2014). Further still, the 2013 report card data indicated that more than half of all Illinois students were considered low income (IIRC, 2014).

In 2001, Harold Hodgkinson, the Director of the Center for Demographic Policy at The Institute for Educational Leadership, Inc. in Washington, D.C., projected that the suburbs closest to the inner cities, which he termed *the inner suburban ring,* would see an increase in diversity with more minorities, more immigrants, more students who need to learn English as a second language and more students in poverty (Hodgkinson, 2001). He further projected that the higher fertility rates of Hispanics and Asian immigrants would lead to an American population over the next two decades that is 65% *minority* (Hodgkinson, 2001). While Hodgkinson wrote this more than a decade ago, his projections are proving correct.

The Center for Immigration Studies 2015 Report, based on census data taken from the 2014 American Community Survey (ACS) and Current Population Survey (CPS), indicates that there were nearly 42.4 million immigrants living in the United States as of July 2014 (Camarota et al., 2015). According to the Center for Immigration Studies (CIS), an estimated 13.9 million new immigrants arrived in the U.S. between 2000 and 2010 (Camarota, 2012), and an additional 5.2 million new immigrants settled in the United States between 2010 and 2014 (Camarota et al., 2015), indicating an acceleration in growth. According to this same data, Mexico had by far the largest legal and illegal number of immigrants (11.7 million as of 2014) living in the United States (Camarota et al., 2015).

Based on the 2010 decennial census data, the Center for Immigration Studies estimated that 10.4 million students in public schools were from immigrant households in which 78% spoke a language other than English at home, and many lived in overcrowded households, lived in poverty, and/or had parents with less than a high school degree (Camarota, 2012).

The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) provides data on how these factors are playing out in our schools in their *Digest of Education Statistics* (2015). A comparison of racial/ethnic enrollment in public schools based on data reported and projected for 2000 through 2025 (Table 2-1) indicates the demographic shift that is occurring. As exhibited in the table below, the White population is decreasing, while the Hispanic population is increasing and surpassing the Black population; Asian and other populations are seeing mild changes. It should be noted, however, that the Multi-racial category, not included in either the 2000 or 2005 data, is expected to continue to grow as the diversity of our Nation changes and inter-marriages take place (Crouch et al., 2012).

Table 2.1

Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools; 2000-2025

Year	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi-racial
2000	61.2%	17.2%	16.4%	4.1%	1.2%	--
2005	57.0%	17.2%	19.9%	4.6%	1.2%	--
2010	52.4%	16.0%	23.1%	5.0%	1.1%	2.4%
2015ǂ	49.3%	15.6%	25.9%	5.3%	1.0%	2.9%
2020ǂ	47.0%	15.3%	27.9%	5.7%	0.9%	3.2%
2025ǂ	45.6%	15.2%	28.5%	6.1%	0.9%	3.6%

-- Not Available
ǂ Projected Data
Source: The data in this table are from National Center for Education Statistics, 2015, *Digest of Education Statistics*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

Perhaps more striking, however, is how changes in demographics have impacted student enrollment in different parts of the Country as indicated in the next table. The data provided by the National Center for Education Statistics (2015) for enrollment by region included only actual data through 2013; projections by region were not included in the data reviewed. See Table 2-2.

Table 2.2

Regional Distribution - Racial/Ethnic Enrollment in Public Schools; 2000-2013

Year	Region	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi-racial
2000	Northeast	67.4%	15.4%	12.4%	4.4%	0.3%	--
2005		64.5%	15.6%	14.4%	5.2%	0.3%	--
2010		60.4%	15.0%	16.9%	6.2%	0.3%	1.2%
2013		57.7%	14.5%	18.7%	6.7%	0.3%	2.0%
2000	Midwest	76.5%	14.7%	5.7%	2.2%	0.9%	--
2005		73.5%	15.3%	7.7%	2.6%	0.9%	--
2010		69.1%	14.2%	10.2%	2.9%	0.9%	2.8%
2013		67.3%	13.8%	11.5%	3.2%	0.8%	3.4%

(continued)

Year	Region	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian/ Pacific Islander	American Indian/ Alaska Native	Multi-racial
2000	South	55.9%	26.6%	14.5%	2.1%	1.0%	--
2005		51.8%	26.2%	18.4%	2.5%	1.1%	--
2010		47.2%	24.2%	22.4%	3.0%	1.1%	2.3%
2013		45.2%	23.6%	24.2%	3.2%	1.0%	2.8%
2000	West	50.0%	6.5%	32.2%	8.9%	2.7%	--
2005		44.8%	6.5%	37.1%	9.3%	2.4%	--
2010		40.5%	5.5%	39.9%	9.2%	2.0%	2.9%
2013		38.8%	5.1%	41.6%	9.1%	1.8%	3.7%

-- Not Available
Source: The data in this table are from National Center for Education Statistics, 2015, *Digest of Education Statistics*, Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education.

From the data provided, it is obvious that the populations of our classrooms are changing; the Midwest is now experiencing the same demographic shift that other parts of the Country previously experienced

The *Digest of Education Statistics 2015* report provides data on family characteristics for children under age 18 by race/ethnicity including parental education status and poverty levels. According to this data, 49% of the parents of White children hold a bachelor's degree or higher, and the vast majority live above the poverty level; 12% live at or below poverty. By contrast, 24% of the parents of our Black children hold a bachelor's degree or higher, and 38% live in poverty. For our Hispanic children, only 17% of the parents of Hispanic children hold a bachelor's degree or higher and 29% have less than a high school education; 32% live at or near the poverty level. The majority of our Asian children come from well-educated parents—64% of their parents hold a bachelor's degrees or higher, and only 12% live in poverty. While the percentages of our children in public schools are significantly smaller for our Native American/Pacific Islander and American Indian/Alaskan Native children, it should be noted that

35% of our American Indian/Alaskan Native children live at or below poverty. For our multi-racial children, the picture is somewhat better; 41% of their parents have a bachelor's degree or higher; but 22% live at or above the poverty level (NCES, 2015).

The *2012 Condition of Education Report* provided background data on the family households of our children. Based on this data, 75% of our White children lived in two-parent households, 55.7% of our Nation's Black children lived in single-parent households with 51.8% in mother-only households, 64.7% of Hispanic children lived in two-parent households, 85.3% of our Asian children lived in strong two-parent households, and 59% of multi-racial children lived in two-parent households. (Aud, S., Hussar, W., Johnson, F., Kena, G., Roth, E., Manning, E., Wang, X, & Zhang, J., 2012).). It should be noted, according to data reported by the National Center for Education Statistics in 2015 that children living in single-parent households, particularly mother only, have higher rates of poverty than children living in two-parent households. The National poverty rate for mother only households is 44%; poverty rates are even higher for our Black (52%), Hispanic (50%), and American Indian/Alaska Native (50%) children living in mother-only households (NCES, 2015).

This data indicates a huge disparity between our children of different races in terms of parental support, education, and socioeconomic status.

A 2012 report provided by the Center for Public Education, *The Changing Demographics of the United States and their Schools*, painted a picture of contrasts impacting our public schools and provided some important direction to school leaders. The report indicated that our Nation is growing both more diverse and older, with the oldest population represented by Non-Hispanic Whites, and the youngest by Hispanics. Our youngest population was reported as the most diverse with at least 47% of the children under five years of age belonging to a racial or ethnic

minority (Crouch et al., 2012). According to this report, minority populations, particularly Hispanics, are growing more quickly than the population as a whole. Based on the last decennial census data, birth rates per non-Hispanic white woman were 1.8 births whereas birth rates per Hispanic woman were 2.5 (Crouch et al., 2012). Trends in immigration and birth rates indicate that in the not too distant future there will be no majority racial or ethnic group, or no group that make up more than 50% of the population, in the United States (Crouch et al., 2012). What does all of this mean for schools? The 2012 Center for Public Education report points out four trends:

- Schools will increasingly educate students of color and Hispanic origin;
- the Non-Hispanic, White population that schools have traditionally depended upon for funding are becoming older and no longer have children in school;
- the social safety nets that the growing older Non-Hispanic, Whites depend on will increasingly be supported by a multi-hued workforce; and
- the achievement gaps between groups of students will have ever-more serious economic consequences (Crouch et al., 2012).

According to the National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP) 2013 Math and Reading scores for 4th and 8th graders, all groups have seen an increase in test scores since 1990 (NAEP, 2015). However, as previously mentioned, Black and Hispanic children continue to score significantly behind their White and Asian American peers (NAEP, 2015). This gap in achievement, referred to as the *achievement gap*, has been the focus of educational leaders for some time, and as the Center for Public Education report pointed out, it has significant consequences for our future.

Are Our Schools Prepared for Diversity?

It is obvious from the demographic data gathered that our American public schools (schools providing free access to everyone and of which the majority of America's youth are educated; estimated at 50 million according to NCES fall 2014 enrollment figures) will continue to have enrollment increases in racial minority populations, children from families living in poverty, and English Language Learners (NCES, 2015). Are our schools ready for such diversity? The 2015 *Digest of Education Statistics* states that at the end of the 2011-2012 school year, 81.9% of the full-time teachers in public and private schools, Nationally, were White; 6.8% were Black, 7.8% were Hispanic and less than 3% were of another race/ethnicity (NCES, 2015). The report also states that the majority of full-time teachers, nationally, were female —76.3% of the teachers were female and 23.7 were male (NCES, 2015).

The report further indicates that school principals, nationally, also tend to be primarily White. The 2015 *Digest of Education Statistics* states that at the end of the 2011-2012 school year, 80.3% of the public and private school principals were White; 10.1% were Black; 6.8% were Hispanic, .9% were Asian, and less than 2% were of another race/ethnicity (NCES, 2015). Gender was split nearly 50/50 for school principals, with females having a slight edge (51.5%) over males (48.4%) (NCES, 2015). The question frequently asked by researchers and multi-culturalist scholars is: How do school systems composed of primarily White teachers and school leaders impact student achievement in culturally diverse schools? (Delpit, 2006, 2012; Frankenberg & Siegel-Hawley, 2008; Howard, G., 2006; Howard, T., 2010).

While over the past ten to fifteen years the race/ethnicity and gender of public school teachers and school leaders have changed very little according to data published by the National Center for Education Statistics, the student populations in public schools has changed

dramatically (NCES, 2015). According to leading multiculturists (Gay, 2010b; Howard, 2006b; Nieto, 2006, 2013, 2014), this change in diversity has been a continual challenge for educators.

In 2006, 1,087 chief school executives, all members of the American Association of School Administrators, completed a survey focused on diversity issues and diversity training. The participants, 90% of who self-reported their race as White, were asked to rank eight elements of diversity standards from most to least important. Nearly 22% of the participants ranked "awareness of language and communication styles of marginalized cultures that facilitate and implement a vision for learning and shaping school culture" as least important (Boske, 2009, p. 121). Further, over 70% of the school executives indicated their school districts did not promote cultural issues; nearly 67% indicated their staff were not culturally diverse, and over 75% indicated that they were not prepared to address equity issues in their schools (Boske, 2009). The question must be asked, if the chief executive of a school district is unprepared for diversity, then how prepared can we expect the rest of the staff they lead to handle diversity challenges?

Nelson and Guerra (2014) conducted a qualitative study examining educator beliefs, knowledge of culture and the application of cultural knowledge to practice to 73 educational leaders and 38 teachers in two school districts in Texas and Michigan. Participants were asked to provide written responses to commonly occurring school culture clashes. Using a constructivist grounded approach, data was analyzed resulting in a continuum of cultural awareness. Of the 111 participants, 14% were considered culturally unaware, 39% had a little awareness of culture, and 44% had only a general awareness of culture; only 3% were considered culturally aware, and only 1% culturally responsive (Nelson & Guerra, 2014).

While most teachers and administrators believe that they are behaving in ways that facilitate success for all students, an overestimation of cultural awareness, unconsciously *hidden* beliefs, textbooks and instructional materials that underrepresent minorities, and a heavy emphasis on teaching to standardized tests versus learning continue to hinder instructional opportunities and school success for culturally diverse students (Rhoden, 2009). The diversity challenge has, no doubt, come at a fast pace, especially for those school administrators and teachers who have developed their skills in primarily White suburban communities. However, the failure to adapt to a demographically and culturally changing community has dire consequences, economically and otherwise.

The Economic Impact of Underachievement

The economic impact on our society for failing to educate ALL of our youth and prepare them for the future, regardless of race, ethnicity, gender, or culture, is staggering. Education is still the means to closing the economic gap.

While unemployment edges downward as America continues to recover from the 2008 financial crisis, some sectors still struggle and remain higher than pre 2008 employment rates. According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics (2015), those sectors that continue to remain hardest hit by unemployment have been the unskilled and uneducated while professional and business services continue to add jobs. Near the end of 2015, nearly 8 million people remained unemployed, with teens (16%), Blacks (9.2%) and Hispanics (6.3%) accounting for the largest percentage unemployed among major work groups (Bureau of Labor Statistics [BLS], 2015). Much of our recovery depends on a strong educational system and how we utilize our resources to rebound. Today's economy is a global, technology-driven economy where education is the main currency (Darling-Hammond, 2007b; Rice, 2012). In 2013 the Center on Education and

the Workforce reported that by 2020, over 65 percent of all jobs will require postsecondary education and training beyond high school (Carnevale, Smith, & Strohl, 2013). Job openings in healthcare, community service, and STEM will grow the fastest among occupational clusters. It is estimated that by 2020, there will be a need for over 2 million jobs for doctors, nurses, and healthcare providers, a 24% increase in community and social service workers, a 17% increase in business and finance occupations, and 22% increase in computer and math occupations (Lockard & Wolf, 2012).

Yet, the U.S. lags behind other industrialized countries in both number of high school and college graduates. According to OECD, the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development which studies the education performance of countries worldwide, the U.S. ranked 12th out of 34 countries studied by OECD in the number of high school graduates, and 11th out of 34 industrialized countries in the number of college graduates, as of 2014 (NCES, 2015).

While the high school graduation rate has increased overall, there are still gaps. According to a 2006 U.S. Census report comparing educational attainment in the United States between 1940 and 2000, "high school graduation rates have increased threefold in the past six decades" (Crouch et al., 2012, p. 6). However, according to the 2012 graduation rate data provided in the 2015 *Condition of Education Report* (Kena, Musu-Gillette, Robinson Wang, Rathburn, Zhang, Wikinson-Flicker, Barner, & Dunlop-Valez, 2015), Blacks and Hispanics still have lower graduation rates than their Non-Hispanic White and Asian peers. At the end of 2015, the U.S. Department of Education reported high school graduation rates had hit an all-time high of 82% for the 2013-2014 year. While slight gains were seen in all subgroups, certain subgroups including English Language Learners, low income, Black and Hispanic students still lagged well behind their White peers (USDOE, 2015).

The cost of dropping out of school and failing to graduate has serious economic consequences for the Country. The Alliance for Excellent Education estimates that if the dropouts from the Class of 2011 alone had earned their diplomas instead of dropping out, the U.S. economy would have seen $154 billion in additional income over these students' lifetimes (Alliance for Excellent Education, 2011). Further, consider the fact that most prison inmates are high school dropouts. “Since the 1980’s, national investments have tipped heavily toward incarceration rather than education; the number of prisoners have quadrupled since 1980 and state budgets for corrections have grown by more than 900 percent, three times faster than funds for education” (Darling-Hammond, 2010b, p. 5). The U.S. has only 5% of the World’s population, but more that 20% of the world’s incarcerated population (Darling-Hammond, 2010b; Ye Hee Lee, 2015). According to the Bureau of Justice statistics, two-thirds of prison inmates have not completed high school (DeBaun & Roc, 2013; Stullich, Morgan, & Schak, 2016). Yet, during the past three decades, spending on education has doubled while spending on incarceration has more than quadrupled (Stullich et al., 2016; UDOE, 2016a). Prisons are overwhelmingly filled with Black and Hispanic men, and unfortunately, the starting point is often the schools. Black and Hispanic students are more likely than their White peers to be pushed out of school for disciplinary consequences such as suspension, expulsion or even arrest, which often becomes the path to incarceration; this path from school discipline to incarceration has been referred to as the *school-to-prison pipeline* (Amurao, 2013; Darling-Hammond, 2008; Flannery, 2015). Darling-Hammond (2008) suggests that perhaps it would be better to focus on insuring equal educational funding up front rather than later spending three times as much on incarceration. Flannery (2015) suggests that beyond spending, consideration must be given to why we are pushing our youth out of school, particularly our children of color.

Consider further, our standing as a World power. On December 3, 2013, the results of the 2012 PISA (Program for International Student Assessment) were released. The assessment, coordinated by the OECD, measures the performance of 15-year old students on an international assessment focusing on science, math, and reading literacy. The assessment began in 2000 with 32 countries participating, and has since grown to 65 education systems (34 member countries) participating in the assessment as of 2012; the assessment has been given every three years since 2000 (NCES, 2013). According to the 2012 PISA rankings, the United States ranked 35th in math, 27th in Science, and 24th in reading (NCES, 2013). According to NCES data (2013), the 2012 U.S. scores are not measurably different from the average scores in previous PISA assessment years, essentially indicating the U.S. is still falling behind other industrialized countries.

Responding to the PISA 2012 results, NEA (National Education Association) President, Dennis Van Roekel, stated "our students from well-to-do families have consistently done well on the PISA assessments; however, for students who live in poverty, it's a different story. Socioeconomic factors influence students' performance in the United State more than they do in all but a few of the other PISA countries" (Walker, 2013, para 6).

The poverty rate calculated by the U.S. Census Bureau stood at nearly 16% in 2012, only 3 percentage points lower than when the *War on Poverty* began in 1964 (Jaworski, 2014). According to the National Center for Education Statistics 2015 Report, 21% of all children under the age of 18 (15.3 million) were from families living in poverty in 2014 (NCES, 2015). If the census data provided earlier, indicating a growing number of children of color and Hispanic origin are populating our schools, is taken into consideration along with the NCES data on the

high number of children living in poverty, many of whom are Black (38%) and Hispanic (32%), there is cause for concern.

As Karl Weber so movingly points out in his book, *Waiting for "Superman",* and the documentary of the same name, "the fate of our country won't be decided on a battlefield, it will be determined in a classroom" (Weber, 2010, cover). The need to provide a quality education for ALL children is, indeed, a "moral imperative" (Gay, 2010b, p. 250) to insure the economic future of America.

Providing Quality Equal Education for ALL Children – Early Reform Laws

The importance of a quality, equal education to a child's future has been reiterated in court cases, legislative acts, and hundreds of documents during the past century.

In 1954 when Chief Justice Earl Warren delivered the opinion of the Supreme Court in the landmark case of *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas,* he stated that education was the most important function of the state and local government, and that it was doubtful that any child could succeed in life without an education (USHistoryAtlas.com). In that light, the Court ruled that segregation of children in public schools based solely on race deprived the minority children of an equal educational opportunity and was unconstitutional under the Fourteenth Amendment (USHistoryAtlas.com). While Brown vs. Board of Education was a decision dealing with racial segregation, according to Geneva Gay (2004), a celebrated cultural education author and education professor, it lit a fire that traveled far and wide impacting other civil rights issues of the day. No doubt, it was the beginning of a long voyage toward equal education for ALL children.

In April of 1965, as part of the *War on Poverty*, President Lyndon Johnson signed into law the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), providing federal resources and

guidance to schools in an effort to ensure equal access to a quality education for ALL children (New America Foundation, 2014). The Elementary and Secondary Education Act was revised by Congress seven times before culminating in the much debated No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (New America Foundation, 2014).

The Bilingual Education Act, also known as Title VII, was signed into law in January of 1968. It was the first piece of Federal legislation that recognized the needs of limited English speaking ability students. The purpose of the act was to provide schools funds for educational programs to assist students with limited English speaking ability (Stewner-Manzanares, 1988). This Act was revised several times before becoming incorporated into the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001 (Wright, 2005).

In 1972, Congress passed Title IX, prohibiting "sexual discrimination in educational programs supported by Federal monies" (Townley & Schmieder-Ramirez, 2010, p. 67). This law has protected students from sexual harassment and is credited with "sparking a revolution in women's sports" (Townley & Schmieder-Ramirez, 2010, p. 67).

As a result of two significant cases dealing with children with disabilities (Pennsylvania Association for Retarded Citizens v. Commonwealth of Pennsylvania and Mills v. Board of Education), in 1973, Public Law 93-112, known as the Vocational Rehabilitation Act, was passed by Congress (Townley & Schmieder-Ramirez, 2010). This law was designed to eliminate discrimination against people with disabilities, including students, in federally funded institutions (U.S. Department of Labor, 2013). Two additional laws dealing with providing an equal education for children with disabilities followed Public Law 93-112. In 1975, the Education of All Handicapped Children Act, which provided for an appropriate education based on individual needs and offered the "least restrictive" setting for children with disabilities, was passed by

Congress (debittencourt, 2002, p. 16; Townley & Schmieder-Ramirez, 2010). In 1990, the Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA) was passed; this act changed the previously used *handicapped* terminology to *disabled*, more broadly defined disabilities, and instructed schools to include students in regular education programs whenever possible. (Townley & Schmieder-Ramirez, 2010, p. 57). This Act was reauthorized and modified in 2004 (Townley & Schmieder-Ramirez, 2010).

The Goals 2000: Educate America Act was signed into law by President Clinton in March of 1994 (Riley, 1995). This Act supported states to develop standards for what ALL students should know and provided resources to states to help students reach those standards. (Riley, 1995).

In October 1994, the Improving America's Schools Act, a reauthorization of the 1965 ESEA was passed by Congress. In conjunction with President Clinton's Goals 2000 program, this reauthorization added funding to improve instructional delivery and professional development, align high standards, strengthen accountability, and improve education for ALL children (Riley, 1995).

No Child Left Behind

In January 2002, the No Child Left Behind Act of 2001, was signed into law (USDOE, 2002). This was considered one of the most sweeping accountability education acts in history, but later became the source of much discussion and debate.

While NCLB maintained the intent of the original ESEA law, its primary goal was to hold schools more accountable and to bring ALL students, regardless of economics, disability or language up to 100 percent proficiency on State Achievement Tests in Reading and Math by 2014 (Illinois State Board of Education, 2011; USDOE, 2002). In brief, NCLB required all

districts and schools receiving Title I funds to annually measure and report their adequate yearly progress, or AYP, for their total student population and for specific demographic subgroups. Subgroups included major ethnic/racial groups, students with limited English proficiency, students with disabilities, and students who are economically disadvantaged. The law further required 95 percent of all students and of each subgroup to take standardized tests in reading and Math. Schools that failed to make AYP two consecutive years in a row were designated as "needing improvement" and received specific sanctions as a result. (NCLB, Sec. 1111, 2001).

The No Child Left Behind Act was intended to liberate the nation's disadvantaged children and provide all children equal educational opportunities (Altman, 2012). "Although public schools are responsible for educating all students, they historically have had greater success educating middle-to-upper income and White students than poor and minority students" (Kannapel & Clements, 2005, p. 2). Former Illinois State Board of Education Superintendent, Glenn W. McGee, stated in his study on high poverty, high performing elementary schools, "the achievement gap is the single most critical issue in American education" (McGee, 2004, p. 10). Since the enactment of No Child Left Behind (NCLB), state and local educational agencies have been fervently working to turn around their lowest performing schools. While the intent of NCLB was to close the achievement gap, at the end of the 2010-2011 school year, "nearly half of the nation's schools had failed to meet benchmarks set by law" (Altman, 2012, para. 3).

President Obama stated that the goals of NCLB and closing the achievement gap are the right ones, but it needs to be done "in a way that doesn't force teachers to teach to the test or encourage schools to lower their standards to avoid being labeled as failures" (Obama, 2012, para. 10). In 2009, the Alliance for Excellence in Education prepared a report that examined high school performance indicators beyond AYP. According to their report, "AYP has been

fundamentally flawed at the high school level because of weak and inconsistent definitions of proficiency and graduation rates that are not aligned to the goal of every student graduating ready for college and a career" (Pinkus, 2009, p. 1). This report further stated, "Federal accountability standards and school improvement systems need to be reinvented, infused with more and better data, and tailored to meet the individual needs of schools and students" (Pinkus, 2009, p. 1). In other words, the annual end-of-year standardized test to measure proficiency and AYP and the reporting of such information may have *whet* the appetite for closing the achievement gap, but it was not the end all, be all. No Child Left Behind clearly was too focused on accountability based on narrow testing without sufficient focus on college and career-readiness.

Moving Beyond NCLB

In February of 2009, President Obama signed into law the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act (ARRA) in an effort to stimulate the economy and support the creation of jobs as well as invest in education. The Act provided a $4.35 billion competitive educational grant program, *Race to the Top,* aimed at encouraging educational innovation and reform (USDOE, 2009). The grant program asked states to advance reforms in four key areas: a) adopt standards and assessments that prepare students for success in college and careers; b) build data systems that measure student growth and success; c) recruit, develop and reward effective teachers; and d) turn around the lowest achieving schools (USDOE, 2009).

In May 2011, the National Center on Education and the Economy (NCEE), an organization that researches education systems around the world held a conference in Washington, D.C., attended by U.S. Department of Education Secretary Arne Duncan, school leaders, and politicians, to release a report entitled, *Standing on the Shoulders of Giants: An*

American Agenda for Education Reform (Koebler, 2011). The report studied the overall education systems in Canada, China, Finland, Japan, and Singapore, and by looking at the successes of these countries, detailed what America can do to solve our education crisis. The report opens with the question, "What would the education policies and practices of the United States be if they were based on the policies and practices of the countries that now lead the world in student performance?" (Tucker, 2011, p. 1). The report defined a high-performing national education system as "one in which students' achievement at the top is world class, the lowest performing students perform not much lower than their top-performing students, and the system produces these results at a cost well below the top spenders" (Tucker, 2011, p. 4). The report outlined an agenda for reform that included:

> (a) Benchmarking the education systems of the top-performing countries; (b) creating world-class instructional systems and gateways (define a limited number of gateways and create standards for the gateways); (c) developing a world-class teaching force; (d) moving toward full state adoption of responsibility for school finance and toward implementation of a weighted pupil finance system (i.e., the same base funding is behind all students in the state, but additional amounts going to students based on the cost of bringing that student up to the high state academic standards); (e) developing the state's school-to-work transition system; and (f) making sure all systems are coherent and aligned (Tucker, 2011, pp. 40-43).

Reports such as this laid the groundwork for what would become the ESEA flexibility initiative.

ESEA Flexibility Initiative

In September of 2011, with Congress still stalled over reauthorization of NCLB, growing concern over the unattainable goals set by NCLB, and the number of schools deemed as failing

(48% of the schools had not made AYP during the previous year according to a 2011 report released by the Center on Education Policy [Usher,2011]), President Obama announced the ESEA (Elementary and Secondary Education Act) regulatory flexibility initiative (USDOE, 2012a). The ESEA Flexibility Initiative or waiver encouraged states to focus on many of the same areas as outlined in the President's *Race to the Top* competitive grant, his *Blueprint for Reform,* and the findings of the NCEE Report. The ESEA flexibility waiver released states from some of the unrealistic and punitive aspects of NCLB and enabled states and schools to design their own solutions to their most important needs while still encouraging accountability and higher standards of achievement for all students (USDOE, 2012a). On February 9, 2012, the first ten states were granted waivers to the strict provisions of NCLB. The initial states excused from compliance (Colorado, Florida, Georgia, Indiana, Kentucky, Massachusetts, Minnesota, New Jersey, Oklahoma, and Tennessee) pledged "to set higher universal standards of achievement, develop more long–term schemes for college and career planning, reward success of the best performing schools and focus more attention on the weakest schools" (Altman, 2012, para 1). By September 2013, 45 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the Bureau of Indian Education had submitted requests for ESEA flexibility (USDOE, 2014), and by April of 2014, 43 states, Washington, D.C., and Puerto Rico were approved (The White House [Press Release], 2014).

According to the U.S. Department of Education, under the ESEA flexibility waiver "States have the double responsibility of implementing rigorous improvement efforts in schools with persistently low graduation rates while monitoring performance of all student subgroups toward state-set graduation goals" (USDOE, 2012b, p. 2). States are required to continue to expose achievement gaps between student groups and their peers, but can now invest in

strategies that they believe will be most effective in improving student achievement, based on local contexts and student needs. "ESEA flexibility is poised to better meet the needs of states, districts, schools, and most importantly, students, as states courageously implement their chosen reforms" (USDOE, 2012b, p. 2).

According to a press release distributed by the Illinois State Board of Education (ISBE) shortly after submitting their waiver application, Illinois' "overarching goal is to cut in half achievement gaps and the percent of students not making AYP by 2018" (ISBE [Press Release], 2012b, para. 1). The press release stated that the plan calls for the use of a Multiple Measure Index based on four broad categories: "(a) outcomes, including graduation rates; (b) achievement in math, reading, and science; (c) student progress, including growth and English language proficiency and; (d) educational context, such as school climate and course offerings, which will be used as a bonus category" (ISBE [Press Release], 2012b, para. 3). Additionally, Illinois's application sought to raise educational rigor for both students and educators, and through the state's landmark Performance Evaluation Reform Act (PERA) legislation (Public Act 096-0861) passed in January 2010, tied student growth to teachers and principals (ISBE, 2010; ISBE, 2012a, 2012b).

Common Core

While President Obama and Secretary Arne Duncan were making efforts to move education forward with the ESEA flexibility waiver, other leaders were also busy looking at the needs of our educational system. The National Governors Association (NGA) together with the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) had been working to create a set of common core math and reading standards in the United States that build toward college and career readiness. This initiative aimed for "standards that are 'fewer, higher, and deeper' based on

analyses revealing that higher achieving countries teach fewer topics more deeply each year, focus more on reasoning skills and applications of knowledge, and have a well worked out sequence of experience grounded in development learning progressions within domains" (Darling-Hammond, 2010a, p. 2). According to the CCSSO website, the common core state standards initiative establishes clear and consistent guidelines for what every student should know and be able to master in Math and English Language Arts at every grade level, from kindergarten through 12th grade, in order to be prepared for college and career success (CCSSO, 2012).

By December of 2013, forty-five states, the District of Columbia, four territories, and the Department of Defense Education Activity had adopted the Common Core State Standards (Common Core State Standards Initiative, 2013). Although some controversy has surrounded the Common Core and several States have withdrawn their support, a majority of the states and their school districts still subscribe to this initiative.

Every Student Succeeds Act

After more than eight years of struggle in the Congress to rewrite NCLB, establishment of the ESEA flexibility waiver, and development of Common Core, President Obama signed into law on December 10, 2015, the bipartisan *Every Student Succeeds Act* (ESSA) reauthorizing the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (The White House, 2015). This law further releases powers of accountability back to the states, but still includes periodic standardized testing.

The Changing Role of Educators

The ESEA Flexibility Waiver and the Common Core Standards placed a new emphasis on teaching and learning. As a result, several studies based on valued-added achievement gains emerged. In one study on the long-term impact a *valued-added* teacher has on student outcomes

into adulthood (Chetty, Friedman, & Rockoff, 2011), it was determined, after tracking one million children from 4th grade into adulthood, that when a high value-added teacher joins a school, the test scores rise in the subject taught by that teacher, and when a high value-added teacher leaves, scores drop (Chetty et al., 2011). The study further indicated that high value-added teachers impact the long-term outcomes of students on multiple dimensions from attending college to salaries earned to a reduction in teenage pregnancy (Chetty et al, 2011). *Value added*, which many States began using as a measure to evaluate teachers, is "defined as the average test score gain for his or her (the individual teacher's) students, adjusted for differences across classrooms in student characteristic such as prior test scores" (Chetty et al., 2011, para. 1).

The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation released in January 2013, the MET (Measures of Effective Teaching) report based on a three-year project involving approximately 3,000 teachers. According to the MET project, "teaching is effective when it enables student learning, but identifying effective teaching is complicated." (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013a, p.6). The MET project used valued-added achievement gains similar to the Chetty, Friedman, and Rockoff study to measure effective teaching, but advocated a multiple measures composite for teacher evaluation that also includes an observation framework such as Charlotte Danielson's Framework for Teaching (2013) and student surveys (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation, 2013a). According to Tom Bosberg, Superintendent of the Denver Public Schools, one of the Districts involved in the study, "great teaching is the most important in-school factor in determining student achievement" (Bill & Melinda Gates Foundation [Press Release], 2013b, para. 10). Countless authors and educational leaders agree (Carter, 2000; Curry, Pacha, & Baker, 2007; Kannapel & Clemens, 2005; McGee, 2004; Reeves, 2000). Carter (2000) in his study of 21

high-performing, high poverty schools stated that "improving the quality of instruction is the only way to improve overall student achievement, and teacher quality is the single most important indicator" (Carter, 2000, p. 9).

Insuring quality teaching and evaluating teacher effectiveness has become a major focus of education in recent years. The Charlotte Danielson Framework for Teaching (2013), suggested by the MET project, is an in-depth, detailed instrument for evaluating teacher performance; it is probably the number one evaluation instrument used today, according to Danielson (2013), and as such, deserves some discussion.

The Danielson framework is based on empirical studies and theoretical research of the teacher responsibilities needed to improve student learning (Danielson, 2013). Originally published by ASCD in 1996, the framework has been updated several times, most recently to reflect the Common Core Standards and the knowledge gained through the MET project (Danielson, 2013). The instrument focuses on four domains of teaching:

Domain 1 – Planning and Preparation: Includes knowledge of content and pedagogy, knowledge of students, setting instructional outcomes, knowledge of resources, designing coherent instruction, and designing student assessments (Danielson, 2013).

Domain 2 – Classroom Environment: Includes creating an environment of respect and rapport, establishing a culture of learning, managing classroom procedures, managing student behavior, and organizing physical space (Danielson, 2013).

Domain 3 – Instruction: Includes communicating with students, effective use of questioning and discussion techniques, engaging students in learning, using assessments for learning, and demonstrating flexibility and responsiveness (Danielson, 2013)

Domain 4 – Professional Responsibilities: Includes reflecting on teaching, maintaining accurate records, communicating with families, participating in the professional community, developing professionally, and exhibiting professionalism (Danielson, 2013).

According to this framework, not only must teachers have a strong command of their subject matter, but also a significant knowledge about each of their students, which includes knowledge of their cultural heritage, when planning and delivering instruction (Danielson, 2013).

Growing Emphasis on Culture in Education

At the July 2013 National Education Association (NEA) Convention, over 25 resolutions were passed dealing with the NEA's position on diversity, culture and cultural education. One of the lengthiest of these, Resolution B-14, stated that "discrimination and stereotyping based on such factors as race, gender, sexual orientation, gender identification, disability, ethnicity, immigration status, occupation and religion must be eliminated" (National Education Association [NEA], 2013, p. 17). In addition, this same resolution stated that all educational plans, activities and programs must "increase respect, understanding, acceptance and sensitivity toward individuals and groups in a diverse society" (NEA, 2013, p. 18), and further, must eliminate discrimination in curriculum materials, foster a use of nondiscriminatory language, integrate accurately the contributions of all groups through history, eliminate favoritism of one student over another, offer role models who are both positive and diverse, and encourage all members of the educational community to examine their assumptions, prejudices and beliefs" (NEA, 2013, p. 18).

In May of 2015, The National Education Association presented a symposium on closing the achievement gap. The symposium focused on teaching children from poverty, understanding the achievement gap between racial and ethnic minorities, and the need for cultural competence

(NEA, 2015). No doubt, the National Education Association sees the importance the role culture and diversity plays in education.

The renewed emphasis the NEA has placed on diversity, culture and cultural education is echoed by other leading professional educational organizations as well, resulting in revised state and National licensing standards for not only teachers, but school leaders as well. In 2008, the Council of Chief State School Officers (CCSSO) released the updated Interstate School Leaders Licensure Consortium (ISLLC) Standards for School Leaders as adopted by the National Policy Board for Educational Administration (Council of Chief School State Officers [CCSSO], 2008). The National Policy Board for Educational Administration is composed of members from the leading educational associations for school administrators, professors of teacher education and educational administration, school boards, state school officers, and teacher accreditation organizations. The 2008 standards, updated from the original 1996 standards, reflected the combined input of numerous educational leaders, significant research, and the many lessons learned about school leadership and the role the school leader plays in promoting the educational success of every student (CCSSO, 2008). The 2008 standards repeatedly addressed the importance of promoting the success of <u>every</u> student with a heavy emphasis on responding to diverse community interests and needs, including promoting understanding and appreciation for diverse cultures, safeguarding equity and diversity and promoting social justice (CCSSO, 2008).

In 2012, Canole and Young, with a grant from the Wallace Foundation and produced with the assistance of the CCSSO, the Council of the Great City Schools, and UCEA, completed an in-depth analysis of the 2008 leadership standards in an effort to further support school leader effectiveness and address the mounting changes experienced by school leaders. According to Canole and Young (2013), there were four primary catalysts driving the changes education

leaders were experiencing at the time: (a) the Common Core Standards, (b) the $4.35 billion Race to the Top initiative, (c) President Obama's Blueprint for Reform, which communicated his vision for reauthorization of the Elementary and Secondary Education Act (ESEA), and (d) the voluntary ESEA Flexibility Program. These four initiatives all aimed, in essence, at closing the achievement gap through education that effectively meets the diverse learning needs of ALL students and insures that ALL students are college and career ready upon graduation from high school.

In 2014, the ISLLC standards were again reviewed and updated to maximize learning for ALL youth. The initial document released for public comment emphasized the importance of empowering *every* learner to learn, valuing the differences that *each* learner brings to the learning experience, and maximizing learning environments in our changing world (CCSSO, 2014). In 2015, the new standards, renamed the "Professional Standards for Educational Leaders" was unveiled. While all ten standards indicate the importance of educating *each* student, Standard 3 focuses specifically on Equity and Cultural Responsiveness, stating that "effective educational leaders cultivate an inclusive, caring and supportive school community that promotes the academic success and well-being of *each* student" (CCSSO, 2015, para. 4).

Part II – Examining Culture in Education

Analyzing America's changing demographics, the impact education has on our future, and the efforts that have been made over time by legislators, educational leaders and scholars to close the achievement gap provides a strong backdrop for addressing the increasingly important role culture plays in education. The term *culture,* which now frequently appears in updated evaluation standards for today's teachers and educational leaders, is often misused and confused.

Thus, a thorough understanding of what the term actually means must be understood before developing any program of cultural responsivity.

Culture Defined

The National Institute for Urban School Improvement, now part of the Equity Alliance at Arizona State University, released in 2005 a series of *OnPoint* articles (white papers) exploring the issues surrounding culture and teaching. In the first of the series, *Understanding Culture*, based on the work of such notable multicultural education scholars as Banks (2004), Gay (2000), Ladson-Billings (1995) and Nieto (1999), culture is defined and examined in terms of what it is, is not, and why it is critical for educators to understand culture and cultural responsivity. The authors of this first article series, Zion and Kozleski (2005) explain that culture, too often thought of as simply the traditions, foods, music, clothing or holidays a particular group shares, reaches beyond such visible indicators; it involves a deeper "combination of thoughts, feelings, attitudes, beliefs, values and behavior patterns that are shared by racial, ethnic, religious or social groups of people" (Zion & Kozleski, 2005, p. 3). Culture transcends race and ethnicity; it involves gender, age, socioeconomic class, both mental and physical abilities, one's spiritual and religious beliefs, sexual orientation, and other elements (Zion et al., 2005).

The United Nations Educational Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) defines culture as "the set of distinctive spiritual, material, intellectual, and emotional features of society or a social group, and that it encompasses in addition to art and literature, lifestyles, ways of livng together, value systems, traditions and beliefs" (UNESCO, 2001, para. 5).

Gay (2010b) defines culture (citing Delgado-Gaitan & Trueba, 1991) as a "dynamic system of social values, cognitive codes, behavioral standards, worldviews, and beliefs used to give order and meaning to our own lives as well as the lives others" (p. 8).

Banks and McGee-Banks (2013) cites Bulllivant (1993) in defining the meaning of culture as "a group's program for survival in and adaptation to its environment" (p. 6). Banks and McGee-Banks (2013) further define culture as consisting of shared knowledge, concepts, beliefs, values, symbols, and interpretations within a group.

Thus, it is safe to say understanding culture is *Beyond Heroes and Holidays* (Lee, Menkart & Okazawa-Rey, 2008). Culture is a complex, dynamic, ever shifting force based on the multiple groups we belong to, our experiences within those groups, and the attitudes and beliefs we develop as a result of those experiences (Zion et al., 2005).

The Importance of Understanding Culture

Understanding culture is profoundly important for educators. "Culture is at the heart of all we do in the name of education" (Gay, 2010b, p. 8). Our behaviors (thinking, relating, speaking, writing, performing, producing, learning AND teaching) are based on not only our ethnicity but our culture and other mitigating values such as affiliations, gender, age, social class, education, residence, and immigration status (Gay, 2010b). According to Gay (2010b), "even without our being consciously aware of it, culture determines how we think, believe, and behave, and these, in turn affect how we teach and learn" (p. 9).

As Zion and Kozleski (2005) point out, it is important for an educator to understand their own cultural orientation and that of their students as misunderstandings about culture and cultural development can unintentionally create unintentional barriers to student success.

A Canadian study, published in the *The Journal of Mutliculturalism in Education* (2012), reported on the experiences of six high school refugees from Palestine, Kenya, Egypt, Ethopia, and Columbia, attending an English speaking Canadian school. Through individual interviews, focus groups, and observations, three consistent concerns that impeded development emerged as

a result of this study: (a) persistent monolingual instructional practices, (b) anti-immigrant sentiments within the school culture, and (c) a lack of opportunity for school involvement and a voice. Participants expressed frustration over how the *English-only* rule in classes negatively impacted their class participation and how they viewed themselves as learners; the refugee students felt they were targets of anti-immigration sentiment and bullying for their accents, broken English and cultural dress, and their well-being was disregarded by school leaders; and they stated that although they wanted to become more involved in the school, opportunities were lacking that met their needs (Montero, Ibrahim, Loomis & Newmaster, 2012).

Gerdean Tan, an Assistant Professor in the Department of Human Development at Washington State University, conducted a study in 2001 examining perceptions of multiculturalism among Hispanic students, school achievement and dropout rates. Tan studied six high schools over a six-month period using observations, focus groups, interviews and data analysis to determine why students drop out of school and what could be done to retain them. The most important finding of her study was that "Hispanic students who saw their teachers as *multicultural* were more likely to find learning easy, to receive good grades, and to believe they would graduate from high school" (Tan, 2001, p. 40). In interviews with 45 students (20 migrant first-year high school students and 25 "settled" students), Tan found that teachers did not necessarily need to be Hispanic to receive a high grade from students (Tan, 2001, p. 40). However, it was important that teachers liked them, appreciated their culture, respected them, respected their language, liked their country of origin and helped them make cultural connections to new information (Tan, 2001). Her observations indicated "that student involvement, interactions with the teacher, cooperative learning, and respect for culture facilitate the learning process among Hispanic children" (Tan, 2001, p. 37).

According to Geneva Gay (2010a), "most culturally diverse students and their teachers *live* in different worlds, and they do not fully understand or appreciate one another's experiential realities" (Gay, 2010a, p. 144). Such a lack of understanding, according to Gay (2010a), leads to sporadic or superficial interactions with one another, which are not desirable for teaching and learning.

Unfortunately, all too often, our knowledge about cultural diversity is viewed through the lens of mass media, which often leads to "distorted perceptions of, beliefs about, and attitudes toward ethnically and racially diverse individuals, groups and cultures" (Gay, 2010a, p. 144). Such distortions can unconsciously impact how a teacher views a culture, and may, without their knowing it, impact how they react to a student or students. According to Osterman (2000), if a teacher inadvertently communicates to a student that they are not valued, their sense of self may deteriorate and they are more likely to withdraw or show aggressive behavior; neither of which leads to healthy academic or social development.

Impact of Positive Relationships on Learning

As pointed out in Tan's study (2001), positive, supportive student-teacher relationships can make the difference between success and failure. The work of Osterman (2000), Furrer and Skinner (2003), Jensen (2009), and the extensive work done by the Search Insititute in Minnesota further support the importance of positive student-teacher relationships and the impact on the academic and social-emotional development of youth

Osterman (2000) did a meta-analysis of a large body of research on students' need for belonging to determine how students' need for belonging in the school community impacts their academic attitudes, motives, self-regulation, engagement, and, ultimately, achievement. She determined that how a student experiences acceptance impacts whether they

have a positive or negative orientation toward their school, their teachers, and their commitment to class work as well as their attitude toward themselves and others, which fundamentally impacts their performance. (Osterman, 2000).

Furrer and Skinner (2003) conducted a longitudinal study of 641 elementary school children in grades 3 through 6 from a suburban-rural school district to determine if a sense of relatedness was important to achievement motivation. Using the results of a series of questionnaires given over a period of time to both the students and the teachers of the students, they examined student engagement and relatedness to social partners (parents, teachers, and peers). They determined that a sense of relatedness to each social partner counts. Children who are high on relatedness tend to be more enthusiastic about learning and have fewer negative emotions. In contrast, children who feel rejected or feel a lack of belonging, tend to become bored, frustrated and withdrawn from learning activities, resulting in poorer academic performance (Furrer et al., 2003). They concluded that "feeling connected and important is not just a by-product of doing well in school; a sense of belonging or relatedness plays an integral role in children's motivational development" and ultimately, their success (Furrer et al., 2003, p. 160).

Jensen's (2009) work examining students of poverty, their developmental needs, and what it takes for them to achieve academically, further emphasizes the importance of relationship building. Jensen states that children of low socioeconomic status often experience impaired relational experience; teachers and other school staff are in a favorable position to provide strong relationship support through the authentic care and concern they exhibit and the amount of personal attention they provide. Jensen (2009) suggests that teachers, coaches, and counselors who create positive bonds with students can do a great deal to encourage students and, for low-

SES students, can help to buffer them from the stressors they experience. Such support can go a long way toward helping students achieve academically, keep them from giving up and dropping out of school, and ultimately, graduating (Jensen, 2009).

In 1990, the Search Institute in Minnesota introduced a *framework of 40 developmental assets.* The framework consists of 20 external assets, consisting of relationships and experiences, and 20 internal assets, consisting of skills and behaviors, which contribute to the successful development of young people (Search Institute, 2016). Since the 40 Assets® were originally introduced, Search Institute has continued to deepen their work on the developmental assets, including doing research globally. According to the Search Institute (2016), data collected from surveys of over 5 million youth from all backgrounds consistently indicates that the more assets a young person has, the more chance of success that child will have in school and beyond. One of the major external assets focuses on relationships with adult role models and high expectations. Data released in 2003 by the Search Institute revealed a strong correlation between school problems and a lack of this asset across all major ethnic groups, further supporting the importance of positive relationships and school success (Sesma & Roehlkepartain, 2003). More recent work by the Search Institute has determined that of all the 40 assets, one of the most important gateways for student success is developmental relationships (Pekel, 2013).

Positive relationships, not only between the teacher and student, but between students within the school or classroom impacts student well-being and, ultimately, student achievement. A study completed by Thompson (2010) suggests that students in classrooms with culturally competent teachers have more friendships and problem behaviors, that can impede learning, are less prevalent.

The acceptance a child feels within their school and their individual classes, as research has indicated, can make a huge difference in their ability to achieve. The mantra, *we believe all children can learn*, is written into many school mission and belief statements, but do the teachers and school leaders who verbalize these words truly believe them (Hooks & Miskovic, 2011), and more importantly are we showing them through our words and actions that we truly accept them for who they are and believe in their potential as individuals? Thus, we must ask ourselves if we are truly *walking our talk*. Are the words we place in our mission and belief statements, include in our policy handbooks, and through our evaluation standards, truly internalized within our belief systems and effectively communicated to reach ALL children? Hooks and Miskovic (2011) deem that our minority students today, primarily our African American and Latino students, are not being adequately prepared for the future and "are quickly becoming expendable" (Hooks & Miskovic, 2011, p. 191). Could this be because of our failure to connect with them? According to Hooks and Miskovic (2011), important in the study of culture and cultural responsivity is how schools connect or fail to connect with their students**.**

Addressing Cultural Responsivity

All educators have at the base of their training an understanding of the various psychological and educational theories that impact teaching and learning**.** While they may not realize that they are working from these theories, psychological and educational theory has guided not only research, but instructional practices in monumental ways. Many undergraduate students studying to become teachers are asked to create a learning theory matrix that includes the key elements of behaviourism, cognitivism, constructionism, social constructivism, social learning, adult learning, and more recently, humanism and connectivism While each theory addressing teaching and learning has impacted today's classroom practices greatly and serves as

the backbone of effective teaching, developing cultural responsivity is based on understanding the uniqueness of the individual child and the worldview they bring to the classroom. Cultural awareness and culturally responsive instructional pedagogy is based heavily on a constructivist perspective often viewed through a sociocultural lens. Multiculturists stress the importance of understanding the differences of each student's cultural background and how their socioculture experiences impact the worldview they bring to the classroom. As such, effective teaching practices steeped in the behavioral theories of stimulus-response, apparent in repetition, practice, and homework assignments for the sake of improving a skill; cognitive theories which stress the importance of mental functioning and the best conditions for such functioning, and outgrowths of such meta theories, while important theories to overall effective teaching strategies, do not necessarily address cultural differences in individuals nor do they address the worldview a child brings to the classroom. Thus, it is through a constructivist perspective with a sociocultural lens that developing cultural responsivity for demographically changing and diverse schools is further examined.

Constructivism and Sociocultural Theory

Constructivism, in its strictest sense, is based on the premise that individuals *construct* their own meaning by building on previous knowledge and experience (Carlile & Jordan, 2005). Constructivists believe that learning is the desire to find the meaning in situations, and since we all have different experiences in the world, finding meaning is an individual experience (Carlile et al., 2005). Constructivism, thus, is important in dealing with diverse learners whose age, ability, gender, socioeconomic status, or ethnicity may impart different perspectives and values (Carlile et al., 2005). Vygotsky's social development theory is one of the foundations for constructivism.

Depending on the research reviewed, social constructivism, social development theory and sociocultural theory, often used interchangeably, all tend to attribute their beginnings to the work of Vygotsky. Lev S. Vygotsky (1896-1934), was a Russian developmental psychologist, whose work was first outlined in the 1920's and 30's; however, interest in his work did not gain wide attention until the publication of some of his writings in *Mind in Society: The Development of Higher Psychological Processes* in 1978 (John-Steiner & Mann, 1996). James Wertsch, a Russian Vygotskian scholar with a Ph.D. from the University of Chicago, published additional works in the '80's and early '90's further explaining Vygotsky's core theories and providing increased attention to his work and its application to teaching and learning (Galloway, 2001). Through the publication of some of Vygotsky's original writings and the work of such scholars as Wertsch (1985, 1991), the central concepts of Vygotsky's work have become widely known and increasingly influential in the study of education in Western Countries (Galloway, 2001; John-Steiner et al., 1996).

The power of Vygotsky's ideas is based on the interdependence of both the social and individual processes that occur in learning; he believed that "community" plays an essential part in learning and the "making of meaning" (Galloway, 2001, p. 2). Vygotsky's theory asserts that social interaction is fundamental to cognitive development. Vygotsky believed that every function in a child's cultural development appears twice: first on a social level through interactions between people (interpsychological) and then inside the child on an individual level (intrapsychological) (John-Steiner et al., 1996). Vygotsky is perhaps best known for *The Zone of Proximal Development (*ZPD). ZPD refers to the distance between a student's ability to perform a task with guidance from an adult or more experienced peer and the student's ability to complete the task on their own; this is the zone in which learning occurs (Carlile et al., 2005).

According to Kozulin, Gindis, Ageyev, and Miller (2003), "at the heart of Vygotsky's theory lies the understanding of human cognition and learning as social and cultural rather than an individual phenomena" (p. 8). The importance of Vygotsky's constructivist perspective and sociocultural learning theory is seen throughout the works of scholars seeking to develop cultural responsivity in schools.

Examining Education through a Sociocultural lens

According to Howard (2010), in his book, *Why Race and Culture Matter in Schools,* sociocultural theory (which he attributes to Vygotsky) "serves as a fundamental lens for understanding how culture contributes to learning and human behavior" (p. 56). Howard (2010) states that "sociocultural theorists recommend examining culture as a construct that influences not only cognition" (p.56), but how we understand and navigate the world—from our motivations to how we interact with one another to our everyday practices. Howard's account of how culture impacts learning aligns closely with that of Banks and McGee-Banks (2013), Bullivant (1993), Gay (2010b), and Zion and Kozleski (2005).

According to John-Steiner and Mann (1996), sociocultural approaches to learning stress the co-construction of knowledge as an interdependence of both social and individual processes. Scott and Palincsar (2013) stress the importance of understanding that individuals are influenced by how they think and view the world based on cultural, institutional and historical contexts. Moll and Gonzalez (2004) emphasize the sociocultural perspective as the lens through which their work on *funds of knowledge* is based; an approach that takes into consideration a child's family household, the productive exchange of activities and knowledge that occurs within the household and the social and cultural resources (funds of knowledge) that can be used to improve instruction for diverse learners.

Thus, a child's learning development and academic achievement, when examined through a sociocultural lens, encourages educators to consider the child's culture and that of the culture of their family environment as well as the social interactions that take place inside and outside of the learning environment of the school.

Such a perspective to insuring the academic achievement of ALL students may seem common sense in nature, but as history confirms, has been impeded by many ideological barriers.

The Different Paradigms of Ideology

Over time several different paradigms of ideology have emerged regarding improving the academic achievement of low-income and minority students. According to Banks (2004), the cultural deprivation model, which arose during the 1960's, was based on the premise that low income or *disadvantaged* students could attain high levels of achievement, but they lacked the necessary home and community supports that enable them to attain the skills and knowledge that middle class children obtain and which are important to academic achievement (Banks, 2004). Bloom (1965), Passow (1963), and Riessman (1962) published influential publications, highly recognized by educational leaders at the time based on this model (Banks, 2004). Head Start programs grew under this theory (Banks, 2004), and Ruby Payne's *Framework for Understanding Poverty* (2005), which has been the base for many educational professional development workshops, has been criticized as being too heavily based on this theory (Gorski, 2006).

In contrast, the cultural difference model, which dominated educational discussions during the 1970's and 1980's, focused on another explanation for the underachievement of low-income and minority students. The cultural difference model explained that the school failure of

these students was not because they did not have rich culture and values, but because the schools had a culture that conflicted with low-income and minority students (Banks, 2004). In other words, there was a mismatch—poor and minority students' cultures were not deficit, but merely different from the practices of the school culture (Banks et al., 2013).

While each of these models has contributed in some way to cultural responsivity, in more recent years, scholars have conducted research and constructed alternative, more culturally sensitive models—models that incorporate a wider view of the role of culture in education, the role of social justice, and the role of not only good teaching principals, but cultural self-awareness.

Culturally Relevant Teaching

Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings made popular the term *culturally relevant teaching* in the early 90's (Gay, 2010b). Predicated on the need for a theory that was culturally relevant and addressed the ethnic and cultural disparity between teachers and students and the continued academic failure of African-American students, Ladson-Billings embarked in 1988 on a three-year longitudinal study of teachers succeeding with African-American students. Ladson-Billings selected eight successful teachers (five African-American; three White) of African-American students from a low-income school district in California, and through ethnographic interviews, two years of classroom observations, videotaping and working with the teachers collaboratively to analyze and interpret each other's best practices, Ladson-Billings developed a grounded theory of *culturally relevant pedagogy* (Ladson-Billings, 1995). It was her intent that *culturally relevant teaching* would produce three outcomes: (a) develop students who can achieve academically, (b) nurture and support cultural competence, and (c) develop students who could recognize, understand and critique social inequities (Ladson-Billings, 1995). Ladson-Billings

(1995) argued that culturally relevant teaching can be distinguished by three factors—regard for self and others, social relations, and knowledge. From her in-depth study of teacher excellence, she noted that the exemplary teachers who were achieving success with their African-American students excelled in these three areas because they:

- Believed all students could succeed, set high expectations, and were relentless in assuring high achievement; failure was not an option;
- Embraced teaching as an Art and a way to impact their Community;
- Made a conscious decision to be an active part of the Community; living in and/or involved in the Community;
- Maintained strong, fluid relationships with students;
- Developed a community of learners; encouraging caring, collaboration and responsibility for one another;
- Were passionate about knowledge and learning, and understood that knowledge is not static, but shared, recycled and constructed;
- Scaffolded instruction, building bridges to learning;
- Used multifaceted assessments, incorporating multiple forms of opportunity for excellence;
- Encouraged questioning, critical thinking and social consciousness (Ladson-Billings, 1995)

It was the goal of Ladson-Billings' study to provide a pedagogy that would enable students to maintain their cultural identity while achieving academically and becoming socially conscious (Ladson-Billings, 1995).

Since Ladson-Billings' work on *culturally relevant pedagogy*, much has been written. The term *culturally relevant* has been referred to as *culturally sensitive*, *culturally congruent*, *culturally mediated*, and *culturally responsive*, to name a few. Geneva Gay focused on the term *culturally responsive teaching* in her landmark 2000 book by the same name; updated and reprinted in 2010. Gay defines culturally responsive teaching "as using the cultural knowledge, prior experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles of ethnically diverse students to make learning encounters more relevant to and effective for them; it teaches to and through the strengths of these students" (Gay, 2010b, p. 31).

Gay (2010b) outlines culturally responsive teaching based on many of the same tenets that Ladson-Billings (1995) found in her study of exemplary teachers making a difference with African–American children. Gay states that culturally responsive teaching is:

- *Comprehensive* – teaching the whole child which includes building academic success as well as cultural competence, a critical social consciousness and responsible community membership;
- *Multidimensional* – encompassing content and context, classroom climate and management, relationships, instructional techniques, and assessment;
- *Empowering* – believing children can succeed and helping them believe in themselves and their ability to succeed in learning tasks, and being willing to relentlessly pursue success until mastery is achieved;
- *Transformative* – recognizing the existing strengths and accomplishments of students, enhancing them in the instructional process, and helping them develop the skills, knowledge, values and ability to make reflective decisions that affect their lives, including social justice;

- *Emancipatory* – releasing "the intellect of students of color from the constraining manacles of mainstream canons of knowledge and ways of knowing" (p. 37); and providing access to authentic knowledge about different ethnic groups (Gay, 2010b)

Gay (2010b) further states that to effectively develop a pedagogy of culturally responsive teaching, such as she outlined, will take an examination of communication styles and both teaching and learning styles; the building of culturally diverse instructional bridges, or scaffolding, based on generally accepted principles of learning; developing an understanding of how different students come to learn or know and construct meaning; and encouraging reflective, critical thinking that supports moral, social, and cultural fairness.

Sonia Nieto, another leading multiculturist, echoes many of the same sentiments outlined by both Ladson-Billings (1995) and Gay (2010b). Nieto's book, *Finding Joy in Teaching Students of Diverse Backgrounds* (2013), is the culmination of her work with over 80 teachers who have found success in teaching students from diverse backgrounds, and, thus, offers powerful insights on how culturally responsive teaching efforts are playing out in classrooms across the Nation. Nieto, in search of what it takes to be a culturally responsive teacher of students of diverse backgrounds, sought out teachers from across the Nation who were not afraid of having *hard conversations* and who were making a difference. Below are five of the themes that came out of the work she did with these teachers (as presented at the 2014 ASCD [Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development] National Convention).

- *Teaching is an act of love*—it takes empathy, solidarity, respect and high expectations;

- *Teaching is an ethical endeavor*—regardless of race or ethnicity, the teacher willing to address this work can do so; engaging all students and their families in hard conversations will build bridges;
- *Teaching is about a willingness to learn* —learning about oneself and others, asking hard questions, dispelling stereotypes, and encouraging honest conversations;
- *Teaching is about honoring students' identities*—accepting students for who they are (regardless of their backgrounds, abilities or disabilities) and having a stubborn belief in what they can do;
- *Teaching is about relationships more than the lesson plan*—put your "stuff" away, get biases out of the way, and listen to what your kids have to say (Nieto, 2014).

Nieto (2014) encourages educators to engage in critical self-reflection, insist on excellent work from all students, honor the families, exemplify a commitment to continuous learning, reject the deficit perspective, and recognize that education is about advocacy for children.

The National Center for Culturally Responsive Educational Systems (NCCREST) further supports the guidance provided by Ladson-Billings (1995), Gay (2010), and Nieto (2014). NCCREST defines *culturally responsive pedagogy* as facilitating and supporting the achievement of all learners in a culturally supported, learner-centered context, where the strengths of the students are identified, developed, and used to promote achievement (Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2006). NCCREST sees culturally responsive pedagogy as multifaceted, comprising institutional, personal, and instructional aspects. While the institutional aspects refer to the school's overall policies and values regarding diversity, the personal refers to the cognitive processes of reflection and self-evaluation educators must go through to become culturally

responsive; the instructional aspects refers to the teaching behaviors, activities, and resources used to provide culturally responsive instruction (Richards et al., 2006).

Part III – Guiding Change: The School Leader's Role

The NCCREST perspective on building culturally responsive pedagogy suggests that institutional, personal, and instructional aspects, which include not only teaching, but the resources afforded teaching, are involved. While much of the research that has been done regarding student achievement of diverse students and the development of cultural responsivity has been focused on teachers, far less has focused on school leaders. Yet, it is the school leader who directs the institutional policies, guides the vision for the school, and holds the key to teaching resources. Thus, the success of any school reform effort is heavily dependent on a strong, *transformational* leader.

The Transformational School Leader

According to Northouse (2010), "transformational leadership is a process that changes and transforms people" (p. 171). Transformational leadership emerged as a form of leadership with James McGregor Burns (1978) classical work, *Leadership*, in which Burns distinguished between two types of leadership, transactional and transformational (Northouse, 2010). Transactional leadership is based on exchanges that occur between leaders and their followers, such as bonuses for meeting goals and penalties for non-performance; whereas, transformational leadership is more concerned about developing personal connections and raising the level of motivation and morality in followers (Northouse, 2010). Burns (1978) work was expanded on by Bernard Bass in the mid 1980's. Bass (1990) described transactional and transformational leadership along a continuum, which has become known as the *Full Range of Leadership Model* (Northouse, 2010). On the lowest level of the continuum is *laissez-faire* leadership or non-

leadership; attributes of transactional leadership span the middle of the continuum, and the attributes of transformational leadership, superior leadership performance, are situated at the top of the continuum (Northouse, 2010). According to Bass (1990), transactional leadership can be a "prescription for mediocrity" (p.31) if leaders passively manage by exception and only intervene when procedures for accomplishing work are not being met. Transformational leadership, in contrast, "occurs when leaders broaden and elevate the interests of their employees" (Bass, 1990, p. 21). Bass suggests that transformational leaders generate awareness and acceptance of the mission of the organization; they encourage employees to look beyond their own self-interest to the greater good for the whole group (Bass, 1990). Bass (1990) outlines four characteristics of transformation leadership: *idealized influence*, which involves providing vision and a sense of mission, instilling pride and gaining respect and trust; *inspiration*, which involves communicating high expectations, focusing efforts and expressing important purpose in simple ways; *intellectual stimulation*, which promotes intelligence and careful problem solving; and *individualized consideration*, which is based on treating each employee individually, and coaching and advising (Bass, 1990).

Bass and Avolio (1995) provide further guidance on the key traits of a transformational leader through their Multifactor Leadership Questionnaire (MLQ), a widely used, extensively researched and validated instrument for measuring a broad range of leadership types. According to Bass and Avolio (1995), the transformational leader is a confident visionary who is admired, respected and trusted. Such a leader is concerned with instilling pride in their followers and consider their followers' needs over their own. Their followers identify with them and want to emulate them. Transformational leaders instill a strong sense of purpose and emphasize the importance of a collective mission. These leaders behave in ways that motivate their followers;

they are enthusiastic, optimistic, articulate a compelling vision for the future, and are confident that goals will be achieved. As leaders, they reframe problems and encourage followers to be innovative and creative in problem solving. Transformational leaders spend time teaching and coaching and treat others as individuals, considering the different needs and abilities of each individual (Bass & Avolio, 1995).

Keneth Leithwood is credited for the most substantial adaptation of Bass's transformational leadership model into the educational environment (Stewart, 2006; Hallinger, 2003). Leithwood's adaptation includes the following components: offering individualized support, developing structures to foster participation in school decisions, building school vision and establishing school goals, providing intellectual stimulation, creating a productive school culture, demonstrating high performance expectations, and modeling best practices and important ogranizational values (Stewart, 2006; Hallinger, 2003).

Leithwood co-authored a study of 2,290 teachers from 655 primary schools in England to determine the effects of a school-specific model of transformational leadership (Leithwood & Jantzi, 2006). This study examined the impact of transformational leadership on teacher's motivation, capacities, work settings, classroom practices, and gains in student achievement. The study assumed that "for large-scale reform to achieve its goals, school staff must be motivated to respond to the reform in some locally meaningful and productive way" and "there must be opportunities for individual teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills for such a response" (Leithwood et al., 2006, p. 203). It was further assumed that a teacher's motivation, their ability or capacity, and the work setting in which they operate have a direct effect on both their classroom and the school (Leithwood et al, 2006).

All transformational leadership approaches "emphasize emotions and values and share in common the fundamental aim of fostering capacity development and higher levels of personal commitment to organizational goals on the part of the leader's colleagues" (Leithwood et al, 2006, p. 204). The transformational leadership model used for the Leithwood study, although heavily influenced by Bass's classical model, was developed from Leithwood and his colleagues' own qualitative and quantitave research in schools, and, thus, some of the transformational leadership features from Bass's model were not part of the model used for this study (Leithwood et al., 2006). "Three broad categories of leadership practices, including a total of nine more specific dimenions of practice" are included in this model "(Leithwood et al., 2006, p. 205). Catgory one, *Setting Direction*, includes "building school vision, developing specific goals and priorities, and holding high performance expectation"; category two, *Developing People*, includes "providing intellectual stimulation, offering individualized support, and modeling desirable professional practices and values"; and category three, *Redesigning the Organization*, includes "developing a collaborative school culture, creating structures to foster participation in school decisions, and creating productive community relationships" (Leithwood et al., 2006, p. 205). Two forms of a Likert-type survey were developed for this study that included the above framework to measure transformational leadership within the schools as well as additional survey questions to measure teacher motivation, capacity, work setting, and classroom practices; student achievement data was collected from tests measuring literacy and numeracy (Leithwood et al., 2006). Three key results were determined from this study: (a) "transformational leadership has a very strong effect on teacher's work setting and motivation, with weaker but significant effects on teacher's capacities" (p. 223); (b) "transformational leadership has a moderate but significant effect on teachers' classroom practices" (p. 223); and

(c) leadership, coupled with teacher motivation, capacity, and work setting explains to some degree (as much as 25%) the variation in teacher's classroom pratices. (Leithwood et al., 2006).

A 2010 study of 702 teachers and 51 principals from 51 elementary schools in the Netherlands, conducted to determine the relationship between transformational leadership, position within the social network (relationship to staff), and innonovative climate (Moolenaar, Daly, & Sleegers, 2010), provides further support to the role of the transformational school leader. The results of this study indicated that the more a principal engaged in transformational leadership, the more likely teachers were to take risks in developing and implementing new practices (Moolenaar et al., 2010). In addition, the study determined that the more a principal exhibited transformational leadership, the closer the teachers felt to the principal, the more likely they were to seek out their principal's support, and the more supportive they felt the school was of innovative practices (Moolenaar et al., 2010).

The School Leader's Impact on Student Achievement

While the approach taken for school improvement, all of which are aimed at improving teaching and learning, may vary from school to school, the success of such school improvement, as research indicates, is heavily dependent on the abilities of the local leader. It is the local school leader who must help his or her teaching colleagues understand the importance of the improvement agenda and gain their cooperation, trust, and support to integrate new concepts into current practices. It is the school leader who must *set the direction, develop the staff, and redesign the organization* (Leithwood, Seashore Louis, Anderson, & Wahlstrom, 2004).

According to the Learning from Leadership Project commissioned by the Wallace Foundation in 2004, school leadership is only second to teaching among school-related factors that impact student learning (Leithwood et al., 2004). Further, the authors of the project contend

that the more challenging the needs of the students in the school, the greater the impact school leadership has on their learning (Leithwood et al., 2004). Teachers, out of all school factors, account for more than a third of the variation in student school achievement. (Leithwood et al., 2004). However, while teachers have a tremendous direct impact on their students, there are many other factors that also impact student achievement—factors, many of which, the school principal is in a position to bring together. According to the Learning from Leadership Project, school principals can account for as much as a 25 percent variation in a school's achievement, depending on their focus of time and resources (Leithwood et al., 2004). Multiple other researchers have also demonstrated that successful leadership strategies can make a difference.

The Heritage Foundation study (Carter, 2000) of 21 high-performing, high poverty schools demonstrated that the *No Excuses* principals were "committed, innovative, and entrepreneurial individuals" (p.18) with a relentless pursuit toward excellence. Once they set a clear vision for their schools, every teacher was held personally accountable; they sought out the best teachers and developed their curriculum around the strengths of the teachers, set forth high expectations for staff and students alike, established contacts with parents to support learning, and eliminated social promotions (Carter, 2000).

The Mid-continent Research for Education and Learning (MCREL) published a report in 2003 based on three decades of research regarding school effectiveness. The findings from their data indicated a substantial relationship between leadership and student achievement (Waters, Marzano, McNulty, 2003). They determined that the impact a school leader can have can be as much as a 19 percentile point increase in student achievement depending on the focus of change and whether leaders understand the magnitude of change they are leading (Waters et al., 2003).

A 2005 synthesis of 17 validated research studies (17 studies selected from 300 reviewed) prepared for the Center for public Education on high performing, high poverty schools indicated that "virtually all studies cited identified the principal's leadership as important to high performance" (p. 5). The report further concluded, "besides establishing a culture of high expectations, the principal's most important role seems to be as instructional leader" (Caliber Associates, 2005, p. 5).

The Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR) 2006 Essential Supports for School Improvement Report indicated that "leadership, acting as a catalyst, is the first essential support for school improvement" (p. 3). They further stated that effective leadership is "inclusive with a focus on instruction and a strategic orientation" and both "stimulates and nourishes the other supports of parent-community involvement, professional faculty and staff capacity, a student-centered learning environment, and ambitious instruction" (CCSR, 2006, p. 3). The University of Chicago CCSR framework laid the groundwork for the 5Essentials Survey used in Illinois as one of the tools to guage school climate and improve student outcomes.

The 5Essentials framework is the result of over 15 years of study, and like the 2006 CCSR report, asserts that effective leadership is the first support needed to effectively insure school improvement. It is the leader's responsibility to guide the development of the four additional supports included in the framework: collaborative teachers, involved families, supportive environments, and ambitious instruction. It is the assertion of the developers of the 5Essentials framework that when these five supports are integrated they reinforce each other and lead to improved school achievement (Klugman et al., 2015).

The Illinois Best Practice Multi-Year School Study (Curry et al., 2007) sought to identify and analyze the best practices of schools that were considered to be consistent high performers

despite significant poverty; they found that “the school principal played the pivotal role in fostering and maintaining the essential culture that provided the ‘direction and fuel’ for excellence within these (the high performing) schools” (p. 9).

Carmon (2009) in her study of high school principals in “beating the odds” schools concluded that “beating the odds” principals “recognized that they were change agents and went about the business of transforming the culture of their schools” versus the low performing school leaders who were simply “trying” (p. 146).

Barr and Yates (2010) provided a framework, based on18 studies of high-poverty, high performing schools that placed effective district and school leadership as the top criteria for turning a school around.

Masumoto and Brown-Welty (2009) completed a case study of leadership practices in three high-performing, high poverty rural California high schools and found evidence to support a direct relationship between effective leadership and student achievement. They concluded “effective leadership was found to be an important factor for student achievement and school performance” (Masumoto et al., 2009, p. 15).

Sanchez (2012) in her study of high achieving public high schools in California determined that successful schools had school leaders who created a school climate of high expectations, including expecting students to graduate and enroll in a four-year university and preparing students early on in their high school career to do so. School leaders in the high achieving schools cultivated the educational growth of their teachers and staff, motivated all stakeholders’ (students, teachers, parents, and the community) desire to do better, encouraged school-community partnerships and provided opportunities for decision-making input (Sanchez, 2012). Further, these school leaders identified early on students in danger of not completing

their high school requirements and implemented proactive measures to insure their success (Sanchez, 2012).

While the day-to-day instruction rests with the teacher, setting the tone for a successful, culturally responsive school cannot be done without the support and assistance of a strong school leader. Simone's 2012 study of culturally proficient practices in an urban Nevada elementary school concluded that while teachers made an effort to implement culturally proficient instructional practices, they faced challenges and barriers in need of administrative support to be successful. In order to overcome these barriers and challenges, according to Simone (2012), it is critical that the school leader focus on and encourage culturally proficient practices, insures what is written in the teacher handbook includes guidelines for culturally proficient policies and practices, leads from a transformational leadership perspectives that supports all stakeholders, and provides ample opportunities for relevant professional development that allows for collegial sharing and examination of personal biases, stereotypes and conflict resolution.

It is doubtful that a school was ever turned around without a strong leader in place. Research such as the above is indicative of the importance of the role of the school leader in determining the mission and vision for the school, guiding culturally proficient instructional practices, insuring appropriate utilization of resources, and developing the overall school climate.

Creating a Culturally Responsive School

Since the passage of NCLB 2001, countless scholars have examined accountability, the achievement gap and the essential role the effective school leader plays in ensuring the academic success of ALL students, regardless of race, ethnicity, disability or socio-economic status. Educational scholars focused on high performing schools that are closing the achievement gap have emphasized the importance of transformative school leaders who create a culture of high

expectations for ALL students. More recently, there is a growing body of research indicating that school leaders must be more than just effective, however, they must be culturally competent (McCloud, 2005; Banks et al., 2004; Klotz, 2006).

In order to become a culturally competent leader capable of advancing a school climate that respects and values diversity in both theory and practice, school leaders must examine their educational leadership through what Lindsey, Nuri Robins, Lindsey, and Terrell (2009) refer to as a "cultural proficiency lens" (p. 13). Cultural proficiency is both a mindset and a worldview that involves values, language usage, and a framework of standards for effective interpersonal, cross-cultural interactions with students, colleagues and the community (Lindsey, et al., 2009). "Educators who commit to culturally proficient practices represent a paradigmatic shift from the too prevalent view of regarding 'underperforming' cultural demographic groups of students as problematic to the empowering view of what needs to be done differently in order to educate students" (Lindsey et al., 2009, p. 13). As Gay (2010b) states, "merely belaboring the disproportionately poor academic performance of certain students of color, or blaming their families and social class backgrounds, is not very helpful in implementing reforms to reverse achievement" (p. xvii). Developing cultural proficiency is more than an independent set of one-time activities or strategies; real cultural proficiency takes continual hard work and a deep internal assessment of one's beliefs, values and own cultural background (Lindsey, et al, 2009; Gay, 2010b; Hammer, 2013). "Culturally competent leaders work to understand their own biases as well as patterns of discrimination; they have the skills to mitigate the attendant negative effect on student achievement and the personal courage and commitment to persist" (McCloud, 2005, p. 4). Such assessment should begin with the school leader, be encouraged among the staff, and

then be continually examined in light of the school, asking, according to Lindsey et al., (2009), such questions as:

- "Are we who we say we are?
- How do we assess who we are?
- Do our actions align with who we say we are?
- What gets in our way of being who we say we are?" (Lindsey, et al., 2009, p. 13)

While most school leaders understand the need to become culturally competent, they often struggle with how to promote culturally responsive practices within their schools, particularly when there are underlying norms, assumptions, and practices deeply engrained within the existing school's framework, and reinforced by expectations of society (Bustamante, Nelson, & Onwuegbuzie, 2009).

Professor Emeritus Sonia Nieto, addressing attendees of the Cawelti Leadership Lecture at the 2014 ASCD Conference in California, emphasized that school leaders need to understand that schools do not operate in a vacuum; they operate in a socio-political context. Within this context, there are societal barriers, which include a lingering history of inequity and wrong-headed reforms; there are school-based barriers such as an unequal distribution of resources, a surveillance-type emotional environment, unequal access to curriculum, and language barriers; and there are ideological barriers, presented by both individuals and the institution (Nieto, 2014). According to Nieto (2014), such ideological barriers involve unresolved biases about race, ethnicity, culture, social class, and ability, and the idea that intelligence is fixed and unchangeable.

Just as children come to us with different views of the world based on their varied backgrounds and experiences, educators also have a view of the world based on individual

cultural, educational and social orientations, and experiences. Constructivist approaches ask how individuals' reality is constructed; the constructions we create take place on different levels and with a different sophistication from the children we educate (Leutwyler, Petrovic, & Mantel, 2012). Thus, as leading multiculturists suggest, developing cultural responsivity must begin with an assessment of cultural awareness (Nieto, 2014; Bennett, 2004; Hammer, 2013).

Raising Cultural Awareness

Raising cultural awareness through a cultural inventory such as the Intercultural Development Inventory (Hammer & Bennett, 2001), a highly validated instrument that has been used extensively in businesses and universities to guide cultural development, is an excellent starting point. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) developed by Hammer and Bennett (2001) is based on the Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (DMIS), a research-based model that was originally developed through decades of work by intercultural scholar, Dr. Milton Bennett (Bennett, 2004), and further researched and tested by Dr. Mitchell Hammer. While the current version of the IDI, version 3, has been revised and remodeled slightly, based on extensive research, understanding the original DMIS framework is helpful as it is often referred to in various research on intercultural development and rests as the original framework for the current IDI.

The DMIS Framework

While observing people in cross-cultural situations over many years, Dr. Milton Bennett decided to try to make sense of why some people were better at communicating than others (Bennett, 2004). He determined that as individuals become more interculturally competent, there is a move from what he refers to as *ethnocentrism* to *ethnorelatism* (Bennett, 2004, p. 62*).* *Ethnocentrism*, Bennett (2004) defines as the "experience of one's own culture as central to

reality" (p.62), while *ethnorelativism* is the polar opposite, and can be defined as the "experience of one's own beliefs and behaviors (accepted or understood) as just one organization of reality among many viable possibilities" (Bennett, 2004, p. 62). The DMIS is a "culture-general, developmental model of intercultural competence" (Lombardi, 2010, p. 10) built on a continuum of six developmental stages that moves between these opposite views of ethnocentrism and ethnorelativism (Bennett, 2004). The six developmental stages spread across the continuum include—denial, defense and minimization (the first three stages or orientations) located within the enthnocentrism range; and acceptance, adaptation and integration (the next three stages or orientations) within the ethnorelativism range (Bennett, 2004).

The DMIS is a framework for understanding how individuals react towards cultural differences, based on models of cognitive psychology and constructivism for "meaning making" (Lombardi, 2010, p. 10). In essence, the DMIS explains how individuals experience difference. Individuals with a *denial* worldview may not notice cultural difference or may experience it as a kind of "other, such as a foreigner or immigrant" (Bennett, 2004, p. 63). Individuals with a *defense* worldview tend to experience their own culture as the only viable one, and tend to be more threatened by cultural differences than those in the denial stage (Bennett, 2004). Individuals within the next stage, *minimization*, are in a state in which elements of one's own cultural worldview are experienced as universal; they may assume, for example, that needs and motivations are the same in all cultures. They may not only expect similarities, but may require the behavior of others to match their expectations (Bennett, 2004). Bennett (2004) suggests that "for people in the dominant culture, minimization tends to mask recognition of their own culture and the institutional privilege it affords its members" (p. 67). Thus, for individuals in the minimization stage, the missing piece, according to Bennett (2004) is recognition of their own

culture (cultural self-awareness) and how their beliefs, values, and behaviors have been developed and influenced through their own socialization process. The other three remaining stages are ethnorelative, "meaning that one's culture is experienced in the context of other cultures" (Bennett, 2004, p. 68). The first orientation within ethnorelativism is *acceptance*. Acceptance of cultural difference is a state in which one's own culture is viewed among a number of different worldviews; people in this stage are capable of viewing others different from themselves, but equally human (Bennett, 2004). The second stage within ethnorelativism is *adaptation*. It is here that experience of another culture produces both perception and behavior appropriate to another culture (Bennett, 2004). The last stage, i*ntegration* of cultural difference, is one in which the experience of self includes "movement in and out of different cultural worldviews" (Bennett, 2004, p. 72). This last stage is not necessarily the best stage, it is simply different and may include members of non-dominant cultures or global travelers, according to Bennett (2004). As noted previously, this model is constructivist in nature; individuals construct their own reality based on their experiences. Further, it should be noted that individuals don't necessarily stay stuck in one orientation, they can move in and out of orientations (Bennett, 2004).

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI)

The IDI, Interercultural Development Inventory, is a 50-item Likert-type scale assessment grounded in the original DMIS model just discussed. Like a climate survey that provides a snapshot at a given point in time, the IDI can be used as a baseline assessment to guide leaders and their staff toward understanding their intercultural competence as well as providing direction toward more interculturally proficient practices (Hammer, 2012a). The IDI has been heavily tested for validity and reliability, used in over 30 countries, translated into

multiple languages and revised three times (Hammer, 2012a). The current version of the IDI, version 3, while based on the original DMIS model, has been adjusted through research and now uses a slightly different continuum and terminology than the original DMIS model. The IDI is now based on what is termed the Intercultural Development Continuum or IDC (Hammer, 2012b). Following are, in brief, some of the revisions to the original DMIS model that have been incorporated into the current IDC, according to Hammer (2012a).

The DMIS identified denial, defense, minimization, acceptance, adaptation and integration as the primary stages of intercultural development. The IDI, v3, identifies denial, polarization, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation as the primary stages of intercultural development. Thus, instead of six stages, the current version of the IDI involves five stages along the continuum, with minimization represented as a transitional orientation between a *monocultural mindset* (referred to as ethnocentric in the original DMIS) and an *intercultural mindset* (referred to as ethnorelative in the original DMIS) (Hammer, 2012a).

Integration, originally situated as a stage beyond adaptation, is concerned with the construction of an intercultural identity versus the development of intercultural competence. Thus, it has been removed on the current continuum, as it is theoretically not related to the development of intercultural competence, which is the focus of the IDI (Bennett, 2004; Hammer, 2011).

The mindsets of denial and polarization, placed at the lower end of the continuum, are considered *monocultural* in orientation as they reflect a view that "one's own culture is central to reality" (Bennett, 1993, p. 30; Hammer, 2012a, p. 120).

According to Hammer (2012a), "a denial mindset reflects less capability for understanding and appropriately responding to cultural differences" (p.120). Individuals with a

denial orientation tend to operate in broad generalizations and stereotypes, not recognizing differences in perceptions and behavior as cultural; they may even maintain a distance from other cultural groups and have little interest in learning about values and practices of diverse communities (Hammer, 2012a). Hammer, (2012a) suggests that this is often an orientation associated with the dominant culture, and when such an orientation is present in an organization, cultural diversity may be ignored.

Polarization, the next step on the continuum, is an orientation with a judgmental mindset that sees cultural differences as "us versus them" (Hammer, 2012a, p. 121). This orientation can take the form of defense, where one feels their culture is superior to another, or reversal, where an individual idealizes another culture and denigrates their own (Hammer, 2012a). When such polarization is present within an organization, diversity often feels difficult or uncomfortable (Hammer, 2012a).

Minimization, the next step along the continuum, is a transitional mindset. This mindset tends to seek out similarities among different cultures, highlighting cultural commonalities while masking a deeper understanding of and consideration for cultural differences (Hammer, 2012a). When such a mindset is present in an organization, feelings of diversity "not being heard" (p. 122) may occur (Hammer, 2012a). The intercultural development strategy for individuals in the minimization orientation is to increase cultural self-awareness and awareness of power and privilege as well as increase understanding about deeper patterns of cultural difference (Hammer, 2012a).

Acceptance and adaptation are the next steps on the IDC and are considered "intercultural/global mindsets" (Hammer, 2012a, p. 123). Individuals with an acceptance mindset recognize and have appreciation for patterns of cultural differences as well as

acknowledge commonality in their own culture and the culture of others (Hammer, 2012a). Acceptance involves deep self-reflection and the ability to experience others as "both different from oneself, yet equally human" (Hammer, 2009, p. 209; Hammer, 2012a, p. 123). The development strategy for individuals in this orientation is to guide them toward gaining more knowledge about cultural differences, including both culture-general (i.e., individualism vs. collectivism) and culture-specific frameworks, while helping them develop the skills needed to adapt to these differences (Hammer, 2012a).

Individuals with an adaptation orientation, the top stage within the IDC, can shift perspectives, change behavior in culturally appropriate ways, and adapt performance (Hammer, 2012). When such a mindset is present, according to Hammer (2012a), "diversity feels valued and involved" (Hammer, 2012a, p. 124)

Use of the intercultural development inventory (IDI) incorporates both quantitative (50-item questionnaire) and qualitative interview guides, designed for individual or group focus (Hammer, 2012b). Before the IDI can be administered, however, training is required. The training is given throughout the year at various locations, runs for three days, and costs about $1800. Further information about the assessment and the training is available at www.idiinventory.com.

The IDI website provides a bibliography of publications related to both the DMIS and the Intercultural Development Inventory, including over 50 pieces of research related to the development of intercultural competence based on use of the IDI (Hammer, 2012c). While the majority of these studies relate to study abroad and intercultural sensitivity in higher education training and corporate diversity training, there are a several studies directly related to cultural development in education that deserve attention.

Mahon (2003) completed a study of 155 teachers in Northeastern Ohio using the IDI and determined that few were above the middle stage of intercultural sensitivity. Seventeen of these educators were selected to participate in a series of interviews to better understand their life history and the experiences affecting their level of sensitivity. Mahon (2003) determined that acquiring intercultural sensitivity is not based on a single event but accumulated from the sum of one's life experiences. Mahon (2003) further determined that both university training and professional development programs focusing on cultural sensitivity were lacking.

Fretheim (2007) completed a study of educators working in an American international school in South Africa, The purpose of her study was to determine what variables influence intercultural sensitivity. This study determined that no statistically significant relationship existed between the background variables and participant's IDI results. The study also found that the majority of the participants (89.3%) had IDI scores that were ethnocentric (or monocultural; mindsets at the lower end of the continuum).

DeJaeghere and Zhang (2008) conducted action research involving nine schools and 284 educators involved in a suburban school district's initiative using the IDI. A baseline IDI assessment was administered. The aggregated overall IDI scores ranged from 96 to 110 in the nine schools, indicating the educators held a minimization worldview. Two variables were used to determine experience and its effect on cultural development: (a) number of years of experience as a teacher, and (b) number of years of experience in the school district (a culturally diverse district). Their study determined that working as a certified teacher more or less than 10 years did not correlate significantly with IDI results nor did number of years working in the District. Professional development focusing on the IDI and cultural awareness was employed following the baseline assessment. Approximately a year and a half after the baseline

assessment and professional development, an online survey scale consisting of questions about demographic characteristics, professional development participation, and an 11-item cultural competence scale was administered. DeJaeghere and Zhang determined that meaningful professional development can have an impact on teachers' perceived intercultural competence.

In a study using an earlier version of the IDI based on the DMIS model to determine cultural sensitivity among teachers, conducted by Yuen (2010), 386 Hong Kong secondary education teachers in nine different schools were assessed. The goal of this study was to determine teacher cultural sensitivity and identify factors that contribute to cultural sensitivity. This study determined that the developmental scores of the participants involved with this study fell on the upper end of the denial/defense range or lower level of minimization (Yuen, 2010). This study further indicated that variables such as years of teaching experience, prior cultural experiences and family background may have an impact on cultural competence, and suggests that efforts are needed to provide intercultural training for teachers (Yuen, 2010).

DeJaeghere and Cao (2009) conducted a multi-year study involving 86 elementary school teachers in seven schools using the IDI as a baseline instrument to assess cultural competence in teachers before professional development focused on developing cultural competence began and following a cultural development initiative. The professional development activities included cultural self-awareness training, culture-specific workshops centering on certain ethnic groups, workshops on White privilege and power, and discussions on critical incidents related to cultural issues that had occurred within the schools. The workshops were held one to three times per year over a period of two to three years. The goal of the study was to determine if professional development that did not include a study abroad component could impact cultural competence. This study found that professional development focused on intercultural training could make a

significant change in teachers' IDI overall developmental score (between a 5 and 8 point change); the more time spent on such training, the more change that occurred in the score (DeJaeghere et al., 2009). DeJaeghere and Cao found that teachers' initial responses fell within the minimization worldview, similar to results found by other researchers (citing Porterfield Bayles, 2009; Mahon, 2006; and Westrick & Yuen, 2007) whose studies sought to determine teacher cultural competence using the IDI. With guided professional development, the teachers in the DeJaeghere and Cao study advanced along the minimization continuum toward a more *ethnorelative* worldview, developed an understanding between cultural differences and similarities, and reported adapting behavior to better interact with others of different cultures (DeJaeghere et al., 2009).

Porterfield Bayles (2009) explored the intercultural sensitivity of 233 educators in bilingual schools in Texas. The purpose was to determine level of intercultural sensitivity and the difference in intercultural sensitivity based on demographic and background variables. The IDI results determined a mean developmental score of 95.09, placing the teachers at the minimization level. The results also indicated a significant difference between the mean developmental scores for teachers teaching over 10 years and those teaching less than 10 years, but no significant difference for the other demographic variables tested (living in a bicultural setting, years teaching in a bilingual classroom, gender, level of education or age) (Porterfield Bayles, 2009).

Two studies using the IDI as the base specifically for school leadership development were found. A brief hypothetical study of school principals was conducted by Hernandez and Kose (2012) using the IDI as their base. Their goal was to examine the various DMIS orientations and provide a hypothetical analysis, contrasting various findings in school research

to each of the orientations, to explain how White principals and principals of color might determine solutions to the racial/ethnic achievement gap based on their level of intercultural competency. Their study, although hypothetical, gives some interesting food for thought in terms of the reality we are seeing occurring in schools. The authors recommend that current and aspiring principals actually determine where they are in terms of their cultural development rather than operate based on where *they think they are* (Hernandez et al., 2012).

A 2012 study conducted by El Ganzoury of educational leaders in a Northern Minnesota school district using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) to investigate intercultural sensitivity of school leaders further supports the importance of utilizing a base line instrument to determine cultural awareness. El Ganzoury (2012) determined a significant disparity between the actual developmental level and the perceived level of intercultural competence among the participants in this study. The participants in El Ganzoury's 2012 study had a surprisingly high gap (24.63%) between their perceived orientation and their actual developmental orientation, suggesting that the participants had inflated and unrealistic perceptions of their intercultural performance as educators. More than half (62%) of the participants in the El Gansoury (2012) study scored in the Minimization transitional stage on the IDI before professional development training, a stage that "can prevent educators from understanding and appreciating cultural differences" (p. 122). El Ganzoury's study (2012) further determined that significant movement can be made along the IDI continuum through appropriate, focused professional development; after professional development training in cultural awareness, less than half of the participants in El Ganzoury's study remained in the Minimization stage on the IDI continuum.

Many of the studies involving the IDI focus on various travel abroad programs, with and without and the benefit of a formal intercultural training program. While most of these programs

focus on university programs, two studies specifically related to educators, travel and the IDI were found and are summarized below.

Pieski (2011) completed a mixed methods study of six pre-service educators involved in an immersion experience. Through data gained from the IDI used as a pretest, posttest, and post-posttest, interviews and journal entries, Pieski determined that pre-service educators can benefit from an effective immersion experience involving sequenced intercultural preparation prior, during and after the immersion experience. Several participants in Pieski's (2011) study experienced gains in intercultural development, as determined by the IDI, following the immersion experience.

Tinkham (2011) explored the experiences of elementary and secondary school administrators who had participated in the U.S.-China Administrator Shadowing Program, a program, headquartered in Massachusetts, that allows pre-college administrators to learn about one another's educational systems. Using a mixed-methods research design, Tinkham explored the impact of the exchange experience. Although the IDI results showed only a minimum, but positive impact, the qualitative study indicated a significant impact. Thus, Tinkham concluded that notable personal and organizational benefits can be realized from study abroad (Tinkham, 2011).

Given the supposition that travel abroad can impact cultural sensitivity, several studies comparing different types and durations of travel abroad programs have been included as part of this review.

Anderson, Lawthon, Rexeisen, & Hubbard (2006) conducted a pilot study of 23 Midwestern college, senior business majors who participated in a faculty-led management course consisting of one week of study on campus followed by four weeks of study in Europe. The

group was very homogenous in terms of ethnicity and experience; none had taken a foreign culture course or had foreign language capability, only half had ever traveled aboard, and only four of the 23 had studied abroad. The program abroad included travel to multiple locations in Europe, classes during the day while abroad, guest lectures, accommodations in the homes of families native to the culture, various site visits, and other opportunities for creating relationships and sharing cultural differences. Using the IDI, both a pretest before travel and a posttest following travel were administered. The pretest overall mean was 93.78 and the overall posttest mean was 98.0, indicating that while the overall mean remains within the minimization worldview, there was a slightly improved level of intercultural sensitivity as measured by the IDI's developmental scale. Anderson et al. (2006) found significant improvement in the students' reversal and acceptance/adaptation subscales, some improvement in overall developmental scores, but no significant difference on the other subscales. While principal growth appears to be at either end of the IDI continuum, there was some overall IDI developmental score improvement, and the authors concluded that "short-term, non-language-based study abroad programs can have a positive impact on intercultural sensitivity" (p. 467).

Pedersen (2010) conducted a year-long study comparing three groups involved in different methods of study. A total of 45 Midwestern college students were involved in the study with between 13-16 students in each group. Group 1 involved diversity training, study abroad, guided reflection, and cultural coaching; group 2 students included study abroad with no intervention; and group 3 included students who studied at home and did not travel abroad. All three groups took the IDI prior to the study abroad groups' departure and again approximately one month after the study abroad groups' return. Results indicated a significant difference in overall mean scores for the group that traveled abroad with intercultural pedagogy and coaching

(pre-departure overall mean of 91.31 and post-departure mean of 102.87; 11.56 difference), and minimal forward movement between pretest and post-test with group 2 and 3 (1.73 and .77 difference, respectively, in overall mean developmental score). Variables such as gender, involvement in work and extracurricular activities, participation in a family stay, or keeping a journal did not impact IDI score changes, according to Pedersen (2010). The study concluded that study abroad alone may not be sufficient to impact cultural understanding, and suggests that efforts to work with individuals studying abroad during their experience is needed to impact cultural understanding (Pedersen, 2010).

A study done by Williams (2005) that did not utilize the IDI, but that is worth mentioning, determined that students who study abroad exhibit a greater change in intercultural communication skills than students who do not study abroad. Two groups of students from Texas Christian University, one group that studied abroad for the semester and one that remained on campus, were given a pretest at the beginning of the semester using the Cross-Cultural Adaptability Inventory and the Intercultural Sensitivity Index. The tests were again administered at the end of the semester to compare results. Results showed that students who studied abroad had a higher level of intercultural communication skill than those who did not study abroad. The major factor that influenced changes in level of intercultural skills over the semester was the location of their previous semester, and not any demographic variable such as academic level, gender, age, or ethnicity. Williams (2005) determined that "exposure to various cultures is the best predictor of intercultural communication skills" (p. 69). Williams (2005) further concluded that while study abroad provides wider exposure to cultural experiences, any cultural experience including taking cultural courses, attending ethnic celebrations or different religious services, and interacting with people of another culture seems to proportionately reflect such exposure.

Another study related to the Intercultural Development Inventory and travel abroad that should be mentioned is Michael Moodian's 2007 "Analysis of Intercultural Competence Levels of Organizational Leadership Doctoral Students". Dr. Moodian's study investigated correlations between doctoral students and intercultural competence that included an intensive international experience. In Dr. Moodian's study, the IDI was administered at the beginning of the doctoral candidates' studies and again after completing their international travel. While his study indicated decreased intercultural sensitivity at the post-test level, (attributed in part to stress, the short duration of the international experience and lack of a formal intercultural training program), his study provides significant implications for groups and organizations studying the dynamics of intercultural behavior. Dr. Moodian has since published *Contemporary Leadership and Intercultural Competence* (2009), a publication that can serve as a vital resource for educational leaders seeking to better understand cross-cultural dynamics within their organization.

A similar, but significantly broader study involving doctoral students and travel abroad was conducted by Schmieder-Ramirez and Neiworth (2013). This study involved 46 demographically diverse doctoral students in the Organizational Leadership program at Pepperdine University between 2010 and 2012. The purpose of the study was to determine if over a two-year period, which included an international experience outside the United States, there was an increase in global mindset, and thus, an increase in pre- and post-test scores using the IDI. Students within three cohorts were tested upon entry into the program in 2010, and again near the end of their coursework following their international experience. Results indicated that improvement was made in the intercultural mindset of the students over their two years in the program. The overall development mean score at pretest was 96.12, indicating an

orientation toward a minimization worldview; the overall post-test developmental mean score was 98.66, which indicates forward movement on the continuum, but still a primary orientation toward a minimization worldview. As was evidenced by the Pedersen (2010) study, advancement along the IDI continuum at the post-test in this study was greater on the upper and lower ends of the continuum, with less change at the minimization level. The greatest change appeared at the adaptation/acceptance level (+6.1%). While improvement was seen in IDI developmental scores in this study, the authors indicated that it was not clear whether the movement was due to the international experience, the coursework or the program as a whole, but felt that individuals open to intercultural experiences are more likely to improve their IDI scores (Schmieder-Ramirez et al., 2013).

Other Tools

While the IDI is a highly validated and reliable instrument that provides a great deal of data to the researcher, it is not without its criticisms. Perry and Southwell (2011) did a synthesis of literature reviewing some of the theories and models associated with intercultural competence, including the IDI. They suggest that the IDI, while a good instrument, has some weaknesses. Among the weaknesses they cite is that the IDI assumes individuals develop in a linear progression, the IDI forces individuals into stages without allowing for the possibility of multiple aspects of intercultural sensitivity, and it doesn't break down results to show ways in which an individual may be interculturally sensitive and ways they are not. Perry and Southwell (2011) suggest other instruments such as the Intercultural Sensitivity Scale (ISS), developed by Chen and Starosta (2000), as a possible alternative instrument that addresses some of the weaknesses they cited with the IDI. Perry and Southwell (2011) also suggest that different models have been

created for different situations. Fantini (2006) compiled a listing of 87 instruments that assess different measures of intercultural competence.

Another tool, beyond the individual assessment, that can assist school leaders in their journey is a cultural audit. Completing a cultural audit using the School-wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist (Bustamante & Nelson, 2007) will guide school leaders in determining how well their school responds to diversity. Bustamante (2005) determined in her work with school leaders that while they may understand the concept of developing school cultural competence, they do not necessarily know how to go about assessing such competence. In response to this need, Bustamante and Nelson (2007) developed a protocol designed to guide school leaders in observing cultural competence within their schools. The SCCOC (School-wide Cultural Competence Observation Checklist) consists of 33 items covering eight themes related to developing school cultural competence (Bustamante et al., 2007). It is based on 1 (never) to 5 (always) point Likert scale that guides schools in examining their school practices and cultural competence.

In a mixed methods study to test the fidelity of the SCCOC, 151 school leaders in two western states were asked to rank the importance of each of the instrument's items as well as answer open-and closed-end questions. The qualitative findings of the study validated the fidelity of the SCCOC. In addition, interesting data was revealed through the study that indicated barriers that exist in school leaders' development of cultural competence within their school, including: (a) confusion about responsibility for promoting cultural competence; (b) the practicality of examining cultural competence given a lack of time and funding; (c) lack of knowledge about research-based, culturally responsive instructional practices; and (d) personal biases that limit the development of inclusive policies and practices. Given these findings,

Bustamante and Nelson (2007) encourage school leaders to raise their cultural awareness as a starting point toward developing cultural responsivity.

Participating in the Intercultural Development Inventory or a similar instrument is an excellent starting point for developing cultural competence. Other tools that can be of assistance might include guiding staff members through reflective practices with a text such as Singleton and Linton's (2006) *Courageous Conversations about Race* to help facilitate awareness, or using an implementation guide such as *The Culturally Proficient School* (Lindsey, Roberts, & CampbellJones, 2005)

Studying schools and school leaders that have had success creating a culturally responsive environment can also provide clues and insight to leaders seeking to become culturally responsive. In an effort to describe how a culturally responsive leader (CRL) manages the role of leadership with teachers, parents, and students in a culturally and linguistically diverse high school, Madhlangobe (2009) completed an in-depth case study of highly successful, culturally responsive school leaders achieving success in a highly diverse central Texas high school. Madhlangobe's study revealed six themes that can guide school leaders toward becoming more culturally responsive: (a) build positive relationships; (b) be persistent and persuasive; (c) model cultural responsiveness; (d) be present and communicate; (e) foster cultural responsiveness among others; and (f) care for others (p. xv). According to Madhlangobe (2009), these leadership behaviors involve creating a school climate that is caring, nurturing, inclusive, accepting, safe and secure, and allows for both freedom of speech and differences (p. 243). Above all, Madhlangobe's study stresses the importance of relationship building, with an emphasis on parental and community involvement, as a key strategy for school improvement.

Summary

Developing cultural responsivity within schools is no easy task and there is no one model that will fit all. Every school is different; every child is different, the worldviews teachers bring to their classroom are all different, and the abilities of school leaders are all different. However, there are guidelines. Extensive research, countless pieces of literature, numerous research-based tools, and the successful practices of those schools who are making a difference can guide school leaders if they are willing to re-examine policies, practices, and beliefs.

Understanding and accepting the importance of teaching as both an art (Ladson-Billings, 1995) and an opportunity to transform our changing world, deep concern for our future and that of the children whose lives educators touch, a willingness to have *hard conversations* (Nieto, 2014) and explore cultural biases as well as the structural and societal barriers that exist, combined with strong leadership and persistence, can pave the way toward culturally responsive schools that close the achievement gap for ALL children.

As Gary Howard (2006b) states, *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know;* it begins with understanding—understanding of ourselves and others. Such understanding is heavily dependent on the strong, transformational leadership of our school leaders, their willingness to become culturally competent and their willingness to, "*set the direction, develop the staff, and redesign the organization*" (Leithwood et al., 2004).

Chapter III: Methodology

Geneva Gay, a long-time promoter of multicultural education, posits in the opening of her book, *Culturally Responsive Teaching*, "too many students of color have not been achieving in school as well as they should and can for far too long" (Gay, 2010b, p. 1). Data provided by the National Center for Education Statistics (2015) as well as data provided by the Illinois State Board of Education (2015) further attests to the continued underachievement of *students of color*, particularly Black and Hispanic students.

Gary Howard (2006b) states in his book, *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know*, an in-depth examination of diversity and the barriers a predominantly White teaching force responsible for educating an increasingly multi-hued student face, that too often educators simply don't know that they don't know, at least when it comes to cultural awareness and responsivity.

The works of Kenneth Leithwood and his colleagues (2003, 2004, 2006, 2010) emphasize the importance of effective school leadership in guiding the vision, mission, and culture of the school, and ultimately, student achievement. McCloud (2005), Lindsey et al., (2009) and others focused on school leadership emphasize that it is no longer enough to be effective to impact student achievement, a school leader today must be also be culturally competent.

Recognizing our changing world, the continuing achievement gap, the declarations of researchers and multiculturists regarding the role of culture in education, the importance of the school leader in guiding their schools, and the importance of school leader cultural competence, it is the aim of this study to examine school leader cultural development and its impact on student achievement in demographically changing school settings.

The purpose of this chapter is to overview the research design used for this study. The research questions, methodology, process for selection of data sources, participants, and data gathering procedures are outlined in this chapter.

Research Questions

The primary question that guided this correlational research study sought to answer:

RQ1. How does a school leader's cultural development impact student achievement in a demographically changing, culturally diverse school?

Research Sub-questions

- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader demographic variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader experience?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory), student demographics, and student achievement as measured by the annual State achievement tests (PARCC)?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI, school climate factors as measured by the 5Essentials survey, and student achievement as measured by the annual State achievement tests (PARCC)?

Research Design

This correlational study utilized data gained through the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), v3, ©Mitchell R. Hammer, Ph.D., IDI, LLC, a highly validated, online quantitative assessment, and publicly available archival data to analyze correlations between school leaders' cultural development, selected demographic characteristics, and school achievement.

Quantitative Design

This study is a correlational research study. Correlational studies are quantitative studies in which two or more variables are correlated within the same group of subjects in an effort to determine if there are any relationships (covariation) between variables (Lomax & Li, 2013). In this study, for example, scores on the IDI are correlated with a number of demographic variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity to determine covariation. Each of the subquestions in this study provides direction as to what variables are to be correlated with one another. However, it must be remembered, "correlations describe relationships, but they do not prove cause and effect; correlation is necessary, but not sufficient for determining causality" (Siegle, 2015).

Correlational research plays an important role in quantitative research; it helps explore the relationship between different variables and allows the researcher to discard those that have no relationship. Such knowledge allows the researcher to give more serious consideration to variables that do indicate a relationship (Lomax & Li, 2013)..

Researcher's Role

In a quantitative approach, the researcher stands apart from the research; the facts (numbers) speak for themselves. An objective quantitative researcher follows an established procedure that can be duplicated by another researcher resulting in the same outcomes. Thus, in

essence, who the researcher is becomes unimportant. Regardless of who the researcher is, the same results should be found by those who follow the same procedure. (Smith, 1983).

Site and Subject Selection

The target population for this study was school leaders from 20 suburban Illinois schools that have undergone substantial demographic change during the past decade. Those invited to participate included district and local leaders from elementary schools, middle schools, high schools, alternative schools and school support programs. The elementary, middle and alternative schools targeted included two building administrators at each school as well as subject coordinators, certified as administrators, and the high schools each included at least three building administrators and the subject coordinators. Based on the number of leaders within the 20 schools under consideration, it was estimated that approximately 50 school leaders would participate in this study.

Sixty-eight school leaders from the 20 different schools were invited to participate in this study. Of the 68 invited, 53 individuals completed the Intercultural Development Inventory required as part of this study; five others started the inventory, but did not sufficiently complete the questions required for their inventory to be used in the study; and 10, after several requests, did not respond at all. Overall, there was an 85.3% response rate to the study and a 78% successful completion rate for the cultural inventory which served as the base for this study.

The schools selected to participate in this study are racially, linguistically, and economically diverse. According to the Illinois State Report Card demographic data (reviewed prior to administration of the assessment), the schools invited to participate in this study had an overall enrollment of 17,481 students at the time of the study, comprised of a total of 27% White students, 20% Black students, 41% Hispanic students, 7% Asian students, less than a half percent

each of Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander students and American Indian students, and 4% students who self-reported multi-racial (Illinois State Board of Education [ISBE], 2014). This data also indicates that 64% of the students in these schools were considered low-income and 12% were Limited English Proficient (ISBE, 2014). The administrative and teaching staff in these schools, according to the Illinois State Board of Education data at the time of the study, were primarily female, 80%, and White, non-Hispanic, 85% (ISBE, 2014).

According to an archival review of demographic data (2000-2015), the staff in the schools being studied have remained predominantly White and female over the past decade while the student demographics have changed significantly (ISBE, 2000-2015). Such demographic change is evidenced throughout the State. According to a report published by the *Chicago Tribune* in January of 2014, citing Illinois State Board of Education enrollment figures and Federal education data (2013), if the trend continues, Illinois may be the "first in the Midwest to have a school system in which minority students are the majority" (Rado, 2014, para 6).

At the beginning of the decade, the students enrolled in the Illinois schools being studied were majority White non-Hispanic students (ISBE, 2000). Within just a few short years, based on statistics reported by the State Board of Education, these formerly culturally homogenous Midwestern suburban schools started experiencing an influx of diversity. In all of the schools studied, buildings and equipment appear to be state of the art, the per pupil instructional and operating expenditure has more than doubled, and numerous supports have been put in place both inside and outside of the schools; yet these schools, like many Nationwide, continue to experience achievement gaps between subgroups in both Reading and Math, particularly for

Black and Hispanic students, low SES, and LEP, students (Illinois State Board of Education, 2000-2015).

Prior to this assessment, no cultural development assessment had been used with these schools, and there had been only limited focused cultural development training (private communication, April 2014). The similarities these schools share with other schools within the State made it uniquely qualified for this type of study.

Entry into *the field* was provided by the school leadership in which the targeted schools reside. The leadership of the targeted schools agreed to encourage participation as they believed the results of the study could benefit both the individual schools under study as well as other schools and districts.

Data Collection Tools

The Intercultural Development Inventory® or (IDI)® is an internationally used assessment of intercultural development and served as the base quantitative tool for this study. The IDI is a 50-item questionnaire with opportunity for customizable demographic data; the questionnaire can be completed in 15-20 minutes either online or through a paper and pencil version (Hammer, 2012a). The online version was used for this study. The data generated from the assessment provides information on how respondents address cultural diversity and identifies issues that may be inhibiting them from connecting more effectively across cultural differences (Hammer, 2012a).

IDI validity and reliability results have been confirmed in large, multicultural samples involving over 10,000 individuals (Hammer, 2011). The IDI has strong "content" validity, strong "construct" validity, and strong "predictive" validity in both organizations and education

(Hammer, 2012a, p. 118). Readability analyses indicate the IDI is appropriate for ages 15 years old or higher or an approximate 10th grade reading level (Hammer, 2011).

When the IDI is used to assess a group or individual's level of intercultural development, a profile report is generated indicating the group or individual's orientation along a five-point continuum (denial, polarization, minimization, acceptance, and adaptation) known as the Intercultural Developmental Continuum (Hammer, 2012a). This continuum is adapted from the DMIS (Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity) originally suggested by Milton Bennett (1993, 2004). The results available to the assessment administrator provide a numeric score between 55 and 145 (corresponds with the five-points along the Intercultural Developmental Continuum) for each respondent's *perceived orientation* as well as their *developmental orientation*, and a gap score for the difference between the two scores (Hammer, 2012b). While several other scores are provided within each assessment administration, for the purposes of this study, only the numeric perceived, developmental and gap scores were used.

It should be noted that in order to be able to administer the Intercultural Development Inventory, the assessment administrator must go through a three-day intensive training and be certified by the IDI, LLC organization. The average cost of training is $1800 for the training and $11-$15 per assessment administered. Unfortunately, due to the high cost, many public schools are unable to take advantage of this assessment. This researcher was trained and certified as an IDI administrator (see certificate, Appendix A), and multiple support tools, including an assessment manual (Hammer, 2016), were available to help guide the research.

In addition to using the results of the Intercultural Development Inventory for this study, publically available demographic, school climate, and achievement data were obtained from the State's Board of Education "School Report Card" website. Each school in the State of Illinois

has a publically available “School Report Card” that is published on line each year. The report card highlights school demographics, results on the annual achievement tests administered the prior spring, and more recently, school climate data based on the University of Chicago Consortium of Chicago School Research (CCSR) 5Essentials Survey.

Rationale Behind Tools

The Intercultural Development Inventory was selected as the base assessment tool to measure cultural development levels because it is a highly validated, reliable instrument that measures what it is intended to measure—cultural awareness and sensitivity (Hammer, 2011). The IDI provides a snapshot in time and can be repeated following coaching and other professional development to determine if movement from the base level assessment is occurring, making it perfectly situated as an instrument for schools and organizations interested in pursuing a cultural development training program. Further, the online assessment is easy to administer, it allows respondents the convenience of completing the assessment within their own time frame, privately, and confidentially. The assessment administrator is provided easy access to the IDI site to export data and obtain reports. The IDI organization provides a significant number of supportive resources and regular training updates. The major drawback is the expense of the instrument.

The choice to obtain school demographic, climate, and achievement data through the State Board of Education “Report Card” website insured that accurate, reliable, unbiased data was obtained. It also assured that only “public” information, and aggregated data were reviewed and used. The ability to access the information online provided convenience and guaranteed a greater measure of confidentiality for participants since no record requests seeking information about specific schools were required.

Description of Data Gathering Process

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v. 3), which was used as the basis of this study, asks 50 standard questions aimed at determining an individual's level of cultural development. The assessment also provides an opportunity for 12 pre-selected demographic questions and six customized questions. A sample of the type of customized demographic questions that can be used are included in Appendix B. (Due to the proprietary nature of the IDI, no other inventory questions could be included in the appendix). From the demographic data, information regarding a school leader's gender, age bracket, ethnic background, education level, position, years of professional experience, and travel experience were gathered.

To introduce the study to as large a number of participants as possible, the researcher was invited to address school leaders at a school leaders' workshop. All school leaders in attendance at the group workshop were personally invited to participate in the study, provided an informed consent information sheet, and explained the scope of the study and their rights and responsibilities if they chose to participate. Those who were interested in participating completed an information card with their contact information so that an online link to the assessment could be provided to them along with a unique user ID and password. Initially, 61 school leaders completed information cards and agreed to participate in the study. However, only 44 of the 61 completed the inventory during the first month access to the inventory was made available. From that point forward, interest slowed. A reminder email was sent, which encouraged a few more leaders to complete the inventory, and then a personal letter of request was sent. In an effort to further increase participation, several school leaders who had not attended the initial group workshop were later contacted, informed of the scope of the research and invited to participate.

Creswell (2009) suggests a four-phase administration process to insure a higher response. Phase 1 should be some type of advance notice, phase 2 should be providing the actual survey, phase 3 should be a postcard follow up, and phase 4 should be a personally signed letter. In the case of this study, the invitation to attend and be placed on the agenda for a school leaders' workshop provided opportunity for phase 1. The actual email sent with research and assessment details served as phase 2, and the reminder email sent served as phase 3. The personally signed letter was sent, as suggested, for phase 4. The goal had been to obtain participation from at least 50 school leaders; after completing the four phases of participation request, 53 school leaders participated.

As participants completed the online inventory, their inventory results and demographic information were exported from the IDI website into a preformatted Excel spreadsheet (see sample in Appendix C). User ID numbers were used in lieu of individual names throughout the data gathering process. In addition to the inventory results and demographic information obtained through the IDI administration for each participant, school report card (public data) for each participant's school was downloaded from the State Department of Education website and manually entered into Excel (see sample in Appendix D). Data obtained from the State DOE website included school demographic data, school achievement test scores and school climate results from the 5Essentials Survey. The response participants gave through the IDI demographic questions regarding current position and their building code were matched against the report card data, which was also coded. All the Excel data was numerically updated and then transferred to SPSS (v.23). Once the data was in SPSS, the variable data was defined so that frequency counts, statistical analysis, and bivariate correlations using Pearson's correlation coefficient, could be run and analyzed.

Protection of Human Rights

Research conducted involving human subjects must meet certain ethical and protective requirements. The IRB is the committee or board responsible for monitoring compliance for a university or organization involved with research. This researcher has met the requirements for the National Institute of Health Office of Extramural Research training course "Protecting Human Research Participants" and has met the requirements set forth by the Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board. IRB approval for exempt status was submitted and approved (see letter in Appendix E).

This study met the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations (45 CFR 46 – http://www.hhhs.gov.ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html) that govern the protection of human subjects. Specifically, the exempt status fall under section 45 CFR 46.101(b.2) which exempts "research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior unless (a) information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and (b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation" (U.S. Department of Health & Human Services, 2009). In addition, an application to waive documentation of informed consent was also approved.

This study involved research through a questionnaire/survey method with an adult population that is not part of a protected group. The information sought through the assessment posed minimal risk to the participants and any potential disclosure of the data did not place the participants at any risk for any criminal/civil liability or damage to their financial standing,

employability or reputation. All responses to the assessment were completely confidential. No names were used in the administration of the inventory; all participants were provided with a study number to use in place of their name, a computer-generated user number, and a protected password to complete the inventory. The coded study numbers, user numbers, and passwords were known only to the researcher, and are locked in a password protected computer and on a USB drive kept in a locked file separate from the other research data. Further, the achievement data reviewed is publicly available on the State website. Correlations made between the various data were reported in such a way to insure confidentiality. While breach of confidentiality is always a potential risk, every precaution was taken to insure confidentiality. The only minimal risk posed to the participants was the time it took to complete the 50-item assessment and participate in a short presentation about the research.

The application to waive documentation of informed consent involved providing all potential participants with an information/fact sheet explaining the purpose of the study, the procedures involved, the potential risks, the potential benefits, participation and withdrawal, confidentiality and contact information. Due to the online nature of the assessment, no signatures were required; consent to participate in the study was assumed once the assessment was completed, and this was fully explained to all participants.

Summary

With increasing ethnic, linguistic, and economic diversity in our public schools and an educational force that has remained relatively homogeneous, there is a need to develop intercultural competence to guarantee the elimination of cultural bias and effectively engage and motivate learners from all backgrounds. According to Dr. Mitchell R. Hammer, the author of the IDI® and an international expert on intercultural competence, intercultural development needs

two things to take place to shift behavior: (a) an understanding of self, and (b) an understanding of the experiences of people from different cultural communities (Hammer, 2013).

While much research has been done around the topic of the achievement gap, cultural responsivity, cultural awareness, and education reform, and, further, a great deal of research has been done with the IDI, relatively little has been done specifically tying school leader intercultural development via the IDI with student achievement (Hammer, 2012c; personal communication, April 2013). This study attempted to do just that. Utilizing an internationally-employed, highly validated and reliable instrument, the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v3) was administered to 53 school leaders in 18 demographically diverse Midwest suburban schools. The schools that participated are part of one of the largest Districts in the State of Illinois, a state by all accounts that may be the first in the Midwest to have school systems that, in the not too distant future, may be composed of a majority of what we have long since considered our minority populations. The schools under study, headed by highly competent and dedicated administrators, staffed by supportive teachers, and working in environmentally and technologically friendly, well-maintained buildings with phenomenal internal and external resources, still struggle passionately to meet the needs of ALL youth. It is hoped that this research, while both expensive and time-intensive, sheds some light on the path our school leaders can take toward finding answers to insure success for ALL children.

Chapter IV: Results

The purpose of this study was to determine whether the level of a school leader's cultural development impacts student achievement in a demographically changing, culturally diverse school. The goal of the research was to analyze school leaders' cultural development using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v.3) against demographic characteristics and school performance factors to determine if there are any correlations. This chapter describes the results of this analysis.

Prior to stating the results, the research questions are restated, the study participants described and an overview of the data gathered reviewed.

Restatement of Research Questions

RQ1. How does a school leader's cultural development impact student achievement in a demographically changing, culturally diverse school?

Research Sub-questions

- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader demographic variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader experience?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory), student demographics, and student achievement as measured by the annual State tests (PARCC)?

- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI, school climate factors as measured by the 5Essentials survey, and student achievement as measured by annual State tests (PARCC)?

Research Participants Described

Sixty-eight school leaders from 20 different schools in Illinois were invited to participate in this study. Of the 68 invited, 53 individuals from 18 schools completed the Intercultural Development Inventory required as part of this study.

The gender of the participants was primarily female; 40 of the school leaders who participated were females (75.5%) and 13 were males (24.5%). The majority of the school leaders were 31 or older (94.3%) with the largest number of participants falling into the 31-40 age group (45.3%), followed by the 41-50 age group (32.1%). The participants were primarily Caucasian/White (83%); 7.5% of the participants were Black/African American, and 7.5% were Hispanic/Latino. Only 1.9% of the participants reported being racially mixed or of another ethnicity. The majority of the participants were building leaders, serving as either a building principal or assistant principal (66.1%). The remainder of the participants were district level administrators with a direct impact on instruction (28.3%) or directors of support programs (5.7%). All participants held a Bachelor's Degree or higher; 85% held a Master's Degree and 9.4% held a Doctoral Degree. The years of professional experience of the participants varied from newly hired to more than 30 years, with the majority having more than 10 years of experience (83%).

Description of Data Gathered

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v. 3) was used as the basis of this study. The Inventory asks 50 standard questions aimed at determining an individual's level of cultural

development and provides an opportunity for 12 pre-selected demographic questions and six customized questions. From the demographic data, information regarding a school leader's gender, age bracket, ethnic background, education level, position, years of professional experience, and travel experience were gathered. The responses to the 50 standard questions provide respondent scores that include both a perceived orientation level (where an individual would place themselves on the intercultural development continuum) as well as an individual's developmental orientation as assessed by the IDI, the gap between the two, and several other scores that can help the individual better understand their development. For the purpose of this study, only the PO (perceived orientation), DO (developmental orientation), and gap scores were used.

Participant IDI scores were correlated against the demographic variables obtained from the self-reported demographic section of the IDI as well as school data obtained through the State Report Card website. Data obtained from the State website included school demographics, school achievement data based on the previous spring's PARCC Assessment (Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers), and school climate data provided through the 5Essentials survey.

All data obtained was coded throughout the data gathering process so no names of individuals or schools were used, and only aggregated data is reported.

Overview of Data for Sub-question 1

The first research sub-question, **"**Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader demographic variables (i.e., age, gender, ethnicity)?" was answered by correlating the responses obtained through the demographic information section of the IDI with

the respondents' perceived and developmental orientations as assessed by the IDI. The demographic information provided responses to four questions pertinent to this research question. The demographic data breakdown related to this question is listed below:

Table 4.1

Frequency Counts for Selected School Leader Demographic Variables (N = 53)

Variable	Category	*n*	%
Gender			
	Male	13	24.5
	Female	40	75.5
Age Bracket			
	22-30	3	5.7
	31-40	24	45.3
	41-50	17	32.1
	51-60	9	17
Education Level			
	Bachelor's Degree or Equivalent	3	5.7
	Master's Degree or Equivalent	45	84.9
	Doctoral Degree or Equivalent	5	9.4
Ethnic Background			
	Black or African American	4	7.5
	Caucasian or White	44	83
	Hispanic or Latino	4	7.5
	Two or more categories	1	1.9

Note: While other ethnicities were included in the ethnic background section, only those listed above received responses.

The respondents' perceived and developmental orientation results as determined by the Intercultural Development Inventory are shown in Tables 4.2 and 4.3.

Table 4.2

Frequency Counts for Perceived Orientation Levels (N = 53)

Variable	Category	*n*	%
Perceived Orientation			
	Minimization	2	3.8
	Acceptance	38	71.7
	Adaptation	13	24.5

One of the measures of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) is how an individual perceives their cultural development or their perceived orientation. Note in Table 4.2 above, the majority of the respondents believe they are at an acceptance level or higher in their cultural development (96.2%). The key measure of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), however, is developmental orientation, or where an individual actually falls on the cultural development spectrum. The developmental spectrum or continuum runs along a scale from 55 (denial) to 145 (adaptation). The majority (73.6%) of the respondents' developmental orientation in this study were determined to be at or below the Minimization level on the cultural development spectrum, according to the Intercultural Development Inventory.

Table 4.3

Frequency Counts for Developmental Orientation Levels (N = 53)

Variable	Category	*n*	%
Developmental Orientation			
	Denial	1	1.9
	Polarization	8	15.1
	Minimization	30	56.6
	Acceptance	10	18.9
	Adaptation	4	7.5

The results indicate that the respondents perceived their orientation to be much higher than their developmental orientation scores indicate. Only 3% believed they were at the minimization level while their developmental orientation scores indicated over 70% were at or below the minimization level. The mean score for the IDI developmental orientation was 103.79 (minimization), with a range of 64.6 points between the highest and lowest developmental orientation score.

Table 4.4

Descriptive Statistics for IDI Scale Scores (N = 53)

Score	*M*	*SD*	Low	High	Range
Perceived Orientation	125.12	6.89	109.53	139.29	29.76
Developmental Orientation	103.79	16.56	69.2	133.80	64.60
Gap	21.32	10.13	4.55	40.92	36.37

Both the respondents' perceived orientation and developmental orientation scores as well as their gap score were correlated against the four demographic variables of gender, age, ethnicity, and education using Pearson's Correlation to determine if there was any correlation between intercultural development levels and demographics. No statistically significant correlations were found between the IDI levels and the four demographic variables tested. See Table 4.5 below.

Table 4.5

Correlations for Selected School Leader Demographic Variables (N = 53)

Variable	Perceived Orientation	Developmental Orientation	Gap
Gender	.177	.234	-.264
Age	.011	.028	-.039

(continued)

Variable	Perceived Orientation	Developmental Orientation	Gap
Education Level	-.047	-.053	.055
Ethnicity	-.067	-.069	.067
Caucasian[a]	-.167	-.143	.120

[a]Coding: 0 = No; 1 = Yes

When Pearson's r is close to 1 (+1 or -1), this means there is a strong relationship. When Pearson's *r* is close to 0, this means variables are not strongly correlated. When Pearson's *r* is positive, this means that as one variable increases so does the other variable. Similarly, as one variable decreases, the other value decreases. When Pearson's *r* is negative, this is considered a negative correlation. In a negative correlation, when one variable increases, the other variable decreases (McCormick, Salcedo, & Poh, 2015). Examining the Pearson's *r* in Table 4.5 the correlation results are closer to 0 than 1, indicating little or no correlation. Gender appears to have a weak correlation with developmental orientation at the .10 level, *(N* = 53, *r* = .234, *p* = .091) however, the .10 level is not considered a strong or statistically significant relationship. A statistically significant correlation is considered to have a probability value (*p*) at the .05 level or less (McCormick et al., 2015). The same can be said of the correlation between the gap and developmental orientation *(N* = 53, *r* = -.264, *p* = .056). To further support this conclusion, a Pearson Product Correlation Coefficient Table of Critical Values can be consulted (Weathington, Cunningham, & Pittenger, 2012).

Overview of Data for Sub-question 2

The second question this research study sought to answer was, "Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural

Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader experience?" Experience referring to years of professional experience in education, years in current leadership position, and travel experience (years of experience traveling and/or living abroad). The answers to these questions were obtained from the demographic section of the Intercultural Development Inventory and reported as follows.

Table 4.6

Frequency Counts for Selected Experience Variables (N = 53)

Variable	Category	*n*	%
Years in Current Position			
	Newly hired	3	5.7
	One year or less	4	7.5
	2 to 3 years	16	30.2
	4 to 6 years	17	32.1
	7 to 10 years	10	18.9
	More than 10 years	3	5.7
Years of Professional Experience			
	0 to 5 years	1	1.9
	6 to 10 years	7	13.2
	11 to 15	23	43.4
	16 to 20 years	12	22.6
	21 to 25 years	6	11.3
	26 to 30 years	2	3.8
	More than 30 years	2	3.8

(continued)

Variable	Category	*n*	%
Time Lived in Another Country			
	Never	42	79.2
	Less than 3 months	3	5.7
	3 to 6 months	1	1.9
	1 to 2 years	3	5.7
	3 to 5 years	2	3.8
	Over 10 years	2	3.8
Times Traveled Abroad			
	Never	1	1.9
	One Time	5	9.4
Times Traveled Abroad	2 to 3 Times	11	20.8
	4 to 5 Times	16	30.2
	6 to 8 Times	8	15.1
	9 Times or More	10	18.9

Note: Two participants did not respond to "Times Traveled Abroad"

The demographic data obtained from the intercultural Development Inventory also indicated that all 53 participants grew up in the United States during their formative years, and 52 of the 53 participants were U.S. citizens; one participant indicated citizenship in Poland.

Each of these experience-related demographic variables were correlated against the respondents' results on the Intercultural Development Inventory to determine if any of these variables had an impact on their perceived or developmental orientation. There was no statistically significant correlation found between the number of years in the position ($N = 53$, $r = -.131$, $p = .350$; level of significance >.1) or overall years in the profession ($N = 53$, $r = .027$, $p = .845$; level of significance > .1) when correlated with perceived orientations. There was also no statistically significant correlation found between the number of years in the position ($N = 53$, $r =$

-.152, p = .273; level of significance >.1) or overall years in the profession (N = 52, r = -.000, p = .999) when correlated with developmental (actual) orientation as measured by the IDI.

Table 4.7

Correlation for Experience Variables with Perceived and Developmental Orientation (N = 53)

Variable	Perceived Orientation	Developmental Orientation
Years in Position	-.13	-.15
Years of Experience	.03	-.00

However, travel experience did indicate a correlation. Combining respondents' answers to time abroad via living and/or traveling provided a combined "travel experience score" for each respondent; this score was correlated against both the perceived and developmental orientations of each respondent. Initially, the correlation was not statistically significant. All respondents that completed the questions about travel (N = 51; two did not respond), except one had traveled abroad, and some had traveled nine or more times abroad. Examining the scatter plot that was created, an outlier was noted when the travel score was plotted against the orientations. The outlier was removed (N = 50 instead of 51), and Pearson's correlation was rerun using the travel score and both the perceived and developmental orientations as variables. See Table 4-8.

Table 4.8

Perceived and Developmental Orientation Correlated with Travel Score (N = 50)

Score	1		2	3
1. Perceived Orientation	1.00			
2. Developmental Orientation	.96		1.00	
3. Travel Score	.293	*	.25	1.00

**Significant at .05 level*

There was some significant correlation found between respondents' "travel score" and their perceived orientation (n = 50, r = .293, p = .039). This is a positive correlation that indicates that as their travel experience increased, their perceived orientation score increased. However, this is only how they perceived themselves; this does not constitute their actual developmental orientation. When their developmental orientation was correlated against their travel score, there was not a statistically significant correlation (N = 50, r = .249, p = .08; significance at .10 level). Statistical significance would be at the .05 level or less. Also note that the "travel score" number is 50 rather than 52 as not all participants responded to the questions regarding travel.

Overview of Data for Sub-question 3

The third question this research sought to answer was, "Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory), student demographics, and student achievement as measured by the annual State tests (PARCC)?" In order to answer this question, school report card data was obtained from the State Board of Education website (public data), manually entered into an Excel spreadsheet and later uploaded into SPSS. The School Report Card provides demographic data for each school in the State as well results of annual State Achievement tests. Each school included in this research was given a numeric code which was matched with the numeric building codes reported by respondents, enabling the researcher to group and correlate respondent IDI scores with achievement data. Of the 20 schools invited to participate, leaders from only 19 responded; achievement data was not available for one of these 19. Consequently, results for 18 different schools is reported. The principals, assistant principals, and subject coordinators for each building were grouped and their IDI scores averaged to provide a building level developmental orientation score. The school leader building level developmental scores ranged from a high of

111 to a low of 95 with an overall mean developmental building level score of 104 (all within the level of minimization).

The individual school demographic data including ethnic breakdown, percent of low income, percent of IEP (Individualized Education Program) and percent of LEP (Limited English Proficiency) students were correlated against the building level developmental IDI scores, and both were correlated against overall student achievement as reported by the State Report Card.

The demographics for the schools studied and the correlations between the variables, school leader building developmental orientation, and overall test performance are indicated in the tables that follow.

Table 4.9

Descriptive Statistics for School Demographic Variables (N = 18)

Demographic Variable*	*M*	Low	High	Range
White	26.8%	7.5%	45.5%	38.0
Black	18.8%	6.7%	31.0%	24.3
Hispanic	42.7%	19.2%	72.3%	53.1
Asian	6.5%	.9%	20.0%	19.1
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	.244%	.0%	.6%	.6
American Indian	.244%	.0%	.7%	.7
Two or More Races	4.2%	2.1%	7.8%	5.7
% Low Income	66.0%	33.7%	91.1%	57.4
% LEP	15.5%	1.4%	54.9%	53.5
% IEP	14.4%	11.6%	16.6%	5.0%

*Note: All variables were expressed as percentages of each building's total population.

Table 4.10

Correlation for School Demographic Variables: Building DO and Test Performance (N = 18)

Variables	Building Developmental Orientation (DO)	Overall Test Performance (Meeting or Exceeding)	
Building Developmental Orientation	1.00	.095	
White	.368	.513	*
Black	-.126	-.116	
Hispanic	-.357	-.604	**
Asian	.156	.464	
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-.066	.052	
American Indian	.004	.357	
Two or More Races	.270	.172	
Low Income	-.285	-.710	**
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	-.010	-.678	**
Individualized Education Program (IEP)	-.246	-.395	

**Correlation is significant at the .05 level*

***Correlation is significant at the .01 level*

As indicated in the table above, the developmental orientation of the building leaders (Building DO) did not have a statistically significant correlation with overall test performance ($N = 18$, $r = .095$, $p = .706$; significance >.50). Statistically significant is considered significant at the .05 level or below. In this case, "*r*" is closer to zero than one, indicating little or no linear association. However, some of the demographic variables did correlate with overall test performance. White student enrollment correlated positively with overall test performance ($N = 18$, $r = .513$, $p = .029$, significant at the .05 level). This means that as the white student population increased in the schools studied, test scores increased. Asian student population, while not a strong correlation, correlated positively with overall test performance ($N = 18$, $r =$

.464, p = .052; significant at <.10). Hispanic student enrollment correlated negatively with overall test performance (N = 18, r = -.604, p = .008; significant at .01 level) as did the percent of low income students (N = 18, r = -.710, p = .001; significant at .01 level), and the percent of LEP or Limited English Proficient students (N = 18, r = -678, p = .002; significant at the .01 level). A negative correlation indicates that as one number grows, the other number declines. Thus, in the case of test achievement, if a number correlates negatively, test achievement scores decreased as the other variable increased and vice versa.

To further broaden the scope of achievement, the Math and English/Language Arts achievement data were entered and correlated against both the building developmental orientation and the demographic data. Table 4.11 shows the results for building DO and low income, LEP, and IEP students when correlated with overall math and ELA (English/Language Arts) scores.

Table 4.11

Correlations for Selected Variables with Math and ELA Achievement (N = 18)

Variable	Overall Math Achievement		Overall English/Language Arts (ELA) Achievement	
Building Developmental Orientation	.129		.072	
Low Income	-.652	**	-.667	**
Limited English Proficiency (LEP)	.444		-.775	**
Individualized Education Program (IEP)	-.615	**	-.191	

***Correlation is significant at the .01 level*

No statistically significant correlation was found between building developmental orientation and math achievement (N = 18, r = .129, p = .609; significance >.50) or

English/Language Arts (N = 18, r = .072, p = .777; significance >.50). However, significant correlations were found between the math achievement data and the percentage of low income (N = 18, r = -652, p = .003; significant at the .01 level) and math and the percentage of IEP students (N = 18, r = -.615, p = .007; significant at the .01 level). Significant correlations were also found in the schools studied between the English/Language Arts achievement data and the percentage of low income students (N = 18, r = -.667, p = .003; significant at the .01 level) and ELA and the percentage of limited English proficiency students (N = 18, r = -.775, p = .000; significant at <.01 level). In addition, a correlation was also found between math achievement and English/Language Arts achievement (N = 18, r = .697, p = .001; significant at the .01 level).

Table 4.12

Correlation for Selected Demographic Variables with Math and ELA Achievement (N = 18)

Variable	Overall Math Achievement		Overall English/Language Arts (ELA) Achievement	
White	.386		.569	*
Black	-.202		-.040	*
Hispanic	-.512	*	-.609	**
Asian	.531	*	.346	
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	.060		.027	
American Indian	.169		.431	
Two or More Races	.382		.004	

**Correlation is significant at the .05 level;*
***Correlation is significant at the .01 level*

The Math and English/Language Arts achievement data were also correlated against the various ethnic backgrounds as indicated in Table 4.12 above. A negative correlation was found between the Hispanic student population and the Math achievement data (N = 18, r = -.512, p = .030; significant at the .05 level), and a positive correlation was found between the Asian student population and Math achievement data (N = 18, r = .531, p = .023; significant at the .05 level).

A positive correlation was also found between the White student population and the English/Language Arts achievement data (N = 18, r = .569, p = .014; significant at the .05 level), and a strong negative correlation was found between the Hispanic student population and the English/Language Arts achievement data (N = 18, r = -.609, p = .007; significance at the .01 level).

Overview of Data for Sub-question 4

The fourth and final question this research sought to answer, "Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI, school climate factors as measured by the 5Essentials survey, and student achievement as measured by annual State tests (PARCC)?" The 5Essentials Survey is a survey given to teachers and students in Illinois Schools that asks questions about a school's culture and climate, and is available for review as part of the School Report Card through the State Board of Education public website. This survey measures a school's performance on five essential performances—ambitious instruction, effective leadership, collaborative teachers, involved families and supportive environment, categories that relate to successful schools (Berlin & Marx, 2015). While this survey culminates years of research by the University of Chicago (Berlin et al., 2015), it was relatively new at the time of this research and not all of the *essentials* were surveyed at all of the schools at the time of this writing. Thus, only the three main essentials surveyed in all of the schools studied were included in this research for correlation: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, and Involved Families. Building Developmental Orientation, as determined by the IDI, was correlated against each of these school climate factors as well as the building demographic data and school achievement data.

Table 4.13

Inter-correlations among Building DO and School Climate Category Scores (N = 18)

Variable	1	2	3	4
1. Building Developmental Orientation	1.00			
2. School Climate - Effective Leaders	-.165	1.00		
3. School Climate - Collaborative Teachers	-.023	.772 **	1.00	
4. School Climate - Involved Families	.192	.432	.534 *	1.00

**Correlation significant at the .05 level*

***Correlation significant at the .01 level*

While the Building Developmental Orientation did not show significant correlation with any of the three major school climate factors, Effective Leaders correlated with Collaborative Teachers (N = 18, r = .772, p = .000; significant <.01), and Collaborative Teachers correlated with Involved families (N = 18, r = .534, p = .022; significant at the .05 level).

Table 4.14

Inter-correlations among Building DO and Involved Families Subcategories (N = 18)

Score	1	2	3	4
1. Building Developmental Orientation	1.00			
2. Involved Families - Parent Involvement	.403 *	1.00		
3. Involved Families - Outreach to Families	.054	-.043	1.00	
4. Involved Families - Teacher-Parent Trust	-.066	.400 *	.348	1.00

***Correlates at .10 level*

In addition to examining these three main school climate categories measured by the 5Essentials Survey, correlations were run on the subcategories listed within the *Involved Families* category (shown in Table 4.14 above). It was felt that the Involved Families category could be closely associated with developmental orientation and the level of acceptance families might feel within a school. The three subcategories listed within Involved Families for the 5Essentials Survey included: Parent Involvement, Outreach to Families, and Parent-Teacher

Trust. The scores reported by the State on each of these subcategories were correlated with building level developmental orientation.

The Building Developmental Orientation did not show a significant correlation with any of the Involved Families' subcategories. As indicated above, building developmental orientation correlated with parent involvement at the .10 level ($N = 18$, $r = .403$, $p = .049$), and parent-teacher trust also correlated with parent involvement at the .10 level ($N = 18$, $r = .400$, $p = .050$). Statistically this is not considered a strong correlation and, thus, is not considered as a positive correlation for this research. It is mentioned, however, for possible consideration for further research.

In addition, correlations were done between the secondary school climate categories' (Parent Involvement, Outreach to Families, and Teacher-Parent Trust) survey scores and school achievement as well as the secondary school climate categories' survey scores and the various demographic categories represented on the school report card. See Tables 4-15 and 4-16.

Table 4.15

Correlations for Involved Families Subcategories with Achievement (N = 18)

Variable	Overall Test Performance	Overall English/Language Arts Achievement	Overall Math Achievement
Parent Involvement	-.040	-.206	.204
Outreach to Families	.381	.268	.445
Teacher-Parent Trust	.552 *	.480 *	.544 *

**Correlation significant at the .05 level*

Overall test performance correlated positively with Teacher-Parent Trust ($N = 18$, $r = .552$, $p = .018$; significant at the .05 level). Overall ELA (English-Language Arts) also correlated positively with Teacher-Parent Trust ($N = 18$, $r = .480$, $p = .044$; significant at the .05

level), and overall math coordinated positively with Teacher-Parent Trust (N = 18, r = .544, p = .020, significant at .05 level). Overall math had a weak correlation with outreach to families (N = 18, r = .445, p = .064; significant at <.10 level), but no other statistically significant correlations were found. Statistically significant is considered to be .05 or less.

When demographics were correlated with the three school climate subcategories (see Table 4.16), Teacher-Parent Trust correlated positively with the Asian population (N = 18, r = .583, p = .011; significant at the .05 level), but negatively with the Hispanic population (N = 18, r = -.545, p = .019, significant at the .05 level). A negative correlation means as one variable increases, the other variable decreases and vice versa. In this case, it appears that as the Hispanic population increases, Teacher-Parent Trust decreases. Teacher-Parent Trust also correlated negatively, very strongly, with the low income population (N = 18, r = .692, p = .001; significant at the .01 level).

Table 4.16

Correlations of Demographics with Involved Families Subcategories (N = 18)

Demographic Variable	Parent involvement		Outreach to Families	Teacher-Parent Trust	
White	.194		.202	.457	
Black	-.171		-.301	-.200	
Hispanic	-.412		-.028	-.545	*
Asian	.592	**	.004	.583	*
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	-.162		.127	-.025	
American Indian	-.075		.272	.230	
Two or More Races	.734	**	-.043	.274	
Low Income	-.482	*	-.046	-.692	**
Limited English Proficiency	.217		-.214	-.394	
Individualized Education Program	-.398		-.079	-.296	

**Correlation significant at the .05 level*
***Correlation significant at the .01 level*

In addition, a very strong correlation was found between Parent Involvement and the Asian population (N = 18, r = .592, p = .010, significant at the .01 level) and those of two or more races (N = 18, r = .734, p = .001, significant at the .01 level). A statistically significant negative correlation was found between Parent Involvement and the low income population (N = 18, r = .482, p = .043; significant at the .05 level). While not considered statistically strong, but worth noting, is the negative correlation between Parent Involvement and the Hispanic population (N = 18, r = -.412, p = .090; significant at the .10 level).

Summary

The purpose of this research was to determine how a school leader's cultural development affects student achievement. Demographic and cultural developmental data were gathered from 53 school leaders in 18 different schools using the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) as the base instrument. The IDI demographic data was correlated against the respondents' IDI orientation results; orientation results were then correlated against publicly available school report card data.

The correlation results indicated that a majority of the school leaders participating in the study fell into the minimization level or below on the IDI developmental orientation scale. However, respondents perceived themselves to be further along the scale and more culturally developed than IDI results indicate. There is a significant gap for school leaders between perception and actual cultural development according to the IDI results in this study.

No significant correlation was found between respondents' age, education level, gender or ethnicity and perceived or developmental orientation levels. There was also no significant correlation between respondent professional experience and perceived or developmental

orientation. However, travel correlated with perceived orientation, but in this research less significantly with actual developmental orientation.

This research, as with prior research, found that students from some minority backgrounds, low income or limited English backgrounds, do not do as well on State achievement tests as White students, students who are not considered low income, or students proficient in English. However, no significant direct correlation was found between overall standardized test achievement and IDI school leader scores.

School climate factors, as two decades of research by the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research has indicated (Klugman et al., 2015), does have an impact on school achievement. Developing parent-teacher trust, especially with Hispanic parents and low income parents, correlated significantly with school achievement in this study. Parent involvement had a significant negative correlation with low income students and a significant positive correlation with parents of Asian students. Further, in this study, effective leadership correlated significantly with teacher collaboration and outreach to families. Building developmental orientation correlated, although weak, with parent involvement. While this is not considered a strong correlation, it is worth noting and should be considered for further investigation and research concerning school leaders' cultural development and their outreach to parents and families of different cultures.

Although the IDI did not provide significantly strong, direct correlations with many of the variables tested, it did provide evidence of a greater need for cultural development among school leaders based on their perceived and developmental IDI scores, indicated some correlation for further consideration between level of cultural development and parent

involvement, and provided significant direction for future research. While correlations do not mean causation, correlations can point us to where further research is needed (Siegle, 2015).

Chapter V: Conclusions and Recommendations

As the demographics of our Country continue to change, it is important that school leaders possess cultural competence as a leadership skill in order to better serve the growing cultural diversity of their schools. School leaders must become more than just effective; they must become culturally competent (Banks et al., 2004; McCloud, 2005; Klotz, 2006).

The purpose of this study was to determine how a school leader's level of cultural development impacts student achievement in a demographically changing, culturally diverse school. The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v.3) was used as the base instrument in this study to measure levels of school leader cultural development. The participants' IDI results were correlated against a variety of demographic variables including age, gender, ethnicity, and experience to determine if any of these variables correlated with cultural development. In addition, the IDI results were correlated with student demographics, student achievement, and the school climate factors that impact achievement in each of the schools studied. To help answer the overriding question of how a school leaders' cultural development impacts student achievement in a demographically changing, culturally diverse school, the following four research questions were explored:

- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader demographic variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader experience?

- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory), student demographics, and student achievement as measured by the annual State tests (PARCC)?
- Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI, school climate factors as measured by the 5Essentials survey, and student achievement as measured by annual State tests (PARCC)?

The results from this study did not indicate a significant link between the participant's demographic variables of age, education, gender or experience and level of cultural development as determined by the IDI. No significant direct link was noted between school leader IDI results and school demographics or school achievement. However, some weak correlations that should be considered for further research were found between school leader IDI results and school climate factors that impact student achievement.

This chapter compares the results found with the literature reviewed, draws conclusions, addresses implications, and provides both practitioner recommendations and recommendations for future research.

Brief Summary of Key Findings

The Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI, v.3) results from this study indicated that the majority of the school leaders participating fell into the minimization level or below on the IDI developmental orientation scale. However, respondents perceived themselves to be more culturally developed than the results indicated, resulting in a significant gap between perception and actual cultural development.

No significant correlation was found between the participant demographic variables of age, education level, gender and ethnicity and participant IDI scores.

Correlation results for participant experience, which included years in current position and overall years of professional experience, also did not show a significant correlation. Participant travel experience, which included time lived and traveled abroad, showed a correlation with participant self-perceived orientation, but not with developmental orientation.

In terms of school achievement, no significant direct correlation was found between school leader developmental orientation as determined by the IDI and school demographics or achievement test performance. However, when correlating each schools' demographic variables against achievement, test performance was higher when there were more white students enrolled, more Asian students, fewer Hispanic students, fewer low income students, fewer limited English proficient students, and fewer students with an IEP.

When correlating school climate factors with school leader developmental orientation, no significant direct correlation was found between the IDI results and the three major school climate factors included in the study (effective leaders, collaborative teachers, and involved families). However, a significant relationship was determined between effective leaders and collaborative teachers as well as between collaborative teachers and involved families. In correlating the subcategories of involved families with developmental orientation, a statistically weak positive correlation was found between parent involvement and school leader developmental orientation as well as a statistically weak positive correlation between the level of parent-teacher trust and parent involvement, both of which should be investigated further. Overall test performance as well as English/language arts and math achievement correlated significantly with parent-teacher trust. When correlating the demographic variables with the three school climate subcategories, teacher-parent trust was stronger when there were more Asian students enrolled, fewer Hispanic students, and fewer low income students. Parent

involvement was stronger when more Asian students were enrolled or, interestingly, students of two or more races, and when fewer low income students were enrolled.

Significance of Findings - Participant Overview

In this study, involving school leaders from 18 different schools, the majority of the school leaders were self-reported White (83%). This is consistent with the National data presented in the *2015 Digest of Education Statistics*, which indicated that 80.3% of public and private school principals are White (NCES, 2015).

These schools, like many of the schools nationwide, have a large and growing number of what was once considered minority populations enrolled, with the largest ethnic percentage of students enrolled in each school, except two, consisting of students of Hispanic origin. This data is consistent with the growing trend observed across the United States as outlined in reports by the National Center for Education Statistics (Aud, et al., 2012; Kena, et al., 2015; NCES, 2015; Snyder, De Brey, & Dillow, 2016), where White students are decreasing in numbers and students of color, particularly of Hispanic origin, are growing in number. According to a report provided by the Center for Public Education (2012), the minority population, particularly Hispanics, is growing more quickly than the population as a whole (Crouch, et al., 2012), and that continues to be the trend as evidenced by other reports focusing on the demographics of the United States including reports from the National Education Association (NEA, 2015).

The schools studied varied in the number of students enrolled who were considered low income, from a low of 34 percent to a high of 91 percent (mean of 66 percent) of the students enrolled were considered low income. This level of poverty is higher than the National average of 21 percent of children of school age living in poverty (NCES, 2015). However, given the decreasing numbers of White students in the schools studied, it is consistent with the higher

poverty levels associated with students of color in National reports. The National Center for Education Statistics (NCES) in their 2015 report indicated that over 70% of Black and Hispanic children combined lived at or below poverty, 39% and 32 % respectively. The majority of the schools studied had larger Black populations and growing Hispanic populations.

The overwhelming majority of school leaders in our public schools are middle class and White in contrast to the diverse student populations inhabiting our schools, further indicating the importance of school leaders' need to develop cultural competency as a necessary skill.

The respondent's results on the Intercultural Development Inventory in this study indicated that a majority (70%) of the respondents were at the minimization level or below on the Intercultural Development Continuum. This is consistent with prior studies (DeJaeghere et al., 2008; DeJaeghere et al., 2009; El Ganzoury, 2012; Porterfield-Bayles, 2009;) involving the IDI, where the majority of educators' initial response fell within the minimization level. This is also consistent with the findings of Nelson and Guerra (2014) where only a small percentage of the educators studied were determined to be culturally aware (3%) or culturally responsive (1%), and the majority had only a general knowledge of culture or were culturally unaware.

Rhoden (2009) indicated that while most teachers and administrators believe they are behaving in ways that facilitate success, they may hold unconscious, hidden beliefs and overestimate their cultural awareness. Like the El Ganzoury study (2012) where the participants had a high gap (24.6) between their perceived orientation and their actual developmental orientation, the results of this study also indicated a significant gap between perceived orientation and developmental orientation, mean gap of 21.32. As Hernandez and Kose (2012) recommended in their study and as has been suggested by such leading multiculturists as Nieto

(2014), it is advisable for current and aspiring school leaders to actually determine their level of cultural development rather than operate on what they think.

Analysis of Sub-question 1

Research sub-question #1 asked: **"**Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader demographic variables such as age, gender, and ethnicity?"

No significant correlation was found in this study between either IDI level of perceived orientation or developmental orientation when correlated with age, ethnicity, or gender. These results coincide with the results found initially by Hammer, Bennett, & Wiseman (2003) and in later studies regarding effect of age and/or ethnicity on level of intercultural development (Fretheim, 2007; Pedersen, 2010; Porterfield-Bayles, 2009).

Analysis of Sub-question 2

Research sub-question #2 asked: "Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory) and self-reported school leader experience?"

This research did not indicate a significant correlation between either years in the position or overall years of experience and participants' IDI perceived or developmental orientation. This result is consistent with most of the prior research using the IDI. Fretheim (2007) determined that there is no significant relationship between background variables and a participant's IDI score. DeJaeghere et al., (2008) determined that neither number of years in the profession nor number of years in a specific district correlated with level of intercultural development on the IDI. Yuen (2010), however, indicated that variables such as years of teaching experience and prior cultural experience may impact cultural competence. Yuen (2010)

also indicated in her study that a parent's level of education could impact developmental orientation. However, this study did not ask a question related to the topic of parental education.

This study indicated a slight positive correlation between perceived orientation and travel (r = .293), but unlike other studies where travel made either a positive or negative difference in developmental orientation (Williams, 2005; Anderson et al., 2006; Moodian, 2007), there was no significant correlation between travel and developmental orientation in this study. However, as Pederson (2009) determined with her three year-long control groups, travel without intentional reflection, guidance and coaching focused on intercultural expectations and outcomes is not sufficient to create intercultural development change. Since questions were not asked about type, duration, or prior training involved with travel, it is difficult to analyze the true impact of travel on the participants in this study.

Analysis of Sub-question 3

Research sub-question #3 asked: "Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI (Intercultural Development Inventory), student demographics, and student achievement as measured by the annual State tests (PARCC)?"

Overall test performance when correlated with developmental orientation did not indicate a statistically significant correlation. Limited research has been done using the IDI to link student achievement with developmental orientation (Hammer, 2012c; personal communication, April 2013). The majority of the studies involving the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI) focus on analyzing IDI assessment results of educators, the impact of travel on IDI results, and the impact of professional development and training on IDI results (Freitheim, 2007; Porterfield Bayles, 2009; Pedersen, 2010; Tinkham, 2011).

When the IDI participant developmental orientation results were correlated against school demographics, no significant correlation was found. In other words, school demographic populations did not appear to have any correlation with developmental orientation.

However, in analyzing the demographic data with student achievement, the results obtained were consistent with the data collected by the National Assessment of Educational Progress (2015). White students outperformed Hispanic students, students with limited English proficiency, and students with an IEP. In this study, there was a significant positive correlation between the number of White students enrolled and achievement test performance *(r* = .513), and a significant negative correlation between the number of Hispanic students enrolled and achievement test performance (*r* = -.604). In other words, when more White students were enrolled in a school, achievement test scores rose, and as more Hispanic students enrolled in a school, achievement test scores dropped. There was also a significant negative correlation between low income students and overall test performance *(r* = -.710) and LEP students and overall test performance. (*r* = -.678). This follows National statistics for demographic subgroups as reported by the National Center for Educational Progress (2015) as well as test performance reported by the National Education Association (2015).

A similar scenario was seen with Math and English/Language Arts achievement and the various demographics. A significant negative correlation resulted when students who were identified as low income were correlated against Math achievement *(r* = -.652) and English/Language Arts achievement (*r* = -.667). As might be expected, a significant negative correlation was found when LEP (Limited English Proficient) students were correlated against English/Language Arts Achievement *(r* = -.775), and a significant negative correlation was found when IEP (Individualized Education Program) students were correlated against Math

achievement (r = -.615). These results are also consistent with prior school achievement reporting (USDOE, 2012c; NAEP, 2015; NCES, 2015; & NEA, 2015).

This gap between various demographic subgroups has been referred to as the *achievement gap* and has been the topic of volumes of prior research, government reports, books and legislation (i.e., McGee, 2004; Darling-Hammond, 2007, 2010; Reeves, 2000; Howard, 2010; Weber, 2010; USDOE, 2002-2016). No Child Left Behind, signed into law in January 2002, was considered at the time to be one of America's greatest efforts toward closing the achievement gap, and while it made strides forward with increased accountability, it failed to be the silver bullet to close the gap. Since NCLB, President Obama's administration focused on closing this gap through programs like *Race to the Top* and the *ESEA Regulatory Initiative*; the National State Governors' Association and the Council of Chief State School Officers undertook the development of common state standards which has become known as the *Common Core*, and both teaching (Danielson, 2013) and administrative standards (Council of Chief State School Officers, 2008 & 2015) focused on raising achievement have evolved. In December 2015, the *Every Student Succeeds Act* was signed into law, replacing No Child Left Behind, and awarding more power to individual states to meet achievement goals, while still focusing on accountability (USDOE, 2016b). Despite these huge efforts, as evidenced by this study, certain demographic subgroups continue to lag behind.

Analysis of Sub-question 4

Research sub-question #4 asked: "Is there a correlation between level of school leader cultural development as measured by the IDI, school climate factors as measured by the 5Essentials survey, and student achievement as measured by annual State tests (PARCC)?"

School leader IDI developmental orientation did not show significant correlation with any of the three major school climate factors included in the 5Essentials Survey used in this study: Effective Leaders, Collaborative Teachers, and Involved Families. Note that only three of the Five Essentials were used in this study as data was not available for all *Essentials* in all schools involved in the study at the time of this study.

While school leader IDI developmental orientation did not show any significant correlation, Collaborative Teachers had a significant positive correlation with Effective Leaders (r = .772), and Involved Families correlated significantly with Collaborative Teachers (r = .534). In other words, the more collaborative the teachers, the more involved families were in the school, and the more effective the leadership, the more collaborative the teachers were. Thus, indirectly, the level of leadership effectiveness impacts family involvement in the school. This evidence correlates with the original 2006 research done by the University of Chicago Consortium on Chicago School Research (CCSR), and the continued CCSR research resulting in the 5Essentials Survey (Klugman et al., 2015).

In addition to examining the three major school climate factors included in the 5Essentials Survey, based on the research on the importance of family involvement on student achievement (Henderson & Mapp, 2002), and the belief that effective school leaders impact family involvement (Klugman et al., 2015), correlations were run on the subcategories related to Involved Families. The three subcategories included under Involved Families are: Parent Involvement, Outreach to Families, and Teacher-Parent Trust. In this inter-correlation, school leader developmental orientation showed a weak but not significant correlation with parent involvement (r = .403), and teacher-parent trust also showed a weak but not significant correlation with parent involvement (r = .400). When these subcategory variables were

correlated against achievement, teacher-parent trust had a significant correlation with overall achievement test performance (r =.552), overall ELA (English/Language Arts) achievement performance (r = .480), and overall math achievement performance (r = .544).

To further examine these variables, correlations were run on the demographic variables (Ethnicity, Income, LEP and IEP) against each of the school climate (5Essentials) subcategories mentioned above.

Strong positive correlations occurred with Parent Involvement when there were more Asian students (r = .592) and students of two or more races (r = .743) enrolled in the school; a negative correlation occurred with Parent Involvement when there were more low income students enrolled (r = -.482).

When the variable of Teacher-Parent Trust was correlated against the demographic variables, there was a positive correlation when more Asian students were enrolled in the school (r = .583), and a negative correlation when there were more Hispanic students enrolled in the school (r = -.545). There was also a strong negative correlation between Teacher-Parent Trust and the number of low income students enrolled (r = -.692).

Research has indicated that in most of our schools the largest student population growth consists of students of Hispanic origin (NCES, 2015), which was true of this study. This research indicated that as Hispanic student enrollment increases, parent involvement in schools tends to decrease. This is consistent with the study done by Zarate (2007) on Latino parental involvement in education. Zarate (2007) indicated in her study that communication, limited formal education, some school policies, and work hours were barriers that Latino parents faced, making it difficult to participate in schools.

This research also indicated that as the number of students who are low income increase, parent trust and parent involvement decreases. The level of parent involvement in schools by low socioeconomic families is consistent with prior research (Payne, 2005; Smith, 2006; Jensen, 2009). According to Payne (2005), there are hidden rules based on socioeconomic level that guide behavior and these rules, learned by the children, often create a gap between the families and the middle class teachers in their schools. Further, as Smith (2006) learned, many low SES parents are so consumed with their daily life and problems, they do not have time to become involved with the school. Jensen (2009) indicated that the stresses of poverty impair parenting skills (longer work hours, odd jobs, and lack of time to provide attention and support to children). According to Jensen (2009), this lack of engagement can have a negative effect on a child's school performance.

As this study indicated, there is a potential link between a school leader's cultural development and parent involvement. While the correlation was weak, it is definitely worth further investigation. This research as well as prior research (Henderson & Mapp, 2002; Payne, 2005; CCSR, 2006; Smith, 2006, Jensen, 2009) indicates that parental involvement in the schools leads to higher student achievement.

Conclusions

The demographics of our country are shifting, and doing so at an ever increasing speed, according to the Center for Immigration Studies (Camarota et al., 2015). In the fall of 2014, *Education Week* reported students of color surpassed Non-Hispanic White students in enrollment when our Nation's schools reopened (Maxwell, 2014). Yet, in this study, consistent with National statistics (NCES, 2015), the majority of the educators remain primarily White, and, consistent with prior studies (DeJaeghere et al., 2009; El Ganzoury, 2012; Nelson et al., 2014),

their level of cultural development is primarily at a level of minimization, where feelings of diversity "not being heard" may occur (Hammer, 2012b). While research indicates an educator does not need to share the same ethnicity as his or her students, respecting and accepting differences and creating linkages between a student's culture and learning is important for student success (Gay, 2010b; Nieto, 2014; Tan, 2001).

The fact that in this study and in prior studies (El Ganzoury, 2012), there was a significant gap between perceived orientation and the actual developmental orientation, and the fact that unconscious, hidden biases may be occurring in our teaching, our policies, and our educational materials because of an overstated cultural perception (Rhoden, 2009), the importance of schools devoting time to cultural development is emphasized. Too often misunderstandings about culture can unintentionally create barriers to success (Zion et al., 2005), and, as multiculturist Geneva Gay (2010b) has stated, most culturally diverse students live in different worlds, worlds not always understood or appreciated by the educators who guide their learning.

As indicated with this research and so much prior research on the achievement gap, the gap continues despite huge Federal and State legislative effort and funding, and the hard work of so many of our schools. Our White and Asian middle class students continue to fare better on achievement tests than students of color, particularly our Hispanic students, our low SES students, students with limited English proficiency, and students with IEP's.

Parent teacher-trust and parent involvement remains low with our Hispanic and low SES population. However, there is hope. The possible link, although somewhat weak, indicated that as school leader's cultural development increased, parent involvement in the diverse schools studied increased. If school leaders can impact achievement as much as 19 to 25 percentage

points, depending on the focus, (Leithwood et al., 2004; Marzano et al., 2005), it stands to reason that improving one's level of cultural development may impact not only parent involvement, which is so necessary to school success, but could also ultimately impact overall achievement scores.

Prior research (Carter, 2006; DeJaghere et al., 2008; DeJaeghere et al., 2009) has indicated the positive impact professional development focused on cultural development can have on increasing a participant's developmental orientation and overall cultural awareness. No doubt, such professional development will take significant time and effort on the part of the schools and school leaders who undertake this mission. Developing cultural awareness is not a one-time workshop; it is an on-going commitment involving intensive self-analysis, a willingness to overcome fears and participate in hard conversations about privilege and cultural difference, acceptance of new knowledge and ideas, and a deep understanding that culture is more than just ethnicity; it involves understanding a full spectrum of different demographics and individual characteristics (Gay 2010b; Lindsey et al., 2009; Nieto, 2014).

Each person is unique and brings to the table the sum of their lived experiences, and while those experiences may be different from another person's, they are no less valuable. *National Geographic's* 2014 anniversary issue masterfully captured in photos the richness of our changing world. We are multi-hued, multi-faceted individuals who provide untold gifts to be shared with one another. Seeing, accepting and embracing each other's differences is both a strength and a blessing. Remaining stuck in *what was* or trying to force the different worldviews of others to conform with our own, not only leaves us missing the richness of a more bountiful life, but also risks our future as witnessed by the continuing achievement gap and increasing need for skilled workers.

Weber (2010) stated that the "fate of our Country will be decided not on a battleground, but in our classrooms" (cover). If education is the great equalizer, as Horace Mann (1848) stated so many years ago and which so many have reverberated through the years, then education is the moral imperative that President Obama (White House, 2010), Geneva Gay (2010b), and former Secretary Condoleezza Rice (2012) have all referred to.

Limitations and Challenges

There were several unforeseen limitations and challenges that occurred with this research. School leaders were somewhat reluctant to participate in an assessment that measured *cultural competence* even though every effort was taken to insure confidentiality. Further, the time required to complete a 50 plus-item assessment left some of the assessments unfinished or unsubmitted, perhaps due to interruptions and lack of time. The time lag between student achievement testing (end of one school year), IDI assessment and reporting of achievement test results (following school year) meant that some of the school leaders changed between school years, further limiting involvement. Also, because only publicly available state data was used, changes in data reporting made data for some schools inaccessible.

Implications for the Future

The changing demographics of our Country have been well documented—from news headlines to detailed private and government organization reports, we have been made aware that our immigrant population is growing. The Center for Immigration Studies (Camarota, 2012) and the National Center for Education Statistics (2015) have projected that in the not too distant future there will be no racial or ethnic majority. Schools will educate a growing number of Non-White children and a growing number of low income students (Crouch, 2012). Fewer and fewer children are being born to middle class White parents which could impact the financial support

once depended upon by schools (Crouch, 2012). Further, the baby boomers are aging, creating an older population that is dependent on younger workers. Yet, we continue to face an achievement gap with lagging graduation rates and lower college entrance rates for many of children of color, the largest segment now populating our schools (NCES, 2015).

Who will fill the skilled jobs projected for our future if we do not close the achievement gap between our Non-Hispanic White and Asian students and other children of color, particularly our Black and Hispanic student population? The Learning Policy Institute recently published an article indicating a teacher shortage, particularly in the areas of our greatest need – special education, math, science, and English as a second language (ESL) (Sutcher, Darling-Hammond, & Carver-Thomas, 2016). Changes in healthcare, increased immigration and an overall increase in the U.S population, and an aging populace that is living longer has created a greater need for doctors and health care providers. The medical field is one of the fastest growing sectors of employment. According to Bureau of Labor Statistics, by 2020 there will be over 2 million jobs for doctors, nurses and other health care providers (Lockard &Wolf, 2012). By 2020, a 17% increase in business and finance occupations, a 22% increase in computer and math occupations, and a 24% increase in Community and Social Service workers including Marriage and Family Therapists and School Guidance Counselors is projected (Lockard et al., 2012). Nearly all of these jobs require a post-secondary degree or higher (Lockard et al., 2012), making it all the more urgent to close the achievement gap and insure college and career readiness for ALL students.

Recommendations for Practitioners

Completing a base-line assessment with the IDI or a similar instrument is highly recommended for all school leaders and teachers. As prior research and this study have

indicated, individuals tend to perceive their cultural awareness/level of development to be at a higher level than it actually is, and thus, they are operating from what they think versus what they know. Such lack of knowledge could be creating unintentional barriers through words, actions, policies, and/or possibly educational materials. Schools should make every effort to remove these barriers, and insure that all children feel valued and accepted within their schools.

Schools need to insure that those parents who tend to be less involved due to language or socio-economic barriers are provided innovative ways to support their children. School leaders should provide a clear organizational focus on long-term, sustainable, and innovative parent involvement for their schools. Understanding the life and culture of families who are struggling economically or in other ways can help educators better connect with both their students and their families. Also, school leaders who work with the community to provide resources to needy families can build trust between schools and families, and help build stronger relationships overall (Smith, 2006).

While it is understood that educators are very limited in time, especially with the increased demands that have been placed on them with the many State and Federal mandates (many of which are intended to improve achievement), understanding culture should not be placed on the back burner or addressed as a one-time workshop topic. Understanding culture can be a key to greater parent involvement, greater school-parent trust, and ultimately, higher achievement. School leaders need to help their staff carve out time to focus on developing cultural awareness through assessment, honest reflection, open conversations, cultural readings and experiences that impart new knowledge, guided travel, when possible, and opportunities to engage with individuals from cultures different from their own.

Recommendations for Future Research

While this study did not prove a significantly strong link between school leader cultural development and student achievement, believed to be partially because of the level of homogeneity of the study participants and the limited number of cases involved, it did reconfirm a great deal of prior research and posed some significant considerations for future research.

The Intercultural Development Inventory is a highly validated, reliable instrument that provides a significant amount of data to the researcher and is easily uploaded into Excel and SPSS, and, thus, would be a good instrument to use in future research. However, more participants need to be included. This will take some *selling* to alleviate the fears that some participants feel about exposing their level of cultural awareness or competence. Insuring participants that no names or individual results will be used in the final research report, all names and schools will be coded to insure confidentiality, and that all results will be aggregated is certainly helpful, but for some reluctant participants not quite enough. Caution is suggested in all wording used when selling participation in the assessment. Terminology such as *cultural competence* can be intimidating, regardless of experience, to otherwise successful school leaders. Working with the district leadership can be very helpful in encouraging participation, especially if the District views the importance of the research and sees it as action research that can benefit both the individual participant and, ultimately, the overall district. Also, due to the expense of the instrument (required training fees and a fee per instrument used), working with the IDI organization is highly advised, and/or seeking grant assistance for this important work is encouraged. If the IDI is used to complete research similar to this study, I would highly recommend that the six optional questions be changed. This research focused primarily on demographic variables, which were helpful, but knowing where and why someone traveled could

also be very beneficial as well as knowing whether the individuals participating had had any prior cultural development training and the type and length of training. The IDI is limited by the number and type of customized questions so adding an additional survey instrument or doing mixed research that includes both a quantitative assessment and qualitative questions could strengthen the research.

A good resource for qualitative research would be Bussamante and Nelson's (2007) School-wide Cultural Competence Observation checklist. The checklist consists of 33 items covering eight themes related to developing school cultural competence and is assessed based on a Likert scale from 1 (never) to 5 (always). Such a checklist could be used for observation purposes, focus group discussion, or as the base for individual interviews.

This study was a correlational study, and could be improved upon with more participants, slightly different customized questions, and the addition of a qualitative piece. It might also be beneficial to repeat this study with teachers in lieu of school leaders and correlate scores with other forms of student achievement.

In addition, it could be beneficial to run a study with students to determine their level of cultural development. Understanding how students deal with cultural difference may be very helpful in structuring curriculum, school policy, and in guiding the cultural work of both teachers and administrators.

This study also utilized only publicly available data, including data about school climate from the 5Essentials Survey. While the 5Essentials Survey is a highly researched survey and results were readily available on the State's website, another school climate survey that asks more specific questions related to the focus of the specific research might be considered. Also,

involving more stakeholders (school leaders, teachers, parents, and students) in the survey could help answer some of the questions left unanswered by this study.

Summary

Students feeling accepted by their teachers and school leaders, regardless of their differences, is key to student success. Parents feeling welcomed and accepted in spite of socio-economic, ethnic, language, and other cultural differences is key to their involvement with the school, and ultimately, their child's success. Insuring that no hidden cultural bias exists in educational materials, testing materials, within the unconscious feelings of educators, and within the overall culture of the school is pertinent to insure an equal education for ALL children.

While we may write this in our mission and vision statements, *walking our talk* and doing the hard work of discussing and analyzing our levels of cultural understanding and both examining and removing the barriers that may exist, is a *moral imperative*.

Failure to close the achievement gap that continues to exist despite years of legislative effort and extensive funding will have dire consequences for our future. As the White population ages and fewer babies are born to White parents vs. parents of color, our workforce will become as Crouch (2012) indicated, increasingly multi-hued, underscoring the importance of insuring the achievement gap that continues to exist is closed, and ALL students are college and career ready, prepared to meet the needs of our society.

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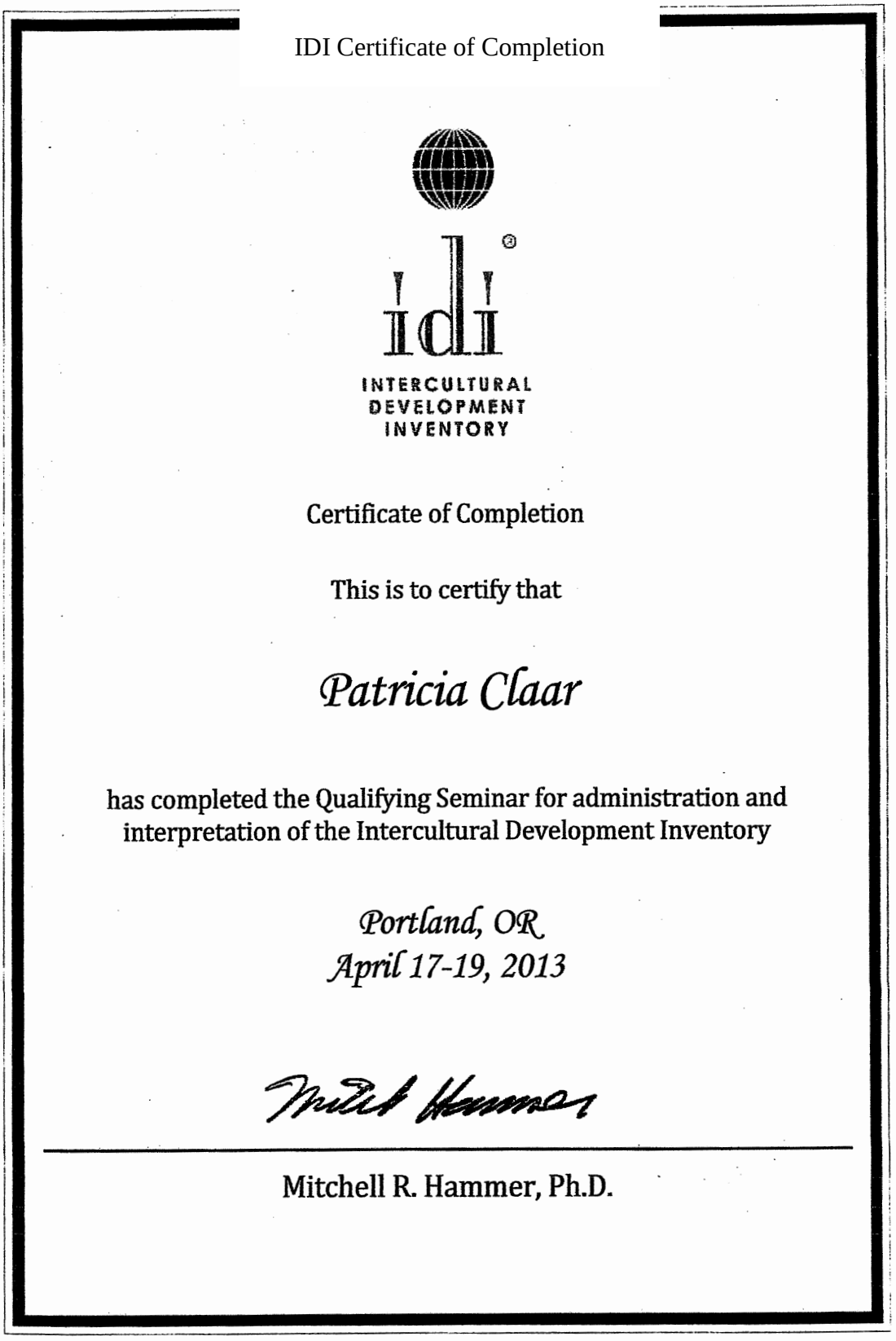
APPENDIX A

IDI Certificate of Completion



INTERCULTURAL DEVELOPMENT INVENTORY

Certificate of Completion

This is to certify that

Patricia Claar

has completed the Qualifying Seminar for administration and interpretation of the Intercultural Development Inventory

Portland, OR
April 17-19, 2013

Mitchell R. Hammer, Ph.D.

APPENDIX B

IDI Sample Demographic Questions

The 50 questions that serve as the basis for the Intercultural Development Inventory, a highly validated and researched inventory examining cultural competence, are proprietary, copyrighted material that **cannot** be reproduced.

Up to 18 demographic questions can be listed at the beginning of the inventory; a portion of these can be customized for a particular group. Six questions, using IDI suggested customization guidelines, were customized for this research. The following categorical questions are offered as an example of the types of questions that can be customized and included in the demographic section of the IDI.

- What is the ethnic group/background you most identify with?
    1. American Indian or Alaskan Native
    2. Asian American
    3. Black or African American
    4. Caucasian or White American
    5. Hispanic or Latino American
    6. Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander
    7. Two or more categories

- What is your current position in your educational institution (please select one):
    1. School Principal
    2. School Assistant Principal
    3. School Subject Coordinator or Department Chair
    4. District Level Administrator
    5. Other

- Please indicate the total number of years in your profession (include previous experience with another Educational Institution):
    1. 0-2 years
    2. 3-5 years
    3. 6-10 years
    4. 11-15 years
    5. 16-20 years
    6. 21-25 years
    7. 26-30 years
    8. More than 30 years

- Please indicate the number of times you have traveled abroad (outside of the U.S.):
    1. Never traveled abroad
    2. One time
    3. 2-3 times
    4. 4-5 times
    5. 6-8 times
    6. 9 times or more

Note: *In addition to any customized questions, pre-designed demographic questions developed by IDI are automatically included in the demographic section of the assessment.*

APPENDIX C

Sample Spreadsheet for Capturing Assessment Data

User Identification Number	Group Ed. Institution. Code	Perceived Orientation	Developmental Orientation	Orientation Gap	Gender	Age	Time spent in another Country	Education	Ethnicity	Position	Years in Position	Years in Profession
2150121	201	113.58	73.47	40.11	2	4	5	3	3	1	3	5
2151341	413	116.35	78.91	37.44	2	3	2	3	3	1	1	4

NOTE: While the IDI assessment captures a variety of data, the scores most important to this research were an individual's perceived orientation as well as their developmental orientation and the gap between the two scores. Perceived orientation is where an individual thinks they fall on the Intercultural Development Continuum and developmental orientation is where they actually fall, based on the IDI assessment. The perceived and developmental orientation scores are weighted scores and range between 55 and 145. The numbers in the cells related to demographic information correspond with responses given to the demographic questions asked.

Disclaimer: The spreadsheet data provided above is for information purposes only and does not constitute data taken from any real or existing situation.

APPENDIX D

Sample School Data Collection File

ID/Study No	Position	School Code	White	Black	Hispanic	Asian	Native Hawaiian Pacific Islander	American Indian	Two or more races	LEP	IEP	Overall Test Performance	Overall Math Perf	Overall ELA
2150121	1	201	32.6	24.8	25.2	14.8	0.1	0.1	2.3	1.8	14.1	35.7	33.53	38.1
2151341	2	413	21.8	29.3	37.1	7.4	0.3	0.4	3.6	14.1	16	26.2	17.2	32.9
2500546	2	807	7.5	24.7	57.7	5.8	0.4	0.2	3.8	44.8	14.9	15.1	15.47	13.7
2500647	1	807	7.5	24.7	57.7	5.8	0.4	0.2	3.8	44.8	14.9	15.1	15.47	13.7

Disclaimer: The information above is for demonstration purposes only and does not reflect any actual data collected.

APPENDIX E

Scanned Copy of IRB Approval Letter

PEPPERDINE UNIVERSITY

Graduate & Professional Schools Institutional Review Board

June 3, 2015

Patricia Claar

Protocol #: E0515D03
Project Title: A Correlational Study Comparing the Relationship Between School Leader Intercultural Development, Selected Demographic Variables, and Student Achievement

Dear Ms. Claar:

Thank you for submitting your application, *A Correlational Study Comparing the Relationship Between School Leader Intercultural Development, Selected Demographic Variables, and Student Achievement,* for exempt review to Pepperdine University's Graduate and Professional Schools Institutional Review Board (GPS IRB). The IRB appreciates the work you and your faculty advisor, Dr. McManus, have done on the proposal. The IRB has reviewed your submitted IRB application and all ancillary materials. Upon review, the IRB has determined that the above entitled project meets the requirements for exemption under the federal regulations (45 CFR 46 - http://www.hhs.gov/ohrp/humansubjects/guidance/45cfr46.html) that govern the protections of human subjects. Specifically, section 45 CFR 46.101(b)(2) states:

> (b) Unless otherwise required by Department or Agency heads, research activities in which the only involvement of human subjects will be in one or more of the following categories are exempt from this policy:
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> **Category (2) of 45 CFR 46.101**, research involving the use of educational tests (cognitive, diagnostic, aptitude, achievement), survey procedures, interview procedures or observation of public behavior, unless: a) Information obtained is recorded in such a manner that human subjects can be identified, directly or through identifiers linked to the subjects; and b) any disclosure of the human subjects' responses outside the research could reasonably place the subjects at risk of criminal or civil liability or be damaging to the subjects' financial standing, employability, or reputation.

In addition, your application to waive documentation of informed consent has been **approved**.

Your research must be conducted according to the proposal that was submitted to the IRB. If changes to the approved protocol occur, a revised protocol must be reviewed and approved by the IRB before implementation. For any proposed changes in your research protocol, please submit a **Request for Modification Form** to the GPS IRB. Because your study falls under exemption, there is no requirement for continuing IRB review of your project. Please be aware that changes to your protocol may prevent the research from qualifying for exemption from 45 CFR 46.101 and require submission of a new IRB application or other materials to the GPS IRB.

A goal of the IRB is to prevent negative occurrences during any research study. However, despite our best intent, unforeseen circumstances or events may arise during the research. If an unexpected situation or adverse event happens during your investigation, please notify the GPS IRB as soon as possible. We will ask for a complete explanation of the event and your response. Other actions also may be required depending on the nature of the event. Details regarding the timeframe in which adverse events must be reported to the GPS IRB and the appropriate form to be used to report this information can be found in the *Pepperdine University Protection of Human Participants in Research: Policies and Procedures Manual* (see link to "policy material" at http://www.pepperdine.edu/irb/graduate/).

Please refer to the protocol number denoted above in all further communication or correspondence related to this approval. Should you have additional questions, please contact Kevin Collins, Manager of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) at gpsirb@peppderdine.edu. On behalf of the GPS IRB, I wish you success in this scholarly pursuit.

Sincerely,

Thema Bryant-Davis, Ph.D.
Chair, Graduate and Professional Schools IRB

cc: Dr. Lee Kats, Vice Provost for Research and Strategic Initiatives
Mr. Brett Leach, Compliance Attorney
Dr. Jack McManus, Faculty Advisor