Spring 3-2010

Effects of Professional Development on Teachers' Cultural Awareness

Marion Wilson-Brooks
Lindenwood University

Recommended Citation

Wilson-Brooks, Marion, "Effects of Professional Development on Teachers' Cultural Awareness" (2010).
Dissertations. 610.

https://digitalcommons.lindenwood.edu/dissertations/610

Effects of Professional Development on Teachers' Cultural Awareness

by

Marion Wilson-Brooks
March 2010

A Dissertation submitted to the Education Faculty of Lindenwood University in partial
fulfillment
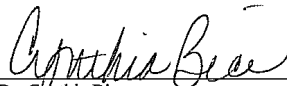of the requirements for the degree of

Doctor of Education

Lindenwood University

The Effects of Professional Development on Teachers' Cultural Awareness

by

Marion A. Wilson-Brooks

This Dissertation has been approved as partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Doctor of Education at Lindenwood University by the School of Education
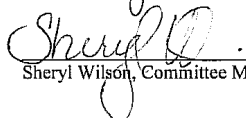
_____   _____
Dr. Cynthia Bice   Date

_____   _____
Dr. Cindy Vitale, Committee Member   Date
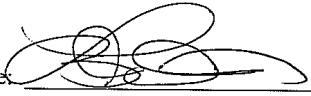
_____   _____
Sheryl Wilson, Committee Member   Date

Declaration of Originality

I do hereby declare and attest to the fact that this is an original study based solely upon my own scholarly work here at Lindenwood University and that I have not submitted it for any other college or university course or degree here or elsewhere.

Full Legal Name: _Marion A. Wilson-Brooks_

Signature: _[signature]_

Date: _2 / 12 / 10_

Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank God for granting the knowledge and strength needed while

completing my dissertation. I also acknowledge all of those who offered support, prayers,

and guidance throughout the writing process. I would like to express gratitude to

 Dr. Susan Isenberg, Dr. John Dougherty, and Dr. Larry Matthews for their tireless efforts

in assisting me throughout my tenure at Lindenwood University. I would like to give a

sincere, humble and special thank you to my husband Tony Brooks, without whose

support, continuous encouragement, and mentoring the success of this dissertation would

not have been possible.

Abstract

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of professional development on educators' cultural awareness. Twelve teachers and six administrators from two different school districts participated in eight weeks of professional development in an attempt to improve their relationships with minority students.

During eight weeks of professional development, participants took part in dialogue designed to increase their cultural awareness. The content of these sessions included (a) reading the book, *The Dream Keepers* (Ladson-Billings, 1994), which is about culturally relevant teachers of African American students; (b) discussing the book's content with peers; (c) discussing topics with guest speakers; (d) discussing ethical dilemmas; (e) discussing participants' opinions of the resources distributed during the professional development and how the resources could assist them in the educational environment; and (f) critiquing participants' own performance using resources provided for them in the professional development. At the beginning and end of the eight weeks of the professional development, teachers and administrators in each district completed a survey on cultural awareness. This survey was designed to determine changes in personal and professional attitudes and opinions resulting from the professional development.

The hypothesis of this comparative study stated that if teachers from two similar districts engage in professional development on cultural awareness, then the effects of the professional development, as evidenced by survey results, will cause them to become more culturally aware. After administering the eight weeks of professional development the study found that the participants from both districts One and Two showed a statistically significant change in their cultural awareness as evidenced by the pre and

post intervention surveys. Of the participants completing the post surveys, most felt that they learned from the professional development and that they would be able to use the information to interact with students. The professional development on cultural awareness could be used to create cultural awareness in any school setting with similar teacher/student demographics.

Table of Contents

List of Tables

List of Figures

Chapter I - Introduction

Background of the Study

In today's public schools, the rate at which new or young teachers are leaving education is a significant problem. According to Provasnik and Dorfman (2005), 50% of teachers leave the profession within the first five years of teaching. Teacher turnover has been associated with teacher perceptions of school organizational characteristics, including low levels of administrative support, lack of input into school decisions, student disciplinary problems, and insufficient salary (Ingersoll, 2003a). However, there are more critical elements facing teachers today.

With the nationwide increase in the number of students of color, culturally and linguistically diverse students, and students from low income families in schools, today's teachers seem to face many critical daily hardships. Two examples of this adversity from the researcher's experience as Director of Special Education in one of the study districts are (a) being sure that students meet individualized student goals and (b) attempting to relate to students with whom they may not share any commonalities such as race, socio-economic status, or ethnicity.

According to the National Education Association (NEA), (NEA, 2005), an historic turnover has taken place in the teaching profession. While student enrollments are rising rapidly, more than a million veteran teachers are nearing retirement. Experts predict that overall, the United States will need more than two million new teachers in the next decade.

The overwhelming teacher turnover rate is puzzling. Many are asking the question, "Why do teachers leave the profession?" According to NEA (2005), new

teachers are leaving because they feel overwhelmed and not prepared to face the new

generation of students who may differ from them in many ways including race, morals,

culture, and the overall valuing of education. Ingersoll (2003b), analyzed data from the

Federal Schools and Staffing Survey, covering 55,000 teachers in 12,000 public schools,

and noted a swift-moving revolving door that would not be slowed by school district

recruitment schemes to retain teachers. Ingersoll also found that

> U.S. schools lose 40 to 50 percent of their new-teacher cadre in the first five
>
> years, a rate reduced greatly in schools with induction programs; and that more
>
> than one million teachers, almost one-third of the profession, are in *job transition*
>
> each year. (p. 1)

These statistics seem to indicate the need for a strategy to not only keep teachers but also

focus on specific strategies to retain first year teachers.

In Winans (2005), a kindergarten teacher talked about her experiences with

education over the past 16 years. The teacher lost her joy for the profession and was

concerned with whether or not the district's professional development could bring back

that joy. Assisting educators with retaining their joy and zest for the profession is an

obstacle that school districts nationwide are facing today.

Although there are many ways in which educators may attempt to revive the

educational system, training continues to be the dominant model of reform (Sparks &

Loucks-Horsley, 1990). It has been this researcher's experience as a teacher in many

districts that staff development relates to training. According to Sparks and Loucks-

Horsley, different models of staff development are designed to improve job-related

knowledge, skills, or attitudes. However, the authors argued that participation in a

development/improvement process tends to be the most effective way to improve cultural awareness.

Howard (2007) explained that there is a need for growth in the quality of education which is offered. According to Howard, all is not well in the educational system due to rapidly transitioning schools. Howard further stated that some teachers, administrators, and parents view increasing diversity in their public schools as a problem rather than an opportunity. It appears that some teachers, as well as parents and students, may be developing attitudes, as evidenced by questions and comments, such as, why are students who are not like us in regards to race, culture, and socio-economic status being sent to our schools? It is presumed that these students don't value education and neither do their parents. According to Howard (2007), although other educators and parents are less negative, they still feel uncomfortable in the new situation in which they find themselves.

> The National Center for Education Statistics (as cited by Howard, 2007), continuing with business as usual, will mean failure or mediocrity for too many students. Data related to racial, cultural, linguistic, and economic diversity demonstrates achievement gaps. Rapidly changing demographics demand that educators engage in a vigorous, ongoing, and systemic process of professional development to prepare all educators in the school to function effectively in a highly diverse environment. Educators may find it increasingly difficult to live in a society where they are encouraged to discuss the tough racial and cultural issues that are going on not just in schools, in their lives outside school. (¶ 4)

History of the Problem

According to Zimmerman (1997),

In *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896), the U.S. Supreme Court decided that a Louisiana

law mandating separate but equal accommodations for blacks and whites on

intrastate railroads was constitutional. This decision provided the legal foundation

to justify many other actions by state and local governments to socially separate

blacks and whites. (¶ 1)

According to Finch (1981), "The first notable change came with the new desegregation

ruling in 1954, when black students were permitted to attend previously all white schools.

Plessy v. Ferguson was overturned in 1954 by Brown v. Board of Education"

(Zimmerman, 1997, ¶ 1). From there, times continued to change and more African

Americans began being accepted into teacher education programs. With the changes of

desegregation rules and the ethnic make up of teachers being accepted into teacher

education programs, many adjustment issues surfaced for both teachers and students.

The No Child Left Behind Act in 2002 pushed for all students to meet state and

federal standards at 100% by the year 2014 without regards to disability, race, culture,

socio-economic status, and gender. This enforcement failed to take into account any

environmental issues that students may encounter that might hinder their educational

performance. Prior to the enforcement of the No Child Left Behind Act, there appeared to

be a noted achievement gap between the academic performance of White and Black

students. Because No Child Left Behind did not address the achievement gap, some

teachers feel that they are now being held accountable in areas beyond their control.

"In 1972 when Minnie Liddell, a parent of African American students sued St. Louis public school districts when they attempted to force her children to move from a predominantly white school to a school that taught black students" (Ingersoll, 2003a, p. 2). Liddell felt that the St. Louis public school district attempted this action in an effort to continue to segregate their schools. Prior to *Liddell v. the Board of Education of the City of St. Louis 1972*, the perception in the community included the belief that certain city schools were specifically created for White students and other city schools were open to Black students. After the desegregation of schools was ordered by the Supreme Court decision *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), many White families in the city of St. Louis moved to St. Louis County, which was predominantly made up of White families at this time. White families moved to avoid their children attending school with Black children (Ingersolla).

According to the Consensus Building Institute (2001):

De facto segregation is a form of segregation that is due to neighborhood living patterns and socio-economic standings by accident. De facto segregation in many northern cities such as Boston was maintained. Schools that served Black communities tended to receive less funding, have fewer supplies, and significantly less experienced teachers. Schools that served White communities received more funding, reserved more supplies, and had a more experienced staff to teach the student body. (p. 2)

Although the ruling stated that segregation was not permissible, some individuals, including teachers, felt that this separatism was perfectly logical. Separatism was illegal at that time; however, some social implications of race encouraged the thought of

separate but equal. Even after *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) mandated

desegregation, segregation remained prevalent in the St. Louis County and city schools.

The movement of White families to St. Louis County made the mandatory desegregation

of schools irrelevant. Black families could not afford to move to the county. The

migration tended to make county schools White and city schools Black, although there

were some communities of Blacks in St. Louis County, such as Kinloch, Meacham Park,

Webster Groves, and Wellston (Ingersoll, 2003b).

In 1972, Minnie Liddell filed suit against the St. Louis Board of Education

regarding the Board's lack of effort to enforce desegregation. Minnie Liddell's law case

resulted in the establishment of the Voluntary Interdistrict Desegregation Program. The

program encouraged Black students to transfer from the city to the county and White

students to transfer from the county to the city. "By 2000, more than 13,500 African

American students in St. Louis city rode buses to predominantly white schools in the

county " (Winans, 2005, ¶ 3). The Voluntary Interdistrict Desegration Program may have

seemed like the ideal opportunity for all parties involved but other issues started to arise.

According to Finch (2008),

One of the biggest problems arose when teachers that were accustomed to

teaching students of their own race were now assigned to teach students from

other races. This problem was significant because it proved to be detrimental to

African American students' education. Caucasian teachers were viewed as not

knowing how to relate to African American students, which was seen as one of

the factor that led to a great academic failure among black students. (¶ 2)

Statement of the Problem

Teachers have learned that one can be a teacher of skill and lack the ability to relate to students. Administrators are seeking creative tactics and systems to ensure that teachers connect with students in a meaningful way. The administrators taking part in this study had not yet attempted to enlist assistance of an outside source to observe how their teachers were relating to their students. The administrators wanted to know if a lack of meaningful relationships with students was a hindrance and affecting the overall achievement of students. The administrators of the study districts wanted to improve teacher/student relationships with an end goal of improving student academic performance.

The first objective of the professional development program was to demonstrate to teachers and administrators the benefits of professional development on cultural sensitivity. Professional development provides educators with tools to help them relate to all types of students. Many districts face more challenging students in regards to both academics and behavior. Completing a degree in education prepares teachers to address the academic needs of students, but their schooling does not necessarily prepare them to form relationships with students from different cultures. Most education programs do not prepare teachers for the cultural obstacles that they may face, which often become barriers to student learning. The participants of this study attended an eight week professional development program designed to give teachers tools needed to overcome the cultural barriers to learning.

The second objective of the professional development provided was to assist teachers with learning and understanding the importance of establishing meaningful

relationships with all students. The professional development series provided new and different strategies for participants to use in attempting to help students tear down barriers and overcome obstacles. One issue that the White participants felt they needed to develop was the ability to relate to Black students and parents. The researcher as facilitator of the professional development series presented information on the culture, social aspects, and influences that affect the lives of Black families. The researcher attempted to give participants insight on how to establish relationships with the students and parents. The resources served as an instrument that would assist the participants in reaching the objectives of the study.

Prior to the study, mostly White teachers and administrators felt they lacked the information needed to bridge the gap between the academic and social components to educate mostly Black students. The results from the pre-professional development survey revealed that some of the participants believed there was no need to know students' background or to understand their culture when attempting to educate them. Student background and cultures were missing components in the students' daily academic venture. The study was designed to help teachers gain an understanding of the need for cultural awareness in the classrooms by assisting them to successfully educate Black students.

Prior to the study, the administrators from the participating districts expressed negative opinions regarding the effectiveness of professional development. Given the administrators' opinions, it was important that the study also assist participants in gaining an understanding of the importance of professional development in the educational environment. Engaging teachers and assisting in their efforts to become more culturally

aware was an important factor in each session. The professional development 8-week series was used as a device to assist administrators in determining what effects professional development on cultural awareness has on teachers and their ability to be successful with mostly Black minority students.

Purpose of the Study

The role of all educators is to increase students' academic performance and achievement. Eight sessions of professional development were strategically designed to assist educators in obtaining and using tools to assist them in becoming more culturally aware individuals. The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of professional development on educators' cultural awareness.

Independent Variable

The independent variable for this study was professional development that the teachers received. Two groups of educators were subjected to eight weeks of culturally relevant materials, such as *The Dream Keepers* (Ladson-Billings, 1994), handouts on cultural strategies, concepts to assist in cultural awareness, guest speaker panels, and other resources. The professional development on cultural awareness was strategically designed to produce results at the end of the eight week period. Although the teachers involved could choose to use the information received, the professional development itself acted as the independent variable in the study. The teachers' ability to become more culturally relevant teachers depended upon the information presented and would be evidenced in the survey results of the study.

Dependent Variable

The dependent variable of this study was the teachers' level of cultural awareness at the end of the professional development sessions. Although the goals of the professional development included providing teachers with resources and knowledge needed to gain relationships with minority students, the teachers' ability to use this information was not measured. The goal of the study (and the dependent variable) was to measure the effects of the professional development on the educator's cultural awareness as evidenced by the survey results.

Hypothesis

H_0: If teachers from two similar districts engage in professional development on cultural awareness, then the effects of the professional development, as evidenced by survey results, will not cause them to become more culturally aware.

H_1: If teachers from two similar districts engage in professional development on cultural awareness, then the effects of the professional development, as evidenced by survey results, will cause them to become more culturally aware.

If the null hypothesis of the study is rejected in favor of the alternate hypothesis, then the professional development may improve the participants' ability to teach and work with students of different ethnicities, race, and socio-economic status. Teachers who attended the professional development on cultural awareness will have a statistically significant change in cultural awareness as evidenced by the results of the pre and post intervention surveys.

Limitations of the Study

Perception of the participants. Although all participants received the same professional development, educators involved in the professional development formed their own perception of the information presented. The feelings and views of the participants were seen as their perceptions. Their perceptions ultimately affected their willingness to apply the information presented.

Resources. Resources included guest speakers, as well as educational articles and books on topics such as (a) cultural awareness, (b) race and culture, (c) how to become a culturally relevant teacher, (d) building relationships with minority students, (e) the importance of building relationships with students, and (f) dictionaries on the dialects of different cultures. Vignettes and stories surrounding culture and the educational system used in this study were limited to the opinions of the individuals who created the resources. Only eight weeks of sessions were provided for each district, which creates the possibility of presenting a limited number of resources. Resources were viewed as anything that was used in the professional development series that assisted the researcher/facilitator of the study in meeting the goals of the program.

Sample size. The population in which this professional development was rendered consisted of educators in two school districts. Although the number of districts and participants was limited, the number of staff members who participated in the study was an adequate number to show whether or not the study could work with other individuals.

Survey research. A survey created by the researcher/facilitator of the professional development series, based on discussions with administrators and the goals of the study, was used as the assessment tool for the study. The pre and post survey included the

current status of opinions, beliefs, and attitudes by questionnaires or interviews from a known population. The study was conducted using survey data.

Teacher participation. The teachers' reception to the professional development information varied in their willingness to take the information back to their classrooms and apply it to their teaching practices and interaction with Black individuals. Although all the teachers and administrators involved participated in eight weeks of professional development, it was their choice to engage in dialogue and give their attention to each study session. It was also the participants' choice to use the information rendered in the professional development session in their classrooms.

Definitions of Terms

Assessments. Assessments refer to tests developed by individual states that students take every year to compare their performance in order to determine the need for extra assistance. For the purpose of this study, an assessment is an instrument that was used to determine the outcome of the study. In this study, a survey was used to assess whether or not the participants benefited from the professional development rendered.

Culture. According Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952),

When the concept first emerged in eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Europe, it denoted a process of cultivation or improvement, as in agriculture or horticulture. In the nineteenth century, it came to refer first to the betterment or refinement of the individual, especially through education, and then to the fulfillment of national aspirations or ideals. In the mid-nineteenth century, some scientists used the term culture to refer to a universal human capacity (p. 224).

For the purpose of this study, culture is defined as the totality of socially transmitted behavior patterns, arts, beliefs, institutions, and all other products of human work and thought characteristic of a community population.

Cultural awareness.

Cultural awareness means having the knowledge or being cognizant of a style of social expression peculiar to a society or a class. Cultural awareness is the foundation of communication and it involves the ability of standing back from ourselves and becoming aware of our cultural values, beliefs and perceptions. (Quappe & Cantatore, 2005, ¶ 1)

Dependent variables.

In a research study, the dependent variable is the variable that is believed to be influenced or modified by some treatment or exposure. It may also represent the variable the researcher is trying to predict. Contrast this with the definition of an independent variable. Sometimes the dependent variable is called the outcome variable. This definition depends on the context of the study. (Simon, 2007, p. 1)

Desegregation. Desegregation is the process of integrating different races and elimination racial segregation. This term is used commonly in the United States of America. The initial desegregation movement was originated and continued throughout the Civil Rights error. Desegregation existed in places prior to the United States Supreme Court's decision in *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954). It continued after this case with the desegregation of schools systems and the military. Racial integration of society was a closely related goal. (Kozol, 2006).

Ethical dilemma. An ethical dilemma is present in situations that require individuals to make a determination between what is perceived as acceptable or good conduct in choosing between the desired outcomes of a situation. An ethical dilemma has the ability to force an individual into an internal conflict to make a decision between what he/she knows is right and what he/she thinks that he/she should do.

Ethnicity. The general definition of ethnicity is that it involves the common consciousness of shared origins and traditions. Archdeacon (1983) stated

Ethnicity is the quality of belonging to an ethnic group. But the question of what is an ethnic group, as opposed to any other kind of group, is one which permits no simple answer. Ethnic groups are not races, since ethnicity can be more precisely defined than race or even logically independent: Serbs and Croats are also Slavs, and a Jew might be black or white. Nor does membership of an ethnic group relate a person necessarily to a particular territory in the way that nationality does. Nevertheless, 'ethnic conflict' can be the same thing as conflict between nations or races as it can also be conflict between religious groups. Ethnic conflict in Northern Ireland ('Catholic' and 'Protestant'), Lebanon (where Christian Arabs have been in conflict with Muslim Arabs), and in the Balkans (where Orthodox Serbs differ from Catholic Croats and from Muslims principally in terms of religion) are all conflicts primarily identified by religious affiliation. Language, for the Basques, Welsh, or Georgians, for example, is a more important badge of ethnicity than race, nationality, or religion. The condition of belonging to a particular religious, racial, national, or cultural group. (¶ 2)

Federal standards. The measures or criteria established by federal authority in relation to education are the federal standards.

Independent variables. In a research study, the independent variable is the variable that is believed to influence the outcome measure. This might be a variable that is controlled, like a treatment, or a variable not under the researcher's control, like an exposure. It also might represent a demographic factor like age or gender. Contrast this with the definition of the dependent variable. Any variable that is being used to make those predictions is an independent variable. An independent variable is any subject of variation free from the influence, guidance, or control of another or others (Simon, 2007).

Minority. A group of individuals viewed as not being part of or different than the larger group with regards to race, religion, national or political groups is considered a minority. A minority or subordinate group is a sociological group that does not constitute a politically dominant voting majority of the total population of a given society.

A sociological minority is not necessarily a numerical minority—it may include any group that is subnormal with respect to a dominant group in terms of social status, education, employment, wealth, and political power. In socio-economics, the term minority typically refers to a socially subordinate ethnic group (understood in terms of language, nationality, religion, and/or culture). Other minority groups include people with disabilities, economic minorities (working poor or unemployed), age minorities (who are younger or older than a typical working age), and gender minorities. (Miller & Glick, 1993)

Perceptions. Perceptions include insight, knowledge or intuitive senses obtained through the five senses that could affect the manner in which an individual behaves. Individual perceptions affect how individuals react to situations.

Professional development. Professional development is the means by which participants learn the knowledge and skills required. Professional development should be research based, fluid, and differentiated. In text, a purposeful analysis of student learning needs determines professional development content. According to Speck and Knipe (2005),

> Professional development refers to skills and knowledge attained for both
> personal development and career advancement. Professional development
> encompasses all types of facilitated learning opportunities, ranging from college
> degrees to formal coursework, conferences, and informal learning opportunities
> situated in practice. It has been described as intensive and collaborative, ideally
> incorporating an evaluative stage. There are a variety of approaches to
> professional development, including consultation, coaching, and communities of
> practice, lesson study, mentoring, reflective supervision and technical assistance.
> (p. 4)

Socio-economic status. According to the National Center for Education Statistics (2008), socio-economic status is an economic measure of an individual's work experience. It can also be defined as a person's and/ or his family's economic and social position in relationship to others, established using measures such as income, education, and occupation. When determining a family's socio-economic status, the income of the household earner's occupation and education are analyzed, including the combined

income. When measuring an individual's socio-economic status, his own attributes are assessed. Socio-economic status could be described in three categories, high socio-economic status, middle socio-economic status, and low socio-economic status to describe the three areas into which a family or an individual may fall. When placing a family or individual into one of these categories, any or all of the three variables (income, education, and occupation) can be assessed. For the purpose of this study, socio-economic status can be simplified as an individual's status as pertaining to the production, development, and management of material wealth of a household or community.

Stereotypes. According to Burgess (2003),

Stereotypes (or characterizations) are generalizations or assumptions that people make about the characteristics of all members of a group, based on an image (often wrong) about what people in that group are like. For example, one study of stereotypes revealed that Americans are generally considered to be friendly, generous, and tolerant, but also arrogant, impatient, and domineering. Asians, on the other hand, are expected to be shrewd and alert, but reserved. Clearly, not all Americans are friendly and generous, and not all Asians are reserved. But according to this study, others commonly perceive them this way. For the purpose of this study, stereotypes are viewed as conventional, prescribed, and usually an oversimplified conception, opinion, or belief. (¶ 1)

Summation of Introduction of the Study

The study began as a professional development program to assist educators in increasing their understanding of the Black culture. The objective of the professional

development was to enable participants to use the information to assist them in educating Black students. Prior to the end of the facilitator's first series, it was indicated in the pre survey results that not only did educators lack the knowledge needed to interact with, understand, and build relationships with Black students, they also lacked confidence in professional development as a tool for change. An eight-week professional development series on cultural awareness was developed, and a study was conducted to gain a better understanding of the effects of professional development on cultural awareness.

Chapter Two- Review of Literature

According to Jay (2002), some individuals use the words culture and race synonymously. Jay states that in an effort to understand and categorize different groups of individuals, some individuals in society have attempted to identify different races. In forming an opinion or attempting to understand race, many individuals confuse race with norms and cultures. Jay defines culture as what society views as the most popular characteristics or behaviors exhibited by individuals in a certain race. Confusion between the terms culture and race continues to be perpetuated and over the years has caused many individuals to gain stereotypes about individuals of certain ethnic backgrounds or races. Due to the misconceptions about race and culture, clarifying the difference between the two before discussing cultural awareness is important.

Understanding Cultural Awareness

Race is defined as "a group of persons related by common descent, blood, or heredity; a subdivision of the human species characterized by a more or less distinctive combination of physical traits that are transmitted in descent" (Merriam-Webster, Inc., 2003, p. 1020). According to the Univeristy of Texas San Antonio's Institute of Texan Cultures (2001),

> The concept of race is an artificial and unfair term for a classification of people based on physical differences. Humans do show physical differences in terms of skin color, texture of hair, facial structures, tendency to illness, and body type. However, two situations—easily confirmed by modern science—deny validity to race as a classification system. First, most of the observable physical differences in individual people occur within the groups formerly called races. Second,

culture, intelligence, creativity, and ability are not linked in any way to physical

differences. (Barr, 1996, ¶ 4)

"Culture defines the way a given group of people interact" (Merriam-Webster,

Inc., 2003, p. 348). Culture is the sum total of folklores, values, mores, ideas, beliefs, and

historical influences. Culture is socially acquired and transmitted through teaching to

future generations (Hofstede, 1997). According to the Institute of Texan Cultures,

Cultures are defined by differences exemplified in regions by historical

influences, class/family status, traditions, and concepts of time. Observable

differences between cultures exist and may be manifested by choices concerning

food, religion, art, music, dance, education, employment, marriage, death and

dying, holidays, and other rituals or rites of passage. Still, within cultures, there

are many differences, particularly in individual preferences. (2001, ¶ 14)

Misconceptions about race and culture continue. The misconceptions have an effect on

how human beings interact with each other. Becoming more culturally aware individuals

benefits teachers and students.

Cultural Awareness and Education

After attending a workshop session on cultural awareness, Biles asked herself,

"Does cultural awareness really matter"? (as cited in Aboud, 1998, p. 1). At the end of

the workshop Biles answered yes. Biles learned three key concepts to reach her

conclusion (Aboud, 1998, p. 1). First, Biles (1994) learned that after the age of nine,

racial attitudes tend to stay the same, unless a person has a life-changing experience.

Second, however, Biles (1994) learned that before age nine there is a good chance to help

individuals develop positive feelings about racial and cultural identity. Educators can

challenge immature thinking that can lead to prejudice (York, 1991). Much like adults, children develop their identity and attitudes through experiences with their bodies, social environments, and their cognitive developmental stages (Derman-Sparks & A.B.C Task Force, 1989). And third, Biles (1994) learned that consequently, most educators' views were formed so early in life that they must use tools such as professional development to change some of their views that may affect the interaction with their students.

Understanding Society and School Culture

Due to racial issues between White and Black Americans, educators continue to struggle to teach students outside of their own race and culture. Stereotypes, behaviors, and beliefs regarding different racial or cultural groups may manifest in the school community to create a diversion from the importance of academic education. The effort to meet the needs of all students presents a struggle for some educators. In predominantly African American communities, this struggle is overwhelmingly true (Ladson-Billings, 1994). According to Ladson-Billings (1994), African American teachers make up less than five percent of the total public school teaching population. Some public schools, including the predominantly African American schools, struggle to develop techniques to ensure that teachers are aware of the cultural differences in African American communities. Some districts recruit in an attempt to employ Black teachers. Other districts search for professional development to assist their teachers in understanding society/community culture and the relationship to the school culture.

According to The Oregon School Boards Association (Oregon School Boards Association, 2002) instead of districts focusing on the recruitment of minority teaching candidates, they must begin to teach tolerance to all of their teachers. Tolerance is

defined in Merriam-Webster, Inc. (2003) as "recognition of and respect for the opinions, practices or behavior of others" (p. 1275). The Oregon School Boards Association states that the idea of teaching tolerance is not new, but there are new efforts being made to reach out, educate, and inspire teachers, students, and citizens to value cultural awareness and diversity. As the country becomes increasingly diverse, broad-brush communication techniques simply won't work anymore (Oregon School Boards Association). The Oregon School Boards Association believes that to break the chain of hate, teachers and students must share what they know and don't know about cultural diversity.

Courageous Ideas

In an effort to inspire tolerance and to create diversity and cultural awareness, the Oregon School Boards Association (2002) offers five very courageous ideas.

Courageous idea one. Recruit creative teachers that frequently use the study of geography as a means to teach cultural diversity. Geography has been referred to by the National Geographic Society (1996) as our passport to the world. Geography refers to how individuals from different races, cultures, societies, and environments interrelate in our world. Geography explores how relationships and bonds are formed and developed in neighborhoods throughout the world and the land around them. This concept focuses on how individuals connect throughout different environments.

Inside the classroom, one creative teacher in Alabama took her students on a journey on the Underground Railroad. Students calculated mileage, talked about the weather and the terrain, and followed maps and figured how to travel by night along the Railroad. In the space shuttle Endeavor, 370 miles above the planet, Astronaut Story Musgrave said, "To look at Earth from this perspective, to look at the contrast of colors,

our home, a place where you really don't see national boundaries, you get a new perspective" (National Geographic Society, 1996, p. 1).

Courageous idea two. Establish relationships with families before their children get into trouble. Often the first time parents or other family members come to school is when their child is in trouble. Making sure that the first contact is positive can reduce distrust and fear. Consider setting up multi-lingual family resource centers, home visits by staff who speak the families' languages, English-as-a-second-language courses and reading classes. Conduct small group "getting to know you" meetings for families who speak the same language.

Courageous idea three. Go to the families; don't expect them to initiate the contact. In order to reach families who are hard to reach, go to them. But do so with an invitation. Ask community leaders and social service or community agencies where the key communication centers are in the community and how you can best reach them. These centers could include churches or religious organizations, business organizations, ethnic organizations, sororities or fraternities, community college and university student groups, etc. Hold meetings in a neutral location. Create a communication cadre whose job is to personally invite English-as-a-second-language families to school programs.

Courageous idea four. Make communication from the district easy to understand. Identify staff or community members who can translate information for families. When writing a document that will be translated, use simple, straightforward, clear language that is free of jargon, lingo or clichés. Be sure the interpreter knows what you are trying to say. Define the type of documents you will consistently provide in written, translated form. Examples of these documents are report cards and other important notifications

such as rules, permission forms, announcements of public meetings, emergency

notifications, etc. Ask families to tell what's most important to them. Don't depend solely

on written communications. Not all members of all families can read in their native

language. Face-to-face and/or telephone communications are important, too. Create a

buddy system by pairing bilingual individuals with those who speak limited English to

facilitate the sharing of other information. Set up an interactive voice-mail system that

has recordings in the languages most prevalent among students' families in your district.

Courageous idea five.

Remove the barriers. Poverty, fear, cultural differences and distrust can keep a

family from participating. But even these barriers can be removed Work through

existing community organizations and/or familiar and respected community/social

networks. Encourage car pooling or provide transportation via school bus,

donated taxi or van from a local non-profit organization. Don't forget to have

interpreters along. Provide child care when you hold meetings for families.

(Encourage high school students to provide this service to fulfill community

service requirements.) If you can't provide child care, have a children's table with

activities as an alternative. Sponsor a multi-cultural family dinner. (Oregon

School Boards Association, 2002, p. 3)

The techniques and strategies will cost time and money. According to Oregon

School Boards Association (2002), "the evidence is clear, however, that it is time well

invested, because the dividends pay out over a lifetime for our children and the world"

(p. 3). Providing teachers with information on how to educate students from different cultures could prove to be an invaluable tool to close the achievement gap between White and minority students.

Understanding the Need for Educator Cultural Awareness

Since the beginning of formal education systems, African American students have lagged far behind their White counterparts on standard academic achievement measures (Ladson-Billings, 1994). This achievement gap created a national phenomenon and has sparked the interest of educators. The fact that all students have a right to a free and appropriate education should be a sensible notion; however, today the test scores of minority students prove that to be just a notion. Educators such as Thernstrom and Thernstrom (2003) believed that Black and Hispanic students are not learning enough in our public schools. Some teachers alter the quality of their instruction due to issues such as race, gender, disability, socio-economic status, etc. These actions create a bias and have an effect on how the students with altered educations perform in the classroom and on state assessments. Ladson-Billings (1994) offered Winfield's Cross Classification System (see Table 1) as a reference for teachers who have this problem. Ladson-Billings (1994) recommended that teachers determine their true placement on the cross classification system in an attempt to become a culturally aware teacher.

Table 1

Winfield's Cross Classification Patterns

Teachers who are tutors	These teachers believe that students can improve and they believe it is their responsibility to help them do so.
Teachers who act as general contractors	These teachers believe that improvement is possible, but they look for ancillary personnel, such as other paraprofessionals or other education disciplines to provide academic assistance rather than take on the responsibility themselves.
Teachers who act as custodians	These teachers do not believe that much can be done to help their students but they do not look for others to help them maintain the students at these low levels.
Teachers who act as referral agents	These teachers believe that much can be done to help their students improve either, but they shift the responsibility to other personnel, by referring them to the Special Education personnel, or programming.

Note. From "Teachers Beliefs towards Academically At Risk Students in Inner Urban Schools," by Winfield, 1986, *The Urban Review,* 18(4), p. 253 – 268.

When teachers determine their true placement on the cross classification system, Ladson-Billings (1994) believe that these teachers will be able to become more culturally aware teachers. The author described teachers as conductors and coaches. Ladson-Billings (1994) defined conductors as teachers who believe that students are capable of excellence. Conductors assume responsibility for ensuring that their students achieve that excellence and they assume responsibility for ensuring that their students achieve excellence (Ladson- Billings, 1994). Ladson-Billings (1994) described coaches as teachers who believe their students are capable of excellence, but they are comfortable sharing the responsibility to help them achieve it with the parents, community members, and the students themselves. Coaches are comfortable sharing the responsibility with parents, community members, and the students to help them achieve it (Ladson-Billings, 1994). Coaches are effective because they know that when students believe in themselves, they do better. Culturally relevant teachers don't expect their students to demonstrate prior knowledge and skills; they help students develop that knowledge by building bridges and scaffolding for learning (Ladson-Billings, 1994).

Zeichner (1992) offers a different approach to advocating for teacher cultural diversity. Zeichner (1992) developed a special report for The National Center Research, which "addressed various dimensions of one of the major policy issues in U.S. teacher education for the foreseeable future—the need to help all teachers acquire the attitudes, knowledge, skills and dispositions necessary to work effectively with a diverse student population". Zeichner's (1992) report is greatly needed in the twenty-first century. After outlining several aspects of what the foreseen problems would be, Zeichner listed "16 Key Elements of Effective Teacher Education for Diversity" (1996) (see Table 2).

Table 2

16 Key Elements of Effective Teacher Education for Diversity

---

1. Admissions procedures screen students on the basis of cultural sensitivity and a commitment to the education of all students, especially poor students of color who frequently do not experience success in school.

2. Students are helped to develop a clearer sense of their own ethnic and cultural identities.

3. Students are helped to examine their attitudes toward other ethno cultural groups.

4. Students are taught about the dynamics of prejudice and racism and about how to deal with them in the classroom.

5. Students are taught about the dynamics of privilege and economic oppression and about school practices that contribute to the reproduction of societal inequalities.

6. The teacher education curriculum addresses the histories and contributions of various ethno cultural groups.

7. Students are given information about the characteristics and learning styles of various groups and individuals and are taught about the limitations of this information.

8. The teacher education curriculum gives much attention to socio-cultural research knowledge about the relationships among language, culture, and learning.

9. Students are taught various procedures by which they can gain information about the communities represented in their classrooms.

10. Students are taught how to assess the relationships between the methods they use in the classroom and the preferred learning and interaction styles in their students' homes and communities.

11. Students are taught how to use various instructional strategies and assessment procedures sensitive to cultural and linguistic variations and how to adapt classroom instruction and assessment to accommodate the cultural resources that their students bring to school.

12. Students are exposed to examples of the successful teaching of ethnic and language-minority students.

13. Students complete community field experiences with adults and/or children of other ethno cultural groups with guided reflections.

14. Students complete practicum and/or student teaching experiences in schools serving ethnic and language-minority students.

15. Students live and teach in a minority community (immersion).

16. Instruction is embedded in a group setting that provides both intellectual challenge and social support.

Note. From "Teacher Socialization for Cultural Diversity," by K. M. Zeichner & K. Hoeft, 1996, in J. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (2nd ed., pp. 525-547).

Whether or not people agree or disagree with Zeichner & Hoeft's (1996) theories, the requirements of the federal mandate, No Child Left Behind, are a growing concern because of perceived inequalities in education. No Child Left Behind states that by 2014, all students will meet state and federal standards at 100% efficiency without regard to disability, race, culture, socio-economic status, gender or any environmental issue. No Child Left Behind ignited the educational community and sparked a sensation of accountability in many school districts. Because of No Child Left Behind, educators

are turning to cultural experts such as Gloria Ladson-Billings to help increase cultural awareness and academic performance in their schools.

Professional Development and Cultural Awareness in Schools

The key focus of No Child Left Behind is on the improvement of academic performance of students in schools. These guidelines present an overwhelming challenge for educators. The No Child Left Behind requirements are difficult for all school districts to meet. District administrators feel the significant effects of the nation's history of segregation and cultural separation. Administrators realize that more than academic skills are required to close the achievement gaps between White and minority students. It will take teachers learning about student's culture, race, and environment. More and more school districts seek professional development on cultural awareness and how to effectively educate all students.

Tatum's (2003), *Why Are All the Black Kids Sitting Together in the Cafeteria?* functions as more than just a conversation starter for educators. Tatum's book speaks of the power of racial barriers and the nation's work to dismantle it. This book delves into the darkness of racial and cultural issues. It surfaces with issues of how to embrace student cultures in order to create academic success in schools. Wellman (as cited in Tatum) defined racism as a "system of advantage based on race" (p. 3). Tatum believed this system of advantage permeates cultural messages, institutional policies, and the actions of individuals. She broke racism into two categories: passive and active. Active racism includes blatant, overt acts of bigotry, while passive racism covers the subtle, more covert, acts. She discounted those who naively feel racism is a problem of the past.

Using the concept of *white privilege*, Tatum (1997) asserted that racism is still alive. She tried to dismantle the hood wearing, cross burning view of a racist many Americans hold. Though Tatum acknowledged that Ku Klux Klan types still exist, they are not as prominent as they were. Tatum's book is angled at the passive racist whom she felt encompassed the majority of racists. According to Tatum, anyone who benefits from racist practices without taking efforts to combat them is passively racist (p.12). The author forced individuals from every race to come face-to-face with their own racial issues and stereotypes in an effort to keep them out of the classroom. The teachers would become more culturally aware.

Prominent motivational speakers, such as Bell (2005), provide professional development all over the nation. Bell, a 28 year veteran in education, dealt with the issue of race by giving educators *12 Powerful Words That Increase Test Scores and Help Close the Achievement Gap*. These 12 words gave students, especially struggling students, trouble on tests. The 12 words helped many students become successful on state tests. Although Bell believed that the understanding of the 12 words (see Table 3) can make any student successful, he did not negate the overwhelming need for teachers to develop relationships and become more familiar with their students' culture and community.

Bell (2005) believed that through skill and drill, students have a higher chance of being successful on tests. By making small changes in the school environment, such as posting the 12 words on hallway and classroom walls, students will become more familiar and comfortable using the words. Strategies such as Bell's could lead to higher scores on academic assessments.

Table 3

Bell's 12 Words That Increase Test Scores and Help Close the Achievement Gap

---

Trace – List the steps

Analyze – Break apart

Infer – Read between the lines

Evaluate – Judge

Formulate – Create

Describe – Tell all about

Support – Back up with details

Explain – Tell how

Summarize – Give me the short version

Compare – All the ways they are alike

Contrast – All the ways they are different

Predict – What will happen next?

Note. From *12 Powerful Words That Increase Test Scores and Help Close the Achievement Gap* (p. 17), by L. I. Bell, 2005, Manassas, VA: Multicultural America, Inc.

Whether educators use Bell's (2005) 12 words, or other strategies, administrators must equip teachers with tools through professional development to create cultural awareness. Some educators believe that professional development can be a device in bringing about the academic success of all students. Biles' (1994) key concepts, which answer the question, Does cultural awareness really matter? were the initial catalyst in the development of the study that was described in this document. The study on the effects of professional development used resources such as Bell's 12 words and Biles' key concepts

during the professional development sessions to assist the participants in reaching the

goals set for the study and becoming more culturally aware.

Chapter III- Methodology

This research study was designed as a comparative study to determine the effects of professional development on cultural awareness. Two school districts which possess similar economic, racial (student/teacher), and academic performance were measured. Two districts were used to assist in providing validity to the study. Teachers and administrators from both districts were given eight weeks of professional development on cultural diversity and awareness. The professional development was designed to increase their ability to work with students of different ethnicities, race, and socio-economic status. Throughout this professional development, the facilitator challenged teachers and administrators to accept and address their own misconceptions or stereotypes.

Phases of Professional Development

In conducting research on cultural awareness, it is important to choose districts that could benefit from the study. Howard (2007) described as leaders those who were willing to move beyond blame and befuddlement and work toward transforming themselves and their staffs to serve all of their students well. Howard (2007) states that there are five phases in which a facilitator should embark upon in rendering the professional development.

Phase one - the building of trust. According to Howard (2007), 90% of U.S. public school teachers are White; most of them grew up and attended school in middle-class, English-speaking, predominantly White communities. White teachers also received their teacher preparation in predominantly White colleges and universities (Gay, Dingus, & Jackson, 2003). Because of this, many White educators have not acquired the practical

and educational background that would prepare them for the growing diversity of their students (Ladson-Billings, 2002; Vavrus, 2002).

The first priority in the trust phase is to acknowledge challenges in a positive, inclusive, and honest way. School leaders should base their opening discussions on the following assumptions:

1. Inequities in diverse schools are not, in some instances, a function of intentional discrimination.

2. Educators of all racial and cultural groups need to develop new methods to successfully engage our changing populations.

3. White teachers have their own cultural associations and unique personal stories that are genuine aspects of the overall mix of school diversity.
   (Howard, 2007, p. 14)

School leaders should also model comprehensive and nonjudgmental conversations, reflections, and engagement strategies that teachers can use to establish positive learning communities in their classrooms (Howard, 2007).

Phase two - engaging personal culture. When attempting to engage personal culture, change has to start with educators before it can logically begin to take place with students. The central goal of the second phase is building educators' *cultural competence*—their ability to form authentic and effective relationships across differences. Young people, particularly those from traditionally marginalized groups, have sensitive antennae for genuineness. Howard (2007) stated that he asked a group of racially and culturally diverse high school students to name the teachers in their school who really cared about them, respected them, and enjoyed getting to know them as people. Forty

students pooling their answers could name only 10 teachers from a faculty of 120. This may be one reason this high school has a 50% dropout rate for students of color.

Aronson and Steele's (2005) work on stereotype threat showed that intellectual performance, rather than being a permanent and steady quality, is quite delicate and can vary depending on the social and interpersonal context of learning. Researchers found that three factors have a major impact on students' motivation and performance: their feelings of belonging, their trust in the people around them, and their belief that teachers value their academic proficiency. This research suggested that the capacity of adults in the school to form trusting relationships with and supportive learning environments for their students can greatly control achievement outcomes.

Phase three - confronting social dominance and social justice. Howard (2007) explains that when individuals look at school outcome data, the history of racism, class, and segregation in the United States stares us in the face. Systems of privilege and preference often create structures of exclusivity in schools, in which certain groups are served well while others pine in failure or mediocrity. As diversity grows in rapidly transitioning school districts, demographic gaps will become increasingly more apparent.

In phase three, educators must deal with the current and past inequities that influence education. The main purpose of this phase is to build a persuasive description of social justice that will inform, inspire, and sustain educators in their work, without falling into the rhetoric of shame and blame. School leaders and teachers should engage in courageous conversations about race, class, gender, sexual orientation, immigration, and other dimensions of diversity and social dominance. The extrication of social dominance takes courage (Howard, 2007).

Phase four - transforming instructional practices. Howard describes this phase as one where schools assess and, where necessary, transform the way they carry out instruction in an effort to become more receptive to diversity. For teachers, this means examining pedagogy and curriculum, as well as expectations and their interaction with students. This means that they must take an honest look at outcome data and create new strategies designed to serve the students whom current instruction is not reaching. For some school leaders, this often means facing the limits of their own knowledge and skills and becoming co-learners with students to find a way to transform classroom practices. The following are ways that transformation may take place:

1. Forming authentic and caring relationships with students

2. Using curriculum that honors each student's culture and life experience

3. Shifting instructional strategies to meet the diverse learning needs of students

4. Communicating respect for each student's intelligence

5. Holding consistent and high expectations for all learners. (Gay, 2000; Ladson-Billings, 1994; McKinley, 2005; Shade, Kelly, & Oberg, 1997)

Phase five - engaging the entire school community. Attempting to change demographics may have profound implications for all levels and functions of the school system. To create a welcoming and equitable learning environment for diverse students and their families, school leaders must engage the entire school community in this process (Howard, 2007). Although Howard describes these phases as a prescription towards creating excellent professional development in schools, he is sure to say that things will not change over night and that when this sort of diversity enters schools,

everyone will be challenged to grow. These five phases were used when designing the professional development that was rendered to the districts that were used in this study.

Districts' Information

The participating districts are located in suburban neighborhoods, immediately situated outside of urban city limits. Each district experiences mobility of students from the city's urban area to the suburban area.

The participating school districts were chosen because of their differences in teacher/ student makeup. The racial/ ethnic makeup of District One is 50.6% White, 36.3% Black, 3.7% Hispanic, and 2.7% Asian students, with 100% White teachers (see Figure 4). In District Two, the makeup is 80.2% White, 10.4% Black, 1.6% Hispanic, 3.5% Asian, and 4.2% multi racial students, with 100% White teachers. Based upon the difference in teacher/student makeup, there was a perceived absence of diversity and cultural awareness in both teaching staffs.

Prior to these studies beginning, information concerning the studies was posted in both school districts' teachers' lounges inviting all teachers to take advantage of this professional development opportunity. The administration and the facilitator of the study had previously decided that the number of participants would be limited to six teachers from each district. All administrators from both districts were allowed to participate based on availability. Only 12% of the teaching populations from both districts were allowed to participate. This number provided an intimate setting allowing individuals to feel comfortable while engaging in honest discussions about uncomfortable issues.

Participants

Six teachers and three administrators participated from the two school districts (Figures 1 - 5). There were three male participants and six female participants from District One. There were two males and seven females from District Two. All of the participants were White and lived in middle class suburban areas. 33% of the participants were male and 67% of the participants were female, as illustrated in Figure 1.
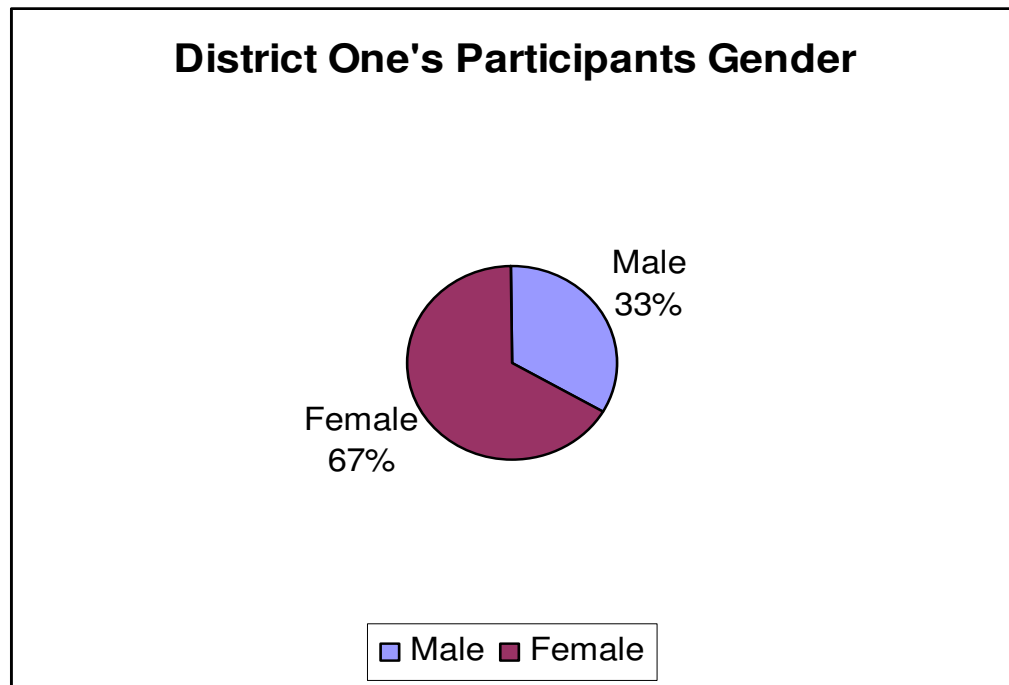
Figure 1. District One's Participants Gender

The participants represented 12.5% of the total teaching population and 75% of the administrative population. Administrators and Teachers participated on a voluntary basis. One of District One's administrators was not able to participate due to after school obligations, which left three of the four total administrators to participate in the study, as illustrated in Figure 2.
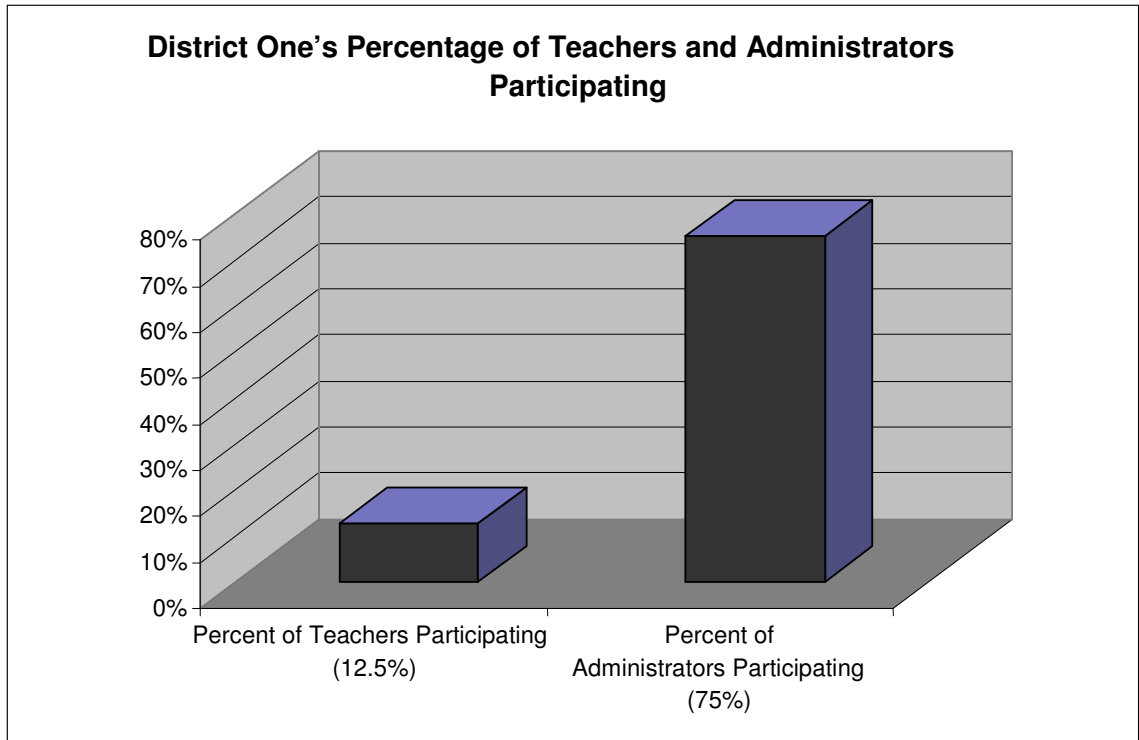
District One's Percentage of Teachers and Administrators Participating

80%	
70%	
60%	
50%	
40%	
30%	
20%	
10%	
0%	

Percent of Teachers Participating
(12.5%)

Percent of
Administrators Participating
(75%)

Figure 2. District One's Percentage of Teachers and Administrators Participating

At the beginning of the study, each participant was asked to complete an initial survey on cultural awareness. These surveys collected detailed information regarding the participants' feelings toward cultural awareness and professional development. The pre-survey and post-survey questions were identical except for verb tense. The questions explored how culturally aware the participants felt they were before the professional development series. Each participant was asked to complete and return the survey to the researcher at the beginning of the second session. Of the nine participants, 88% completed and returned the initial survey, as illustrated in Figure 3.

District One's Survey Completion Data

Participants
Without
Completed
Survey
11%

Participants
who
Completed
Survey
89%

☐ Participants Without Completed Survey
■ Participants who Completed Survey
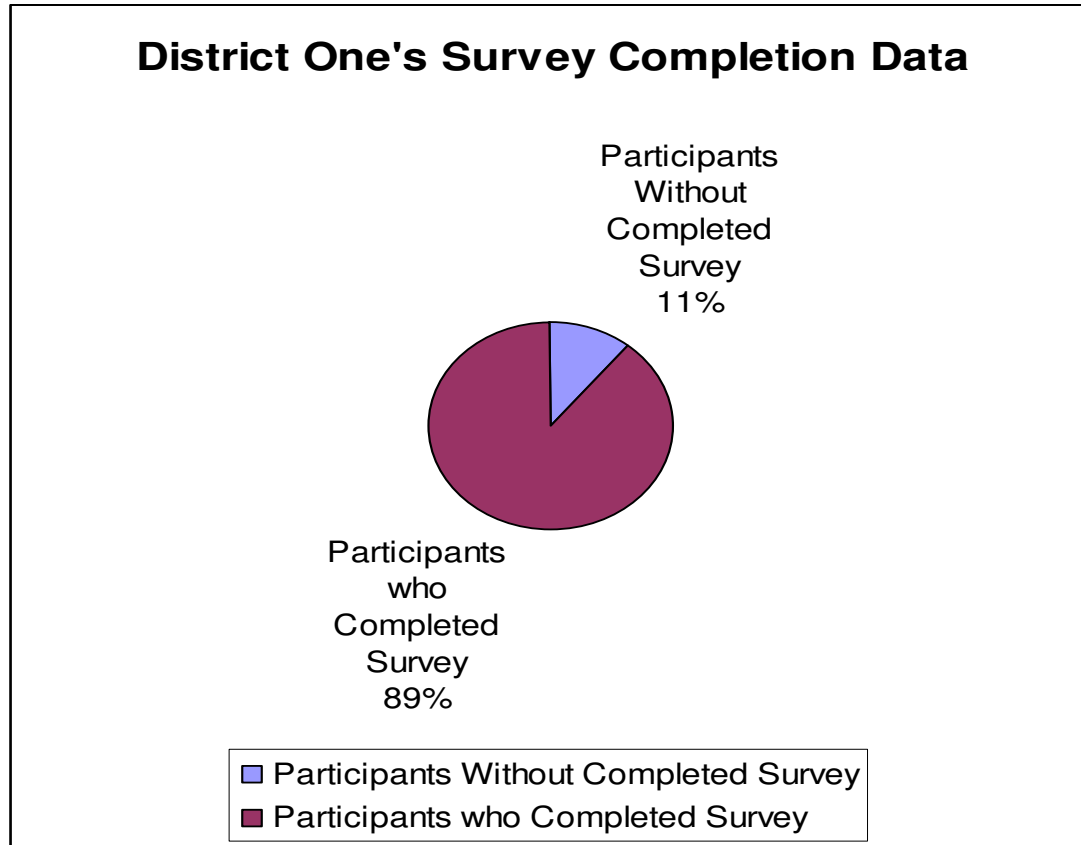
Figure 3. District One's Survey Completion Data

Due to the focus of the study relating to race, the researcher thought it important to reveal the racial component of the participants and students involved in the study because it may show relevance to the findings. According to Lewis and Niesenbaum (2005), when educating individuals, it is beneficial to develop a relationship. Race and ethnicity were acknowledged as factors in building relationships in the study. According to Lewis and Niesenbaum, it is possible that real relationships between students and educators may impact those relationships that influence what students learn. Caucasian Americans made up 100% of the teaching community. In comparison, the student community consisted of 50.6% Caucasian, 36.3% African American, 3.7% Hispanic, and 2.7% Asian, as illustrated in Figure 4.

District One's Student Ethnicity Groups

Asian 2.7

Hispanic 3.7

Black 36.3

White 50.6

☐ Black ■ White ☐ Hispanic ☐ Asian
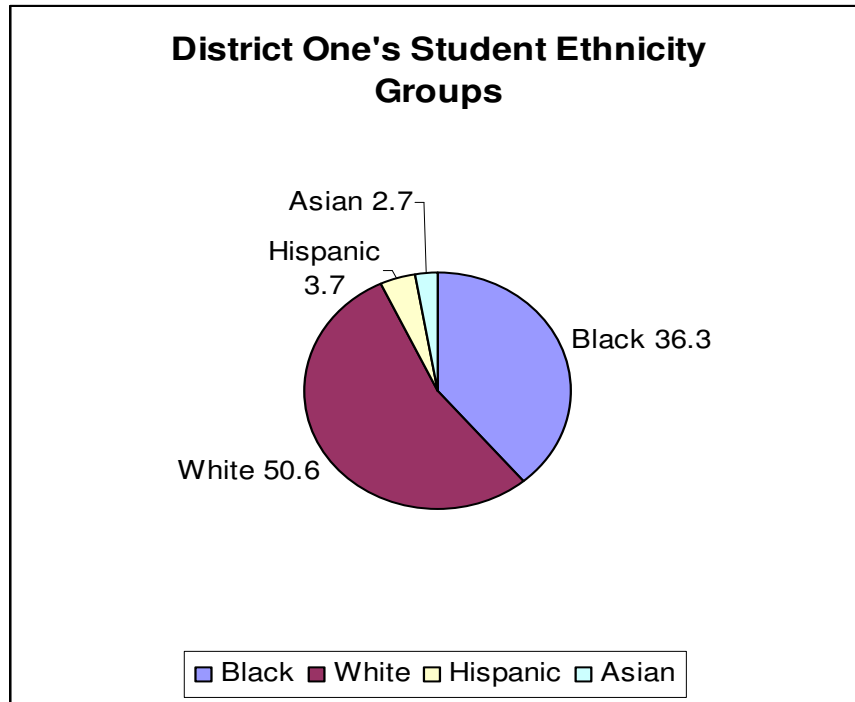
Figure 4. District One's Student Ethnicity Groups

Due to the focus of the study relating to cultural awareness, the ethnicity of the students being serviced by the research study participants was an important factor to be discussed. According to Lie (2004),

Race has proven to be an important factor in the education system today. Until fairly recently, our society enforced the separation of the races in virtually all important areas—social, economic, political and educational. As a result of racial isolation, African Americans and white Americans often learned about each other by relying on unfounded images and stereotypes. (Lie, 2004, p.189)

Demeaning and hurtful images proliferated in the media, in textbooks, in movies and on radio and television has perpetuated negativity amongst different races. There were no countervailing institutions to perform the function of education an understanding. By design, individuals from different races did not know each other.

The participants from District Two differed from the participants in District One. From District Two, there were two males and seven females participants (Figure 5). All of the participants were White and lived in middle class suburban areas.
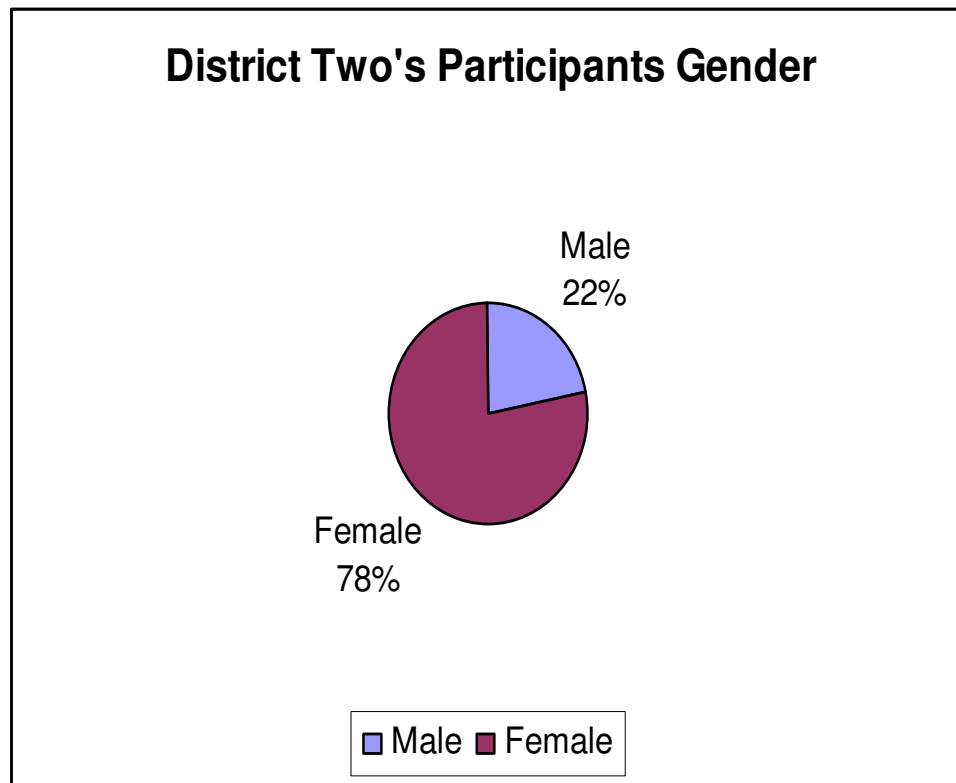
Figure 5. District Two's Participants Gender

The study was offered to District Two teachers on a voluntary basis just as it was offered to District One teachers. The first six teachers who signed up were chosen to participate in the study. In District Two, all three administrators chose to participate. Of the total participants, 12.5% of the total teaching population participated in the study and 100% of the administrative population participated in the study, as illustrated in Figure 6.
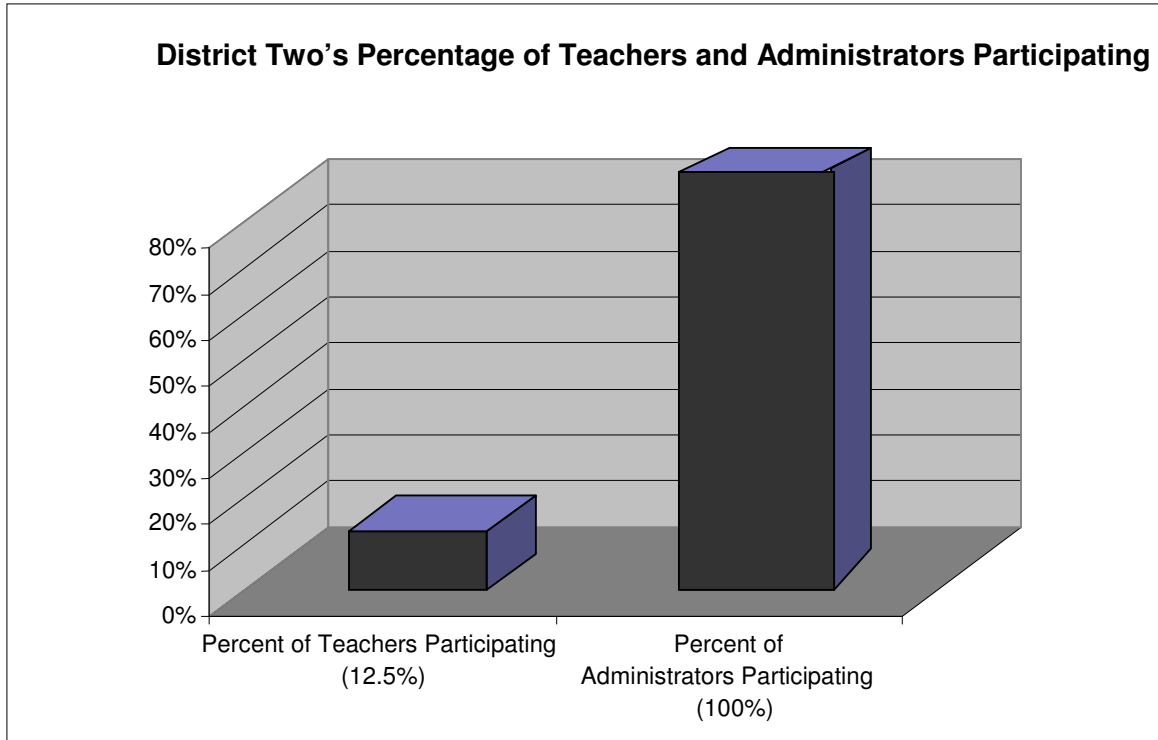
District Two's Percentage of Teachers and Administrators Participating

Figure 6. District Two's Percentage of Teachers and Administrators Participating

At the beginning of the study in District Two, each participant was asked to complete an initial survey on cultural awareness. These surveys collected detailed information regarding the participants' feelings toward cultural awareness and professional development. The pre and post survey questions were identical except for verb tense. The questions explored how culturally aware the participants felt they were before the professional development series. Each participant was asked to complete and return the survey to the researcher at the beginning of the second session. Of the 9 participants, 100% completed and returned the initial survey, as illustrated in Figure 7.

District Two's Survey Completion Data

Participants
Without
Completed
Survey
0%

Participants
who
Completed
Survey
100%

☐ **Participants who did not Completed Survey**

■ **Participants who Completed Survey**
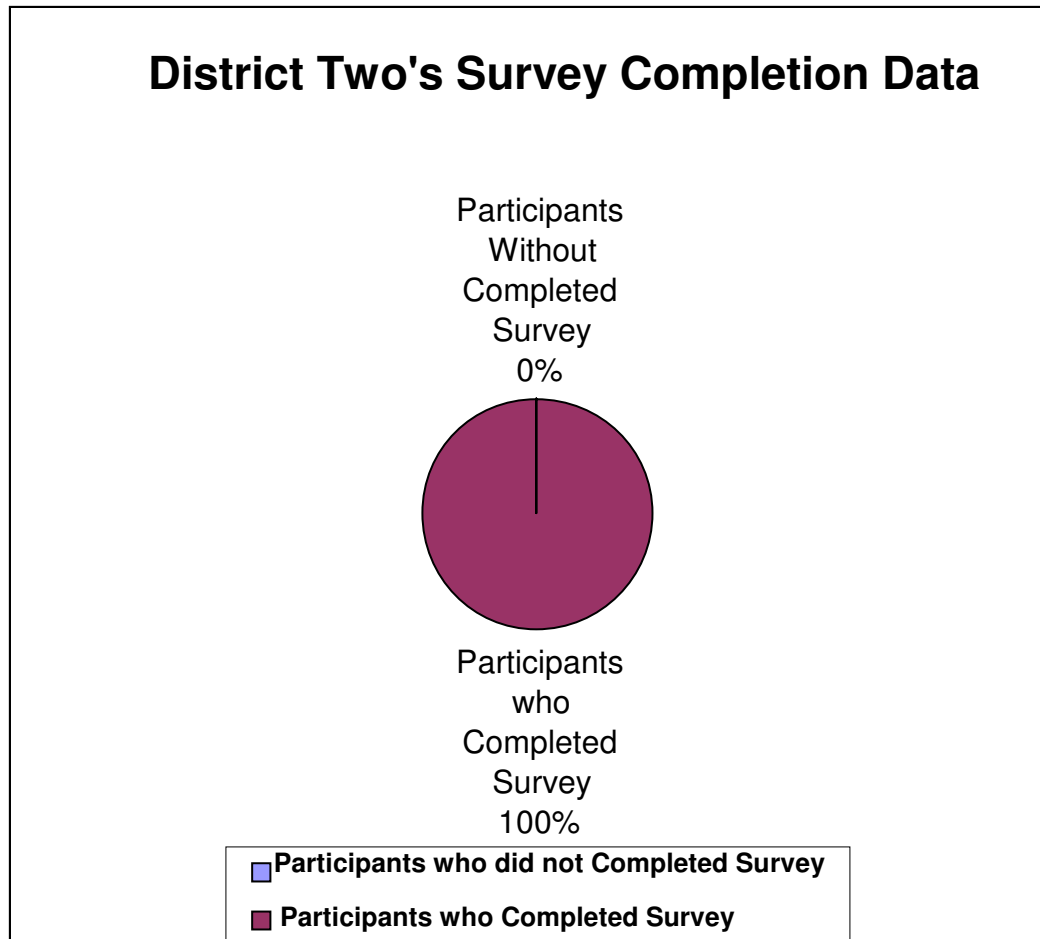
Figure 7. District Two's Survey Completion Data

Just as in District One's study, due to the focus of the study relating to race, the

researcher thought it important to reveal the racial component of teachers and students

involved in the study because of its potential relevance to the findings. White teachers

made up 100% of the teaching community, in comparison to the student community of

80.2% Caucasian, 10.4% African American, 1.6% Hispanic, and 4.2% Multiracial, as

illustrated in Figure 8.

District Two's Student Ethnicity Groups

Asian 3.5

Black 10.4

Hispanic 1.6

White 80.2

□ Black ■ White □ Hispanic □ Asian
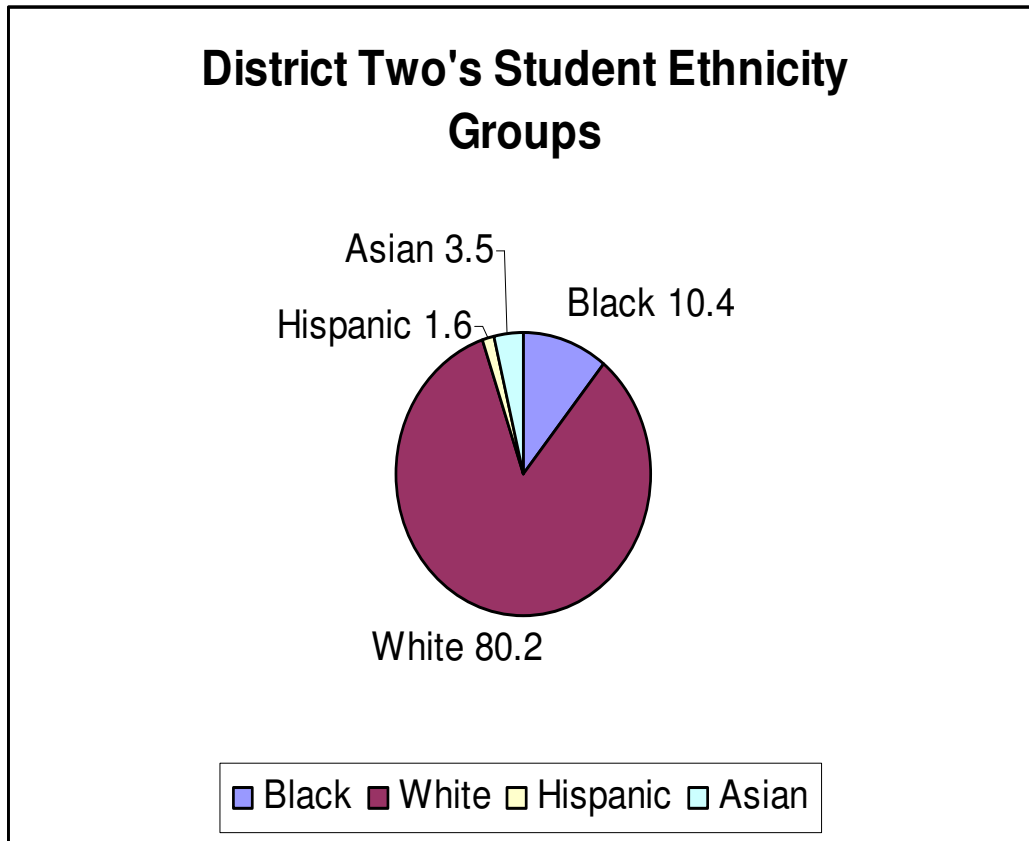
Figure 8. District Two's Student Ethnicity Groups

Research Design

This study was conducted as a comparative survey research design study. In both studies, educators' personal views were taken in a pre-survey format by the facilitator. The purpose was to determine how important educators felt cultural awareness was in the educational environment. The purpose was also to determine how culturally aware the participants felt that they were prior to the implementation of the professional development. At the end of the eight week session, a post-survey was conducted in both studies. The participants' views of the professional development were recorded. Comparative data was obtained for the study and eight professional development session goals were accomplished.

Goal one. The first goal was to determine what effect professional development on cultural awareness has on teachers and their ability to be successful teachers of minority students. "The literature on culturally relevant teaching made an important contribution to the field of education in terms of exploring the beliefs and practices of teachers who successfully connected their students from marginalized groups with academic success" (Delpit, 1995, p. 173; Ladson-Billings, 1994, p. 128). According to Delpit, there is a continued and increasing demographic and cultural mismatch between students and teachers in both public schools and institutions of higher learning. In the National Center for Education Statistics, 1996; and National Education Association, 2002, Delpit also states that

> Numerous studies have demonstrated that deficit thinking paradigms are highly pervasive in both these institutions and consequently perpetuate the value system as the norm. Statistics also show increasing ethnic, cultural, and language mismatches between students and teachers in public schools, colleges, and universities. (p. 21)

Goal two. Goal two is to help administrators understand the importance of professional development in the educational environment. According to Fielding and Schalock (1985),

> Professional development is a continuous improvement process lasting from the time an individual decides to enter education until retirement. It encompasses the processes that educators engage in to initially prepare themselves, continuously update themselves, and review and reflect on their own performance. (p. 1)

In Covey's (1989), *The Seven Habits of Highly Effective People,* the author suggests to "Begin with the end in mind" (p. 95). If educators are to successfully prepare students for the future, they must be prepared for the future themselves. It is the belief of the researcher that schools and districts should be committed to offering the highest quality professional development opportunities for their teachers. Learning opportunities should provide an environment where all teachers can develop or acquire the necessary knowledge and skills to deal with change and pursue lifelong learning.

Goal three. Goal three is to determine the need for cultural awareness among teachers in classrooms. Some educators are of the belief that public schools systems and higher education institutions are failing to offer a significant, instructive educational environment that is effective in attempting to meet the needs of children of color. It is becoming the common concern of some educators that school systems are failing to provide what students need, hence failing to provide a proper education for children of color (Freire, 1987; Ladson-Billings, 1994; Valencia, 1991; Valenzuela, 1999). The initial interest of this study originated from the viewed failure in the education of children of color when the education was being provided by primarily White teachers.

Goal four. Goal four is to determine whether or not professional development on cultural awareness will provide teachers with enough information to feel comfortable dealing with students from different cultures, race, ethnic, and socio-economic status. Apple (1992) argued that critical thinking on issues of race, gender and class was needed to ensure that teachers taught for the success of all students. Teacher reflection on the importance of these issues was missing from professional development workshops. Apple (1992) argued that little is said about how one might prepare future teachers to reflect.

Thinking critically is not necessarily a natural occurrence. It doesn't automatically arise simply because one is told to look for problems. Rather, such awareness is built through concentrated efforts at a relational understanding of how gender, class, race, and power actually work in one's daily practice and in the institutional structures that now exist. That is, simply pointing out to teachers that a problem exists with respect to the educational experiences of such students would never be enough to fully solve the problem. To truly enact change, teachers should possess a deeper understanding of the ways in which race, class, and gender relate to the everyday practices of teaching and schooling.

Goal five. Goal five is to provide administrators with a model of a professional development workshop that engages teachers. According to Hayes and Puriefoy (2003),

teachers are under growing pressure to perform. But most new teachers are not adequately prepared to meet the needs of their students, and many experienced teachers have yet to adapt to new standards. Like practitioners in other professions, teachers need to deepen their knowledge and improve their skills over the course of their careers. Unfortunately, the need for quality professional development for those in the teaching profession too often goes unmet. (p. 4)

Goal six. Goal six is to determine whether or not professional development on cultural awareness gives teachers a greater comfort or confidence in dealing with students. According to Winfield (1986), when a teacher graduates, everyone expects him/her to know the subject thoroughly and to be able to perform. Winfeld also states

While teachers may not feel as confident as they would like, with training they will get past this uneasiness. The title of being a teacher makes them think that

being a teacher actually signifies something. So when teachers obtain their

degree, they feel that this means that they have become some new kind of person.

They feel the expectation to behave in a certain manner to match up to an

important title. (p. 254)

According to Winfield, many professional people, including teachers, experience

considerable anxiety in their professional roles. They feel like frauds that will be found

out. Winfield states that this is because, inside, they know that they are just another

human being. *Teacher* is just a label that has been applied to a person with a degree, not a

description of what people are or what they can do. Winfield continues by indicating that

being a confident teacher comes from focusing on students and being able to use the

training that is given to them to bring about academic success in students.

Goal seven. Goal seven is to determine whether or not it is necessary to be

culturally aware in order to successfully interact with other students from various

cultures. As the student population in the United States becomes more culturally diverse,

it is imperative to provide an empowering and equitable education for all students. Within

the context of teacher preparation, one of the highest priorities is to help prospective

teachers acquire the attitudes, knowledge, skills, and dispositions to work effectively with

every student. Schools, colleges, and departments of education must assume the

responsibility of preparing every teacher, regardless of race, to work effectively in

culturally diverse classrooms. While most teacher education programs acknowledge the

importance of an increasing diversity among school pupils, reviews of the literature

reveal that little attention in mainstream teacher education programs has been focused on

preparing teachers for the children they will likely encounter (Grant & Secada, 1990; Liston & Zeichner, 1991).

Goal eight. Goal eight is to gain comparative data on two similar districts to determine whether or not the eight week professional development series was an effective method for studying the effects of professional development on cultural awareness in schools. In this study, the researcher could not be confident that the professional development would be successful in either district. To determine the results of the professional development, the researcher collected data from pre and post surveys to measure the effectiveness of the professional development.

Instrument

The instrument used in this comparative study was not a standardized test or a published survey; rather, it was a survey uniquely designed by the researcher and the participating district superintendents. This created instrument was based upon the location of the study and research that proved to determine culturally aware individuals. The survey was formulated from information that would delve into whether or not the professional development truly had an effect on the cultural awareness of teachers. Based upon the educators who assisted in developing this survey, the questions were not weighted, and the results could not be weighted by the emotions of the participants or their desire to please the surveyor.

Procedure

The cultural awareness professional development series design was based upon research materials that would assist participants in obtaining important information in order to develop into more culturally aware individuals. The professional development

was provided for eight weeks in one hour weekly sessions. At the beginning of each session, agendas were offered to organize and direct the sessions. However, participants were encouraged to elaborate on certain topics if needed. Sessions were designed to engage the participants in intense conversations concerning different facets of cultural awareness, while leaving room for the participants to explore their own personal boundaries. Each week brought a different activity for the participants. The groups were asked to read assigned materials about the effects of culture on education. At the beginning of the sessions, each districts' group was asked to formulate goals which they wanted to achieve from the professional development. Participants were provided with educational handouts, important points from the readings, and ethical dilemmas based on culture. The purpose was to keep the participants focused during the sessions while also allowing them to broaden their thoughts beyond the one hour sessions. Below are examples of the common goals that were originated by both groups. The reader will see examples of a weekly resource that the group was given to assist them with understanding different cultures' dialects in Table 5. In addition, they were given two examples of the important points made from Ladson-Billings' 1994 book, *The Dream Keepers*. Teachers listened to an example of a motivational hip-hop song. They were asked to take it back to share with their students. Finally, descriptions of each weekly agenda provided were used consistently with both districts.

Each professional development session was designed to meet the overall goals of the cultural awareness professional development program (see Table 4). These goals were also developed based upon an entrance survey that each participant completed outlining specific ideas that he/she felt would assist in becoming more culturally aware individuals.

Prior to each session, the researcher would set specific goals to be accomplished. Evidence of the weekly goals being met was revealed in the dialogue between the facilitator and the participants weekly.

Table 4

Professional Development on Cultural Awareness Participant Learning Objectives

Increase knowledge in becoming more successful with different cultures

Improve understanding of how to deal with minority parents more effectively

Develop skill in teaching Black students

Increase understanding of Black student culture

Develop knowledge of Ebonics (dictionary)

Learn to value differences between the cultures

Create an interest in becoming a relevant teacher

Acquire an understanding of what students from the Black culture feel about white

     teachers attempting to break cultural barriers

Develop skill in not imposing personal cultures on different cultures

Develop skill in how to effectively discipline African American students

Note. Session goals were developed by the researcher and the participants prior to the completion of the pre-survey document.

     Throughout the course of the professional development series, several resources were provided to participants to assist them in gaining a better understanding of certain aspects of cultural differences. One issue that many of the participants felt that they were lacking was the understanding of the way in which some of their Black students spoke. To help the participants gain a better understanding of the difference in dialect, the

participants were given an Ebonics dictionary (see Table 5). According to the Rickford and Rickford (2000, p. 2), Ebonics simply means "Black speech."

> The term was created in 1973 by a group of Black scholars who disliked the negative connotations of terms like, "nonstandard Negro English," which had been coined in the 1960s when the first modern large-scale linguistic studies of African American speech-communities began. (p. 2)

Some examples of Ebonics terms that were given to participants in the Ebonics dictionary are provided in Table 5.

Table 5

Sample Ebonics Terms and Definitions

My Boo- my close friend or lover
411- information
Aw-ite- what you said is acknowledged
My Homies- my friends
My Boys- my friends
Buck wild- really crazy
The crib- my home
I'm Chillin- I'm relaxing

Note. From *Spoken Soul*: *The Story of Black English*, by J. R. Rickford & R. J. Rickford, 2000, New York: John Wiley.

Another resource was provided to participants during each session that included important points from the readings assigned from Ladson-Billings', *The Dream Keepers* (see Tables 6 & 7). The researcher considered it important to provide important points from the reading to the participants as a point of reference during the sessions. In case the

participants did not find time to read the material prior to the session, they could use these materials and still follow along. Some of the points from chapters one and two are listed below to assist in understanding material the participants received.

Table 6

Chapter One Important Points

Improving the achievement of African American students has been a challenge of educators.
The quest for quality education remains an elusive dream for the African American community.
African American students lag far behind their white counterparts on standard academic achievement measures.
African American teachers make up less than 5 percent of the total public school teaching population.
This book offers the reader models of improving practice and developing grounded theory, through a look at the intellectually rigorous and challenging classrooms of teachers in a low-income, predominantly African American school district.
Parents and community members will be able to use this book as a talking point to help outline the redesign of community schools that better meet the needs of their students.
The way that we teach profoundly affects the way that students perceive the content of the curriculum.
The purpose of this book is to offer an opportunity to make problems central to the debate about education.

Note. From *The Dream Keepers: Successful Teachers of African-American Children*, by G. Ladson-Billings, 1994, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Table 7

Chapter Two Important Points

To successfully educate African American students, motivate them to be their very best.
You must have expectations for your students; when you have high expectations, they

rise to the occasion.
You can not see black students in two separate races. There is no such thing as black-black people and white black people. It is offensive to refer to black people in this manner.
Do not make your discipline of students different. If you feel as if black students don't know any better and you don't discipline them either as hard you discipline white students, the will only reach the expectations that you have set for them.
Winfield's cross classification system yields four possible teacher behavior patterns (1986, p. 12):
Tutors- believe that students can improve and they believe it is their responsibility to help them do so.
General contractors- believe that improvement is possible, but they look for ancillary personnel to provide academic assistance rather than take on the responsibility themselves.
Custodians- do not believe that much can be done to help their students but they do not look for others to help them maintain the students at these low levels.
Referral agents- believe that much can be done to help their students improve either, but they shift the responsibility to other personnel, by sending them off to the special education personnel.
Teachers function as either conductors or coaches.
Conductors believe that students believe that students are capable of excellence and they assume responsibility for ensuring that their students achieve that excellence.
Coaches believe that their students are capable of excellence, but they are comfortable sharing the responsibility to help them achieve it with parents, community members, and the students themselves.
When students believe that they can do more and are told this, they do better.
Culturally relevant teachers don't expect their students to demonstrate prior knowledge and skills; they help students develop that knowledge by building bridges and scaffolding for learning.
Parents feel that they want good teachers to help their children succeed at traditional

academic tasks, but at the same time they want them to provide an education that would not alienate their children from their homes, communities, and their culture.

Note. From *The Dream Keepers: Successful Teachers of African-American Children*, by G. Ladson-Billings, 1994, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

With each session, the researcher provided participants with tools that would help them gain a better understanding of the Black students. Participants listened to the music that their students listen to in assisting them to build relationships with students. Many young students have turned to hip hop music as a form of expression or entertainment. According to Toop (1994), "hip hop music, also referred to as rap music, is a music genre typically consisting of a rhythmic vocal style accompanied with backing beats" (p. 106). In this study, participants listened to the hip hop radio stations that the Black students often listen to. After listening to the radio stations, the participants expressed their opinions regarding songs such as one by Nas titled, "I know I Can Be What I Want to Be." Such songs were played during these sessions. Participants discussed ways to use music to bridge the cultural gap between themselves and the students.

Outline of Weekly Professional Development Sessions

For each session, an agenda provided clarity. If all of the points were not met during the session, the unmet topics carried over to the next session to be sure that all goals were met. Descriptions of the session agendas have been provided below to aide in possible reproduction of the study.

Week one. During week one of the study, all participants met for the first time. During the initial meeting, an introduction and overview to the study was presented. Due to the nature and sensitivity of the study, relationships were formed to establish a comfort level in order to engage in honest dialogue throughout the sessions.

In the introduction, participants were asked to tell who they were, what current positions they held, how many years they had been in education, and any information that they would like to share. After each participant introduced him/herself, the researcher gave background on the study and why it was originated.

The researcher emphasized the importance of honesty during the sessions. This was done because the summary data from the study could possibly be skewed and the data would be invalid if participants were not speaking honestly.

During the first day of the book study, the participants engaged in a discussion about cultural awareness. The participants set goals for what they would like to accomplish during the eight week professional development series. Although the initial goals for the study had been established, the researcher felt in order to make the study meaningful to the participants, it would be important to get their views on what they wanted to gain from the study.

Finally, participants were asked to complete the entrance survey for the study. This survey would be used to show the researcher how the participants felt about the study and cultural awareness prior to being engaged in the cultural awareness professional development. The final activity for each session was to discuss the next session and discuss the assignment before the next session.

Week two. At the beginning of the second session, participants were given a handout on Race/Culture sensitivity. In this handout, participants were asked to look at the name of each ethnic group, White, Black, Hispanic, etc. and discuss what stereotypes they had learned about each ethnic group. To say what they had learned did not insinuate that they agreed or disagreed with the views. Once the participants completed the

sensitivity worksheet, the group engaged in a discussion regarding the expressed views. The group also discussed stereotypical views of the different cultures depicted in the newspaper, on television, and in the news.

The final step in this activity was to collect each participant's handout. After collecting and sorting, the researcher/facilitator set a trash can on top of the table in front of them and threw all of the worksheets containing negative views away. The researcher explained to the participants that the reason for throwing the worksheets away was to symbolize a new beginning. This was also an effort to open up their minds to what they would learn throughout the study.

After the sensitivity activity, the participants were introduced to the primary supplemental book that would be used throughout the study, *The Dream Keeper* by G. Ladson- Billings. This book was used to assist the participants in understanding the importance of becoming culturally aware educators. The eight chapters were divided and individual chapters were assigned to each participant to read. The chapters were broken down as not to overload any one participant with the task of being responsible for focusing on every chapter. The participants were given one chapter to focus on and discuss with the group to develop a sense of ownership of the concept discussed in the chapter. The participants discussed the next session and reviewed the activities in the present session.

Week three. At the beginning of this session, the participants were briefly led in a discussion regarding the important points from the assigned reading. Participants engaged in a discussion about what they thought was important from the reading. They were encouraged to share their views on and feelings about the text.

The next activity was to discuss an ethical dilemma case study. Participants were given a scenario and, based upon what they had learned in their reading, asked to discuss how they would respond to the situation. The researcher explained to the participants that there was no right or wrong answer; the goal of the ethical dilemma was to attempt to use what they learned to assist them in their decision making. The final activity for this session was to discuss the participants' views on the session's activities. The participants discussed what they believed to be the strengths and weaknesses of this session.

Week four. The focus of session four was to discuss the difference between race and culture. Due to the nature of the study, the researcher felt it important to distinguish the difference between the two. During this week's chapter discussion, the focus of the reading was related to the topics of race and culture. Participants discussed their opinions regarding the reading and were asked to bring life experiences to the discussion.

During the second half of the session, the participants listened to a guest speaker. Hearing testimony from individuals who had developed successful relationships with parents and students from different cultures was a benefit to the participants. The speaker talked about his background on building meaningful relationships with individuals from different cultures. The speaker was a White male working in a primarily Black school district. The speaker offered the participants motivation to gain relationships with all students and parents and not allow a lack of understanding regarding the individual's culture to effect how the participants relate to the students and their parents. The speaker encouraged the participants to use all of the information from the professional development to assist them in becoming successful teachers of minority, specifically Black students.

The session ended when the participants discussed what they believed to be the important points of the session as a method of determining if the session goals were met. The participants discussed what they thought about the speaker's presentation in an effort to offer direction to future speakers. For the final activity of the session, participants discussed next week's session.

Week five. The focus of this session was to discuss cultural differences. When individuals think of culture, they often relate their thoughts to race. The researcher discussed how culture has no racial boundary. One example that the researcher gave was the Hip Hop culture. The Hip Hop culture has been embraced by many teens and young adults both Black and White. The participants were given their first assignment to listen to one of the Hip Hop radio stations prior to next week's session.

Next the participants discussed the important points from the week's assigned reading. The participants told their views regarding the reading. They discussed whether or not anything from the reading could be useful to them in their interaction with students and parents from different cultures. After the discussion of the chapter, the participants engaged in an ethical dilemma which focused on breaking cultural boundaries. The scenario asked how they would respond to the situation based upon what they learned in the reading.

During the final activities of the session, the participants discussed what they believed to be key points. The participants were then given educational resources regarding building relationships with students and motivational literature on the importance of not judging students to take with them regarding the day's topics. The session ended when the participants discussed expectations for next week's session.

Week six. The focus of this session was for the group to discuss how cultural beliefs affect how individuals interact with other individuals from different cultures. The participants engaged in a brief discussion regarding the important points of the assigned reading. The participants listened to the speaker assigned for the week's discussion.

Participants listened to the guest speaker discuss his views on differences from the perspective of a Black male in a primarily Black district. The speaker engaged the participants in discussion regarding how cultural differences affect the educational environment. This speaker was raised in the community in which he now served as a principal. The speaker spoke about how the cultural makeup of the district had shifted since he entered the school district 30 years ago. When he was a student in the district, the community make up was primarily White with very few Black students. Now the district was primarily Black with very few White students. Being from the community helped him develop into a successful leader of the community; however, he stated that the relationships that he gained with the families that he served made the difference in how he related to students. The final activity was for the group's participants to discuss next week's session and how they felt that they could use from information they received from the speaker.

Week seven. The focus of this session was how cultural differences affect the educational environment. The participants began by discussing the important points from the assigned reading. Next, the participants were given more resources to discuss. These resources included articles on teacher tips and how to close the achievement gap, what teachers could do to build relationships with students and their families from different

cultures, and a framework for understanding poverty. The final activity was to discuss next week's session and to review the current session.

Week eight. The final session was a recap of the previous sessions. The participants began by engaging in a discussion on what they had learned that would assist them in becoming more culturally aware educators. As one of the final activities, the participants engaged in a debate on their opinions on the topic of cultural awareness and whether or not it was important when educating students. The participants were then given resources such as music to which they could listen that would assist them in relating to different cultures, an Ebonics dictionary that would assist them in understanding the dialect of often used by Black students, and the participants discussed inspirational readings by and about teachers who make a difference. The final activity for the session was for the participants to discuss their thoughts regarding the final professional development session and what they could expect in the exit session.

Exit session. The exit session design included an assessment of the professional development goals and the completion of the exit survey. This session began by reviewing the goals that were set in the first session. The participants discussed whether or not they felt, as individuals, that they met their personal goals. The participants received extra resources to help them in their journey on becoming more culturally aware individuals. Each resource was briefly reviewed. The resources included information on the book *We Can't Teach What We Don't Know*, by Howard (1999) and a list of multicultural education resources including a book list. Participants were given articles on classic African American fiction, a series of articles that were referenced as a multicultural teaching toolbox, a multicultural curriculum resource, and a suggested

reading list. The final activity for the exit session was for the participants to complete and return the exit survey. This activity concluded the professional development program.

This study was designed with the end in mind. The purpose was to determine the effects of professional development on educators' cultural awareness. Each session was designed to meet specific goals. If proposed information was not covered or completed, certain materials were carried over into the next session. Every activity performed and every resource or material reviewed was directly related to cultural awareness.

In chapters four and five the results of the pre/post survey will be discussed. These chapters will provide information regarding the participants' views as to whether they changed positively as a result of the professional development.

Chapter IV- Results

At the beginning of each of the two eight-week professional development series, participants were asked to voluntarily participate in a study on the effects of professional development on cultural awareness. The study involved completing an introductory survey prior to beginning the study. The survey focused the participants' familiarity with students and individuals from different cultures and races. The survey also addressed participants' prior experiences and beliefs with individuals within those cultures. All participants were then asked to engage in eight weeks of professional development on cultural awareness and complete an exit survey regarding the professional development rendered and whether or not it had an effect on their becoming a more culturally aware individual.
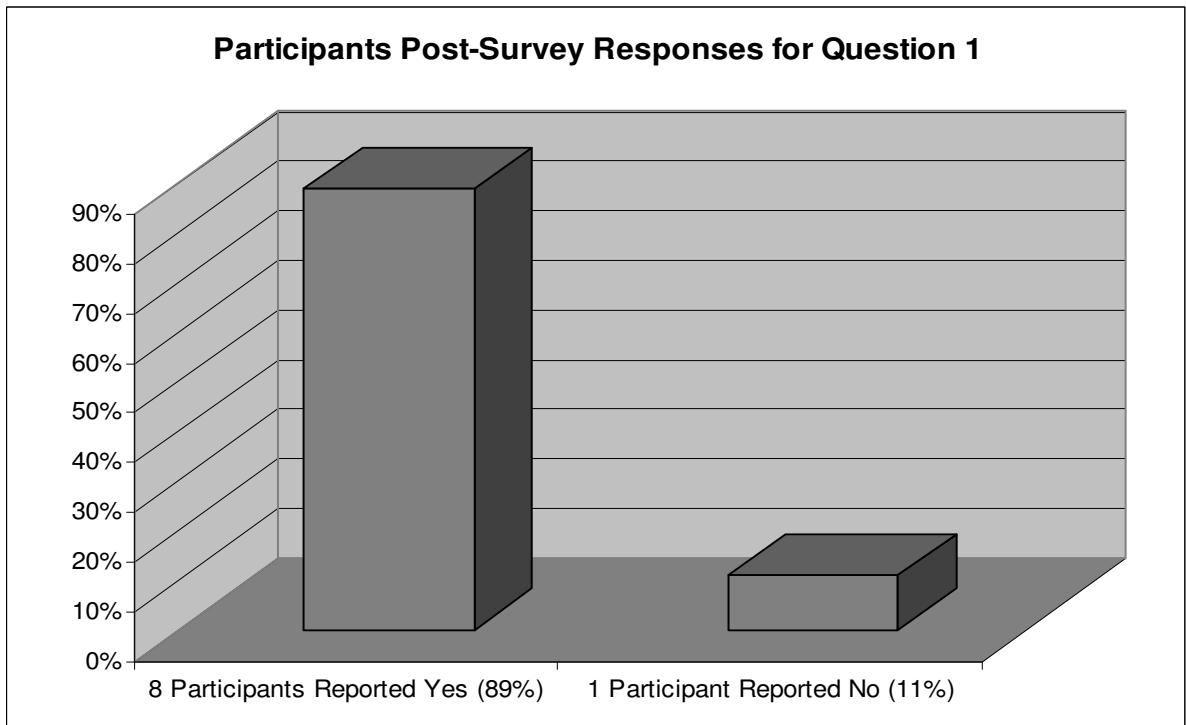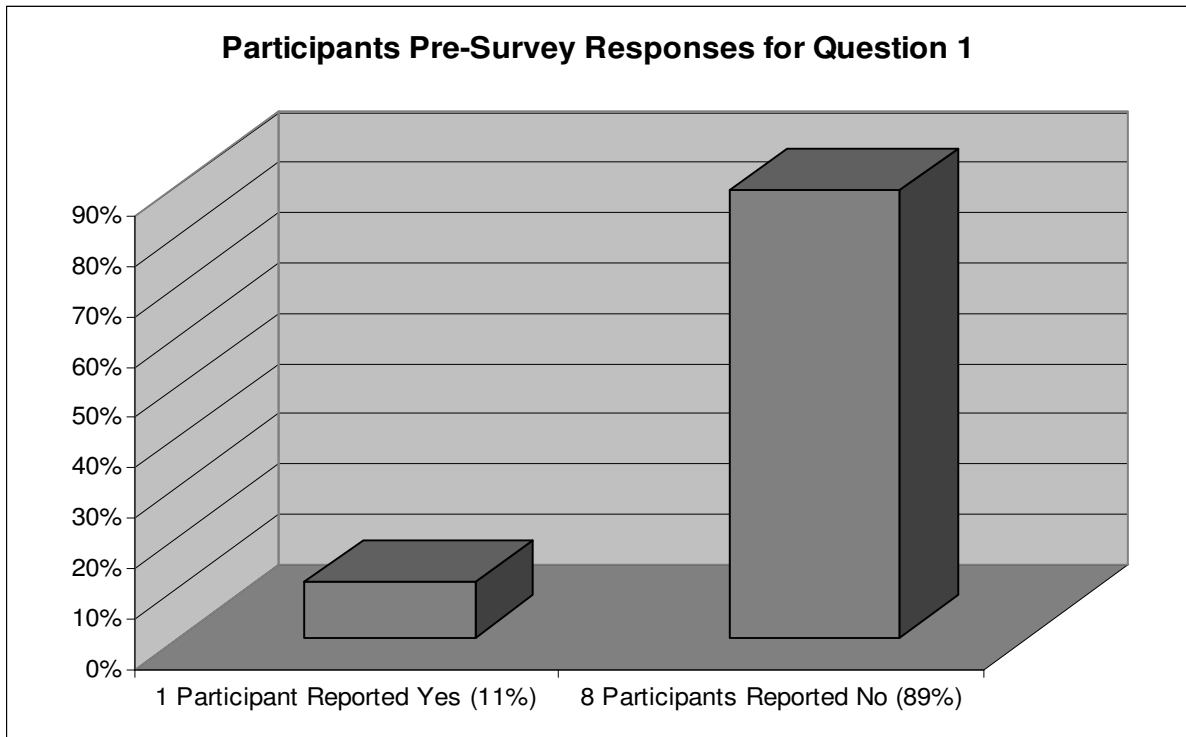
The facilitator and the administrators from both districts had previously been presented with problems and concerns from teachers and other school personnel when working to improve professional development and cultural awareness. Some of these problems and concerns were related to teacher-student cultural conflict, teachers' lack of understanding about student behavior, and administrators' inability to bridge the gap between the teacher and the student due to racial influences. The team of professionals decided to create the instrument used to determine the effects of the professional development on cultural awareness. The team wanted a survey that would be specific to what they wanted their staffs to gain from the professional development. Both the introductory and exit survey had consistent questions. These questions were presented in a manner to be answered in a *yes* or *no* format. The objective was to not take away participants' rights to give a means of expression to open-ended responses, but rather to

ensure their answers could be statistically measured. In both the introduction and the exit survey from both districts, the focus remained consistent: whether or not the participant believed that professional development had an effect on his/her cultural awareness. If participants believed that professional development could positively impact their ability to relate to the student body, the opportunity for academic growth may be greater. After receiving the results of both the introductory and exit survey from both districts, the participants' answers were analyzed to determine the most common answers and to determine the similarities in the answers of both groups. This analysis could prove beneficial in determining popular opinions among the participants, as well as strategies to combat any misconceptions that may hinder teacher-student relationships.

In both the introduction and exit surveys, the survey creators believed that it would be best to find out the participants' beliefs and perceptions towards culture and professional development. This survey would be administered before and after engaging participants in the study. In addition, the survey would also be used to determine whether or not the participants exhibited true effects from the professional development or whether their cultural perceptions were present prior to the implementation of the professional development. These questions were developed to determine the participants' opinions on professional development and cultural awareness. The results of the participants' responses to these questions prior to the eight weeks of professional development and their responses to the same question after the eight weeks are illustrated in Figures 9–45.
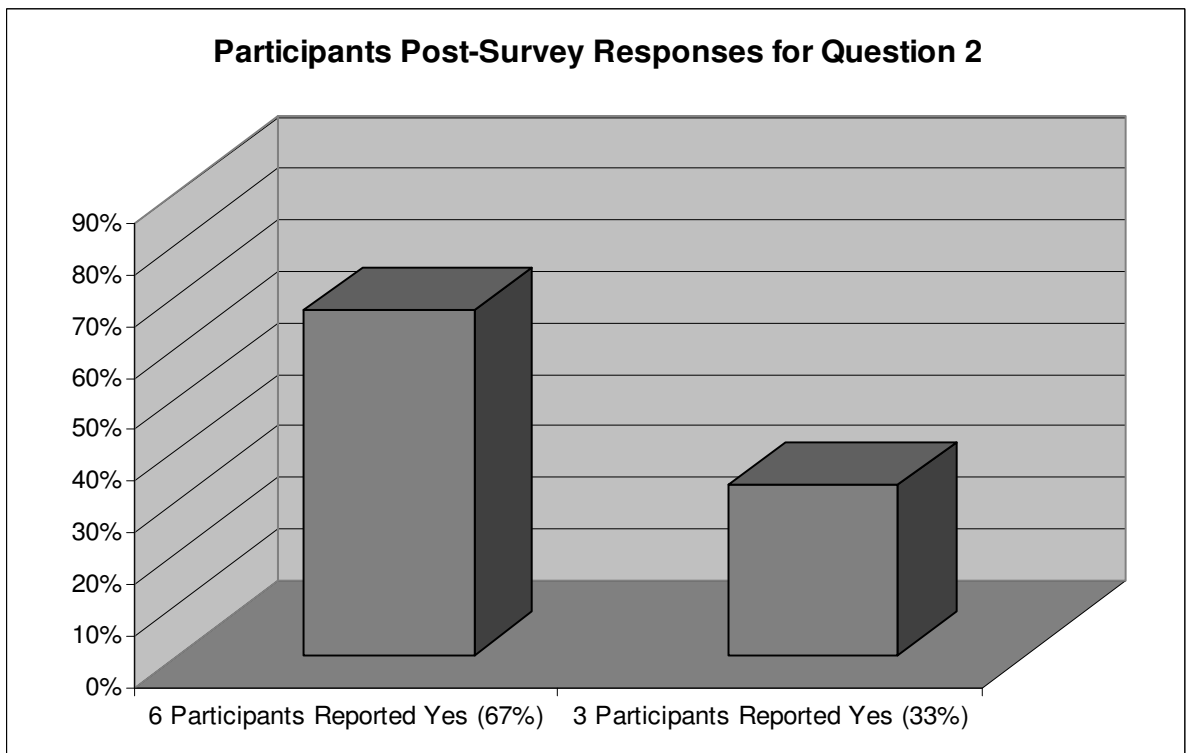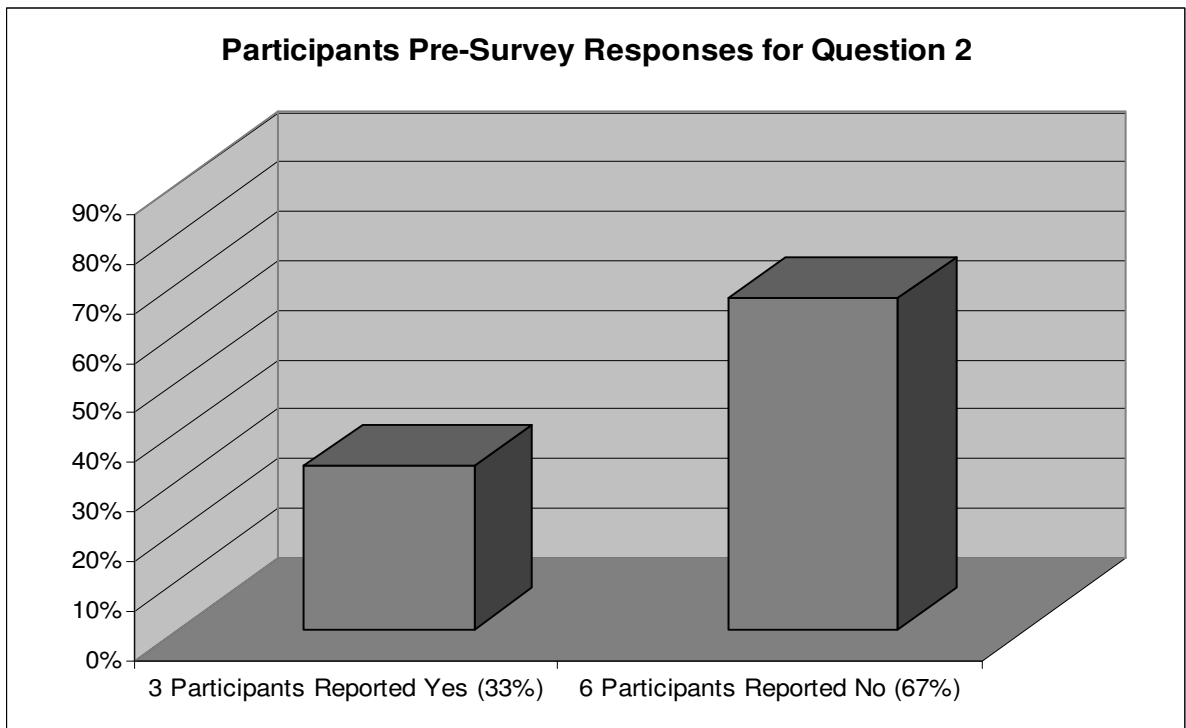
District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question one. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness increases your knowledge of approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques for teaching students from different cultures?

Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 1

1 Participant Reported Yes (11%)   8 Participants Reported No (89%)

Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 1

8 Participants Reported Yes (89%)   1 Participant Reported No (11%)

Figures 9 & 10. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question One
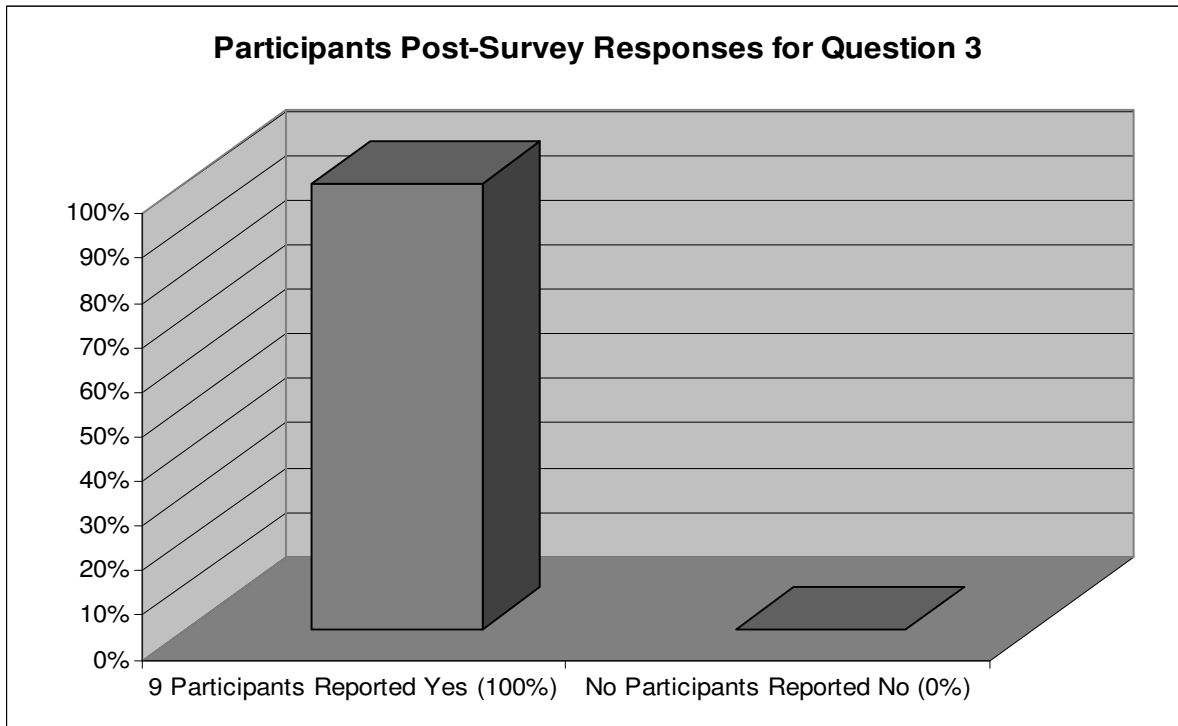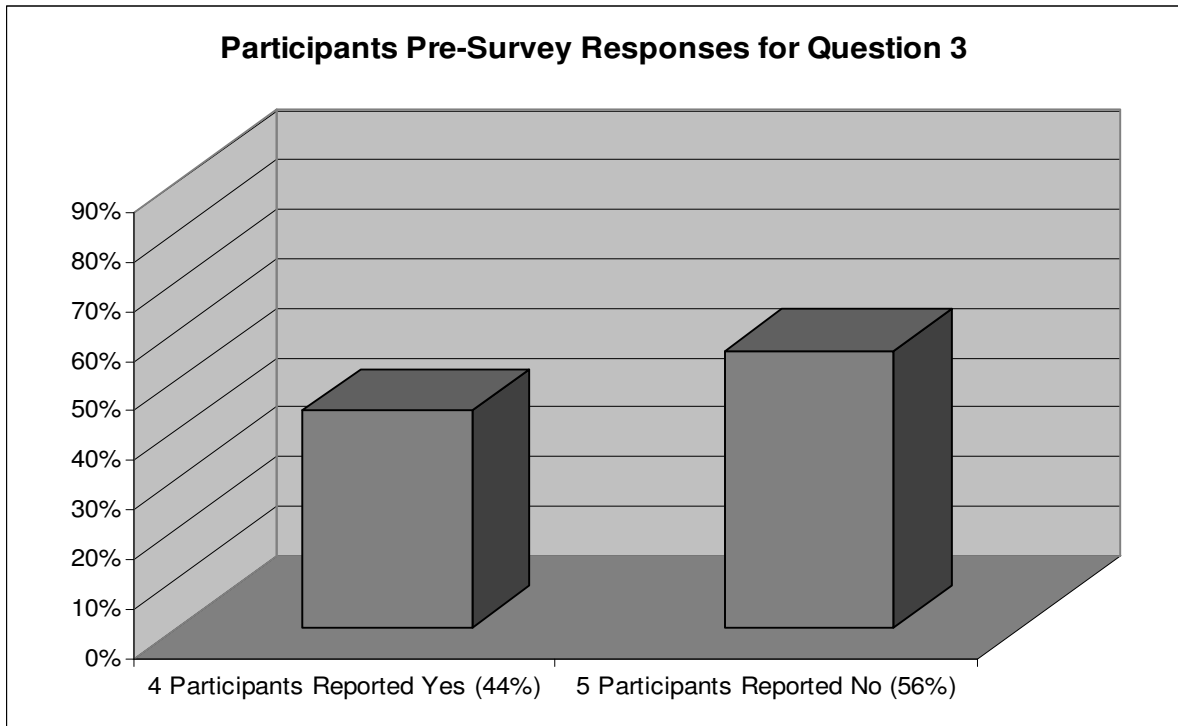
District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

Q*uestion two.* Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness increases your knowledge of approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques for assess students from different cultures?

Figures 11 & 12. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Two
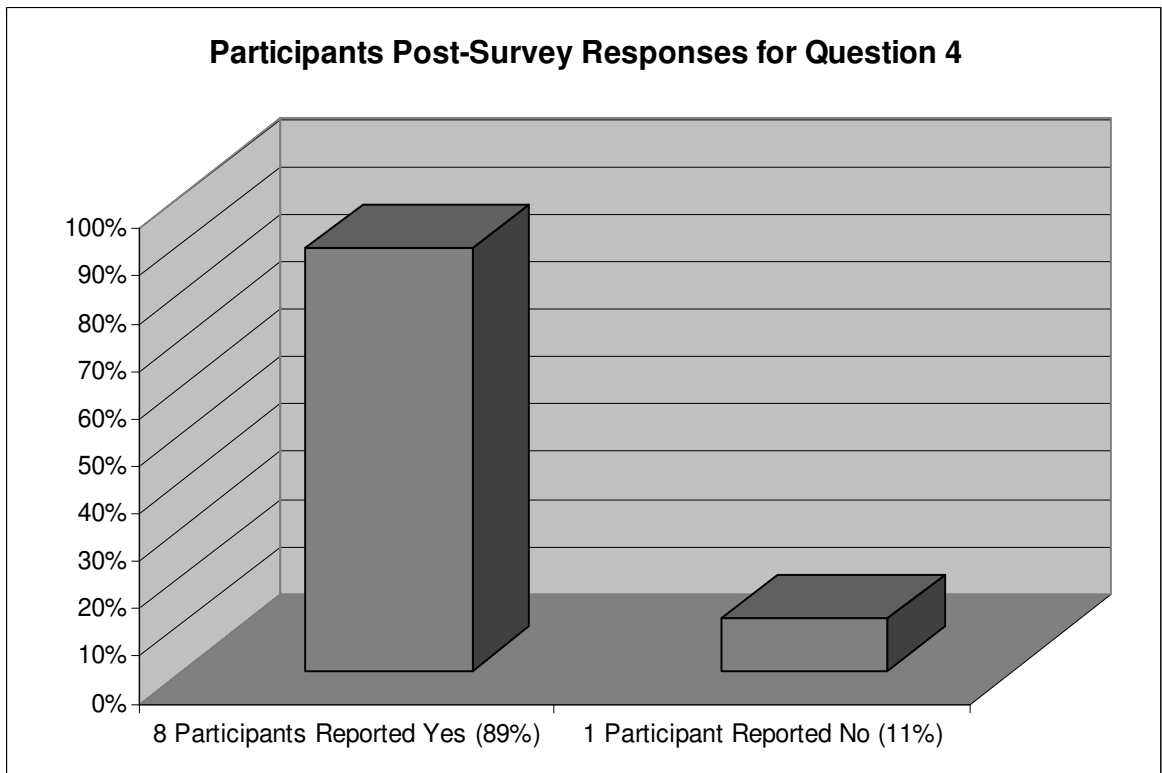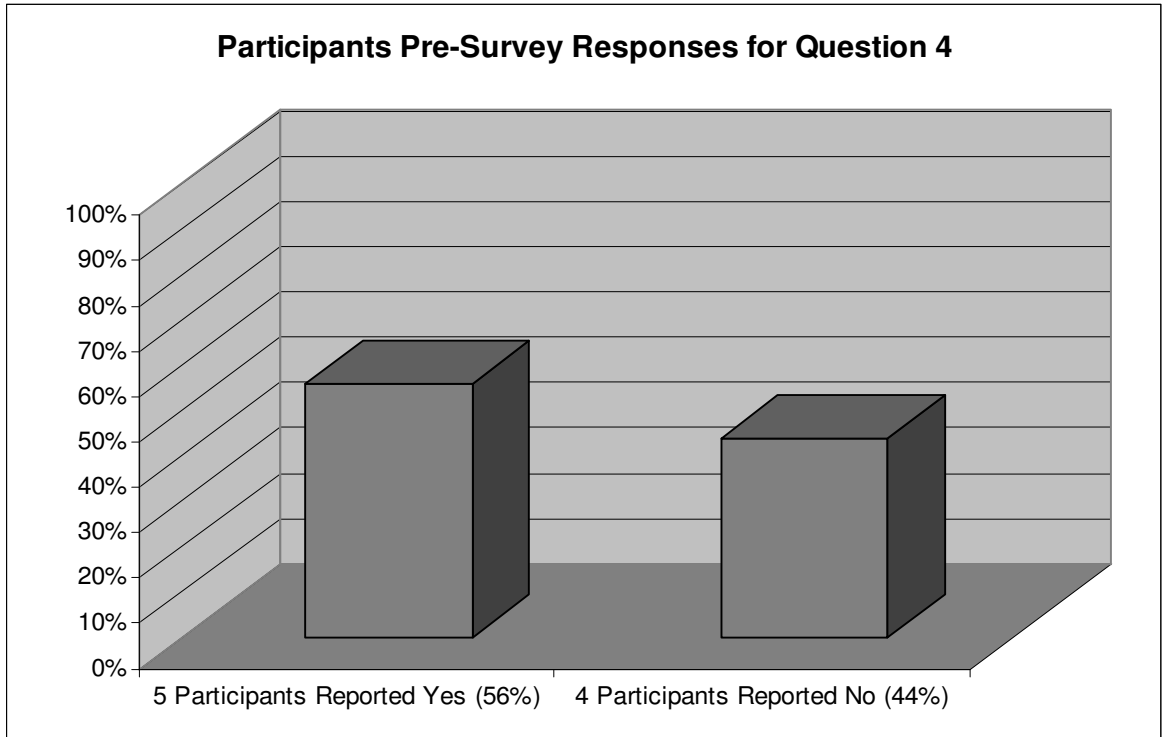
District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question three. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness increases your knowledge on cultural awareness, tolerance, understanding, and acceptance?

Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 3

90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

4 Participants Reported Yes (44%)   5 Participants Reported No (56%)

Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 3

100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

9 Participants Reported Yes (100%)   No Participants Reported No (0%)

Figures 13 & 14. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Three
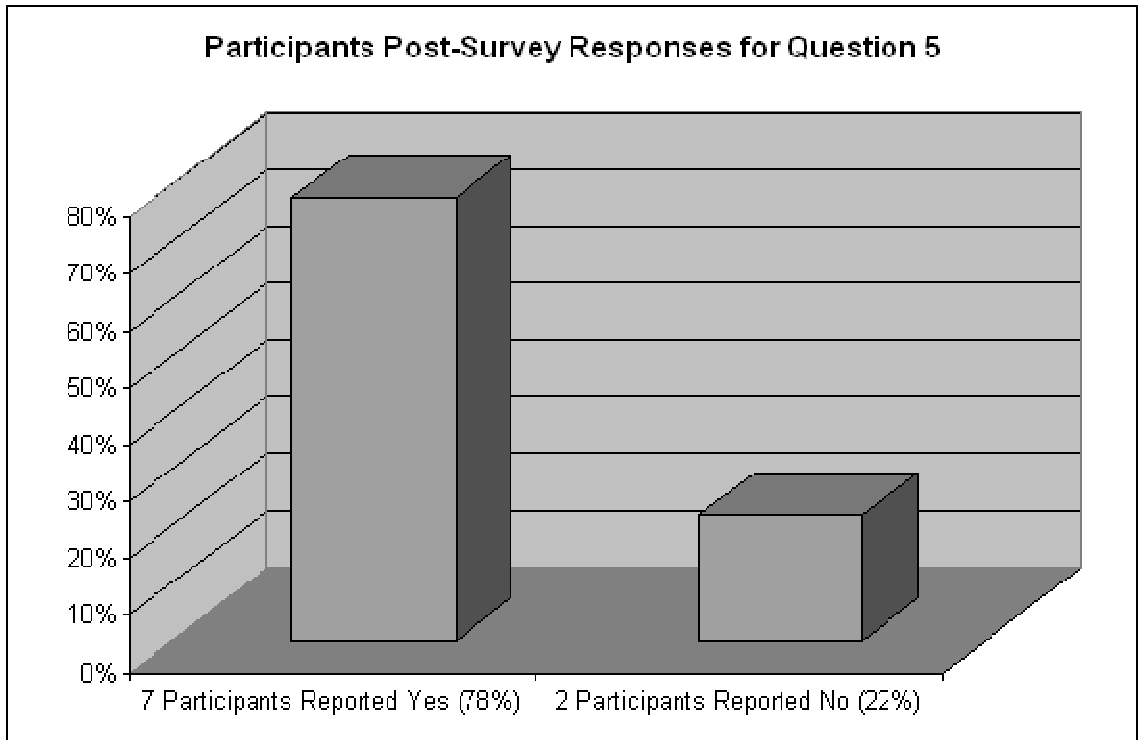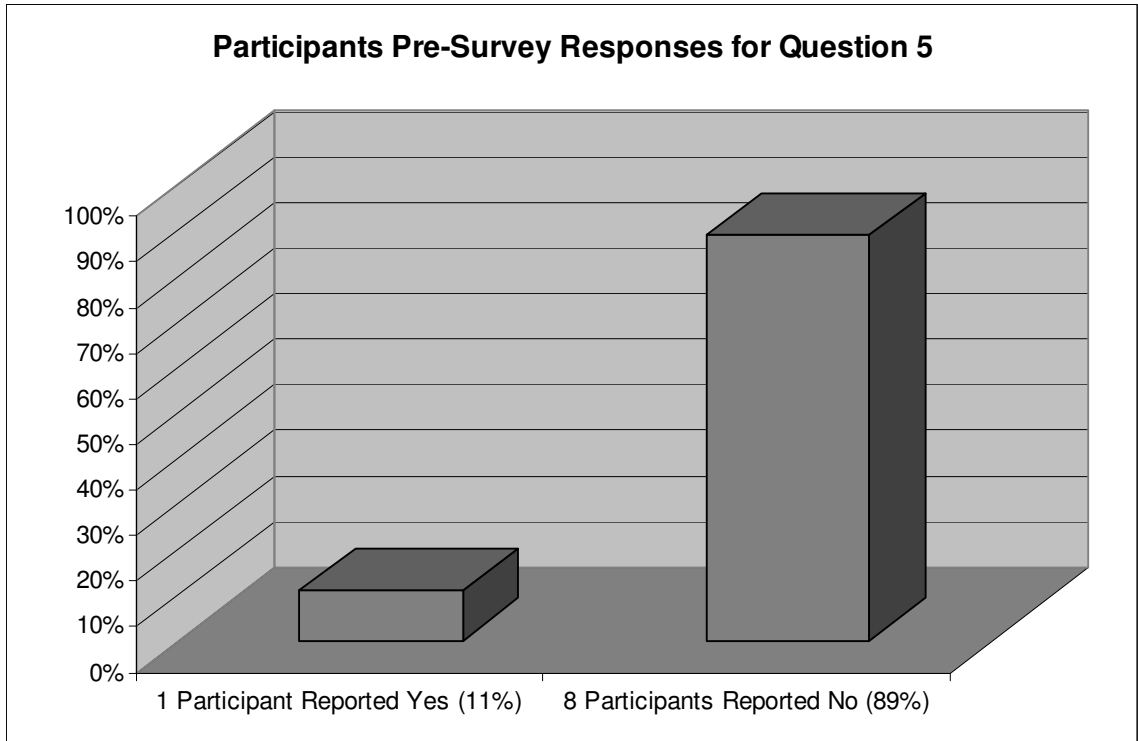
District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question four. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness can assist you in understanding and implementing multicultural teaching strategies?

Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 4

5 Participants Reported Yes (56%)   4 Participants Reported No (44%)

Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 4

8 Participants Reported Yes (89%)   1 Participant Reported No (11%)

Figures 15 & 16. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Four
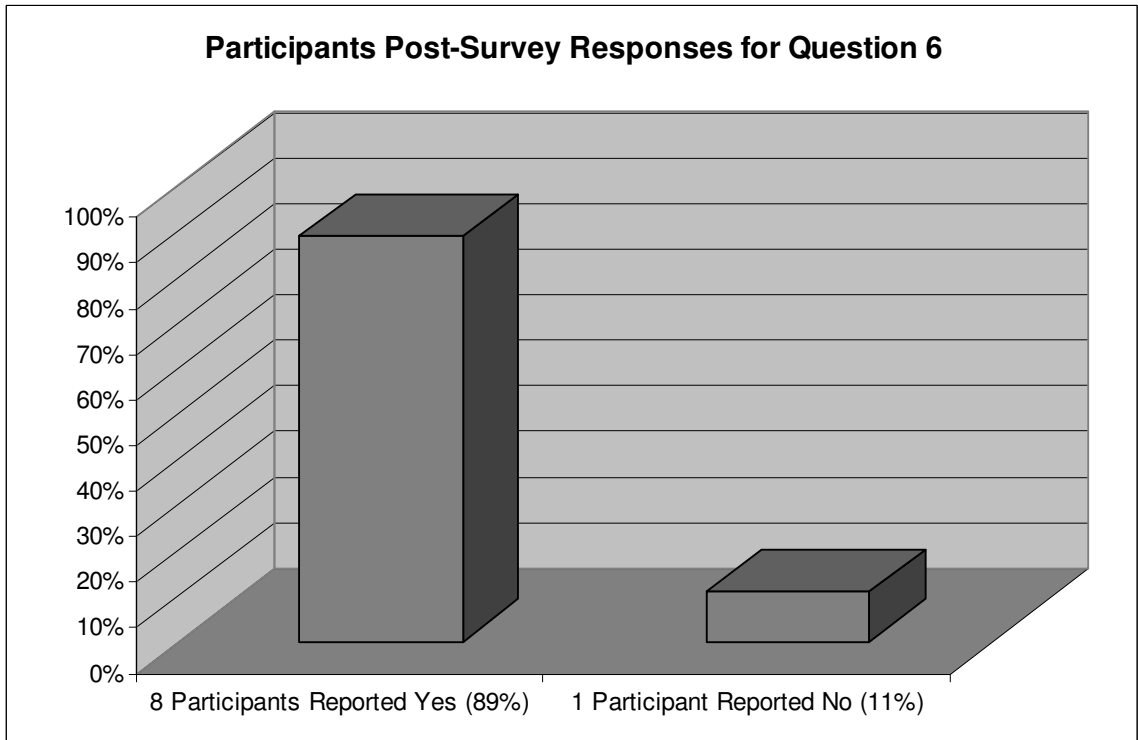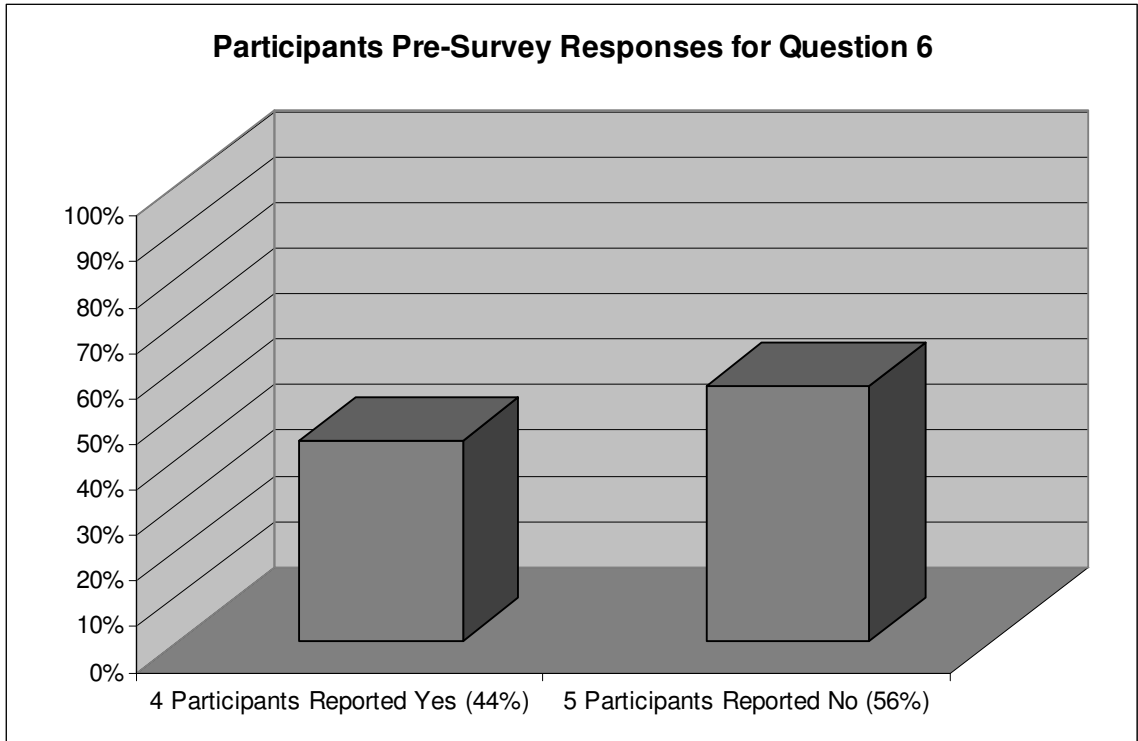
District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

    Question five. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness can guide you to change your teaching practices?

Figures 17 & 18. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Five
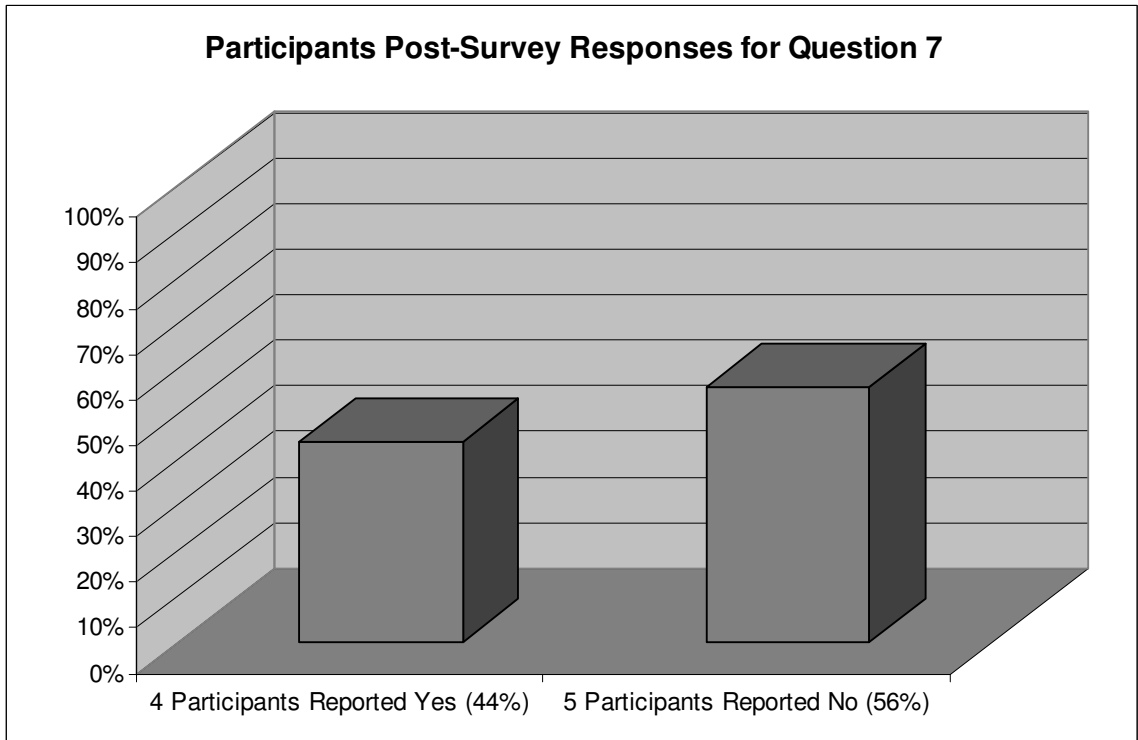
District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

    Question six. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness can assist you in implementing steps to increase parental involvement and improving the home-school connection?

Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 6

4 Participants Reported Yes (44%)   5 Participants Reported No (56%)

Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 6

8 Participants Reported Yes (89%)   1 Participant Reported No (11%)

Figures 19 & 20. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Six

District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question seven. Do you believe that your past experiences or perceptions sometimes impede your ability to interact with students from different cultures?
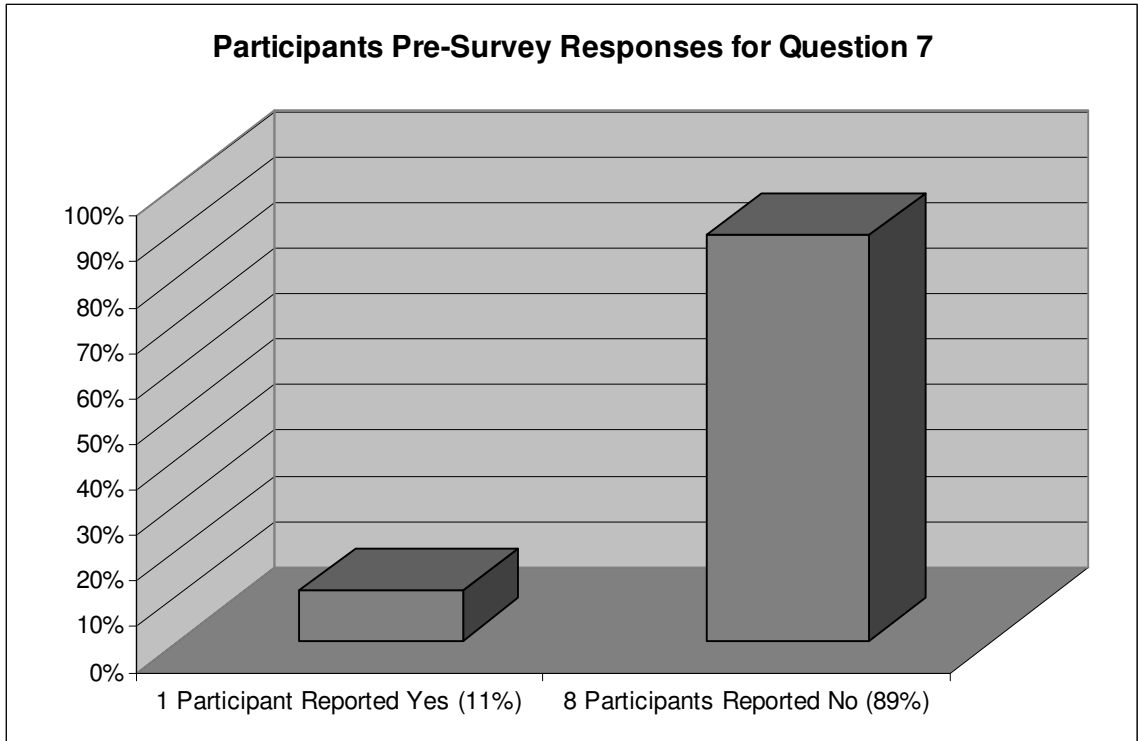
Figures 21 & 22. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Seven
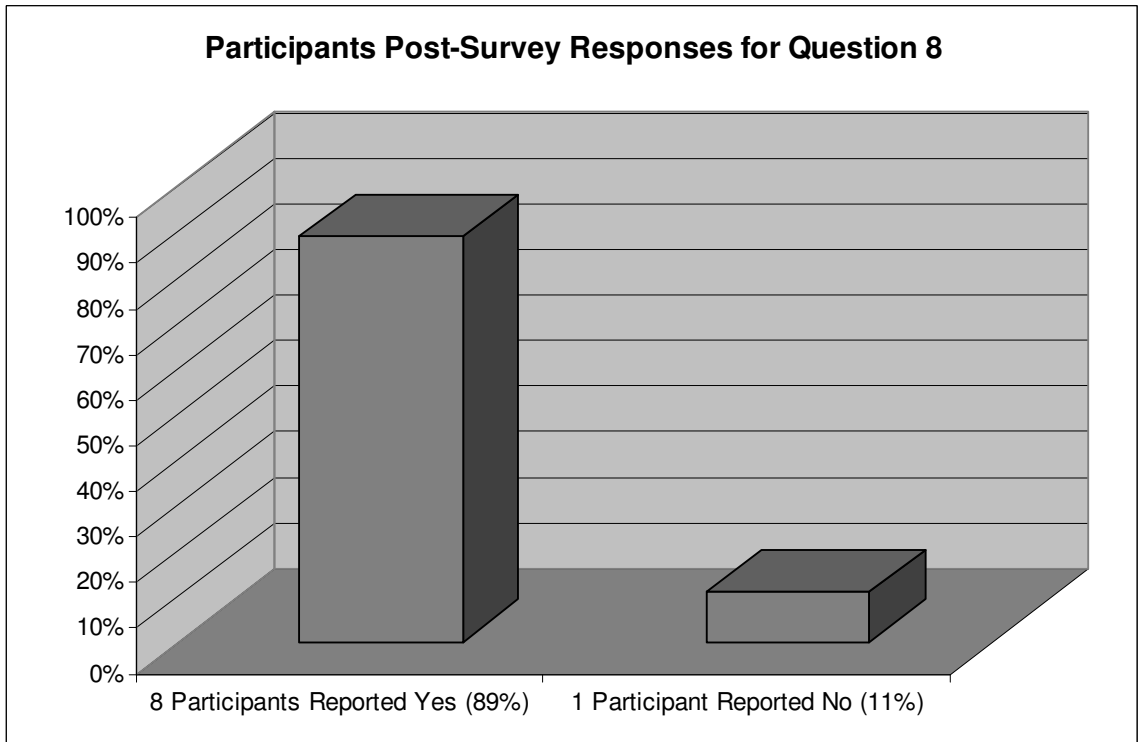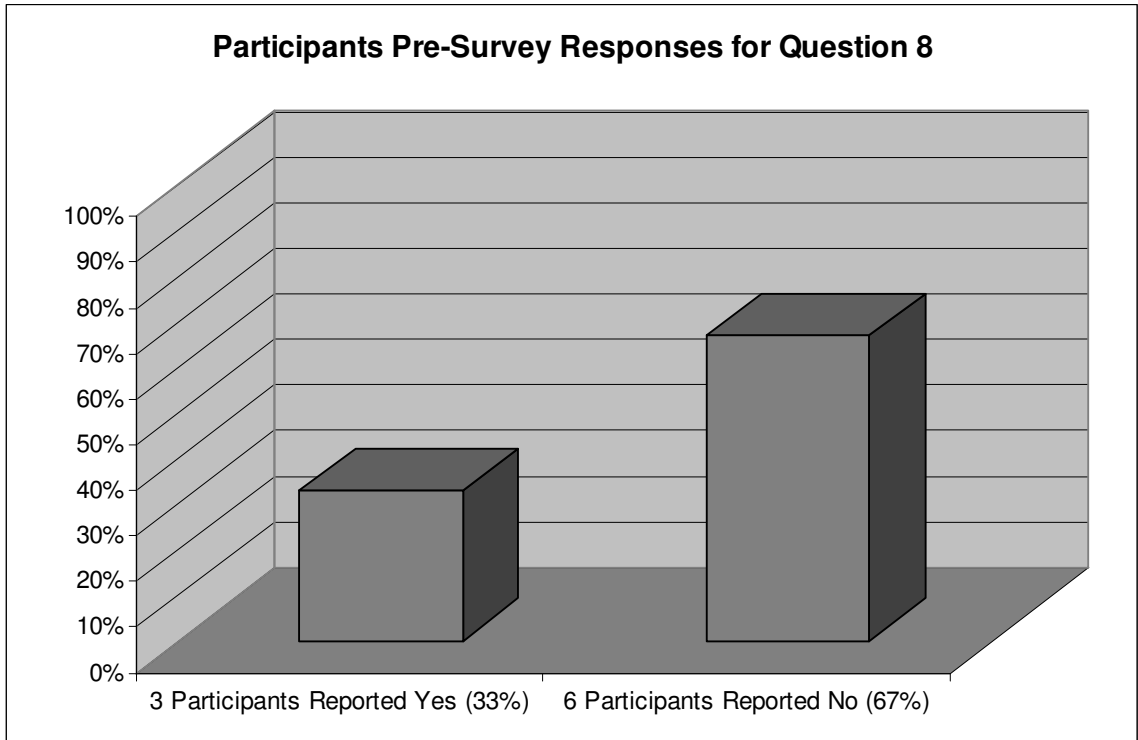
District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question eight. Do you believe that you are knowledgeable of different cultures?

Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 8

100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

3 Participants Reported Yes (33%)   6 Participants Reported No (67%)

Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 8

100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

8 Participants Reported Yes (89%)   1 Participant Reported No (11%)

Figures 23 & 24. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Eight

District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question nine. Do you believe that you are prepared to teach students from different cultures?

Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 9

6 Participants Reported Yes (67%)	3 Participants Reported No (33%)

Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 9

6 Participants Reported Yes (67%)	3 Participants Reported No (33%)
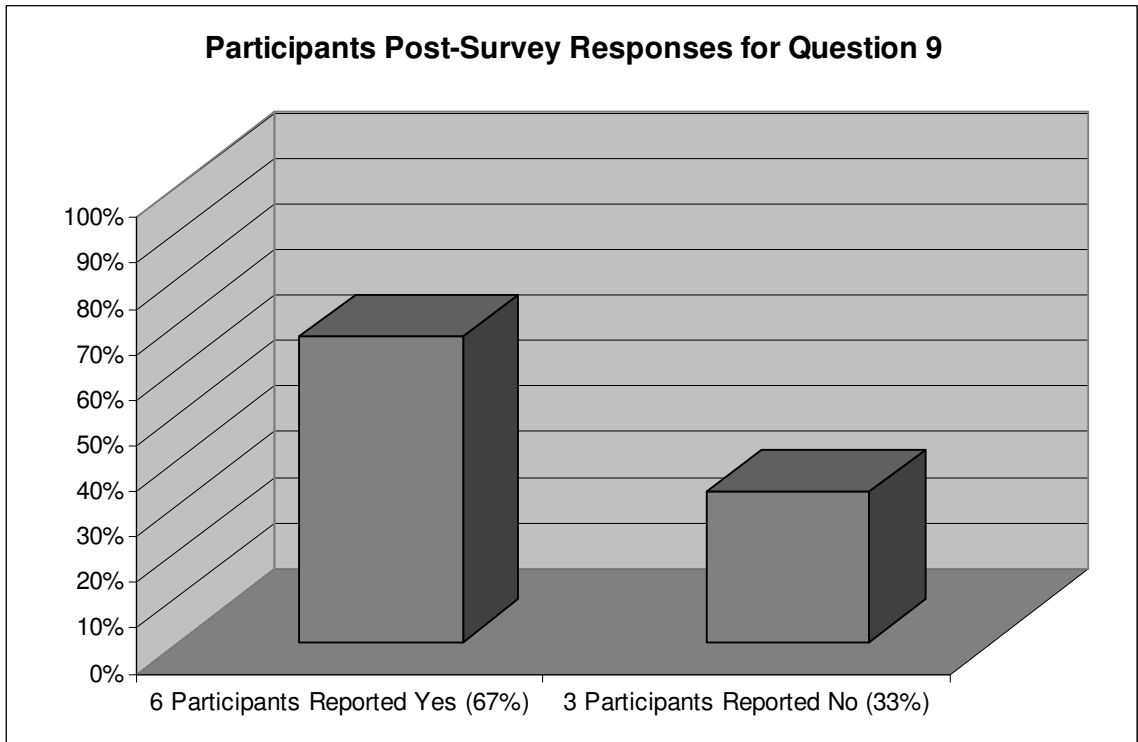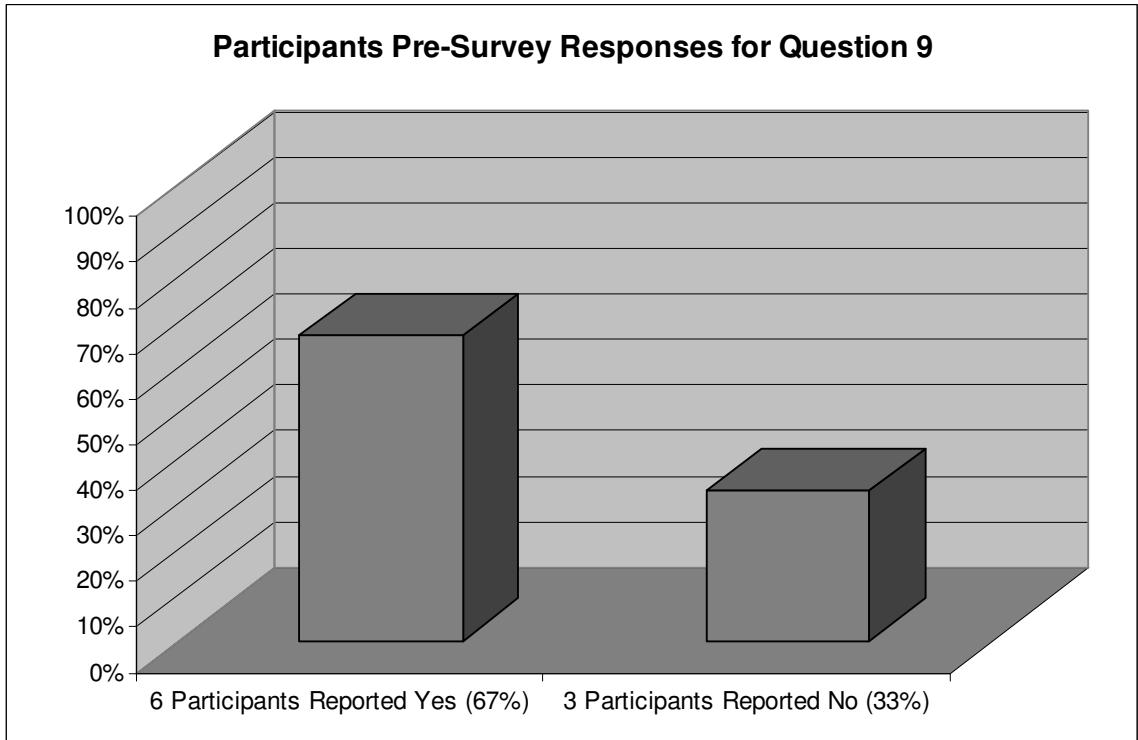
Figures 25 & 26. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Nine

District One's Pre/Post Survey Results

    Question ten. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness can have an effect on your cultural awareness?
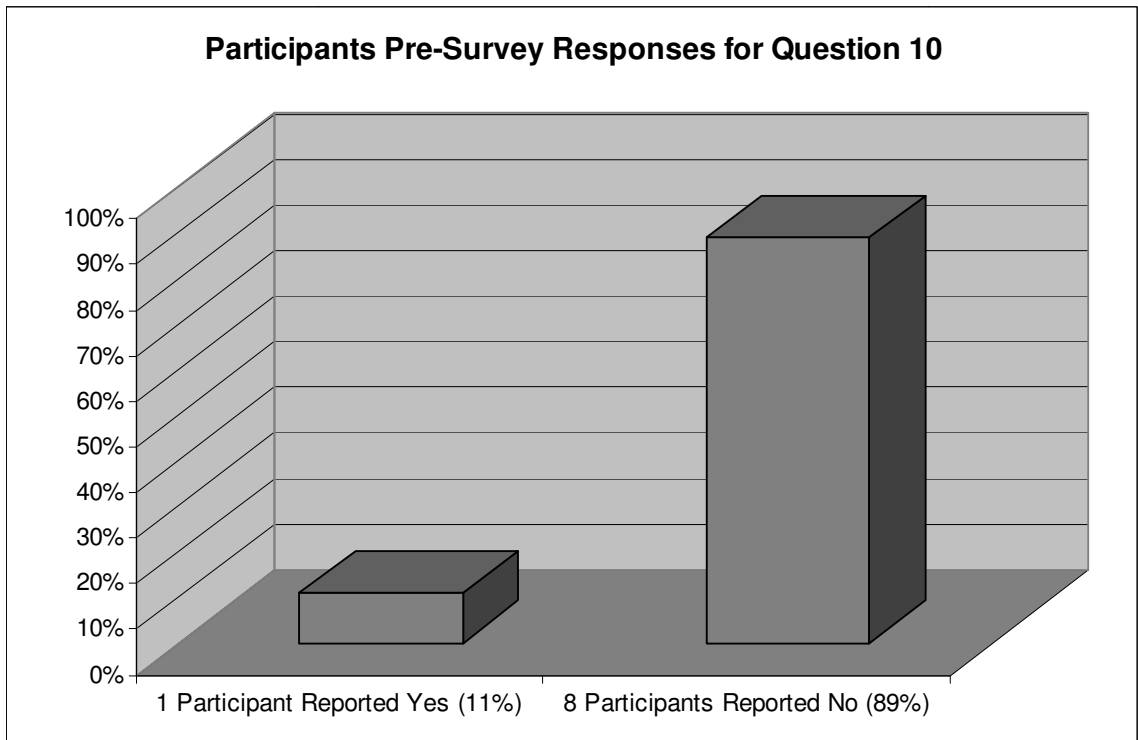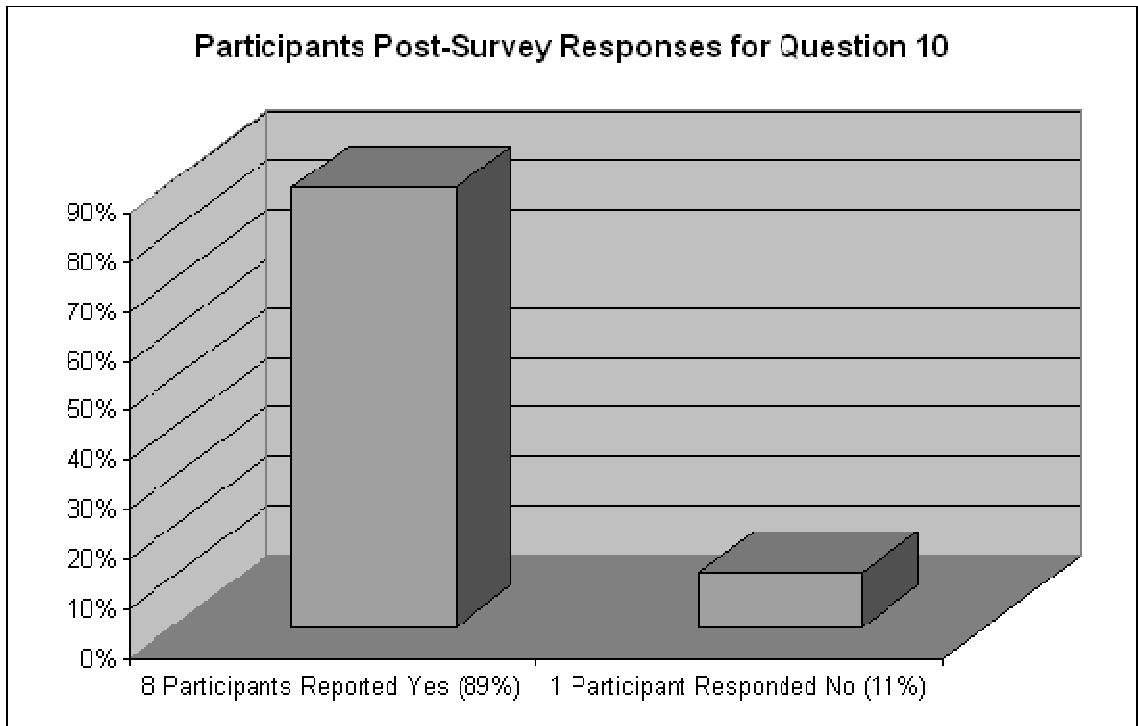
Figures 27 & 28. District One's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Ten

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question one. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness increases your knowledge of approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques for teaching students from different cultures?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 1

7 Participants Reported Yes (78%)   2 Participants Reported No (22%)

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 1

7 Participants Reported Yes (78%)   2 Participants Reported No (22%)
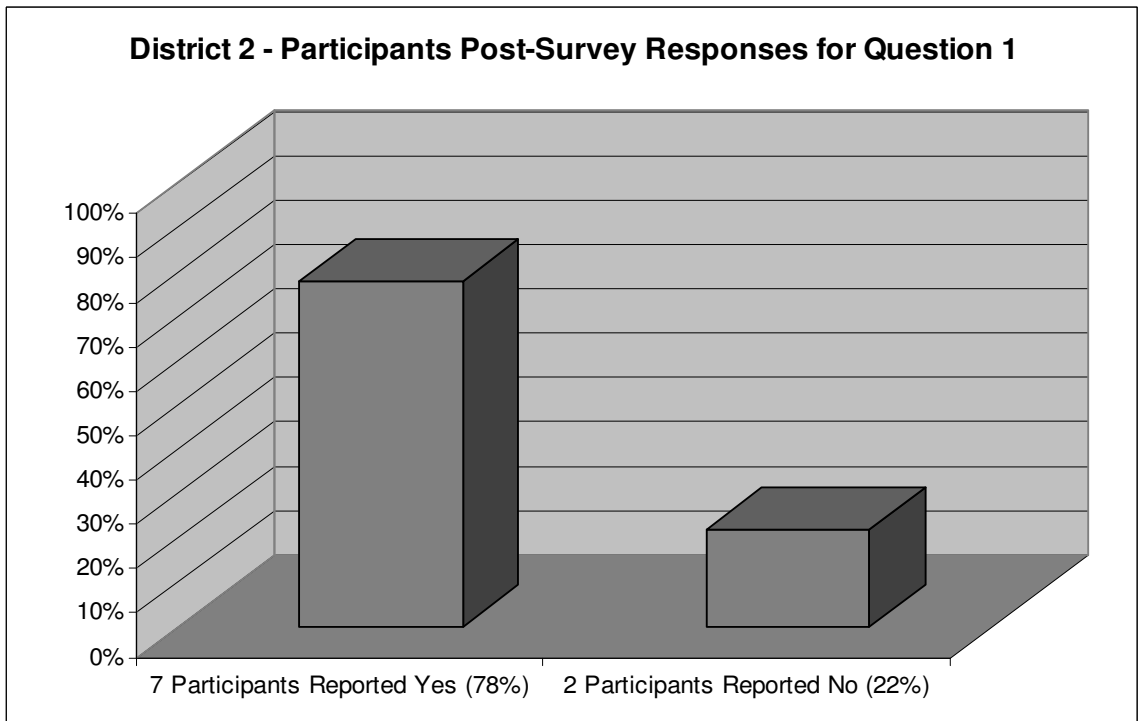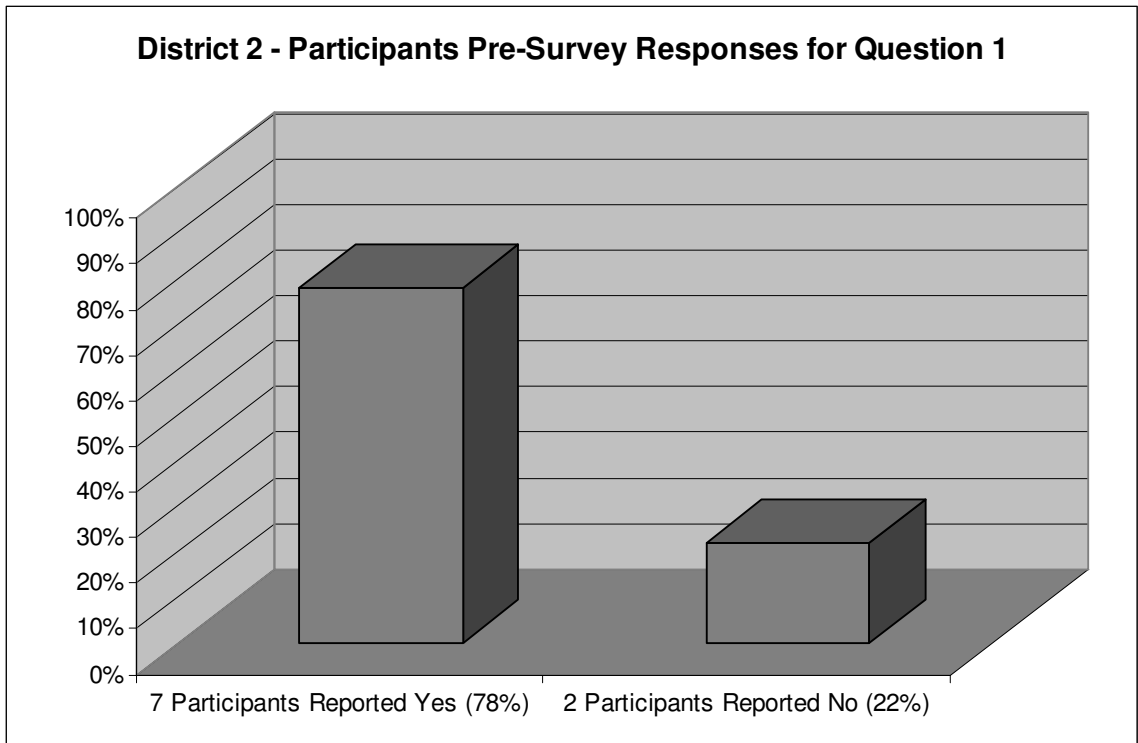
Figures 29 & 30. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question One

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

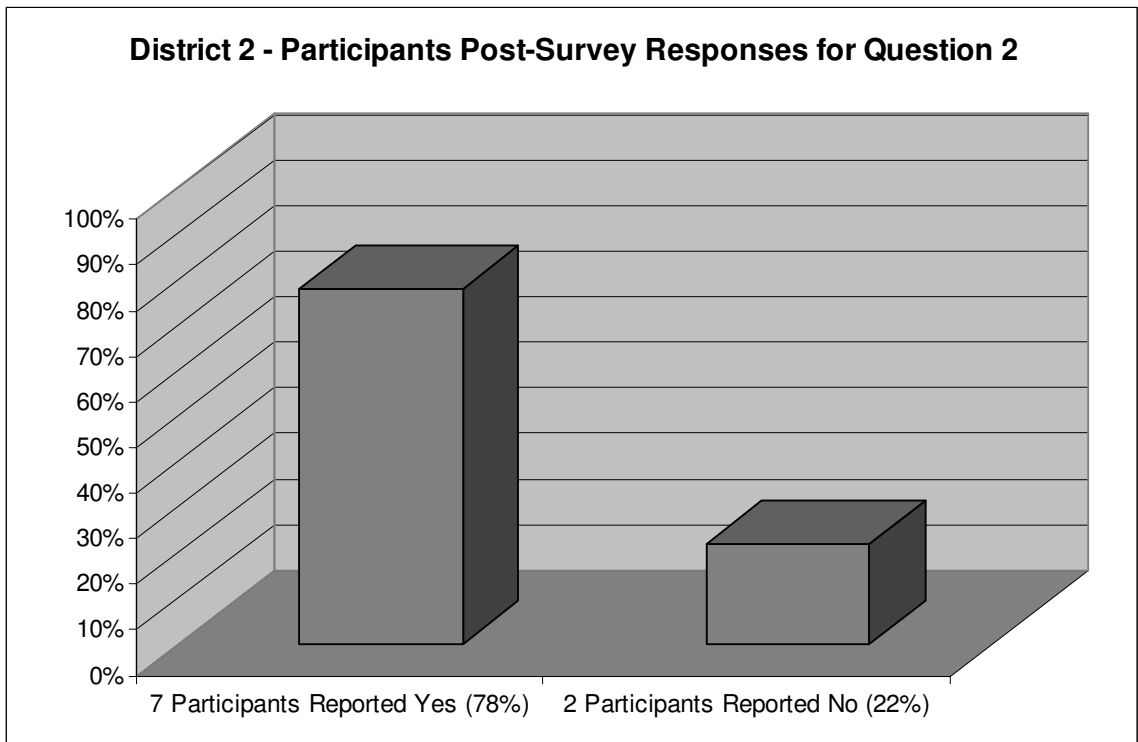*Question two.* Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness increases your knowledge of approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques for assess students from different cultures?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 2

100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

2 Participants Reported Yes (22%)   7 Participants Reported No (78%)

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 2

100%
90%
80%
70%
60%
50%
40%
30%
20%
10%
0%

7 Participants Reported Yes (78%)   2 Participants Reported No (22%)
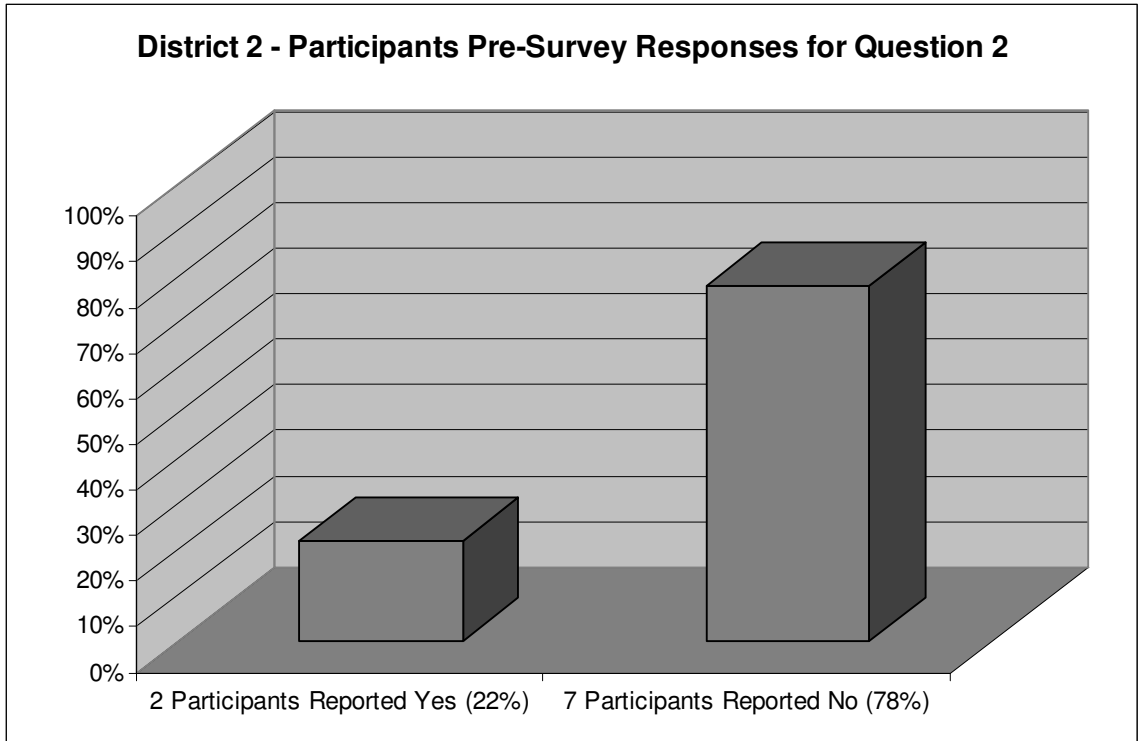
Figures 31 & 32. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Two

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question three. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness increases your knowledge on cultural awareness, tolerance, understanding, and acceptance?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 3

2 Participants Reported Yes (22%)   7 Participants Reported No (78%)

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 3

8 Participants Reported Yes (89%)   1 Participant Reported No (11%)
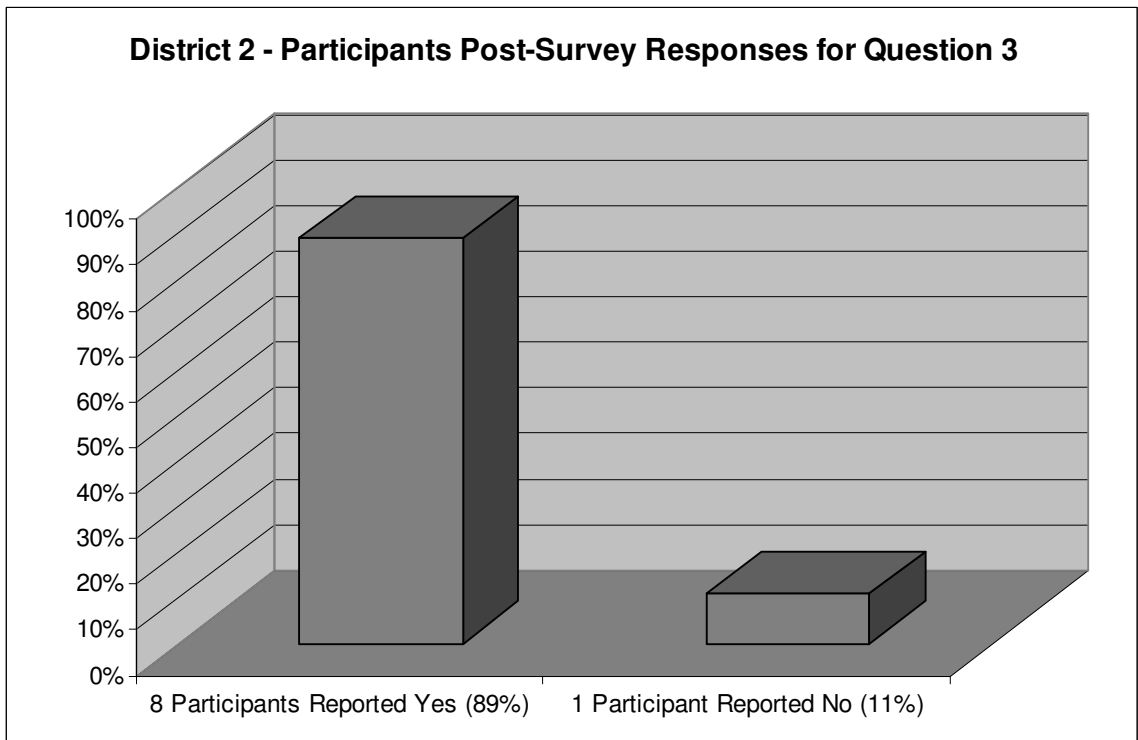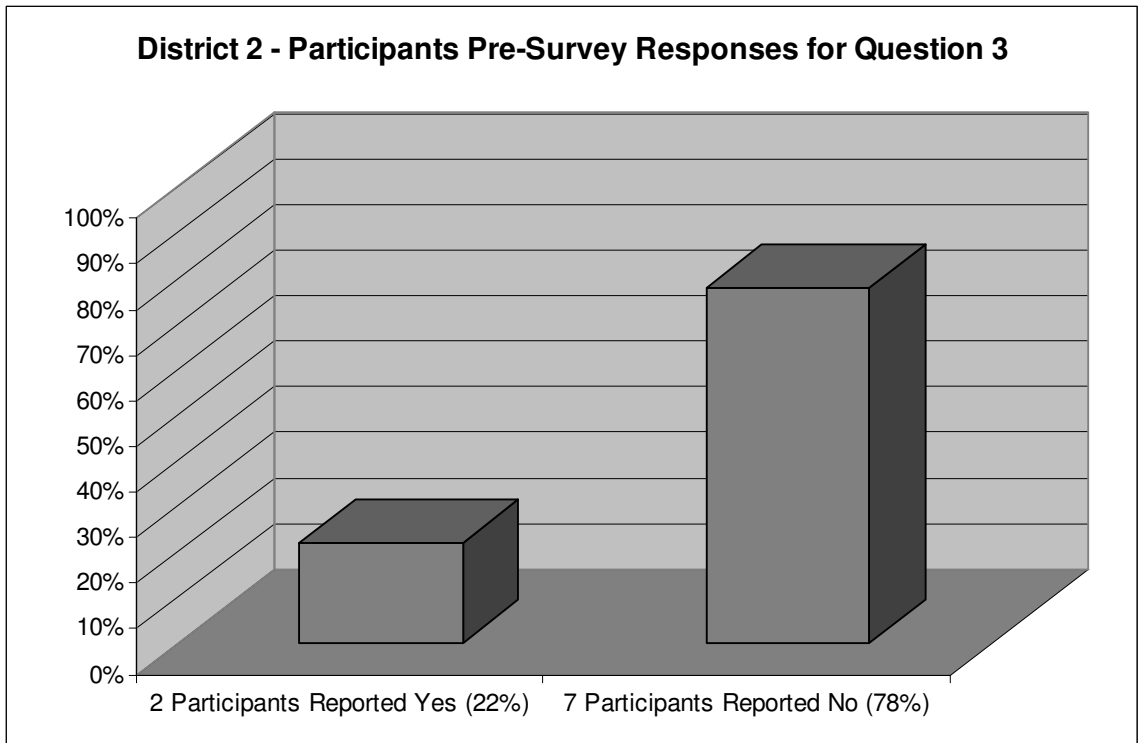
Figures 33 & 34. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Three

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question four. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness can assist you in understanding and implementing multicultural teaching strategies?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 4

5 Participants Reported Yes (56%)   4 Participants Reported No (44%)

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 4

8 Participants Reported Yes (89%)   1 Participant Reported No (11%)
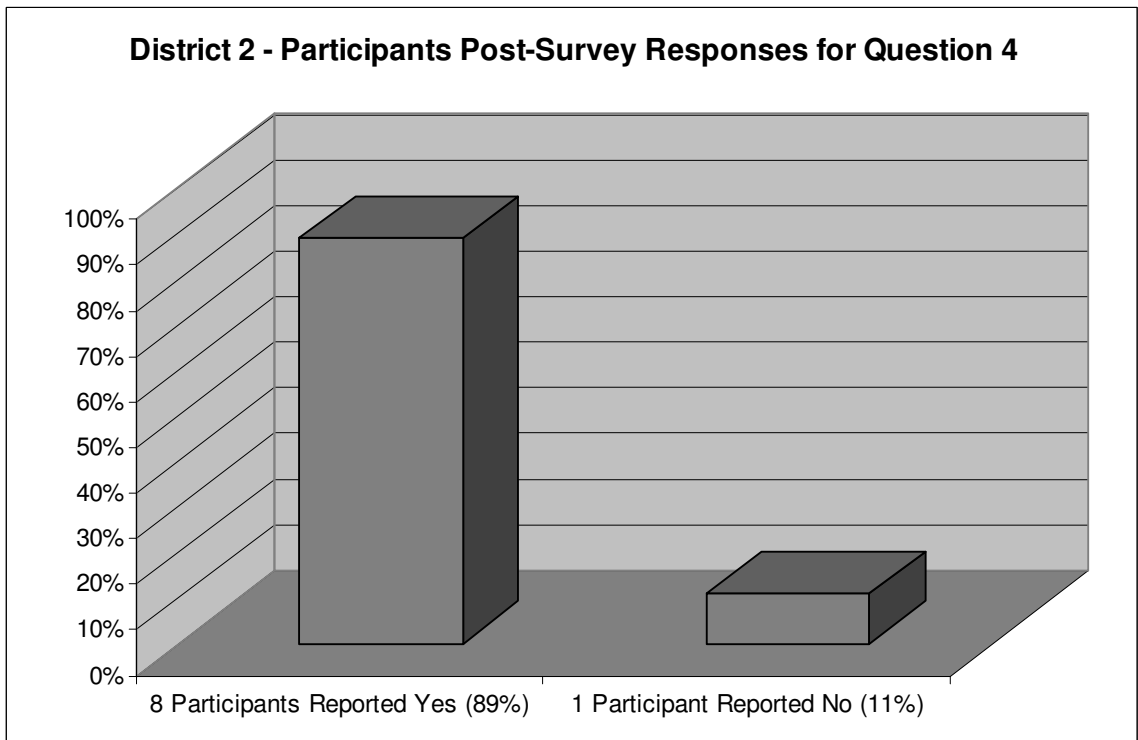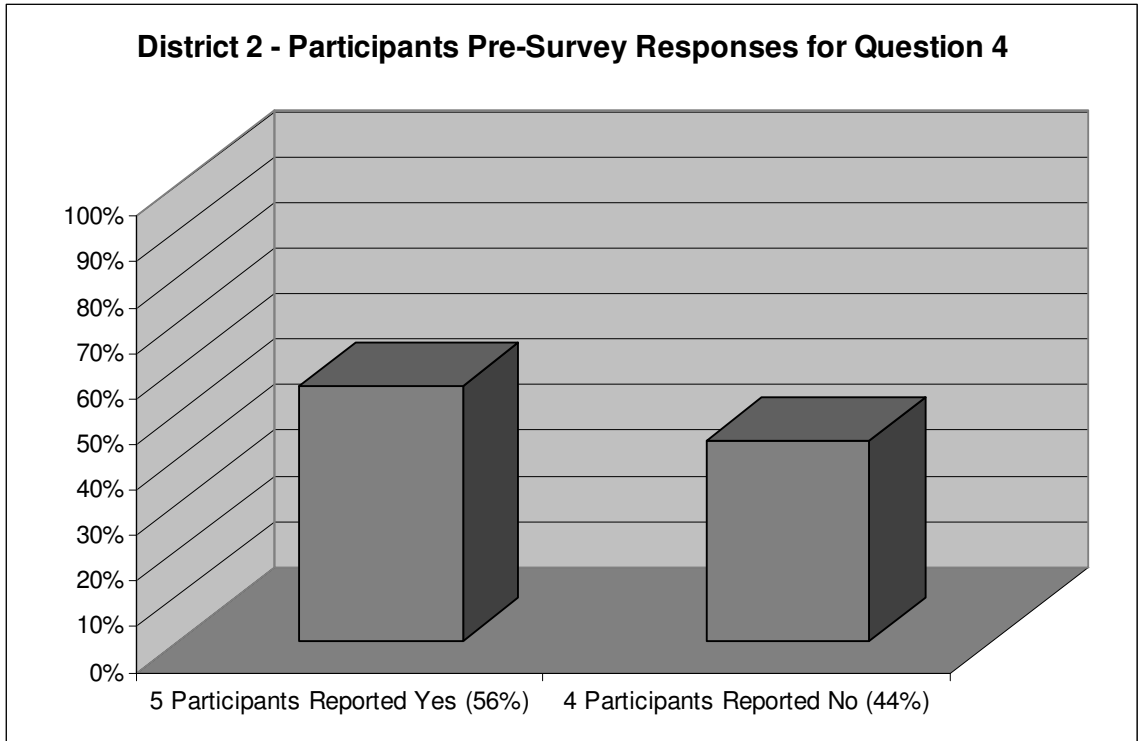
Figures 35 & 36. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Four

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question five. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness can guide you to changing your teaching practices?
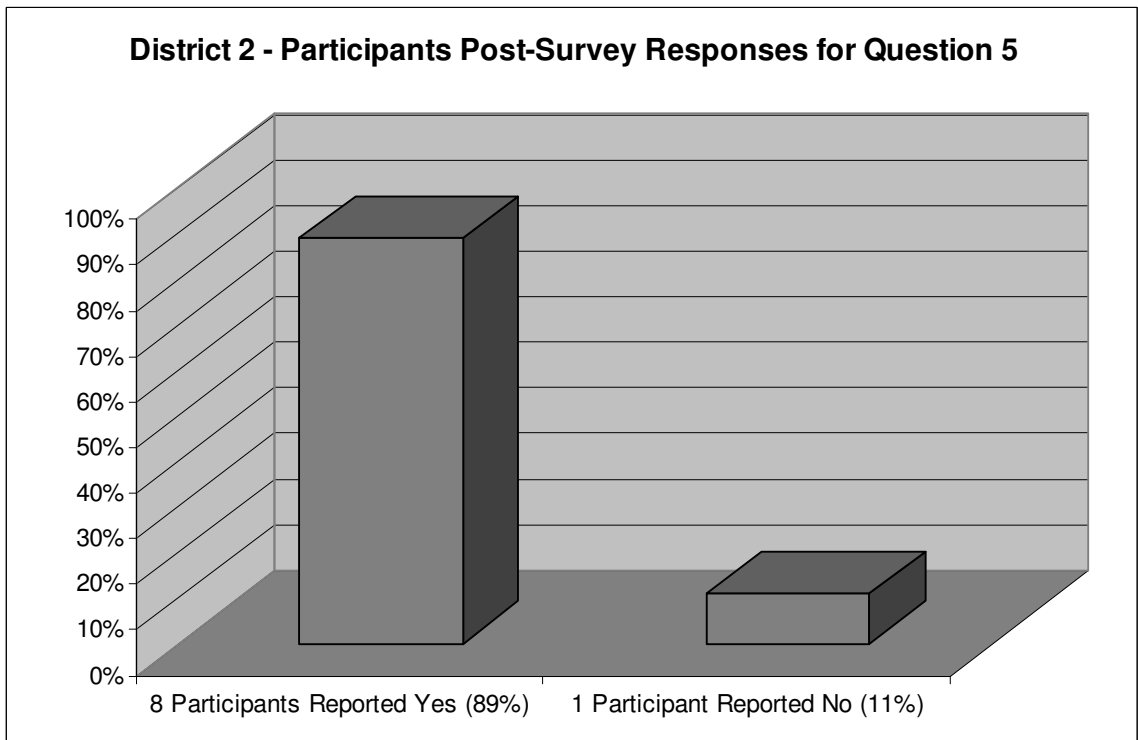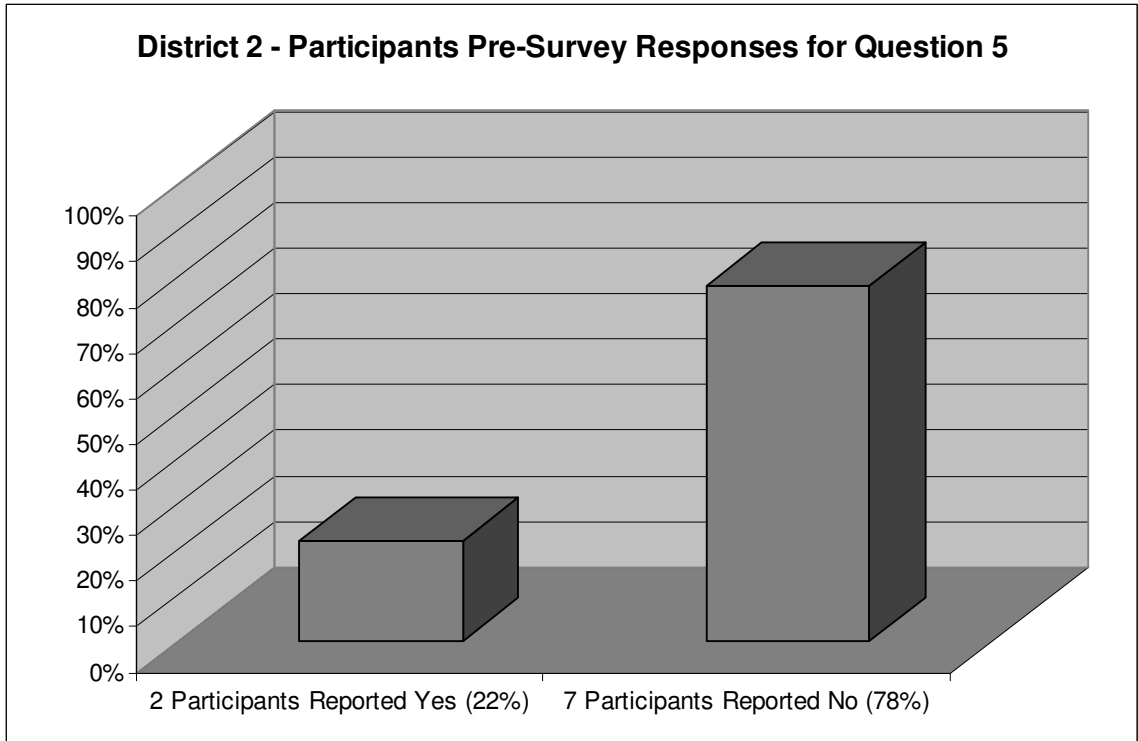
Figures 37 & 38. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Five

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question six. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness can assist you in implementing steps to increasing parental involvement and improving the home-school connection?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 6

4 Participants Reported Yes (44%)   5 Participants Reported No (56%)

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 6

8 Participants Reported Yes (89%)   1 Participant Reported No (11%)
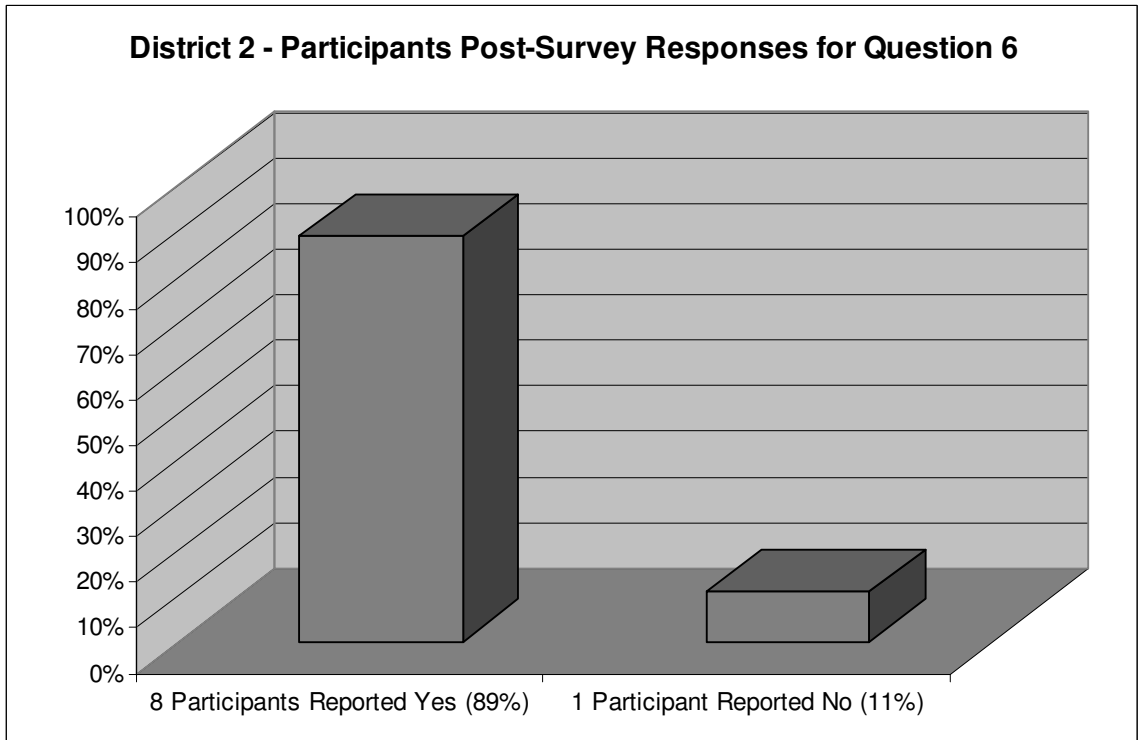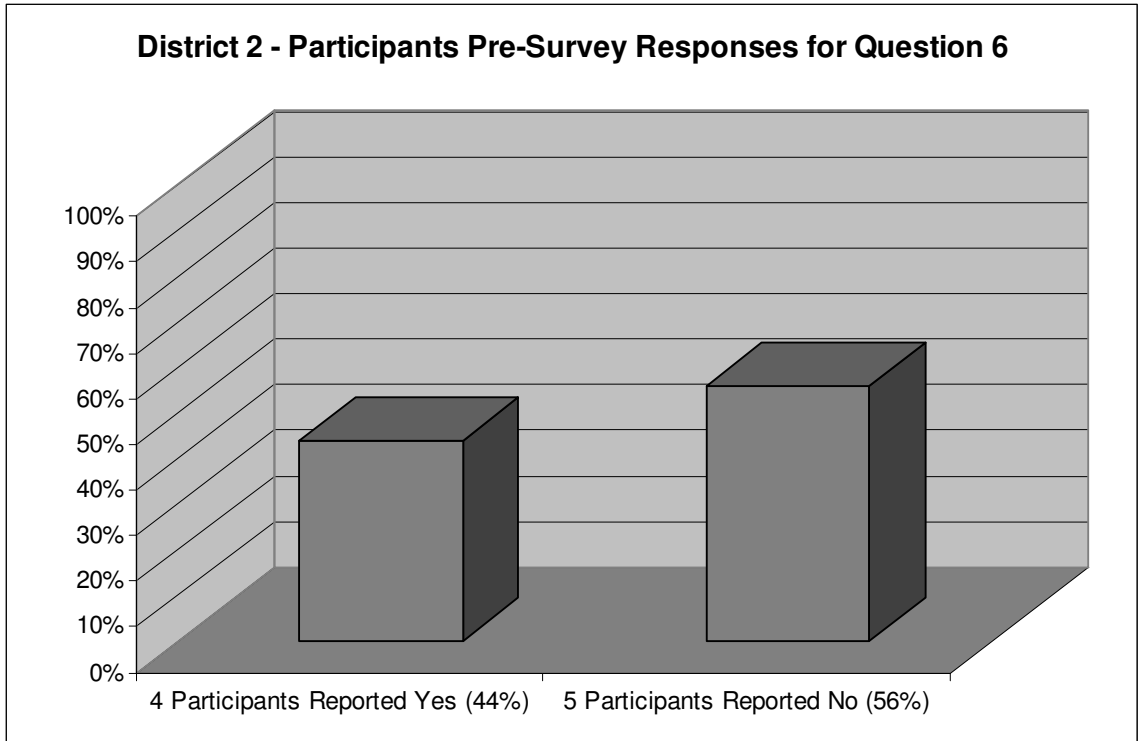
Figures 39 & 40. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Six

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question seven. Do you believe that your past experiences or perceptions sometimes impede your ability to interact with students from different cultures?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 7

```
100%
 90%
 80%
 70%
 60%
 50%
 40%
 30%
 20%
 10%
  0%
      4 Participants Reported Yes (44%)    5 Participants Reported No (56%)
```

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 7

```
100%
 90%
 80%
 70%
 60%
 50%
 40%
 30%
 20%
 10%
  0%
      7 Participants Reported Yes (78%)    2 Participants Reported No (22%)
```
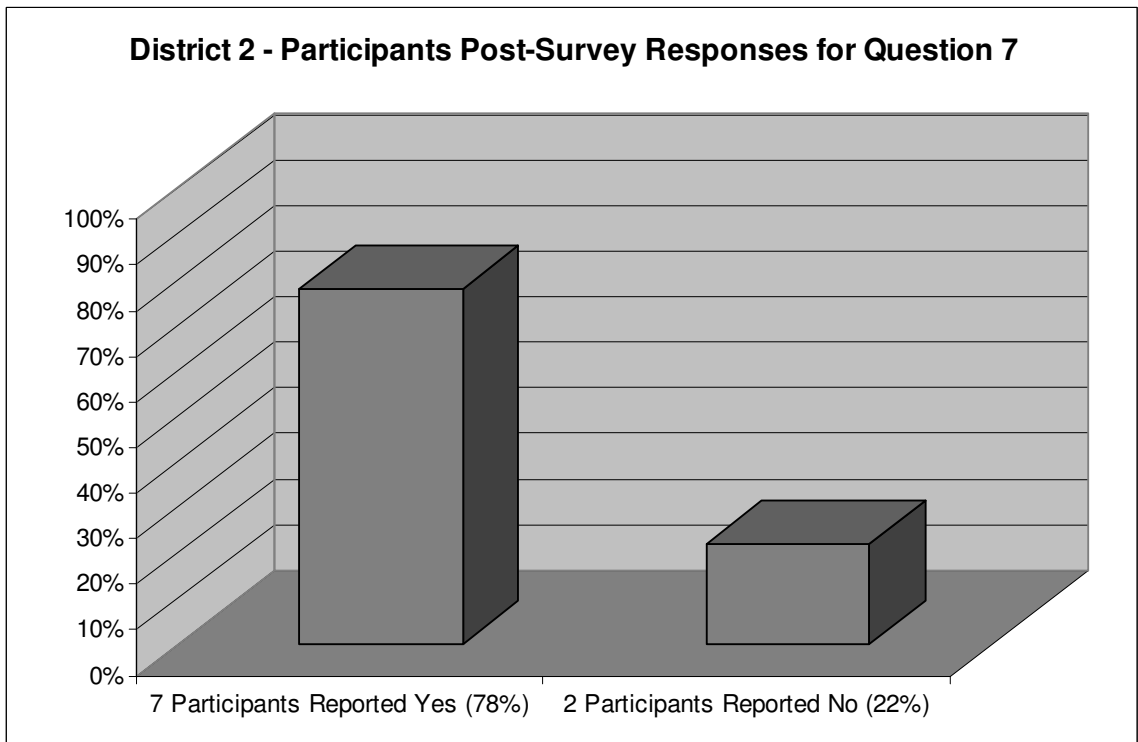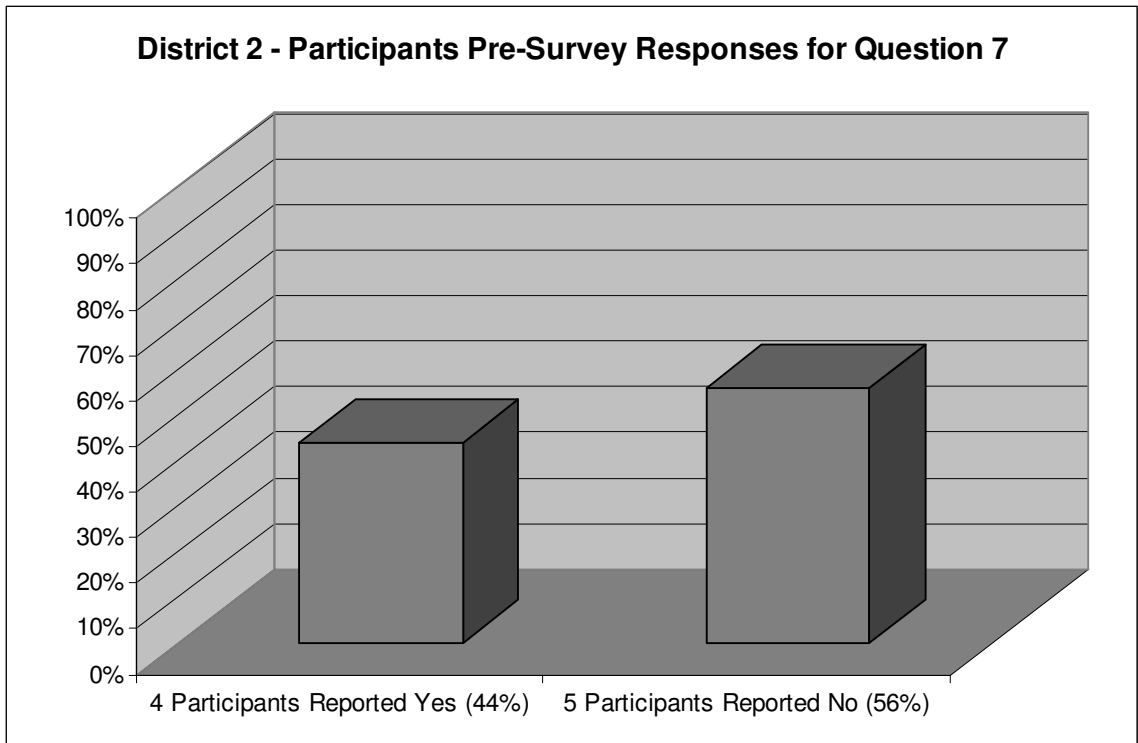
Figures 41 & 42. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Seven

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question eight. Do you believe that you are knowledgeable of different cultures?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 8

7 Participants Reported Yes (78%)   2 Participants Reported No (22%)

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 8

8 Participants Reported Yes (89%)   1 Participant Reported No (11%)
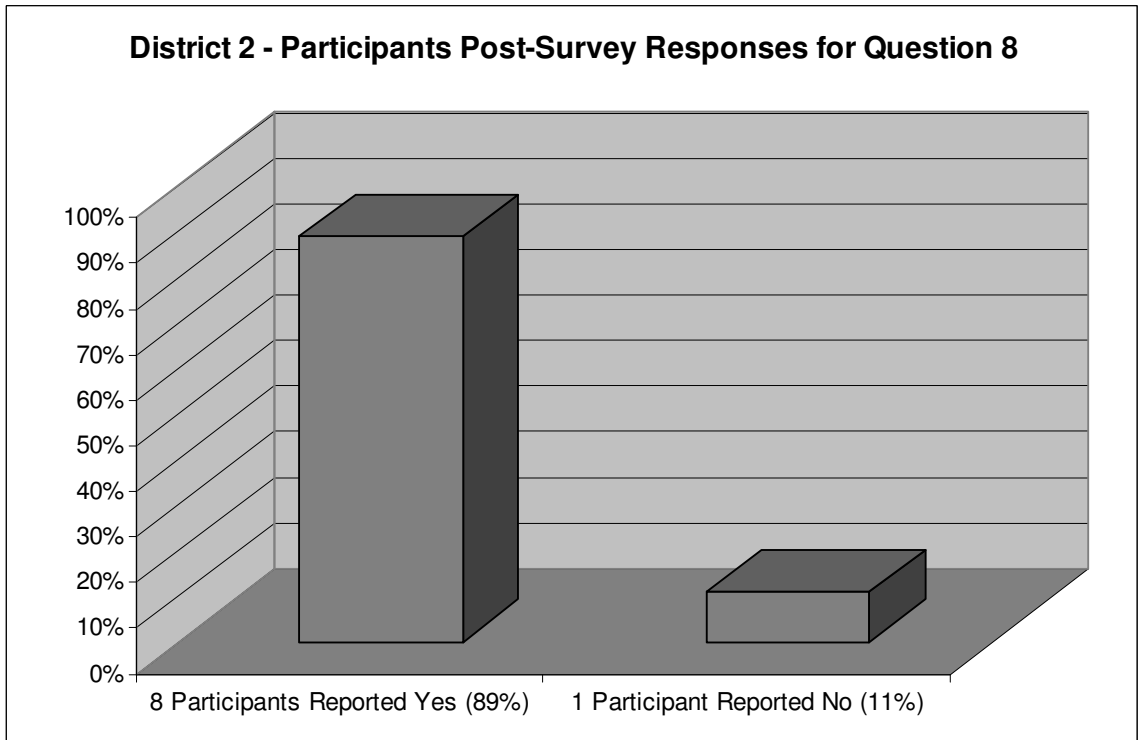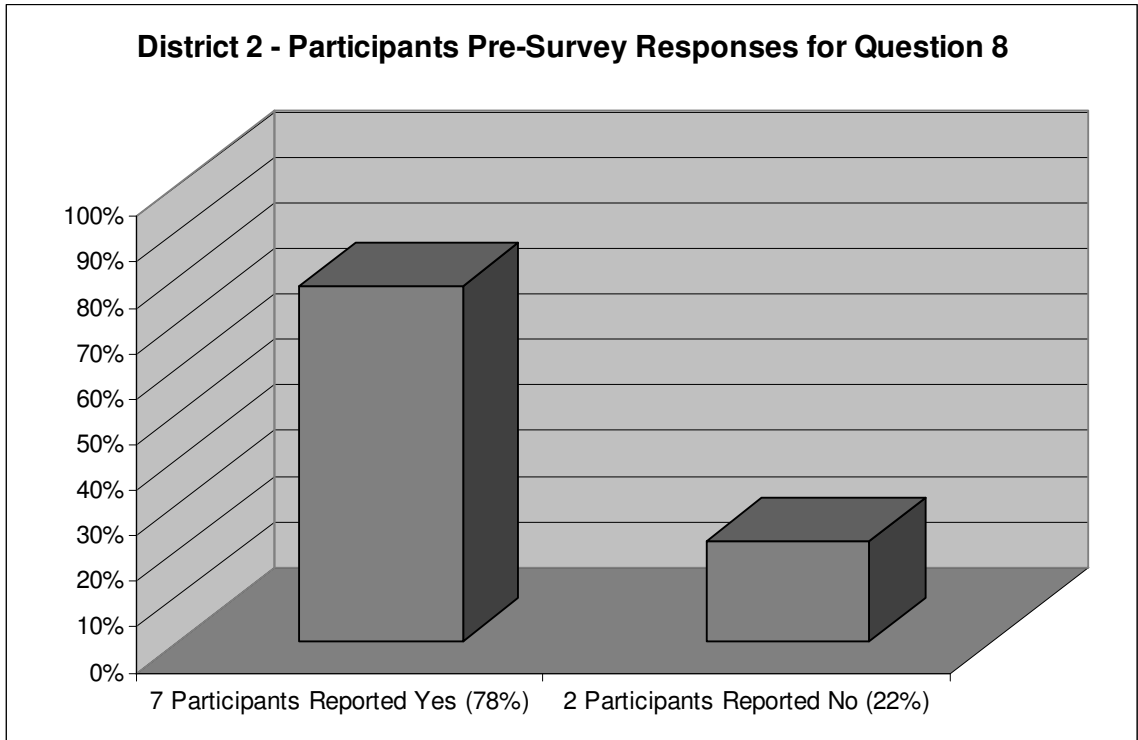
Figures 43 & 44. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Eight

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question nine. Do you believe that you are prepared to teach students from different cultures?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 9

9 Participants Reported Yes (100%)   0 Participants Reported No (0%)

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 9

6 Participants Reported Yes (67%)   3 Participants Reported No (33%)
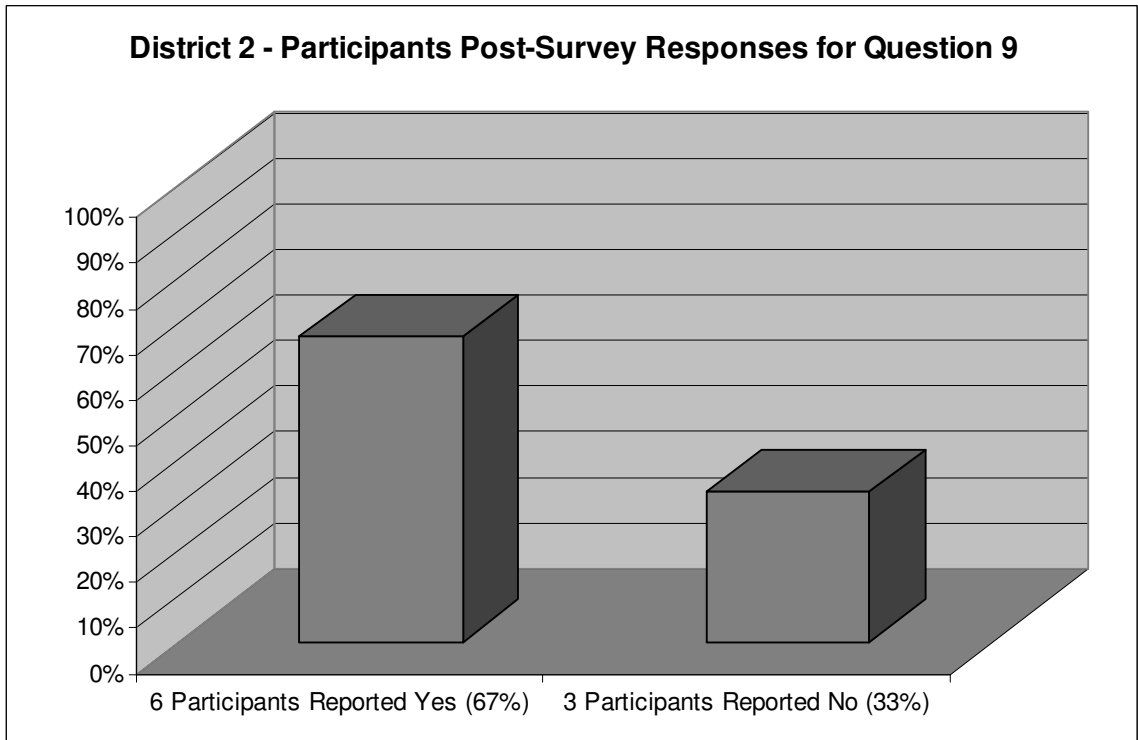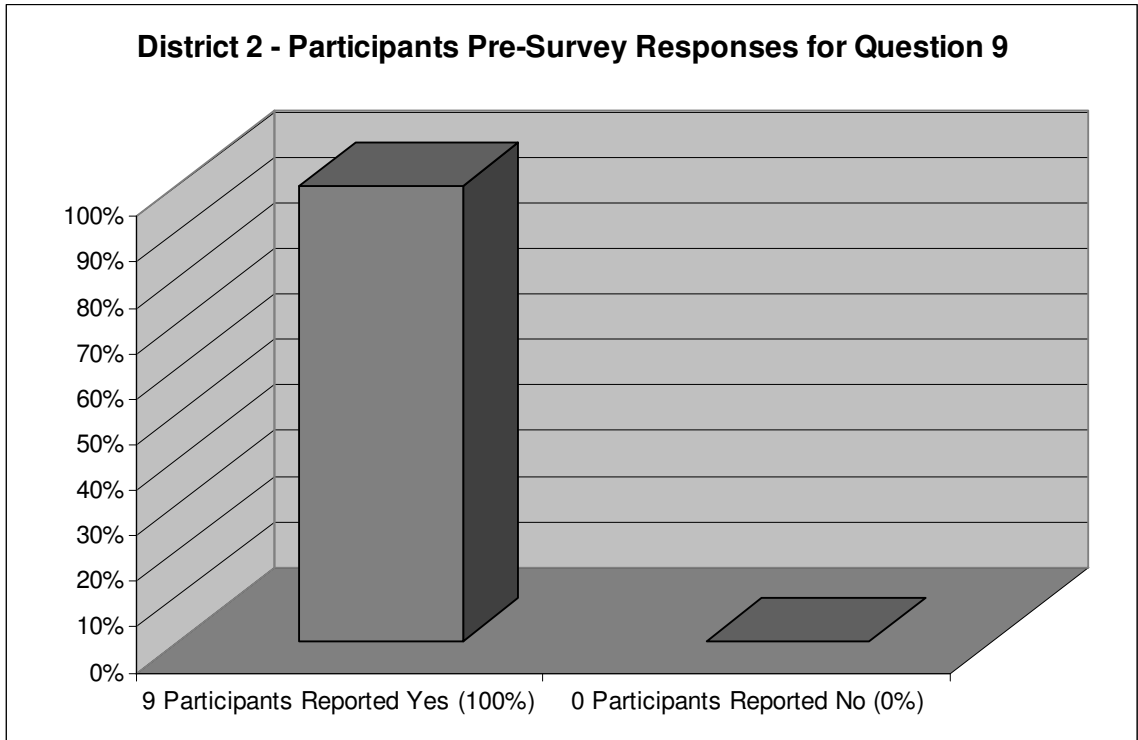
Figures 45 & 46. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Nine

District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results

Question ten. Do you believe that professional development on cultural awareness can have an effect on your cultural awareness?

District 2 - Participants Pre-Survey Responses for Question 10

1 Participant Reported Yes (11%)   8 Participants Reported No (89%)

District 2 - Participants Post-Survey Responses for Question 10

3 Participants Reported No (33%)   6 Participants Reported Yes (67%)
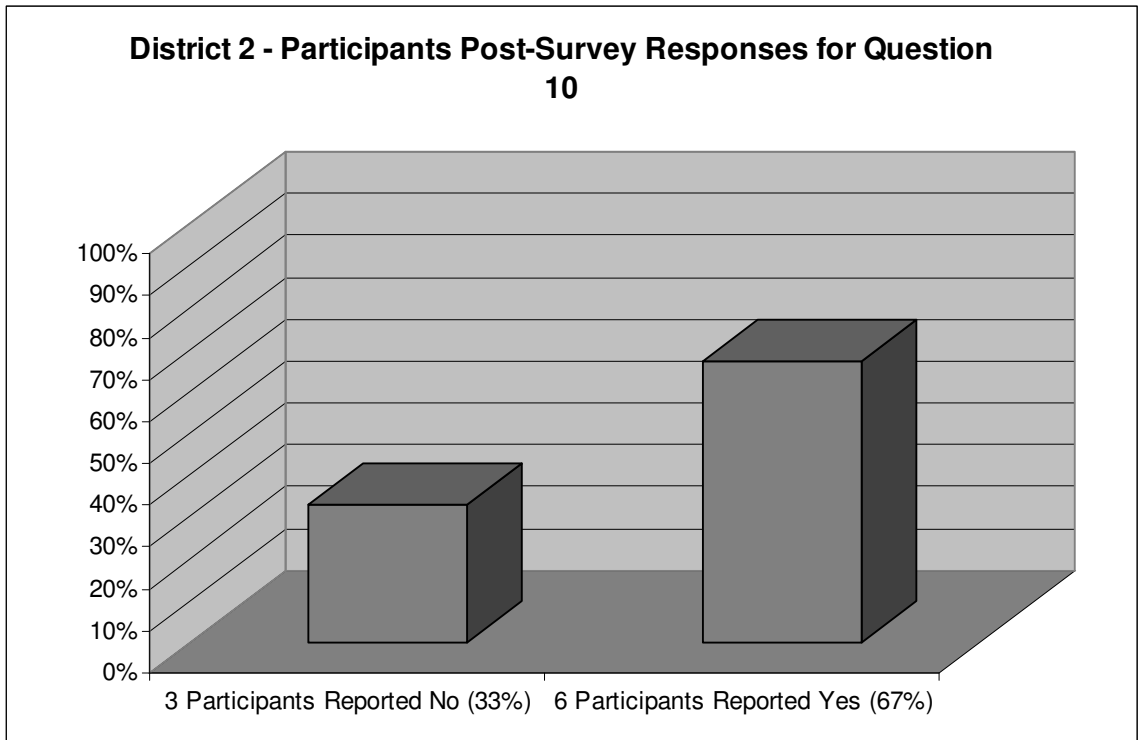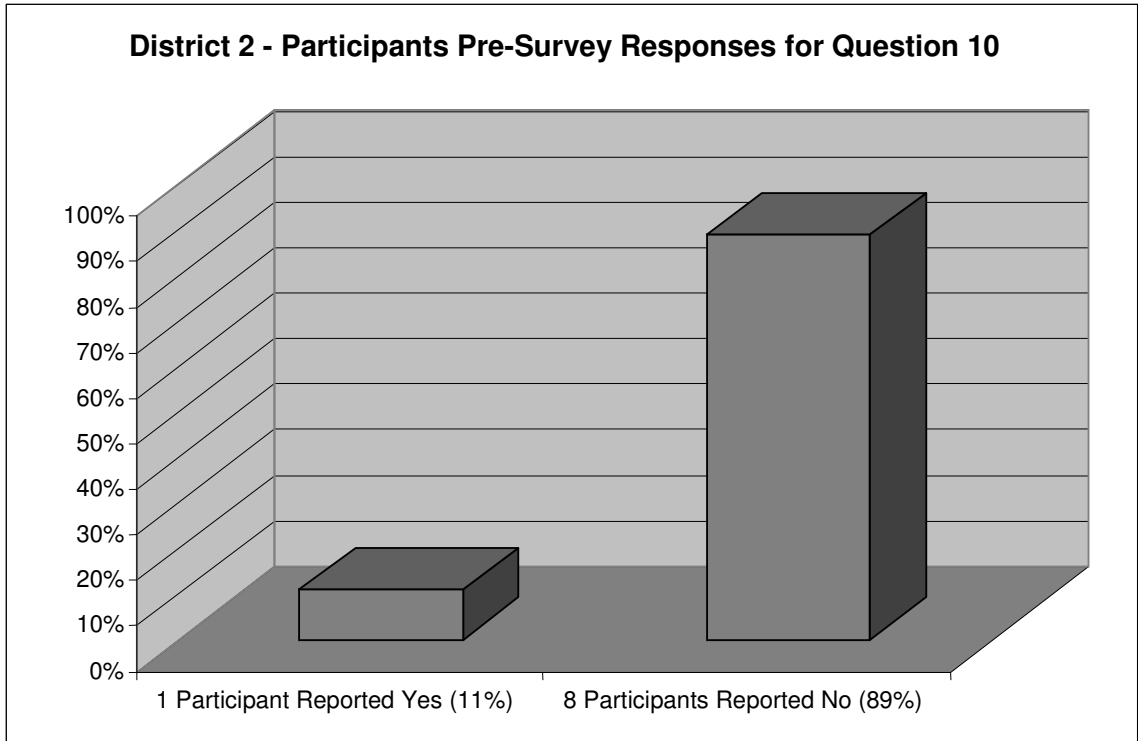
Figures 47 & 48. District Two's Pre/Post Survey Results for Question Ten

Explanation of the Null Hypothesis

In this project, the null hypothesis was used to conclude whether or not the participants from both districts believed that the professional development had a statistical effect on their cultural awareness. In statistics, a null hypothesis is a hypothesis set up to be nullified or refuted in order to support an alternative hypothesis. When used, the null hypothesis is presumed true until statistical evidence in the form of a hypothesis test indicates otherwise (Ioannidis, 2005). The null hypothesis is that which is presumed to be initially true. It is rejected only when it becomes evidently false, that is, when the researcher is 90%, 98%, or 99% confident that the data do not support it (Ioannidis, 2005). In statistical hypothesis testing, the p-value is the probability of obtaining a result at least as extreme as a given data point, assuming the data point was the result of chance alone. The fact that p-values are based on this assumption is crucial to their correct interpretation (Ioannidis, 2005).

Generally, one rejects the null hypothesis if the p-value is smaller than or equal to the significant level. If the level is 0.05, then the results are only 5% likely to be extraordinary given that the null hypothesis is true (Ioannidis, 2005). In this study, a z-test was conducted to test the equality of proportions of *yes* answers for the pre survey versus the post survey. In this study, the null hypothesis was rejected, due to the proportion of *yes* answers being significantly greater in the post survey than in the pre-survey.

H_0: $\pi_{before} = \pi_{after}$

H_1: $\pi_{before} = \pi_{after}$

$Z = 6.46$

p- value < .001

Decision: Reject H$_0$.

Summary

The proportion of *yes* answers was significantly greater in the post-survey than in the pre-

survey. In other words, participants in the professional development on cultural

awareness were more culturally aware after the program than before, as evidenced by the

results of the pre and post surveys. The purpose of this study was to determine the effects

of professional development on educators' cultural awareness.

Chapter V- Discussion

During the 2004-2005 and 2005-2006 school years, two eight-week professional development series on cultural awareness were provided to two small school districts in Illinois. Participants were given a pre- and post-survey regarding their perspectives on cultural awareness and professional development. The 10-question survey was designed by the facilitator/researcher. The participants answered yes or no to the survey questions. The learning resources used in this study emphasized the importance of cultural awareness and the effects which professional development could play on cultural awareness. The resources also support the idea that professional development is essential to teachers developing into culturally aware individuals. The results of the survey demonstrated an increased cultural awareness after eight weeks in both study districts. A summary of the improvement in cultural awareness, as measured by percentages of increase in yes answers in the post-survey from the pre-survey by district, are as follows:

District One = 67% increase in yes answers from pre- to post-survey

District Two = 73% increase in yes answers from pre- to post-survey

The purpose of this study was to determine the effects of professional development on educators' cultural awareness. Biles said cultural awareness really matters (as cited in Aboud, 1998), and she reached this conclusion because of three key concepts that she learned about racial attitudes. Biles' (1994) three key concepts on racial attitudes were

1. After age 9, racial attitudes tend to stay the same unless a person has a life changing experience.

2. Before age 9, however, there is a good chance to help individuals develop positive feelings about racial and cultural identity.

3. Consequently, most educators' views are formed so early in life that they must use tools such as professional development to change some of their views that may affect their interaction with their students.

Each pre and post-survey question was aligned with one of Biles' three key concepts on racial attitudes (see Table 8). This was an unscientific human activity based on perceived best fit. Important to the exercise was the realization that each of the ten pre- and post-survey questions did in fact seem to align with one of the three key concepts and could be thought of as a way to validate the relevance of the survey questions. Also important to this exercise is that this alignment was contrived after the development of the survey questions, not before.

Table 8

Aligning Survey Questions with Biles' (1994) Key Concepts on Racial Attitudes

Biles Key Concepts on Racial Attitude	Ten Pre- and Post-survey Questions
Concept one. After age nine, racial attitudes tend to stay the same unless a person has a life changing experience	Question one. Do you believe that professional development increased your knowledge of approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques for teaching students from different cultures? Question seven. Do you believe that your past experiences or perceptions sometimes impede upon your ability to interact with students from different cultures? Question eight. Do you believe you are knowledgeable of different cultures?
Concept two. Before age 9, however, there is a good chance to help individuals	Question three. Do you believe that professional development increased your

develop positive feelings about racial and cultural identity.	knowledge on cultural awareness, tolerance, understanding, and acceptance? Question ten. Do you believe that professional development can have an effect on cultural awareness?
Concept three. Consequently, most Educators' views are formed so early in life that they must use tools such as professional development to change some of their views that may affect the interaction with their students.	Question two. Do you believe that professional development increased your knowledge of approaches, methods, strategies, and techniques for assessing students from different cultures? Question four. Do you believe that professional development can assist you in understanding and implementing multicultural teaching strategies? Question five. Do you believe that professional development can guide you to changing your teaching practices? Question six. Do you believe that professional development can assist you in implementing steps to increasing parental involvement and improving the home-school connection? Question nine. Do you believe that you are prepared to teach students from different cultures?

Note. From "Activities that promote racial and cultural awareness," by Barbara Biles, 1994, *Family child care connections,* 4, p. 1-5.

Findings and Current Status of Professional Development Program

In trying to determine whether or not cultural awareness can be positively affected

by professional development, the concluding research of a comparison on the pre- and

post-survey results from both districts indicated that professional development can positively affect school personnel's ability to become culturally aware individuals. At the time of this writing, the professional development series is being used by several districts in St. Clair County, Illinois, to assist educators in developing into more culturally aware individuals.

Recommendations for Future Program Implementation

If this study is reproduced, the following changes are recommended. The first suggestion is to make each session longer than one hour. The recommended amount of time is two hours per session because this would allow ample time for positive dialogue among the participants and the facilitator. Having a ten-week study would be more beneficial because this will allow a liberal amount of time to arrange a more detailed list of topics of discussion for participants. The researcher and participants often felt rushed in attempting to complete each session. Participants felt that there was never enough time to hit all of the focal points of the study. The final recommendation is to limit the size of the sessions to ten individuals. Feedback from the participants stated they felt comfortable speaking honestly in the group because of the size. If the study group had been larger, the participants stated that they would not have felt as comfortable.

Recommendations for Future Research

A recommendation for future practice is to expand the study and determine the effects of this professional development series on the number of Black students referred for special education services. In this study, it was determined that if teachers engage in this professional development series, it could have an effect on their cultural awareness

and their ability to establish meaningful relationships with their students, especially Black students.

Relationships have been established as a predictor of students' academic success. The current academic achievement gap between Black and White students is growing, possibly as a result of the lack of meaningful relationships that have been established. In an attempt to remediate some Black students' academic deficiencies, they are being referred for special education services. Therefore, it would be fascinating to expand this study to determine the effects of this professional development series on the number of Black students referred for special education services.

Conclusion

The null hypothesis states that if teachers from two similar districts are given professional development on cultural awareness, then the effects of the professional development will not cause them to become more culturally aware; and it was rejected, as evidenced in favor of the alternate hypothesis by pre and post intervention survey results. And, because the pre- and post-survey questions seemed to align with Biles' (1994) key concepts on racial attitudes, the study's professional development program design may be a successful way to change racial attitude to improve the teaching of minority and Black students. This study determined that eight weeks of professional development and culture diversity training can have a positive effect on educators' cultural awareness.

References

Aboud, F. (1998). *Children and Prejudice*. New York: Basil Blackwill

Apple, M. W. (1992). Do the standards go far enough? Power, policy, and practice in

mathematics education. *Journal for Research in Mathematics Education, 23*(5),

412–431.

Archdeacon, T. (1983), J. *Becoming American: An ethnic history.* New York: Free Press.

Aronson, J., & Steele, C. M. (2005). Stereotypes and the fragility of human competence,

motivation, and self-concept. In C. Dweck & E. Elliot (Eds.), *Handbook of

competence and motivation* (pp. 436–456). New York: Guilford.

Bell, L. I. (2005). *12 powerful words that increase test scores and help close the

achievement gap*. Manassas,VA: Multicultural America, Inc.

Biles, B. (1994). Activities that promote racial and cultural awareness. *Family Child Care

Connections, 4*(3), 1-4. Retrieved from

http://web.aces.uiuc.edu/vista/pdf_pubs/CHLDCARE.PDF

Burgess, H. (2003). Stereotypes / characterization frames. In Burgess, G. & Burgess H.

(Eds.), *Beyond Intractability*. Boulder: University of Colorado, Boulder, Conflict

Research Consortium. Retrieved from Beyond Intractability Web site:

http://www.beyondintractability.org/essay/stereotypes/

Consensus Building Institute. (2001). *Workable peace: Boston busing role play*.

Cambridge, MA: Author.

Covey, S. (1989). *The 7 habits of highly effective people*. New York: Simon &

Schuster.

Delpit, L. (1995). *Other people's children: Cultural conflict in the classroom*. New

York: The New York Press.

Derman-Sparks, L., & A.B.C. Task Force. (1989). *Anti-bias curriculum: Tools for empowering young children*. Washington, DC: National Association for the Education of Young Children.

Fielding, G., & Schalock, H. (1985, January 1). *Promoting the Professional Development of Teachers and Administrators. ERIC/CEM School Management Digest Series, Number 31*. Oregon Univ., Eugene, & ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, Eugene, OR. (ERIC Document Reproduction Service No. ED260489)

Finch, M. (1981). *The NAACP: Its fight for justice.* Metuchen, NJ: Scarecrow Press.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching: Theory, research, and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Gay, G., Dingus, J. E., & Jackson, C. W. (2003, July). *The presence and performance of teachers of color in the profession.* Unpublished report prepared for the National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, Washington, DC.

Grant, C., & Secada, W. (1990). Preparing teachers for diversity. In W.R. Houston (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 403-422). New York: Macmillan.

Hayes, C., & Puriefoy, W. (2003). *Teacher professional development: A primer for parents & community members*. Retrieved from the Public Education Network Web site: http://www.publiceducation.org/pdf/Publications/Teacher_Quality/ Teacher_Prof_Dev.pdf

Hofstede, G. (1997). *Cultures and organizations: Software of the mind*. New York:

McGraw Hill.

Howard, G. (2007, March). As diversity grows, so must we. *Educational Leadership,*

64(6), 16-22. Retrieved March 14, 2007, from

http://www.ascd.org/publications/educational_leadership/mar07/vol64/num06/

As_Diversity_Grows,_So_Must_We.aspx

Ingersoll, R. (2003a). *Who controls teachers' work? Power and accountability in*

America's schools. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.

Ingersoll, R. (2003b, September). Is there really a teacher shortage? Retrieved November

17, 2007, from University of Washington, Center for the Study of Teaching and

Policy Web site:

http://depts.washington.edu/ctpmail/PDFs/Shortage-RI-09-2003.pdf

Ioannidis, J. (2005, August). Why most published research findings are false. *PLoS*

Medicine, 2(8), 696-701.

Jay, G. (2002). Terms for multicultural studies: Defining "race," "ethnicity," and

"nationality." University of Wisconsin—Milwaukee. Retrieved from

http://www.uwm.edu/~gjay/Whiteness/

Terms%20for%20Multicultural%20Studies.doc

Kozol, J. (2006, Winter). Segregation and its calamitous effects: America's "apartheid"

schools [Electronic version]. *Voices in Urban Education*, 10. Retrieved from

Annenberg Institute for School Reform at Brown University Web site:

http://www.annenberginstitute.org/VUE/winter06/Kozol.php

Kroeber, A. & Kluckhohn, C. (1952) Culture: A critical review of concepts and
definitions, Cambridge, MA: Vintage Books

Ladson-Billings, G. (1994). *The dream keepers: Successful teachers of African-American
children.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2002). *Crossing over to Canaan: The journey of new teachers in
diverse classrooms*. San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Lewis, T., & Niesenbaum, R. A. (2005). The benefits of short-term study abroad.
Chronicle of Higher Education, 51(39), B20.

Liston, D., & Zeichner, K. (1991). *Teacher education and the social conditions of
schooling.* New York: Routledge.

McKinley, J. H. (2005, March). *Culturally responsive teaching and learning*. Paper
presented at the Annual State Conference of the Washington Alliance of Black
School Educators, Bellevue, WA.

Merriam-Webster, Inc. (2003). *Merriam-Webster's collegiate dictionary* (11th ed.).
Springfield, MA: Author.

Miller, M., & Glick, D. (1993, March 29). White male paranoia. *Newsweek*, *121*(13), 48.

National Center for Education Statistics. (1996). *Remedial education at higher education
institutions.* Washington, DC: U.S. Department of Education, Office of
Educational Research and Improvement.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2002). *Digest for education statistics tables and
figures*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved November
18, 2007, from http://nces.ed.gov/programs/digest/d02/dt066.asp

National Center for Education Statistics. (2004). *Digest of Education Statistics - 2003*.

Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Education, Institute of Education

Sciences.

National Center for Education Statistics. (2008). *Digest for education statistics tables and

figures*. Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office. Retrieved November

18, 2007, from http://nces.edu.gov/programs/d05/tables/dt05_038.asp

National Education Association (2005). *Attracting and keeping quality teachers*.

Retrieved November 17, 2007, from https://hems.nea.org/teachershortage/

National Geographic Society. (1966). *What do we mean by professional development in

the early childhood field?* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina, FPG Child

Development Institute.

Oregon School Boards Association. (2002, January). Diversity and cultural awareness:

Teaching tolerance. *PR in ACTION*. Washington State School Directors'

Association. Retrieved November 17, 2007, from

http://www.osba.org/commsvcs/engagement/diversity/0201_pr2.pdf

Provasnik, S., & Dorfman, S. (2005). *Mobility in the teacher workforce* (NCES 2005–

114). Washington, DC: U.S. Government Printing Office.

Quappe, S., & Cantatore, G. (2005). *What is cultural awareness, anyway? How do I build

it?*. Retrieved from Culturosity.com Web site:

http://www.culturosity.com/pdfs/What%20is%20Cultural%20Awareness.pdf

Rickford, J. R., & Rickford, R. J. (2000). *Spoken soul: The story of Black English.* New

York: John Wiley.

Shade, B. J., Kelly, C., & Oberg, M. (1997). *Creating culturally responsive classrooms*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.

Sparks, D., & Loucks-Horsley, S. (1990). Models of staff development. In W. R. Houston, (Ed.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (pp. 234-250). New York: Macmillan Publishing.

Speck, M., & Knipe, C. (2005). *Why can't we get it right? Designing high-quality professional development for standards-based schools* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Corwin Press.

Simon, S. (2007). Dosimetry for epidemiological studies: Learning from the past, looking to the future. *Radiation Research, 166*(1), 313-318.

Tatum, B. D. (2003). *Why are all the black kids sitting together in the cafeteria? And other conversations about race* (5th ed.). New York: Basic Books.

Thernstrom A., & Thernstrom, S. (October 2003). *No excuses: Closing the racial gap in learning*. New York: Simon & Schuster Publishing.

Toop, David (1994). *Rap attack 2: African rap to global hip hop*. London: Serpent's Tail.

Winans, D. (2005, May). It's hard to stick around. *NEA Today*, *23*(8), 41-41.

Winfield, L. F. (1986). Teacher beliefs toward academically at risk students in inner urban schools. *The Urban Review,* 18(4), 253-268.

Winfield, L. F., & Manning, J. (1992). Changing school culture to accommodate student diversity. In M. E. Dilworth (Ed.), *Diversity in teacher education: New expectations.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

University of Texas San Antonio's Institute of Texan Cultures. (2001). 801 S. Bowie Street; San Antonio, TX 78205.

Vavrus, M. (2002). *Transforming the multicultural education of teachers: Theory, research and practice*. New York: Teachers College Press.

York, Stacey. (1991) *Roots & wings: Affirming culture in early childhood Programs*. St. Paul, MN: Toys'n Things Press.

Zeichner, K. M. (1992). *Connecting genuine teacher development to the struggle for social justice*. East Lansing, MI: National Center for Research on Teacher Learning.

Zeichner, K. M. (1996). *Educating teachers for cultural diversity*. East Lansing, MI: National Center for Research on Teacher Learning.

Zeichner, K. M., & Hoeft, K. (1996). Teacher socialization for cultural diversity. In J. Sikula, T. J. Buttery, & E. Guyton (Eds.), *Handbook of research on teacher education* (2nd ed., pp. 525-547). New York: Macmillan Library Reference.

Zimmerman, T. (1997). *Plessy v. Ferguson*. Retrieved November 18, 2007, from http://www.bgsu.edu/departments/acs/1890s/plessy/plessy.html

Vitae

Marion Wilson-Brooks is a native of St. Clair County where she is currently Director of Special Education for the Cahokia and Dupo School Districts in Southern Illinois. She holds a Bachelor of Science Degree in Special Education from Southern Illinois University at Edwardsville in Edwardsville, Illinois. She holds a Master of Arts in Education from Maryville University in Chesterfield, Missouri. She holds her administrative certification from Lindenwood University in St. Charles, Missouri. This thesis is the culmination of work leading to a Specialist Degree in Education Administration from Lindenwood University. In her career, Marion taught special education at the elementary, middle, and high school levels, and she has also been a Technical Assistance Supervisor for Special Education. Marion currently holds Pre-K through age 21 teaching certificates in the states of Missouri and Illinois and is also a State Approved Director of Special Education in Missouri and Illinois.