

PRE-SERVICE TEACHER EFFICACY IN CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE TEACHING AND SOCIAL-EMOTIONAL LEARNING

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Abstract

One of the critical issues in K-12 education today is addressing the needs of linguistically and culturally diverse students. Several studies have found disproportionate achievement outcomes for K-12 students of diverse socio-cultural and multicultural backgrounds as compared to White students. Teacher preparation programs are integral in developing the extent to which pre-service teachers (PSTs) feel ready to effectively and equitably meet the needs of all students, particularly in terms of culturally responsive pedagogy and socio-emotional learning. This study was conducted in a large research university in the southern part of Texas and explores PSTs perceptions (n=129) regarding opportunity and confidence in social-emotional learning and culturally responsive teaching. The results show strong positive correlations between culturally responsive teaching opportunity and culturally responsive teaching confidence as well as strong relationships between social emotional learning opportunity and social emotional learning confidence. The ANOVA results indicate increased confidence in pre-service teachers' perceptions on culturally responsive teaching based on grade classification. Implications for educator preparation programs are discussed.

Keywords: Pre-service teachers, social-emotional learning, culturally-responsive teaching, survey research

Providing pre-service teachers (PSTs) with the myriad experiences needed to prepare them for the teaching profession can be a daunting task for teacher preparation programs. Though content knowledge and pedagogical practices are essential, it is also imperative that PSTs recognize that teaching students involves more than just these dimensions. In the ever-changing landscape of diversity in America, PSTs would benefit from acknowledging that culturally responsive teaching (CRT) and social emotional learning (SEL) are critical components of meeting the needs of the students that will be entrusted within their care. While national statistics show that the majority of U.S. teachers in K-12 continue to be a very homogenous group, specifically, 75% are White females, 10% are White males, 6% are Black females, and 1% of teachers are Black males (Bryan & Ford, 2014; CAEP, 2014), student demographics represent a much more diverse population. A 2019 NCES report indicates that between 2000 and 2015, the overall U.S. school population rose from 47.2 million to 50.4 million, while the percentage of White and Black students decreased from 61% to 49% and 17% to 15% respectively, and the number of Hispanic students rose from 16% to 26% (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). Furthermore, projections of increasing school diversity are expected to continue increasing to 52.1 million by 2027, with the number of White students continuing to decline and Hispanic, Asian and Pacific islanders continuing to increase (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). As the diverse classrooms of the 21st century continue to grow, teacher preparation programs (TPP) have a responsibility to identify and teach effective cultural pedagogy that addresses the multiple cultures, languages, abilities and various other characteristics of students (Heraldo, Richards, Brown, & Forde, 2007). In essence, there is a pragmatic urgency to ensure that prospective teachers are properly and comprehensively equipped to navigate the instruction of culturally pluralistic educational spaces. Additionally, along with addressing the cultural needs of students, it is essential for PSTs to recognize that classrooms are often the arena for students to continuously develop social and emotional skills over time and in the context of daily life in order to manage negative emotions, develop and nurture adult and peer relationships, follow directions and learn how to be calm; yet PSTs receive little training in addressing SEL issues (Jones & Bouffard, 2012).

By addressing both CRT and SEL, we propose that these two constructs go hand in hand in teacher preparation programs. Moreover, we fundamentally regard teachers as door-openers to students' expansion of knowledge and skills. Cultivation of knowledge must include those cultural histories which have been erased, marginalized, rewritten, or told through one dominant, hegemonic lens. As such, this study is interested in understanding the extent to which PSTs feel a sense of efficacy towards CRT and SEL. The following research questions will explore PSTs efficacy within their teacher preparation program regarding:

1. What are PSTs' perceived opportunities to learn SEL and CRT?
2. What are PSTs' confidence toward learning SEL and CRT?
3. Is there a correlation between opportunity and confidence for both CRT and SEL?
4. Are there differences on CRT and SEL by student classification and students on financial aid (FAFSA)?

Culturally Responsive Teaching

To fully understand CRT, it is helpful to acknowledge that it is often comprised of multiple dimensions and may also use alternate terminology to address this area. For example, Malo-Juvera, Correll, and Cantrell (2018) summarize the idea of culturally responsive instruction (CRI), where cultural pedagogy incorporates "students' cultural knowledge and experiences to make learning relevant and consequently more effective" (p. 146). This mirrors Nieto and Bode's (2008) discussion on the importance of using culturally responsive pedagogy as it improves academic achievement by building on students' experiences and cultural knowledge. Heraldo, et al. (2007), on the other hand, suggest that culturally responsive pedagogy works at three levels including institutional, personal, and instructional where, "effective teaching and learning occur in a culturally supported, learner-centered context, whereby the strengths students bring to school are identified, nurtured, and utilized to promote student achievement" (p. 64). The common thread accounts for a system of social justice in education and social change through the classroom (Aronson & Laughter, 2015), especially in light of demographic trends mentioned above where the predominantly White female teachers who make up the majority of educators in U.S. classrooms find themselves teaching in a markedly different setting than the one in which they learned (Harrison & Lakin, 2018).

In addition, teachers may not recognize that their values, biases, negative feelings, and prejudices may impact the relationships that are established with students and their families and contribute to the overall success (or lack of) for these students (Richards, et al., 2007). Sugimoto, Carter, and Stoehr (2017) found that PSTs often had "conflicting orientations

towards English learners” (p. 185). This conflict was typically based on a number of reasons, including modeling by the mainstream classroom teacher. Additionally, Sleeter (2008) notes the tendency of teachers to have lower academic expectations for children of color based on cultural identity stereotypes. Finally, Monroe and Obidah (2004) illustrated that teachers engage in unnecessary disciplinary action as a failure on their part to understand certain behaviors through appropriate sociocultural lenses. While these studies point to the negative implications of ineffective CRT, Aronson and Laughter’s (2016) systematic review evaluated a number of studies, finding evidence of improved academic skills and concepts across the content areas (math, science, social studies and English language arts) as well as affective domains, like motivation and engagement, when culturally relevant practices were employed. TPPs must provide comprehensive experiences that prepare future educators for effectively meeting the needs of the diverse classrooms of the 21st century.

For the purpose of our study, the authors used the theoretical framework for CRT established by Siwatu (2007), which establishes that four main areas must be addressed in order to have culturally responsive pedagogy in the classroom to facilitate learning:

1. Curriculum and instruction uses students’ cultural knowledge, experiences and individual learning preferences;
2. Classroom management incorporates students’ cultural orientation for classroom environment;
3. Multiple and varied student assessment techniques and opportunities are available for students to demonstrate their knowledge;
4. Cultural enrichment and competence where knowledge and skills are imparted in order to allow students to function in mainstream culture while retaining their own cultural identity and native language.

We contend that this framework incorporates the main components needed to address CRT at individual, institutional, social, and familial levels.

Social Emotional Learning (SEL)

Social emotional learning (SEL) encompasses a broad range of competencies needed by teachers in today’s ever-challenging learning environment. While we know teacher retention is a major issue across the U.S., research shows that teachers often leave the profession as a result of behavior management issues (Albrecht, Johns, Mounstevan, & Olorunda, 2009; Ingersoll & Smith, 2003). While SEL comprises more than how to handle discipline, understanding the socio-emotional needs of students is crucial to mitigating causes of teacher attrition. The Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Model (CASEL, 2019) defines SEL as the “capacity to integrate skills, attitudes, and behaviors to deal effectively and ethically with daily tasks and challenges.” (<https://casel.org/core-competencies>). The framework established by CASEL addresses other competencies as well as intrapersonal, interpersonal, and cognitive competencies. CASEL addresses five specific core competencies, each encompassing a variety of areas. These five competencies include Social Awareness, Self-Awareness, Responsible Decision-Making, Relationship Skills, and Self-Management (CASEL, 2019).

Addressing the social emotional learning needs of students due to the positive outcomes is echoed throughout research (Main, 2018; Yoder, 2014). SEL skills are strongly associated with success in school and other aspects of life (McKown, 2017; Yoder, 2014), and interventions in schools and other settings offer lifelong benefits as students’ progress to college and the workforce (Taylor, Oberle, Durlack, & Weissburg, 2017; Yoder, 2014). Allensworth, et al. (2017) discussed the importance of student engagement, classroom environment, and the role of teachers in creating responsive classrooms that develop not only the academic but also the social and emotional well-being of students. While a substantial body of evidence exists that supports integration of SEL in schools, a 2017 survey reported that only 58% of principals set goals for their campus, while only 44% of teachers set SEL goals for their classroom (Doss, Johnston, & Akinniranye, 2017). Although this study found urban teachers and principals more likely to set such goals, the percentages were still low.

In a 2017 meta-analysis that synthesized the impact of social-emotional interventions found that the outcomes of social emotional intervention programs were positive in areas such as social emotional assets, including social and emotional skills, attitudes toward self, others and school, positive social behaviors, academic problems, conduct problems, emotional distress, and substance use (Taylor, Oberle, Durlack, & Weissburg, 2017). Compared to the control group, students involved in intervention programs demonstrated stronger SEL skills and improved attitudes. Additionally, participants had significant academic performance outcomes, coping skills for dealing with emotional stress, and less drug use. In addition to exploring intervention impacts, the study examined the outcomes across diverse populations. There were significant positive effects across demographic subgroups (i.e., racial, SES, international) for participants in SEL programs following SEL intervention. Knowing the results of SEL interventions for students warrants evaluation of SEL competencies in TPPs and how they prepare PSTs for the socio-emotional needs of students.

Goegan, Wagner, and Daniels (2017) evaluated both PSTs and in-service teacher's comfort and commitment to social emotional learning. The study found PSTs' comfort with SEL was positively correlated with a commitment to SEL. PSTs indicated less competence in SEL as well as comfort in implementing SEL practices than in-service teachers. As noted in Larson and Samdal's (2012) study, explicit teaching of techniques in social competence improved in-service teachers' ability to meet the social and emotional needs of students. The evidence from the study points to the necessity to create confidence among PSTs to embed social emotional pedagogical practices. The cultivation of social emotional competence is necessary for PSTs as they prepare to navigate interpersonal and social concerns within the classroom. As a result, we implore TPPs consider the same practices.

Social Emotional Learning and Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices

While the literature is robust regarding the need to develop students' social emotional learning as well as the need to implement culturally responsible teaching practices, the literature scantily discusses the integration of the two competencies. One systematic literature review identified and analyzed the social, emotional and behavioral interventions used with students of color, providing a framework for schools when starting such intervention programs (Brown, Maggin, & Buren, 2018). Another study analyzed the combining of SEL, CRT and positive behavior intervention supports at an elementary campus, documenting the 3-year process for implementing evidence-based interventions with positive student outcomes (Cressey, 2019). A few studies exist that analyze in-service teacher perceptions when using culturally responsive practices with SEL interventions (Barnes & McCallops, 2019). In one study, in-service teachers' perceptions and practices with culturally responsive teaching were intertwined with a school-adopted SEL intervention program, RULER (Barnes & McCallops, 2019). Findings from the study indicated teacher need for training not only in SEL, but also in CRT pedagogy. In fact, participants in the study noted the foundational importance of receiving training in CRT before the implementation of an SEL intervention for obtaining the best student outcomes regarding academic and social-emotional progress.

McCallops, et al. (2019) describe an idea known as culturally responsive SEL (2019). Culturally responsive SEL (CRSEL) considers students' frame of reference as well as students lived experiences while integrating the teaching of SEL competencies (Barnes & McCallops, 2019). In McCallops', et al. (2019) international systematic literature review of CRSEL intervention used in urban K-12 schools, only five of the 51 studies explicitly reviewed in the analysis used CRSEL. While other studies in this review mentioned cultural aspects of students in their specific studies, McCallops points out the need for the combination of both CRT and SEL.

Other studies regarding CRT and SEL involve various other school populations. One study analyzed social skills education with urban students identified as having emotional or behavioral disorders (Robinson-Ervin, P., Cartledge, G., Musti-Rao, S., Gibson Jr., L., & Keyes, S. E. 2016). Other studies analyze the use of CRT and SEL in school counseling programs (e.g. Cook et al, 2017; Cook, et al., 2018). In each of these studies, students experienced positive academic and social outcomes when CRT practices were combined with SEL interventions. However, to date, no research was found where CRT and SEL competencies were integrated in TPPs' training of PSTs. Yet, considering the diversification of the classroom and the continued homogenous workforce, understanding of cultural backgrounds has the potential to impact SEL understanding and implementation. Hence, this study aims to identify PSTs efficacy in each of these competencies, addressing a gap in the literature regarding PST training.

Method

Participants

The participants in this study were undergraduate PSTs enrolled in the TPPs at a large research-based TPP located in the south-central part of Texas. Pre-service teachers received an email with a survey to complete voluntarily; from the survey, PSTs had the opportunity to indicate if they wanted to participate in a structured phone interview protocol. Of those that received the survey, 134 responded.

Five respondents were eliminated who were either graduate students or not seeking certification for a total of 129 valid responses. In some cases, however, there were missing values which lowered the actual number of responses in some categories. Of those included in the analysis, there were 24% of the undergraduates classified as freshman, 28% as sophomores, 25% as juniors, and 22% classified as seniors. Based upon certification type being sought, 61% of the participants were seeking the PK-6th-grade certification, 28% were seeking the middle grades certification (4th-8th grades), and 23% were seeking secondary

certification. Additionally, 14% of the participants listed “other”, which included those seeking special education certification. In some cases, students responded that they were seeking more than one certification.

Student experiences regarding the number of courses taken and the amount of field experience varied by classification, which is to be expected. Approximately 90% of students have had field placements within the last year. On average, the participants had 10 hours of education coursework, and the number of field hours was a median of 25 hours. Of those surveyed, 25% of respondents were first-generation college students. Nearly all of the respondents were under the age of 23, ranging between 18 to 23 years old, and 94% were female. About half of the participants were working part-time with 46% qualifying for financial aid through the FAFSA program. The ethnic breakdown showed that 74% of the participants were White, 23% were Hispanic, and 4% were Other. Approximately 79% of participants attended a public high school, with nearly 54% attending suburban schools, 31% attending rural schools and 15% attending urban schools. Only 26% of the participants attended predominantly White high schools. PSTs in the program are required to take one multicultural education course at some point in their program, and this course does not focus on CRT. There are no SEL components formally addressed in the TPP at this university.

Instrument

Based on our review of the research and other instruments, we developed a survey for Social-Emotional Learning (SEL) and Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT). This study is being conducted in order to examine the opportunity and confidence level of PSTs in both of these areas. The research team developed the survey instrument *Social Emotional and Culturally Responsive Teaching Survey* to explore PSTs’ perceptions of the extent to which the education courses taken at this juncture have focused on social-emotional learning and CRT practices.

Participants were asked to rate their experiences in each area. Specifically, students were asked to evaluate how often they had the opportunity to learn or experience various aspects of SEL and CRT practices, as well as how confident they felt in those teaching practices. The questions on the survey were 4-point Likert-type questions based on the Collaborative for Academic, Social, and Emotional Learning Model (CASEL, 2019) and Siwatu’s (2007) Culturally Responsive Teaching Self-Efficacy and Outcome Expectancy scales. Also, the survey included demographic questions, such as participants’ classification and federal student-aid qualification through the FAFSA program.

The survey instrument explored three main themes: (a) PSTs experiences in social-emotional learning, (b) culturally responsive teaching practices, and (c) general multicultural dispositions. An exploratory factor analysis was performed to examine the construct validity of the instrument and then Cronbach’s alpha were used to establish the reliability for each of the four constructs. Table 1 summarizes the overall Factor Analysis results for the four constructs used in this study. The first 2 constructs centered around Social Emotional Learning. For Factor 1, SEL Social Awareness Opportunity, revealed items loading to one factor accounting for 63% of the variance with factor loadings ranging from .740 – .857. Cronbach’s alpha for this construct revealed a .956 reliability. For factor 2, SEL Social Awareness Confidence, the Cronbach’s alpha was .883, and the factor analysis accounted for 64% of the variance. All items loaded on one factor with factor loadings ranging from .683 - .884. Factors for the other SEL components did not provide strong reliability, therefore they were eliminated from the study.

The second area of focus in the survey was Culturally Responsive Teaching. Factor 3, Culturally Responsive Teaching Opportunity, had high factor loadings on one factor and accounted for 76% of the variance with the loadings ranging from .818 to .916. Cronbach’s alpha revealed a .934 reliability for this construct. Factor 4, Culturally Responsive Teaching Confidence, also had high factor loadings on 1 factor with factor loadings ranging from .792-.911, accounting for 72% of the variance. The reliability showed a .921 Cronbach’s alpha.

The survey also included specific items intended to measure the multicultural dispositions of the respondents. Items for multicultural dispositions loaded on two factors. However, the results were non-discernable, so we analyzed it using one factor which accounted for 28% of the variance. Cronbach’s alpha revealed reliability of .677 for the factor. Because the amount of variance accounted for was low and the reliability was not as high as preferred, this factor was eliminated from our study.

Overall, the instrument included four construct and scales that were valid and highly reliable. In summary, the four scales included SEL Social Awareness Opportunity, SEL Social Awareness Confidence, Culturally Responsive Teaching Opportunity, and Culturally Responsive Teaching Confidence.

Table 1

Factor Analysis of the Social Emotional and Culturally Responsive Teaching Survey

Items	Factor Loadings
Factor 1: SEL Social Awareness Opportunity	
Creating an atmosphere where students respect others	.740
Teach students to communicate clearly	.813
Helping students appreciate the diversity of others around them	.778
Guide students to take the perspective of others	.857
Guide students to resist inappropriate social pressures	.753
Guide students to establish healthy relationships	.797
Amount of Variance	63%
Cronbach's alpha reliability	.956
Factor 2: SEL Social Awareness Confidence	
Creating an atmosphere where students respect others	.683
Teach students to communicate clearly	.796
Helping students appreciate the diversity of others around them	.851
Guide students to take the perspective of others	.884
Guide students to resist inappropriate social pressures	.752
Guide students to establish healthy relationships	.809
Amount of Variance	64%
Cronbach's alpha reliability	.883
Factor 3: Culturally Responsive Teaching Opportunity	
Matching instruction to the students' learning preferences	.842
Revising instructional material to include a better representation of the students' cultural group	.916
Understanding cultural backgrounds in order to decrease likelihood of student-teacher misunderstandings	.818
Using my students' interests when designing instruction	.900
Valuing the Students' cultural background	.907
Helping students from diverse cultural backgrounds succeed in school	.832
Amount of Variance	76%
Cronbach's alpha reliability	.934
Factor 4: Culturally Responsive Teaching Confidence	
Matching instruction to the students' learning preferences	.807
Revising instructional material to include a better representation of the students' cultural group	.814
Understanding cultural backgrounds in order to decrease likelihood of student-teacher misunderstandings	.792
Using my students' interests when designing instruction	.874
Valuing the Students' cultural background	.899
Helping students from diverse cultural backgrounds succeed in school	.911
Amount of Variance	72%
Cronbach's alpha reliability	.921

Data Analysis

The data analyses included correlations, paired sample t-tests, and Univariate ANOVAs. For the Univariate ANOVAs,

the independent variables were students' classification and federal student-aid qualification, which were both categorical: four levels for classification (freshman, sophomore, junior, and senior) and two levels for federal student aid qualification (yes/no). The dependent variables were opportunity in SEL social-awareness, confidence in SEL social-awareness, opportunity in CRT, and confidence in CRT, all continuous variables.

Results

The results revealed several statistically significant outcomes. The correlation results indicated a high statistically significant positive correlation between SEL Social Awareness Opportunity and SEL Social Awareness Confidence ($r = .722, p < .001$) (see Table 2). This suggests that as PSTs had the opportunity to experience social-awareness in Social-Emotional Learning, their confidence in doing so increased. Culturally Responsive Teaching Confidence had a moderately high significant positive correlation with SEL Social Awareness Confidence ($r = .589, p < .001$) and a high statistically significant positive correlation with both SEL Social Awareness Confidence ($r = .744, p < .001$) and Culturally Responsive Teaching Opportunity ($r = .784, p < .001$). No other statistically significant correlations were found.

Table 2

Correlations among SEL and CRT Opportunity and Confidence

	SEL Social Awareness Opportunity	SEL Social Awareness Confidence	Culturally Responsive Teaching Opportunity	Culturally Responsive Teaching Confidence
SEL Social Awareness Opportunity	1			
SEL Social Awareness Confidence	.722*	1		
Culturally Responsive Teaching Opportunity	.701**	.559**	1	
Culturally Responsive Teaching Confidence	.589**	.744**	.784*	1

* $p < .05$, ** $p < .01$, 2-tailed tests

Paired sample t-tests were also conducted to compare differences among SEL confidence and opportunity and CRT confidence and opportunity. The analysis indicated that there were no statistical differences between SEL opportunity and SEL confidence ($t(74) = .452, p < .652$). The same was true for CRT opportunity and CRT confidence ($t(73) = 1.4, p < .652$).

Sets of univariate ANOVAs were conducted to examine the differences on the four scales by student classification (freshman, sophomore, junior or senior) and their family income (measured by their ability to qualify for financial aid). The results of those analyses were largely insignificant; however, we did find some significant variation between classification groups for one of the scales: CRT Confidence ($F(3, 94) = 1.544, p < .05$). The details for the ANOVA are found below in Table 3. For CRT Confidence, we found a significant main effect in how students felt about their confidence in teaching CRT content across classification. While not statistically significant, the Duncan post-hoc results (Table 4) revealed that senior students felt more confident than freshman students regarding culturally responsive teaching practices.

Table 3

Univariate ANOVA between Culturally Responsive Teaching Confidence and Student Classification

Source	<i>df</i>	Mean Square	<i>F</i>	Sig.
Classification	3	.848	2.740	.050
Financial Aid	1	.128	.413	.523
Classification*Financial Aid	3	.478	1.544	.211
Error	67	.310		

Table 4

Duncan^{a,b,c} Post-Hoc Results for Culturally Responsive Teaching Confidence and Classification

Classification – Selected Choice	N	1	Subset 2
Freshman	15	3.167	
Sophomore	24	3.3889	3.3889
Junior	16	3.3958	3.3958
Senior	20		3.7083
Sig.		.248	.107

Means for groups in homogeneous subsets are displayed.

Based on observed means.

The error term is Mean Square (Error) = .310.

^a Uses Harmonic Mean Sample Size = 18.113.

^b The group sizes are unequal. The harmonic mean of the group sizes is used. Type I error levels are not guaranteed.

^c *Alpha* = 0.05.

Discussion

The results of this study present a preliminary indication of preservice teachers' perceived opportunity to learn and confidence toward competence in SEL and CRT. This study also describes the measurement properties of new instrument that examines pre-service teachers' SEL and CRT, while also providing initial data using the instrument. Furthermore, the data show that the preservice teachers' opportunity and confidence level regarding CRT varied due to the students' classification. The findings of this study are discussed in more depth in the following paragraphs. Additionally, the implications addressed the extent the findings in this study may help in teacher education to prepare pre-service teachers' SEL and CRT competence.

PSTs Opportunity & Confidence

The results of this study provided insights into PSTs' perceptions primarily around the SEL construct of social awareness. The findings suggest that PSTs are more confident in SEL social-awareness if more opportunity is provided to learn the related concepts. That is, the implementation of the SEL social awareness experiences in TPP's has a positive influence on

the PST's teaching techniques as well as their more extensive social awareness. Studies have found that teachers become more emotionally inclusive and student-centered in their teaching, and more socially aware of students' needs and difficulties after receiving training on developing the characteristics of SEL (Larsen & Samdal, 2012). According to Rosenthal and Gatt's (2010), teachers who received the training on developing students' SEL social-awareness provided better support for their students than those who did not. As such, the importance of infusing SEL into courses in the TPP is an asset for future teachers in meeting the social-emotional social awareness needs of students. The PSTs' self-efficacy in helping students to develop SEL social awareness, such as, creating an atmosphere where students respect others, guiding students to resist inappropriate social pressures, and guiding students to establish healthy relationships, is strongly and positively influenced by the amount of time of getting exposure to the SEL concepts and the relevant curricular practical training in TPPs.

In the meantime, an accurate representation of the findings from this study suggest the importance of the opportunity to learn CRT in the teacher education program. As the opportunity of the PSTs to learn CRT associated notions increases, the confidence in their ability to teach in a multicultural background classroom context with the belief of CRT grows. Compared with the students from unilingual and mainstream cultural backgrounds, the continuing achievement gaps over students, who are from culturally and linguistically diverse backgrounds, have become increasingly obvious. Culturally responsive teaching highlights the importance of making the delivery of the curriculum more in line with culturally diverse students' orientation in the classroom (Good, 2008). Thus, the confidence of preservice teachers in providing an inclusive learning environment for students in multicultural backgrounds and their capability in working on this issue to eventually have positive outcomes should be given vital importance in TPPs. However, the extent to which the PSTs are involved in culturally responsive teaching practices and become well-prepared is determined based on the fidelity and design of the TPPs program. In general, cultural diversity is a consistent and important strength in PST's careers and the educational issues unavoidably related with it. Therefore, PST's self-efficacy may be enhanced if practices incorporating CRT with content and pedagogical knowledge improve.

In addition, the scales of CRT opportunity and SEL social-awareness are statistically positively associated with each other in this study. The result indicates that sufficient CRT learning included in the TPP allows PSTs to broadly meet the students' social-emotional social awareness needs in a culturally diverse environment. Culturally responsive teaching is the cornerstone of meeting the needs of students' SEL. CRT combines classroom instruction and exercises with the cultural awareness and resources of generally ignored students and their societies and relations (Good, 2008). According to research on the perception of the CRT in teaching SEL, consolidating the use of culturally responsive teaching in developing students' SEL experiences is one of the most effective approaches to addressing this cultural mismatch (Barnes & McCallops, 2019). In the current situation, since the ongoing multicultural issues of the student population are known, teaching effectiveness cannot only be placed on White and middle-class students. However, few studies explored the issue of CRT learning promoting the ability of PSTs' efficacy on SEL.

Classification difference

Results from the ANOVAs do not provide surprising information. One would expect that as students' progress through their TPP, their confidence in various pedagogies would improve. Among the participants in this study, student experiences regarding the number of courses taken and the amount of field experience varied by classification. Interestingly, the results reveal that senior students have greater confidence in their culturally relevant abilities as compared with other grade level students. This result may point to the fact that students have had increased exposure and experience to increasingly diverse students through field placement or other educational endeavors. This is also consonant with the second finding of this study, that as students receive more exposure to CRT coursework and pertinent practices, the more positive their confidence becomes.

Limitations

While the study sheds light on one teacher educator preparation program's CRT and SEL practices, the expansion of the study could yield more insight into PSTs perceptions on these topics. With a small sample size, the findings cannot be generalized to other educator preparation programs. Future studies should consider expanding the research to additional universities in order to obtain a more robust finding. By expanding the present study across the state or even nation, the study would increase the diversity of the sample size, yielding stronger implications.

Additional limitations exist within the study. Due to the nature of survey research, the team relied upon self-reported data from current PSTs. Additionally, the survey was conducted at the end of a semester, when clinical teachers were preparing

for graduation, thus potentially limiting the amount of responses. Therefore, the release of the survey could be timed to be more accommodating of this fact. Continuing the study longitudinally would also add richness to the data.

Finally, the survey instrument, *Social Emotional and Culturally Responsive Teaching*, should be revised to obtain valid data on each of the SEL components. In order to measure all aspects of social-emotional learning, for example, scales should be developed and validated to encompass the five core competencies defined by CASEL. These include self-awareness, self-management, responsible decision making, relationship skills, and of course, social awareness, the competence measured in this study. Once a revised instrument is created, it should be field tested for validity and reliability as well. The instrument could also be revised by obtaining data regarding the extent PSTs are exposed to both CRT and SEL and practical applications of such to determine how that impacts their comfort and confidence levels in each of these competencies.

Implications for Teacher Education

With the increase of an ever-changing and diverse student population entering the classroom, TPPs are implored to cultivate PST's confidence in implementing pedagogies that meet the socio-emotional needs of students as well as culturally responsive teaching practices. Such competencies must be embedded throughout the TPP coursework and field experiences, providing PSTs with rich, diverse experiences that enhance their practical applications of such pedagogies. Programs that provide more than a singular approach of offering a diversity course may provide a viable solution for TPPs.

Although this study looks into measurement properties of a new instrument, it provides preliminary data regarding PSTs comfort and confidence level with CRT and SEL at a Texas university. This study aims to fill the gap in the literature, as little has been done regarding these two constructs with PSTs. Since few studies have explored CRT and SEL collectively, we propose that connections between the two be explored in more depth from other PST programs. Future studies should examine both PST opportunity and confidence levels in CRT and SEL more extensively through the inclusion of other PST programs with hopes of effecting programmatic change. Additionally, interventions should be developed in TPPs identifying the specific areas of CRT and SEL in which PSTs lack training and confidence. PSTs should not only be introduced to CRT and SEL, but also provided opportunities for practical application and for integrated pedagogical applications into the course of study throughout.

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