

**TEACHER COMPETENCE IN MULTICULTURAL
SCHOOLS IN SAUDI ARABIA**

by

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Submitted in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF EDUCATION

in the subject

EDUCATIONAL PSYCHOLOGY

at the

UNIVERSITY OF SOUTH AFRICA

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JUNE 2007

DECLARATION

STUDENT NO: 3493-472-3

I hereby declare that Teacher Competence in Multicultural Schools in Saudi Arabia represents my own work and that all the sources that I have used, or quoted, have been indicated and acknowledged by means of complete references.

SIGNATURE

V NAIDOO (MRS)

DATE

DEDICATION

This work is dedicated to my twin sons, Luschen and Leevan, my husband, Trevor,
and my mother for their constant support and encouragement.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

My gratitude and heartfelt appreciation go to the following people:

- My supervisor, Dr C Meier, for her professional advice and guidance. Her dedication to her task as supervisor has allowed me to progress with confidence and enthusiasm. I greatly appreciate the time and effort taken by her to evaluate this dissertation critically.
- My principal, Mr Rick Barnhouse, and my vice-principal, Mrs Evelyn Harrison, who allowed me to conduct my research at the school site.
- The teaching staff at ISG-Dammam: for the time spent in answering the questionnaires and for their valued responses.
- My mother for her continuous, long distance encouragement.
- My family overseas for their support and encouragement.
- My twin boys, Luschen and Leevan, for always enquiring after my work and for understanding the times when I needed to work and could not spend time with them.
- My husband, Trevor, for being at my side all the late nights required by the study, for both emotional and nutritional nourishment and for his constant support, encouragement and belief in me.
- Prof EM Lemmer for the editing.
- Mrs M van Zijl for the final layout of the document.

SUMMARY

This research aimed at identifying the teacher competencies of teachers teaching at an international school in Saudi Arabia. The research addressing the problems and sub-problems involved a literature review that conceptualised multicultural education and international schooling. The empirical investigation included the use of a questionnaire to gather data. The questionnaire aimed at determining the ability of teachers to function effectively within a multicultural environment. The findings, which were linked to the literature review, revealed areas of strength and weakness. Based on the findings, recommendations were made for school administrators for the design of appropriate staff development programmes to inculcate in teachers the competencies necessary to perform effectively in an international multicultural environment.

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List of frequently used abbreviations

ELS	English Second Language
NAME	National Association for Multicultural Education
NCATE	National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION, PROBLEM FORMULATION, MOTIVATION AND AIMS

1.1 INTRODUCTION

Social ills such as racism, discrimination, social injustices and inequalities, past prejudices, oppressive practices and gender inequalities have all greatly impacted on society and societal practices with regards to education, employment, places of residence and organisational power structures. In South Africa apartheid policies dictated where people lived and what opportunities and privileges different race groups were afforded. Unequal educational opportunities existed for different race groups and schools were resourced according to race.

Similarly, inequality and prejudice can be identified worldwide. According to Shah (2004:1), when racism is discussed, Europe is one of the first places that come to mind. In Western Europe in 2002, racist attacks against Jews and Arabs increased due to increasing hostile activities in the Middle East. Shah (2004:1) quoted in the *The Human Rights Watch (1997)* stated: "The U.K. has one of the highest levels of racially motivated violence and harassment in Western Europe ... London saw two bombs explode in predominantly ethnic minority areas". Spain has noted an increase in racial violence as immigrants from North Africa continue to infiltrate the region, leading to increased friction and confrontations. According to the British Broadcasting Corporation, Greece has one of the worst records in the European Union regarding racism and treatment of ethnic minorities (Shah, 2004:2). The practice of racism in Australia has caused many indigenous Aborigines to lose their land. In Zimbabwe, poverty and the lack of land ownership have caused an increase in racist acts against white farmers. In the Middle

East, friction and racial conflict is ongoing between Palestinians and Israelis (Shah, 2004:3). Cambodia expresses a strong anti-Vietnamese sentiment in its various activities and policies. Affluent Chinese populations in Indonesia are threatened by violent acts and until 2003, Chinese students born in Malaysia were discriminated against with regard to university entrance. In the United States, racism is an issue that is well known. Other related issues have emerged such as police brutality against minority groups, the legacy of the history of slavery and the harsh treatment of immigrants (Shah, 2004:4). Whilst race is a common issue leading to inequality, gender issues also cause the suffering of many women around the world. For many years women were seen as inferior counterparts in the workplace, deprived of proper health care and deprived of education, for example, in ancient Greece and the present Arab countries. This has in cases led to double discrimination.

The above mentioned global issues cast light on the emergence of multicultural education, whose main purpose is to educate people to practice respect and tolerance of all. Multicultural education is described by Banks (in Banks, 2002) as an idea, a movement that contributes to educational reform and as a process. The idea behind multicultural education is to create equality amongst racial, social class and ethnic groups in terms of the educational opportunities provided to them by schools. Schools and their classroom environments should therefore reflect evidence of recognition and acknowledgement of diverse cultures. The process that underlies multicultural education involves the constant endeavour of teachers and administrators to achieve the best educational practices. In doing so, teachers need to modify their teaching methods to enhance academic achievement.

Multicultural education has been defined by the National Association for Multicultural Education (NAME) (NAME, 2003:1) as “a philosophical concept built on the ideals of freedom, justice, equality, equity, and human dignity.” It further states that schools play an important role in the development of attitudes and values that create a democratic society. The belief at the center of the teaching and learning process should be placed on students’ life histories and experiences and pedagogy should be contextualised to enhance multiple ways of thinking.

Seldom will two people define multicultural education in the same way. While some view it as a shift in curriculum to include underrepresented ethnic and cultural groups, others view it as a change in teaching styles and classroom climates. Still, others talk of changes in institutions and systems and educational and societal transformations (Gorski, 2006b:1). In whatever way multicultural education is defined or changes made, it seems as if teachers are not always competent to teach in multicultural classes, because since the inception of multiculturalism, racism, social injustices and inequalities are still practised. Public schooling in South Africa has undergone major changes since the 1994 general elections. Schools are now open to all children and there is an influx of learners of diverse races, cultures and religions into schools. But teachers were neither trained nor prepared for this. The challenge of de-racialisation was the result of the education policy prior to 1994. Research on schools in South Africa has shown that the challenge to manage integration has grown more serious because no race relations programme has been developed to provide guidelines on de-racialisation or racial harmony in schools (Khosa, 2001).

An article in *The Mercury* of June 17, 2005 stated the following: “As classrooms become more integrated racially and culturally in urban areas in South Africa, teachers are struggling to cope with the challenges posed by diverse cultures and backgrounds thrown together in the classroom environment. At most schools in South Africa teachers have received no training to handle classrooms with pupils from different and often clashing cultures. Dr Eunice Dlamini, the Vice Dean of the University of Zululand, said teachers had largely been left to find their own solutions to the dilemma, which often perpetuated stereotypes and hindered learning” (Bolowana, 2005).

According to Davis (in King, Sims & Osher, 2000:22) “...Cultural competence is the integration and transformation of knowledge about individuals and groups of people into specific standards, policies, practices and attitudes used in appropriate cultural settings to increase the quality of services thereby producing better outcomes ”.

Sleeter (in Miner and Peterson, 2001: 2) proposes that teachers, stereotypically, think of and conceptualise multicultural education as teaching about differences in culture. Hall and Barret (2000: 8) define cultural diversity in the classroom as the recognition and

respect of students as valuable individuals by other students and staff regardless of culture, race, linguistic background or religion. Hall and Barret (2000:10) propose that teachers should be aware of the foundations of multicultural education and that respect and dignity characterise a teacher who is culturally sensitive and responsive. According to Batiste (2005), we need to acknowledge gender, sexual orientation, age and ability. Landsman (2001: 45) points out that as teachers we need to show acknowledgement and understanding of the students' environments and those who form a part of this, in order to explain what happens at our schools. We, as teachers, should show a responsibility for our place as teachers, our teaching styles, and our curriculum and for the experiences that we provide in the classroom. We are also responsible for the way we treat our students and the expectations we have of them.

Landsman (2001: 34) mentions that in South Africa it is the task of white teachers to recognise the need for a change in the teaching of history as well as develop a way for the teaching of history. In doing so, we need to question the issue of morality, compassion, how decisions have been made and by whom. When a book has been published and a law passed, we need to question in whose interests this was done. Once this introspection takes place, we have begun to think differently about power, politics and history. She goes further to say that the curriculum will become more meaningful to students if we include black as well as white heroes. Our definition of history should therefore include a definition of antiracism (Landsman, 2001:36).

Whilst the literature describes multicultural education as bringing to the fore the acknowledgement of people of colour and of different social and ethnic groups, the case in Saudi Arabia with reference to multicultural education is somewhat different. Whilst the literature often refers to black and white people, in Saudi Arabian international schools that cater for expatriate student populations, a dominant culture, the Arab, prevails. This is due to students who come from the Middle Eastern countries, namely, Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Palestine, Lebanon, Saudi Arabia and Sudan. Arabs who have emigrated to Canada, the United States and Australia also form a part of the student population when their parents take jobs in Saudi Arabia and the whole family relocates. The other minority cultures present are Pakistanis, Indians, Filipinos, South Africans and Koreans. International schools allow for the meeting of different cultures and religions on

the school campus, within the classrooms and on the playgrounds. Teaching should therefore be aimed at teaching minority groups to be competent within a majority, dominant culture. This, according to Sleeter and Grant (in Miner and Peterson, 2001: 4), is referred to as “Teaching the Culturally Different” and targets minority groups. In the same light, teaching should also address issues that focus on the dominant culture tolerating and appreciating minority groups.

Sebastian (2002: 2), in his presentation at an International Education Conference, wrote that international schools in Saudi Arabia cater for school populations that have as many as fifteen to twenty different nationalities which he describes as a “heterogeneous cultural spectrum”. He found that if the school curriculum took into account integration and socialisation, this contributes positively towards educational goals.

Research done by Harnish (2003:5) in the development of career and technical education in the Persian Gulf, informs us that in this process, it became necessary for the career experts to quickly develop an understanding of the cultural context and unique, social, economic and religious norms that have shaped education in the Gulf area and the United Arab Emirates. For teaching to be effective, teachers had to be motivated to learn new paradigms of teaching and working with learners and in so doing teachers had to update their knowledge and skills.

The international schooling system is characterised by teachers who are from throughout the world. The school at which this research was conducted is run by an American organisation and offers students an American curriculum. From school record statistics, it is evident that teachers have been trained throughout the world in their native countries. (See also Chapter 4). They have, however, ventured out to teach elsewhere. International schools should, therefore, focus on the training or re-training of teachers with specific competencies that address the needs of international teaching. Since the school caters for an expatriate student population which gives rise to a gathering of different cultures and religions, staff development programmes should address the multicultural school environment and equip teachers with the knowledge, skills and attitudes that are essential for operating within this environment. Competency in cross-cultural functioning means learning new patterns of behaviour and applying them

effectively in the appropriate settings. Training is therefore seen as essential and necessary due to the difficulty in changing adult attitudes and behaviour.

1.2 MOTIVATION FOR RESEARCH

Having had the experience of teaching in multicultural schools in South Africa over twelve years and presently teaching in Saudi Arabia, I have come to realise that the same scenario prevails in international schools, only the cultures and ethnic groups are different. My experience as a teacher in multicultural schools in South Africa has significantly influenced my decision to research the topic of cultural competency of educators. This experience has extended to my present context, whereby similar incidents seem to replicate itself with regard to cultural diversity and ethnicity. In all instances, classroom learning and teaching will be enhanced if educators show leadership in acknowledging the cultural diversity of students in the classroom. In so doing teachers will be able to practise recognition of students regardless of race, colour or creed and in turn provide equal opportunities to all students to promote success in learning.

One of the many schools that I taught at, an ex- Model C school in the Durban region in South Africa, conducted a survey amongst learners to determine their needs and concerns. An often repeated suggestion among the learners was that the school should employ more white teachers. An interesting point was that this particular school had an almost 85% black student population. I regard this as a matter of what the students conceptualise as a good education, that is, 'white is best'. This conveys to us that learners also need to be educated about equality among teaching staff, that diverse teachers can be equally knowledgeable and not only white teachers can teach effectively. According to Carmen (1992:1), in the 1990s, white females formed the majority of the teaching corps, which reflected a contrast to the backgrounds of the students they taught.

The topic is very relevant to my present profession. The current work situation and the situation in South Africa, regarding multicultural education, is a concrete problem which requires insight and knowledge about ways and skills to cope with and handle the situation. When teachers enter the world of international/multicultural teaching, they enter a situation that is different for which they have been trained. A lack of organisational structure and commitment to the cultural justice and equity in teacher

training curriculums fails to equip teachers with the pedagogic skills and knowledge to deal with culturally diverse student populations.

1.3 FORMULATING THE PROBLEM

In Saudi Arabia, international schools accommodate students from all over the world and are staffed by teachers from all over the world. The curriculum they follow, however, is American. The question that arises is whether this addresses the needs of a diverse student population and, according to the principles of multicultural education, whether students are thus provided with quality education.

The question addressed in this research is:

What competencies do teachers need to teach in a multicultural international school?

To address the above, the following sub problems were formulated:

- What constitutes a culturally diverse international school?
- What are the main aims of multicultural education?
- What competencies do teachers need to teach in culturally diverse schools?
- What staff development should be offered in multicultural schools?
- What is the competence of teachers in a culturally diverse international school in Saudi Arabia?
- What can be recommended to improve teachers' competence to teach in a culturally diverse international school?

1.4 AIM OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this research is to investigate teacher competence in multicultural education in an international school. The specific objectives of the research are:

- To define a culturally diverse international school.
- To describe the main aims, and assumptions of multicultural education.
- To identify competencies that teachers need to teach in culturally diverse schools.

- To describe staff development that should be offered in multicultural schools.
- To investigate the competence of teachers in a culturally diverse international school in Saudi Arabia.
- To define and describe what can be done to improve teachers' competence to teach in a culturally diverse international school.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

According to Babbie and Mouton (in De Vos, Strydom, Fouché & Delpont, 2002:77), science is “an enterprise dedicated to finding out” or according to Heppner (1992 in De Vos *et al*, 2002:77) “to advance knowledge, to make discoveries, and to acquire facts”. In spite of what needs to be found out, what needs to be discovered, or what facts are wanted to be acquired, there is a process involved. The process involves scientific inquiry, which allows us to learn and know about the world around us (De Vos *et al*, 2002:77). The process of finding out, discovering and the acquisition of facts for the research under review are guided by a literature review and an empirical investigation.

1.5.1 Literature review

A literature review is used to allow the researcher to build up a logical framework that is set within a context of inquiry and studies that are related. A literature review should (De Vos *et al*, 2002:266-7):

- Assist in contextualising the researcher's questions.
- Show that the researcher is knowledgeable about other related research and supporting evidence of the present research.
- Show that the researcher's proposed study will fill the identified gaps of previous research.
- Allow the researcher to refine and redefine the present research questions by placing it within the larger context of previous research.

- Primary literature sources refer to the original writings and research of researchers. These include scholarly books, journals, abstracts and research reports. In this study a primary literature source included journals and books written by Banks (cf bibliography).
- Secondary literature refers to information that has been removed from the actual published results of literature, by synthesising and bringing together previous literature eg. textbooks, encyclopaedias and review papers. This study has made use of secondary resources in textbooks eg. Sleeter (cf bibliography), review papers (eg. Sebastian (cf bibliography) and encyclopaedias eg Harnish (cf bibliography).

1.5.2 Empirical investigation

Mouton (in De Vos *et al*, 2002:137) describes a research design as the ways and means the researcher employs to conduct the research. The research design, therefore, assists in guiding the researcher to meet the main objective of the study by beginning with the research problem and proceeding through the research in a logical manner. Quantitative research is defined as “a formal, objective, systematic process in which numerical data are used to obtain information about the world”. Qualitative research, on the other hand, is regarded as being subjective, comprising of observation, interviewing and document analysis techniques (De Vos *et al*, 2002:339).

Quantitative research designs are systematic and are said to be objective and deductive and can therefore be generalised. Quantitative research therefore uses data that can be translated into numbers and then interpreted. In quantitative research the aim is to determine the relationship between one thing (an independent variable), which in this study is teacher training, and another (a dependent variable), which is teacher competency.

A quantitative, descriptive design has been selected for the following research. A descriptive design assists in gathering information about a group of people, aiming to describe and interpret responses and allow for the development of theories and identification of problems (Cohen & Manion, 2001:169). Best (in Cohen & Manion,

2001:169) states that descriptive research is about “points of view or attitudes”. Descriptive studies are best done with groups, institutions and individuals, where methods and materials are also looked at for the purpose of describing, comparing, contrasting, analysing and interpreting anything that exists or may be supposed to exist and the events that develop in the various fields of inquiry.

1.5.2.1 Sampling technique and research sample

The sampling technique that was employed was non-probability, convenience sampling as it allows for choosing respondents that are close by and easily accessible.

The school at which I am presently teaching, namely ISG-Dammam, in the Eastern Province in Saudi Arabia, has three sections: the Elementary School (Pre Kindergarten to Grade 4), the Middle School (Grade 5 to Grade 8) and the High School (Grade 9 to Grade 12). The staff is employed by the company, International Schools Group (ISG), which recruits staff from India, Pakistan, Australia, USA, UK, South Africa, Egypt, Lebanon and the Philippines. The sample comprised the staff of the three different sections of the school. The staff population, comprised of 98 staff, was the sample. Questionnaires were handed out to all teachers and those returned were used for analysis in the study. According to the guidelines for sampling in De Vos *et al* (2002: 210), if a population of 100 is suggested, a sample of 45% is suggested, implying 45 respondents. “It is not always possible to involve a minimum number of respondents in an investigation, because the total population is often quite small and it is preferable that the total population be involved in such cases (De Vos *et al*, 2002: 200).

1.5.2.2 Data collection

The chosen data collection method was a questionnaire as this is seen as a widely used and useful means of information collection (Cohen & Manion, 2001:245). Since the sample size was large, i.e. over fifty, the questionnaire had to be more structured and closed. This method was chosen as it was the easiest way to get information from the three different sections of the school which work according to different time schedules. The

questionnaires were handed to the teachers at a staff development meeting to ensure a good response rate. In order to do this permission was sought from the principal and vice principals of the different sections of the school.

1.5.3 Analysis

The responses of teachers were transformed into percentages to interpret their meaning, to offer explanations and make inferences and to identify areas of concern that could lead to staff development. The results and inferences drawn enabled the researcher to compare the findings with established theory and it also allowed for verification (De Vos *et al*, 2002:223).

1.6 CONCEPT CLARIFICATION

1.6.1 International schooling

International schooling refers to students attending schools outside of their country of birth as a result of their parents finding work in another country, i.e. the host country (Google Encyclopedia). "Internationally mobile youth live throughout the world and often attend schools developed expressly for students whose parents work abroad" (Shafer, 1998: 1).

1.6.2 Expatriate population

An expatriate population is one temporarily or permanently residing in a country and culture other than that of their upbringing or legal residence. Expatriate can also be used to describe any person living in a country other than where they hold citizenship (Google Encyclopedia) or internationally mobile families and those living outside the country of citizenship (Useem, 2001).

1.6.3 Ethnic group

An ethnic group is a human population whose members identify with each other, usually on the basis of a presumed common genealogy or ancestry (Google Encyclopedia).

1.6.4 Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism causes people to perceive of others who are different from them, as being inferior to them (Google Encyclopedia). "Ethnocentrism is the tendency to look at the world primarily from the perspective of one's own culture" (Satter, 2002).

1.6.5 Culture within a society

Large societies often have subcultures, or groups of people with distinct sets of behavior and beliefs that differentiate them from a larger culture of which they are a part. The subculture may be distinctive because of the age of its members, or their race, ethnicity, class or gender. The qualities that determine a subculture as distinct may be aesthetic, religious, occupational, political, sexual or a combination of these factors (Google Encyclopedia).

1.6.6 Acculturation

Acculturation refers to the integration of another culture into one's own culture (Hall & Barret, 2000: 2).

1.6.7 Culture shock

When learning about a new culture people display a natural, defensive resistance to this which may be manifested as irritation, confusion, hostility, estrangement and panic (Hall & Barret, 2000:2).

1.6.8 Discrimination

Discrimination refers to showing differential or exclusionary treatment towards a group of people on the basis of race, gender, social class, ethnicity or sexual orientation (Hall & Barret, 2000:2).

1.6.9 Racism

Racism occurs when one has the belief that one's own race is superior and other races are inferior, less intelligent, less moral, etc. (Hall & Barret, 2000:2).

1.6.10 Prejudice

Prejudice refers to an unfavorable attitude toward another group which is formed because of stereotypes (Hall & Barret, 2000:2).

1.6.11 Stereotype

A stereotype refers to an exaggerated or inaccurate generalisation that is used to describe people in a group (Hall & Barret, 2000: 2).

1.7 OUTLINE OF THE STUDY

Chapter 1 outlines the introduction and motivation of the study, the research design and methodology and the clarification of key concepts that are used throughout this study.

Chapter 2 is based on the research in terms of a literature review which provides a theoretical background to the topic in focus. The idea of international schooling and multicultural education are discussed. Teacher competencies and staff development issues are identified and discussed.

Chapter 3 gives a description of the research design, the method of data collection, the analysis and interpretation of the data.

Chapter 4 contains the presentation, discussion and interpretation of the findings of this study.

Chapter 5 constitutes the summary of the research, main conclusions and recommendations. This chapter also highlights the limitations of the study.

1.8 SUMMARY

This study focuses on the competencies that teachers require to equip them with the attitudes, skills and knowledge that enable them to function effectively in an international school. The problem has been formulated, the aims specified, the research design and methodology identified and explained and the study was outlined according to the various chapters to follow. The second chapter includes an in depth study of the literature relating to teacher competencies, multicultural education and international schooling.

CHAPTER TWO

LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 INTRODUCTION

This research is based on identifying competencies in teachers that are necessary to teach in a multicultural international school. Before these can be identified it is necessary to provide a theoretical framework of multicultural education according to which the competencies can be identified. The literature review that follows focuses on the definitions, aims, characteristics, principles and misconceptions of multicultural education. Furthermore, teacher competencies required in a multicultural international setting are also discussed. This chapter goes on to discuss the staff development issues that become relevant in this situation.

2.2 A BRIEF HISTORY OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education has its beginning in the civil rights movements and social action by oppressed groups. Educational institutions were targeted, as these were seen as being the most resistant to change in terms of racial equality. The history of multicultural education has been traced back to the 1960s, by many to the social action of African Americans and other people of colour, who during the civil rights struggles challenged the discriminatory practices that took place in public institutions. In the early 1970s, women's rights movements joined in the struggle for education reform. Parents, community leaders and activists focused on and called for a change in the existing curriculum and an examination into hiring practices of institutions and stated that these should be consistent with the racial diversity that the country represented. In the 1980s, education activists and researchers reacted to schools that included token programmes and the study of people of colour who were famous. A pioneer of multicultural education, James Banks, studied schools within a multicultural context and as a social system. He used the words

“educational equality” to conceptualise multicultural education. Banks spoke of a “multicultural school environment” and stated that for schools to acknowledge its multicultural student population, the operation of the school should be examined with the intention of change, with regard to school policies, teachers’ attitudes, materials used for instruction, methods of assessment, counseling techniques and teaching styles and methods. By the middle and late 1980s, the contributions made by Grant, Sleeter, Gay and Nieto provided deeper frameworks about social change and educational transformation (Gorski, 2006a: 1-3).

In 1977 the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) in the United States of America mandated multicultural education as an integral part of teacher preparation. These standards appeared in faculty and student references and assisted in the planning of long term programmes. The reference appeared as follows: “Multicultural education is preparation for the social, political, and economic realities that individuals experience in culturally diverse and complex human encounters. These realities have both national and international dimensions. This preparation provides a process by which an individual develops competencies for perceiving, believing, evaluating, and behaving in differential cultural settings. Thus multicultural education is viewed as an intervention and an ongoing assessment process to help institutions and individuals become more responsive to the human condition, individual cultural integrity, and cultural pluralism in society” (Ramsey, Williams & Vold, 2002: 212-213).

By the middle and late 1980s school transformation and social change became the focus of work done by Grant, Sleeter, Gay and Nieto (in Gorski, 2006a: 2) and they established new frameworks that focused on equal educational opportunities. Discussion of social change exposed and criticised discriminatory hiring practices and school curricula, oppressive teaching approaches and education systems, classroom climate and funding inconsistencies. According to Ovando and McLaren (in Gorski, 2006a:2), racism and social injustices underlie the foundations of multicultural education and will always obstruct democracy.

2.3 DEFINING MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

There will probably be no two people that define multicultural education in the same way. While some view it as a shift in curriculum to include underrepresented ethnic and cultural groups, others view it as a change in teaching styles and classroom climates. Still others talk of changes in institutions and systems, and educational and societal transformations (Gorski, 2006b:3).

Multicultural education has been defined by the National Association for Multicultural Education in the United States of America (National Association of Multicultural Education 2003) as “a process that permeates all aspects of school practices, policies and organisation as a means to ensure the highest of academic achievement for all students. It helps students to develop a positive self-concept by providing knowledge about the histories, cultures and contributions of diverse groups. It prepares all students to work toward structural equality in organisations and institutions by providing knowledge, dispositions and skills for the redistribution of power and wealth among diverse groups.”

Banks (1995:1) described multicultural education as being *an idea* - serving all ethnic, racial and economic classes by providing equal educational opportunities; as *a movement* - focusing on educational reform by acknowledging diverse cultures and nations within the classroom by changing the climate that exists in the present classroom; and as *a process* - which targets teachers and administrators to make endeavours to achieve the ideals of multicultural education.

Sleeter stated (in Miner & Peterson 2001:1) that multicultural education must be understood as arising from the civil rights movement having as its underlying basis a struggle against white dominance, white privilege and white supremacy. Multicultural education should not be merely seen as a sharing of ethnic recipes and significant cultural days on the calendar. We need to look at issues of poverty amidst wealth, issues of inclusivity and access to privileges and if these are not addressed, then we are far from establishing the true meaning of what multiculturalism is. She mentions also how white

racism keeps benefiting people in many facets of life, for example, in finding a job or finding a place to rent.

Sleeter (in Miner & Peterson, 2001:1) explained that teachers misconstrue multicultural education as the mere teaching of cultural differences and that if we as teachers truly want to understand the differences between white people and others, then “we need to understand that within an accurate historical context”.

Multicultural education is about education about the past that has created the present, to encourage the full development of all students. In a nutshell, Hanley (2002:4) states that “multicultural education is about social change through education. It requires deep and critical thinking, imagination, and commitment to another tomorrow, inclusive of all the wealth of all our stories and peoples”.

Hart (2002:1) stated that multicultural education is best defined by Christine Bennett as follows: “Multicultural education is:

- teaching and learning based on democratic values that foster cultural pluralism;
- in its most comprehensive form, a commitment to achieving educational equity;
- developing curricula that build on understanding about ethnic groups;
- combating oppressive practices.”

The National Association of Independent Schools (NAIS) defines multicultural education as follows: “Multicultural education is an approach to transforming education grounded in ideals of social justice, education, equity and is dedicated to facilitating educational experiences in which all students reach their full potential as learners and as socially – aware and active beings, locally, nationally and globally. The objective of multicultural education simply stated, is to help our students learn how to live in an ethnically and culturally rich, diverse society” (Batiste, 2005). In my current work situation it would become the responsibility of administrators and teachers to equip themselves with the knowledge, skills and attitudes, to guide and mentor students from minority groups. By being knowledgeable, teachers are at an advantage to assist students to function comfortably, confidently and effectively within a dominant culture, namely the Arabs.

2.4 THE DIMENSIONS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

The dimensions of multicultural education as outlined below focus on broadly conceptualising multicultural education. When these dimensions are acknowledged and practised, they allow for students to learn about the past and present nations and the world. Learning takes place from diverse perspectives and students become capable of interacting personally and socially and are able to make judgements about civic actions (Banks, 1995: 3).

Banks (1995: 1-3) identified five dimensions of multicultural education as follows:

- (i) *the integration of content* – which deals with the extent to which teachers include content and examples from sources of different cultures and groups with the intent of explaining key concepts, principles and theories in their subject.
- (ii) *the process to construct knowledge* – refers to the extent to which teachers assist students to investigate, determine and understand how the biases, the cultural assumptions, frames of reference and perspectives influence how knowledge is constructed. Banks (in Hart, 2002:6-7) mentions five types of knowledge, namely: personal/cultural knowledge; popular knowledge; mainstream academic knowledge; transformative academic knowledge and school knowledge.
- (iii) *creating a reduction in prejudice* – this focuses on students' attitudes, racial and other and how this can be influenced by how teachers teach and the material they use;
- (iv) *creating equality within pedagogy* – the teacher needs to match teaching styles with students' learning styles that are present within various cultural and ethnic groups. In doing so teachers focus on modifying their teaching to allow students from different racial, social, cultural and gender groups to achieve academically; and
- (v) *creating an empowered school culture and social structure* – practices at school relating to sport and academic achievements cause interactions between teachers and students from all racial backgrounds. These must be examined so that the

school culture that prevails empowers students from all backgrounds (Ramsey *et al*, 2002:154).

The following summarises the dimensions of multicultural education as practised by teachers and educational institutions. When teachers are willing to change their teaching styles to allow all students to achieve academically, equity will exist within pedagogy. Teaching styles should move from being competitive to cooperative and will contribute to developing positive racial attitudes. Banks (1995:2) believes that teachers and administrators are empowered if the school organisation is transformed in terms of the above five dimensions mentioned to allow for equal status amongst all racial and ethnic groups. Teachers should use content from diverse groups when teaching concepts and skills; students should be helped to understand how knowledge in the various groups is constructed; students need to be helped to develop positive intergroup attitudes and behaviour; and teachers should be able to modify their teaching strategies to ensure that students from different racial, cultural and social class groups will be exposed to equal opportunities. The school as an educational institution must allow for the transformation of the school so that students from diverse, ethnic and cultural groups will experience equal status in the culture and life of the school. Banks and Banks (2001: 25) have noted that whilst student populations are becoming more and more diverse in the United States, the majority of the nation's teachers still remain white, middle class females.

2.5 AIMS OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

The following section focuses on what the ideals of multicultural education aim to achieve in their recognition and practice. As schools become more culturally diverse, the presence of multiculturalism at schools must be acknowledged. Practising educators and future professional preparation should focus on what multicultural education has to offer to upgrade the status of all cultures and at the same time, the status of education.

- The National Association of Multicultural Education stated that education should generate multiple ways of thinking by placing students' life histories and beliefs at the center of the teaching and learning process. Education should also create in students

a critical awareness of power and oppression, society and the world (National Association of Multicultural Education 2003).

- Students should be assisted in understanding what influences the construction of knowledge within a discipline. Multicultural education should provide knowledge about the histories, cultures and contributions of diverse groups and in doing so aim to help students to develop positive self-concepts (National Association of Multicultural Education 2003).
- Multicultural education aims to provide students with knowledge and skills about the redistribution of power and income amongst diverse groups and in so doing aims to prepare students to address structural inequality in organisations and institutions (National Association of Multicultural Education 2003).
- Multicultural education aims to allow students and teachers to analyse critically power relations and oppression in the world, society and in their communities (National Association of Multicultural Education 2003).
- Multicultural education aims to create equality with respect to educational opportunities and at the same time aims to create in students, awareness and encouragement to critique society in the interest of social justice (National Association of Multicultural Education 2003).
- To achieve all of the above, multicultural education aims at reforming the school comprehensively as multicultural education should filter through all aspects of the school community and organisation (National Association of Multicultural Education 2003).
- Multicultural education (Hanley, 2002:1) is aimed at ridding society of the antagonism, aggression and resistance that has come about as a result of a superior culture into which all other cultures must be assimilated. Multicultural education requires of teachers to instill critical thinking skills in students as it is more than just sharing holidays and food.
- The aim of multicultural education is to reflect in its operation, the positive aspects from a range of cultures to ensure that learning resources do not include racial stereotypes (SeaBritain, 2005:1).
- Multicultural education aims to create “Respect for all: valuing diversity and challenging racism through the curriculum” (SeaBritain, 2005:1).

- Multicultural education aims for inclusion of cultures and all aspects of life that create equality amongst people, that is, equality with respect to educational opportunity, freedom, with regard to social and political involvement, and individual growth. The aim is not to separate cultures but to create cultural fairness in a way that no one group dominates the public scenario (Feinberg, 2004:1).
- Multicultural education aims to allow for the expression of experiences of cultural groups from the points of view of people from different race and ethnic groups, as well as from different genders and sexual orientations (Feinberg, 2004:1-2).
- Another aim of multicultural education is to provide students with information about their own society and the diversity that exists there; to encourage respect amongst students for the practices of other cultural groups; and to assist students from disadvantaged minorities to develop a sense of pride about their own cultural heritage (Feinberg, 2004:2).
- According to Wilson (2000:3), multicultural education aims towards creating a positive multicultural climate which should in turn impact on the following: the creation of smaller groups of segregated students; diminished racial tension within the school; ethnic minority groups should be acknowledged more and their classroom performance should be increased; and the inclusion of a multicultural curriculum.

In order for the above aims to be reached, teachers are expected to acknowledge diversity with respect to race, culture and language and are also expected to be culturally competent. The school staff should be multiculturally literate having the capability of serving as a support system to families and the community. The National Association of Multicultural Education proposes that since equality and equity are not synonymous, the aim of multicultural education is an attempt to offer students an equitable opportunity for education, whilst at the same time emphasising to students the necessity to critique society for the purposes of social justice (National Association of Multicultural Education 2003).

Reviews done by the National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education in the late 1980s found that many educational institutions included the aims of multicultural education in their mission statements but they did not find evidence of this being

implemented in their curriculums. Also institutions differed greatly with regards to what aspects of multicultural education they emphasised or included. Whilst some focused on gender issues, others focused on prejudice reduction or on the development of a multicultural curriculum. They found that the most common emphasis amongst institutions was on developing knowledge for cultural groups and developing teaching strategies for teaching the culturally diverse and exceptional students (Ramsey *et al*, 2002:226).

Hart (2002:2) proposes that when we consider Bank's dimensions of multicultural education, we should keep the following in mind: "What are we currently doing? Why are we doing it? Whose needs are and are not being met? What changes need to be made?" In keeping with the aims of multicultural education, this questions whether we are maintaining the status quo and looking to the needs of the dominant culture or acknowledging and recognising changes that can be made in terms of creating a positive multicultural climate; are we working against racism and stereotyping and creating an awareness in students about social injustices.

The abovementioned aims of multicultural education are broad and encapsulate many facets including students, teachers, the community, the curriculum and the construction of content and knowledge, learning resources, the concept of respect, and the acknowledgement and involvement of all people regardless of race, colour, creed, gender or sexual orientation. Multicultural education is aimed at the creation of equality and social justice through education and the curriculum.

2.6 PRINCIPLES OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

The Multicultural Educational Consensus Panel at the University of Washington and University of Maryland (made up of two psychologists, a sociologist, a political scientist and four specialists in multicultural education) devised twelve essential principles that are intended to guide educational practitioners to achieve academic excellence amongst students and improve communication amongst groups of students (Banks, 2002: 1). The panel, an expert group, was formed to develop and write reports based on research and

practice. They report on what has been found about a particular problem and the most effective actions that can be taken to solve it. Devising these principles also served to help schools to be successful in their functioning by assisting them to identify and meet the challenges of diversity.

The principles of multicultural education support the aims of multicultural education. Whilst the aims focus on prejudice reduction, antiracism, and the reduction of social injustices and inequalities, the principles of multicultural education focus on and target teacher and student learning, intergroup relations, school organisational structures and learner assessment methods to accomplish the aims.

The following are the twelve essential principles (Banks, 2002: 2-3).

Teacher learning

Principle 1: Professional development programmes should help teachers understand the complex characteristics of ethnic groups within U.S. society and the ways in which race, ethnicity, language, and social class interact to influence student behavior.

Student learning

Principle 2: Schools should ensure that all students have equitable opportunities to learn and meet high standards.

Principle 3: The curriculum should help students understand that knowledge is socially constructed and reflects researchers' personal experiences as well as the social, political, and economic contexts in which they live and work.

Principle 4: Schools should provide all students with opportunities to participate in extra- and co-curricular activities that develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that increase academic achievement and foster positive interracial relationships.

Intergroup relations

Principle 5: Schools should create or make salient superordinate crosscutting group memberships in order to improve intergroup relations.

Principle 6: Students should learn about stereotyping and other related biases that have negative effects on racial and ethnic relations.

Principle 7: Students should learn about the values shared by virtually all cultural groups (e.g., justice, equality, freedom, peace, compassion, and charity).

Principle 8: Teachers should help students acquire the social skills needed to interact effectively with students from other racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups.

Principle 9: Schools should provide opportunities for students from different racial, ethnic, cultural, and language groups to interact socially under conditions designed to reduce fear and anxiety.

School governance, organisation and equity

Principle 10: A school's organisational strategies should ensure that decision making is widely shared and that members of the school community learn collaborative skills and dispositions in order to create a caring environment for students.

Principle 11: Leaders should develop strategies that ensure all public schools, regardless of their locations are funded equitably.

Assessment

Principle 12: Teachers should use multiple culturally sensitive techniques to assess complex cognitive and social skills.

A review of the above twelve principles should create an awareness amongst administrators of multicultural, international schools and allow them to identify shortfalls in the schools that they manage. Even though, these principles have been devised by a US author, who is clearly an authority on multicultural education, and is from a US source, they can be used in any school setting to support the aims of multicultural education.

2.7 MISCONCEPTIONS ABOUT MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education as a movement has been identified and progressed rapidly over the past forty years. Professional organisations have provided educators with guidelines

for the practice and implementation of multicultural education for some time now. In 1977, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) revised its standards, and all teacher education programmes had to include a multicultural perspective (Ramsey *et al*, 2002:211). Gorski (2006b:1) mentioned that the theory and practice of multicultural education has been transformed, refocused and reconceptualised during the early stages of the development of multicultural education in the 1960s. The Council on Interracial Books for Children published “Guidelines for Selecting Bias-Free Textbooks and Story books”. Bishop (in Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 28) published “Guidelines in Teaching Multicultural Literature in Grades K-8”. However, when educators take into cognisance multicultural education and try to adjust the curriculum to include diverse cultural issues, this process is challenged by misconceptions about what multicultural education is and how it should be practised (Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 27).

Multicultural education is often seen, narrowly, as education provided for children of colour. There have been fifteen misconceptions about multicultural education identified. These are summarised below:

- *People share a common culture if they come from the same geographic region or from the same nation, or if they speak the same language.*

Whilst people may talk the same language, they do not necessarily have the same cultural background. Banks and Banks (in Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 27) stated that historical, racial and cultural differences must be acknowledged to appreciate differentiation. Regions and nations cannot be assumed to be monocultural and if this occurs in teaching, students are deprived of appreciating that the whole is made up of parts.

- *Families share the same values if they come from the same culture.*

Lynch and Hanson (in Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 27) note that families tend to “live out” their culture over the generations. Whilst grandparents retain their original culture, grandchildren tend to follow one of four paths; i.e. they follow the mainstream culture, or

they become bicultural, or they become culturally different people or they become culturally marginalised.

- *When teachers choose books about other cultures, there is the belief that the stories are authentic.*

This is such a misconception that the Council on Interracial Books for Children published “Guidelines for Selecting Bias-Free Textbooks and Storybooks” in 1980. When teachers aim to share information about other cultures in their teaching, they may unintentionally choose books that are racist or not representative of a group. The guidelines help teachers in : a) identifying stereotypes by checking illustrations; b) checking the story line; c) looking at lifestyles and analyzing relationships between people; d) identifying heroes and, e) noting the effect on the child’s image etc (Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 28).

- *Ethnic and racial issues are the focus in multicultural education.*

Whilst this is a large part of multicultural education, socioeconomic diversity and gender should not go by unnoticed. To help dispel this myth, Davidman and Davidman (in Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000:28) wrote “Teaching With a Multicultural Perspective: A practical Guide. Sleeter and Grant (in Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000:28) wrote about school goals for multicultural education promoting ethnic and racial equality in schools. These references included in their content “the promotion of equal opportunity in the school, cultural pluralism, alternative life styles, and respect for those who differ and support for power equity among groups.”

- *Multicultural teaching is seen as being effective by the use of the tour and detour approaches.*

Cultures are stereotyped by their food, traditional costumes and dances. Teachers neglect to focus on the everyday living of people from that culture which gives rise to biases amongst students. Having a Black History week or month separates whites from blacks and non-black learners see this as being for them – not us. Students may leave the teaching programme with more biases than they felt before the programme.

- *The teaching of multicultural education should be a subject on its own.*

This approach, instead of creating a bringing together of cultures, creates an awareness of marginalised groups in society and at the same time creates an overload in the teachers' already full workload. It is suggested that concepts dealing with multiculturalism be included throughout the curriculum.

- *Multicultural education is seen as being an accepted part of the curriculum.*

This is an untruth as it has been learned that many schools have tried to remove multicultural education from the operation of their schools. Rush Limbaugh wrote (in Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 30) that "multicultural Education is just an excuse for those who have not made it in the American way".

- *Multiculturalism promotes division rather than unifies people.*

This misconception does not take into account that there have always been a vast range of diversities that have existed and will continue to exist throughout the United States.

- *There does not exist a need to learn about other cultures in single cultural or bicultural societies.*

This is so because people believe that there is just black and white. This was heard from protesting undergraduate education students "Why should we study other cultures when there are only whites and blacks in the class and the community". It was found that these protesting students were located close to an elementary school that represented 71 different nationalities. With an increase in diversity within society, there is a need to learn about all cultures (Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 32).

- *Older children are less egocentric or ethnocentric than younger children and as result should be the ones who should be exposed to multicultural education.*

Lynch and Hanson (in Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 30) state that children establish understandings about cultural differences by the age of five and learn about these with much more ease as compared to adults. Young children are capable of understanding that we are all different and at the same time all alike in certain ways; therefore, the inclusion of the study of family and the community in the elementary curriculum is

considered as a positive aspect. When teachers ask students to bring to school pictures of family and the similarities and differences are discussed, children are being exposed the diverse world out there.

- *The commonality amongst people is lost when multicultural education is implemented.*

Multicultural education, however, teaches tolerance, inclusivity and equitability and suggests that the cultural whole is richer than the parts.

- *America already acknowledges its cultural diversity; therefore they do not need multicultural education.*

This is also in keeping with the tour- detour approach to teaching and Americans would argue that Martin Luther King's birthday is celebrated and that is evidence enough of inclusivity.

- *Multicultural education causes historical accuracy to suffer.*

Teachers tend to teach in a way that favours their own cultures. The Egyptians will teach that Western civilisation had its beginnings in Egypt, whilst the Greeks will teach that Western civilisation had its beginnings in Greece.

- *Most people identify with only one culture.*

When children learn about other cultures from their interaction with others, they develop a unique cultural heritage. Multicultural education should address intrapersonal and interpersonal cultural diversity to avoid intrapsychic cultural conflict from occurring.

- *Multicultural education does not have enough resources available.*

There has been an overabundance of resources related to cultural diversity (Aldridge & Calhoun, 2000: 31). In the past ten years there has been a flood of information concerning cultural diversity. The references and list of websites mentioned in Aldridge and Calhoun's article are evidence of this.

The above are just fifteen misconceptions that have been identified by Aldridge and Calhoun (2000: 27-33). There are many more that have not been mentioned here. Teachers have in some way or the other participated in or contributed to these misconceptions. It is, however, the professional responsibility of educators to become knowledgeable about, and review their own, misconceptions about diversity.

2.8 APPROACHES TO MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Acknowledging and incorporating multicultural education into teaching practices and educational experiences require a transformation of present practices and mindsets. Educators need to become aware of their own biases, prejudices, issues and assumptions that they carry with them into the classroom. Having knowledge of approaches to multicultural education will allow educators to be able to constantly critique their own perspectives and will inadvertently assist them in their choice of approach to multicultural education transformation (Gorski, 2006b: 1). There are many approaches to multicultural education, but reference here will be made particularly to Sleeter and Banks as they have written extensively about multicultural education. They are also popular for their viewpoints on multicultural education and have also been cited by many authors used as a reference in this research.

Sleeter (in Hanley, 2002: 1- 4) described five approaches to multicultural education as follows:

- *Teaching the culturally different approach* – culturally relevant instruction is used to uplift the academic achievement amongst students of colour.
- *Human Relations approach* – the understanding of people's social and cultural differences occurs through teaching students that all people have a common background.
- *Single Group Studies approach* – teaches students about past and present issues regarding people of colour, people from low socioeconomic groups, women, gays and lesbians.
- *The Multicultural Education approach* – that allows for the transformation of the educational process and enlightens people about democracy by teaching students

educational content using instruction that focuses on the knowledge and differences of culture.

- *The Social Reconstructionist approach* – teaches students about oppression and discrimination. Students become aware of their roles as agents of social change and how they could contribute to a more just society.

Banks (in Ramsey *et al*, 2002: 148-149) identifies four approaches of practice which result from the integration of multicultural content and process and which create an awareness of the aims of multicultural education. These include the following:

The Contributions approach - This involves the taking of holidays recognising heroes, e.g. the celebration of Martin Luther King Day as a historical event without the acknowledgement or the teaching of the history and meanings behind the hero. Another typical example would be the International food fairs that schools have without the study of the significance of the origination of the food.

The Additive approach – This involves additions, in terms of content, themes and perspectives, to the curriculum without changing the curriculum's structure. An example of this would be to add books written by authors of colour.

The Transformational approach – This involves structural changes to the curriculum so that students have the chance to view concepts, events, issues and themes from varying diverse ethnic and cultural perspectives.

The Social Action approach – this allows students to become involved in decision making and to be responsible for the decisions that they take by taking the appropriate action.

The above included a description of the approaches to multicultural education as outlined by Sleeter and Banks. Sleeter's approaches focus on the creation of an awareness and understanding of colour, oppression and discrimination, social and cultural differences, and the acknowledgement of all groups of people. Banks focuses on the acknowledgement of significant heroes, the content and themes present in the curriculum, and the involvement of students in becoming active decision makers in the community.

The following section addresses curriculum reform in multicultural education as the principles of multicultural education focus on student learning. Principle 3 stipulates that “the curriculum should help students understand that knowledge is socially constructed” (Banks, 2002: 2-3).

2.9 CURRICULUM REFORM IN MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Curriculum guidelines offer educators benchmarks and standards by which to achieve student and learner outcomes. Educators need to determine how to do this and what are the essential elements in achieving this. Learners are exposed to the planned as well as the hidden curriculum, which occurs through students’ experiences at school. Educators have a professional responsibility to their students to become aware of what students learn via the curriculum. The following discusses curriculum reform as sited in American literature. This can be applicable to schools throughout the world as schools function on the same basic principles.

Walker (in Sleeter, 2005:5) defines the curriculum as “a particular way of ordering content and purposes for teaching and learning in schools”. In this definition is included the content of textbooks, curriculum standards and guides. It also tells us how material is organised and around what material is organised. Giroux (in Sleeter, 2005:87) stated that “within dominant forms of curriculum theory, learning is generally perceived as either a body of content to be transmitted or a body of skills to be mastered”. The curriculum standards inform us of the knowledge, skills and understanding that students need in order to be competent in challenging the subject matter that they are faced with (Sleeter, 2005:5).

Ralph Tyler (in Sleeter, 2005: 6) identified, in his classic work, *Basic Principles of Curriculum and Instruction*, four questions that should guide curriculum planning. These are:

- What educational purposes should the school seek to attain?
- What educational experiences can be provided that are likely to attain these purposes?

- How can these educational experiences be effectively organised?
- How can we determine whether these purposes are being attained?

Other than the planned, written curriculum that is expected to be followed, we need to question what it is that students also learn through their experiences within the context of the school. This is what is referred to as the unplanned or hidden curriculum. The following should be considered: when participating in a classroom, what do students learn? What does this participation allow them to learn about their own identities and self worth? What do they realise about their learning abilities? What do they learn about what role/s they should fill within society? Can they be leaders or should they follow? Teachers who are attuned to the hidden curriculum come to realise that learning cannot be standardised as classroom interactions are not standardised as a result of differences in human behaviour (Sleeter, 2005:9). Knowledge to be learned within the curriculum is, however, generally devised by powerful groups in society namely, those that are educated, affluent or white. Banks (in Sleeter, 2005: 10) stated that school knowledge is created through the eyes of those that hold political, social and economic power and does not reflect the points of view of marginalised or underrepresented sectors of society. Haberman and Post (1999:103) ask whether the assumption in school curriculums should continue to be that there is a common set of societal norms in existence or whether school curriculums should focus on assisting students to make life choices from the variety that exists. This approach is favoured because it allows for critical thinking skills to be enhanced in students about the life choices they can make in the real world.

In this regard Haberman and Post (1999:103-105) suggest the following questions which should be considered during curriculum reform:

- Should the school curriculum be structured so that all groups become one America or should the curriculum acknowledge the cultural diversity prevalent in the society?
- Should the school curriculum help teach students to be participants in actions that promote equal opportunity and treatment for all people or should it reflect society as it is?

- Is a multicultural curriculum a process that serves to connect students' lives to the present curriculum, to add meaning to their lives, or is it just new content to be learned?
- Is a multicultural curriculum everything that takes place at a school or is it just a component of the school programme?
- Should the school curriculum focus on the conservation of natural resources or should it focus on Western societies and their right to exploit natural resources of the world?
- Should the school curriculum assist in preparing students to meet the challenges of tomorrow's world economy or just the jobs and careers in the American economy of today?

Curriculum reform is necessary to achieve the aims of multicultural education. The school curriculum is a framework within which teaching and learning takes place. The curriculum is therefore the ideal vehicle to realise the aims of multicultural education as it encompasses a plan of ideas of what is to be taught, the goals of individual teachers, the acknowledgement of diverse groups, identification of cultural differences, academic challenges, student interactions, available classroom resources and assessment practices and techniques. The school curriculum is of utmost importance in the process of transformation to accommodate diversity.

To implement a multicultural curriculum, Haberman and Post (1999:106) identify the following that must be considered: what are the school policies regarding discipline and supervision; what is taught and how is it taught; what is the role of the principal in implementing the multicultural curriculum; how are parents involved in the running of the school; what are the roles of the teachers; what extracurricular activities occur at the school; how are all staff evaluated and what material of instruction are used.

Freire, Schon and Williams (in Ramsey *et al*, 2002:150) are, however, of the opinion that for teachers to be able to reform a curriculum, certain competencies need to be achieved of which an awareness of the curriculum content and teaching strategies are of the most important.

2.10 TEACHER COMPETENCIES IN MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS

When teachers enter the world of multicultural education and international teaching, they need to reflect on their present competencies as teachers. They need to address their professional growth and effectiveness and look for areas of strengths and weaknesses.

To assist teachers, in Australia, in this regard the Department of Education and Training of Western Australia devised a competency framework for teachers which should be acknowledged in multicultural schools. The framework defines three professional elements of teachers' work: attributes, practice and knowledge. They describe professional attributes as essential to effective classroom teaching and the facilitation of student learning. Teachers' day-to-day decision making and actions are determined by their professional attributes that contribute to the attitudes, beliefs and skills (Department of Education and Training, 2004:6).

The competency framework identifies the following *professional attributes* that teachers demonstrate throughout different phases of their teaching careers:

Collaborative: Teachers show that they have good interpersonal skills by being able to communicate and share ideas. They are willing to accept advice from colleagues and assist in creating relationships between students, parents and the school. They acknowledge and encourage student learning.

Committed: Teachers show a commitment to the education of youngsters and have students' best interest at heart. They are inspired by challenges to make a difference in the lives of students. Teachers aim to teach students to be life-long learners and active members of society by being dedicated to developing their students personally, educationally, socially, morally and culturally.

Effective Communicator: Teachers' presence positively influences students' behaviour. They are articulate with respect to their thoughts and ideas and are able to use appropriate language that is suitable for specific contexts.

Ethical: Teachers act consistently and impartially and thereby respect the rights of others. They make fair and just decisions as they have an understanding of the principles of social justice.

Innovative: Teachers are risk takers and creative problem solvers. They enhance student learning by providing new learning experiences.

Inclusive: Teachers are sensitive and caring and able to identify students' educational, physical, emotional, social and cultural needs.

Positive: Teachers share constructive and supportive interactions with others. They are flexible and able to adapt to a changing work environment and are able to implement changes.

Reflective: Teachers show insightfulness in decision making. Their actions and goals are determined by their professional knowledge.

The Competency Framework identifies the following as *professional knowledge* that teachers draw on to be effective teachers: Teachers should have professional knowledge of students, subject matter, pedagogy, education-related legislation, the curriculum, and the specific context of teaching. Teachers should be able to understand the structure and function of the curriculum. Teachers should engage the use of varied assessments and use them to reflect upon their teaching. Teachers should acknowledge that students' learning occurs as a result of their development, experiences, abilities, interests, language, family, culture and community. Teachers should identify that central to the learning areas are the key concepts, content and processes of inquiry. Teachers should become familiar with laws and regulations pertaining to the school system and teachers work. Teachers should familiarise themselves with government, district and school policies that govern the educational programme at school (Department of Education and Training, 2004:7).

According to the Competency Framework for Teachers (Department of Education and Training, 2004:8) teachers' *professional practice* encompasses the following: the facilitation of student learning; the assessment and reporting of student learning outcomes; the process of becoming involved in professional learning; the participation in curriculum policy and other programmes; and the formation of partnerships within the school community.

The following competencies as developed by the Department of Education regulations in Massachusetts, supplements the teacher competencies mentioned above from the Department of Education and Training in Western Australia.

The Teacher Development Network of Massachusetts, (The Department of Education and Training, 2004: 6-11) identifies the following common teaching competencies:

Competency 1: Professional learning - having a knowledge of subject matter i.e. the actual content of the subject as well as knowledge of the level of the student that he/she teaches e.g. elementary, secondary; having a knowledge of the physical, social, emotional, intellectual and moral development of adolescents; having a knowledge of multidisciplinary structures and the relationships shared between the disciplines taught at the school.

Competency 2: Communication - The effective teacher displays good communication skills being able to communicate effectively and sensitively with the appropriate use of language with respect to the students' stage of development, age, gender, race, ethnic, linguistic and socioeconomic background, taking into account the students' learning styles and needs. The effective teacher is capable of communicating with students, families and colleagues.

Competency 3: Instructional Practice - The effective teacher has an understanding of human development and is able to integrate special education needs into teaching. The teacher is familiar with the principles of the curriculum and instruction. The effective teacher has the ability to teach through various modes and includes reading, language arts and new technology for use with the appropriate age and developmental stage as well as learning style. The teacher makes the content of the curriculum relevant to the experiences of students from diverse ethnic, racial and cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds. The teacher has the ability to manage and organise the classrooms so as to support the learning of students from diverse backgrounds. The effective teacher develops students' academic and social skills by using appropriate methods. The effective teacher works effectively with community and family organisations.

Competency 4: Evaluation – the effective teacher is able to use varied methods of assessment and also designs own methods of evaluation to determine student learning. The teacher also tries to improve student learning by evaluating his/her own behaviour.

Competency 5: Problem solving – the effective teacher is able to develop creative thinking skills within students as the teacher is able to think critically about teaching and learning.

Competency 6: Equity – the effective teacher shows responsibility by displaying equal treatment of all students. The teacher develops meaningful strategies from knowledge of the impact of Western and non-Western cultures on American culture.

Competency 7: Professionalism – the effective teacher has an understanding of legal and moral responsibilities and the societal problems that have a negative impact on student learning and therefore applies appropriate strategies to solve problems.

The above competencies reflect the effectiveness of teachers when they apply their knowledge, skills and attitudes to their teaching practice. It represents a holistic approach to teaching and learning as the students, parents, the community and professional knowledge are all intertwined. The above supports the principles of multicultural education, which focus on teacher and student learning, intergroup relations, school governance, organisation and equity and student assessment.

Teacher competencies are enhanced when the school administration sees it as vital to the operation of the successful functioning of the school. In order to enhance teacher competencies and assist teachers to progress in their career field successfully, it becomes imperative for schools to engage in staff development programmes. When schools assess the areas of weakness and strengths, for example, the inability to function because of a language barrier, then school administrators can determine the programmes that are necessary for the development of their staff.

2.11 STAFF DEVELOPMENT IN MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS

The rapid change and increase in learner diversity have created a challenge to education. The scope and content of professional development programmes should be

linked to the aims of multicultural education and should address issues pertaining to social justice, educational equality and equity. Teachers need to be equipped with this pedagogic knowledge to better understand the rights and responsibilities of students, parents and teachers through teacher preparation and inservice training.

Bennet (in Ramsey *et al*, 2002:215) developed a model for inclusion in initial teacher preparation programmes which involved four areas of concern. These are:

- having a knowledge of current cultural differences and historical perspectives;
- having an understanding of culture that leads to intercultural competence;
- creating attitudes that lead to a reduction in racism, prejudice and discrimination;
and
- the development of skills to teach multicultural students.

The following study supports Bennet's model mentioned above and at the same time addresses crucial aspects with respect to staff development programmes for teachers teaching culturally diverse students.

In a National Study of Teacher Education Preparation for Diverse Student Populations, conducted in the USA, Walton, Bacca and Escamilla (2002) addressed the following research questions:

- What programmes are in place at selected universities to prepare teachers to teach linguistically and culturally diverse students?
- What are the goals and outcomes of the programme?
- What is the national curriculum, the course work and field experiences of these programmes?
- How are issues related to language, culture, equity, and teaching addressed and developed in these programmes?
- What are the professional development programmes that participants are expected to participate in?
- How are these programmes influenced by professional and state standards?

The major findings were as follows: that States do not agree on teacher preparation programmes and their educational reform policies differ; each State differs with regards to the focus on language and culture; and bilingual and English Second Language (ESL) programmes were established at states and colleges. The study suggested the following for teacher education programmes:

- an inclusion in their curriculums of a study of language development.
- the development of an understanding of diverse cultural patterns.
- the need for ESL teachers to study a second language.
- the need for all teachers to learn teaching methodologies that focus on the teaching of ESL learners and dialect speakers.

Multicultural education has been described as a transformation in educational practices (Gorski, 2006b: 2-4). Transforming schools and schooling should focus on upgrading educators' knowledge through professional development programmes and reviewing school curriculums. In this regard each of the following addresses aspects of multicultural education with respect to the student, the curriculum, the learning resources, the classroom climate, and evaluation and assessment. These can be addressed at different levels of staff development sessions. The key ideas that are mentioned support the aims and principles of multicultural education. When staff engage in professional development that focuses on the under mentioned, they become familiar with concepts and practices like oppression; critical and social awareness; equal opportunities; students having a voice in the classroom; critical thinking; discrimination, racism and sexism; fairness and justness; and the inclusion of underrepresented groups. Having knowledge of the above, assists teachers in teaching the hidden social curriculum. For eg. When a teacher witnesses a student hurling a cultural insult, the teacher is equipped with the knowledge that it is his/her responsibility to act on this and steer the student towards comments and behaviour that are socially acceptable and less hurtful to others. It is the task of school administrators to address the following at staff development sessions.

Student –centered pedagogy

- Creating active, interactive and engaging learning where students' experiences are acknowledged.

- Reviewing and critically examining traditional teaching methods and its impact on supporting oppression.
- Refocusing teaching and learning to the students themselves.
- Emphasising critical awareness and creative thinking.
- Instilling social awareness.
- Creating a pedagogy that allows all students with equal opportunities to reach their full potential as learners.
- Creating a flexible pedagogy that acknowledges the diversity of learning styles in each classroom.

Multicultural curriculum

- All subjects in the curriculum should be analysed for completeness and accuracy - implying that it should be taught from diverse perspectives.
- The curriculum should be inclusive – implying that students should have a voice in the classroom.
- A reconceptualisation of ideas must occur to alleviate bias towards any one group of people.
- Diverse learning styles in every classroom should be reflected in school curricular.

Inclusive educational media and materials

- Educational materials should include diverse voices and perspectives.
- Students should be encouraged to think critically about the media and materials used: Why this? Whose voice is this? Why was this film produced? Is there some bias reflected in the author's writing?

Supportive school and classroom climate

- Teachers should be prepared to create a positive classroom climate for all students.
- Close examination of the school culture must take place to identify practices that promote oppressive societal conditions.
- School administrations must be assessed for the provision of positive teaching environments for all teachers.

- Administrators and teachers should be held accountable for discriminatory, racist, sexist or class related practices.

Continual evaluation and assessment

- There should be the development of more fair and just ways of measuring student ability, achievement or potential.
- The emphasis on standardised testing should be examined.
- New and existing programmes must be evaluated to ensure that these are providing opportunities for underrepresented groups to achieve success.

Staff development for new and existing teachers is an essential need at all multicultural and international schools. In order for schools to function effectively and acknowledge the diversity of its learner and teacher population, there must be intervention at every level of practice at schools. Teacher preparation programmes must focus on knowledge, skills and attitudes of teachers to achieve success in a multicultural environment. Professional development programmes must focus on the curriculum and teaching resources; a student-centered pedagogy; creating positive classroom climates; and establishing fair and just ways of assessment and evaluation of students' work.

2.12 MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION AND INTERNATIONAL TEACHING

The development of international schools took off in the late fifties and early sixties. There was an increase in the number of Americans who relocated outside of America after World War II. America had strengthened in terms of economic and political power and there was a change in business patterns throughout the world. By the 1970s it was estimated that at least eight out of every 1 000 American citizens worked as contract workers outside America (Luebeke in Shafer, 2002: 1).

The children of families who have moved are often schooled in international schools and thus, experience the challenge of being a part of an international school community. These challenges include dealing with transitional changes and culture shock; issues of mobility; going back to their birth countries; cross-cultural communication and adapting

to verbal and non-verbal cross cultural communication; adjusting to a new educational system and general schooling issues; developing new social relationships; learning and adjusting to the cultures and behaviors of the people of the host country; and experiencing racial or cultural discrimination (Church in Shafer, 2002: 3).

International, multicultural schools are characterised by having:

- a multinational teacher and student body.
- a high student turnover as a result of parents moving to follow careers away from home. This in turn contributes to students being able to travel internationally. Secola (in Shafer, 2002:3) mentions that at most international schools, the annual turnover rate of the student population is more than 25%. When students leave their home countries and settle elsewhere, they experience problems with this transition and the “loss of their home”. In a study conducted by the Kyoto University Group for Comparative Educational studies, in which they examined the adjustment of Japanese children in International schools, they found that “the majority of [Japanese] children adjusted steadily. Within the first 3 months about 50%, by the 6th month nearly 90%, by the end of the first year 98% of children were reported to be well adjusted” (Okasi-Luff in Shafer, 2002: 2).
- a great possibility that students will not complete their education or attend tertiary education at the place of the international school.
- a strong possibility that the child’s cultural development will be influenced by the culture of the host country and the many other cultures that it houses (Langford in Shafer, 2002 : 2).

To help students adjust to the above, international schools should provide multicultural orientation programmes to teachers as well as learners (Price in Shafer, 2002: 5). If the above are to be achieved, international schools should be governed by the principles of multicultural education especially teacher competence to implement multicultural education.

In this regard, Sebastian (2002: 1) states that most international schools cater for the educational needs of 15 to 20 different nationalities of children. He sees this as a positive

aspect as schools work towards integrating these differences and diversities into the school curriculum and positive educational goals. These are outlined as follows:

- training and orientating staff – having an induction programme that prepares staff to handle a multicultural school environment.
- having morning assemblies – where the discussion of international news takes place; students must be given a chance to present cultural items. Staff supervision of this assists in students ridding themselves of racial and cultural biases.
- interactive group projects – creates opportunities for interaction among diverse groups.
- playgrounds – play and games help foster bringing together and closeness of diverse groups.

Henderson and Mapp (in Ferguson, 2005:1) have further shown that parents show an interest in their children's academic success across ethnic, cultural or socio-economic groups. To involve families successfully in the students' school life, schools should:

- build on the cultural values of families
- stress personal contact with families
- develop processes, such as, having translators and providing transport that promote communication with families
- create a warm environment for families.

2.13 SUMMARY

This chapter focused on a theoretical exposition of multicultural education in which the history, definition and dimensions of multicultural education were outlined. The approaches to multicultural education and the misconceptions about multicultural education were also discussed. The teaching and learning process in international schools highlighted the fact that that these should be governed by the principles of multicultural education which reflect on what should be deemed important in teacher education programmes and staff development issues. All of the above address the issue of teacher competencies and the review of curriculum within an international school setting.

In the next chapter, the research design and methodology will be discussed.

CHAPTER THREE

RESEARCH DESIGN AND METHODOLOGY

3.1 INTRODUCTION

This chapter describes and explains the plan that was implemented in carrying out the research, the research design used, the selection of respondents and the method of data collection.

Research always requires the gathering of information and the analysis and interpretation of this information. Information can be obtained through documents, data, diaries, speeches, interviews, questionnaires and test scores. The research is then guided through the formulation of a research problem by establishing research questions (De Vos *et al*, 2002:53). This investigation addressed the main research question, namely, 'What competencies do teachers need in a multicultural international school?'

This research relates to real-life problems and therefore involved an empirical investigation, where new information was collected, together with a literature review. The choice of a research design, which serves to explain how the research was conducted or what plans were in place, is described in this chapter. The focus is on the nature of the study which was being planned and the kind of result aimed at. Thereafter, the researcher determined the method of carrying out the plan, that is, the research methodology. The focus was on the actual research process and what tools and procedures were needed to conduct the research.

3.2 AIMS OF THE RESEARCH

The aim of this research was to address the research problem as mentioned in the preceding paragraph by:

- investigating the competence of teachers in a culturally diverse international school in Saudi Arabia.
- defining and describing what can be done to improve teachers' competence to teach in a culturally diverse international school.

3.3 RESEARCH DESIGN

A research design is defined by Mouton (in De Vos *et al*, 2005: 132) as the plan or blueprint according to which data are collected to investigate the research question. It is a detailed plan which guides the manner in which research is to be conducted. Once the researcher has identified the research problem, the focus is on the end product, that is, the kind of study being planned, the kind of results aimed at, and the required evidence to address the research question adequately. This research included both a literature review as well as empirical research.

3.3.1 Literature review

A literature review assists the researcher to become familiar with knowledge that exists on the topic at hand. The researcher has to locate available literature that broadly encapsulates the focus of the research. The literature review allows for the clear formulation of the problem and at the same time assists the researcher in devising a plan of action whereby the research can be carried out. The literature study allows a researcher to learn as much as possible from the experiences and work of others (Mouton in De Vos *et al*, 2005:263).

The literature review in this research project focused on the definition, characteristics, aims, principles and misconceptions of multicultural education; teacher competencies

in international schools and staff and professional development programmes in multicultural schools.

3.3.2 Empirical investigation

De Vos *et al* (2005:73) distinguish between quantitative and qualitative research designs. A quantitative research design has been selected for this research. This research project is a descriptive project, defined by Cohen and Manion (2000:169) as describing and interpreting *what is*, and as such, employed a survey method of data collection. Best (in Cohen & Manion, 2000:169) states that descriptive research concerns itself with *what exists*, which has been influenced by events that have already taken place and have now affected the present situation. With regards to the present study, the focus is on the teacher training that has taken place previously, influencing teacher competency presently. Best (in Cohen & Manion, 2000:169) describes descriptive research as “...conditions or relationships that exist; practices that prevail; beliefs, points of views, or attitudes that are being felt; or trends that are developing.” Descriptive studies are concerned with groups, individuals, institutions, methods and materials, to be able to compare and contrast, classify, analyse and interpret events that may develop within the research taking place (Cohen & Manion, 2000:169).

3.3.3 The pilot study

A pilot study assists researchers to orientate themselves to the project at hand. The most common errors in doing research are that no piloting or pre-testing occurs (Mouton, 2001:103). When one undertakes a small-scale trial run of the major enquiry, in order to make the major study as close as possible to being error-free, this is considered as a pilot study. Singleton (in De Vos *et al*, 2002:210) states that when one pre-tests a measuring instrument, then one is “trying it out on a small number of persons having characteristics similar to those of the target group of respondents”. A pilot study is defined by Bless and Higson-Smith (in De Vos *et al*, 2002:211) as “a small study conducted prior to a larger piece of research to determine whether the methodology, sampling, instruments and analysis are adequate and appropriate”.

Aspects of a pilot study include: a study of the literature; learning about the experiences of experts; analysing an overall picture of what is to take place in the actual research, i.e. addressing the goals and objectives, the resources and the research population, data collection methods and the possible errors that are likely to occur (De Vos *et al*, 2002:213).

The pilot study included a testing of the instrument of measurement, namely, the questionnaire. A group of ten teachers were identified from the same school and the questionnaire was given to them to answer. The feedback received from them in terms of the instructions; lack of clarity of what was actually being questioned; ambiguity of the questions; terms that could not be understood; and the length of the questionnaire was reviewed. This allowed for changes to be made in the questionnaire.

3.3.4 Permission

The school at which the research was conducted is a private school in the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia. In order to conduct the research, permission had to be sought from the principal of the school and the vice principal of the high school. A formal letter was presented to both the principal and the vice principal whereby they acknowledged approval by signing. This can be viewed as Appendix A.

3.3.5 Selection of respondents

The respondents who participated in this study included all the teachers from the elementary, middle and high school. Each group of teachers was given the questionnaires at their respective staff meetings.

3.4 RESEARCH METHODS

Research methodology is a reference to the research process involved, the kind of tools and procedures to be employed in the investigation. The focus is on what method of

sampling is to take place and what data collection methods are best suited to the research (Mouton, 2001: 56).

3.4.1 Data collection

The purpose of this research was to determine if the school staff displayed competence in being able to teach in a multicultural, international school, after having being trained in their home countries. The method that was used to collect data was a questionnaire (see Appendix C). This is described as a survey. Surveys are used to gather information at a point in time, to be able to describe what is happening presently, or to compare present conditions to particular standards, or to establish relationships that may exist between events or occurrences (Cohen & Manion, 2000: 169). The following explains how the sample of teachers was obtained and describes the procedure that was employed in the collection of data.

3.4.1.1 The sample

A sample is a section of the population that it is drawn from. A sample therefore comprises the elements and characteristics of the population of interest. An effort is made to understand the population by studying the sample drawn from it. After the research, a description of the sample takes place, to gain more insight into the population from which it came. Samples, instead of populations, are used because of the following reasons: (i) it is too costly to use every member in a population; (ii) it would take too much time to involve every member in the population; (iii) it may be impossible to identify all the members in a population, e.g. all drug users. Better quality research is guaranteed when time, money and effort are concentrated on a smaller number of people (De Vos *et al*, 2002: 199).

According to De Vos *et al* (2005: 195-196), if the population is large, then the percentage of the sample size needed should be small and vice versa. From the guidelines for sampling, the suggested percentage for a sample from a population of a hundred should be 45%.

The school has a total staff population of 98 teachers. There were 98 questionnaires given out. Teachers, who were not present at school on the day that the questionnaire was handed out, received one from the researcher personally at a later stage. Eighty-four (84) questionnaires were returned after having been completed. Some respondents returned them immediately after the meeting and some took them home to complete. This is a reason why a 100% return rate did not occur. The response rate was 86%, which is acceptable according to the guidelines (De Vos *et al*, 2005:196).

3.4.1.2 The research instrument and data gathering

The instrument for data collection in this study was the questionnaire. A questionnaire is defined in the *New Dictionary of Social Work* as “a set of questions on a form which is completed by the respondent in respect of a research project” (De Vos *et al*, 2005: 166). The questionnaire is seen as a useful tool for data collection in that it is a method of data collection that allows the researcher to get lots of information quickly and easily from people in a non-threatening way. There are many advantages to the use of questionnaires that include the following:

- They are inexpensive and easy to administer.
- Lots of data can be obtained easily.
- Respondents can complete them without divulging identity.
- Comparison and analysis are simple.
- Can be administered to many people.
- There are many sample questionnaires that exist for reference.

A good questionnaire is characterised by the following:

- a pleasant, non-threatening appearance – with relation to the colour of the pages and the font of the writing
- questions arranged so that the non-threatening, general questions appear first and the more personal, sensitive questions appear later
- short and to the point sentences
- style of questioning easily understood by the respondent

- questions and alternatives to responses clear, with no biases of the researcher reflected in them
- relevant questions related to the purpose of the study (De Vos *et al*, 2002:176-7).

When the pilot study for this research took place, the questionnaire was revised to change the order of the questions and ambiguities in questions were eliminated. The questionnaire was structured to include a section on personal details. The rest of the questionnaire was designed to assist the respondents to answer the questionnaire in the time that was allotted, which is forty minutes. The time constraints of teachers were considered and as a result many of the questions were closed-ended questions including, true/false; agree/uncertain/disagree; often/sometimes/never; yes/no. There were eight open-ended questions that appeared in the questionnaire.

3.4.2 Ethical issues in data collection

The following ethical issues were taken into account for this research and serve as a guide to research conducted with people, as proposed by The Code of Ethics of the National Association of Social Workers (De Vos *et al*, 2002:74):

- *Consideration must be given to the research respondents with regards to the possible consequences that may result from the research.*

The consequences of this research may require the teachers to be actively involved in professional development programmes should the results reveal that the majority of teachers are incompetent to teach in a multicultural school setting. Since teachers are expected to upgrade themselves professionally on a continuous basis, having a consequence like this would not be demeaning to teachers, rather it would benefit them.

- *Respondents' consent to participate should be voluntary and informed.*

In this research, teachers were informed that the choice to participate was their decision. They were also informed that the principal was very interested in the results of the research as it would give him an idea of the status of the school with respect to

multicultural education and would therefore assist the leadership team in the planning of staff professional development programmes for the future. As a result the return rate of the questionnaires was high.

- *There should be no penalty for refusing to participate.*

The teachers who chose not to return their questionnaires remained anonymous and were not placed under pressure to return them.

- *The respondents' privacy and dignity must be respected.*

In this research teachers answered the questionnaires anonymously and were asked not to divulge their identities. There were no questions contained in the questionnaire that infringed on the respondents' dignity.

- *Respondents should be protected from distress, harm, danger, deprivation, or physical or mental discomfort.*

In this research, the survey contained questions that pertained to their everyday line of work, was relevant and pertinent to the respondents and contained information that would have enlightened them about their professional conduct as teachers. They were, therefore, not subjected to the above mentioned harsh conditions.

- *Respondents' information must be treated confidentially.*

The results of this research were presented to the staff as a whole in terms of significant numbers and percentages. Individual questionnaires were under no circumstances reviewed with the staff. In this regard, the respondents' information was respected and treated with the strictest of confidence.

3.4.2.1 Measures to ensure validity

An instrument considered to be valid in measuring can be described as doing what it is supposed to do and measure what it is intended to measure (De Vos *et al*, 2005:160-161). Validity can be described in two parts: that "the instrument actually measures the concept in question, and that the concept is measured accurately". To ensure the validity

of an instrument, the researcher needs to establish that, what is in the instrument actually allows for the measurement of the concepts/ideas/items being researched. This is referred to as *content validity*. When using an instrument, the researcher needs also to note that the instrument is structured so that it appears to show relevance to what is being measured. This is referred to as *face validity* (De Vos *et al*, 2005:161). The instrument of measurement in this research project is the questionnaire. Reviewing and double-checking by a research consultant ensured that the questions included measured teacher competencies and that the items included were of a psycho-educational nature. The closed ended questions especially, clearly indicate that teacher competencies are being questioned. The open ended questions focus on respondents' knowledge of multicultural education and practices at the school that contribute to the provision of multicultural education.

3.4.3 Data processing and analysis

Mouton (2001: 108) describes the analysis of data as the breaking up of information into trends, themes, patterns and relationships. Through the inspection of these patterns and relationships that emerge, the researcher is able to understand what constitutes the various elements in the data. Quantitative data, when analysed are reduced to numbers and are obtained by counting or measuring (De Vos *et al*, 2002: 225). Data is analysed more easily if it has been coded. Coding and analysis of data can be done manually, in the case of small surveys, or by the use of a computer, when the numbers to analyse are large. Before the process of coding takes place the questionnaires must be checked or edited by identifying and getting rid of errors that the respondents might have made. Editing of questionnaires is done firstly with respect to (i) *completeness* – i.e. a check to see that all the questions have been answered; (ii) *accuracy* - i.e. a check to see that all questions have been answered accurately, by placing ticks or rings in the appropriate places; (iii) *uniformity* - a check to see that all instructions and questions have been interpreted uniformly (Cohen & Manion, 2000:265).

Open ended questions assist in the gathering of information from the respondents. It also assists the researcher to clarify the understanding of what is being said and to allow the

researcher to connect with the respondent. Open ended questions allow for broad based responses and moves away from being factual. Open ended questions encourage the respondent to explore the issue and not give a mere “yes” or “no” response. Open ended questions place in the respondents’ hands, the ownership and responsibility of the data. (Cohen & Manion, 2000:255-265). Many of the open ended questions required of respondents to report on what is actually happening at the school. When respondents were asked about definitions, the accuracy of their responses were aligned to the literature study. The responses were not compared as there was no need to do so and would have had no impact on the analysis of the data.

For this research all of the above were taken into account. Responses to questions were converted to percentages and this information was represented as frequency distributions in table form. Univariate analysis of data was done, i.e. the analysis of one variable took place to describe that particular variable.

3.5 SUMMARY

In this chapter, the research design and the research methods used were described. The pilot study, the construction of the research instrument and the gathering of data, the method that was chosen to select the respondents, the processing, analysis and representation of the data were discussed.

The following chapter presents the results and discussion of the empirical investigation.

CHAPTER FOUR

PRESENTATION AND DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

4.1 INTRODUCTION

The aim of the research was to determine competencies that were necessary for teaching in an international school. This chapter represents the results and findings of the research that took place in an international school setting with the aim to devise staff development programmes to overcome identified incompetencies. The information for the research was collected by the use of a questionnaire and the respondents involved were teachers who were trained in different parts of the world. The questionnaire was divided into different sections to gain information about teachers' personal details, misconceptions about multicultural education, teacher competencies relating to content and knowledge, teacher competencies relating to student and parent interaction, and professional development or training workshops that teachers had attended.

4.2 FINDINGS

The findings of this research study are represented below as tables and figures containing graphs for easier interpretation. The numbers of responses have been converted to percentages. The findings have in some cases been linked to the literature review to be able to identify areas of strengths and weaknesses. Where an aim (par 2.5) or principle (par 2.6) of multicultural education is not realised as outlined in Chapter two, it implies that these are the teacher competencies or organisational procedures that should be addressed by school administrators. In this case the aims as indicated in section 2.5 and the principles as indicated in section 2.6 have been used extensively by the researcher who deems them a firm basis for analysis.

4.2.1 Section A

Section A of the questionnaire dealt with personal details of the respondents.

Table 4.1 reflects the teaching staff and their nationalities at the school.

Table 4.1 Teaching staff

NATIONALITY	NUMBER AT SCHOOL	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	% OF TOTAL PARTICIPATED
Indian	42	38	45.2
Fillipino	13	11	13.1
Pakistani	11	10	11.9
Egyptian	10	7	8.3
Lebanese	9	8	9.5
South African	6	5	6.0
American	3	2	2.4
Sudanese	1	1	1.2
Sri Lankan	1	1	1.2
Canadian	1	1	1.2
TOTAL	98	84	100

Table 4.1 shows that the highest percentage recorded of the nationality of respondents was Indian, which made up 45.2% of respondents. As there were only one Sudanese, one Sri Lankan and one Canadian, they comprised 1.2% of the respondents respectively. There were 13.1% Fillipino, 11.9% Pakistani, 8.3% Egyptian, 9.5% Lebanese, and 6.0% South African respondents. This is clearly representative of the cultural diversity that exists among school staff.

Table 4.2 reflects the number of respondents in each section of the school.

Table 4.2 Number of respondents in each school

SECTION	NO. PARTICIPATED	% PARTICIPATED
Elementary School	28	33.3
Middle School	32	38.1
High School	24	28.6
	84	100

Table 4.3 represents the percentage of teachers who are qualified to teach the subject that they are presently teaching and those who are not qualified to teach the subjects they are teaching.

Table 4.3 Qualified teachers for teaching their subject

CATEGORY	NO.	%
Teachers qualified to teach the subject presently teaching	67	79.8
Teachers not qualified to teach the subject presently teaching	17	20.2
TOTAL	84	100

Figure 4.1 Teachers qualified and not qualified to teach their subject

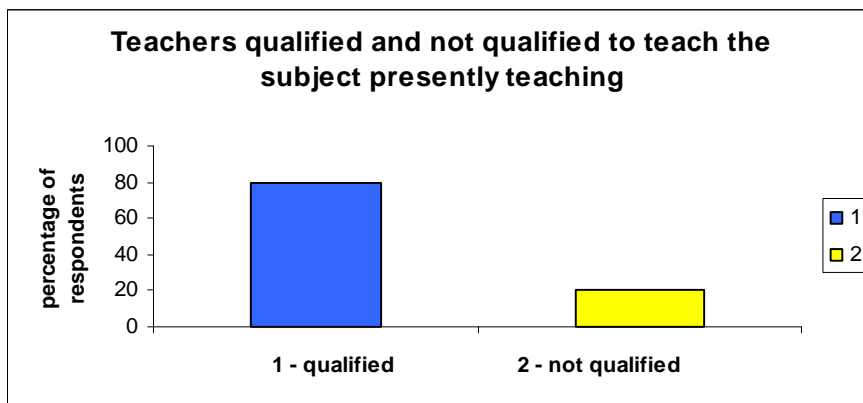


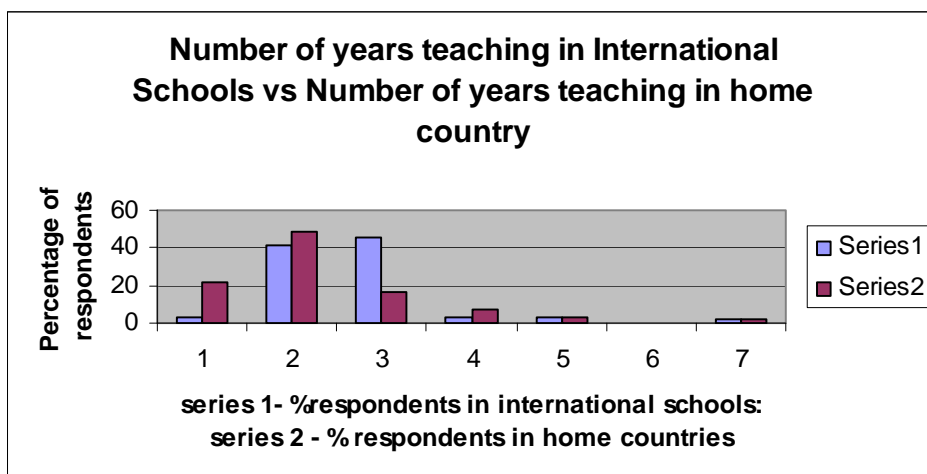
Figure 4.1 shows that 79.8% of teachers are qualified to teach the subject that they are presently teaching and 20.2% have teaching qualifications but are not qualified to teach the subject presently teaching. According to the competency framework (cf 2.10) Competency 1: teachers should have a knowledge of subject matter, that is, the actual content of the subject.

Table 4.4 represents the number of years the respondents have spent teaching in international schools and in schools away from their home countries in no particular order. The figures represent the total number of respondents in each category.

Table 4.4 Number of years teaching in international schools and in home country

Category	Number of years teaching in International Schools	No. of respondents	% of respondents	Number of years teaching in home country	No. of respondents	% of respondents
1	0-1	3	3.6	0-1	18	21.4
2	1-5	35	41.6	1-5	41	48.8
3	6-10	38	45.2	6-10	14	16.7
4	11-15	3	3.6	11-15	6	7.1
5	16-20	3	3.6	16-20	3	3.6
6	21-25	0	0	21-25	0	0
7	26-30	2	2.4	26-30	2	2.4
		84	100		84	100

Figure 4.2 Number of years teaching in international schools and in home country



In Figure 4.2, series 1 represents the percentage of respondents teaching in international schools; whilst series 2 represents the percentage of respondents who have taught in home countries, in the different time categories.

Table 4.4 and figure 4.2 reflect that 45.2% of respondents have been teaching in international schools between 6-10 years, 41.6% of respondents between 1 to 5 years, whilst 2.4% of the respondents have had between 26 to 30 years experience teaching in international schools. The highest percentage of respondents, i.e. 48.8%, taught in their home countries between 1 to 5 years; 86.8% of respondents have taught in international schools between 1 to 10 years; whilst 65.5% of the respondents taught in their home countries between 1 and 10 years.

Table 4.5 Number of respondents qualified in home country and away from home country

NATIONALITY	NUMBER OF RESPONDENTS	QUALIFIED IN THEIR HOME COUNTRY		QUALIFIED AWAY FROM HOME	
		NO.	%	NO.	%
Indian	38	38	45.2	1	1.2
Fillipino	11	11	13.1	0	0.0
Pakistani	10	10	12.0	0	0.0
Egyptian	7	7	8.3	0	0.0
Lebanese	8	8	9.5	0	0.0
South African	5	5	5.9	0	0.0
American	2	2	2.4	0	0.0
Sudanese	1	1	1.2	0	0.0
Sri Lankan	1	0	0	1	1.2
Canadian	1	1	1.2	0	0.0
TOTAL	84	83	98.8	2	2.4

Table 4.5 reflects that 98% of the respondents obtained their educational qualifications in their home countries, whilst 1.2% obtained their qualifications away from their home country, either in the United States, Canada or the UK but not in Saudi Arabia, as expatriates are given little or no privileges, if they are female, to study there. At the time of the study, the majority of the teaching staff were female with only four male staff members. A certain percentage, 1.2%, qualified in the home country as well as away.

These results show that 98.8% of the respondents received their initial teacher training in their home country.

4.2.2 Section B

Section B of the questionnaire dealt with the misconceptions of multicultural education as explained in Chapter 2, section 2.7. Each of the statements below from (i) to (xvii) is a misconception. A high percentage reflected for a True response implies that this particular aspect of multicultural education is misconceived by the majority of teachers.

Table 4.6 People who speak the same language share a common culture

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	63	16	5	84
%	75.0	19.0	6.0	100

Regarding this statement, 75% of the respondents indicated this as true that people who speak the same language share a common culture and 19%, false, indicating that people who speak the same language do not necessarily share a common language. 6% of the respondents did not respond to this question.

Table 4.7 People who are from the same nation share a common culture

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	63	16	5	84
%	75.0	19.0	6.0	100

75% of the respondents indicated that people from the same nation share a common culture; whilst 19% indicated this to be false, indicating that people from the same nation

do not necessarily share a common culture. 6% of the respondents did not respond to this question.

Table 4.8 People who are from the same geographic area share a common culture

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	63	16	5	84
%	75.0	19.0	6.0	100

75% of the respondents indicated that people who are from the same geographic region share a common culture and 19% indicated this to be false, meaning that people who are from the same geographic region do not necessarily share a common culture. 6% of the respondents did not respond to this question.

Table 4.9 Families from the same culture share the same values

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	54	28	2	84
%	64.3	33.3	2.4	100

64.3% of the respondents indicated that families from the same culture share the same values; whilst 33.3% indicated that this is not true, meaning that families from the same culture do not necessarily share the same values. 2.4% did not respond to this statement.

Table 4.10 Story books for children about another culture are generally a true reflection of that culture

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	56	27	1	84
%	66.7	32.1	1.2	100

66.7% of respondents indicated that story books reflect culture truly; whilst 32.1% think that story books for children about another culture are not generally a true reflection of that culture. 1.2% of respondents did not respond to this question.

Table 4.11 Multicultural education deals with ethnic or racial issues only

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	9	75	0	84
%	10.7	89.3	0.0	100

Only 10.7% of the respondents indicated that multicultural education deals with ethnic or racial issues only, whereas a high percentage of 89.3%, indicated that this statement is false. This suggests that the majority of the respondents are aware that multicultural education goes beyond just racial and ethnic issues. 10.7% of the respondents did not respond to this question.

Table 4.12 Teaching about different cultures according to the months/ seasons e.g. a study of the Native Americans should take place in November when Thanksgiving occurs in the United States.

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	40	42	2	84
%	47.6	50.0	2.4	100

50% of the respondents indicated this statement is false, which means that the majority of the respondents feel that teaching about different cultures should be done throughout the year, whilst 47.6% indicated that this is true, meaning that teaching about different cultures should only be done according to specific months or seasons for example a study of the Native Americans should take place in November when Thanksgiving occurs in the United States. 2.4% of the respondents did not respond to this statement.

Table 4.13 We should teach multicultural education as a separate subject

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	36	45	3	84
%	42.9	53.6	3.5	100

The majority of the respondents (53.6%) indicated that this statement is false and therefore are saying that multicultural education should not be taught as a separate subject. 42.9% of the respondents indicated that multicultural education should be taught as a subject on its own. 3.5% of the respondents did not respond to this statement.

Table 4.14 Multicultural education is an accepted part of the curriculum

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	65	18	1	84
%	77.4	21.4	1.2	100

77.4% of the respondents indicated this statement as true, meaning that multicultural education is an accepted part of the curriculum; whilst 21.45% indicated that this is false, thus multicultural education is not an accepted part of the curriculum. 1.2% of the respondents did not respond to this statement.

Table 4.15 Multicultural education promotes division rather than unity

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	19	65	0	84
%	22.6	77.4	0.0	100

A high percentage of respondents, 77.4%, indicated this statement to be untrue, meaning that multicultural education does not promote division rather than unity. However, 22.6% indicated that multicultural education creates division of people rather than bringing them together. All of the respondents responded to this statement.

Table 4.16 If a society has only one or two cultures, then multicultural education is unnecessary

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	0	82	2	84
%	0.0	97.6	2.4	100

None of the respondents indicated that this item, if a society has only one or two cultures, then multicultural education is unnecessary, is true, while the majority of the respondents, 97.6%, indicated that it is untrue, if a society has only one or two cultures, then multicultural education is unnecessary. 2.4% of the respondents did not respond to this statement.

Table 4.17 The concept of multicultural education should be reserved for the teaching of older children only

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	6	77	1	84
%	7.1	91.7	1.2	100

Only 7.1% of the respondents indicated this to be true that the concept of multicultural education should be reserved for the teaching of older children only, whilst 91.7 % indicated that multicultural education should not be reserved for older children only. 1.2% of the respondents did not respond to this statement.

Table 4.18 When we teach, we forget about common aspects that prevail throughout people

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	30	49	5	84
%	35.7	58.3	6.0	100

A high percentage of 58.3% regarded the statement, when we teach, we forget about common aspects that prevail throughout people, as false. 35.7% indicated that this is true, thus indicating that when we teach, we forget about common aspects that prevail throughout people. 6% of the respondents did not respond to this statement.

Table 4.19 Multicultural education is unnecessary for societies that acknowledge cultural diversity

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	17	63	4	84
%	20.2	75.0	4.8	100

Only 20.2% of the respondents indicated that the statement, multicultural education is unnecessary for societies that acknowledge cultural diversity, is true, whilst 75% of the respondents indicated that the statement, multicultural education is unnecessary for societies that acknowledge cultural diversity is false. There was a 4.8% no response for this statement.

Table 4.20 When we teach about other cultures, the history of an event becomes distorted

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	24	57	3	84
%	28.6	67.8	3.6	100

28.6% of the respondents indicated that it is true that when we teach about other cultures the history of an event becomes distorted, whilst 67.8% indicated that the statement is false that when we teach about other cultures the history of an event becomes distorted. 3.6% of the respondents did not respond to this statement.

Table 4.21 Most people identify with only one culture

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	60	24	0	84
%	71.4	28.6	0.0	100

71.4% of respondents indicated that it is true that most people identify with only one culture, whilst 28.6% indicated that this statement is false that most people identify with only one culture. All of the respondents responded to this statement.

Table 4.22 There are insufficient resources regarding multicultural education

	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	56	26	2	84
%	66.7	30.9	2.4	100

The majority of respondents, 66.7%, indicated that there are insufficient resources regarding multicultural education; whilst 30.9% of the respondents indicated this statement is false which means that there are sufficient resources regarding multicultural education. There was a 2.4% no response to this item.

On an average, as reflected in table 4.23, there were 48% of respondents who indicated all of the above misconceptions to be true, 49% indicated that the statements were false and there was a no response of 3% in total. Almost 50% of the respondents indicated that they regarded the misconceptions as true.

Table 4.23 Number of true and false statements

Statements i) – xvii)	TRUE	FALSE	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	661	676	41	1378
%	48	49	3	100

According to Competency 3 of the Competency Framework (cf 2.10), “The effective teacher makes the content of the curriculum relevant to the experiences of students from diverse ethnic, racial and cultural, linguistic and socioeconomic backgrounds. The teacher has the ability to manage and organise classrooms so as to support the learning of students from diverse backgrounds”. Teachers can only be effective in doing this by recognising and understanding the misconceptions of multicultural education.

4.2.3 Section C

Section C of the questionnaire dealt with teachers' teaching experience and interaction with students from different cultural groups.

Table 4.24 reflects teachers' teaching experience and interaction with students from different cultural groups.

Table 4.24 Teacher's teaching experience and interaction with students from different cultural groups

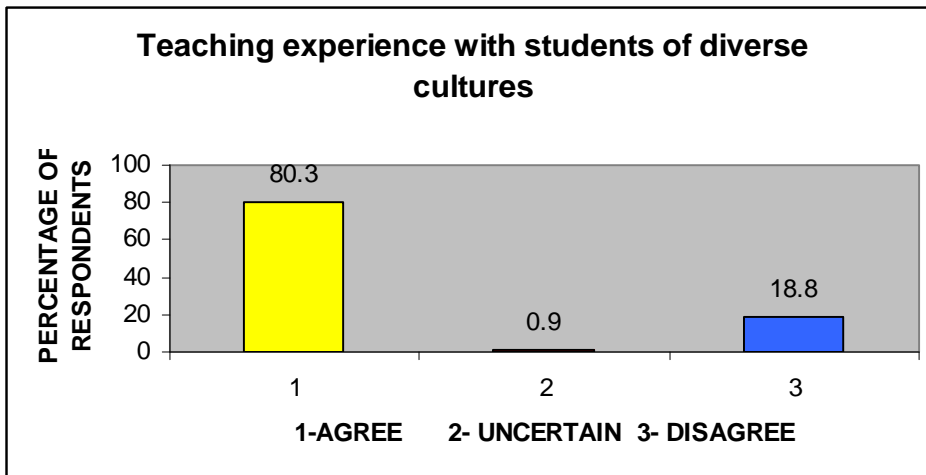
STATEMENT	AGREE		UNCERTAIN		DISAGREE		TOTAL	%
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%		
a) I am familiar with the learning outcomes for my subject according to the district curriculum.	81	96.4	0	0.0	3	3.6	84	100
b) I am able to integrate cultural differences into the teaching of my subject.	65	77.4	0	0.0	19	22.6	84	100
c) I am able to attend to students with different learning needs, as a result of cultural background, in my classes.	66	78.6	0	0.0	18	21.4	84	100
d) My teaching links the curriculum to real life experiences across cultural backgrounds.	68	81.0	1	1.2	15	17.8	84	100
f) I integrate students' cultural backgrounds into classroom learning.	51	60.7	4	4.8	29	34.5	84	100

STATEMENT	AGREE		UNCERTAIN		DISAGREE		TOTAL	%
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%		
g) I am able to identify the dominant group from dominated groups in my classroom.	68	81.0	1	1.2	15	17.8	84	100
h) I do not allow students who belong to the same culture to sit together.	77	91.7	1	1.2	6	7.1	84	100
i) My subject area allows me to integrate content that arises from different cultural backgrounds.	48	57.1	0	0.0	36	42.9	84	100

The results indicated in Table 4.24 and Figure 4.3, reflect the following: 80.3% of the respondents agreed to all nine statements, whilst 18.8% of respondents disagreed with the statements. There was a no response of 0.9%. A high percentage of respondents agreeing imply that they are culturally aware and tolerant of the diverse student population. By reflecting a high response rate to the above statement, namely to integrate content that arises from different cultural backgrounds in each respondents subject area, implies that teachers are accomplishing an aim of multicultural education as stated by Feinberg (2004:i): “Multicultural education aims for inclusion of culture and all aspects of life that create equality amongst people. The aim is not to separate cultures but to create cultural fairness in a way that no one group dominates the public scenario”. The high response rate for this category of questions accomplishes Competency 6 of the Competency Framework (cf 2.10) which states that “the effective teacher shows

responsibility by displaying equal treatment of all students. The teacher develops meaningful strategies from the impact of Western and non-Western cultures.”

Figure 4.3 - Teaching experience with students of diverse cultures



4.2.4 Section D

Section D of the questionnaire dealt with teachers' classroom teaching, the integration of cultural differences into their classroom, and their communication with diverse cultures of students and parents.

Respondents had to state whether they practised the following statements: Often (O), Sometimes (S) or Never (N), with respect to their classroom teaching, the integration of cultural differences into their classroom, and their communication with diverse cultures of students and parents. The results are reflected in Table 4.25.

Table 4.25 Classroom teaching, integration of cultural differences and communication

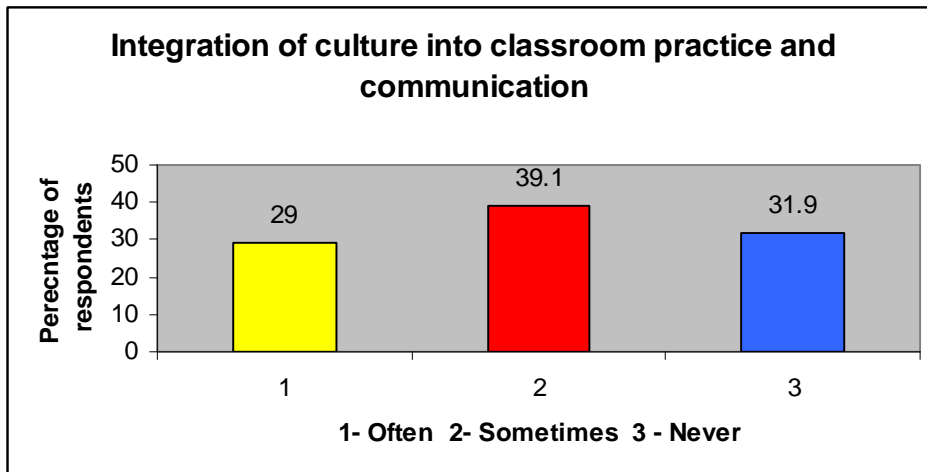
	Statement	Often		Some-times		Never		TOT	
		NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	No.	%
a)	My classroom has pictures/posters that reflect the cultures of the children in my school.	10	11.9	45	53.6	29	34.5	84	100
b)	The printed resources that I refer my students to reflect the cultures and ethnic backgrounds of the children that attend my school.	6	7.1	36	42.9	42	50	84	100
c)	The media resources that I use reflect the cultures of the children in my school.	9	10.7	45	53.6	30	35.7	84	100
d)	At student gatherings the food that is provided is inclusive of the cultures of the children in my school.	30	35.7	39	46.4	15	17.9	84	100
e)	I try to learn some words of the different languages spoken by the children in my school.	12	14.3	54	64.3	18	21.4	84	100
f)	When communicating with parents from another language group, I use a staff member to interpret for me.	13	15.5	33	39.3	38	45.2	84	100
g)	When communicating written information to parents I try to do this using the language that they speak.	1	1.2	6	7.1	77	91.7	84	100

	Statement	Often		Some-times		Never		TOT	
		NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%	No.	%
i)	I discourage staff members from engaging in culturally insensitive behavior.	11	13.1	44	52.4	29	34.5	84	100
j)	I observe cultural customs in my school.	50	59.5	27	32.1	7	8.3	84	100
k)	I promote cultural diversity in my school.	54	64.3	23	27.4	7	8.3	84	100

The averages of the percentages in table 4.25 reflect that 29% of the respondents practise the statements a) to k). Often, 39.1% practise the statements Sometimes and 31.9% Never practise the above statements with respect to classroom practice, integration and communication with students and parents.

This is reflected in Figure 4.4 to highlight the lack of competency of teachers with respect to acknowledging cultural differences and showing evidence of this in classroom practice. The respondents who practise the above often provide the lowest percentage reflected, i.e. 29%. Principle 8 of multicultural education (cf. 2.6) needs to be addressed in developing the competency of teachers as follow: “teachers should help students acquire the social skills needed to interact effectively with students from other racial, ethnic, cultural and language groups”. Teachers need to familiarise themselves with the five approaches to multicultural education as stated by Sleeter (1996) (cf. 2.8) as well as the approaches to multicultural education as stated by Banks (1995) (cf. 2.8) to allow for better integration of culture into classroom practice and communication.

Figure 4.4 Integration of culture into classroom practice and communication



4.2.5 Section E

Section E of the questionnaire dealt with cultural tolerance of teachers towards their students. The statements (cf. Table 4.26) determined the cultural tolerance of teachers towards their students. Respondents had to answer YES or NO to the statements.

Table 4.26 Cultural tolerance of teachers towards their students

	STATEMENT	YES		NO		NO RESPONSE		TOT	%
		NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%		
A	I show a great deal of concern for students of all cultural groups	84	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	84	100
B	I am able to work with students regardless of ethnic background	83	98.8	1	1.2	0	0.0	84	100
C	I am patient with students of all cultural groups.	81	96.4	3	3.6	0	0.0	84	100
D	I am able to interact in a positive manner with students whose background is different from mine	84	100	0	0.0	0	0.0	84	100
E	I consider myself to be open minded regarding ethnic diversity	84	100	0	0.0	0	0.0	84	100
F	I consider myself to be flexible regarding ethnic diversity	81	96.4	3	3.6	0	0.0	84	100
G	I am able to give feedback to parents of all cultural groups	83	98.8	1	1.2	0	0.0	84	100
H	I am able to communicate well with students of all cultural groups	83	98.8	1	1.2	0	0.0	84	100

	STATEMENT	YES		NO		NO RESPONSE		TOT	%
		NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%		
J	I am able to identify and develop appropriate material for students from different cultural backgrounds to learn from	80	95.2	4	4.8	0	0.0	84	100
K	I am able to give clear directions for students from different cultural backgrounds to follow	84	100.0	0	0.0	0	0.0	84	100
L	I am able to use different techniques for stimulating students' interest even though they come from varied cultural backgrounds.	81	96.4	3	3.6	0	0.0	84	100

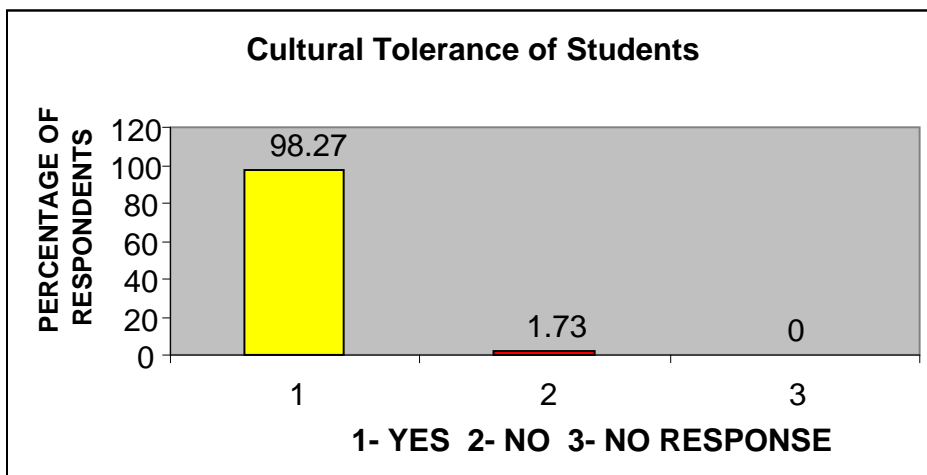
The high percentages of responses in Table 4.26 show that the teaching staff at the school has satisfied Principle 12 of multicultural education (cf. 2.6): “Teachers should use multiple culturally sensitive techniques to assess complex cognitive and social skills.”

Table 4.27 Ability to teach and tolerate students of diverse cultures

STATEMENT	YES		NO		NO RESPONSE		TOT	%
	NO.	%	NO.	%	NO.	%		
AVERAGES	908	98.27%	16	1.7%	0	0.0%	924	100

Table 4.27 reflects that 98.27% of the respondents are able to teach and tolerate students of diverse cultures, whilst 1.73% show that they are unable to do this. Figure 4.5 illustrates the high percentage of respondents who reflect cultural tolerance.

Figure 4.5 Cultural tolerance of students



The results show that teachers satisfy one of the aims of multicultural education i.e. prejudice reduction. By being able to be tolerant of different cultures, teachers' teaching styles are more corporative than competitive and this helps contribute to the development of positive racial attitudes towards their students (cf. 2.4).

4.2.6 Section F

In Section F of the questionnaire, the respondents had to indicate the appropriate responses to the statements given. The statements were linked to open ended questions which required the respondent's view on the statement.

Table 4.28 - Professional development programmes attended

	YES	NO	NO RESPONSE	TOTAL
NO.	51	20	13	84
%	60.7	23.8	15.5	100

Table 4.28 indicates that 60.7% of the respondents mentioned that the professional development programmes that they had attended, assisted them in handling, teaching or understanding multicultural student populations. 23.8% mentioned that these programmes did not assist them in their teaching; 15.5% did not respond to this statement. The school is accomplishing Principle 1 of multicultural education (cf. 2.6) by affording teachers the opportunity of attending professional development programmes. But if these programmes do not address issues relating to multiculturalism, international schooling and developing teacher competencies, they will not profit teachers. Principle 1 states that “Professional development programmes should help teachers understand the complex characteristics of ethnic groups....language and social class interactions to influence student behaviour”.

The following are Professional Development Programmes that teachers attended. The information was obtained from the open-ended questions. The school and the district place a great deal of emphasis on professional development of teaching staff. The following are conferences that take place in and around the Middle East that teachers attend.

- NESA (Near East South Asia) Teachers’ Conferences: – These are conferences that are held in the fall, winter and spring in the Northern Hemisphere and focus on different themes eg. Assessment techniques, curriculum planning, best practices in teaching, the use of technology in the classroom.
- TARA Conference – Teachers of Arabic Readers’ Association
- ABC Conference – Assessment, Best Practices and Curriculum

- TOYC Conference – Teachers of Young Children
- Site Staff Development Programmes: each school site organizes staff development for teachers

Table 4.29 Attendance at conferences

CONFERENCE AND TOPIC	NO.ATTENDED	%
• NESA – Turkey - Assessing the multicultural competence of teachers	8	9.6
• NESA - Turkey - Multiculturalism and Inclusivity	5	6
• ABC Conference – Bahrain – Brain Gym	35	42
• TARA – coping with a child from different cultural background – Saudi Arabia	12	14.4
• ABC Conference – Bahrain – Teaching Tools- “Learning from the Natural Teachers”	18	21.6
• ABC Conference – Bahrain – Curriculum mapping	13	15.6
• ISG Conference – Saudi Arabia – The third Culture Kid experience	43	51.6
• TARA – Techniques on how literature can be taught to students of different cultures – Saudi Arabia	5	6
• School Staff Development – Classroom Management – school site – Saudi Arabia	76	91.2
• USA – English Programme -USA	4	4.8
• TOYC conference – Teachers of Young Children – Saudi Arabia	23	27.6
• ABC Conference – Writing Traits – Bahrain	76	91.2
• New Teachers’ Orientation – District Conference - Saudi Arabia	55	66
• ISG - District Conference – International Schooling and Multicultural Education – Saudi Arabia	8	9.6
• ABC Conference – Teaching tools – Learning from the Natural Teacher – Bahrain	5	6
TOTAL	386	

Table 4.29 shows that 60.7% respondents mentioned that professional development programmes have helped them in their teaching (386 attendances at such sessions). Some could have attended more than one mentioned above. Those that reflect a high percentage as 76%, 55% and 43% are programmes that were held by the district or the school. The other programmes are optional and teachers may choose to attend them. As a result a low percentage is reflected.

Table 4.30 This school provides all students with equal opportunities to learn

	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	TOTAL
NO.	68	0	16	84
%	80.9	0.0	19.1	100

Table 4.30 indicates that 80.9% of respondents agreed to the statement that the school provides equal opportunities to all students because of the following reasons. These were obtained from the open ended question.

- The Global Language classes bring the students closer to their culture.
- The school has one policy that applies to all.
- Every student has an equal opportunity to achieve his/her full potential.
- The school is for international students.
- No segregation or discrimination takes place.
- The curriculum has different levels of teaching material suiting students' learning abilities.
- All follow the same curriculum and participate in activities as a whole class.
- Each and every child is unique and all students are treated equally.
- Students' success depends on their performance here and never on their background.
- There is no differential teaching.
- The extra activities we provide give opportunities to improve their multiple intelligences.

- All children get equal preference regardless of their nationalities or their aptitude. Special attention is given as and when needed to the one required.
- Class activities and Multicultural Education
- There is no discrimination done according to caste.
- Because children learn a global language and the main language which is Language Arts.
- Classroom, co-education activities
- The school provides the students with a healthy environment where they are free to express themselves and can fearlessly communicate with the teachers.
- Our school has a multicultural student population including staff, and they are free to express themselves, share ideas and work together.
- As long as they learn in English and learn an American curriculum.
- Students of different academic levels are placed in a class.
- All students are given the chance to participate in school activities.
- The facilities provided in school can be utilised by everyone.
- There is a good and clean atmosphere for progress.
- All students follow the same curriculum.
- The school is an international school with more than 20 nationalities.
- There are teachers from different countries.
- Education is for everybody, I think it's up to the student if he/she really wanted to learn.
- Enough teaching resources are provided.
- Attention is given to every student.

The above satisfies the multicultural aim to create equality with respect to educational opportunities (cf. 2.5) as the majority of the respondents agreed with this aim.

However, 19.1% of respondents disagreed with the statement that the school provides equal opportunities to all students because of the following reasons given in the open ended question.

- Unlike an ESL program in Language Arts, there is no program in Mathematics to help students in science and math.
- Not all students are given equal opportunities – due to time constraints.
- All students have equal access to the same lessons/materials, but their lack of proficiency in English is the one factor that does not allow for equal opportunities.
- While it is true that learning is for everyone, I believe that we can have better quality of students if we have programmes for less fluent students separate from the fast paced students.
- How can this be true if the background of our students are so different and groups are not homogenous?

Table 4.31 The curriculum that I teach reflects a bias toward; a certain ethnic group

	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	TOTAL
NO.	23	2	59	84
%	27.4	2.4	70.2	100

Table 4.31 show that 27.4% of the respondents indicated that they agreed that the curriculum they teach reflects a bias towards a certain ethnic group because of the following reasons given at the open ended question:

- The curriculum reflects more of the American culture.
- We teach only the American curriculum, and the important events, personalities, currencies etc. are all related to the American culture.
- Because the subjects I am teaching (Math and Science) are related to real life in general.
- Certain sections in topics in social studies.
- It is based on American culture and resources for History and Geography.
- Exponents or experts are all European or North American.
- We use only American textbooks which reflect a one-sided opinion.

Table 4.31 indicates that 70.2% of the respondents believed that the curriculum they teach does not reflect a bias towards a certain ethnic group. They disagreed with the statement for the following reasons given at the open ended questions:

- The curriculum I teach does not reflect any bias in any group.
- I teach Arabic language.
- The EAL (English as Additional Language) curriculum is free of biases. My students are free to explore other perspectives and cultures.
- It is an all encompassing curriculum.
- It contains literature from every culture.
- So far I have not encountered any such problem.
- No lessons in any subject reflect that.
- The curriculum is not culturally biased.
- No, it reflects all the ethnic groups.
- The syllabus being taught is completely multicultural. So there is no question of being biased or not.
- Our school has a multicultural environment and the curriculum and syllabus taught is also multicultural – so the question of being biased does not arise.
- It improves the subject knowledge and can be used at anytime.
- The curriculum is aimed at general meaning of a preparatory school – preparing students for college life.
- Not so much an ethnic group, but a culture or nation.
- The teaching of technology does not reflect a bias.
- According to our philosophy statement, our students should recognise the cultural and historical perspective of science.
- The curriculum is suitable for the multicultural background we have. It does not relate to any ethnic group specifically.
- The curriculum I teach doesn't reflect a bias towards a certain ethnic group because it is a global language.
- It caters to humanity and progress of oneself.
- The curriculum tries to incorporate the values of all cultures.

- I teach Ancient World History and we study the achievements and contributions of all civilizations without bias or prejudice.
- I teach biology. It deals with life and living organisms. It has nothing to do with any ethnic group.

A small percentage, 2.4% of respondents, was uncertain about their response to the statement. The responses as presented in Table 4.30 reflect that the teaching staff are not taking into consideration that the school follows an American curriculum and that the textbooks that are used are American textbooks. There are subjects like American History, American Literature, Social Studies (that studies the U.S. only), American units of measurement are used in Math and Science and Physical Education. It is striking that the majority of teachers (i.e. 70.2% of teachers) stated that there is no bias in the curriculum that they teach. Principle 3 of the Principles of multicultural education (cf. 2.6) stipulates: “The curriculum should help students understand that knowledge is socially constructed and reflects researchers’ personal experience as well as the social, political, and economic contexts in which they live and work.”

Table 4.32 The extra- and co-curricular activities offered at this school contribute to improving academic achievement

	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	TOTAL
NO.	63	0	21	84
%	75.0	0.0	25.0	100

According to Table 4.32, 75% of the respondents agreed with the above statement. They identified the following activities that contributed to improving academic achievement in the open ended questions.

- Games
- Knowledge Bowl
- Speak Out
- Spelling Bee
- Sport and music activities
- Fun with Math
- Homework club
- Math Contest
- Student assemblies
- Reading club
- English as Additional Language programme
- Vocabee
- Science Fair
- NESAs Math Contest
- Standardised Aptitude Tests (SAT)
- History and Literacy Fairs

There were 25.0% of the respondents who disagreed with the statement that the extra- and co-curricular activities offered at the school contributed to improving academic achievement. The offering of the abovementioned extra- and co-curricular activities contribute to the principles of multicultural education as outlined in section 2.6. Students are given an opportunity to achieve academic excellence and improve communication amongst groups because of the above activities. Principle 4 (cf. 2.6) states: "Schools should provide all students with opportunities to participate in extra- and co-curricular activities that develop knowledge, skills and attitudes that increase academic achievement and foster positive interracial relationships." Group work and team work allow students to interact and work towards common goals of the group. This fosters understanding and acceptance of group members. Eg. students working on a science fair project have to reach consensus about the topic, procedure, instruments used and presentation, regardless of their nationalities as this is what is going to earn them grades.

Table 4.33 The extra- and co-curricular activities at school assist in creating positive interracial relationships

	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	TOTAL
NO.	77	1	6	84
%	91.7	1.2	7.1	100

According to Table 3.33, 91.7% of respondents agreed with the above statement as a result of the following activities that take place at the school as indicated in the open questions:

- International Day
- Sports
- Music activities
- UN (United Nations) Day
- Social studies Fair
- Junior/Senior Student Council Elections – active student bodies of different cultures
- National Junior Honor Society
- National Honor Society
- Sport – which involves “doing” and teamwork – overcomes language barriers

However, 7.1% of the respondents disagreed with the statement and 1.2% were uncertain about their response. Even though these clubs and organisations mentioned are characteristically American, the respondents agree that these positively influence interracial relationships. This contributes to the reduction of racial tensions which are one of the aims of multicultural education (cf. 2.5).

Table 4.34 Values shared by most cultural groups e.g. justice, equality, freedom, peace etc. are taught to students at school

	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	TOTAL
NO.	63	3	18	84
%	75.0	3.6	21.4	100

According to Table 4.34, 75% of respondents agreed that students are taught about justice, equality, freedom and peace at school. They gave the following reasons in the open ended responses:

- Through drama productions and skits.
- In the Arabic Language Curriculum, there are stories that reflect these values.
- The United Nations Day Awareness Programme at school.
- Each student is free to express his/her feelings and develop friendships with students of other cultural groups.
- We address these values at monthly assemblies and these are instilled throughout the year.
- The social studies syllabus addresses this.
- General classroom discussions.
- Classroom instruction/guidelines.
- The Annual Speak Out contest invites students to write and speak about these topics.
- Writing exercises in Language Arts classes allows students to write about this.
- Character week allows for this.
- By incorporating these values in the teaching of your subject.
- As a teacher it is the responsibility of the teacher to develop the character of students by giving importance to these values in the classroom even though it is not a part of the curriculum.
- In Saudi Arabia, women's rights are non-existent – this in a way serves as enlightenment to the expatriate student population.
- This is sometimes addressed in English Literature.

However, 21.4% of respondents disagreed with the statement and 3.6% were uncertain of their response. A high percentage of respondents agreed to this statement. This implies that a large percentage of the teacher population are aware of power relations and oppressive practices in society and that at least 75% of the staff members may be addressing this within the curriculum or in their teaching practices.

Table 4.35 Worksheets used deal mainly with one/combination cultural/national groups

	ONE	NO RESPONSE	COMBINATION	TOTAL
NO.	14	42	28	84
%	16.7	50.0	33.3	100.0

According to Table 4.35, 16.7% of the respondents mentioned that only one cultural/national group is favoured. In this regard they mentioned the following in the open ended responses:

- The American cultural group.
- We use American textbooks.
- The American culture is reflected in most worksheets.
- European or American.
- Western culture is favoured.

However, 50% of the respondents did not respond to this statement and 33.3% stated that they indicated that worksheets reflected a combination of cultural/national groups. This indicates that the respondents are unaware of the bias that exists in the teaching resources that they use. The school uses American textbooks published by American publishers. They are unaware of a superior, dominant culture with regards to the content that they teach.

The following open-ended question was asked to gain insight into the knowledge teachers had about the concept of multicultural education. The following statements were recorded:

I define multicultural education as:

- teaching education to different nationalities.
- as a progressive approach for transforming education. It is grounded in the ideals of social equality.
- open-mindedness and looking through the eyes of others, feeling with others, communicating with others and co-existing with others on this one planet.
- the teaching of students the values, customs and cultural elements of different cultures.
- one that includes all cultures and actually explores each one within the curriculum-allowing for a greater understanding of individual cultures by all.
- having students from different parts of the world and working together as one while learning from each individual's uniqueness.
- knowing about other people's ways of living, thinking and behaving.
- educating students by giving importance to customs, values, beliefs and ideas of different cultures to shape the lives of individuals and all students have an equal chance to achieve academic success.
- a system in which multiculturalism is incorporated in the textbooks. Either we need a variety of resources from different sources or we use resources that are not biased and are considered more authentic by the community we are teaching.
- an opportunity to train and interact with students who possess different values.
- education that consists of different cultures of different countries, and their ethnic values. The school atmosphere should also be multicultural.
- enlightening students about the various cultures around the world and helping them develop tolerance and respect towards each of these cultures and races.
- the learning about the multiple strands of the past that have created the webs of the present, teaching about commonalities of all people through understanding their social and cultural differences, but not the difference in economic power – and teaching students to participate in the generation of an equitable society.

- the teaching of the curriculum by integrating the values and customs of students into the subject being taught – done by including applications that are released into the various groups being taught.
- being education that incorporates and uses prior knowledge of all cultures and races, regardless of whether you teach children from those backgrounds or not and never focuses or shows bias towards any particular ethnic group or country. There is no RIGHT race.
- teaching young minds with quality and efficiency regardless of race and integrating multicultural lessons wherever possible.
- is the recognition, honor and understanding of different cultures to work together peacefully and to eradicate prejudices and hatred, which can promote peace through learning.
- a way to provide students with a syllabus that covers a wide range of study material related with different cultures and nations, to give students a better understanding of other cultures and nations.
- a field of study that aims to create equal opportunities for students from different cultural/social backgrounds.
- a system of education where 1) students from different cultures study cohesively, 2) the curriculum introduces students to cultures other than their own, and 3) there is tolerance for other cultures among students and teachers.
- children of multinational countries studying together, understanding each others cultures, intermingling, interacting, respecting and developing tolerance towards each other and joining hands to build a better world to live in.
- a process that permeates all aspects of school practices, policies and organisation as a means to ensure the highest levels of academic achievement for all students.
- education that is for and by multicultural groups of students and teachers. The curriculum should also have appropriate multicultural dimensions.
- a system of education where not only one or two cultural backgrounds prevail or are favored, but different cultural groups are taken care of while planning a curriculum and other school activities.

- one that helps students to understand and appreciate cultural differences and similarities as well as recognise the accomplishments of diverse racial and ethnic groups.
- a philosophy that stresses the importance of cultural diversity in shaping the lives of individuals, groups and nations, within the educational system based on principles of equality, mutual respect, acceptance and moral commitment to social justice.
- education where students from different cultures, countries and races study one curriculum and share similar activities designed to suit all.
- a field of study whose aim is to give equal education to students from different cultural, ethnic or racial groups. It helps students to gain knowledge and skills to interact with people from different groups that works for the good of the community.

The following statements showed a lack of understanding of the all encompassing concept of multicultural education when reference is made to the definitions of multicultural education in Chapter Two.

Some responses use the term, 'multicultural education', to define multicultural education.

I define multicultural education as:

- life-long learning that enables students to share in a multicultural environment, leading to character development and the ability to face future challenges.
- the school curriculum should be molded on the basis of multicultural education.
- a wide spectrum of knowledge.
- interesting, where one gets to know a great deal about various other cultures. At times it is a challenge as volatile world issues raise different viewpoints of different students.
- the coming together of different cultures on the school campus.
- discrimination of cast, sect, religion etc.
- a multicultural system that enriches the school culture.
- a valuable one for students and teachers, because of understanding and having respect for each and everyone's culture.

- students learning to face and cope with the challenges in life in whatever part of the world they go to.

4.3 DATA ANALYSIS AND INTERPRETATION

Much of the literature that has been consulted describes multicultural education as having its beginnings in the United States and focuses on the provision of education for whites as opposed to blacks (Sleeter in Miner & Peterson, 2001: 1-7); talks about the black minority and people of colour (Gorski, 2006b:1); and talks about oppression and socioeconomic status (Banks, 1995: 1). The school at which the research was done is multicultural in terms of a bringing together of as many as 32 nationalities from throughout the world. The dominant group of students is Arabic speaking and a host of minority groups includes the Pakistanis, Indians, Filipinos, Sudanese and others.

Multicultural education at the school at which the research has been conducted is commonly regarded as the mixing of cultures or the coming together of different cultural groups on the same school campus. The definitions of multicultural education as outlined in Chapter 2.3 by Sleeter (in Miner & Peterson, 2001) states multicultural education should not be seen as a sharing of food and significant days on the calendar. We need to look beyond that at issues of poverty and wealth and access to privileges. At the present school, however, the celebration of International Day takes place where students dress up in their national dress and bring to school the different food that they eat. This is seen as being sufficient practice to acknowledge the diverse cultures that are present at the school. To be effective, multicultural education should educate individuals on three levels: as members of the larger society; as members of a particular cultural group; and as individuals free to explore their abilities beyond any group membership (Haberman & Post, 1999: 108). The present school is academically driven as students have to complete the core subjects to graduate from high school. They need to complete English, Mathematics, Science and Social Studies, which are all based on the American curriculum. There is little or no opportunity to pursue a course of study that acknowledges diversity of students and teachers. The school has, however, introduced into the school curriculum, the subject, Arabic Culture, from Kindergarten to grade 12 as

enforced by the Education Ministry of Saudi Arabia. This forces expatriate students to learn about the dominant culture of the Saudi Arabs (the host country).

Multicultural education is sometimes defined as a process including ways in which teachers and students interact during the process of teaching, learning and living together in schools. At other times, multicultural education is seen as a product, which is a curriculum to be learned where new forms of knowledge are achieved and evaluated. As mentioned in Chapter 2.9, the school curriculum is a framework within which teaching and learning takes place. The curriculum should acknowledge diverse groups and identify cultural differences and is therefore seen as being of utmost importance in the transformation process. If the present school offers an American curriculum, then it becomes evident that the curriculum is not assisting in the transformation process, but rather maintains the status quo of the dominant American culture within the content of what is being taught. A review of the Social Studies textbook used at the school from grade 1 to grade 10 reveals the content as having an American bias as the content teaches only considers the U.S.

Multicultural education should focus on creating a positive school and classroom climate; promote critical thinking rather than rote learning; create a climate that fosters mutual respect for teachers, students and parents; and inspire students to see the merit in learning. The goals of schools with multicultural student populations should be to serve these students by connecting the existing curriculum with students' lives to make their learning more meaningful and relevant rather than presenting students with a curriculum with new content to be learned. Following a strict American curriculum at this international school does not satisfy the above goals. There is no integration of cultural ideas and beliefs as the textbooks that are used are from America and have American publishers. In the District, schools are classified as being American or International. The present school ISG-Dammam, is also classified as being International. Another school in the District is ISG-Dhahran, that is, American Division. The only aspect that delineates these two schools is that the international school offers Global, National or Foreign languages, such as Arabic, French, Urdu and Hindi and Filipino to students. This is what the District sees as the acknowledging of diverse cultures. This does not take into consideration the dimensions of multicultural education as conceptualised by Banks

(1995:1-3): the integration of content; the process to construct knowledge; creating a reduction in prejudice; creating equality within pedagogy; and creating empowered school culture and social structure.

Haberman and Post (1999:102-108) have identified many aspects that hamper the ideal provision of multicultural education. Firstly, the concept of what multicultural programmes are varies widely. According to Section F, question d) of the questionnaire, 75% of respondents agreed that the activities the school offered contributed to improving academic achievement. There is only one programme mentioned that looks to the needs of diverse cultures and that is the English as Second Language programme. Many of the other programmes have a strong American background, i.e. the spelling bee; Science, History and Literacy fairs; the SAT tests, the NESAs math league, etc. This contradicts one of the dimensions Banks (1995) discusses, i.e. *creating an empowered school culture and social structure*, which stresses that practices at school relating to sport and academics should include activities from all racial groups, so as to empower students and teachers. Secondly, administrators conceptualise differently which aspects of the school curriculum need reform. Thirdly, the notion that all aspects of the school must be changed to make the curriculum more multicultural is beyond anyone's capability. Fourthly, schools serving poor and diverse students are of the belief that they are changing continuously by accommodating multicultural school populations; but the changes they are making are "actually antithetic to education in a democratic, pluralistic society" Banks (1995:3).

Whilst many of the literature sources (EG. Banks, Sleeter, Gorski as indicated in the bibliography) talk about a change in attitudes, a change in the curriculum, learning new methods of teaching, creating multicultural classrooms and getting rid of racial prejudices, very few mention the issue of cultural conflict, i.e. having to acknowledge and include in their teaching others' cultural beliefs what may be in conflict with their own. There is the assumption that all teachers should be in agreement with the ideals of multicultural education once they have been introduced to it. In keeping with the dimensions of multicultural education as outlined by Banks (cf 2.4), when teachers are willing to change their teaching styles to allow all students to achieve academically, then only will there be equity within pedagogy. School administrators must aim to empower teachers to achieve equality amongst the different groups of students by assisting them

to use content from diverse groups when teaching concepts and skills. Teachers must be helped to modify their teaching strategies to ensure that students from different racial, cultural and social-class groups are allowed to be exposed to equal opportunities.

4.4 SUMMARY

This chapter presented the data that were obtained through the use of a questionnaire given to teachers at an international school. The analysis of the data allowed the researcher insight into the teachers' teaching qualifications, their understanding or misunderstanding of multicultural education, and teacher competencies relating to student and parent interaction. On the basis of this, recommendations can be made for the provision of suitable professional development to improve practice. The next chapter focuses on the summary of the findings and recommendations.

CHAPTER FIVE

SUMMARY AND RECOMMENDATIONS

5.1 INTRODUCTION

This research project focused on teacher competencies in multicultural schools in Saudi Arabia within the context of multicultural education. The ideals of multicultural education are based on the creation of equality among racial and ethnic groups and different social classes with regards the provision of equal educational opportunities by the school to cater for the diverse student population. It becomes the task of teachers and administrators to upgrade their knowledge and practice about varying methods of teaching and assessment to produce the highest standard of academic achievement possible for all students.

Sleeter (in Miner & Peterson, 2001:3) says that whilst teachers conceptualise multicultural education as teaching about differences in culture, multicultural education is based on the ruling of education by a dominant culture and must be seen as the struggle against white racism, white supremacy and white privilege. In the case of Saudi Arabia, where the dominant student population is Arab, the main objective of multicultural education should be to equip students with the knowledge and skills to function appropriately in a society that is ethnically and culturally rich and diverse.

Teachers should be guided by a structural framework to assist them in the process of teaching. The school administration should focus on the necessary knowledge, skills and attributes that define an effective teacher. Teachers need to be exposed to what guides and characterises good teaching practice. Staff development programmes should address what teachers know, are capable of doing, and what they value, in order to improve the teaching and learning process. Teachers should have at their disposal a

framework that outlines the abilities and responsibilities that are central to the teaching profession which allows for improving the quality of education and at the same time enhances the profession.

5.2 SUMMARY OF THE RESEARCH

This section provides an overview of what this study focused on with reference to the research problem formulated in section 1.3.: does the selected international school address the needs of a multicultural student population? Also, according to the definition of multicultural education, are the students being provided with quality education? The following sub problems were addressed in the investigation:

- What constitutes a culturally diverse international school?
- What are the main aims and assumptions of multicultural education?
- What competencies do teachers need to teach in culturally diverse schools?
- What staff development should be done in multicultural schools?
- What is the competence of teachers in a culturally diverse international school in Saudi Arabia?
- What can be done to improve teachers' competence to teach in a culturally diverse international school?

This research project was informed by the relevant literature (cf Chapter 2) in the field of multicultural education and an empirical investigation was planned using the teachers at the international school as respondents in the research (cf. Chapter 3: Appendix B).

5.2.1 Literature review

The review of literature includes the history and definition of multicultural education. Multicultural education has been defined as the provision of equal opportunities for all teachers and students, with regards to teaching and learning resources, acknowledgement of cultural differences, and the acknowledgement of diverse cultures (cf. 2.1 and 2.2).

The dimensions of multicultural education (cf. 2.4) include explanations about the integration of content, the process to construct knowledge, creating a reduction in prejudice, creating equality within pedagogy, as well as creating an empowered school culture and social structure.

Multicultural education is aimed at creating in students a critical awareness of power and oppression, society and the world (cf. 2.5). Banks' description of the Principles of multicultural education (cf. 2.6) serves to enlighten school administrators about the shortfalls that their school systems may be experiencing; describes the misconceptions about multicultural education (cf. 2.7); and provides an explanation as to how our practices as teachers are not in keeping with the ideals of multicultural education. Teacher competencies in multicultural international schools are discussed at length to contribute to an understanding of what the requirements for teachers who are trained in their home countries and work abroad. The literature review finally addresses the staff development issues that are necessary in a multicultural school environment.

5.2.2 The empirical investigation

The empirical investigation involved the use of a questionnaire for the purposes of data collection. The questionnaire was distributed to teachers at a staff development session. The questionnaire addressed issues relating to the misconceptions about multicultural education (cf. Section B); practices of teachers, according to teaching experience (cf. Section C), practices of teachers, regarding the acknowledgement and inclusion of cultures within classroom practice (cf. Section D); practices regarding student and parent interaction taking cultural differences into consideration (cf. Section E) and Section F focused on open ended questions that questioned the opportunities and the educational programmes that the school provided to promote academic and social achievement, as well as promoting positive racial interactions. Respondents were also questioned about their knowledge with regards to the concept of multicultural education.

The responses to the questionnaire were analysed and represented in tables as percentages and, as graphs in some cases, to provide more clarity about the findings.

The results reflected that there were ten nationalities among the teaching staff (cf. Table 4.1), and school records reveal that there were 32 nationalities represented in the student body. The majority of teachers employed were qualified to teach the subject that they teach (cf. Figure 4.1). The largest percentage of respondents who taught in international schools had taught between six to ten years, whilst the largest percentage of respondents who taught in their home country had taught for one to five years.

Section B of the results reflects that almost half the teachers indicated misconceptions. Having misconceptions about multicultural education implies that teachers will not be competent to understand cultural biases and differences, acknowledge diverse cultural groups and are not equipped with the knowledge to teach and communicate effectively. According to Aldridge and Calhoun (2000:27), when educators take into cognisance multicultural education and try to adjust the curriculum to include diverse cultural issues, this process is challenged by misconceptions about what multicultural education is and how it should be practised.

Section C reflects the results (cf. Table 4.24) from respondents with respect to their teaching experience and interaction with students from different cultural groups. A higher percentage of the respondents agreed to the statements. This showed that a high percentage of the staff is culturally aware and tolerant of the diverse student population. One of the aims of multicultural education is for the inclusion of culture and all aspects of life that create equality amongst people. The aim is not to separate cultures but to create cultural fairness in a way that no one group dominates the public scenario (Feinberg, 2004:1).

Section D (cf. Table 4.25) focused on teacher practices with respect to their classroom teaching, the integration of cultural differences into their classroom and their communication with diverse cultures of students and parents. The low percentage of the 'Often' response to statements indicated that teachers lacked the competency of

acknowledging cultural differences and this was reflected in their teaching practices. Whilst teachers report that they were tolerant of different cultures within the classroom, they were not able to integrate tolerance in their teaching.

Section E (cf. Table 4.26) showed that a large percentage of respondents were able to accept and teach students of diverse cultures.

After having done an extensive literature review and now being more knowledgeable about the premises of multicultural education, it can be concluded that the open-ended questions reflected a lack of understanding of concepts. When asked if the school curriculum reflects a bias towards a certain ethnic group, there was a larger percentage that disagreed than agreed to this statement. The school offers an American curriculum and uses American published textbooks and the response implies that the majority of teachers might not have understood the concept of bias when answering this question. There were varied responses to what multicultural education can be defined as. Some described it explicitly whilst others had a poor idea or lack of understanding of the concept. The concept, dimensions and aims of multicultural education were discussed in Chapter 2.

5.3 RECOMMENDATIONS

Arising from the empirical investigation as well as relevant literature, the study concludes with recommendations to enhance the competence of teachers in culturally diverse international schools.

5.3.1 New teacher orientation

The following should become the priority of school administrators as they employ teachers from diverse cultures in an international school setting. This constitutes a more in-depth understanding or definition of multicultural education and involves the following criteria:

- (a) what do we know about the school before we enter it;

- (b) what is the ethnic background of the students, teachers, and administrators;
- (c) what material is used in the curriculum;
- (d) what are languages that the school programme uses;
- (e) how involved are parents in decision making regarding the running of the school; and
- (f) what criteria are used for determining student achievement (Haberman & Post 1999: 102).

5.3.2 Professional development programmes

There are many opportunities for teachers to attend professional development programmes within the district, at the school site as well as at other locations in the Middle East. The opportunities outside the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia are, however, more extensive and presented by experts in their field of study. This does not auger well for expatriate teachers who have no family support present to see to the needs of their families in their absence, by attending a conference outside the Kingdom. It should therefore become the priority of the school to address relevant and meaningful professional development topics at the school site.

Professional development programmes should focus on new teacher orientation where the following topics should be highlighted: the concept and characteristics of international schooling and teaching; the differences in the conceptualisations of multiculturalism and multicultural education; what does multiculturalism and acknowledgement of diverse cultures entail; what is the status of the school with regards to multicultural education; effective communication between teacher, parent and student across cultural backgrounds; cultural tolerance amongst the staff and student population alike; culturally safe schools and characteristics of expatriate children. Training for the faculty (staff) should be designed to develop skills, knowledge and sensitivity in diversity and multicultural education.

The National Association of Independent Schools in the U. S. is embarking on the AIM programme, which is the Assessment of Inclusivity and Multiculturalism. Should the

school want to address the issue of proportionate teacher-student ratios in terms of nationalities and cultures, their hiring practices and the appointment of key personnel at the school, the administrators should have the school personnel engage in this research project at the school. The AIM programme evaluates diversity, multiculturalism, equity and justice in independent schools.

5.3.3 Proficiency in English

The school is an English medium school and it is necessary for the teachers to converse effectively in English. Many teachers are English Second Language speakers and their lack of understanding of some concepts is suggested by their answering of the open ended questions. The school should therefore focus on providing training for their teachers to become proficient in English. Sleeter (in Miner and Peterson, 2001:6) advises that teachers should join organisations as, the National Association for Bilingual Education, or the National Association for Multicultural Education. This effort should come from the school management and teachers should be encouraged to become affiliated to these.

5.3.4 Hiring practices

The school should focus on hiring teachers to be more representative of the student population. School administrators should take cognisance of the positions in which people of color are placed at the school. School administration should question and assess what has been done in the operation of the school that has allowed for, and been effective in, the creation of a more diverse and inclusive staff.

5.4 LIMITATIONS OF THE STUDY

- (a) The majority of respondents were English second language speakers and some of the questions may have been misunderstood. I noticed, when analyzing the results, that the word “bias” was misinterpreted by many.
- (b) When a method of data collection used is the questionnaire, there is always the question of the truthfulness of responses. Eg. in the section on teaching experiences

and practices, when asked “I am able to.....” or “I am familiar with.....” teachers may readily have reported that they are.

5.5 CONCLUDING REMARKS

The aim of this study was to determine what competencies are needed by teachers to teach in a multicultural international school within the context of multicultural education. The research took place at an international school in Saudi Arabia that caters for an expatriate student population and employs expatriate teachers from around the world. In order for teachers to become competent in dealing with issues of multiculturalism and diversity, school administrators should become familiar with the concepts of multicultural education, multiculturalism, and acknowledgement of cultures. School administrators need to create organisational structures and a commitment to cultural justice and equity in order to equip teachers with the pedagogic knowledge and skills to deal with culturally diverse student populations. The focus should be on ongoing staff development programmes, addressing issues related to multiculturalism and cultural diversity.

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APPENDIX A

P O Box 31677
Al-Khobar
31952
Saudi Arabia

12 October 2005

The Principal

Request for Research Authority

TOPIC: TEACHER COMPETENCE IN MULTICULTURAL SCHOOLS IN SAUDI ARABIA : A PSYCHOLOGICAL-EDUCATIONAL PERSPECTIVE

I am presently a student at the University of South Africa (UNISA) and am completing a dissertation towards a Masters degree in Education, in the field of Educational Psychology. The dissertation requires research to be done at the school site involving the teachers on the staff.

I request for permission to conduct this research at school. The findings of the research will benefit the school in that the status of the school with respect to multicultural education can be determined and appropriate professional development programmes can be devised to address teacher competencies lacking in the teaching staff.

Your cooperation will be highly appreciated.

Yours faithfully

Mrs V Naidoo

APPENDIX B

Dear Staff Member

I am presently doing research to complete my dissertation towards a Masters Degree in Educational Psychology. The research has to do with the concept of Multicultural Education in an International School.

It would be appreciated it if you could complete the following questionnaire as **HONESTLY** as possible. I do not need any identification – so you **need not** give me your name.

The results of the research will be beneficial to the school in that areas of weakness can be identified and staff professional development can be determined.

Please hand in your completed questionnaire by the **7th February 2007**.

You can hand it in to **me (Veron)** or place it in the provided box if you are in:

Block A - Jayanthi

Block B - Souvenir

Block C - Cheryl

Block D -Uma

Annex - Veron

I thank you greatly for your time and effort taken to answer the question.

Enjoy your weekend.

Veron

APPENDIX C

SECTION A: PERSONAL DETAILS

Complete the following table with reference to personal details.

School	HIGH		MIDDLE		ELEMENTARY		
Subject/s Teaching							
Subject/s Trained To Teach							
Professional Qualifications (that which allowed you to follow a career eg. Teaching diploma, engineering degree etc.)							
Academic Qualifications (E.g. BA, BSc)							
Country where Qualified							
Nationality							
Number of Years Teaching in International Schools	1-5	6- 10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	
Number of Years Teaching in Home Country	1-5	6- 10	11-15	16-20	21-25	26-30	

SECTION B

State whether you think the following are true or false by checking (ticking) the appropriate box.

STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
i) People who speak the same language share a common culture.		
ii) People who are from the same nation share a common culture.		
iii) People who are from the same geographic area share a common culture.		
iv) Families from the same culture share the same values.		
v) Story books for children about another culture are generally a true reflection of that culture.		
vi) Multicultural education deals with ethnic or racial issues only.		

STATEMENT	TRUE	FALSE
vii) As teachers we should teach about different cultures according to the months and seasons of the year e.g. a study of the Native Americans should take place in November when Thanksgiving occurs in the United States.		
viii) We should teach multicultural education as a separate subject.		
ix) Multicultural education is an accepted part of the curriculum.		
x) Multicultural education promotes division rather than unity.		
xi) If a society has only one or two cultures, then multicultural education is unnecessary.		
xii) The concept of multicultural education should be reserved for the teaching of older children only.		
xiii) When we teach, we forget about common aspects that prevail throughout people.		
xiv) Multicultural education is unnecessary for societies that acknowledge cultural diversity.		
xv) When we teach about other cultures the history of an event becomes distorted.		
xvi) Most people identify with only one culture.		
xvii) There are insufficient resources regarding multicultural education.		

SECTION C

State whether you AGREE with, DISAGREE with, OR are UNCERTAIN about, the following statements; according to your teaching experience.

STATEMENT	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE
a) I am familiar with the learning outcomes for my subject according to the district curriculum.			
b) I am able to integrate cultural differences into the teaching of my subject.			

STATEMENT	AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE
c) I am able to attend to students with different learning needs, as a result of cultural background, in my classes.			
d) My teaching links the curriculum to real life experiences across cultural backgrounds.			
e) I am able to promote student learning by linking new cultural concepts to prior knowledge of cultural concepts.			
f) I integrate students' cultural backgrounds into classroom learning.			
g) I am able to identify the dominant group from dominated groups in my classroom.			
h) I do not allow students who belong to the same culture to sit together.			
i) My subject area allows me to integrate content that arises from different cultural backgrounds.			

SECTION D

In the following questions, determine whether the following occurs:

O – often

S – sometimes

N – never

a)	My classroom has pictures/posters that reflect the cultures of the children in my school.	
b)	The printed resources that I refer my students to reflect the cultures and ethnic backgrounds of the children that attend my school.	
c)	The media resources that I use reflect the cultures of the children in my school.	
d)	At student gatherings the food that is provided is inclusive of the cultures of the children in my school.	
e)	I try to learn some words of the different languages spoken by the children in my school.	

f)	When communicating with parents from another language group, I use a staff member to interpret for me.	
g)	When communicating written information to parents I try to do this using the language that they speak.	
h)	I discourage students from using cultural insults.	
i)	I discourage staff members from engaging in culturally insensitive behavior.	
j)	I observe cultural customs in my school.	
k)	I promote cultural diversity in my school.	

SECTION E

In the table that follows check (tick) the appropriate response.

	STATEMENT	YES	NO
A	I show a great deal of concern for students of all cultural groups		
B	I am able to work with students regardless of ethnic background		
C	I am patient with students of all cultural groups.		
D	I am able to interact in a positive manner with students whose background is different from mine		
E	I consider myself to be open minded regarding ethnic diversity		
F	I consider myself to be flexible regarding ethnic diversity		
G	I am able to give feedback to parents of all cultural groups		
H	I am able to communicate well with students of all cultural groups		
I	I am able to prepare appropriate techniques for assessing intellectual growth of students of all cultural groups		
J	I am able to identify and develop appropriate material for students from different cultural backgrounds to learn from		
K	I am able to give clear directions for students from different cultural backgrounds to follow		
L	I am able to use different techniques for stimulating students' interest even though they come from varied cultural backgrounds.		

SECTION F:

Answer the following questions briefly. Check (Tick) the appropriate response.

- a) Professional Development programmes I have attended have helped me with teaching multicultural student populations.

YES	NO
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If YES, name at least one programme that you have attended.

- b) This school provides all students with equal opportunities to learn.

AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	
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Explain why you think so.

- c) The curriculum that I teach reflects a bias towards a certain ethnic group.

AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	
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Explain why you think so.

- d) The extra- and co-curricular activities offered at this school contribute to improving academic achievement.

AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	
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If AGREE, name one such activity.

- e) The extra- and co-curricular activities at school assist in creating positive interracial relationships.

AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	
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If AGREE, name ONE activity.

- f) Values shared by most cultural groups e.g. justice, equality, freedom, peace etc. are taught to students at school.

AGREE	UNCERTAIN	DISAGREE	
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If AGREE, tell how or when.

- g) Worksheets that are used deal mainly with one cultural/national group, or a combination of cultural/national groups?

ONE	COMBINATION	
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If only one, which is the cultural/national group that is favored?

Complete the following sentence.

I define multicultural education as _____

I thank you for your time taken to answer this questionnaire. This is greatly appreciated.

Veron Naidoo

Below is a list of concepts that are explained.

CONCEPT	DESCRIPTION
Extra-curricular activities	Activities that take place after school hours
Co-curricular activities	Activities that take place within the school day
Professional qualifications	Qualifications that have allowed you to follow a specific career e.g. Higher Diploma in Education – would have allowed you to become a teacher.
Academic qualifications	Completion of a degree/diploma with no career path.