Cultural Competence and Referral Rates of Hispanic Students

by

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Background: Hispanic students continue to be disproportionately placed in special education compared to their Caucasian peers. Special education referral rates have been examined based on a number of variables including teacher race, cultural competence, school district race make up, and student socioeconomic status. To date, research has focused on the existing special education data, and highlights the cultural mismatch between minority students in special education and teachers that are predominantly Caucasian and middle class. However, research has not focused on teacher referral rates for special education while examining teacher cultural competence. **Purpose**: The current study investigated preservice teacher referral rates of Hispanic students for special education and preservice teachers' cultural competence. **Methods**: Participants were asked to complete a demographic questionnaire and cultural competence survey. The 241 East Carolina University preservice teachers were given one of two case studies that were identical except for the race of the student, and asked to make a decision to refer for special education based on academic or behavioral concerns. **Results**: Findings indicated that there was no difference in teacher referral rates for the Hispanic or Caucasian case study. Academic, behavioral, and overall referral rates were equivocal for the two versions of

the case study. Further, cultural competence was not affected by the race of the preservice teacher. **Discussion**: Findings are reviewed in the context of the theoretical model, Multiple Dimensions of Cultural Competence.

Cultural Competence and Referral Rates of Hispanic Students

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CHAPTER I: INTRODUCTION

Recently, a renewed interest has sparked regarding equity in education for the culturally diverse population within the United States. The *Individuals with Disabilities Education Improvement Act* (IDEIA) (2004) requires a free and appropriate public education for all individuals regardless of disability status. This law provides children with disabilities an individualized education plan to provide specialized and differentiated instruction according to their needs. This is carried out by the placement of the student into special education programming. In the U.S., ethnic minority children are being placed in special education at higher rates than their white counterparts, and at higher rates than the percentage of their ethnic status in regular education (Ladner & Hammons, 2001; Oswald, Couthinho, Best, & Singh, 1999).

Beginning in the 1980s, the Hispanic population was projected to become one of the biggest minority groups in the United States (Arias, 1986). The Hispanic population in itself is diverse and is typically broken down into subgroups of Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans, and "other Spanish," including individuals from Spain and Spanish speaking countries in Central and South America (Arias, 1986). The mean age of Hispanics has been lower than that of other ethnic groups in the U.S., indicating there is a high percentage of Hispanics that are school-aged (United States Census Bureau, 2011).

Consistent evidence documents large gaps in achievement between ethnic and culturally diverse students and their majority peers (Skiba et al., 2008). This gap has been documented in numerous ways. Researchers have examined accountability test scores, graduation rates, and placement in educational programs like gifted and

talented, which have continued to produce evidence for the gaps in academic achievement (Skiba et al.).

In addition, research has continued to identify a disproportionate amount of ethnic minorities in special education (Artiles, Harry, Reschly, & Chinn, 2010; Donovan & Cross, 2002; Coutinho & Oswald, 2000; Skiba et al., 2008). Patterns of disproportionality are found at national (Donovan & Cross, 2002; Skiba et al., 2008) and state (Coutinho & Oswald, 2000) levels. When examining this disproportionality it is important to look at data on all levels including, national, regional, state, and district. Doing so might enable researchers to unmask trends and obtain a better understanding of the reasons for disproportionality (Artiles, Harry, Reschly, & Chinn, 2010).

The issue of disproportionate placements through special education has been discussed in many studies (Oswald, Couthinho, Best, & Singh, 1999; Sorensen, 2011). Ladner and Hammons (2001) examined a number of different variables that effect special education rates, and found that race impacts special education at twice the level of the next highest variable. Ladner and Hammons concluded that race plays the most powerful role in special education rates. Over the decades, studies have continued to show a disproportionate number of Hispanic students in special education (Chinn & Hughes, 1987; De Valenzuela, Copeland, Qi, & Park 2006; Ladner & Hammons, 2001; Skiba et al., 2008). This disproportionality often appears as underrepresentation in state and national aggregated data, however they are increasingly more likely to be overrepresented as the Hispanic population in a state increases (Artiles, Harry, Reschly, & Chinn, 2002). These patterns of underrepresentation and overrepresentation help to explain the variability found in research studies.

Many factors contribute to the overrepresentation of Hispanic students in special education. Recent studies have begun to examine the relationship between Hispanic students and English Language Learners (ELLs) because the majority of ELL students in the United States are Hispanic (Guiberson, 2009). Additionally, Hispanic students are more likely than their majority peers to come from low SES home environments, which in itself negatively impacts learning, and they come from a variety of different cultural backgrounds (Mexican-Americans, Puerto Ricans, Cubans etc.), adding yet another layer of complexity.

The teacher's role in the referral process appears to be another contribution to Hispanic student overrepresentation in special education. Brown (2007) discusses the impact that teacher responses can have on self-esteem and academic success of students from varied racial, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds. The majority of the teachers in the U.S. come from a white, middle class background; many teachers are not adequately prepared to teach students from diverse ethnic backgrounds (Brown). Auwarter and Aruguete (2010) found that teachers are more likely to develop negative attitudes toward low-SES students. Another study found that teachers rated their relationship with a student more positively if there was an ethnic match between teacher and student (Saft & Pianta, 2001). This study also found a child's temperament can be moderated by teacher behaviors, which can create a more harmonious relationship with the student.

Teachers commonly use student behavior as a source of information to inform the referral process. Finn (1989) posits that school engagement is critical to informing interventions for at-risk students. Engagement behaviors that teachers are directly able

to observe are classroom behaviors, acceptance of school, acceptance of class rules, and student initiative. Unfortunately, a study by Wilson and Hughes (2006) found that teachers reported Hispanic students were less engaged in school.

Finn and Rock (1997) found students were more successful even under adverse conditions if they demonstrated behaviors associated with school engagement. Students who engaged in disruptive behaviors and did not complete schoolwork had greater difficulty adapting to situations in school. Inattentiveness and lack of student initiative were also found to impact a student's success in school (Finn & Rock). Further, it is important to note that classroom behaviors displayed by Hispanic students have been found to vary considerably when compared to African American student behaviors that contribute to referral rates (Wilson & Hughes, 2006). Specifically, Hispanic students were rated as less engaged, having less ego resilience, experiencing less teacher support, achieving at a lower level in the classroom, where as African American children more often were referred due to externalizing problems such as aggression and teacher-rated conflict (Wilson & Hughes, 2006).

Culture is defined as the internalized values, beliefs, and rituals that define a group (Helms & Richardson, 1997). Cultural competence is fluid over time, and requires self-involving strategies and procedures to demonstrate. It is measured through awareness and knowledge of other cultures and through skill, which incorporates the ability to use awareness and knowledge to interact effectively with individuals from various cultures. Since the 1970's, multicultural education has been discussed and incorporated into educational literature, which documents a wide variety of practices (Sleeter & Grant, 1987).

Cultural competence according to the Multiple Dimensions of Cultural Competence (MDCC) model suggests that beyond awareness, knowledge, and skills, another important dimension in cultural competence is the foci (Sue, 2001). The foci are broken down into individual, professional, organizational, and societal. Examining teacher variables that affect cultural competence is directly examining cultural competence at the individual level (Sue, 2001). Teacher variables contribute to teachers' understanding of diverse cultures, thus impacting their referral rates through increased cultural competence (Brown, 2007; Ortiz, 1997). Researchers have found that the race of the teacher also affects the special education rate (Ladner & Hammons 2001; Coutinho & Oswald 2000). School districts that have predominately African-American faculty have three to four times fewer African-American and Hispanic students in special education compared to districts with predominately white teachers (Ladner & Hammons), presumably because they have a better understanding of student behaviors within an appropriate cultural lens. This suggests a need for more culturally competent teachers throughout the public school system.

Further, integrating cultural competence into the classroom through culturally responsive teaching may make the learning process easier and more interesting for all students (Gay, 2002). Within culturally responsive teaching, one of the most important aspects of teaching ethnically diverse students is the teacher's perception that the students want to learn (Brown, 2007). Teachers need to be better communicators with the ethnically diverse students so they can better determine what the students can do and what they are capable of doing and knowing (Gay, 2002).

Statement of Problem

The numbers of Hispanic students are continuing to grow and will represent a larger percentage of the population of school-aged children in the future. Hispanic students are disproportionately overrepresented in special education, and the referral of students for special education is a process in which race is one of the most influential variables to special education rates (Ladner & Hammons, 2001). Teacher variables have been linked to high rates of referral of Hispanic students. Contributing factors related to teacher variables include the teacher's race and their perceptions of ethnically diverse cultures.

Research Question

The current research project is designed as an analogue study. It aims to investigate preservice teachers' (interns) decisions to refer students for special education. This study addresses three research questions.

1. Do preservice teachers' academic or behavioral referral rates for special education differ for White versus Hispanic students?

2. Does cultural competence influence the overall (academic and/or behavioral) decision to make a referral for special education services?

3. Does the race of the teacher intern affect the level of cultural competence?

The hypotheses resulting from these research questions are stated as null hypotheses:

H 1: There is no difference in frequencies of academic or behavioral referrals for special education in White versus Hispanic students.

H 2: Teacher interns' referral decisions are not affected by their cultural competency.

H 3: There is no difference in level of cultural competency between racial and

ethnic groups of teacher interns.

Significance of Study

The findings of this study will contribute to the literature in numerous ways. First, the support or lack of support for higher referral rates for Hispanic students will help shape the way this problem is conceptualized. It may give rise to more in-depth and large-scale studies, utilizing different conditions.

If teachers' levels of cultural competence affect their referral, this may inform teacher training programs and educators to include classes or trainings for multicultural competence. Finding information that can help inform current preparation of teachers may help to prevent higher referral rates for Hispanic students in the future. It may also be generalized and decrease high referral rates for African Americans and other ethnic cultures. Understanding if the race of the teacher has a significant effect on cultural competence may be helpful when planning a multicultural workshop or class. It may also help to pinpoint the deficits in Caucasians' perceptions of other cultures.

CHAPTER II: LITERATURE REVIEW

Equity in education is an ongoing issue that continues to evolve as our society changes; educational legislation in the United States is in place to help ensure disadvantaged learners receive equal opportunities. Despite these laws, there continues to be a controversy within education surrounding ethnic minorities. This controversy continues to shift emphasis as researchers, legislators, and educators attempt to remedy the problem.

Disproportionality in Special Education

Researchers have continually identified over-representation of ethnic minorities in special education (Artiles et al., 2002). Disproportionality can refer to overrepresentation and underrepresentation. Overrepresentation occurs when the percentage of a (ethnic/minority) group of students in special education is greater than their percentage in the school population. Underrepresentation occurs when students with disabilities are not identified; as a result they are not receiving the appropriate services (Guiberson, 2009).

Disproportionality has been measured using one of two valid methods (Reschly, 1997; Artiles et al., 2002). One method looks at special education enrollment by ethnic group compared to proportion of that group in school enrollment, also referred to as the composition index (Reschly, 1997; Skiba et al., 2008; Artiles et al., 2000). The second method, relative risk ratio, examines the percent of a (ethnic) group's students placed in a particular special education program compared to other groups (Reschly, 1997; Coutinho & Oswald, 2000; Artiles et al., 2002).

Although both methods are considered valid for measuring disproportionality of minorities in special education, Coutinho and Oswald (2000) highlight that the results yielded by the two methods can be conflicting and difficult to interpret. Using both indicators (composition index & relative risk ratio) does not offer a comprehensive perspective on the problem. However, utilizing both of these indicators may help to clarify the magnitude of the problem (Artiles et al., 2002).

The most comprehensive investigation of national data was reported in the National Academy of Sciences Panel Report. These data were analyzed from a 1978 survey and found evidence for disproportionality of some ethnic groups in special education (Coutinho & Oswald, 2000). Studies using data from the U.S. Department of Education, Office for Civil Rights (OCR), reveal consistent patterns of disproportionality nationally (Donovan & Cross, 2002; Skiba et al., 2008). Donovan and Cross (2002) examined data from the Office of Special Education Programs that has been collected since 1998, and confirmed the patterns of disproportionality nationally regarding ethnic minority overrepresentation as found in the OCR survey.

State studies of disproportionate representation show variability state to state in special education identification and placement. Studies conducted between 1988 and 1996, have yielded different findings on special education rates. For example, in 1995 a study found that Florida had African American students overrepresented, most often labeled as emotionally handicapped. The study also identified predictors of disability identification, such as teacher's race, and found that districts with more African American teachers tended to have less overrepresentation of African American students. However, a study in Illinois found that white students were more likely to be

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identified than any ethnic group for special education in Illinois (Coutinho & Oswald, 2000).

The way data are examined, national, regional, state, or district level can create problems for interpretation. Artiles, Harry, Reschly, and Chinn (2002) outline potential problems when using national data; utilizing national data can mask trends, obscure statistics on subgroups, and obscure individual state variability. State level data may obscure variability within individual districts regarding placement or special education classification. This variability of special education placement within districts may be associated with the availability of programs, such as bilingual education. Further, federal policy regarding disproportionality in special education has caused confusion in priority areas for monitoring and enforcement of the law at State (SEA) and Local Education Agency (LEA) levels (Albrecht, Skiba, Losen, Chung, & Middleberg, 2012). Variations in special education law enforcement, placement, and availability of programs are important factors to consider when reviewing national, regional, state, or district data.

Oswald, Coutinho, Best, and Singh (1999) examined economic and demographic variables influencing ethnic representation in special education and found economic variables accounted for a significant proportion of variation in emotional disturbance and mental retardation. Findings also showed race variables added significantly to special education rates. Although poverty was a strong predictor, it was concluded race added incremental validity to the prediction (Oswald et al., 1999). Hosp & Reschley (2004) examined the demographic and economic variables of Oswald et al.'s study, but added an achievement variable to determine which had the strongest impact for prediction of

special education rates. The study found that all three variables had an impact for special education rates, but academic variables were the weakest of all three. Ladner and Hammons (2001) conducted a study examining the variables influencing special education rates. They found spending-per-pupil, poverty level, and race were all predictive of special education placement. Further, Ladner and Hammons' study suggests that enrollment in special education might be determined in part by race of the student, teacher, as well as fellow students.

Disproportionate representation of ethnic minority groups in special education is greater in judgmental disabilities rather than nonjudgmental disabilities (Skiba et al., 2008, Parrish 2002, Donovan and cross, 2002). Judgmental disabilities are those in which it takes more subjective judgments by an IEP team to qualify a student for special education. These judgment disability categories are mental retardation, emotional disturbance, and learning disabled. The nonjudgmental disability categories are hearing impairment, visual impairment, and orthopedic impairment (Skiba et al., 2008, Parrish 2002, Donovan & Cross, 2002). This indicates that another variable influencing disproportionate representation has to do with the placement criteria of the school system.

Studies examining the disproportionality of Hispanic students enrolled in special education have agreed that there is a disproportionate amount of students placed. Regarding the Hispanic population of students, studies have shown both underrepresentation and overrepresentation of Hispanic students in various special education categories. Further, studies are now examining the relationship of Hispanic

students and English language learners (ELLs) since the majority of these students in the United States are Hispanic (Guiberson, 2009).

Chinn and Hughes (1987) found representation of Hispanic students was disproportionately low between 1978 and 1984 in various categories such as: trainable (moderate) mentally retarded (TMR), emotionally disturbed (ED), and significant emotional disability (SED). Studies also report that Hispanic students are underrepresented in the gifted and talented programs (Donovan & Cross, 2002; De Valenzuela, Copeland, Qi, & Park 2006). Hispanic students were also underrepresented in emotional disturbance, other health impairment, and speech and language impairment (De Valenzuela et al.). Guiberson (2009) conducted a literature review that concluded Hispanic students were also underrepresented in the intellectual disability category.

Studies that examine placement rate variations among states and districts suggest that Hispanic students are overrepresented in special education. For instance, Ladner and Hammons (2001) found Hispanic student special education enrollment to be consistently higher than white student enrollment. Further studies have found Hispanic students are overrepresented in the learning disability category (LD) (De Valenzuelaet al., 2006; Skiba et al., 2008). Data from the U.S. Department of Education, Office of Special Education and Rehabilitative Services (2006) also indicate an overrepresentation of Hispanic students in hearing impairments (Skiba et al., 2008).

Research from Artiles et al. (2002) indicates Hispanic students, as a group, often appear underrepresented in state and national aggregated data, however they are increasingly likely to be overrepresented as the Hispanic population in the state's

student body increases. In contrast, districts that already have high minority populations tend to have lower rates of overrepresentation (De Valenzuela et al., 2006; Coutinho et al., 2002). These patterns help to explain the variability in data being presented; however, many research studies do not provide the racial/ethnic demographic context of the location being studied. With disproportionality of Hispanic students in special education being variable, differing at national, state, and district levels, it makes understanding the magnitude of the problem difficult.

De Valenzuela, Copeland, Qi, and Park (2006) examined the representation of Hispanic and ELL students within special education. The majority (80.2%) of all ELLs receiving special education services were Hispanic, and 39.2% of Hispanic student's receiving special education were also ELLs. Further analysis revealed that special education enrollment for Hispanics and ELLs differed. Hispanic students were proportionately represented in developmental delay (DD) and intellectual disabilities (ID), but ELLs were overrepresented in ID and underrepresented in DD. Hispanic students were overrepresented in learning disability, however ELLs were overrepresented in emotional disability, intellectual disability, learning disability, and speech language impairment (De Valenzuela et al., 2002).

A study examining ELLs special education rates found similar findings to the aforementioned study. Sullivan (2011) found ELLs were overrepresented in specific learning disability, mentally impaired, and speech language impairments. These findings also supported elevated risk ratios at the state level. In this study, 91% of the ELLs spoke Spanish. These results suggest a need for more research and better assessment of limited English proficient students. ELLs in special education is an

emerging area of study that needs more research. Better understanding the relationship between ELLs and Hispanic students will allow a better understanding of the interaction and implications for special education.

Federal law stipulates that students placed in special education be served in the least restrictive environment. Fierros and Conroy (2002) found that minority students were more likely to be educated in segregated settings. De Valenzuela, Copeland, Qi, and Park's (2006) study also found Hispanic and ELLs were placed in segregated educational settings more often than their peers. Restricted access to peers may deny these students, especially ELLs, an opportunity to interact providing an appropriate language model and instructional scaffolding.

Special education rates for Hispanic students may be influenced by many factors. Increased poverty levels in school districts lead to higher special education enrollments (Donavan & Cross, 2002; Ladner & Hammons, 2001).   The racial demographic of the district influences special education enrollment as well. White districts enroll a greater percentage of ethnic minority students in special education. In Ladner and Hammon's (2001) study, race was the most important indicator of special education enrollment. The race variable is not limited to the student, but also extends to the teacher.

Other variables mentioned by Ladner and Hammons (2001) were teacher salaries, teacher to student ration, spending per pupil, and percent of students eligible for free or reduced lunch. Hosp and Reschley (2004) found demographic variables such as the percentage of White, African American, and Hispanic students and economic variables for a district (median income, median housing value in community)

were the best predictors of special education enrollment rates of Hispanic students (Hosp & Reschley).

Finally, because many educational agencies do not report disaggregated data on ELLs, this may be causing an inaccurate representation of the disproportionality. The majority of ELLs are Hispanic (91%). If this ELL status cannot be disaggregated by race and ethnicity the current disproportionate rates of Hispanic students in special education may not be accurate (Sullivan, 2011).

Variables Influencing Special Education Referral

Special education referral has been linked to disparities influenced by potential inadequacies in practice or bias at the level of special education referral and decision-making (Skiba et al., 2008). Ysseldyke, Vanderwood, and Shriner (1997) found a large percentage of students referred for special education were eventually served by such programs. The majority of these special education referrals come from teachers, which makes understanding the variables that influence the referral process important.

Educators, including teachers, are primarily middle class, female, and white, while students in special education are more likely to be poor, male, and an ethnic minority (Artiles et al., 2002). Examining the incongruence in cultural backgrounds of students and teachers may be important in understanding special education referrals (Artiles et al., 2002; Ladner & Hammons, 2001). Teachers primarily rely on perceptions and impressions as their primary source of data for decision-making regarding referrals (Rong, 1996).

Examining student gender and socioeconomic status, a study by Auwarter and Aruguete (2010) found that teachers are likely to develop negative attitudes toward low-

SES students. Teachers in this study consistently rated low-SES boys in an unfavorable manner compared to their counterpart, high-SES boys. Further, teachers perceived the future of low-SES students as less promising than high-SES students (Auwarter & Aruguete).

Teachers' perceptions of their relationships with students was examined in a diverse group of preschool and kindergarten teachers, and revealed an ethnic match between teacher and child consistently related to teachers' perceptions (Saft & Pianta, 2001). An ethnic match between teacher and child showed teachers rated their relationship with the child more positively. Difficulties in the teacher-child relationship can be magnified when there is an ethnic difference and specific teacher expectations for different groups. Further, the study showed that a child's temperament could be moderated by teacher behaviors, thus creating a more harmonious relationship with the student (Saft & Pianta, 2001).

A study conducted in a predominantly white school examined teacher and student's perceptions and impressions (Marx, 2008). Out of 26 surveyed teachers, 25 white teachers responded consistently to questions regarding their impressions and perceptions of Latino students. White teachers consistently responded strongly disagree or disagree to statements of, "Latinos are strong students," "Latinos are well prepared for school," and "Latinos are doing what it takes to succeed in school". These statements reflect the struggles teachers within the two school districts were having with Latino students, where the graduation rate was at 50%. Out of all the teachers surveyed, one teacher was Latino and had very different responses such as, "Latino students have a strong work ethic," "Latino students come from families where

education is highly valued," and "I feel that I know and understand the parents of my Latino students." The contrast between the majority white teachers and the Latino teacher highlights some of the perceptions and impressions that the majority of teachers currently in education may have, especially when there is a cultural mismatch (Marx). However, these results must be viewed tentatively given the small numbers of teachers surveyed and the fact that only one Latino teacher participated. This suggests additional research is needed to explore these patterns of perception by teacher variables.

Engagement in school, as described by Finn (1989), is critical to informing interventions for students at risk. Two of the three levels on school engagement are directly observed and utilized in the classroom. The first level of engagement involves classroom behaviors, acceptance of school, and class rules such as arriving on time, attending to the teacher, coming to class prepared, and responding to directions or questions from the teacher. Noncompliant behaviors consistently exhibited by students are more likely to experience learning difficulties. The second level of engagement is initiative of the student. This encompasses initiating questions or dialogue with the teacher and spending extra time in the classroom (Finn, 1989).

Examining these engagement behaviors, Finn and Rock (1997) found students were more successful at adapting to life tasks even when socially disadvantaged and adverse conditions existed, if they displayed the aforementioned behaviors. Being disruptive and not completing schoolwork were associated with greater inability to adapt to the situation in school. Examining engagement behaviors by race, white, Hispanic, and African American, and risk level, students who were successful in school exhibited these behaviors (Finn & Rock). From this, behaviors such as inattentiveness, refusing

to complete work, disruptive behavior, and lack of student initiative are all classroom behaviors that can greatly impact a student's success, and likely influence whether or not a student is flagged for academic referral concerns.

Another study examining retention rates of Hispanic and Latino first grade students reported teachers perceived these students as less engaged in school than their majority counterparts (Wilson, & Hughes, 2006). These children were not as attentive as peers and received less teacher support. The lack of externalizing behaviors displayed from this particular study with the Hispanic population suggests that problematic classroom behaviors may differ from the one's typically discussed in studies examining African American classroom behaviors that contribute to referral (Wilson & Hughes).

Cultural Competence

Teacher impressions and perceptions are influenced by the teacher's cultural competence. In addition, appraisals of classroom behaviors are influenced by cultural competence. For this reason, it is important to understand how cultural competence of a teacher can impact referral rates. According to Helms and Richardson (1997), "Culture is the internalized values, beliefs, and rituals that, among other things, define any group or collective." This posits that a student may have numerous cultures internalized within one's self. Further, this work asserts that cultural competence involves the integration of dimensions of a student's cultures into theories, techniques, and practices, with the objective of providing students from various cultures with effective services (Helms & Richardson).

Ponterotto, Rieger, Barrett, and Sparks (1994) suggest cultural competence is not a passive process of memorization. Rather, cultural competence is an active process that requires continuous engagement. Thus, cultural competence is variable and not static, requiring self-involving strategies and procedures to demonstrate skill and competence (Ponterotto et al., 1994). Cultural competence as discussed by Sue (2001) posits that it is multidimensional (Multiple Dimensions of Cultural Competence MDCC). The MDCC offers a conceptual framework organizing cultural competence into three dimensions: (a) specific racial/cultural group perspectives, (b) components of cultural competence, and (c) foci of cultural competence. Using this model, the first dimension is cultural competence examining race and culture specific attributes, or what has been previously defined. The second dimension is made up of the components used to measure cultural competence. Finally, the third dimension examines the foci of cultural competence or person/individual versus the organization/system levels of analysis (Sue, 2001).

Sue and colleagues (1982) identified a model of cultural competence that included three components that are seminal to cultural competence; these three components make up the second dimension of the MDCC model (Sue, 2001). The three components are awareness, knowledge, and skill. The requisite nature of these components to cultural competence is used to inform cultural competence trainings, and assess an individual's cultural competency (Helms & Richardson, 1997). Helms and Richardson (1997) state that awareness is a process of examining personal and societal attitudes, opinions, and assumptions about racial and cultural groups including one's own with an emphasis on these perceptions' validity. Knowledge refers to facts

and information relevant to racial and cultural groups that are accurate. Finally, skills

incorporate the ability to use awareness and knowledge to interact effectively.

Multicultural education emerged in the 1970's following the civil right's

movement, and included a wide variety of practices. Though terms may vary, it

commonly refers to a progressive approach at transforming education to respond to

culturally diverse students in policies and practices (Sleeter & Grant, 1987). Haberman

(1995) defines a star teacher in urban schools as one that is able to engage all students

by matching them to various techniques that work best with the individual. Haberman's

description of what makes teachers successful in urban school districts highlights a

critical component of culturally responsive teaching that is a practice within multicultural

education (Gay, 2002).

Culturally responsive teaching refers to the use of a student's culture to inform

teaching thus making the learning process easier and more interesting (Gay, 2002); this

is achieved by developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity, applying the

knowledge to the content in the curriculum, adjusting the delivery of instruction,

communicating effectively with students, and demonstrating a caring attitude. Gay

further points out that teachers in education training programs should be acquiring

multicultural awareness, knowledge, and skills.

As a result of an accreditation requirement beginning in 1979, teacher education

programs have increased class requirements to include multicultural courses (Grant,

1992). Multiple studies indicate that educators are predominantly white, middle class,

and female (Artiles et al., 2010; Ladner & Hammons, 2001; Hosp & Hosp, 2001). The

multicultural courses are mandated by accrediting bodies to increase preservice

teachers' awareness and knowledge (Grant); however, Brown (2004) found preservice teachers complete cultural diversity courses but show no change in their perceptions of self and others.

According to Grant (1992), in the last five years emphasis has shifted in teacher preparation programs to tracking the number of minority students and developing strategies to recruit more minority students to the field of teaching. Rao's (2005) study confirmed the lack of diversity among preservice teachers. This lack of diversity can be found in the demographics of teachers as well as in teacher training programs and their respective multicultural education courses.

Attribution Theory

Attribution theory examines how people make sense of their world; it is how an individual arrives at an inference about their own behavior and the behaviors of others. Educational research on the attribution of motivation examines academic successes and failures (Weiner, 1979), and has found that we arrive at these inferences largely through internal attributions (e.g., personality traits) as well as external attributions (e.g., situational or environmental causes). Further, internal attributions are used more often to explain the behavior of others (e.g., he failed the test because he has low intelligence), while external/situational factors are used to explain our own behavior (e.g., I failed the test because I was tired and didn't study enough). This tendency has been demonstrated so often that it has been termed the Fundamental Attribution Error (Ross, 1977).

The role attribution plays regarding teachers' perceptions of students can effect teacher behavior as well (Georgiou, Christou, Stavrinides, & Panaouria, 2002). This

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study examined the relationship between teacher attributions of a failing student and the teacher's behavior toward that student. When low achievement of a student was attributed to internal causes, such as low ability, the teacher felt pity for the student. However, sometimes the teacher expressed anger toward a student whom they attributed low effort, or external attributions, for their low achievement. This anger was associated with a teacher's tendency to give up efforts to help student improvement. In fact, the more the teachers perceived giving-up behavior the less likely the teachers were to accept some responsibility for student failure (Georgiou et al.).

Another study examining attitudes of teachers' concerning students with and without disabilities used attribution theory to posit that teachers who believe their students make an intentional choice to be defiant or hostile are more likely to blame the student and reject them (Cook, 2004). Teachers were asked to nominate three students based on attachment to the student, concern for the student, indifference toward the student, and rejection of the student. Teachers were more likely to nominate students with disabilities in the concern, indifference, and rejection areas, whereas students with disabilities were less likely to be nominated by teachers for the attachment between teacher and student. These findings are consistent with a previous study (Cook, Tankersley, Cook, & Landrum, 2000) and have been replicated in another study by Cook, Cameron, and Tankersley (2007), which found that students with disabilities are less likely to be represented in attachment nominations of teachers and more likely to be overrepresented in nominations of concern, rejection, and indifference.

Examining attribution of internal and external causes for student problems based on race, a study consistently found minority students were perceived by teachers to

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have internal causes, or personal stable explanations of problems (Jackson, 2002). However, the minority students' white counterparts were more likely to have problems attributed to situational or external causes. Further, for African American and Hispanic students the most frequently used internal cause attributed to the students by the teacher was, "child has become disrespectful, hostile, and aggressive and is not taking responsibility" (Jackson).

Teacher's attribution of students is not the only factor that plays a vital role within the referral process. Student's attributions of teacher's perceptions play a large role in a student's educational future and aspirations (Flowers, Milner, & Moore, 2003). A study examining African American high school students' educational aspirations found the students' perceptions of their teacher's expectations had a substantial effect. Examining influences on the students' educational future, teacher's perceptions were the second most important (with students' mothers' perceptions ranking first).

A study examining students' reactions to negative feedback from teachers found a connection between the negative evaluations and student self-fulfilling prophecies (Coleman, Abraham, & Jussim, 1987). Students perceived negative feedback from teachers as a more credible than positive feedback. Negative feedback also led students to believe that teachers had an extremely unfavorable but inaccurate impression or their effort and ability. Further, these findings contribute to research of self-fulfilling prophecies of teachers. Teachers with rigid expectations were more likely to provide negative feedback to students that were expected to be low achievers even when the students exhibited similar levels of performance to peers. As a result,

students are likely to display decreased willingness to work and little desire to cooperate with and seek out the teacher (Coleman et al.).

Teacher attributions play a key role in the referral process for special education. Student attributions also contribute to the students' educational future and the way in which they relate to teachers. Both teacher and student attributions are important to understanding how individuals attempt to explain behaviors and how they may influence the referral process overall.

CHAPTER III: METHODS

Participants

Participants were recruited through teacher preparation courses at East Carolina University, and through university listservs. Demographic information was collected to describe the characteristics of the participants and is summarized in Table 1. There were a total of 241 participants, 196 (81.3%) women and 41 (17%) men. Four participants (1.7%) were missing this information on their questionnaire. Two hundred and six of the participants (85.5%) were Caucasian, 13 (5.4%) were African American, 7 (2.90%) were Hispanic, 3 (1.25%) were Native American, and 9 (3.7%) considered themselves Multiethnic. Three participants (1.25%) were missing this information on their questionnaires. The average age of the participants was 22.00 years. The ages ranged from 19 years to 48 years. The largest percentage of participants were 22 years of age, representing 27% of the sample. Seven participants (2.9%) were missing this information. The participants were asked to identify the regional location where they grew up prior to coming to college. One hundred and one of the participants (41.9%) identified that they grew up in a rural area, 113 (46.9%) grew up in a suburban area, and 22 (9.1%) grew up in an urban area. Five participants (2.1%) did not complete this information on the questionnaire. One hundred ninety three participants (80%) identified they grew up in North Carolina prior to coming to college. In all, 16 states were reported as areas in which a participant lived prior to coming to college. Nine participants (3.7%) reported growing up in New Jersey, which was the second most frequent state identified by participants. One hundred thirty-four participants (55.6%) indicated their degree would be in elementary education, 11 (4.6%) were seeking a degree in middle grades education, 29 (12.0%) were seeking a degree in secondary education, 24 (10.0%)

indicated their degree would be in special education, and 3 (1.2%) indicated their

degree was in birth to kindergarten. Four participants (1.7%) were missing these data,

and 36 participants (14.9%) identified their program as other.

Table 1

Participant Demographic Characteristics (n = 241)

Category	Frequency	Percentage
Gender		
Male	41	17
Female	196	81.3
Race/Ethnicity		
Caucasian	206	85.5
African American	13	5.4
Hispanic	7	2.9
Native American	3	1.25
Multiethnic	9	3.7
Age		
19-20	31	12.9
21-22	128	53.1
23-24	42	17.4
25-29	23	9.5
30-49	10	4.1
Home Location		
Rural	101	41.9
Suburban	113	46.9
Urban	22	9.1
State		
North Carolina	193	80.1
New Jersey	9	3.7
New York	6	2.5
Texas	4	1.7
Virginia	7	2.9
Area Teacher Preparation		
Birth to Kindergarten Education	3	1.2
Elementary Education	134	55.6
Middle Grades Education	11	4.6
Secondary Education	29	12.0
Special Education	24	10.0
Other (multiple areas)	36	14.9

Measures and Questionnaires

Materials utilized for the study included: 20-items from the *Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey-Teacher Edition* (MAKSS-T), a case study, a demographic questionnaire, a referral questionnaire, and an informed consent. Students participating in the study online followed a link to the surveys, which were recorded through a secure survey program.

Informed Consent. The informed consent explained the purpose, risks and benefits, and the voluntary nature of the study, and obtained consent for participation in this research. See Appendix A for documentation of IRB Approval.

Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey (MAKSS-T). The full MAKSS-T is a 41-item survey measuring multicultural awareness (eight items), knowledge (thirteen items), and skills (20 items) of teachers (D'Andrea, Daniels, & Noonan, 2003). The participant rates each statement on a 4-point Likert scale with values of 1 indicating the statement is "very limited" to a value of 4 "very good." A sample of 171 participants in a study analyzing the generalizability of the MAKSS-T in the teacher intern population found that each factor of the MAKSS-T demonstrated moderate to high internal consistency reliability with the following subscale scores, multicultural awareness (.73), knowledge (.86), and skills (.93). Additionally, their analyses suggest the MAKSS-T is suitable and valid measure for use with teachers (D'Andrea et al., 2003).

The 20 items corresponding to the skills portion of the MAKSS-T was used to assess preservice teachers cultural competence. This portion of the survey had the highest internal consistency reliability. Further, the skills portion of the survey is

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designed to measure how well an individual is able to use their awareness and knowledge of cultures to interact effectively.

Demographic questionnaire. The demographic questionnaire (see Appendix C) includes ethnic and racial background, gender, age, community the teacher intern was raised in, family income, area of teacher preparation, and grade level of students with whom the teacher intern plans to work.

Case Study. Each participant received a case study (see Appendix D). There are two forms of the case study; the forms are identical with exception of the ethnicity of the child. The case study contained either a student that was Caucasian or Hispanic. The case provides general background information about a student who is having academic and behavioral difficulties in class.

Referral Questionnaire. The referral questionnaire required the participant to make a decision for special education referral based on academic and behavioral concerns (see Appendix E).

Procedures

Students were recruited to participate in the study during a teacher preparation internship seminar, and were informed that participation in the study was optional. Each participant was verbally explained about informed consent and was instructed that they had the option to not participate by simply handing their packet back in blank. Distribution of a packet containing a demographic questionnaire, MAKSS-T, case study, and referral questionnaire was then handed to participants, followed by an explanation of instructions for completing the surveys and questionnaires. Counterbalancing the order of surveys and questionnaires was completed to ensure that there was no

interaction between the order in which the survey and questionnaires are presented to participants. Finally, privacy and anonymity of participants was protected by taking no identifying information from the participants. For those participants recruited via Listserv an email detailing the study with a link was forwarded through deans, department chairs, and professors on university Listservs. The link in the email took the participant to a secure survey website. The first page of the survey contained the informed consent and detailed how privacy and anonymity was protected by taking no identifying information from the participants. The next three pages contained the demographic questionnaire, MAKSS-T, case study, and referral questionnaire. To account for counterbalancing, the survey software automatically randomly assigned the order of the components displayed (demographic questionnaire, MASS-T, and case study with referral questions). Participants could end participation at any point by simply closing the web browser window.

Data Analyses

The data were entered into SPSS for analyses. First, Cronbach's α was computed to determine internal consistency for the MAKSS-T. Hierarchical logistic regressions were performed on the data to predict the probability that a participant would refer a student for special education (academic referral, behavioral referral, and overall referral). Further, an analysis of variance (ANOVA) was performed examining participant race and cultural competency.

CHAPTER IV: RESULTS

Descriptive Statistics for MAKSS-T Skills Data

In this research investigation, the total number of participants completing the skills section of the Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey (MAKSS-T) was 239. The average score on the MAKSS-T was 61.23 (SD = 8.59) with scores ranging from 19 to 80. Provided in Table 2 are mean scores of the skills section of the MAKSS-T of all participants and by race.

Cronbach's alpha for the skills section of the Multicultural Awareness-Knowledge-Skills Survey (MAKSS-T) was computed to determine reliability for the measure used. The MAKSS-T skills section consisted of 20 items (α = .91) demonstrating high reliability for this measure.

Table 2

MAKSS-T Mean Scores

Multicultural Skills Score	Mean Score	Median	Number of Participants
Total-All Participants	61.23	60	239
By Race			
African American	61.25	60.5	12
Caucasian	61.53	60	205
Hispanic	57.42	66	7
Native American	68.33	66	3
Multi-racial	60.11	60	9
Unidentified	45.66	57	3

Frequencies of Referral rate by Race of case

The referral rates for Caucasian and Hispanic case studies were similar across different referrals. Academic referrals for the case study resulted in 77 participants referring a student, 38 were Caucasian and 39 were Hispanic. Behavioral referrals totaled 62 referrals for special education, 30 were for the Caucasian case study and 32 were for the Hispanic case study. Overall referral, whether a participant referred the student for academic and/or behavioral referral, totaled 109, 51 of those referred were from the Caucasian case study and 58 were from the Hispanic case study. Frequency information of the referral rates by case is summarized in Table 3.

Table 3

Referral Rate Frequencies by Race

Type of Referral	Caucasian Referred	Hispanic Referred	Caucasian Not Referred	Hispanic Not Referred
Academic	38	39	75	77
Behavioral	30	32	83	84
Overall	51	58	62	58

Academic Referral

Hierarchical logistic regression analysis was employed to predict the probability that a participant would refer a student for special education. The predictor variables were participant's age, gender, race (dichotomized Caucasian/minority), race of student in the case study (Hispanic/Caucasian, and level of cultural competency. A test of the full model versus a model with intercept only was not statistically significant, χ^2(5, N = 221) = 4.112, p = .533. The model was able correctly to classify 56% of those who referred and 79% of those who did not refer, for an overall success rate of 69%.

Table 4 shows the logistic regression coefficient, Wald test, and odds ratio for each of the predictors. Employing a .05 criterion of statistical significance, no predictors were found to be statistically significant

Table 4

Academic Referral

Predictor	B	Wald χ^2	p	Odds Ratio
Gender	-0.669	2.533	0.111	.51
Age	-0.042	1.296	0.255	.96
Race	-0.315	0.488	0.485	.73
Case Study Race	-0.104	0.128	0.721	.90
Cultural Competency	-0.002	0.016	0.899	1.00

Behavioral Referral

To assess behavioral referral rates a hierarchical regression analysis was performed examining participant's race, age, gender, description of residence, area of teacher preparation, cultural competency level, and race of student in case study as predictor variables. A total of 221 cases were analyzed and the full model did not significantly predict behavioral referral (omnibus chi-square = 4.986, df = 5, p < .418).

Table 3 shows the logistic regression coefficient, Wald test, and odds ratio for each of the predictors. Employing a .05 criterion of statistical significance, no predictors were found to be statistically significant.

Table 5

Behavior Referral

Predictor	B	Wald χ^2	p	Odds Ratio
Gender	0.428	1.238	0.266	1.54
Age	-0.033	0.776	0.378	.97
Race	-0.527	1.126	0.289	.59
Case Study Race	0.075	0.059	0.808	1.08
Cultural Competency	-0.024	1.430	0.232	.98

Overall Referral

Additionally, a hierarchical logistic regression analysis was performed with overall referral rate as the dependent variable, and participant's race, age, gender, cultural competency level, and race of student in case study as predictor variables. A total of 221 cases were analyzed and the full model did not significantly predict overall referral rate (omnibus chi-square = 1.417, df = 5, p < .922).

As shown in Table no predictors were statistically significant when examining the dependent variable overall referral. The table shows the logistic coefficient, Wald test, and odds ratio for each of the predictors employing a .05 criterion of statistical significance.

Table 6

Overall Referral

Predictor	B	Wald χ^2	p	Odds Ratio
Gender	-0.071	.038	.845	.93
Age	-0.028	.593	.441	.97
Race	-0.314	.589	.443	.73
Case Study Race	.109	.161	.689	1.12
Cultural Competency	-0.007	.140	.708	.99

Competency Level

An analysis of variance indicated that participant race did not significantly affect cultural competency ($F(4,231) = 1.018$, $p < .399$, partial $\eta2 = .017$). As shown in Table 7, the mean score on the MAKSST did not differ significantly between races.

Table 7

Competency Level

Race	M	SD	n
African American	61.25	7.387	12
Hispanic	63.67	8.287	6
Multi Ethnic	60.11	7.753	9
Native American	68.33	4.933	3
White	61.53	7.796	205

Further analysis showed, minority participants who completed the MAKSST did not show a difference in cultural competence ($M = 61.91$, $SD = 1.299$, $n = 32$) than Caucasian participants ($M = 61.53$, $SD = 0.544$, $n = 205$), $t(0.255) =$, $p = .861$, $d = .375$, 95% CI [-2.523, 3.272].

CHAPTER V: DISCUSSION

A substantial amount of evidence exists showing minority students are disproportionately represented in special education compared to their white counterparts. In particular, research-examining rates of special education at the national and state levels show Hispanic students are disproportionately represented. Further, minority students are disproportionately placed in a disability category, which requires a team judgment. With a substantial amount of the literature examining trends of disproportionate representation patterns it is important to examine additional variables that may help to predict patterns. This study examines a number of variables that have been hypothesized in previous literature to have a role in disproportionate education among minorities, including student race, teacher race, and level of cultural competence.

Further review of the literature examines the role the race of the teacher, cultural competency of the teacher, and school district have on referral rates of Hispanic students. In particular, research has highlighted the incongruence in teacher race and background to the students in their classrooms. Research has provided evidence that minority teachers have lower referral rates than white teachers.

This study used university pre-service teacher education major students to examine referral rates for special education of Hispanic students. Specifically this study examined the cultural competence of teachers' and its effects on referral rates for behavioral, academic, or overall referral of Hispanic students, as well as the race of the pre-service teacher and their level of cultural competency.

Findings for academic and behavioral referral did not differ significantly between the two cases, a white student and a Hispanic student. Pre-service teachers referred white students based on academic and/or behavioral concerns just as often as Hispanic students. Further, examining the overall referral rates, simply indicating if a student was referred at all, there was no difference found in referral rates for white and Hispanic students. Lastly, this study found there was no significant difference in the level of cultural competence between different races of pre-service teachers as measured by the MAKSS-T.

The findings from this study do not support findings of disproportionality in studies that examine national and state data. Some studies have found Hispanic students to be underrepresented in special education, while other studies have found Hispanic students to be overrepresented in special education. The findings from this study did not show a significant difference implying under or overrepresentation of Hispanic students in referral rates.

Although the findings for referral rates do not support findings in previous studies of disproportionality, it is important to consider the current study examined referral rates, while the previous studies examining disproportionality were examining actual placement rates into special education. There are a number of variables that may have a role in a student being placed for special education after being referred including a team decision and the model used for special education placement. The role a special education team or model/procedures for special education placement are variables at the organizational level of cultural competence that were not examined in this study that may have an effect on disproportionality rates.

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Further, when looking at cultural competency between pre-service teachers of different races there was no difference in competence, which does not support findings in the literature that minority teachers are more culturally competent. This could be a result of the majority of the participants being from similar general regions of the country.

Limitations

The present study has two limitations. The first limitation of this study is the use of an analogue case as a means to examine referral decisions. Researchers have criticized the use of case studies in decision-making processes, as it does not take into account the complexities teachers face in the classroom.   Pre-service teacher participants often noted the use of interventions or stated there was not enough description in the case study and wanted more detail before referring a child for special education. The analogue case in this study did not provide participants an opportunity to list their process or steps they would take prior to referral. The oversimplification of decision-making processes using the analogue case may have had an effect on the outcome of this study.

Another limitation is the generalizability of the study due to the sample of participants. All participants were university students, with the majority of the students all attending the same university. Further, the majority of the participants were similar in age, races, general region of the country, and major. With such a homogeneous group of participants there is no way to ensure that the results would not differ if participants were more diverse. Participants in the study are pre-service teachers, which may not

reflect the same decision making processes teachers make when they have responsibility over a classroom.

Implications

The current study's findings regarding referral rates and teacher cultural competence do not suggest that teacher variables or the individual level of cultural competence are creating the disproportionality observed in special education. The absence of a difference in referral rates between the two races of the case suggest that obstacles such as biases, prejudices, and misinformation manifested via discrimination may not be variables affecting teachers' decisions to refer Hispanic students over Caucasian students. However, as previously mentioned, the disproportionality of current special education rates may be influenced by professional or organizational cultural competence.

According to the findings of the current study, if teacher variables such as cultural competence are not impacting special education referral rates than the team decisions and the model/processes used to place a student into special education once referred for special education may be the foci influencing disproportionality rates. At the team level, this would include culture-bound definitions of school performance, disability, and ethnocentric standards of practice, using whiteness as our standard. At the organizational level, or school policies and processes, cultural competence or the lack of would include monoculture policies, practices, programs, and structures. This would shift the barrier of cultural competence from the teacher or individual to the professional and organizational level.

Using the MDCC model as the framework for cultural competence, the barriers that may exist at the professional or organizational level would need to be solved before cultural competence could be demonstrated at school. If the findings of this study were replicated and system level barriers identified, then this suggests the school systems could benefit from actions that would make their profession and organization more culturally competent. To obtain professional cultural competence schools would need to adopt standards of practice that are multicultural in scope. At the organizational level, the school or district would need to value diversity and continue attempts to accommodate ongoing cultural change through including more minorities in decision making processes, constructing multicultural programs and practices, and continue to build individual cultural competence of teachers, mental health, and all staff.

Conclusion

As school districts are becoming more ethnically and racially diverse, it is important that teacher education programs continue to emphasize cultural aspects of teaching and provide diversity trainings as well as opportunities to interact with diverse students. Continuing to examine the variables found at student, teacher, parent, special education team, school, district, state, and national levels may help to identify variables that are strong predictors of decision making processes that influence the disproportionality of special education rates. Finding a model or variables that can best predict this disproportionality can aid in reducing this disproportionality.

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APPENDIX A: IRB Approval Form

EAST CAROLINA UNIVERSITY
University & Medical Center Institutional Review Board Office
4N-70 Brody Medical Sciences Building· Mail Stop 682
600 Moye Boulevard · Greenville, NC 27834
Office 252-744-2914 · Fax 252-744-2284 · www.ecu.edu/irb

Notification of Amendment Approval

From: Social/Behavioral IRB
To: Jennie Pahl
CC:
         Michael Brown
Date: 2/26/2013
Re: Ame1_UMCIRB 12-002450
         UMCIRB 12-002450
         Referrals

Your Amendment has been reviewed and approved using expedited review on 2/26/2013. It was the determination of the UMCIRB Chairperson (or designee) that this revision does not impact the overall risk/benefit ratio of the study and is appropriate for the population and procedures proposed.

Please note that any further changes to this approved research may not be initiated without UMCIRB review except when necessary to eliminate an apparent immediate hazard to the participant. All unanticipated problems involving risks to participants and others must be promptly reported to the UMCIRB. A continuing or final review must be submitted to the UMCIRB prior to the date of study expiration. The investigator must adhere to all reporting requirements for this study.

The approval includes the following items:

Name	Description	Modified	Version
There are no items to display			

Informed Conset1.3.docx

Thesis Proposal.docx

The Chairperson (or designee) does not have a potential for conflict of interest on this study.

IRB00000705 East Carolina U IRB #1 (Biomedical) IORG0000418
IRB00003781 East Carolina U IRB #2 (Behavioral/SS) IORG0000418 IRB00004973

APPENDIX B: DEMOGRAPHIC PROFILE

Circle one: MALE   FEMALE

Age _____

Race: _____ African American (non-Hispanic origin)
_____ Asian American/Asian/Pacific Islander
_____ Hispanic (any race)
_____Native American
_____White
_____Multi-Ethnic (Please List: _____)

State and Description of Residence (prior to coming to college):
State _____
Rural _____
Suburban _____
Urban _____
Country (if not U.S.) _____

Area of Teaching Preparation: _____   Elementary Education
_____ Middle Grades Education
_____ Secondary Education
_____ Special Education
_____ Other

APPENDIX C: ANALOGUE CASE STUDIES

CASE STUDY

Gerry is a 9-year- old Hispanic boy in third grade. He lives with his parents, brother, uncle, and three sisters. His family has recently relocated to the area from another school district. He has made a successful social transition at his new school. He is social with peers and has some friends. He has adequate verbal skills, but is quite low in reading and writing. He is often distracted when completing reading and writing assignments. When reading and spelling tasks are presented, he will begin to exhibit more off-task behavior. He will often stop working and put his head on the desk, draw, or look at the pictures. When he is redirected to complete these types of tasks, he will ignore the request or becomes more verbal and uncooperative. In contrast, he was far more focused on arithmetic and art activities.

CASE STUDY

Gerry is a 9-year- old Caucasian boy in third grade. He lives with his parents, brother, uncle, and three sisters. His family has recently relocated to the area from another school district. He has made a successful social transition at his new school. He is social with peers and has some friends. He has adequate verbal skills, but is quite low in reading and writing. He is often distracted when completing reading and writing assignments. When reading and spelling tasks are presented, he will begin to exhibit more off-task behavior. He will often stop working and put his head on the desk, draw, or look at the pictures. When he is redirected to complete these types of tasks, he will ignore the request or becomes more verbal and uncooperative. In contrast, he was far more focused on arithmetic and art activities.

APPENDIX D: REFERRAL QUESTIONNAIRE

Answer the following questions as if the child described in the above scenario was child in a regular education class that you were teaching.

1. Based on academic performance, would you be likely to refer this child for special education services?

Yes _____   No _____

2. Based on his behavior, would you be likely to refer this child for special education services?

Yes _____   No_____