Preservice teachers' self-perceptions and attitudes toward culturally responsive teaching

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Abstract
When infusing Culturally Responsive Teaching (CRT) concepts in preservice methods classes, teacher candidates (TCs) begin a journey that involves understanding the cultural contributions of the students in the classroom, as well as becoming aware of the possible disconnects between their cultures and the culture of the school. To help preservice teachers learn how to bridge these gaps, teacher education faculty integrated history, literacy, and art into a literacy methods course as a first step in helping teacher candidates develop the necessary competencies to successfully implement culturally responsive teaching in their own classrooms. Four university faculty members administered an adapted version of The Culturally Responsive Teaching Self Efficacy and The Culturally Responsive Teaching Outcome Expectancies Scales (Siwatu, 2007) to 55 teacher candidates (n=55), and had them self-evaluate and rank their beginning competencies, and define what strategies and knowledge they wanted to gain during the semester. At the end of the semester, TCs re-evaluated themselves on the same survey, and then reflected on their experiences. Teacher candidate responses on the survey indicate that they perceived themselves as gaining knowledge and skills in their ability to understand and implement culturally responsive pedagogy. The TCs were also positive about their experiences in this project.