D.O.O.R.S. OF CHANGE: CAPACITY BUILDING TO
DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION

by

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Dedicated to:

My Family

Grace Garner Lee
Hazel Ann Lee
Whitey
Tabby
Blacky
Tiger

Thank you for your guidance, encouragement and most importantly, your love.

To My Students

Martha
Betty
Peter
David

Thank you for inspiring me to pursue my advance graduate studies.

ABSTRACT

Cynthia Cozette Lee
D.O.O.R.S. of Change: Capacity Building to Differentiated Instruction
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There is a disproportional representation of African American students in special education in the United States. Minimal use of differentiated instruction is a common reason for overrepresentation of minority students in special education. I conducted an action research study with elementary school teachers involving differentiated instruction. One purpose of my project was to facilitate teachers with capacity building and assist 3 participants with overcoming common barriers in differentiated instruction creating second order change. A second purpose was to explore my leadership theories-in-action: transformational, servant and cultural proficiency.

I discovered five missing pieces of relevant knowledge in differentiated instruction literature that did not deal with the historically oppressed kindergarten to 12th grade African American students and minimally discussed how to bridge classroom teaching practices to differentiated instruction educational methods. To address these shortcomings, I created D.O.O.R.S., my five guideline action plan. I discovered D.O.O.R.S. guidelines had a positive impact on teacher implementation of differentiated instruction and that cross-cultural dialogue may be necessary to resolve the issue of cultural bias in traditional educational settings. For my leadership style, I explored my living theory, created an original leadership style *tri-river leadership* and found my core leadership style was ethical leadership.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Harry and Klingner's (2006) book entitled *Why Are So Many Minority Students in Special Education?* presented the tough question: are a disproportional number of African American students being placed in special education (SE)? I decided to begin four chapters of my research with the stories called preludes about four SE students whom I taught or was acquainted with personally. These preludes provide a firsthand perspective on the discussion of African American students and education. These students deserved recognition because they deeply affected my viewpoint in education by showing the impact of SE and inspired me to perform research in the area of differentiated instruction.

Prelude One: Martha

Chapter one starts with the story of Martha who is one of these students who deeply affected my viewpoint. I had originally instructed Martha in general education classes and I found her to be academically proficient but frequently had disruptive behavior. Therefore, I was surprised when I saw Martha in a sixth grade special education class because she did not seem academically deficient in her general education classes.

The experience of seeing a former general education student placed in SE whom I believed still belonged in general education piqued my interest in the prevention of students entering special education. I decided to focus my research project on the teacher because the teacher initiates student placement into SE. The teacher has a major impact on the student's development of knowledge (Noddings, 2005). Is it possible for the teacher to affect the placement of students in SE?

Background of the Problem: Overrepresentation of Minorities in Special Education

For the past fifteen years, educational scholars have made significant observations about the placement of an increasing number of minority students into SE classes in the United States (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Parrish & Wolman, 2004). Presently Black students comprised only 17% of public education students. However, the percentage of African American students in special education placement was 41.6 %. Within the 41.6% group of African American special education students, 85% were Black males (Mobley & Holcomb, 2008).

Terminology African American, Minority and Special Education

For the purpose of this study, the term of African American will be used interchangeably with the term Black. Both of these terms were associated with African peoples and their descendents from the caste system slavery in the United States. (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). The term minority will refer to American people such as Native Americans, Hispanics and Blacks who were dominated by the White European in an historically oppressive manner social, politically, economically and educationally (Noguera, 2008).

Another important term is special education. The Individuals with Disabilities Education Act (IDEA, 2004) definition refers to special education (SE) as a specially designed instruction which has no expense to the parents and assists with meeting the unique needs of children with disabilities. The act mentions SE instruction can occur in the classroom, home, hospitals and institutions and in other settings.

IDEA (2004) mandates that a student with specified disabilities and in certain age ranges have free appropriate public education (FAPE). Under FAPE, the teacher with the

assistance of designated school officials, such as the principal, social worker, psychologist and the parent must create an Individualized Education Program (IEP). The IEP is supposed to provide accountability and enhance the child's progress (Cohen & Spenciner, 2005). Some sources refer to this as the IEP Cycle that includes 6 steps: referral, assessment, eligibility, IEP, placement and annual review (Disability, Rights, Education and Defense Fund, 2009). Yet, the IEP process needs improvement in such ways as considering the student's behavior in regards to the classroom and other settings (Cohen & Spenciner, 2005).

Common Causes for Overrepresentation in Special Education

Enrollment of both White and minority students has increased in SE programs. Parrish and Wolman (2004) linked the increased enrollment of students in SE to medical and socioeconomic reasons. Medical reasons consisted of poor nutrition and low birth weight and these factors led to impaired growth. Also, improved medical care has increased the survival and lifespan of many children with severe disabilities. In addition, the number of students with mild to moderate disabilities has increased in SE enrollment more than students with severe disabilities.

Socioeconomic reasons can include family incomes below poverty level, social and job discrimination against minorities or prejudice against the children because they are a member of the African American social group (Noguera, 2008; Parrish and Wolman, 2004). Another cause is the rapidly expanding enrollment of preschool children as well as the enrollment of infants and toddlers (2 years old and under). Legislatures have also played a role in the increase in SE enrollment by expanding the definitions of disability.

Other reasons for the increase in SE student population according to Parrish and Wolman (2004) are that once a student is enrolled in SE, they tend to remain in the program. Therefore, no significant amounts of students are leaving the SE program and the numbers of students in the program are not declining. Parrish and Wolman (2004) also suggest since the drive for higher academic standards has occurred, there is a push for more remedial education services for students from lower economic status to improve their academic performance. Therefore, SE is being used as a remedial education service.

However, Losen and Orfield (2002) discovered a significant finding concerning special education and African American student placement during the course of their research for the Harvard Civil Rights Project. They discovered that in many states Black students were represented in SE in major numbers. Yet, other ethnic groups such as Whites, Hispanics and Asian Americans had low representation in SE. Black students were three to four times more likely to be identified and placed into SE.

According to Losen and Orfield, the factors used to place African American students in SE were some type of objective criteria, subjective criteria and local state and federal policies. Also, African American students regardless of poverty level or economic background, were more likely certified as being mentally retarded in larger numbers than other ethnic groups. Therefore, this placement of African Americans was based more on subjective opinion rather than medical diagnosis (Losen & Orfield, 2002). States with a history of racial apartheid, stereotypes, prejudice and biases were more likely to have major numbers of African American students placed in SE (Losen & Orfield, 2002). Also, ongoing Federal government monitoring was lacking in SE programs allowing the local state government freedom and license in SE student placement.

Adverse Consequences of Special Education Placement

The placement of children into the SE programs may adversely affect their future. Students placed in SE programs have a higher dropout rate than general education students (Cohen & Spenciner, 2005). The SE students' quest for higher education, such as entering college is hampered. Also, obtaining gainful employment is impaired by stigmatizing them as being a slower learner (Cohen & Spenciner, 2005; Harry & Klingner, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002). According to Cohen and Spenciner (2005), students enrolled in SE programs have difficulty with transitioning from the pace of a slow learning environment to the real world. The real world consists of the student's social life that occurs outside of the SE school environment. In addition, SE students are not well-informed about their disability and do not know how to self-advocate or promote their needs while in school and after leaving school (Cohen & Spenciner, 2005).

In addition, African American males who represent the majority population of SE students in the United States have issues such as grade retention, dropout rates and discipline problems (Schott Foundation, as cited in Noguera, 2008). For example, within two years of the special education student leaving school, 75% of African American students with disabilities are not employed as compared to 47% of White students. Also, within the same two year period, the arrest rate for African Americans with disabilities is 40%, as compared to 27% for Caucasians (Wagner, D'Amico, Marder, Newman, & Blackorby, 1992 as cited in Losen & Orfield, 2002).

Common Reasons for Placement of African American Students in Special Education

A common reason for the rising number of the Black students enrolled in SE programs is the misperception of the students' ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds

(Kunjufu, 2002). The adults who worked with these students in schools misperceived the students' ethnic and socioeconomic backgrounds as mental disabilities causing higher rates of Black students to be classified as mentally retarded (Noguera, 2008). Another reason for this disparity, according to Kunjufu (2002), is due to White and Black middle class teachers not connecting with the Black student culture. These middle class teachers view the African American student as different from their culture and tend to place African American students into special education because of these differences.

Several other reasons were given for the substantial number of African American children being placed into special education. One reason was misdiagnosing the learning abilities of African American children (Losen & Orfield, 2002). Lack of professional development for teachers in the area of teaching diverse student populations was another cause for SE placement of African American students (Kunjufu, 2002). In addition, incompletely assessing the intelligence of African American students was a cause of SE placement (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002). Yet, another common reason for SE placement of African Americans is lack of effective differentiated instruction (DI) methods used in the general classroom (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002; McNally, 2003; Parrish & Wolman, 2004).

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of my study was to perform an action research project to facilitate teachers of African American students in grades K through 12 in DI capacity building. Also, a further purpose was to create second order change in the general and SE classrooms to overcome common barriers in DI (Argyris, 1990; Levy, 1986; Tomlinson, Brimijoin, & Narvaez, 2008) while at the same time exploring my leadership theories-in-

action. Second order change penetrates the fabric of the organization and alters the organization's culture (Levy, 1986). My study was important because I devised an original action plan called D.O.O.R.S. that dealt with common barriers encountered by the classroom teacher in the DI preplanning and implementation phases.

My study was also significant because through D.O.O.R.S. I addressed common gaps or missing pieces of relevant knowledge in the DI literature concerning the curriculum needs of the historically oppressed African American students Gregory 2003, 2005; Gregory & Chapman, 2007; Tomlinson, 1999, 2001; Tomlinson et al., 2008). In addition, I discovered an original style of leadership I labeled as tri-river leadership. Tri- river leadership (Lee, 2008) is an original term created by me and occurs when a leader takes two or more leadership traits and balances, blends or threads them together to achieve a change initiative (Fullan, 2007).

I decided to focus my research on the teacher's role with implementing DI because the teacher is responsible for implementing the DI teaching method into the classroom. Strengthening the teacher's ability to implement DI in the classroom can lead to positive student learning outcomes (Tomlinson et al., 2008). Furthermore, these positive student learning outcomes that occur due to the implementation of DI may prevent students in general education like Martha from placement into SE (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002; McNally, 2003; Parrish & Wolman, 2004). Therefore, I chose to fully explore DI and its significance for the teachers of African American students.

Another aim of my study was to create a paradigm shift from traditional educational instruction to DI. A major factor in the teacher's capability to transition from

traditional teaching methods to the DI method was a shift in paradigm. Kuhn (1996) referred to a paradigm as a model or pattern which was accepted in science. Kuhn theorized that a paradigm shift related to the dynamics involved when one scientific model was changed or replaced by another through a process of transformation. Guba (1990) believed a paradigm guides actions through a set of beliefs. The concepts of paradigm and paradigm shift have been extended to education (Tuthill & Ashton, 1983).

I assisted the participants with capacity building to facilitate an educational paradigm shift where they learned how to move from a traditional educational paradigm to a differentiated instruction paradigm. An educational shift occurs when the purpose, policy, practice and paradigm shifts into another curriculum model (Sterling, 2003). My research included the participants learning through my coaching and support how to sustain a paradigm shift to DI, how to develop a deeper understanding of the students through DI and how to change the classroom environment to a DI setting as action researcher.

Overview of Differentiated Instruction

An examination of differentiated instruction begins with its definition. Differentiated instruction is an approach to education widely advocated by scholars and school administrators to be used in grades kindergarten (K) through 12th (12) grade in school districts across the United States (Tomlinson, 2001). Gregory (2003) refers to differentiated instruction as a philosophy that assists teachers with planning strategically so that the needs of the diverse learners can be obtained in the classroom.

According to Gregory (2003) differentiation occurs when the teacher takes the time to analyze the student needs and then chooses a mode of instruction which is

student-centered and is directed towards the student receiving the information in a way that leads to positive learning outcomes for the student. Differentiation can also occur by modifying the various areas of the curriculum. Two important parts of this process are the planning stages and the reflection stages and both parts often involve a great amount of time to perform for the individual teacher or for group collaboration in lesson planning (Gregory, 2003). Unfortunately, in the conventional classroom, teachers often are not given adequate time to develop DI methods and often they are not implemented due to lack of planning time or administrative support to initiate this kind of instruction (Gregory, 2003).

A common benefit in implementing DI is improved achievement among general education and special education students (Adger, Wolfram, Detwyler, & Harry, 1993; Ford & Harris, 1994; Gardner, 2006; Harry & Klingner, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002). For instance, student standardized test scores improved after implementing differentiated instruction in the classroom (Tomlinson et al., 2008). In addition, DI may deter students from being referred for special education placement. However, the paradox is that differentiated instruction is not the common practice in most conventional classrooms (Harry & Klingner, 2006).

Pilot Study

Prior to my dissertation research study I had devised and conducted a pilot research study during the spring of 2008 to examine the barriers in implementing DI with 3 middle school teachers at an urban middle school with a predominantly African American student population. My pilot study was significant because I explored firsthand the problems the teachers were experiencing in implementing DI in the general

classroom. This pilot study occurred in four action research cycles at the Henry Street Middle School. Cycle one was a planning stage and initial contact stage with participants. Cycle two was the observation, monitoring and mentoring stage. Cycle three involved modifying my leadership theory platform and cycle four was discovery and reflection.

The study occurred over a three month period and yielded these findings. Twelve negative and twelve positive factors existed when implementing DI in the classroom (see Appendix A). The major barriers to implementing DI in the classroom were environmental setting which has a negative impact on learning (ENL) and student interest being low or not focused (SIL). The environmental barrier includes the physical space of the classroom. However, during their final interviews the participants in the study commented that lack of time (LOT) in the teacher's schedule prevents self-reflection and journaling and appears to be the greatest barrier. Concerning my leadership theories-in-action at the beginning of the study, I was a servant leader. However, by the end of the study, my dominant leadership theories-in-action were culturally proficient leadership, servant leadership and transformational leadership.

There were several limitations of the pilot study. One limitation was the lack of time for teachers to learn my action plan. Also, the teachers did not keep a reflective journal or log and this caused a limited input of data from the teachers concerning feedback. Therefore, I had to rely mainly on my field observations and reports to collect data. In addition, the interruption of the normal classroom routines and lessons due to two months of standardized test preparation impeded the teachers implementing DI. During this time period they basically used teacher-centered instruction consisting of lectures and had the students practice taking multiple choice tests instead of the teachers applying

student-centered instruction. Teacher-centered instruction involved the teacher being the central director of the learning activity. The student acted as a passive participant with little or no engagement (Gregory & Chapman, 2007). Student-centered instruction involved the teacher being the facilitator or guide in the student learning experience. The student constructed their own meaning to the activity and became the central focus of the learning experience. Student-centered lessons are preferred in DI (Gregory, 2005).

The findings from my pilot study led me to consider three leadership styles as my espoused leadership theories. My three espoused leadership theories were culturally proficient leadership (CPL) (Lindsey, Martinez, & Lindsey, 2007; Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2003), servant leadership (Block, 2008; Greenleaf, 1970, 2002; Senge, Kleiner, Roberts, Ross, & Smith, 1994; Spears, 2007; Wheatley, 1999a) and transformational leadership (Burns, 2003; Du Bois, 2002; Senge et al., 1994; Sergiovanni, 2001; Wheatley, 1999a). These three styles of leadership complemented and supported my research study.

Capacity Building

The gaps in the DI literature pertaining to teachers assisted me with considering the best ways to strengthen the teachers' link to DI. I decided to improve the teachers' DI capacity building and thereby strengthening the teacher's classroom using DI methods. According to Fullan (2007), capacity building is a major component in changing a learning organization's practices for the individuals within the organization. Fullan mentions the use of capacity building concerns all things which affect new knowledge, skills, competencies, improved resources and firmer commitments. Capacity building can be demonstrated in such ways as having individuals participate in ongoing professional

development; recognizing and sharing effective practices relating to the strategies and subject matter of the changing features of the organization; and developing resources that directly relate to the issues at hand (Fullan, 2007). Another way to demonstrate capacity building is to have the individuals directly involved with the changing organization practices to control most of the endeavor and to have the leader of the changing feature to have minimal control (Senge, 2006).

In my project, I engaged my participants in ongoing DI professional development through workshops, classroom modeling techniques and individual coaching. These practices built DI capacity and had the participants empower themselves to solve problems. When the participants are part of the solution to a problem they are more likely to adopt the change initiative (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

Fullan (2007) refers to individuals who participate in capacity building as second change agents. The first change agent is the primary leader of the change and is usually the principal in a learning organization. The second change agent or agents are secondary proponents of change. They are important because they work within the school showing other teachers new techniques, providing instructional resources and being the link to other teachers in the school and to other schools. Individuals in learning organizations value capacity building because they are directly experiencing it (Fullan, 2007). I had the participants become the second change agents in the school by learning the guidelines of my research project concerning DI use in the classroom and by having them share their knowledge with their colleagues at departmental meetings and in other formal or informal settings.

My Change Theory

Fullan's (2007) change theory has three phases. I used all three of Fullan's change theory phases to outline my action research study. Fullan's phase one involved recognizing or adopting a change initiative. In applying Fullan's phase one concept to my study, I recognized that change needed to occur in the classroom at Bear Elementary School concerning DI implementation. I also recognized that there was minimal discussion in DI literature about the African American student. In addition, there were few resources for teachers that discussed paradigm shifts from traditional educational instruction to DI to assist the teacher with the implementation process.

The second phase of Fullan's change theory concerned the implementation or the initial use of the change idea. The change ideas I used for my action research project were guidelines that facilitated DI capacity building for teachers. I implemented my change initiative through various methods of professional development.

Fullan's (2007) phase three involved assessing the outcome of the change idea. Phase three also concerned determining whether the change idea was sustained. I strove to facilitate sustaining change in my study by assisting teachers to overcome their perceived DI barriers.

Fullan's phase three concepts were carried out in my research project through collaborative reflective practices and the use of action research. Collaborative reflective practices involved the participant and researcher discussing a self-analysis of the teacher's performance. I coached the teachers through these three phases in my action research project by having them use reflective practice and recognize DI as a means to change. In addition, I facilitated teachers transitioning from traditional educational to DI

methods through capacity building and by assisting them with recognizing how to overcome perceived DI barriers in the classroom.

D.O.O.R.S. Guidelines

Fullan's (2007) change theory phase one involves recognizing the change initiative. My change initiative that I recognized and adopted for my study was D.O.O.R.S. The D.O.O.R.S. guidelines (see Appendix B) were an action plan. An action plan is a summary of the goals and objectives I accomplished during the course of my study (Klariti, 2008). The overall goal of my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines was to facilitate K through 12 classroom teachers in becoming culturally proficient with implementing DI (Gregory & Chapman, 2007; Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2003). Therefore the classroom teacher would understand and value the students' social culture. The D.O.O.R.S. guidelines were designed to accomplish this goal by addressing the gaps or missing pieces of relevant knowledge I discovered in DI literature. My D.O.O.R.S. guidelines integrated into one vehicle important areas of DI knowledge that had been minimally addressed in the DI literature. It is possible that these areas have not been fully discussed because they deal with a people, African American, who are typically disenfranchised from society. Also, these gaps in DI literature related to improving the teacher's perception and implementation of DI. DI literature mentioned that these are areas of concern but did not fully provide teacher-related vehicles or methods to address these important areas of knowledge.

I used the term, bridge, to describe my guidelines because my guidelines act to link or connect traditional education methods with DI. Bridge one, my first guideline, addressed DI literature not directly dealing with the historically oppressed African

American students in grades K through 12. Therefore, the objective of bridge one of my

D.O.O.R.S. guidelines *develop diversity pathways to change your classroom* was the

teacher becoming aware that the classroom environment should embrace their students'

diversity (see Figure 1.1). By acknowledging and valuing the student's cultures, the

teacher can more readily reach the student (Lindsey et al., 2003). In this guideline, I

offered such recommendations as the teacher seeking students' opinions on the classroom

setting (Gregory & Chapman, 2007) and the teacher actively obtaining training in

diversity (Lindsey et al., 2003).

The second missing area of knowledge I discovered in DI literature involved the

high emphasis on student academic achievement and minimal discussion on the African

American student's physical, social and emotional needs. The basic physical, social and

emotional needs of a student must be addressed before their complex educational needs

(Gregory & Chapman, 2007; Maslow, 1968). I created bridge two of D.O.O.R.S. *observe*

your students' needs to address this problem. The objective of bridge two was to

encourage the teacher to address the students' needs through action research (McNiff &

Whitehead, 2006). The students' needs may include physical as well as social and

emotional needs relating to the students' culture (Maslow, 1968). Another

recommendation was for the teacher to connect with the parents in positive ways in other

areas of learning and not respond only in negative ways such as when the students

become behavioral problems (Noguera, 2008).

Figure 1.1 Objectives of D.O.O.R.S. Guidelines

Bridges	D*evelop diversity pathways to change your classroom*	O*bserve your students' needs*	O*ne bridge to learning is not enough*	R*e-evaluate and re-examine the curriculum program success*	S*uccess depends on your training and commitment*
Objectives	The classroom environment embraces the students' diversity	Use Action Research methods to address the students' needs	Teachers can shift from traditional educational methods to DI methods	Use qualitative and quantitative methods to evaluate student performance	Keep the teacher committed
Actions to Reach Objectives	See Appendix B	See Appendix B	See Appendix B	See Appendix B	See Appendix B

The third missing piece of relevant knowledge I found in DI literature was minimal mention of the problem of teachers needing to shift paradigms from traditional educational methods to DI and how to effectively address this situation (Tomlinson, 1999; 2001; Tomlinson, et al., 2008). Therefore, I created bridge three *one bridge to learning is not enough* to assist with this problem (Gregory & Chapman, 2007). The objective of bridge three was to provide ways in which the teachers can shift from traditional educational methods to DI methods (Riegle, 2008). I recommended in bridge three that the teacher select a learning theory for the students which is compatible with DI (Gregory & Chapman, 2001). The teacher would then have a foundation or guideline to follow in attempting to navigate back and forth from traditional educational paradigm requirements to DI (Riegle, 2008).

The fourth gap in DI literature I discovered concerned minimal reference for a formula for teachers to realistically deal with the time factor needed for re-evaluation and reassessment. The objective of bridge four *re-evaluate and re-examine the curriculum program success* was to remind the teacher that reflection journals and logs along with other qualitative evaluation methods were just as important as quantitative assessment devices such as student test scores to gauge student learning outcomes (Gregory & Chapman, 2007; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). The journals and logs can assist the teacher to keep track of where she is going and where she came from with her instructional plan. This can save her a great deal of time because she will keep a better account of individual needs of the students (Gregory & Chapman, 2007; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). Since students' needs will vary from day to day (Maslow, 1968), she will have a better grasp of the situation because of the ongoing narrative descriptive record of her students and classes. Even if the comments written are brief, they should be of value (Gregory & Chapman, 2007; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

The fifth gap in DI literature I discovered was there is little mention of the teacher needing to be highly committed or she will easily slide back into old routines and traditional teaching practices due to the requirements of the real world of teaching. Individuals need to be involved with the change initiative and newer trends in professional development to build sustaining change (Fullan, 2007; Sergiovanni, 2001). The objective of bridge five *success depends on your training and commitment* was to have the teacher stay committed, ask the difficult questions and not be afraid to seek help in order to build second order change in the classroom (Argyris, 1990). The teacher cannot be intimidated by the need to adhere to government and school administration

requirements for a traditional instructional paradigm while attempting to serve the diverse

needs of the students (Fullan, 2007; Sergiovanni, 2001). My D.O.O.R.S. guidelines

recommended that the teacher acknowledge the successes with DI and not to be

succumbed by government and school administration requirements (Fullan, 2007;

Sergiovanni, 2001).

Research Questions

      I facilitated teachers' capacity building in my research study by transitioning

traditional educational methods to differentiated instruction in order to create second

order change. The following four research questions guided my study. The four

questions were:

1. What impact does my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines have on the teacher's capacity building for differentiated instruction?

2. What are the most effective factors needed to create a positive environment in the classroom conducive to differentiated instruction?

3. What impact does implementation of my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines have on the participants' opinions of differentiated instruction?

4. What impact does my research experience have on my leadership theories-in-action?

Conclusion

      Why are there so many African American students placed in special education is a

daunting question concerning the American school grades K through 12 (Harry &

Klingner, 2006). Lack of differentiated instruction use in the traditional classroom is one

of the common reasons African American students are disproportionally represented in

SE. Differentiated instruction takes place when the teacher takes the time to analyze the student needs and then chooses a mode of instruction which is student-centered and is directed towards the student receiving the information in a way that leads to positive learning outcomes for the student (Gregory, 2003).

I discovered five gaps or missing pieces of relevant knowledge in the DI literature. The missing gaps were DI literature minimally discussed: the perspective of the African American student and DI, the African American student's basic physical, social and emotional needs, teachers shifting paradigms from traditional educational methods to DI with guidelines to facilitate the paradigm shift and the need for a high level of commitment from the teacher.

The purpose of my study was to facilitate DI capacity building and create second order change through my action research study at an urban elementary school. I created an action plan entitled D.O.O.R.S. to facilitate this process. D.O.O.R.S. was a five-step guideline for change in order to assist the classroom teacher with moving from the traditional classroom experience to DI. Through my leadership theories-in-action I provided leadership and coaching support to the participants. My three leadership theories-in-action were culturally proficient leadership, servant leadership and transformational leadership.

CHAPTER II

LEADERSHIP PLATFORM

Prelude Two: Cynthia

As a child growing up I recall hearing stories from my grandfather about the history of the European settlers, colonists and the development of my hometown, Pittsburgh. My grandfather, Jack Garner, who lived one hundred and four years in the Maryland and Pennsylvania regions, was the son of an African slave, Warren Garner, who fought in the Union Army during the Civil War. I heard many tales from my grandfather, my elementary school teachers, my family, friends and neighbors about Daniel Boone and Davy Crockett assisting pioneers traveling through my hometown and therefore, Pittsburgh became known as the Gateway of the West. I remember hearing stories about wild strawberries that grew abundantly on the landscape and many tales of the Native Americans during the 1700's living in the Ohio Valley leaving behind arrowheads for modern day children to find. The legend of philanthropist, Andrew Carnegie and composer, Stephen Foster, and his slave guitar player named Joe also fill my childhood memories. Most notably, there were many stories I heard about the two great rivers bearing Native American names, the Monongahela and the Allegheny, which flowed through the heart of the city to form a third river, the Ohio River.

The image of these three rivers affected me deeply as I grew up. I saw these three rivers daily from a hill in my neighborhood. The area where the two rivers merged into one was called The Point. The Point was reserved as an inner city park. Summer concerts by the Pittsburgh Symphony Orchestra, plays, art shows, picnics with friends and a great

place to daydream of my future sitting on the lush grass were some of the activities I experienced at the Point and these activities affected my development as a leader.

Three Rivers Metaphor

The image of the three rivers I saw daily while growing up in Pittsburgh led me to envision my leadership platform as an extension of these rivers. My three leadership theories seemed to flow through my life reminiscent of the three rivers flowing through my youth in Pittsburgh. Two of the rivers flow along the northern and southern shores of the city and connect midpoint to form a letter V-shape. The Allegheny River is to the north and the Monongahela River is to the south. A third river, the Ohio River, forms from the intersection of the two rivers at the point of the V-shape and flows west.

Metaphorically, my leadership platform resembles the coursing of these three rivers. The three dominant leadership theories in my life reflective of these three rivers are culturally proficient leadership (CPL) (Lindsey et al., 2007; Lindsey et al., 2003), servant leadership (Block, 2008; Greenleaf, 1970, 2002; Senge et al., 1994; Spears, 2007; Wheatley, 1999a) and transformational leadership (Burns, 2003; Du Bois, 2002; Senge, 2006; Sergiovanni, 2001).

Symbolically, in Figure 2.1, the CPL would be situated to the south because the southern river, the Monongahela impacted my life the most of the three rivers. The Monongahela River was the closest river to my house located in the lower portion of the Mount Washington neighborhood. Likewise, CPL is the leadership style that affected me deeply because I experienced it from childhood living in a racially diverse neighborhood. The servant leader would be symbolically to the north because the northern river represents the leadership style that influenced and dominated my life from my teen-age

years and carried through to the civil rights movement and marches for equality. The

transformational leader would be represented by the Ohio River because this style

emerged from my CPL and servant leadership styles merging during my adulthood.

The transformational leadership theory impacted on my musical composition projects

I conducted.

The pathways of the three theories interconnect and flow through my life now like

the course of these three rivers. Some days my life experience appears dark and murky

like the rivers of Pittsburgh. Other days my world as a leader may shine with clarity and

understanding like the peaceful calm of the rivers. However, it is my sincere hope that

my learning pathway about leadership proves to open up my knowledge to a new horizon

like the Ohio River once did acting as the Gateway to the West and leading pioneers to

new ideas and a changing civilization.

What is Leadership?

Various definitions exist for the word, leadership (Boyatzis & McKee, 2005;

Fullan, 2007; Maxwell, 1993). Fullan (2007) describes leadership as someone who leads

people to change. Boyatzis and McKee (2005) describe leadership as building resonant

relationships with those around them. The definition I found that was the most relevant

for my study was provided by Maxwell (1993) who believes that leadership is influence

and includes the ability to find individuals that are willing to follow your ideas. Some

scholars may refer to this as influential or informal leadership which involves the ability

of a leader to persuade others to act in a certain way to achieve a desired outcome

(Shirlaws, 2009).

Figure 2.1 Three Rivers Leadership Theory (Lee, 2008)

ALLEGHENY RIVER – SERVANT LEADERSHIP NORTHSIDE

MONONGAHELA RIVER – CULTURALLY PROFICIENT LEADERSHIP SOUTHSIDE

OHIO RIVER – TRANSFORMATIONAL LEADERSHIP GATEWAY TO THE WEST
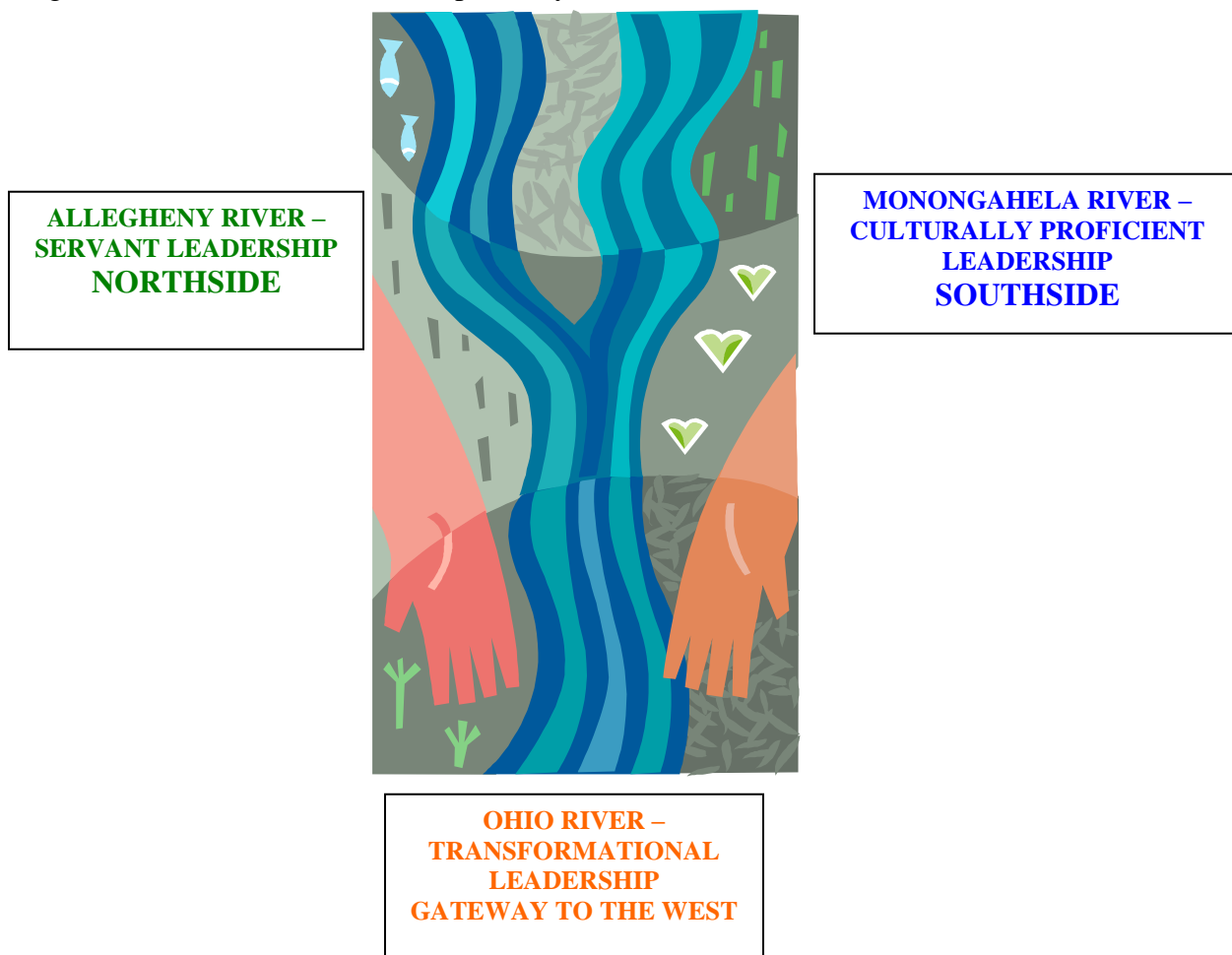
I view Maxwell's (1993) definition as closer to transformational leadership which refers to the leader's ability to collectively influence others to act (Burns, 2003). I gravitated to Maxwell's (1993) definition because I had to influence the participants to change from traditional educational methods to DI. The optimum leader conducts an action research project to influence people to change their direction because the crux of action research is to empower people and move them towards change (Bloor & Wood, 2006). In my study I influenced people to build DI capacity. Influence suggests to me that I am not browbeating a person to move in a certain direction. I am encouraging

the person and swaying the person to change. A leader is moving or directing individuals to move in a certain direction, so therefore, the ability to influence becomes paramount.

Developing a Living Theory

During the course of my action research study I found the need to explain my educational influences in learning and to explain my own methodological inventiveness. I discovered the living theory which is a new approach to scientific inquiry used by Whitehead (2008) to assist practitioner researchers with creating their own methodological inventiveness. The living theory approach helped me to explain the transformation that occurred during my research with me as a researcher and with my participants.

A living theory is comprised of two basic concepts: the unique contribution and an individual's methodological inventiveness (Dadds & Hart, 2001; Whitehead, 2008). The methodology is a theoretical analysis of methods and single research procedures such as an interview. The inventiveness refers to the uniqueness of the inquiry (Whitehead, 2008). The fundamental question that is asked in pursuing a living theory mode of inquiry relates to self-improvement. A living theory may be developed through methodological inventiveness and using action reflection cycles to evaluate the effectiveness of the action and to understand the values applied to judge the improvements made. Also, narrative inquiry, personal validation and social validation may be considered (Whitehead, 2008).

Leadership and Developing My Living Theory

Although, I used three leadership platform theories as my theories-in-action (Argyris, 1990), my living theory evolved as the participants and I lived this experience.

My living theory was based on the concern how do I improve my leadership to better guide my action research project? The process of developing a living theory entailed self-reflection and self-awareness (Whitehead, 2008). Therefore, I searched for any patterns that occurred in my self-analysis of my journals and daily routines which appeared as strengths or weaknesses in my quest for developing my living theory. My living theory was growing and changing as we lived the experience. This made my project unique and I believed the perimeters for judging whether my action research project was a success or a failure, depended not on reaching final goals and objectives, but on the growth I had with my participants through my living theory experience (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

Critical Race Theory

The critical race theory (CRT) is the forerunner of my first leadership theory-in-action, the cultural proficiency leadership theory (CPL). The CRT theory is based on features that came into focus after a Critical Legal Study was done in the 1970's concerning African Americans and the law. Critical race theory espouses that race is a social construct. A social construct basically means that race is constructed or made-up by society. Also, CRT proposes that judicial decisions are different for people outside of the power base of society, than for the powerful. A Black person would not have the same legal experience as the powerful White elite of the society. In addition, the elitists will act against racism only when this act serves their purpose (Bell & Freeman, as cited in Gordon, 1999; Delgado & Stefancic, 2001). Racism is considered to be a system where one group profits from its institution at the expense of another group (Tatum, 2002). Consequently, CRT has indirectly influenced my style of leadership through the cultural

proficient spectrum. CRT has shaped my personal ethical code by emphasizing my perceptions on ethics and nature as an African American.

The historical origins of critical race theory began about 1845 with Frederick Douglass and then continued with the philosophies propounded by W.E.B. Du Bois (1903). After this time period, according to Gordon (1999) critical race theory continued through the 1950's with the philosophical writings of Fanon. By turning the analytical process around and criticizing the dominant Caucasian status quo group who were termed as the studiers of the Black dilemma, CRT champions the need for structural change in the American society (Gordon, 1999).

The evolution of CRT and cultural proficiency leadership is displayed in Figure 2.2. The figure indicates the development of CRT beginning with Douglass (1845, 2005) Du Bois (1903, 1999, 2002) flowing into the Critical Legal Studies movement (CLS) (Gordon, 1999). The CLS surged into the multicultural movement. The multicultural movement flowed into the Cultural Proficiency Leadership (CPL) movement (Gordon, 1999). Therefore, the newer movements came from CRT.

The purpose of the CPL movement is to honor, respect and value the non-dominant cultural groups as equally as the dominant group members of society (Lindsey et al., 2003). The purpose of the multicultural movement is to increase the visibility of certain under-represented groups in the school curriculum programs. These groups include women, Blacks, gays, the disabled, certain religious groups and others in a low economic or social minority status (Cerroni-Long 1993). The multicultural movement is presently occurring in education with one group of scholars and community leaders supporting a cultural self-esteem curriculum program highlighting contributions of

minority and other diverse groups. At the same time another opposing group exists labeled as "democratic pluralists" who support traditional Western European history and value oriented education. The group promoting the cultural self-esteem curriculum program is labeled as the relativists. The opposing group, democratic pluralists, who support Western European history and value oriented education are sometimes called anti-relativists (Fitzgerald, 2000).

From the CPL movement we move into other leadership types including two of my leadership theories-in-action, the servant leader (Greenleaf, 2002) and the transformational leader (Burns, 2003). If the CPL movement (Gordon, 1999) had not taken place, there may not have been a push for the new age type of leadership currently professed in education (Wheatley, 1999a). I have created my theory concerning CPL evolution phases in Figure 2.2 where the CRT phase begins with Frederick Douglass (1845) and ends with transformational leadership (Burns, 2003).

Cultural Proficiency Leadership

Lindsey et al. (2003) describe the traits of a culturally proficient leader as one who clearly understands the importance of culture, recognizes cultural competence and is able to achieve cultural proficiency. Understanding the importance of culture means that the leader values and respects culture. According to Lindsey et al. (2003), culture refers to a group of people who identify and share the same history, values and patterns of behavior. Schools consist of several types of cultures which include but are certainly not limited to the school climate, the student culture and professional cultures. A person identifies with several cultural groups. It is the mixture of these groups leading to a dominant culture pattern that is significant. The school's dominant culture either

embraces or marginalizes the less dominant cultures. A CPL leader understands this interplay of cultures.

Figure 2.2 Cultural Proficiency Leadership Evolution (Lee, 2008)

Critical Race Theory (Douglass, (1845; Du Bois, 1903; Fanon, 1952)

Critical Legal Studies (Bell & Freeman, 1975); [Multicultural Leadership Movement, 1990]

Culturally Proficient Leader (Lindsey, Robins, & Terrell, 2002)

Servant Leader (Greenleaf, 2002)

Transformational Leader (Burns, 2003)
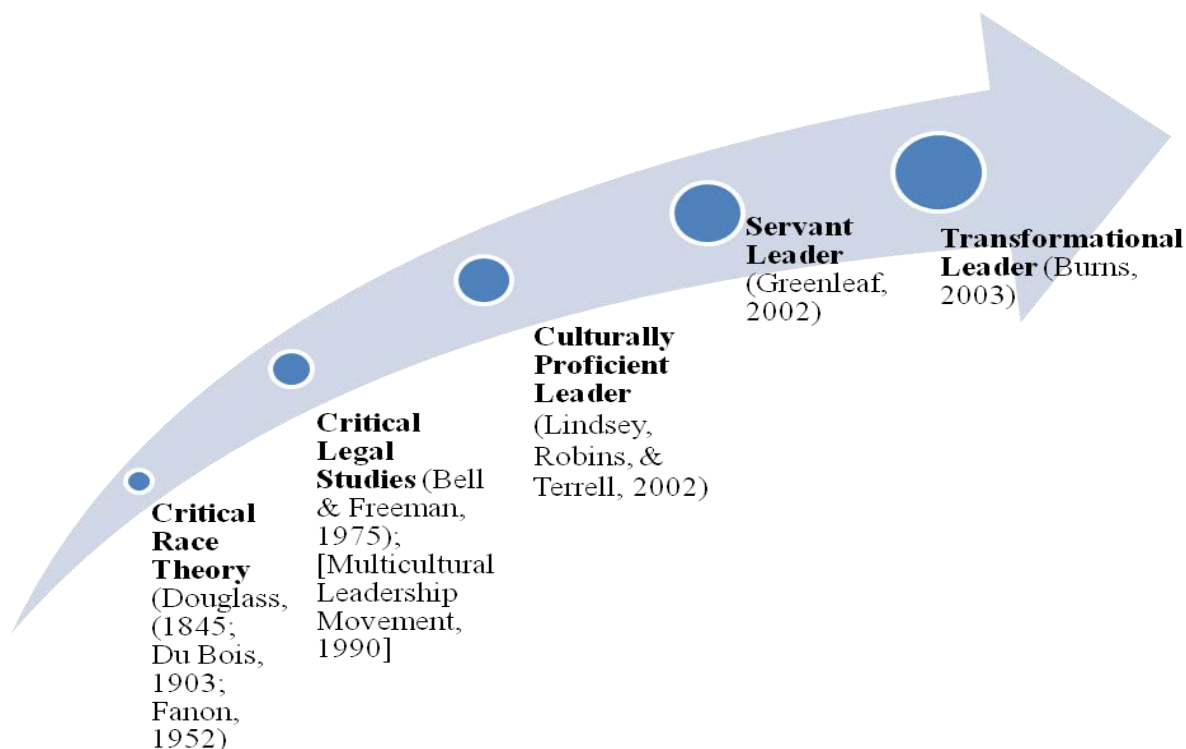
Cultural proficiency is the way that a person effectively responds to different cultural settings. It is important to understand the concept of cultural proficiency in order to determine if a leader exhibits this concept. If the leader is deficient in having cultural proficiency then this lack of proficiency would directly impact on her ability to perform as a culturally proficient leader (Lindsey et al., 2003).

The development of cultural proficiency occurs along a scale that includes both positive and negative policies, practices and behavior. Lindsey et al. (2003) refers to this scale as The Continuum. Along the Continuum scale are six categories or points. Each

one of the six points represents either a positive or negative awareness of a culture by an individual, leader or group. The negative points are cultural destructiveness, cultural incapacity and cultural blindness. The positive points are cultural precompetence, cultural competence and cultural proficiency.

Cultural destructiveness is eliminating other people's cultures. Cultural incapacity supports the superiority of your culture and the disempowerment of other's culture. Cultural blindness is not recognizing the differences in others culture. Cultural precompetence is awareness of the limitations in interacting with others. Cultural competence is interacting according to five essential elements of proficiency. These five elements are assessing culture, valuing diversity, managing the dynamics of differences, adapting to diversity and incorporating cultural knowledge into the mainstream of the organization. Cultural proficiency is having a high regard for a culture. Therefore, the CPL leader is able to understand the history of historically oppressed people and the effects of discrimination and social policies (Lindsay et al., 2003).

Learning Cultural Proficiency at an Early Age

"Cynthia, you stay home! You are not to go to South High School!"

These far-reaching words were said to me by my entrepreneur mother. My mother was an entrepreneur because she managed a rubbish removal business. She had inherited this business at the death of my father thirteen years earlier.

At the time my mother spoke these words to me, I had just graduated from the eighth grade at Knoxville Junior High School. Mostly middle-class Black students attended Knoxville Junior High School. Due to the Pittsburgh Public School policies of students only attending schools in their neighborhood, I was destined to attend the low

performing South High School. My determined mother fought the Board of Education to transfer me into the most affluent high achieving high school in the city, Taylor Allderdice.

I recall not attending the first day of school and staying home for three days. On the third day of staying home, I received a call from the school superintendent who informed me my mother would go to jail if I did not report to enroll in South High today. I followed my mother's wishes and continued to stay home. My mother went to the Human Relations Commission in Pittsburgh to resolve my school problem during the three days that I stayed home from school. On the fourth day, I received another call from the school superintendent. He told me that I was granted permission to attend the prestigious Taylor Allderdice.

Little did I realize years later that this was an important crossroad for me on becoming a culturally proficient leader. By attending Taylor Allderdice I was placed in the center of a group of students who were both Jewish and affluent. The Taylor Allderdice experience taught me how to deal with a culture of individuals who had backgrounds and experiences different than my own African American/Native American background. I became very knowledgeable of the Jewish faith from my daily contact with my Jewish friends and I learned to respect its history and religious effects on people. I found commonality with my new Taylor Allderdice classmates and bonded with them through my music and I went on to develop life-long friendships. I felt gratified that I had bonded with such a sincere group of friends whose history and religion were different from my own but shared interests in classical music and social justice issues that helped

me to discover who I was ethically as a cultural proficient leader. Honesty, virtue and justice became my mainstay during this period of my life.

Cultural Proficiency in Action

In college I continued to be a part of the international learning community by becoming a member of international clubs in undergraduate and graduate schools. After college, I taught in bilingual educational settings at elementary and high school levels. I became an international teacher and lived in Puerto Rico for three years.

Not many people would uproot their life to go to Puerto Rico to live. What led me to the momentous decision to go to Puerto Rico was because I had studied the Spanish language which is the native language of Puerto Rico for three years. In addition, I had studied classical Latin in secondary school for four years. My love of cultures began with my Latin teacher, Mr. Primo, who used to tell many stories about ancient and modern day Greece and Italy. My secondary school senior Latin class was going to fly to Rome. This would have been my first trip outside of the United States but Mr. Primo became ill. We had to cancel the trip and I was devastated because I had strong interest in seeing another culture.

This incident motivated me to pursue the study of other foreign languages. I also inspired my mother and sister to pursue the study of foreign languages by encouraging them to enroll in university courses. My mother can speak German and Russian. My sister can speak French, German, Italian, Russian and Spanish. I became fluent in three languages, Italian, French and Spanish.

I have traveled to several European countries alone and knew I could survive because I was self-sufficient. I had been a James Bond aficionado as a teenager. I had

read all of Ian Fleming's books about James Bond, the British secret agent, who traveled

the world and easily assimilated into other cultures. My mind was set to travel. The day I

was set to go to Puerto Rico I sprained my ankle. I had to learn how to manage my

luggage which included traveling with my cat, Whitey. I had to negotiate in a foreign

culture in order to obtain assistance.

While in Puerto Rico, as an elementary school music teacher I acquired a second

job as a part-time church organist and choir director. The church I worked for had a

unique arrangement. There were two ministers who conducted two services for two

different congregations. Each Sunday the Puerto Rican minister would deliver a sermon

in Spanish to the Puerto Rican congregation. One hour later the White American minister

would conduct a service in English to the English speaking congregation. The English

speaking congregation was comprised of Black people from the Caribbean Islands. Like

James Bond's character in Ian Fleming's (2002) novel entitled *Dr. No*, I easily found

myself at home in two diverse cultures. I had little difficulty in shifting back and forth

between these two cultures because I displayed cultural proficiency leadership traits of

valuing and respecting each culture.

Servant Leadership

A servant leader is one who serves first and is not assuaged by a power drive or

material possession of a leader-first type of leader (Greenleaf, 1970). A servant leader

makes sure that other people's highest priority needs are being served. Wheatley (1999a,

1999b) views servant leadership as learning how to work together in a unified manner.

Wheatley (1999b) believes that the world is comprised of important relationships.

Servant leaders do not exist in the world outside the web of relationships. Effective

servant leaders exist within the web of relationships and choose to act as helpers for the people who desire them as leaders (Wheatley, 1999b). According to Block (2008), the main task of a servant leader is to produce an environment supportive of civic or institutional engagement.

Block (1996) presents six points that capture the essentials of servant leadership. The first point is to lead by affirming the spirit and recognizing that people are central to the organization. The second point is the recognition of the importance of partnership in leading. Leadership should not be controlling but an empowering experience. The third point is empowerment which means that an individual is responsible for the quality of their experience, creating the organization's culture and delivery of outcomes. The fourth point is to eliminate the two class system of managers and workers and to integrate the two classes. The fifth point is not to engineer and direct using the same leadership strategies that created the problem. The sixth point is the recognition and elimination of practices that reinforce the class system.

My First Lessons in Servant Leadership

I can see Block's (2008) servant leadership in action when I reminisce about my mother. Block believes that a leader must understand the links that occur in a community and is concerned with the care of every person and group. After my father's sudden death from leukemia as a small child, I recollect seeing my mother maintain the intricate relationships of our family comprised of eight children. I recalled her displaying genuine concern and understanding for everyone in our family. My mother chose to manage a rubbish removal business instead of going on the public assistance welfare program. Her

concern for the well-being of the family was immense. I recalled times when she made great sacrifices in order to improve our general welfare.

My mother was a pioneer in her profession. She was a woman managing her own business and a female driving a truck which was a rare event in the 1950's and 1960's. I learned from my mother how to stay motivated and committed to achieve your vision and goals even in the face of adversity. Seeing my mother become a successful entrepreneur and run a small business operation became my first lesson in observing how an effective servant leader acts (Block, 1996, 2008; Greenleaf, 1970, 2002; Wheatley, 1999a).

My mother's leadership style was basically a servant leader (Block, 1996, 2008; Greenleaf, 1970, 2002; Spears, 2007; Wheatley, 1999a). I recall her using good nurturing leadership skills in the manner she ran her business. Also, she ran her home with fairness, equity and virtue and made good decision making. She looked to the requirements of her family and even workers to assure that their needs were being met which is a servant leader trait.

I recall watching my mother go to work in all kinds of terrible seasonal weather and storms in order to earn a family income. I remember observing her manage a small work force of men who sometimes took advantage of her inexperience. I witnessed my mother overcome all sorts of obstacles placed in her path and build a successful business enterprise which she ran effectively for eighteen years. In retrospect, I see how my first servant leadership skills developed. My servant leadership traits were developed from observing my mother. I consider myself very fortunate at seeing a good manager like my mother operate a business closely at first hand.

Developing My Servant Leadership Awareness

I became attuned to Wheatley's (1999a) perspective of the importance of the interrelationships among nature when I was a youth. Consequently, three forces have shaped my philosophy of life and they are nature, religion and creativity. I acquired a love of nature by growing up in beautiful, lush woodlands surrounding my home as a child. I became religious through my Christian church-going experience and I became highly creative through the pursuit of classical music study. My relationships to nature, religion and music affected my relationships with people.

I stated in my journal:

I believe once again my mother assisted as a good role model for my development as a servant leader when I became a teenager. Not only did I see her success as a servant leader in the role of a mother, business woman and truck driver but she was also a servant leader in her roles of church deacon, frequently donating to charity organizations and always giving donations in clothes or money to the poor of our neighborhood.

I observed the servant leadership traits of courage and commitment each day my mother would display when she would rise at 4 o'clock a.m. in the morning. My mother would then don a cotton blouse top, a pair of black baggy pants and wrap a faded cotton cloth around her head. Before she left for work my mother would go to the kitchen and bake cinnamon buns or cakes in the oven for her children's breakfast. Then she would silently open the front door and walk down the cobblestone street to some unknown place where she parked her red rubbish truck. After sitting in her truck for a few minutes to warm up the engine,

my mother would then drive the truck to a rendezvous site to find the two

workmen who assisted her daily with hauling rubbish for her business. I do not

recall my mother ever missing one day of work or complaining she was too ill or

sick to work (Lee, Journal, December 31, 2008).

Evolving into a Servant Leader

In my teenage years I developed into a servant leader by recognizing the needs of

the community and acting to service these needs by volunteering in social and political

organizations (Block, 2008; Greenleaf, 1970, 2002; Wheatley, 1999a). I recall

volunteering to join the Black Student Union and becoming Vice President in both high

school and in college of this organization. Having a deep sense of caring for the

disadvantaged and fighting for racial equality became the highlight of my teenage and

early college years. I attended protest marches for a great number of causes such as the

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) directive to

promote fair hiring practices for Blacks to work for such corporations as Duquesne Light

Company, Bell Telephone and AT &T. I joined hundreds of other protesters carrying

signs, chanting slogans and walking for hours around the city block wide office buildings

for Blacks to attain fair employment in these corporations. I volunteered to assist with

fundraising and social support for causes such as the United Farm Workers of America

right to fair labor practices. In addition, I volunteered to work for each presidential

election or mayoral campaign in Pittsburgh.

My volunteer efforts exemplified the servant leadership trait of servicing the

highest priority needs of people. My needs were secondary. I believed that by

volunteering to help people, I was improving their lives. At this time, I believed that volunteering was a major way to cause change within society.

Servant Leadership Through the Years

My experience as a servant leader began early in my childhood. Between the ages of eight years old until I was fourteen, my two older sisters and I would collect money throughout our neighborhood for the local charities that funded programs for the handicapped children. After collecting the donations we would travel to the local television station which was conducting a fundraising marathon. Although I was the youngest of the three sisters I was the motivating force. I remember my sisters not wanting to make the arduous journey to the remote location of the television station. However, I saw this as a duty to help the handicapped children because of the Christian church values I had learned. Through my encouragement as a servant leader I convinced them of the benefits and the need to help the handicap.

One major benefit of traveling to the television station was that famous movie stars would participate in the fundraising drive and you could meet them in person. My sisters and I met such personalities as actors from the *Bonanza* western television series, Michael Landon and Loren Green. I recall Loren Green scolding me for not having my Girl Scout pin on my uniform, the day I decided to wear my Girl Scout dress to the television station.

I grew as a servant leader by devoting more time and effort to my volunteer activities. For several years in secondary school, I volunteered to become the leader and director of a community acting group that would present public plays annually. By the time I entered undergraduate school at a university, I became a public radio volunteer

producer and interview show hostess for classical musicians. I used my program as a platform for local Black classical musicians to present a forum for their talent because as a servant leader I recognized that this unique group of artists had a need for exposure. After college, I volunteered as a servant leader and became a Sunday school teacher for children. Again, I was motivated as a volunteer to assist with the needs of the community. As the Sunday school teacher I enhanced the children's church going experience by adding songs to the lessons. I thought by bringing music into the lesson this would motivate the students to attend church services. The students appeared to attend Sunday school more often after I introduced music.

Transformational Leadership

Several interpretations have been presented to describe transformational leadership (TL). Burns is considered the originator of this leadership theory and originally called it transforming leadership (Couto, 1995). Transforming leadership occurs when a leader can transform followers into leaders and the transformed leaders become ethical or moral agents (Couto, 1995). Bass modified the term transforming to transformational leadership (Couto, 1995).

Sergiovanni (2001), another proponent of transformational leadership, theorizes that TL is a stage or phase of leadership development. Sergiovanni (2001) begins his theory of transformational leadership development by discussing the transactional leadership stage. He considers transactional leadership as a bartering or exchange of needs, interests and services between the leader and follower in an organization. Leadership development then proceeds to the transformational leadership stage. According to Sergiovanni (2001), the TL stage has three aspects: building, bonding and

binding. The building stage occurs when the expectations of the leader and follower increase and focus on developing human potential. The bonding stage occurs when the leader and follower who are ethically committed increase their knowledge and understanding of organizational objectives to a shared agreement. The binding stage has the people and organization connecting their goals, objectives and aspirations with policies and practice.

In addition, Sergiovanni (2001) describes five forces that relate to the process of leadership. He names these forces as technical, human, educational, symbolic and cultural. The technical force of leadership involves a leader applying effective management techniques. The human force concerns the human relationships and inspirational interpersonal aspects of leading. The educational force concerns the leader's control in reference to the educational administrative and supervision aspects. The symbolic force entails a leader assuming the role of the top manager and directing the needs of the forces to understand what is essential or what is of value. The cultural force concerns the leader as the key school administrator seeking to define, strengthen and articulate important values, beliefs and cultural strands that give the learning community its unique identity over time (Sergiovanni, 2001).

Sergiovanni's (2001) interpretation of transformational leadership resonates with me because it includes both transactional and transformational traits. He has a broad view of leadership because he does not envision it as a type or group of traits. He views leadership as a developmental process not as a stagnant entity. I believe Sergiovanni's (2001) explanation concerning the forces of leadership to be the most relevant.

My Experience as a Transformational Leader

I was a very quiet and shy as a child. When I decided to become a composer, I realized I had to transform my personality from a musician who is deemed to be a follower, into a leader if I hoped to have my compositions performed. Gradually, as I became involved as a flutist, pianist, composer and musical producer I had to become extroverted in my personality traits and my behavior.

My qualities and experience as a transformational leader grew in diversity. My early educational career that involved training as a composer/performer led me to enable others to function autonomously on the behalf of my shared purpose of obtaining a public performance of my works. I also throughout my pre-college and post-college music career have taught flute, piano and composition to others. Part of becoming a successful transformational leader is helping other followers turn into leaders. I have worked with hundreds of musicians nationally as a transformational leader in order to meet this end. By my senior year in college I recalled recording at least one hundred public performances of my works since high school which I was involved in producing and directing. By viewing leadership as a power to accomplish an end (Sergiovanni, 2001) I have been responsible for transforming over a half dozen non-profit organizations into viable learning communities which are still in existence.

While attending Franklin College I was instrumental in establishing a music organization for student composers. I decided to co-found this organization because my friend Kurt and I saw a vision for an orchestra that performed student works. There was no organization currently in existence to perform student written compositions at

Franklin College. I decided to co-lead this newly formed student organization as a transformational leader effecting change.

As a music teacher I have on numerous occasions demonstrated bartering, building, bonding and binding traits of transformational leadership (Sergiovanni, 2001). For instance, while in Puerto Rico I was able to bond two diverse communities together when I coordinated the *Teacher's Appreciation Day* event at the church where I was substitute choir director and organist. I organized and directed a program where the classroom teachers at the Rodriquez Elementary School, a Puerto Rican private school, were honored at one of the local churches, Saint Georges. I arranged for the children from Rodriquez Elementary School's choir to perform at the Sunday service where the teachers were honored. I was able to build a link between two communities, the school staff with the church community. I was responsible in helping to transform a local church into a caring community for the Rodriquez Elementary School teachers.

Conclusion

I believe my church going experience as a child provided me the basis for my servant leadership style with wanting to help people in need. I believe my cultural proficiency leadership began with the study of Latin languages. I believe my career choice in composing led to my personality shift from a shy, quiet introverted child into a highly motivated, leader who can influence and inspire others to follow as well as lead.

Growing up in Pittsburgh drew me close to my grandfather who had universal brotherhood-type beliefs concerning relationships between White European Americans and Black Americans. My leadership platform is built on the three leadership theories of culturally proficient leadership, servant leadership and transformational leadership.

Metaphorically, the evolution of my leadership platform is similar to the coursing of the three rivers of my home town, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Maxwell's (1993) definition that leadership is the ability to influence other people is the most relevant for my study.

My first leadership theory is culturally proficient leadership. A culturally proficient leader is one who clearly understands the importance of culture, recognizes cultural competence and is able to achieve cultural proficiency (Lindsey et al., 2003). My second leadership theory is servant leadership and this theory affected me deeply in my teenage years. The servant leader is a helpmate and I thought at that time that I should help society through volunteering (Wheatley, 1999a, 1999b). My third leadership theory is transformational leadership. Transformational leadership concerns bartering, building, bonding and binding of the leader and the follower to advance the goals of the organization or school community (Sergiovanni, 2001). Because of my dual professional career as a musician and educator, I have had the opportunity to highly develop my transformational leadership style. I also developed my living theory (Whitehead, 2008). which concerned the uniqueness of my contributions and my self-improvement. My living theory was growing and changing as I lived the experience with the participants (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). Therefore, as I initiated my research project I found my proficiency in servant leadership, culturally proficiency and transformational leadership styles made me highly competent as a leader trying to effect change.

CHAPTER III

LITERATURE REVIEW

Prelude Three: Betty

Betty is the second African American student who affected my perspective

of special education. Betty's story wanders through the special education minefields

of crushed aspirations that extended from first grade to twelfth grade and then

into adulthood.

Betty Jones was my neighbor when I was growing up in Pittsburgh. From first

grade until twelfth grade, Betty remained in a special education program. Betty Jones still

lives in Pittsburgh and as an adult, has not been able to keep a job for more than three

months. She is a thirty-eight year old African American mother of three small infants

living in the public housing high-rise section of the city. She has three children fathered

by three different mates who are African American males presently all incarcerated for

felony counts.

Betty is a product of the public school special education program. When Betty

failed kindergarten in her early childhood at age six her mother readily signed papers for

Betty to be placed into the special education program. Betty's mother approved of her

daughter being placed into special education because Betty's mother believed her

daughter was a behavior problem in school and needed to be taught a lesson. The teachers

and school administrators felt Betty was hyperactive and belonged in a remedial

education program since she could not sit still in class. Today, Betty lives a life of

unemployment and poverty. The special education program did not prepare her with the

life skills she would have probably learned in a general education setting.

Introduction – Discussion of African American Experience

When I discuss my African American cultural heritage with my family members we focus on the experience being highly unique because we have no knowledge of where our lineage begins. My Caucasian friends would sometimes discuss their heritage and that their mother was Irish or their father was Italian. Yet, this discussion was closed for me and many other African Americans because we had no links to the past other than referring to the vast amorphous dark continent of Africa as our beginning.

I hope to address with my action plan this underlying issue of how to educate the descendants of African slavery and not dilute what is occurring with these children like Betty with concepts of cultural responsiveness which is generic and suitable to improving the operations of any business. Education is a business but it is still a very personal experience because educators are building lives through gaining knowledge (Nees, 2004). We, educators have to build lives mired in the aftermath of African slavery. As a descendent of African slaves, I hoped to create a unique workable plan in my action plan, D.O.O.R.S., that integrates the accumulation of knowledge using differentiated instruction, educating the teacher who disperses this knowledge (cultural proficiency) and giving the teacher workable tools (action research inquiry) to educate these Americans— the descendants of African slaves.

Factors Important for My Study

The perception of the African American student by traditional educators was a factor of importance in my study because this perception impacted on how the African American student was treated. At the core of this perception was the relationship of teacher comprehension of intelligence to the instructional practices for African American

student. Historically, the concept of intelligence has been linked to race (Harry &

Klingner, 2006). How traditional educators view intelligence among African American

students became a major issue for discussion. In addition, the assumptions concerning

these perceptions in traditional education became issues that needed discussion.

Assumptions evolve from information that we have not been told. These assumptions or

omitted pieces of information can lead to stereotypes and prejudice. Prejudice occurs

when an individual or group's judgment or opinion is perceived based on limited

information. Prejudice promotes cultural racism which is the cultural images and

messages that affirm White superiority and assumed Black inferiority (Tatum, 2002).

Other discussions of importance in my study included DI elements in the

classroom, the strengths and limitations of DI and critically recognizing the response of

DI literature towards the African American student's needs. The fundamental physical,

emotional and social needs (Maslow, 1968) of the African American students were being

minimally discussed in DI literature. In addition, the DI literature had a tendency to

ignore the factor as to how the teacher was to change from traditional educational beliefs

to incorporating DI educational beliefs into their practices. There was minimal mention

of teachers having to shift from a traditional educational paradigm to DI. Therefore,

another element, the concept of educational paradigms had to be explored. Finally,

creating second order change through professional development should be addressed. All

of these factors were directly related to building a foundation of support for my study to

assist me as a leader, coach and facilitator.

Traditional Assumptions in Education

The curriculum structure in the majority of the schools in the United States has been developed to address the needs of mainly the dominant White group in society (Harry & Klingner, 2006). The power and control of the curriculum structure continues to be overseen by educators with middle class values who base their traditional curriculum program on three assumptions (Delgado & Stefancic, 2001; Noguera, 2008):

1. The educational needs of the historically oppressed African American students are not as important as the need to promote the content curriculum practices invented for students from the dominant White group. Therefore, it is normal not to address the needs of the African American students in instructional literature.

2. Intelligence assessment of African American students is based on quantitative instruments or genetic principles that favor the White dominant group as being superior. It is normal to continue to use these instruments of assessment for judging intelligence.

3. The role of teachers is to uphold the traditional content curriculum practices and values invented for the White dominant group to succeed and the Black minority group to fail. Therefore, it is normal to refer Black students for special education placement. Consequently, the African American students of or affiliated with African slave descent, such as Betty, are being placed into special education (SE) in significantly large numbers in the United States schools in kindergarten through 12th grades.

Educational Practices Do Not Favor the Historically Oppressed

There has been a tendency for European Americans who dominated educational learning institutions for the past several hundred years not to favor the educational needs of the historically oppressed African American student of or affiliated with African slave

descent. The dominant European American group instead emphasized educational training for students belonging to their own dominant group (Losen & Orfield, 2002; Noguera, 2008). Consequently, omissions have existed historically in educational literature with missing pieces of knowledge addressing the specific needs of the African American student.

The tendency to ignore the needs of African Americans is referred to as color-blindness by Tatum (2002). Lindsey et al. (2003) refer to this state of ignorance as cultural blindness. Delpit (1988) refers to this state as cultural bias. Tatum (2002) explains that many White people are not aware of their own racial prejudices and perceive themselves as being normal. She stresses that developing critical conscious awareness with racism is very important. Tatum believes with cross-cultural racial dialogue and positive feedback as a whole group, the American society can counter the system of racism. Cross-cultural dialogue involves interracial exchange in communication that promotes positive relations among people or groups belonging to two or more different social races (Grant, 2003).

Intelligence Theories in Education Promote White Superiority

One of the factors in becoming an effective cultural proficient leader is for the leader to recognize the history of the oppressed people and their relationship to education (Lindsey et al., 2003). The relationship of the oppressed people, the African American, to education in the United States has been dependent on the educational philosophy of Whites in reference to non-Whites (Harry & Klingner, 2006). This educational philosophy has been historically linked to genetics (Harry & Klingner, 2006).

Prior to the *Brown v Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas, 1954*, the prevailing belief in American education was that intelligence was genetic and that the African American was racially inferior (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002). This belief about African American inferiority in intelligence continues to the present day in the traditional curriculum programs (Herrnstein & Murray, 1996). In these traditional curriculum program school leaders promote assessment using quantitative instruments devised for White students (Kunjufu, 2002). When African American students fail these assessment instruments the traditional school leader believes they were justified in disproportionally placing African American students in SE (Losen & Orfield, 2002; Harry & Klingner, 2006; Noguera, 2008).

Intelligence Theories Regarding African Americans

I discovered three theories concerning race, genetics and intelligence. One theory is referred to as the intelligence, race and genetics theory (Harry & Klingner, 2006), the second theory is the cultural deficit theory (Herrnstein & Murray, 1996; Jensen, as cited in Villegas & Lucas, 2002) and the third theory concerns the geographic location of races (Lynn, 1991).

Two of the theories, the cultural deficit theory and the geographic location of races theory, use the intelligence quotient (IQ) tests to determine intelligence (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Herrnstein & Murray, 1996; Jensen, as cited in Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Intelligence quotient is a test score based on the number of correct answers an individual achieves in a test. The IQ tests have been the main source of judging aptitude in American schools since the first quarter of the twentieth century (Harry & Klingner, 2006). The IQ test has been criticized as not relating the process of how one arrives at the

correct answer. In addition, the IQ test questions are very narrow and not interrelated. An individual correctly answering the IQ test questions is heavily based on one's skill in defining words, world knowledge and connecting or discovering differences with verbal concepts (Gardner, 2004).

Since the beginning of the American colonial school system the intelligence, race and genetics theory has been the dominant educational philosophy in most traditional classrooms. The intelligence, race and genetic theory is the belief that non-Whites are inferior in intelligence based on genetics (Harry & Klingner, 2006). This theory influenced the educational world during the 1960's and 1970's, however, fell into disfavor after this period (Harry & Klingner, 2006). Although it has fallen in disfavor, I believe that the tenets of this theory still linger in the respect of Black students being labeled as exhibiting some type of mental deficiency more so than White students by educational institutions (Mobley & Holcomb, 2008).

A second theory concerning race and intelligence is the cultural deficit theory. The cultural deficit theory gained prominence in 1994 about the same period as when Herrnstein and Murray (1996) published their report *The Bell Curve*. Herrnstein and Murray (1996) expounded the race theory in *The Bell Curve* that there are inherent genetic differences concerning intelligence among racial groups (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The cultural deficit theory is similar in principles to the intelligence, race and genetics theory (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). However, the cultural deficit theory bases its premise of genetic inferiority on the patterns of low IQ that occur frequently within the populations of people of color and poor economically disadvantaged people (Herrnstein & Murray, 1996; Jensen, as cited in Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

A third theory concerning intelligence and race proposes that the Asian and Caucasoid groups of people are genetically superior to Africans who originated in the sub-Saharan regions. This theory on racial superiority in intelligence is that historically Asian and Caucasoid groups had to fend for themselves in a colder climate. They were forced to develop a higher intelligence quotient than the Black Africans because of living in this colder climate (Lynn, 1991).

Multiple Intelligences Theory Challenges Traditional Beliefs

The belief in the race, genetics and intelligence being linked has been challenged by Sternberg, Grigorenko and Kidd (2005) along with Gardner (2006). These scholars argue that intelligence and race have no relationship. In fact, they propose that in a few more decades, racial social groups will become so inter-mixed; geneticists will not be able to categorize groups of people according to social race. Gardner (2006) does consider culture as one of the major influences in developing multiple intelligences.

Gardner's multiple intelligences (MI) theory counters the race, intelligence and genetics theory because the MI theory is based on neurological cognitive processes and not on the genetics of race (Gardner, 2004, 2006). Therefore, a child's racial make-up is not a determinant of the child's intelligence but the neurological area of the brain determines which of many intelligences a child demonstrates. MI is based on determining intelligence by brain-based learning. Brain-based learning is defined according to the areas of the brain affected by different intelligences. Interest in brain-based research became prominent in the 1990's (Gurian, 2001).

Gardner (2004) explains that intelligence is not a tangible or measurable occurrence. Intelligences exist as units at certain levels of generality. Each multiple

intelligence should not be compared but thought of as its own system with its own set of rules (Gardner, 2004).

Gardner does not look at intelligence through the traditional perspective of education which involves sorting and testing (Harry & Klinger, 2006). Gardner (2004, 2006) views intelligence as being multi-dimensional. Initially, Gardner proposed that his MI theory was based on seven unique and equally situated intelligences. Therefore, a person may have multiple intelligences and these intelligences are not abilities or skills. According to Gardner, each intelligence is exclusive or unique unto itself. The seven intelligences that composed Gardner's MI theory are musical, linguistic, logic-mathematical, spatial, bodily-kinesthetic, interpersonal and intrapersonal. The number of intelligences has increased and now includes newly identified intelligences such as naturalistic and spiritualistic (Educational Broadcasting Corporation, 2004a, 2004b). Therefore, it is the culture of the African American students, which is differing from the White students, not the race which is the human race (Ford & Harris, 1994).

Another counter theory recommends that environment and student motivation determine the level of intellectual ability leading to successful academic performance in school for Black students (Noguera, 2008). The American school system has deeply embedded stereotypes that connect racial identity to academic ability and these stereotypes can affect the performance of the African American students (Steele, 1997). This theory is supported by a study performed by Steele (1997) which showed that students are highly susceptible to racial stereotypes related to intellectual performance and ability when asked to perform in the traditional classroom setting.

Fordham and Ogbu (1986) developed the cultural oppositional theory which explains the low achievement of Black students. This theory proposes that African American students do not strive to achieve academically because of the trepidation of receiving the acting White label by their peers. Acting White occurs when the Black students strive to do high level of academic performance in school. The students perform poorly academically to act in opposition to the White culture. The African American students rebel against learning in traditional education in order to maintain respect from their peers in the Black student groups (Fordham and Ogbu, 1986). Some theorists believe this behavior is more pronounced among African American male students (Kunjufu, 2002; Noguera, 2008). However, this theory is being challenged by some scholars who have performed studies yielding results that Black students and their parents want the students to excel academically in school (Ford, Wright, Grantham, & Harris, 1998; Noguera, 2008).

Multiple Intelligences Theory Provides Holistic Assessment

Multiple intelligences theory integrates several ways of assessing intelligence and therefore, provides a holistic assessment method for students (Gardner, 2004). Ford and Harris (1994) proposed that lack of applying holistic learning theories such as the Gardner's (2004) multiple intelligences theory has created classroom climates and school cultures that delimit positive student learning outcomes for minorities. In addition, the MI theory builds lessons surrounding the strengths of the students' talents and provides self-advocacy for the student concerning their intelligence strengths (Gardner, 2006). Similarly, my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines do not link intelligence to race and provides suggestions for holistic assessment of the students. D.O.O.R.S. allows the teacher to

choose the learning theory preference for the student and then use differentiated

instruction methods to evaluate the product.

Gregory (2005) also supports Gardner's (2004) multiple intelligences learning

theory or style as a vehicle to improve student learning outcomes. Learning theory and

learning styles are interchangeable terms used by scholars. Both concepts refer to the

manner in which learners have a preference for obtaining, processing and learning new

information and skills (Gregory, 2005).

Differentiated Instruction Evolution

Virgil Ward (1961) is credited as the first scholar who espoused beliefs that later

came to be included in general classrooms concerning differentiated instruction. Ward

theorized in the case of gifted education that the experience of learning should include an

ongoing problem solving process and not a collection of facts (as cited in Hertzog, 2004).

Government agencies such as the Office of Gifted and Talented (1976) further expanded

on the concept of differentiated education. The Office provided a set of guidelines which

include defining a differentiated curriculum, among other characteristics, as a curriculum

that has learning strategies which contains both curriculum content and the learning styles

of gifted and talented children and accommodates these special children (Hertzog, 2004).

Passow (1982) further developed principles and concepts surrounding differentiated

instruction curricula for the gifted and talented students. He explained differentiating

curricula for the gifted/talented is basically a process of individualizing curricula to better

meet individual and group learning, needs, abilities and styles (as cited in Hertzog, 2004).

Tomlinson is one of the first scholars to research and apply differentiated instruction in

the general education classrooms (Tomlinson, 1999).

Differentiated instruction as perceived in education in the first decade of twenty-first century is a way for the teacher to reach the unique needs of each learner by differentiating the content, the assessment tools, the performance tasks and the instructional strategies (Gregory & Chapman, 2007). DI is a philosophy that allows the teacher to plan strategically in reaching the needs of diverse learners. In addition, DI provides many options or strategies for the teacher to successfully reach the required standards (Gregory & Chapman, 2007).

According to Tomlinson (1999), DI strategies focus on the classroom teacher developing whole group, small group, or individual student-centered lessons surrounding the curriculum elements of content, process and product. Content refers to the materials or mechanisms the teacher wants the students to learn. It includes the ways students familiarize themselves with information such as books, demonstrations and field trips. Process describes the activities students will use to learn the content. The activities allow the students to understand the information. Product is the vehicle students use to show what they comprehend. A teacher may differentiate using one, two, or all three of these elements (Tomlinson, 1999).

Content should include the students' needs, interests and specify the time allowed for the student to spend on the unit (Gregory, 2005). Content may also be relevant by being personal to the student. It may be activities such as field trips, supplementary readings and demonstrations (Tomlinson, 1999).

For the process element to be effective, the activity provided for the student to process information should have a well defined goal. In addition, the activity should center on one specific understanding and allow the student to use key skills to learn major

ideas. The activity should assist the student in learning and not just repeating the information. It should assist the student in relating new concepts to previously learned concepts and match the student's initial point of understanding which is called readiness (Tomlinson, 1999).

A product is a demonstration of the students' understanding after a major portion of a learning assignment has occurred. For example, a student displays after a month long study or a unit what they have learned through a class demonstration or exhibition. According to Tomlinson (1999), the teacher needs to give clear explanations to the student what skills need to be displayed to illustrate they comprehend the concepts taught. In addition, the teacher needs to present one or more means of expression, give outlines for superior content demonstrations and provide tiers or scaffolding to display excellence in student academic success. The teacher also should provide variation in student readiness, interest and learning profiles (Tomlinson, 1999).

According to Tomlinson (1999), student readiness, interest and learning profile are other important elements to include when implementing differentiated instruction. Readiness concerns the student's beginning level of knowledge or starting point in understanding a specific skill. To increase student readiness, students can use assistance such as additional coaching, more direct instruction or guidance. The student interest involves the student's desirability, curiosity and passion for a subject or a skill. The learning profile is the manner in which a student learns. The learning profile can have an effect on the student's learning style (Tomlinson, 1999). The learning style is the preferences that a student has in attaining, processing and learning new abilities or skills (Gregory, 2005).

A noted perceptual learning style is espoused by Dunn and Dunn (1987). They propose that a person learns through environmental, emotional, sociological, physiological and psychological stimuli. I orientated my participants in my DI workshops with auditory, visual, tactile, kinesthetic or tactile/kinesthetic ways students learn. An auditory learner learns best through speaking and listening. A visual learner learns best by seeing. A tactile learner learns best through touch. A kinesthetic learner learns best though movement. A tactile/ kinesthetic learner learns best by becoming involved physically (Dunn & Dunn, 1987; Dunn, Dunn, & Treffinger, 1992).

Differentiated Instruction Strategies

Differentiated instruction doctrines can be introduced into the classroom in an assortment of ways. According to Tomlinson (1999) these various means of introducing DI are strategies. These strategies are similar to containers or buckets which teachers can utilize to convey the content, process or products of teaching (Tomlinson, 1999). Many differentiated instruction strategies are complex (Gregory, 2003; Gregory & Chapman, 2007; Tomlinson, 1999). Three examples of instructional strategies that are not as complex are stations, agendas and orbital studies. The stations strategy creates different places in the classroom called stations where students may work simultaneously on different tasks. These places can be color-coded or numbered. They allow flexible grouping of students and tasks. They can be visited based on the teacher or student's choice and the tasks can vary daily (Tomlinson, 1999).

An agenda is a personalized list of activities that a student must accomplish within a certain amount of time. Teachers usually develop the lists and indicate when the students are to complete the list. However, the students can decide the order in which the

activities are performed. While the students work on their agenda, the teacher can move around the classroom and provide individual coaching and monitoring of the students' understanding and progress (Tomlinson, 1999).

Orbital studies are independent investigations lasting a few weeks that center on some aspect of the curriculum (Tomlinson, 1999). The students select the issues to be investigated and the teachers assist the student through coaching and providing guidance. Orbital studies are based on the concept that students benefit when they develop and share knowledge and skills similar to earning a Boy Scout merit badge (Tomlinson, 1999).

Differentiated Instruction Advantages

According to Gregory and Chapman (2007), an advantage to DI implementation is that it accommodates the many ways students learn. Students learn based on such factors as learning style, multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2006), preference, experience, social and emotional development. A teacher can address these factors through knowledge of their students and strategically selecting strategies to meet targeted standards and allow for growth of the student.

Another advantage is that DI addresses the individual needs of each student by giving the teacher the flexibility to have individual students learn deeply and quickly through using varying materials and pacing. The student or learner is not forced into one mold (Tomlinson, 1999). A third major advantage is that DI builds an inclusive supportive classroom that permits the teachers to honor the diversity of the student population. The classroom experience becomes positive because the students have greater involvement in their learning. In addition, the teacher is the architect and is designing and

building an environment conducive to enlarging the individual student's knowledge (Tomlinson, 1999). However, the teacher has to be knowledgeable of what factors are necessary to build an inclusive supportive classroom. DI does not specifically provide the tools but allows the teacher the freedom to create such an environment. My action plan does give the teacher specific guidelines on how to develop a supportive inclusive classroom.

Differentiated Instruction Implications for African Americans

Differentiated instruction is currently being supported by scholars who advocate cultural curriculum programs that promote positive student learning outcomes for African American students (Kunjufu, 2002; Lindsey, Roberts, & CampbellJones, 2005; Noguera, 2008; Obiakor, 2007)). Cultural curriculums involve students learning about content through topics highlighting cultural diversity and both the student and teachers learning to value and respect all cultures (Lindsey, et al., 2005). Teaching individuals to respect and value all cultures becomes the overall goal of the cultural curriculum program. The goals of the cultural curriculum program can be reached through cross-cultural dialogue. Cross-cultural dialogue involves positive individual or group interaction or discourse between two or more cultures. In addition, a cultural curriculum can be successfully implemented with on-going differentiated instruction assignments and activities that emphasize cultural proficiency awareness (Lindsey, et al., 2005).

Differentiated Instruction Barriers

A major barrier in implementing DI is lack of time (Corley, 2005; Santangelo, Knotts, Clemmer, & Mitchell, 2008; Stetson, Stetson, & Anderson, 2007). Teachers experience a lack of time in such areas as lesson planning time needed to assess learners'

needs, interests and readiness levels; ascertaining important concepts and planning questions and designing appropriate activities for the student. A teacher needs to have time in her personal schedule or in her daily instructional schedule to participate in constructive professional development. The teacher is usually given one forty-five minute mid-day period of time designated as preparation time. However, by the time students are dismissed or picked up from an interim class period with a special area teacher, such as music, or physical education, this preparation period is shortened to about thirty minutes. This is not adequate time to complete any extensive professional development session on DI.

Another major barrier relates to classroom management and the teacher's role changing from the giver of knowledge to facilitator of learning (Corley, 2005). For example, with DI, a teacher does not teach in a teacher-centered way where the teacher lectures and the students listen. The teacher should teach in a student-centered way with DI where the student has more involvement in how the knowledge is dispensed to the student and how the student acquires the knowledge (Gregory, 2003).

In addition, before beginning DI each teacher needs to understand and learn how to apply the principles of effective classroom management which involve learning strategies and methods of controlling the environment of the class so that student learning can occur in a safe, orderly, fair and positive way (Holloway, 2000). Teachers usually acquire this through life experience. Novice teachers because of their inexperience as teachers usually are lacking in these traits. Kizlik (2009) lists forty-two mistakes new teachers make in classroom management. The mistakes in classroom management include novice teachers being undecided about their goals and objectives,

overemphasizing the negative, giving verbal praise too often and not intervening fast enough during episodes of disruptive behavior.

A third important issue is the teacher being required to obtain and use new strategies (Corley, 2005). These strategies can be complex. They can involve a multitude of steps to implement (Gregory, 2003, Gregory & Chapman, 2007; Tomlinson, 1999).

The best remedy for these perceived barriers is effective professional development that emphasizes teachers applying skills and offers coaching throughout the process of the teacher developing DI. Also, a commitment of teachers, administrators and students is vital. The teachers and students must move into a new instructional paradigm. The administrators must support the teachers' professional development, access to instructional material and provide encouragement for support networks or peer coaching (Corley, 2005).

Elements of a DI Classroom

Tomlinson (1999) theorizes a classroom that uses DI effectively can be recognized because common characteristics and elements can be seen with the teacher and the environment. An effective DI classroom has teachers who are competent diagnosticians and able to prescribe the best practices for their students. Teachers understand how to use classroom time in a flexible way. Teachers know how to provide specific ways for varied individual and group instruction. Students learn to compete against themselves. Teachers understand how to make instruction interesting by using different learning modalities. Teachers start their lessons on the levels where the students are at and understand how to differentiate the pre-assessment, content, process, product and evaluation parts of the lesson effectively (Tomlinson, 1999).

Studies on Differentiated Instruction

Callahan, Tomlinson, Moon, Tomchin, and Plucker (1995) researched Gardner's theory and found the use of MI did not make a significant increase in student achievement in their MI study entitled Project START. Tomlinson et al. (2008) recently conducted a two school mixed quantitative and qualitative longevity study on the implementation of differentiated instruction at the Conway Elementary School and Colchester High School. The study lasted for a period of three years. Significant improvement was made at both schools in student academic performance after the implementation of DI throughout the entire school's curriculum. In this study, the teachers received added guidance and coaching in implementing DI from the people directing the study.

Stetson et al. (2007) conducted a study that examined the experiences of 48 elementary school teachers who researched and implemented differentiated instruction in their classroom. The study took place over the course of a semester and the findings revealed five main categories in which differentiated instruction positively affected classroom learning. The 48 participants were required to read a book by Diane Heacox (2001) *Differentiated Instruction in the Classroom: How to Reach All Learners, Grades 3-12*. Stetson et al. (2007) explained that each teacher in their study created and taught four DI lessons. The first three lessons focused on one of the elements of DI, which was content, process or product. The final lesson combined all three DI elements. Each lesson included a pre and post-assessment of the learning objective. The teachers were also encouraged to differentiate in other areas of instruction such as learning styles, interests and environments for learning. The teachers supported one another through

coaching, providing feedback during planning, communicating online through the Internet and suggesting activities concerning student engagement. The teacher used reflective practices for evaluating the success of their lessons and decided what modifications might be needed. The findings yielded that the differentiated instruction approach motivated the students more in engagement, met the students needs better, led to student success, provided the students with a sense of responsibility with their own learning and provided the teacher new insights in the student learning process (Stetson et al., 2007).

An action research study occurred in Leon County, Florida where the researcher focused on DI professional development (Green, 2002). For three years Green trained a group of 48 teachers in the school district on how to differentiate instruction in the classroom and enhance DI implementation using peer coaching and action research. During the first year workshops Green concentrated on the participants learning about differentiated instruction. During the second year workshops Green taught his participants how to implement DI through peer coaching. By the end of the second year Green surveyed the participants. All the teachers surveyed believed they were more knowledgeable and comfortable with using DI. Finally, for the third year of his study he concentrated on training the participants in action research to improve their data analysis and research skills. This study was very closely related to the key components in my D.O.O.R.S. study where I used DI workshops, peer coaching and action research cyclic inquiry methods to overcome DI challenges and understanding cultural proficiency.

Maslow's Hierarchy of Safety Needs Minimally Discussed

The basic physical, social and emotional needs of a student as exemplified by Maslow (1968) have to be met before the educational needs (Gregory, 2005). Maslow's needs were relevant because they define the basic human factors and conditions required for readiness to learn (Gregory, 2005). The historically oppressed African American students suffer in the basic need area due to their experience of belonging to an under class group which is treated differently. The African American students as a group historically have not received the quantity or quality of material sustenance in comparison to the dominant White student group. Consequently, their readiness level to learn might be lower (Losen & Orfield, 2002; Noguera, 2008).

Maslow's (1968) needs were minimally discussed in the majority of DI literature. Maslow (as cited in Sashkin & Morris, 1984) developed a different approach to understanding motivation by creating a theory of motivation on the basis of his own clinical experience. Maslow (1968) identified five basic groups of motives or needs which make people behave the way they do. These needs are physiological, safety, social, ego-esteem and self-actualization. Gregory and Chapman (2007) discussed that the proper learning, emotional and physical environment are necessary before implementing DI. She suggested Maslow's needs should be in place in creating a readiness climate for learning. There is minimal mention of these basic needs being met before venturing on the implementation of DI with other theorists (Heacox, 2002; Tomlinson, 1999).

Paradigms an Important Aspect of Change

DI literature had minimal mention of the problem of teachers needing to shift paradigms from traditional educational methods to DI in the classroom.

Understanding paradigms is central to understanding change in learning organizations. Therefore, paradigm shift, or the progression of one model being changed or replaced by another through a process of transformation became important in my research project (Kuhn, 1996).

Four research paradigms are recognized in scientific inquiry. They are positivism, postpositivism, critical thinking and constructivism. These paradigms are classified according to ontology, epistemology and methodology. According to Guba (1990) ontology encompasses the nature of reality. Epistemology involves the characteristics of the relationship between the researcher and the item researched. Methodology refers to the manner in which the researcher finds out knowledge (Guba, 1990).

The constructivist belief system is the most applicable to my research study because my research is based on the constructivist ontology, epistemology and methodology. My research study resembles the relativist ontology where reality consists of multiple mental constructions. The epistemology is subjectivist where the findings are created by interaction between the researcher and the inquired person or item. The methodology identifies the different constructions that exist and attempts to bring them into consensus (Guba, 1990).

Analysis of paradigms proceeds in stages or cycles. Eight stages have been identified to analyze paradigm problems or opportunities and they are: recognizing the problem, framing the problem, identifying alternative paradigms, comparing the alternatives, selecting the appropriate paradigm, adopting the paradigm, implementing the paradigm and evaluating the paradigm. A paradigm problem is unfavorable whereas an opportunity is an advantageous circumstance. After the problem/opportunity is

recognized, it should be framed by defining or limiting it. Alternative paradigms that

provide other options should be identified and compared. The selection process may not

be as simple as selecting the best alternative because of mitigating factors such as

multiple goals. The adoption stage should consider the decision-makers. Implementation

stage occurs between adoption and analysis and is most frequently the stage where the

new paradigm fails. Activities that were to be executed were not carried out. The

evaluation stage involves determining if the paradigm has met its goals (Riegle, 2008).

The major limitations to paradigm analysis are not having good judgment, strictly

adhering to a specific recipe and selecting problems that are not worthy of investigation.

In addition the process of paradigm analysis has problem areas. For example, a pitfall can

be using arbitrary criteria to define the paradigm problem. Another example is the bias

of the analyst. Care must be taken to ensure that these pitfalls are minimized in the

analysis process through awareness of these pitfalls and proceeding in a prudent manner

(Riegle, 2008).

Building Sustaining Second Order Change

I focused on how to build deep change as a leader. I also focused on professional

development trends through cultural proficient (Lindsey et al., 2007), servant (Block,

1996, 2008; Greenleaf, 1970, 2002; Wheatley, 1999a, 1999b) and transformational

leadership methods (Burns, 2003; Sergiovani, 2001). I discovered Argyris' (1990) theory

of change, Quinn's (1996) theory of leadership and Fullan's (2007) theory of change to

be the most relevant to my action research project.

According to Argyris (1990) change in organization practices is hindered by

defensive routines used by individuals within the organization. These individuals use

Model I theory-in-use and single loop learning to obtain first order change. Model I theory-in-use creates defensive reasoning through defensive consequences. Also, Model I keeps the individual oblivious to their counterproductive actions. Single loop learning resolves only the existing problem and does not solve the reason why the problem occurs. Individuals in organizations can have two theories, espoused theory and theory-in-use. The espoused theory encompasses the individuals' beliefs, values and attitudes (Argyris, 1990). Theory-in-use refers to the theory the individual essentially uses when acting. First order change results from these combining forces. First order change consists of only superficial changes (Levy, 1986).

Second order change arises from double loop learning. Double loop learning changes the underlying values and the theory-in-use (Argyris, 1990). Second order change also involves not being apparent how the change will improve circumstances, having individuals or groups in an organization learning new ways or challenging existing values and standards (Waters, Marzano, & McNulty, 2003). Changing the classrooms towards differentiated instruction by broadly affecting the student learning needs does require deep change that occurs with second order change (Tomlinson, et al., 2008).

Learning How to Build Deep Change as a Leader

Change is essential to the growth of an organization (Argyris, 1990). The leader has a critical role in enacting organizational change (Fullan, 2007). According to Quinn (1996), one individual can act as a change agent in the organization. In order for the individual leader to enact organizational change she needs to examine internally her motivational drives and the reasons she hopes to continue leading the organization.

The leader must then decide whether to lead in a transformational manner which means taking risks in order to achieve deep change or leading the organization down the path of slow death.

Quinn (1996) explains deep change as being a new way of behaving. Deep change involves risk taking, not connecting with past behaviors of incremental change, surrendering control and creating irreversible positive behavioral trends. Quinn (1996) refers to the slow death syndrome as having incremental change or no action. The slow death syndrome occurs when a leader is not focused, has a conformist attitude, violates trust for selfish gains, denies problems and loses energy from overextension. Quinn (1996) believes that in order to counter the walking dead or slow death syndrome a leader must after evaluating self-motives, build a culture of trust, take risks and share visions and goals with the workers.

Culturally Proficient Coaches Leading Change

The book *Culturally Proficient Coaching* (Lindsey et al., 2007) assists the educator with integrating cultural proficiency leadership with cognitive coaching frameworks. Cognitive coaching occurs when coaching is used as a professional tool to develop standards-based teaching and learning (Lindsey et al., 2007). Cultural proficiency coaches and leaders utilize the elemental instruments in cultural proficiency to direct exchanges among various members of a learning community in ways that acknowledge, honor and value diversity. These coaches assist with effecting change in the learning community (Lindsey et al., 2007).

The term coach is usually affiliated with athletics or sports where an individual is responsible for teaching, training and leading a group of individuals to achieve a high

sought after physical goal or mark. The term coaching occurs alone or is preceded by a modifier such as literacy coach, mathematics coaches, learning coaches or change coaches (Lindsey et al., 2007). Hence the term culturally proficient coach exists in current vernacular.

The culturally proficient coach offers an organization with a perspective and set of guidelines for an individual's or groups' work in cross-cultural settings (Lindsey et al., 2007). This means that cross-cultural dialogue is highly encouraged (Lindsey, et al., 2005). Therefore, coaching can be described as a manner for one person to mediate and influence the thoughts and actions of another individual. The coach's influence can be either instructive or reflective (Lindsey et al., 2007). Cultural proficient coaching assists the individual being coached with becoming responsive to the cross-cultural diversity of a student population (Lindsey et al., 2007).

Mediation is an important part of coaching and occurs when the coach expertly provides support to the individual involved in the coaching process. The support is provided by clarifying, refining, modifying and changing your thinking to be educationally responsive to students from cross-culturally diverse backgrounds (Lindsey et al., 2005). Therefore, a pertinent assumption occurs with the infusion of a coach and that is the act of coaching is necessary to assist and support change. This results in individuals and organizations questioning as to whether the coach had any kind of impact or change element with people wanting to see concrete results. Therefore, for my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines I embraced the concept of cultural proficiency coaching and made this concept part of my leadership role. As the culturally proficient coach I assisted

educators who want to develop their craft and positively impact student achievement irregardless of the student's social circumstances (Lindsey et al., 2007).

Leading Change Through Teacher Professional Development

Sergiovanni (2001) offers a well developed model on teacher professional development. According to Sergiovanni, teacher professional development encompasses renewal improvement strategies that lead to change. He categorizes professional development strategies into three areas and they are training, professional and renewal. Sergiovanni (2001) lists assumptions, roles and practices for each of these three areas of professional development. For instance, concerning his reference to assumptions, Sergiovanni (2001) explains three ways of viewing assumptions in professional development through comparison and contrast. First, he mentions that a training assumption is knowledge stands above the teacher. Then he explains a professional assumption is the teacher stands above knowledge. Thirdly, Sergiovanni (2001) explains that a renewal assumption is knowledge is in the teacher.

Sergiovanni (2001) explains further that professional development should offer motivational, meaningful, social and emotional engagement with inspirational ideas, materials and interaction for the colleagues both in and outside of teaching in the classroom. At the same time professional development should offer support for informed dissent by the teachers because dissent provides another alternative way of evaluating the situation. The experience should supply the teacher with the opportunity to employ new techniques and perspective of inquiry. In addition, Sergiovanni (2001) believes effective teacher training and professional development which should include coaching, needs to prepare the teacher for the new experience and provide the teacher with a sense of self-

esteem, value and knowledge concerning her own expertise. Both training and professional development models need to share the same purpose of helping teachers improve their practice (Sergiovanni, 2001). I combined Sergiovanni's (2001) teacher development models with Lindsey et al. (2007) cultural proficient coaching strategies in my research project to provide effective teacher support.

Conclusion

The taint of African American slavery made me conscious of my heritage of historical oppression as a child. The other students in my class could speak about their European heritage. My heritage as an African American student of African slave descent was treated as shameful. Recalling my own educational experience as an African American student as being negative or shameful, I created a workable action plan that integrates concepts of DI, capacity building with action research cyclic inquiry and cultural proficiency to assist classroom teachers of African American students.

Therefore, certain factors needed to be explored in the DI literature to understand the response of DI to the African American student and the practices that do not favor the historically oppressed in traditional education. Factors delving into perceptions, assumptions and traditional beliefs towards the African American student needed to be addressed. There has been a tendency for the dominant European American culture to ignore the needs of the African American student in education. Tatum (2002) refers to this tendency of ignoring the African American needs as color-blindness. Lindsey et al. (2003) explain this type of ignorance as cultural blindness. Delpit (1988) refers to this state as cultural bias. Tatum (2002) believes many White people are not aware of their racial prejudice and view themselves as normal.

There is an ongoing argument concerning intelligence and its connection to race, genetics, culture and environment. Some theorists believe race has no factor in developing intelligence since race is a societal creation (Gardner, 2004, 2006; Kunjufu, 2002; Losen & Orfield, 2002; Noguera, 2008; Sternberg et al., 2005). Counter theories have emerged that do not link race, intelligence and genetics such as Gardner's (2004) multiple intelligences brain-based learning theory. Brain-based learning theories are becoming widely accepted. Another counter theory to race and intelligence is the cultural oppositional theory (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986). This theory proposes that Black students do poorly academically in school for fear of being labeled "acting White" by their peers (Fordham & Ogbu, 1986).

The implementation of differentiated instruction into the classroom by the culturally proficient coaches (Lindsey et al., 2007; Villegas & Lucas, 2002) assists the general and special education students with better academic performance (Cohen & Spenciner, 2005; Gregory, 2003). I became a culturally proficient coach for the participants in my research (Lindsey et al., 2007). Also, I followed Sergiovanni's (2001) teaching development model when coaching the participants. Sergiovanni (2001) categorizes teacher development renewal strategies into three areas: assumptions, roles and practices. He suggests that the professional development experience should offer stimulating, meaningful, social and emotional engagement with inspirational ideas, materials and interaction for the colleagues both in and outside of teaching in the classroom.

CHAPTER IV

METHODOLOGY

Prelude Four: Peter

Peter's story ends tragically in his death from a swimming accident. His story brings to the forefront the issue of how special education is realistically preparing children to function in society. Peter was one of our 7th grade African American male students who was placed into the special education (SE) program two years ago. While in Atlantic City on a Saturday he suffered a near drowning accident with his older brother.

I visited Peter in the hospital later in the week after learning of his accident. When I entered his hospital room I found him to be comatose on his hospital bed. After speaking several minutes to Peter I turned to his mother who had accompanied me into the room and handed her the get-well card and blue teddy bear I had brought for Peter. As I placed the card and gift in her hand I jested with her and told her I can hear Peter saying to me now, *"Why just a card, why not balloons? Aren't you a teacher? Don't you make money? Why are you giving me such a little gift? Where are my balloons?"* I saw Peter's mother's eyes light up with a slight smile when I became mockingly critical about my card to Peter, the way he would retort this small gift if he were able to speak.

Peter was a highly honest person and very critical about the world around him. His directness and honesty sometimes bothered people. He was mischievous also and this sometimes landed him into trouble at school. However, Peter's charismatic personality caused him to be greatly liked by both students and staff.

Two hours after visiting Peter I learned Peter had died. After experiencing the tragic loss of my student, Peter, I realized my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines to assist teachers

had an even more viable reason to occur. Peter was an African American SE student and I will always wonder whether he was one of the general education African American students who had been misdiagnosed for SE because of his sometimes abrasive, direct, honest and mischievous behavior or if he was adequately placed in the SE program because he possessed special needs.

Research Questions

I facilitated teachers' capacity building in my research study by transitioning traditional educational methods to differentiated instruction in order to create second order change. The following four research questions guided my study. The four questions were:

1. What impact does my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines have on the teacher's capacity building for differentiated instruction?

2. What are the most effective factors needed to create a positive environment in the classroom conducive to differentiated instruction?

3. What impact does implementation of my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines have on the participants' opinions of differentiated instruction?

4. What impact does my research experience have on my leadership theories-in-action?

Research Design: Action Research

My research project was designed as an action research study because the focus of my study was on solving problems which is the aim of action research (Patton, 2002). The problems I was attempting to deal with related to implementation of differentiated instruction. I asked my participants if they had any problems or barriers in implementing

DI. When they indicated that they did, I asked them to explain their perceived barriers to DI implementation (Argyris, 1990). I suggested that the participants solve their problems by orienting the participants to the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines and asking the participants to collaboratively try to find ways to overcome the barriers they perceived.

A key assumption of action research is that the problems can be solved by people within the setting of the problem (Patton, 2002). Therefore, for my study I made the following assumptions: that the practitioners can improve DI assimilation through capacity building and overcome perceived DI challenges by using the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines. This kind of participatory problem solving in an organization leads to second order change (Argyris, 1990).

In addition, I followed the human research guidelines of the Office of Human Research. I valued the shared knowledge, openness and counter arguments of all the participants. I used confidentiality in collection of all data.

Additional strategies I incorporated into my study followed Stetson et al. (2007) study. I had my participants add a pre-assessment and post-assessment evaluation lesson objective phase. This step allowed the participants to assess or evaluate how they incorporated my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines into their classroom lessons. Also, this step involved how to assess their teaching style before the lesson (pre-assessment) and after the lesson was completed (post-assessment). To assist the participants in their assessment, I created a reflective log sheet (see Appendix C). The participants were asked to complete the reflective log after each lesson to assist with the next lesson phase.

In addition, I used DI related texts for resource guides (Gregory, 2005; Gregory & Chapman, 2007; McNiff & Whitehead, 2006) similar to Stetson et al. (2007) who used

Heacox's (2002) text as a resource guide for the participants in their study. Another strategy was modeling through direct instruction what the teachers needed to do in their classrooms with implementing DI. I followed an empowerment model for professional development (Sergiovanni, 2001) and allowed the teachers to cooperatively decide their own best methods and strategies of DI instruction. In addition, the participants learned how to better resolve their problems through action research self-reflective cycles (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

Action Research Inquiry

Action research is a form of inquiry that finds solutions for problems (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Stringer, 2008). Researchers are called practitioners in action research; the goal of the research is for the practitioner to engage in careful forms of inquiry in order to obtain relevant information that can be applied to the solution for specific problems or issues. These problems are related to their work (Stringer, 2008). Another view of action research is that it is a type of inquiry that assists practitioners to ubiquitously examine and evaluate their work (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006).

The practitioner and the participant have two main roles in action research. The practitioner, who is also the researcher, is concerned with learning and its effect on the learning of others, irregardless of the practitioner's role or research setting (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). The participant is the person who is researched. The participant is the central focus and has the greatest venture in the research. The participant can also be affected by the topic being researched or can have an effect on the research issue (Stringer, 2008).

Two approaches of action research that are closely aligned to my research project are proposed by Stringer (2008) and McNiff and Whitehead (2006). Stringer (2008) supports using both interpretive and participatory action research methods. Interpretive action research views the practitioner as the individual with professional knowledge to explore a problem. Interpretive action research recognizes this resource of knowledge is incomplete. Other knowledge may be needed that is relevant, culturally attuned to the problem and extend the understanding of the situation. Therefore, other individuals such as parents and students with this additional knowledge can be included in developing the research (Stringer, 2008).

In participatory action research, the participant takes greater charge of their role in the research (Stringer, 2008). The practitioner-participant relationship is not a parent-child authoritative relationship. The participant has a more equivalent, empowering position in the research. The inquiry into the problem is more democratic, participatory, empowering and life-enhancing. Stringer's (2008) approach of interpretive-participatory inquiry worked well with my research project because the participants were fellow teachers who had equal educational experiences to my educational experiences.

In addition, Stringer (2008) indicates that the participants seem to relate more effectively and are more motivated when they take on an empowering position in the research. The participants in my study who were empowered as teachers to implement DI in their classrooms appeared to be more motivated, after I used Stringer's approach.

McNiff and Whitehead (2006) support the premise that the practitioner needs to use self-study, another form of action research. The self-study inquiry has the practitioner at the center of their own inquiries. Several self-reflection questions which

McNiff and Whitehead (2006) propose the practitioner ask concern what the researcher is doing, how the researcher describes and explains their actions and how they hold themselves accountable to the researcher and participant (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). By answering self-reflective questions the researcher recognizes and determines if their values are realized (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). In addition, the researcher is cautioned against becoming an outsider who is abstract and distant from the research during the observation and research study process. McNiff and Whitehead's (2006) approach was helpful in exploring my leadership theories-in-action. Their approach required comprehensive self-reflection. McNiff and Whitehead self-study approach also entailed a detailed, in-depth examination of my values as the researcher which I found very revealing concerning my leadership styles.

Naturalistic Inquiry Strategy

I used a naturalistic inquiry strategy for observations of my participants in my project. My naturalistic inquiry involved studying real-world situations as they occurred naturally. I was open to whatever emerged and was non-controlling and non-manipulative (Patton, 2002). In addition, I was a participant observer in my research study. As participant observer I made firsthand observations of activities and interactions. In addition, as participant observer I sometimes personally became involved in these activities (Patton, 2002). I observed the participants in their natural environment and real-world setting. Therefore, the data I collected was authentic and not experimental (Patton, 2002).

Foundation of D.O.O.R.S.

My D.O.O.R.S. action plan was structured from two major educational theories. The first theory concerns cultural proficiency in the classroom. Lindsey et al., (2003) suggest that cultural awareness occurs at six levels on a cultural awareness continuum scale. I theorized that if cultural awareness exists on six different degrees, then DI awareness in the classroom probably exists on various levels. An action plan was needed in my study that mirrored the key problematic concepts in a teacher becoming DI proficient in the classroom. Therefore, the five D.O.O.R.S. guidelines were invented by me to assist the teacher with the DI transformation of her classroom. The teacher is the implementer of the change initiative (Fullan, 2007); therefore, she needs to understand that DI proficiency occurs, not all at once but in stages.

However, the problems of classroom instruction and management that concern DI implementation were many (Gregory, 2003, 2005; Tomlinson, 1999, 2001). Therefore, I decided to incorporate a second major theory to structure my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines concerning problem-solving and decided to use action research cyclic inquiry. McNiff and Whitehead (2006) had a five-step action research cyclic inquiry theory that had been proven successful, at least in England and South Africa. I decided that action research inquiry was a valid means of solving problems for practitioners and infusing action research inquiry with cultural proficiency concepts provided a strong foundation for my original change initiative action plan, D.O.O.R.S.

Organizational Scan

I completed an organizational scan for the Bear Elementary School, the setting for my research, during cycle one which included an investigation into the human resources

and other frames prevalent in the learning community. I collected information from informal interviews with key school personnel and artifacts to conduct the scan. I also collected data from the local and state education Internet websites on the setting of the Bear Elementary School.

Setting of Bear Elementary School

The Bear Elementary School was situated in the Midway School District which was located in a large urban city in the northeastern part of the United States. The district encompassed five high schools, five middle schools, nineteen elementary schools and four alternative and early childhood facilities (Midway Public Schools, 2008). The Midway School District had one superintendent and three assistant superintendents who managed the school district's operations (Midway Public Schools, 2008). The superintendent's position had been replaced during the past five years by three different interim or acting superintendents. In addition, in the 2007 school year, a state monitor was appointed for possible state take-over because state law allows the state to take over school districts that have very low student achievement and dubious financial practices.

The Board of Education for the Midway School District was comprised of nine members who had a three year term. Three of the Board members were elected publicly by the city, 3 members were appointed by the state and 3 members were appointed by the city. In addition, The Board was the policy maker for the district. Five appointed high school students acted as student representatives and sat on the Board.

According to data collected from the 2006 – 2007 State School Report Card, the Bear Elementary School had a student population of seven hundred and fifty six students from pre-kindergarten through fifth grades. The State School Report Card also showed

that the school has five hundred and sixty eight students for the 2007 – 2008 school year. This number was a significant decrease in almost 25% of the student population.

Bear Elementary School Student Ethnic Groups

In 2006 – 2007, 50% of the students were English speaking. One hundred percent of the English speaking students were African American (AA). No White students attended the school. The Spanish speaking students comprised 46.7% of the student population. One hundred percent of the Spanish speaking students were Hispanic in origin. Smaller diverse language and ethnic student groups included 2.2% Vietnamese, 0.4% Haitian creole French and 0.1% Bassa. This 2006 – 2007 school year the Black American students were in the majority (see Figure 4.1).

In the 2007 - 2008 school year the majority population shifted with the Spanish speaking students becoming the majority and the Black American students decreasing to the minority group. The Spanish speaking students in 2007 - 2008 made up 59.25% of the students while the English speaking students were all Black Americans decreased to 38.4% of the students. The Vietnamese students increased slightly to 2.5%.

Figure 4.1 Bear School Ethnicity Student Population

2006–2007 Student Ethnicity	2007–2008 Student Ethnicity
50.5% AA	38.4% AA
46.7% Hispanic	59.25% Hispanic
2.2% Vietnamese	2.5% Vietnamese
.4% Haitian creole French	
.1% Bassa	

The percentage of students with limited English proficiency increased from 15.1% to 17.6%. The student mobility rate decreased from 19.2% to 16.5%. The state average for student mobility slightly decreased from 11.8% to 10.8%. The percentage of students with disabilities and individualized education programs increased from 8.6% to 11.8%. The student population speaking Bassa and Haitian creole French was not listed for the 2007 -2008 school year.

Participant Selection

Three participants were selected on a volunteer basis by the school administrators. The two administrators, the principal and the vice principal, notified the staff of my research project through memorandums in teachers' mailboxes. The vice principal gathered together the names of the participants that were selected and forwarded the names to me by electronic mail (e-mail) personal communication. I had previously explained to both the principal and vice principal that I would like to make the final decision as to whether or not the teachers who initially volunteered for my project would actually participate in my study. I did decide to keep all three people who had originally volunteered because I did not anticipate any problem with their involvement in my study.

Data Collection Strategies

My research involved four main data collection techniques used in qualitative research. The data collection techniques I employed were participant observations, interviews, documents and questionnaires (Glesne, 2006). The order I followed was to administer the participant questionnaire first, give a questionnaire at the end of each workshop and conduct interviews and observations. Also, during the course of the study, I periodically collected certain documents such as lesson plans from the participants.

Participant Observation

One of my data collection techniques was participant observation. Participant observation is also known as fieldwork or direct observation and entails the observation of the participant in the research setting (Glesne, 2006; Patton, 2002). For my study, I performed fieldwork observations as a participant observer and wrote descriptive and analytical field notes while I observed the participants teaching in their respective classrooms (Glesne, 2006).

I openly wrote notes on the classroom setting and the participant's interactions with their students including dialog and physical behavior. In addition the participants' encounters with their students that did not include differentiated instruction also were noted (Glesne, 2006; Patton, 2002). I wrote full running notes as unobtrusively as possible leaving wide margins on the sides of the pages for additional coding and further notations. I developed my own form of shorthand to expedite taking notes. I did not discuss my observations with anyone else until I had fully written up my field notes. Within a two to three day period, I reviewed my field notes and added, clarified, or further expanded on the observation notes (Glesne, 2006).

Interviews

The second data collection method in this study was semi-structured interviews. I conducted two audio taped interviews with two of the 3 participants lasting from 30 to 60 minutes depending on the time schedule of the participant. One of the interviews occurred at the beginning of the study and the second occurred at the end of the study. One of the 3 participants did not complete a beginning interview session due to her conflict with graduate school courses. However, she did complete a closing interview.

I had anticipated this problem when I learned she was enrolled in graduate school because Santangelo et al. (2008) mentioned graduate school study as a challenge for some teachers in completing professional development DI activities.

Interspersed through the study I engaged in unscheduled discussions with the participants on a weekly or bi-weekly basis. The unrecorded discussions were documented by taking handwritten notes. When the interaction was a few minutes long, the notes were made after the interaction had ended. When the interaction was longer, I made brief notes during the interaction being aware that the note taking may be considered a distraction to the participant (Glesne, 2006).

I asked open-ended questions to ascertain the participant's opinions towards DI and if they had changed during the course of the study. Stringer (2008) suggests that the researcher/interviewer begin with a grand tour question during the interview process. A grand tour question usually begins with the researcher asking the participant to tell them about an issue or phenomena (Stringer, 2008). With this type of question the participants, who can also be referred to as respondents, have the opportunity to describe the experiences in their own words (Stringer, 2008).

The interview continues with mini-tour questions. The mini-tour questions are designed to bring forth more detailed descriptions from the grand tour questions. These questions assist the researcher with extracting a better explanation of events, issues and contexts investigated from the participants (Stringer, 2008). During the course of the interview, prompt questions can be introduced to have the participants divulge more detail about a given experience. Prompt questions include the researcher asking the

participants if there is anything else they can tell about their experience or includes affirmative comments (Stringer, 2008).

The basis of action research is to assist people in obtaining new understandings of issues. Therefore, questions that extract details and not just convey superficial responses will assist the exploration of the problem further (Stringer, 2008). Consequently, I incorporated grand tour questions, mini-tour questions and prompt questions into my interviews to attempt to elicit more detailed responses from the participants pertaining to the issues being researched (see Appendix D). In addition, I used probing questions to obtain information concerning a specific DI related issue that may have unexpectedly arisen during the interview.

I transcribed my recorded interviews using an interview log to assist with analysis of what the participant said (Merriam, 1988 as cited in Glesne, 2006). I listened to the tapes and notated pertinent sections of the interview making note of when these sections occurred on the tape counter. I made additional analytical notes in the margins.

Collection of Journals and Artifacts

The third data collection method utilized in my study was the use of journals, field notes and pertinent artifacts. Researchers can gain a large amount of significant information from examination of these documents in the context of research because they can supply information to the researcher concerning the main elements of the situation (Stringer, 2008). The teachers were asked to keep a weekly reflective journal. However, because of lack of time on the participant's part, when I collected these journals at the end of the research project the journals had only a few pages filled in them by one participant. Another participant chose to submit an essay, instead of his journal notes.

The third participant turned in no journal artifacts claiming lack of time to complete

notes. Also, artifacts were collected of lesson plans and classroom handouts.

Questionnaires

A fourth data collection technique used in this study was questionnaires. By

giving the participants a prescribed set of questions to answer in a printed questionnaire

at the beginning of my study and also distributed to the staff that attended my three

workshops, provided me with an effective means of obtaining feedback. The reason for

using a questionnaire was because the participants failed to maintain reflection journals in

my pilot study. I anticipated a similar occurrence for this study and decided another

means of collecting information about the participants' opinions had to be devised.

Questionnaires were resourceful and economical ways of collecting data (Patten,

2001). This technique measured the opinions of the participants. An opinion is measured

when the researcher utilizes a very small number of items concerning a specific element

as opposed to measuring attitudes. An attitude is when an individual or group holds a

general predisposition towards a group of people, organization, institution, issue or

phenomena (Patten, 2001). Attitude measurement involves using a number of items in an

attitude scale (Patten, 2001). I decided to measure opinions instead of attitudes in order to

keep the research project focused on the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines. The participants'

opinions were also solicited in the interviews.

The participants' opinions about DI were assessed in my initial meeting with them

by giving them a questionnaire containing four questions to evaluate specific

characteristics of DI and teaching (see Appendix E). Also, the staff member workshop

participants were given a questionnaire to voluntarily complete at the end of each of my

four workshops. I included a question to solicit an overall evaluation of DI and asked open-ended questions to capture the participants' impressions of DI and utilizing DI in teaching. The questionnaire also had an open-ended question on my leadership (Patten, 2001). However, I did meet with the 3 participants as group members or individually on a weekly or biweekly basis to obtain feedback on how the assimilation process was developing for DI.

Collaboration and Reflective Practices

My data collection efforts and my interactions with the participants were facilitated by using the collaborative approach. The collaborative approach was used throughout the course of my research. This approach involved bonding the participant and the researcher relationship by following five guidelines in classroom observation practice (Sullivan & Glantz 2005) which included: identifying the issue from the teacher's perspective, providing feedback reflection on what was heard, initiating collaborative brainstorming with most of the ideas generating from the teacher, drafting resolutions for the problems through a collaborative discussion and agreeing on an action plan and setting up a follow-up meeting .

In addition, reflective practices were used where I discussed with the participants shared ideas and/or assumptions (Sullivan & Glantz, 2005). Reflective practices involve the acceptance of the principles of the experiential learning theory. This theory is based on the premise that effective learning occurs, leading to a change in behavior, when the inquiry originates from a problematic experience of the participants (Osterman & Kottkamp, as cited in Sullivan & Glantz, 2005). Also, reflective practices involve understanding that learning is most effective when the learner is concerned with

a collaborative situation, rather than an isolated event and the context is meaningful for the learner (Bridges, as cited in Sullivan & Glantz, 2005). According to Sullivan and Glanz (2005), reflective practices occur in four cyclical stages. The four cyclical stages include identifying a problematic situation, reflecting on the problem or experience in a collaborative or cooperative setting, while considering variations in thought and actions and testing the innovative behavior and assumptions formulated collaboratively.

The Change Theory

I adopted Fullan's (2007) change theory as the means to create change through my action research. Fullan's (2007) theory is a three phase process and the theory applied to the three key concepts of implementing a change initiative in an organization. Phase one of Fullan's (2007) theory entailed recognizing and adopting a change initiative. Phase two encompassed implementing the change idea by putting it into practice. Phase three involved the change idea's outcome and if it will be sustained.

D.O.O.R.S. Workshops

D.O.O.R.S. guidelines became my Fullan (2007) change initiative for DI capacity building and was used throughout cycles two, three and four to create a foundation for the participants to implement DI in their classrooms. I orientated the participants in my research study with my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines through workshops, discussion groups, handouts and individual training. My D.O.O.R.S. guidelines and handouts were discussed in three workshops for the entire staff at Bear Elementary School and one mini-workshop for my participants only. Newmann and Wehlage (1995) found that professional development has a greater impact school-wide when the entire staff participates and the professional development is continuous.

Each workshop was approximately 45 minutes long. In these workshops, there were ongoing discussions of three books on DI and articles on DI, action research and understanding cultural proficiency occurred (see Appendix F for complete list). The three books used for DI and action research resource guides were Gregory's (2005) *Differentiating Instruction With Style: Aligning Teacher And Learner Intelligences For Maximum Achievement*; Gregory and Chapman's (2007) *Differentiated Instructional Strategies: One Size Doesn't Fit All*; and McNiff and Whitehead's (2006) *All You Need To Know About Action Research*. I selected these series of books and articles on DI because they presented DI theory in a clear, concise manner and provided a broad overview of DI. In addition, I chose the McNiff and Whitehead (2006) action research text because it is teacher friendly and provides an understandable explanation of the action research cyclic approach to problem solving in education.

Professional development credit was given for my participants who attended my mini-workshop and for the participants in the three larger staff workshops. This credit was dependent on the approval of the district Professional Development Office Director, Ms. Howard. Approval for the workshop was obtained after I collaborated with the Bear School principal, Ms. Shirley, on completing workshop forms and the completed forms were submitted to Ms. Howard (see Appendix G).

Discussion Groups

I had originally planned each week to discuss at least one classroom problem through e-mail with my participants. This action developed into in-person scheduled discussion group meetings at the request of the 3 participants. The purpose of the weekly problem solving meetings was for the participants to become more knowledgeable

of the DI approach and to learn and understand how to overcome their challenges in implementing DI (Green, 2002).

The total number of discussion group hours at Bear School was eight hours and fifty six minutes. During the discussion group sessions the teachers decided their own subject matter for this weekly discussion meeting and were therefore empowered to chose which topics or problems they needed to present for discussion. After the first discussion group meeting, I made up an agenda for each discussion group. I waited until after the first meeting in order to learn which topics the participants preferred to discuss.

Overview of Action Research Cycles

The action research process emphasizes cyclic inquiry into the research problem. The cyclic inquiry can consist of three or more steps to assess the problem (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Stringer, 2008). Stringer (2008) proposes that action research inquiry is an investigation of a specific problem in a three step process recurring over and over again to remedy, alleviate, or ameliorate the situation. The three steps of the cycle are look, think and act. The first step is to look in order to collect information from careful observation of the issue. The second step is to reflect on and analyze the information in order to identify relevant features and elements. The third step is to act or to devise solutions using the analysis from the collected information. This three step process is repeated in order to reformulate solutions and obtain a successful outcome (Stringer, 2008).

McNiff & Whitehead (2006) proposes an action-reflection cycle consisting of five steps. The five steps are observe, reflect, act, evaluate, modify and then transition into innovative directions (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). I used the cyclical process associated

with action research in my research study to better address teachers transitioning from the traditional educational method to the DI method, overcoming perceived DI challenges and becoming better problem-solvers by being action researchers (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006; Stringer, 2008).

Overview of the Four Cycles

My research study had four cycles based on when a particular action occurred and the effects of that action on the research project (see Appendix H). The cycles of my research project were further divided into subsections called phases to make the cycles more manageable. Cycle one had three phases. Cycle two had four phases. Cycle three had three phases and cycle four had three phases.

I remained constant with Fullan's (2007) phase one concept that entailed recognizing and adopting a change initiative for my cycle one. During cycle one I worked diligently to establish a collaborative relationship with the Bear School officials to obtain district approval to conduct my research. I had to establish communication networks with the Bear School former principal, current principal and vice principal, the Office of Professional Development Director, my principal at my current work site Homer Middle School and the current vice principals and the Central Office administration in order to secure approval. I used in-person meetings, telephone conferencing and personal communication with e-mails to set up meaningful dialogue with these school officials. After my study was approved I had to collaborate with the Bear School vice principal to recruit three teachers to be participants in my project. In addition in cycle one I completed an organizational scan of Bear Elementary School.

For my cycle two, I implemented my change ideas by putting them into practice (Fullan, 2007). I facilitated four weekly DI discussion group sessions, one interview session with 2 of 3 participants, one unscheduled classroom observation session with the 3 participants. In addition, I facilitated one DI 45 minute mini-workshop solely for the 3 participants. For my cycle three, my aim was to assist the participants in addressing perceived DI challenges by completing two scheduled classroom observations, leading individual coaching, modeling and reflective discussion sessions with the participants. At the same time I facilitated capacity building with the entire staff by presenting two workshops on DI and my action plan D.O.O.R.S.

For my cycle four, I followed Fullan's phase three concept, that involved the change idea's outcome and if it will be sustained. During my cycle four phase I continued to assist the participants and the entire staff in addressing perceived challenges with DI by conducting one workshop on cultural proficiency and reviewing learning theories. I completed my final scheduled classroom observation sessions with my 3 participants. I then ended this cycle with conducting an interview with each participant and received evaluation and feedback from the workshop participants on my influence as a leader through their completion of questionnaire forms. Throughout cycle two through four, cultural bias towards African American students became a concern in Pam and Tim's classroom. However, I did not have enough triangulated data to confirm the extent of this issue.

Cycle One: Bonding with School Administration July 7, 2008 – October 6, 2008

My change theory for cycle one begins with Fullan's (2007) phase one concept. Fullan's phase one entailed recognizing and adopting a change initiative. I recognized

the need for DI use in the classroom and created D.O.O.R.S. as my change initiative for my research project. However, now I had to obtain the recognition and adoption of my project by the Bear Elementary School principal and my participants. I had to scan the organizational needs (Bolman & Deal, 2003) and find out if the needs of the organization complimented the needs of the individual employees. The organizational scan assisted me with understanding the school culture and climate for adopting my project. In addition, I had to request the recruitment process for the participants begin at Bear School in order for me to implement my action research plan.

Cycle one consisted of three phases. Phase one procedures included contacting the principal and vice principal in-person to discuss the purpose, timeline of the study and participant selection. The principal submitted an item request to the Board of Education to obtain approval to conduct my study. I checked the Board minutes each month to find out when my study was officially approved by the Midway School District Upon approval I then notified the principal and vice principal. The vice principal had consented to act as the lead school administrator for my study.

Phase two involved me conducting an organizational scan. Phase three of cycle one involved the recruitment process for my participants. The participants were purposively recruited by the vice principal at Bear Elementary School by answering a public announcement or placing a note in the vice principal's mailbox to show their interest in joining my study.

Cycle One – My Leadership Focus

The beginning focus of cycle one for me as a leader was to use the transactional leadership trait of bartering. I bonded with the school principal through collaboration

and meaningful dialogue to perform my study at the Bear Elementary School through negotiations, interactions and exchange of needs and interests suitable to both of us (Sergiovanni, 2001). My needs involved recruitment of participants, use of the school facility and administration and staff support for my research project. In addition, I had to incorporate my cultural proficiency leadership (CPL) theory-in-action in cycle one by recognizing and respecting the existing school culture when I obtained the input of the principal and vice principal in the participant recruitment and eventual selection process (Lindsey et al., 2003). I had to develop my servant leadership theory-in-action by serving the participant's needs first. In my initial meeting with the participants, I had to request ideas and feedback from the participants at various stages in my research study (Greenleaf, 2002).

Cycle Two: Capacity Building October 7, 2008 – November 19, 2008

Cycle two consisted of four phases. It was the next cycle of my change theory that was based on Fullan's (2007) phase two concept. Phase two of Fullan's (2007) change theory entailed implementing the change idea by putting it into practice. Cycles two and three of my research were included in Fullan's (2007) phase two stage because these cycles involved the implementation and putting into practice of my research project.

Another goal of cycle two was to build capacity with the participants and the learning community by minimizing my control of the interactions with the participants and maximizing the participants' controlling their interactions (Senge, 2006). I proceeded towards this goal through my four discussion groups, completing one interview session with two of the 3 participants, attending one unscheduled observation session with the 3 participants and facilitating one 45 minute DI workshop solely for the 3 participants.

My participants were introduced to D.O.O.R.S. as the change initiative during cycle two through interviews, four discussion group sessions, unscheduled classroom observations and individual sessions. I obtained an understanding of the participant's existing beliefs concerning DI, parent involvement concerning DI and the traditional procedures, policies and routines that must be followed in order to initiate the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines. This was accomplished at the interview sessions and through my initial questionnaires.

Establishing Relationships With Participants

During cycle two phase one, I initiated and completed the selection process of the 3 teacher volunteers to participate in my research project with the assistance of the assistant principal (Senge, 1999). The procedures for purposively selecting the participants involved the vice principal first making a public announcement concerning my project on the intercom and then polling the staff either individually or in groups. This process resulted in 3 teachers volunteering for my research project.

I then assessed the participants and made the final selection of the 3 participants after a discussion group meeting on October 7, 2008. I informed the principal and the vice principal of my selection via e-mail. I sent confirming e-mails to each of the 3 participants with copies to the principal and vice principal thanking them for volunteering. The e-mail also stated that I will meet them individually each week to discuss their concerns with DI and the research project.

During cycle two phase one, I met with the 3 participants for the first time in one of the participant's second floor classroom for introductions and unscheduled observation of the participants. At this meeting, I introduced myself, provided a brief biography

of myself and contact information, provided a brief overview of the project, distributed a welcome letter (see Appendix I) and had the participants sign letters of consent to participate in the project (see Appendix J). In addition, I orientated the participants on how they will participate in my study and how I will assist them as a coach.

Establishing a relationship of trust between the researcher and the participants is important during the building phase of research (Sergiovanni, 2001; Stringer, 2008). The participants need to become comfortable in openly revealing their thoughts and experiences. Creating a trust environment and relationship is the responsibility of the researcher. During this time of building the initial relationship, Stringer (2008) advises the researcher to identify herself, identify and try to discover the issues, obtain permission from the participants to discuss the issues and negotiate suitable times and places to meet (Stringer, 2008). I followed Stringer's recommendations for establishing a relationship of trust in my study and allowed the participants to arrange the dates as much as possible of scheduled classroom observations, workshop and discussion groups. I would adjust my schedule if possible to fit their requested dates. For unscheduled classroom visits, I would let the participants know that within the next two weeks, I would be coming to visit them.

For phase two, I had my discussion group meetings one to four with the participants and established profiles on each participant. Participant one whom I called Pam was a fourteen year kindergarten special education specialist. Participant two whom I called Tim was a novice first year, first grade teacher with DI college course work background experience. My third participant, Dina was a three year bilingual second grade teacher and had extensive workshop experience with DI. In addition, I began

providing a literature rich environment for the participants. I gave them DI related articles and resource materials to read.

Phase three of cycle two involved me completing my first unscheduled classroom observation with each participant as an observer. I was able to assess the classroom climate and learn the teaching style for each participant. Phase four involved me facilitating my first mini-workshop on DI exclusively with the three participants. I was able to orientate the 3 participants on planning DI lessons through my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines and introduce the participants to action research cyclic inquiry for problem solving in the classroom.

Cycle Two – My Leadership Focus

The beginning focus of cycle two for me as a leader was to use the transformational leadership trait of building human potential (Sergiovanni, 2001). I was able to build the participants' potential by motivating the participants to higher levels of commitment. I motivated the participants through my coaching in workshops, individual participant encouragement and mediation during classroom observation sessions. I incorporated the cultural proficiency leadership trait of understanding the importance of cultural and history of oppressed people by including in my workshops the need to be open and respectful of cultures (Lindsey et al., 2007). I also incorporated the servant leadership trait of working in a unified manner by suggesting that the participants and staff collaborate on their DI implementation by holding informal or formal discussions of how they are progressing with DI (Wheatley, 1999a).

I conducted one small mini-workshop for the 3 participants and later in cycle three and four I facilitated three workshops for the entire staff (see Appendix K).

The dates for all the workshops were collaboratively agreed upon by the principal and vice principal for the staff workshop and the participants approved the mini-workshop date during cycle one. The first workshop was a 45 minute mini-workshop solely for the participants entitled *Bridging Differentiated Instruction*. The participants' workshop consisted of my detailing the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines and providing handouts explaining D.O.O.R.S., requesting the participants to openly provide challenges that they have experienced with DI or if they prefer to anonymously write the barriers on paper and then discuss possible ways to overcome them. Also, the participants were provided a short open-ended questionnaire to complete on their views of their mini-workshop experience. I requested that the participants begin to keep a reflection log and I provided an example. I made the participants aware of resource books about DI available as references for their usage. At all times, I was open to questions and suggestions from the participants.

Also, during cycle two I conducted a 30 minute taped interview with two of the 3 participants prior to the mini-workshop to elicit their views on differentiated instruction, what challenges they experience and how they handle the challenges before learning the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines. The third participant was unavailable for the first interview session. I was available after school one evening per week to offer support for any questions or concerns the participants may have with the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines. For additional support, I tried to have one of the teachers at Bear Elementary School who was highly knowledgeable in DI to volunteer to be an in-house teacher buddy to assist the participants. However, due to an after school scheduling conflict the individual teacher I had in mind for this position could not participate in my study.

Cycle Two – Data Collection

The data collection for cycle two was from field observations from my initial meeting of the participants and the unscheduled visit to their classroom. Also, I made journal reflections of my experience for my action research study and wrote field notes highlighting important conversations and events. Additional documents that I collected for data analysis were e-mails, letters of consent, initial questionnaires from the participants and questionnaires from the mini-workshop.

Cycle Three: Changed Teaching Style and Staff Professional Development

November 20, 2008 – December 31, 2008

Cycle three consisted of three phases. The aim of cycle three was to assist the participants in addressing perceived DI barriers through facilitating two scheduled workshops for the entire staff and leading individual coaching and reflective discussion sessions with the participants. By directly addressing perceived DI barriers in my second staff workshop entitled *Managing Change in the Classroom*, I provided support to the entire learning community and my participants.

Cycle Three – My Leadership Focus

As a leader for this cycle I focused on the transformational leadership phase of bonding (Sergiovanni, 2001). The two DI workshops *Understanding Differentiated Instruction and D.O.O.R.S.* and *Managing Change in the Classroom* provided a good vehicle to implement bonding by stimulating awareness and raising the school's goals. I facilitated a shared covenant of bonding myself as the leader to the staff in a moral commitment with including the staff in problem solving perceived DI barriers (Sergiovanni, 2001). My professional development workshops assisted the Bear School

staff with bonding through vertical articulation and communication. This was an area the school was cited as being weak in by the state curriculum team.

During cycle three when I conducted a DI workshop for the entire staff entitled, *Understanding Differentiated Instruction (DI) and D.O.O.R.S.* I suggested that the participants also attend this workshop to reinforce their learning. These workshops entailed explaining the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines, providing handouts, two small group activities outlined in the agenda and had a question and answer session. In addition, I enhanced the workshop experience for the participants by having inquiry and self-reflection among the attendees take place, being an honest and open leader and presenting my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines in a way that invited questions and I offered the staff a questionnaire at the end of each workshop to voluntarily complete (Argyris, 1990).

For cycle three and cycle four, I incorporated the CPL leadership trait of achieving cultural proficiency by effectively responding to a different cultural setting. I devised an exercise or activity that demonstrated this trait (Lindsey et al., 2003). I incorporated the servant leadership trait of creating conditions for institutional engagement by holding a workshop for the staff to address the perceived DI barriers (Block 2008; Greenleaf, 1970; Wheatley, 1999a; 1999b).

In addition in cycle three, I observed the participants individually teaching in their classroom for at least two or more class periods for a lesson including DI methodology. These observation sessions were scheduled and not impromptu. I used enriching conversations and collaborative reflective practice guidelines to provide feedback to the participants about their performance after each session. In addition, I followed through on

participants' inquiries to see if the inquiries were adequately addressed or needed to be revisited.

Why Highlighting Learning Theories Became Important

Learning theories became the central focus of my study after I recognized the need for the teachers at Bear Elementary School to learn more about this topic after Workshop I. The teacher needs to understand the DI strategy how to connect the learning theory to the learning style preference of the students in the classroom. I highlighted three learning theories at Workshops II and III and they were Gardner's (2004, 2006) multiple intelligences, Bloom's taxonomy (1956), Dunn and Dunn (1987) and Dunn et al. (1992) multisensory perception theory. I chose these theories because they seemed to be the most familiar with the participants. The participants expressed prior knowledge of these theories.

I attended two workshops on DI at the state teacher's convention during the past school year during the cycle two stage of my research. The information I acquired at these workshops supported the premise that by viewing different theories on learning styles, personality types and multiple intelligences, teachers can discover individual ways in which they can learn how to resolve issues in the classroom and assist their students with problem-solving (Gregory & Chapman, 2007).

Bloom's Taxonomy

Bloom (1956) developed a theory that individuals think or can learn about knowledge at six different levels. Level one is knowledge. Level two is comprehension. Level three is application. Level four is analysis. Level five is synthesis and level six

is application. Gregory and Chapman (2007) referred to this theory as Bloom's Thinking Taxonomy. Gregory suggests teachers use Bloom's (1956) Thinking Taxonomy to differentiate questions or layer the instruction based on the readiness of the students or their level of comprehension. I decided to use Bloom's taxonomy's theory during my workshops to assist the teachers with creating a choice board based on Bloom's (1956) six levels of knowledge. Choice boards give students the opportunity to process information or demonstrate their competence and skills in different ways (Gregory & Chapman, 2007). Figure 4.2 displays a sample choice board I used in my general music classes for assessment of student knowledge.

My choice board was created after the students finished a unit on orchestra instruments and Bill Withers, who is a popular rhythm and blues singer and songwriter. The choice board was created based on Bloom's taxonomy six levels of knowledge comprehension. I told the participants in my workshops that I was able to ascertain the different levels of knowledge and comprehension the students had for a particular topic with my choice boards. For the advanced classes I allowed the students to choose their activity on the choice board. For other groups who were struggling with these concepts I assigned specific tasks to certain individuals and turned the activity into an agenda. For my Workshop II session I had the participants cooperatively create a choice board based on a reading activity for C.S. Lewis' (1950) *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe*.

Figure 4.2 Music Choice Board Activities

Recall 5 facts about Bill Withers & tell a friend.	Define patriotic music & sing a patriotic song with a friend.	How many names of orchestra instruments can you list? Can you label the family they belong in?	Sing "Lean on Me" for a friend using the karaoke player microphone. Have the friend critique your singing.
Demonstrate how to play "Lean On Me" on the piano to a friend.	Define rap music & sing "Rap of the Presidents" with a friend.	Create 4 lines or verses of a rap song about President Barack Obama.	Tell a friend the characteristics of the four orchestra family instruments. Search for a photo of 1 instrument from each family on the Internet.
Show a friend how to play "Lean on Me" on the xylophone bells. Practice with your friend.	List the names of 10 presidents of the USA. Share your list with a friend.	Write an acrostic poem about Bill Withers with a friend.	Create a rubric for a group of singers who want to audition for a choir. Explain your ranking system.

Dunn and Dunn Multisensory Theory

I was glad to learn at the end of my study that one of my 3 participants, Dina had

decided to use Dunn and Dunn (1987) and Dunn et al. (1992) multisensory perception

theory in order to develop her future DI lessons. Dunn et al. (1992) created a learning

style theory based on the multisensory learning styles of students involving

characteristics that were environmental, emotional, social, perceptual and physiological.

During my discussion group and workshop sessions I informed the participants about the

perceptual characteristics of Dunn et al. (1992) in order to encourage the participants to

begin building DI lessons based on their student's perceptual learning preferences. The

Dunn et al. (1992) perceptual characteristics are divided into four categories of auditory,

visual, tactile and kinesthetic. Dina, who was not in attendance for any of the workshops

and had received all of the material as the workshop participants. Dina decided to use Dunn et al. (1992) approach to teaching students DI because it was the most relevant for her group of second grade bilingual learners.

Cycle Three – Data Collection

The data collected for cycle three included observations from my workshops, two scheduled observations in the classroom and observations from informal interactions with the participants. I made journal reflections of my workshops and wrote field notes of classroom observations. In addition, I questioned the participants about their reflection logs to see if they were in need of any assistance. None of the participants said that they needed assistance. I later learned that they were not writing in their reflection logs.

Cycle Four: Sustaining Change January 1, 2009 – February 13, 2009

Cycle four consisted of three phases. Cycle four involved Fullan's (2007) phase three concept. Phase three of Fullan's (2007) change theory involved the change idea's outcome and learning if it will be sustained. My goal during cycle four which was to reflect on my change initiative and my research questions to determine if any additional data needed to be ascertained. In addition, cycle four concerned interview two, my discussion group five session with the participants, the collection of journal logs and artifacts to obtain participant feedback.

The aim of my workshop during cycle four was to conduct a detailed discussion with the staff on cultural proficiency. My workshop was entitled *Understanding Cultural Proficiency through D.O.O.R.S. and DI* and emphasized commitment. The transformational leadership theme for cycle four involved binding the individual and organizational needs. My workshops provided a means to accomplish binding

by promoting self- management (Sergiovanni, 2001). By the third workshop, the staff and participants were aware that improvements can be made routine and become everyday practice by being connected to methods that guide what to do, support the needs of the school and protects values (Sergiovanni, 2001).

In Workshop III, I discussed CPL traits and had group activities to show the staff how to become an effective CPL leader. I incorporated the servant leadership traits by attending to the needs of the staff through the questions presented in the workshops. I also spent time with the participants to discuss learning theories and had the attendees complete an activity based on finding the learning theory preference for students using multiple intelligence (Gardner, 2004, 2006), Bloom's taxonomy (1956) and multisensory perception (Dunn et al., 1992). In addition, I conducted the final observation in the classroom to assess how the participant was utilizing DI in the classroom. I collaboratively used reflective practice techniques to provide feedback.

Cycle Four – My Leadership Focus

My leadership focus during cycle four concerned me taking action to ensure the change initiative outcome would be sustained. At the same time I had to do this subtly in order for the participants to empower themselves as change agents. When the participants became an integral part of the transformation experience the change initiative was more likely to be sustained (Argyris, 1990; Fullan, 2007). Argyris refers to this as second order change or penetrating change. This meant at this final stage I had to use reflective practice and introspective thinking to make certain my participants understood the change initiative, D.O.O.R.S., and reasons why change was needed in the classroom.

Cycle Four – Data Collection

I collected data from field observations of the workshops, classrooms, informal interactions with the participants and the participants' journals. Also, I used my own written journal reflections of workshops, field notes of classroom observation and interviews. Through the final interviews, final workshop questionnaires, classroom observations and other data I collected I ascertained the outcome of my study.

I had planned to keep a detailed reflective journal to record my personal leadership experience in order to see if there are any elements of growth during the course of the study. However, I found that due to lack of time, some days I could not write in my journal. Therefore, each week I tried to summarize in my journal the major events which took place.

My journal included observations I made of my interactions with the participants and administration and my observations in leading the workshops. Also, I reflected on my espoused leadership theories. I analyzed my strengths and weaknesses in my leadership style and reflected on ways to improve my personal mastery. I sought counsel to help with accountability from educational scholars.

One of the interview questions given at the end of the study asked the participants to provide feedback on my effectiveness as a leader. I periodically inquired about my leadership effectiveness at the discussion group sessions. I also collected artifacts and reflection logs from the three participants. These collection methods and strategies were used throughout the study.

Exploring My Leadership Strengths and Limitations

During my research I explored the overlapping principles of my three chosen platforms for leadership – CPL, servant leadership and transformational leadership to discover my strengths and weaknesses as a leader. I used three instruments to evaluate my growth as a leader. The first was through self-analyzing my daily and weekly reflective journal. The second was by reviewing the findings of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Instrument (MBTI) which I took as an assessment tool (August 7, 2008). I tried to review my data collected during the study to see if any reoccurring themes or patterns concerning my MBTI test results were present in my study. The third instrument to evaluate my leadership growth arose from answers to questions from workshop questionnaires and participant interviews.

My MBTI Personality

The MBTI was a personality type assessment (Myers & Myers, 2005) which I completed on August 2, 2008. The MBTI tools examined my leadership style from different perspectives. The results of the MBTI revealed my personality type as Extraverted Thinking with Sensing and Judging (ESTJ). The *extraversion* element is where I focus my attention. The *sensing* represented the way I take in information. The *thinking* concerned the way I make decisions. The *judging* concerned how I deal with the outer world.

The MBTI describes my personality strengths as an ESTJ who is excellent as an administrator because this personality type generally understands systems and logistics. The ESTJ can foresee potential problems, foresee the steps needed to accomplish a task, assign job duties and efficiently oversee resource allotment. This personality understands

how to cover all areas, leaving nothing undone in order to have events occur on time. When dilemmas occur, the ESTJ will plan to rectify the situation. Their preference is organizational trends, procedures and systems. Their orientation is to tasks, action and the end result (Myers & Myers, 2005).

According to the MBTI my weaknesses are in the area of combining my sensing and judging personality traits. Some limitation with the ESTJ personality type include not balancing the sensing element and making decisions too quickly before absorbing enough information. In addition, ESTJ types most preferred pattern of preference was thinking. The second most preferred pattern of use was sensing. The third most preferred pattern was intuition and the least preferred was feeling.

I was able to see validation of the MBTI assessment of my personality type through self-reflection and data analysis of critical events which occurred during my research. However, I found the MBTI assessment not accurate in describing all of my traits. I could clearly see precision in my thinking after I reflected on my methodical inventions and activities used throughout my research project which were planned and led to the eventual completion and success of my study. Through data analysis, I was able to code many sections of my reflection log with one of these four MBTI personality traits. The thinking trait was my dominant pattern that appeared in my data analysis. The sensing element was the second. The third most dominant pattern that appeared was intuition. The least used pattern that appeared during my study was feeling. This aspect of the MBTI I found contradictory. For many years as a musician my artistic or feeling side of my personality was the dominant force that fostered my creativity. By the end of the study I recognized that the MBTI suggestion that my thinking and logic personality traits

were the most dominant in my personality proved to be valid. However, my feeling side, particularly concerning ethics was not a subdominant force.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness deals with how well the findings are worth looking at and taking note of and credibility is one of the criteria used to determine trustworthiness (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Credible findings and analysis of data can be produced through using the techniques of prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation. Prolonged engagement involves allowing enough time to achieve certain goals, studying and understanding the culture, testing for misinformation introduced by the biases of the researcher or the participants and building trust in relationships (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Persistent observation by the researcher identifies the relevant characteristics and elements in the issue being researched (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Triangulation refers to a technique of using multiple data collection methods to compare and corroborate the research findings and increase the confidence in these findings (Glesne, 2006; McMillan, 2000; Patton, 2002). I was able to produce credible findings and analysis in my research study by using the techniques of prolonged engagement, persistent observation and triangulation.

I had an extensive prior relationship with Bear Elementary School, the administrators and the staff. I took my training for my principal certificate at Bear from September 2004 to June 2005. While at Bear during this time period, I interacted extensively with the staff and administrators as a principal-in-training. I made copious notes on the Bear staff and environment. I was highly familiar with the school culture and have a working relationship with the staff.

My current action research project involved extending an already existing close relationship with Bear Elementary School. Therefore, I began my research project after experiencing prolonged engagement and persistent observation of the educational environment and staff of the Bear Elementary School. I realized that my prior knowledge of the Bear Elementary School could bias my perceptions. I therefore tried to maintain as much of a nonjudgmental approach to my study as I could. I continued experiencing prolonged engagement and persistent observation by having weekly meetings, unscheduled and scheduled observations, workshops and e-mail contacts with the participants and staff.

Triangulation

Triangulation is another technique I used in my research study to improve the credibility of my findings and analysis. My research study utilized multiple data collection methods of shared observations, questionnaires, interviews, field notes, narrative stories, journaling and collection of artifacts such as lesson plans, journals and reflection logs. By using multiple data collection techniques, the data was richer and the findings more believable (Glesne, 2006; Patton, 2002). Findings are considered credible when the results using several methods of data concur (McMillan, 2000). In addition, I led my research study with transparency by being open to my participants about my beliefs and actions giving the participants the feeling of trustworthiness (Goleman, Boyatzis, & McKee, 2002).

Limitations

The limitations of this study concerned the relationship of the researcher to the participants. As the researcher, I needed to develop a relationship with the participants

where the participants could be candid and frank with me. I overcame this limitation by empowering the participants and building trust with the participants.

The participants should not be inhibited by the researcher observing them and questioning them. Patton (2002) recommended a goal-free evaluation which means that the fieldwork and the data collected for assessment are from a wide range of sources and outcomes. Next Patton (2002) suggested that the researcher compare the collected data and the outcomes with what the participant needs. I followed Patton's (2002) suggestion for my study.

Another limitation to the study was the fact that I was using action research for my method of inquiry. Action research can pose problems with validity and reliability. The research process is dependent on the practitioner's knowledge and training in the social sciences. Therefore, the researcher needs to keep in mind that the study results may prove to be incomplete or invalid. The main criticism of action research is that attempting to do a good deed and find a remedy to a problem, does not necessarily mean that the good act transfers into good social research. Consequently, a practitioner needs to be aware of these issues when using action research (Bloor & Wood, 2006). To counter this limitation, I used several sources of data.

Conclusion

My action research study facilitated teachers to make a paradigm shift from traditional educational methods to DI through capacity building and action research cyclic inquiry (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). My research study encompassed four cycles based on Fullan's (2007) three phase change theory. Cycle one concerned me seeking and obtaining approval of the Bear Elementary School principal and school board to conduct

my research. This cycle had three inner phases. Cycle two consisted of four phases and involved building capacity with the participants and the learning community through recruiting 3 teachers purposively interested in DI to be participants in my project and providing them ongoing professional development experience. Cycle two activities included discussion groups with an initial questionnaire, the participant mini-workshop with a questionnaire, unscheduled classroom observations, the first audio-taped interview of the participants and reflective coaching sessions.

Cycle three consisted of three phases and involved assisting the participants with addressing perceived DI barriers through two scheduled classroom visits and two DI workshops offered to the entire Bear School staff. Cycle four consisted of three phases and was involved in building cultural proficiency understanding with the staff to develop their general knowledge concerning learning theories and student learning preferences. The cycle four activities include Workshop III, discussion group five and the second scheduled classroom observation. The cycle four data collection was of logs, questionnaires, artifacts and interviews to be used for data analysis and coding purposes. My study as a leader included analyzing my reflection journal, reviewing the findings of the Myers-Briggs Type Indicator Instrument (Myers & Myers, 2005) and reflecting on how I used my three leadership theories-in-action: transformational leadership, servant leadership and culturally proficient leadership.

CHAPTER V

CYCLE ONE: BONDING WITH SCHOOL ADMINISTRATORS

Background

African American students are placed at disproportional rates into special education (SE). This dilemma is increasing (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Parrish & Wolman, 2004). A common reason for the increase of African American students in SE is lack of differentiated instruction (DI) in the traditional classroom (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002; McNally, 2003; Parrish & Wolman, 2004). I chose differentiated instruction to act as my change initiative to affect this placement of African American students into SE. I conducted an action research study that facilitated capacity building in teachers through DI. The action research study which occurred in an urban elementary school setting goal was to improve the teacher's implementation of DI in the classroom with the majority population of African American students since lack of implementation of DI in the classroom is directly connected to the disproportional placement of African Americans in SE (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Losen & Orfield, 2002; McNally, 2003; Parrish & Wolman, 2004).

My period of research occurred from July 9, 2008 through February 13, 2009 at the Bear Elementary School in four cycles. For my project, I became a coach, facilitator and participant-observer for three purposively selected classroom teachers. Also, I presented a series of four workshops on various topics related to differentiated instruction open to the participants and school teaching staff. I called my action research plan D.O.O.R.S. Each acrostic letter in D.O.O.R.S. represented a guideline for classroom teachers to follow when using differentiated instruction in their lessons.

Cycle One – Overview

Cycle One encompassed the period from July 9, 2008 to October 6, 2008 and consisted of three phases. Cycle one entailed me arduously working to bond collaboratively with key administrators and school officials to have them recognize and adopt my change initiative for implementing differentiated instruction (Sergiovanni, 2001). In phase one, I established ongoing communication and obtained approval to conduct my action research study from Ms. Shirley, the newly appointed principal at Bear Elementary. I valued the principal's opinion during this phase and we both agreed on the actions needed to make my study a success.

In phase two, I completed an organizational scan for Bear Elementary School. The organizational scan during phase two assisted me in bonding with school officials by understanding the culture of the school and with recognizing the needs of the learning community. The Bear School culture and climate were already familiar to me because I had spent one year at Bear School as an administrative intern three years ago. I was anticipating little change in school culture and structure prior to completing the organizational scan, since a new principal had just been appointed in August, 2008. Ms. Shirley had not yet instituted any changes. Phase two also involved my contact with the Office of Professional Development in order to ensure that the participants in my workshops would receive proper credit for attending my workshops from the district and the state.

In phase three, Ms. Young, the vice principal, recruited three volunteers to become participants in my project based on their interest in learning about differentiated instruction. She notified me by e-mail who the participants were on September 19, 2008.

In addition, during phase three I obtained official approval from the Midway Board of Education to conduct my action research project at Bear Elementary School. I had to collaborate and bond with the Bear School vice principal, Ms. Young, in order to submit the proper request to the district officials to obtain final approval to begin my project.

Cycle One Phase One – Obtaining Approval to Conduct Research at Bear School

I had previously been informed by Ms. Brenda, Bear Elementary School's former principal, that Bear School had no principal. I learned this information after sending Ms. Brenda an e-mail dated July 9, 2008 and receiving a response. Ms. Brenda suggested I contact Ms. Young, Bear School's current assistant principal, about my research project. Therefore, I sent Ms. Young, the assistant principal, an e-mail on July 10, 2008 outlining my project and inquiring about the identity of the new principal so that I could contact the new principal to obtain approval. Through various exchanges of e-mails, we decided to have an in-person meeting on July 23, 2008 at 10:00 a.m. in her office at Bear Elementary School.

I had found Ms. Young's e-mails very encouraging because she commended me on conducting research and I looked forward to speaking with her in-person. However, my first meeting with Ms. Young was uneasy. Ms. Young seemed skeptical of my research project by the tone of her voice and the types of questions she asked. I was surprised to see a change in her attitude from the prior e-mails I had received concerning my research project. Ms. Young now acted as though she did not want me to facilitate research at her school by the type of questions she asked me about conducting research.

I began to reason why there was a change in her attitude. I decided her attitude change was due to recently published studies completed by graduate students from other

universities within the past 2 years which yielded negative findings about the schools. When these studies were published this resulted in negative publicity for the Midway School District and became an embarrassment to the administrators at the schools where these studies were performed.

Ms. Young asked me pointedly why I was not doing research at my current work site and how was I to manage going back and forth between the two sites. I believed this was a valid concern because research is typically conducted at your work site. Therefore, I explained to Ms. Young that I had difficulty in using my current work site on a recent research project I had conducted there the previous school year due to frequent classroom interruptions from public announcements and constant noise from students loitering in the hallways. Also, I would use my preparation periods and personal days to commute between my work site and Bear Elementary School.

After my explanations, Ms. Young seemed more supportive. The tone of her voice softened and she recommended that I contact the newly appointed principal of Bear Elementary School, Ms. Shirley. Ms. Young also volunteered to act as the lead school administrator for my research study. On reflection I sympathized with Ms. Young being cautious because she had to decide about the merits of my research project and its effect on her school.

I already knew Ms. Shirley because we had previously pursued an educational degree at the same time for principal certification at Rollins University. Through various e-mails, we arranged to have an in-person meeting on August 7, 2008 at 9:00 a.m. in her office. Again, I initially met resistance to my project. She questioned the logistics of conducting research at a school different from my work site. I gave her the same

explanations I had given to Ms. Young. In addition, we discussed having the new,

yet-to-be assigned principal at my school also approve me commuting between the two

schools, having my work site vice principals arrange my work schedule to accommodate

this commute and having the teachers who attended my workshops obtain professional

development credit. She agreed at the end of the meeting to have me conduct my study at

Bear Elementary School, to try to recruit participants for my study and to submit

a request to the School Board seeking approval from the Board to conduct research at the

school. I followed through and obtained approval from my vice principals on having

a compatible work schedule to more easily conduct research and the Office of

Professional Development to provide professional credit for teachers attending the four

DI workshops I facilitated. On reflection, I believe that my explanations of the

disadvantages of using my current work site and the benefits of professional development

to Bear Elementary School persuaded both administrators to allow me to conduct

research at their school.

Cycle Two Phase Two – Organizational Scan Outline

An organizational scan was completed from August through October, 2008 for the

Bear Elementary School during the phase two stage of cycle one. An investigation was

made into the structural, human resources, political and symbolic frames prevalent in the

learning community (Bolman & Deal, 2003). The scan entailed analyzing information

retrieved from the local, state and school district websites concerning the structure of

the learning organization and the demographics. Additional information was retrieved

from unscheduled interviews with the administrators and teaching staff at Bear

Elementary School.

For the organizational scan, I had hoped to interview all key coalition groups at Bear School including the teachers, parents, custodial and cafeteria staff. However, I was met with resistance by the vice principal, Ms. Young. When I inquired about scheduling interviews with the staff during the month of October, Ms. Young insisted that I did not need to do these interviews. She said that I was already familiar with the culture of the school from my past association as an administrative intern.

I reflected on Ms. Young's decision not to allow me to perform scheduled interviews with the staff. She probably believed that the school culture had stayed the same over the past three years. I tried to discern if the vice principal was sincere in her suggestion or if she was trying to act protectively to cover up any weaknesses or limitations I may discover during interviews with the staff. I decided not to argue the point with her because I felt there were other more important issues at hand concerning my study such as participant selection. However, I proceeded more attentively through the next phases of my research project with my field observations to discover information for the organizational scan.

School in Need of Improvement

Bear School is listed as a school in need of improvement in their Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) 2006 Report because the Bear School students have not reached the AYP proficiency level stipulated annually by the state. The AYP proficiency scores are based on the students' Language Arts Literacy (LAL) and mathematics standardized test scores retrieved annually from the state test. The target state proficiency levels for the 2005, 2006 and 2007 school years were for grades three through five students to reach 75%

proficiency in LAL and 62% in mathematics. The target state AYP proficiency levels for

2008 – 2009 school year is for 73% in LAL and 69% in mathematics.

The Bear School grade 3 students in 2007-2008 school year averaged 42.1%

proficiency in LAL and 23% proficiency in mathematics (see Figure 5.1). The grade 4

students in 2007 – 2008 averaged 28.9% proficiency in LAL and 25.3% proficiency in

mathematics. The grade 5 students in 2007 – 2008 averaged 15.1% proficiency in LAL

and 28.8% in mathematics. The Bear School test scores were significantly below the

district and state averages except in the case of the grade 5 test scores which were a few

points above the district average.

Figure 5.1 Adequate Yearly Progress (AYP) Report for 2007-2008

| | State Target Proficiency Level for Grades 3 to 5 | Bear | Elementary | School |
		Grade 3	Grade 4	Grade 5
LAL Language Arts Literacy	73%	42.1%	28.9%	15.1%
Mathematics	69%	23%	25.3%	28.8%

The *No Child Left Behind Act* (NCLB, 2002) required the state to measure

annually the AYP for each school. The Bear School was currently in year five for

planning and restructuring. The Midway School District is required by the state to

restructure the school through developing an alternate governance plan (State School

Report Card, 2006). Bear School had formed a School Leadership Committee (SLC) that

assisted the principal with overseeing the mission of the school and with developing an

alternate governance plan. The SLC committee had at least one or more representatives

from every adult coalition group including the teachers, parents, paraprofessionals and the building operations staff.

Culturally Diverse Staff

During the 2008 – 2009 school year the Bear Elementary School employees were comprised of four diverse ethnic groups: African Americans, Hispanics, Caucasians and Asians. The percentage of African American non-teaching staff members like cafeteria workers was in the majority at 50%, the percentage of Hispanics was at 30%, the percentage of Caucasians was at 18% and Asian staff members were in the minority at 2%. The two administrators on staff consisting of one principal and one vice principal were both African American. The teaching staff was comprised of 60% African American members, 20% Caucasian and 18% Hispanic members. The Asian employees comprised 2% of the teaching staff.

These statistics parallel the student population which had the Hispanic students as the majority at 60%, the African American students at 38% and the Vietnamese students at 2%. The African American and Vietnamese students represent the minority. Among the teaching and non-teaching staff the African Americans were in the majority. However, the Hispanic students were in the majority among the students.

There were 63 teachers on staff at Bear Elementary School during the 2007 – 2008 school year. One hundred percent of the 63 teachers were state certified. There were four paraprofessional teacher aides at Bear School. Two teacher aides were African American, one was Caucasian and one was Hispanic. In addition, there was one Hispanic literacy coach, one Caucasian mathematics coach and one African American technology coordinator.

The adults who composed the non-teaching and support staff in the 2007 – 2008 school year were also from one of four diverse ethnic groups, African American, Hispanic, Caucasian or Asian. There were two African American security guards, two Hispanic secretaries, three African American custodians, six Hispanic and one African American food service worker. In addition, Bear School had one Hispanic school community coordinator, one Asian school nurse and one African American guidance counselor. Other support staff members included one African American social worker, one African American school psychologist, one African American truant officer and two Hispanic and one African American Parent-Teacher Organization officers. When a learning community has a mixture of diverse cultural and ethnic group members who are highly collaborative this sets the scene for a cultural aware and diverse organizational environment for the students and the staff (Lindsey et al., 2003).

Structural Frame – Simple Structure

The structural frame concerns the division of labor and determines the functional roles and relationships of the employees in an organization. Organizational control through maximum performance with minimal problems becomes the main goal. An organization's structure represents resolutions for a continuing set of problems that occur in the organization. The organizational design needs to include a balanced, carefully planned structure to accommodate collective goals and individual differences (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

The Bear Elementary School structural frame reflected the simple organizational structure (Mintzberg, 1979) because two levels of structure existed. The two levels were the strategic apex and the operating level. At the strategic apex level, the highest level,

the principal oversaw the organization through direct instruction, supervision and management of all school personnel. The principal had absolute authority over the daily operations of the building.

The operating level was lower than the strategic apex and consisted of small units of workers who received direct instruction from the principal (see Figure 5.2). The principal continually monitored the workers on the operating level and in the simple structure gave rewards and punishments to the workers (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

Figure 5.2 Simple Structure of Bear Elementary School
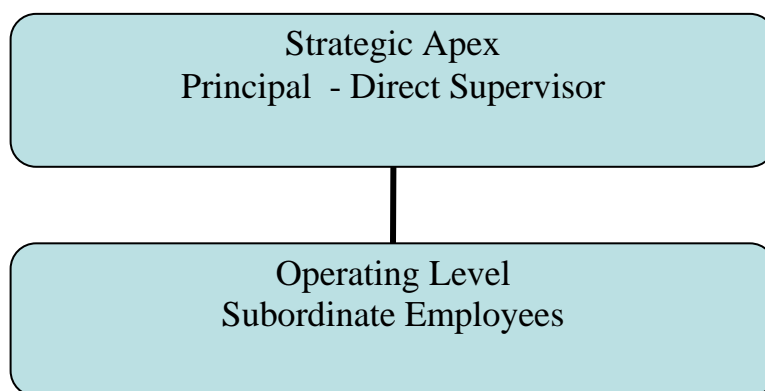
Division of Labor

The principal at Bear Elementary School operated using a fixed structural division of labor inherited from the central district office. The principal supervised employees in two types of categories, curriculum instruction and building operations. The Bear Elementary School principal had a vice principal and her office staff to assist the principal in the operation of both categories.

In the curriculum instruction category there were individuals and small units the principal directly supervised. This subgroup consisted of the school leadership team, the child study team, the pupil assistance team, the literacy coach, the mathematics coach, the technology coordinator, the school community coordinator, all classroom teachers,

the students and the parent organization (see Figure 5.3). The curriculum instruction

group was made up of the professional staff members who serviced the students. They

were the teaching staff, counselor and paraprofessionals. The students were the recipients

of this subgroup. The principal was also responsible for the direct supervision of

the students.

Bear Elementary School had grades pre-kindergarten through fifth grade teachers

in the curriculum instruction category. These teachers were divided into subgroups based

on the content of the subject areas they taught (see Figure 5.4). The principal was

considered the direct supervisor of all teachers in her building. Also, the central district

office had employed an external supervisor according to a specific subject or content area

to supervise the classroom teacher.

Because a teacher also had an external district supervisor, this sometimes created

tension and conflict. When the classroom teacher had two supervisors internally, the

principal, the vice principal and one or more supervisors in their content areas in which

they taught sometimes agendas were crossed. External supervisors from the central office

of the superintendent included a supervisor in the content areas of language arts literacy,

mathematics, science, history, English Second Language (ESL), special education and the

special areas of music, physical education, computer technology, library media and other

areas. When there was a conflict of interest between the directives the teacher received

between the supervisors, the decision of the principal, who was the teacher's direct

supervisor, prevailed.

The categories of the classroom teacher included general education instruction

and special education instruction. There were two self-contained special education

classrooms and two special education inclusion classrooms. The self-contained

classrooms had a teacher certified in special education and one paraprofessional

instructional teacher's aide. The inclusion classrooms had one general education teacher

and one special education teacher. These two teachers usually worked in a co-teaching

situation where each teacher taught the entire class of general education and special

education students together.

Figure 5.3 Subgroups in Curriculum Structural Frame
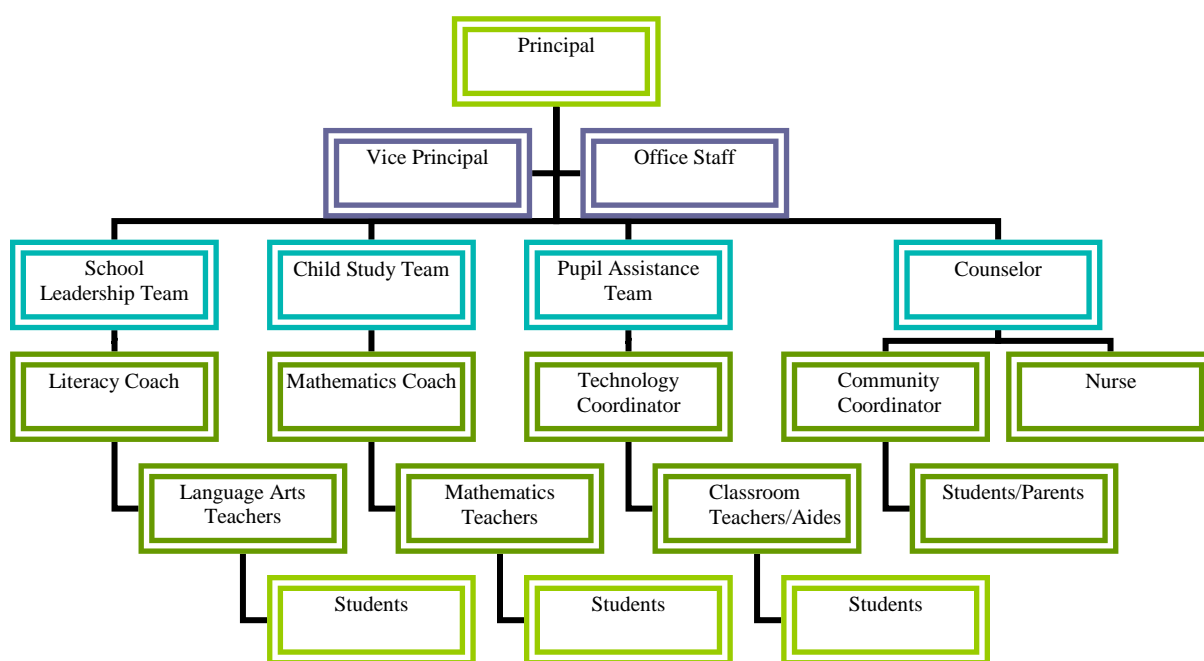
Figure 5.4 Subject Areas Subgroups in Curriculum Structural Frame
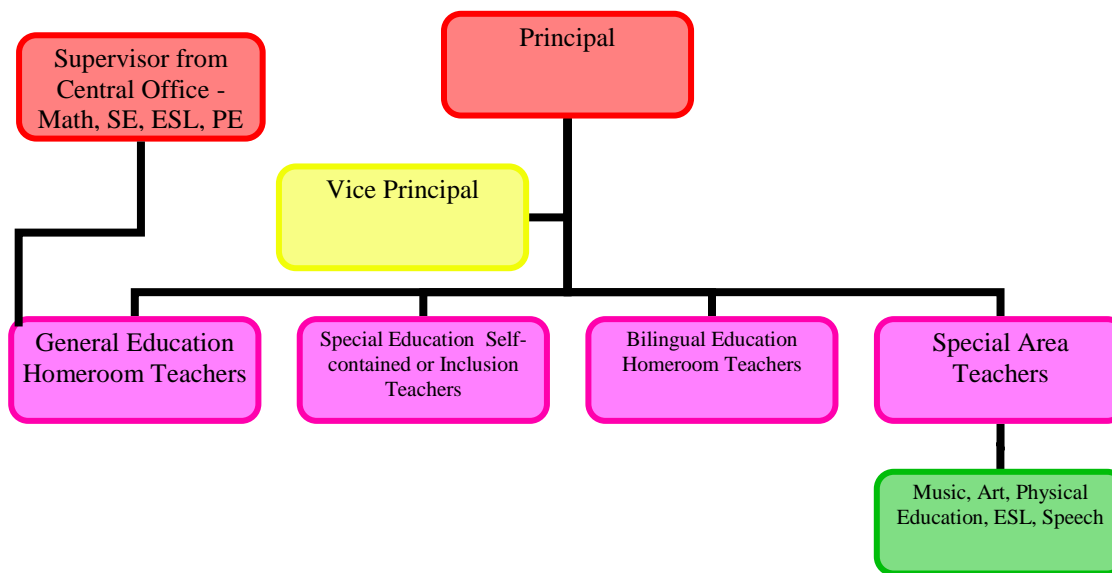
The general classroom teachers were categorized into additional subgroups. These subgroups were academic content area teachers and special area teachers. The homeroom teacher was considered the academic content area teacher. She was responsible for teaching all academic subjects to the students in her homeroom. The literacy and mathematics coach only worked with homeroom teachers who instructed the students in literacy and mathematics. The special area teachers were teachers who taught subjects that were considered non-content academic area and included music, art, physical education, library, computers and any other non-content area subject.

Building Operations Subgroup

The second category of individuals and groups of employees the principal directly supervised involved building operations. This group of workers included the head custodian and his cleaning staff; the food service manager and her group of cafeteria workers; the head security guard and his security guards; the truant office and the students; and parent organizations. The building operations group was considered

non-certified staff. However, the head custodian and food service manager were required to possess a state license certificate.

Structural Frame Tensions

Tension was created structurally in the building operations category because the non-certified employees, like the certified teachers, had an external supervisor from the Office of the Superintendent who gave directives. Therefore, the non-certified staff members in this category had three supervisors, the principal, vice principal and the external supervisor in the area of her expertise who originated from the central Office of the Superintendent. If conflicts did arise for the workers among the directives of the three supervisors then the principal's directives were usually followed because she was the direct supervisor. The principal overall directly supervised approximately one hundred fifty adults and four hundred students.

Organizations try to gain greater influence over the environment by producing coalitions. However, greater influence can produce entanglement and erosion that self-defeats the goals of management (Pfeffer & Selancik, 1978). Although multiple supervisors, one internal and one external, can promote healthier organizational climate (Peterson, 1995), confusion can be caused when an employee has two or more direct supervisors.

Political Unrest – Lack of Time Causes Major Tension

Ms. Shirley, the principal of Bear Elementary School, spoke about the lack of time issue during my first meeting with her on August 7, 2008 to discuss my research project. Lack of time to perform duties can cause political unrest for the administration as well as the staff. Ms. Shirley said:

The only thing is that Ms. Young, the vice principal, will have to oversee this

project because as the new principal I will not have enough time to help you

with research. I need to spend the time with my staff (Lee, Field notes,

August 7, 2008).

The lack of time issue was passed down to the rest of the staff because their jobs also

were structured with multiple duties. The teachers I spoke with informed me that they did

not have enough time to complete their tasks because of the burden of having too many

job duties.

Also, these teachers expressed their concerns that the lack of time in their

schedules prevented them from concentrating on important educational matters such as

implementing differentiated instruction with the students. One teacher said: "Each time

we turn around another job requirement is placed on our shoulders. They are not giving

us enough time to do our job." Another teacher said, "Only today, another supervisor

from downtown came to visit our classroom wanting us to do different things."

I inquired, "What is the name of your supervisor?" The teacher's response was, "I don't

know. She just came into the classroom to look around, said she was the new supervisor,

told us some new information, and then left. I have no idea what her name was." (Lee,

Field notes, November 3, 2008). The teacher's response showed the frustration in

receiving orders from multiple supervisors and having to perform the additional duties

assigned by multiple supervisors.

Structural Frame Impact on DI

Successfully implementing differentiated instruction in a school means the school

leader provides all teachers encouragement, support and nurturing (Gregory, 2003, 2005).

The top down management design limited the school leader to provide teacher encouragement, support and nurturing factors for two reasons. First, the large number of staff members limited the amount of time the school leader could spend with encouragement one on one with a teacher or groups. Second, because of the large number of staff the school leader had to rely on her support staff, the vice principal and external supervisors to supply this kind of support. The problem arose when the principal had some support persons who were not sensitive or knowledgeable about the specific needs of the teachers. Therefore, it was highly important that the principal institute an on-going system of differentiated instruction professional development training for the teachers to provide the kind of nurturing and support needed to successfully implement DI (Holloway, 2000).

Human Resource Frame

The human resource frame delved into the fit between the employees and the organization. The manner in which the organization and the employees interacted together was one of the central focuses of the human resource frame. The organizational needs and the human needs had to complement each other to minimize tension (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Data on the Bear Elementary School human resource frame was collected through analysis of unscheduled observations with the 3 participants, informal interviews with the 3 participants, informal interviews with five teachers from other grade levels and state reports.

Bear Elementary School Human Needs

Human and organizational needs impacted on Bear Elementary School human resource frame. The human needs related to the needs of the employees and included

physiological, safety, loving relationships, esteem and self-actualization (Maslow, 1968).

Physiological needs included food, water, oxygen, physical health and comfort. Esteem

needs involved valuing oneself. Self-actualization needs include seeing one's own

potential. For three years at Bear School the panda care bear and school motto "Bear the

Caring School" assisted the school with striving to develop loving and caring

relationships under the previous school principal, Ms. Brenda.

The human physical needs of the staff at Bear School appeared to be met because

the internal physical appearance of the school was neat, clean and attractive. The

hallways and classroom floors were kept tidy by the day and night custodial staff. Each

floor had a rest room with decorative colored toilet items added inside. There was even a

large sofa in one of the female rest rooms for staff members to recline. The parking lot

which was also used as a play area for physical education classes was litter free and

appeared to always be kept clean. All of the windows, doors and classroom fixtures

appeared to be in tact. The staff doubled the small copy room as the teacher's lounge.

Bear School appeared to be located in a low crime neighborhood. The homes

surrounding the building had been painted recently and had clean and orderly yards.

The school had two security guards who patrolled the inside and outside of the school

building. One security guard or school support staff member was always posted at the

front door requiring all visitors to sign a roll book. The security staff provided a safe

environment for the students and staff.

There was one nurse on staff who was there to take care of the medical needs of

the students and staff. The students had a gymnasium that doubled as the school cafeteria

with a stage for performances. Some of the classrooms had cloak rooms where students

could hang their book bags and coats. Breakfast, lunches and afternoon snacks were served to the students in the cafeteria by cafeteria workers supervised by a food service manager. The equipment for the kitchen included a hot oven and large refrigerator freezer in the basement.

Bear School Organizational Needs

Organizational needs relate to developing characteristics that promote a healthy culture and compliments human personalities. Bear Elementary School had a highly collaborative staff according to the State Curriculum Summary Report. However, the report stated that the collaboration and interaction existed on the horizontal level, such as communication among teachers in one grade level and needed work on the vertical articulation level, such as communication between teachers in various grade levels. According to the Bear Elementary School State Curriculum Summary Report, the organization needed a leader who promoted change through empowerment and inspirational strategies. Bear School was commended for having this type of administrator, Ms. Brenda, and now the new principal, Ms. Shirley, appeared to possess similar skills.

State Report Discloses Human Resource Elements

The Bear School State Curriculum Summary Report was reviewed to further analyze the human resource frame. The report was constructed by a team of seven education professionals and community members from the State Department of Education. The state team visited the Bear Elementary School in October, 2005. The review team activities included a review of documents collected for the school portfolio and data profile. The report stemmed from 52 classroom observations; general

observations, such as morning and afternoon arrival and dismissal, lunch in the cafeteria and student restrooms; 32 interviews with teachers; 3 interviews with building leadership and administrators; 1 interview with district administrators; 26 interviews with students; 25 interviews with school and support staff and 28 interviews with parents.

The state report yielded three important findings concerning the Bear Elementary human resource frame. The report stated:

The first major theme that emerges strongly from the data is that the professional school family is highly collaborative and enjoys a high level of interpersonal trust. The second major theme that emerges from the data is strong and effective leadership on the part of the principal and the administrative staff. The third major theme has a dual influence on the learning environment and the academic performance. The data strongly support a conclusion that the learning climate of the school is very child centered; hands-on problem solving in an active learning mode is the norm.

These findings were important for the implementation of DI in the classroom because an environment of learning that is student-centered and child focused is needed for DI instruction (Gregory, 2005).

Human Needs and Organizational Characteristics Agree

The State Curriculum Report Summary commended the Bear Elementary School staff on their healthy school climate. Also, the report commended the former school principal, Ms. Brenda, on her leadership style. The current principal, Ms. Shirley, had a leadership style that was compatible with Ms. Brenda and enabled continued professional growth of the professional staff. The acceptance of my research project by the newly

appointed principal showed that the principal promoted continual professional development growth, like her predecessor Ms. Brenda.

Political Frame

The political frame of an organization involves the premise that organizations are comprised of diverse individuals, interest groups and coalitions (Bolman & Deal, 2003). Lasting differences in values, beliefs, interests and perceptions of reality occurs in most organizations. Many decisions are based on allocating scarce resources. Also, conflicts among the coalitions may happen because of competition for scarce resources. Data collected for the political frame involved analysis of the structural frame, determining the dominant coalition groups at Bear School and their political agendas. In addition, information was retrieved in informal interviews with the 3 study participants, informal interviews with the school administrators and other members of the teaching and non-teaching staff at Bear Elementary School to determine the political sources of power at the Bear Elementary School.

The Power Source

The Bear School structural design determined who yielded the most dominant position of power. The top down strategic apex gave the administration the strongest positions of authority. However, there were two administrators at Bear School the principal and the vice principal. I discovered the two administrators did not always work in concert with one another with the same agenda.

I discovered the vice principal, Ms. Young, was the strongest politically by structural design since she filled the void in leadership between the former and the new principal appointment during the summer of 2008 until the fall of 2008. Ms. Young, who

had worked at Bear School for three years, was also more familiar with the employees'

needs and the organizational needs. In addition, she was responsible for overseeing the

allotment of resources. Therefore, I discovered that Ms. Young due to her human

resource knowledge and the fact she held the responsibility for overseeing the school

resources was the most dominant figure.

> The feeling that the vice principal was more in charge of the school than the
>
> principal was expressed by several employees. One employee said, "The vice
>
> principal seems more in charge of the school, however, the new principal
>
> is trying to regain control of the school as the leader" (Lee, Field notes,
>
> November 3, 2008).

These statements by the employees showed that they readily saw Ms. Young as the

strongest politically because they directly acknowledged the vice principal being the

person in authority.

The Political Agenda

Organizations often allow some individuals or groups more access to setting the

political agenda (Bolman & Deal, 2003). The principal was responsible for setting the

political agenda at Bear School due again to the top down structural design of the school.

The principal's source of power was the control of rewards and she had access and

control of the agenda. I discovered an inconsistency would occur because the principal

and the vice principal at Bear School would not operate with the same agenda. As a

result, on two different occasions my workshops had to almost be re-scheduled or

delayed in starting because the two administrators had forgotten about the pre-scheduled

workshop dates I had originally arranged through the vice principal.

Ultimately, the principal's agenda or activity was treated as the most important and the vice principal's agenda, consisting of my workshops was treated as secondary. Two of my four workshops were delayed in starting at the prescribed time due to the principal's agenda being treated as primary. The lack of communication between the two administrators in agenda setting may have been the source of this conflict.

Coalition Groups at Bear Elementary School

Bear Elementary School had five internal and one external coalition group derived from the subgroups discussed in the structural frame. The five internal coalition groups were comprised of the two administrators, teachers, non-teaching support staff, parents and student groups. The sixth coalition group was the external group made up of supervisors and administrators from the central office. I was able to ascertain information concerning the political frame at Bear Elementary by informally conducting interviews and observations with individuals from the three major coalition groups, the administrators, the teachers and the non-teaching support staff members to understand the coalitions groups and their agendas.

Political Conflicts

Ongoing differences and scarce resources undermine the power and dynamics of an organization (Bolman & Deal, 2003). The act of bargaining, negotiating and striving for a higher position of power becomes the central focus among stakeholders in organizations. Political conflicts encompass individuals or groups of importance vying for power and promoting their interests or desires. Organizational goals and decisions originate from these concepts in the political frame (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

The importance of the coalition groups was how one group favorably or unfavorably affected another group. The most friction among the groups occurred when the higher level group negatively affected a lower group. I observed several members of the teaching staff complain about performance evaluations not being fair. This would involve the administrators' who initiated the evaluations and the teachers' coalition groups who received the evaluations. I was unable to probe this issue in depth due to the confidentiality clauses in my study concerning personnel issues.

The political climate of the school was connected to the treatment of the lower coalition groups by the administrators. All the coalition groups seemed to be collaborating to improve the student learning experience. There appeared to be little or no internal strife during cycle one when the organizational scan was performed.

The Midway School District central office administrators represented a higher level external political coalition group than the principal and vice principal. The school district administrators had offices that were located physically outside of the Bear Elementary School in an eight story office building. The school district central office administrators, headed by the Office of the Superintendent, issued directives that the principals and teachers had to follow. In addition, the school leader is sometimes micro-managed by the Office of the Superintendent and the Board of Education. I recalled the former principal at Bear School once said, "Some principals have difficulty surviving because of the politics of the district destroying them."

Symbolic Frame

Effective organizations have activities and events that are meaningful to the employees (Bolman & Deal, 2003). In the symbolic frame organizational efficiency

becomes secondary to the cultural heroes, heroines, myths, ceremonies, rituals and stories that assist with individuals connecting the purpose and meaning of their jobs with their personal lives. The symbolic frame helps individuals and groups to peer into the culture of the organization to find out what holds the organization together and what unites the employees around shared values and beliefs (Bolman & Deal, 2003). I collected data to understand the symbolic frame at Bear School through informal interviews of the 3 participants and informal interviews with the administration and staff members. In addition, I referred to my observations and comments to discern what symbols had important meaning to the Bear School community.

Three Symbolic Hallmarks

Events can have multiple meanings because individuals and groups construe meaning from situations and experiences differently. Individuals in organizations search for symbols to find resolution during misunderstandings, to enhance predictability, find direction and affix hope and faith to the problem (Bolman & Deal, 2003).

I stated in my journal:

Bear Elementary School was known for three symbolic hallmarks which were the symbol of school pride according to the staff I informally interviewed. The decorative bulletin boards, the shining pink tile floors and the glass display cases on each floor were the school's hallmark symbols because they were distinctive to Bear School. The color pink for the tile on the hallway floors was specially ordered for Bear School by the principal from a previous administration. Also, how well these items were cared for showed how important they were to the

teaching and non-teaching staff in honoring the past traditions of the former

administration concerning school pride (Lee, Journal, November 30, 2008).

Interactive Bulletin Boards – A Symbol of Pride

The coalition group behind the decorative bulletin boards was the teachers who

spend very long hours after school decorating interactive bulletin boards for the students.

I witnessed one of my participants staying until six o'clock one evening with her co-

teacher in order to create an interactive bulletin board based on the theme for Hispanic

month. One Bear School staff member commented, "Bear School is known for its

decorative bulletin boards that are interactive for our students. You need to walk around

and look at the bulletin boards and display cases set up by Ms. Maria to see how we see

this as a symbol of our school pride."

A school administrator asked me, "Have you walked around the school building

to notice the display cases and the colorful bulletin boards? This helps us with our school

culture" (Lee, Field notes, November 30, 2008). I was already aware of these distinctive

bulletin boards from the previous time I had been at Bear Elementary School as an

administrative intern.

The Hallways – Source of School Pride

The hallway bulletin boards were not the only symbol of school pride. The second

symbolic hallmark was the clean pink tile floors which covered the hallways in the entire

three story school building. The custodial staff was responsible for the care of the pink

tile floors and was the guardian of the second symbolic hallmark. The two night

custodians were responsible for the job of wet moping, waxing and cleaning the tile

floors. Bear School had three floors covered with pink tiles. The pink tile floors were

immaculately kept in fine condition by the dedicated night staff of custodial workers.

During the daytime the two day custodians, the teachers and support staff members

collaborated to keep the hallways neat, clean and attractive. I cannot recall seeing any

papers, candy wrappers or paraphernalia of any type on the floors of the hallways during

my weekly observations.

I noticed at the end of the school day when the students were dismissed at

3 o'clock the two night custodians appeared at the Bear School front gate. Like the

changing of the guard at Buckingham Palace, the two custodians who were six foot tall,

African American men, slowly and stately began to make their rounds. They locked each

gate on the outside of the building. They did not lock the front gate until after 6 o'clock

p.m. in the evening because the after school program was in session until 5:30 p.m. and

this would cause an inconvenience for staff members who stayed late to work. When the

custodians began their nightly rounds of cleaning the hallways and classrooms, I noticed

the teachers still working after school would greet them in the hallway and classrooms

with great respect. Some staff would call upon them for assistance while others would

ask them how they were doing (Lee, Journal, November 30, 2008).

Ms. Maria – Display Case Artist

The display cases were designed by a bilingual teacher, Ms. Maria, who had

a high degree of talent in the arts. Ms. Maria's artistic talent was so versatile that she was

responsible for overseeing the decoration of the entire multipurpose room and stage for

the Hispanic month assembly. The many hours she spent each day after school to assist

with special decorations and keep up the appearance of the glass cases was highly

commendable (Lee, Journal, November 30, 2008).

Ms. Maria was a bilingual teacher fluent in Spanish and English whom I first met 3 years ago during my internship at Bear School. She was still continuing the tradition of designing elaborate glass display cases. Ms. Maria was an Hispanic American female who at first seemed to be one who was very critical and complained frequently particularly of new events. However, when I viewed her intricate decorations for the Hispanic Month Assembly and the glass display cases on each floor which she is responsible for overseeing I could see the sensitive artistic nature inherent in her personality. Ms. Maria later proved to become a secondary change agent for my project because she attended two of my three workshops I offered to the entire staff (Lee, Journal, October 30, 2008).

These three symbols were the source of the school pride and spirit. The dedicated workers were sometimes applauded for their high commitment. I noticed one of the custodial workers had his photograph on display in front of the school office for an *Employee of the Month Award*. The teacher who does the glass case decorations had her name highlighted in the Hispanic Month program. In years past the teachers were awarded a prize for the best bulletin board, however, this award was no longer given. The positive school culture and learning environment was shaped by the clean, attractive and neat physical surroundings the custodial staff and teachers created (Lee, Journal, September 5, 2008).

Strengths and Weaknesses of the Organization

After analysis of the organizational scan I discovered the strengths and the weaknesses of the organizational culture of Bear Elementary School. The strengths included a highly collaborative staff as mentioned in the state school report and a new

principal who seemed skilled at multi-frame strategies. The organizational needs appeared to be working in concert with the human needs of the organization. The new principal assisted with continuing the healthy climate of her predecessor by building consensus with the staff through empowerment and attempting to have all coalition groups focus on student-centered learning and achievement.

The weaknesses inherent in the organizational structure concerned lack of time issues for individuals and groups to perform their job. In addition, an individual employee having two or more supervisors can become an issue when the employees are asked to complete certain tasks at the same time by two different bosses. However, the principal's directive usually prevailed during times of conflict. The organization scan yielded that the Bear Elementary School still was existing in a healthy climate from my initial contact 3 years ago.

Seeking Midway Board of Education Approval

Ms. Young was not at my meeting with the principal of Bear Elementary School when the process of obtaining board approval was discussed on August 7, 2009. I had to clarify with Ms. Young that the required document called the board request item letter had to originate from Bear School. When Ms. Young became aware of the necessary process, she proceeded to submit the required letter to the Board on September 5, 2008. My research project was finally approved by the Board in their October, 2008 meeting.

Recruitment of Participants and Deciding Workshop Dates

The Bear Elementary School principal initially agreed to recruit teachers by polling the staff at one of the early staff meetings. However, at my second meeting with Ms. Young that occurred on September 5, 2008, I mentioned to Ms. Young that the

principal was going to recruit the participants. Ms. Young said, "The principal is too busy to do this. I will have to do this." I told her at this meeting that I preferred general education teachers because special education teachers were in co-teaching partnership situations. Yet, I was willing to work with special education if both teachers would participate in the study. Ms. Young said, "It's a shame that I cannot have teachers participate who really need the help" (Lee, Field notes, September 5, 2008).

Also at this meeting we decided on the dates for my four workshops. Ms. Young checked the available dates in the school calendar and I provided her with my open dates. The dates we decided on were Thursday, October 30, 2008; Thursday, November 20, 2008; Thursday, December 18, 2008; and Thursday, January 22, 2009. Each workshop was 45 minutes in length. Every workshop participant would receive .75 hours of professional development. The first workshop on October 30, 2008 was exclusively for the 3 participants. The other three workshops were open for attendance on a volunteer basis for the certified and non-certified Bear Elementary School staff.

By September 19, 2008 Ms. Young had recruited 3 teachers to participate in my research because she had previously volunteered to be the lead administrator during my study. I was relieved to receive the e-mail from Ms. Young. I could now arrange my first meeting with the participants with the assistance of Ms. Young. I was able to confirm a meeting through several more e-mails with Ms. Young in order to meet with the teacher recruitments. The meeting was scheduled for October 7, 2008, after school in the classroom of one of the participants.

Because I was at Bear Elementary School on a part-time basis, I planned to have a teacher who was permanently at Bear School to be the in-house facilitator and coach

for the participants who may have questions concerning my D.O.O.R.S. action plan and differentiated instruction. I called this position a teacher buddy. The teacher whom I had in mind to be the teacher buddy was Ms. Miller. I selected her because she was experienced. The first week of September I learned Ms. Miller was unable to assist as the teacher buddy. I decided to abandon the idea and rely more on the e-mail to communicate between me and my participants. I thought that not having an in-house facilitator would be a major limitation but the interactions in the discussion groups seemed to compensate for this limitation.

Cycle One Analysis

Reflecting on my goals in cycle one to obtain a research site and recruit participants for the study, I can see how my project started with a disadvantage of not securing a research site officially until the beginning of October, 2008 with the Midland School District Board approval. The fiscal school year had begun July 1, 2008 and I was floundering until October 1st with a definitive site for my research. I was under great stress during this time, because of the uncertainty, however, remained focused on my long-term goal of recruiting participants to partake in my study with the collaborative assistance of the vice principal, Ms. Young. I believe the vice principal, assisted me with staying focused by having the foresight to tentatively schedule the four DI workshop dates prior to approval for my project.

In addition, I recognized through my journals during cycle one the Myers-Briggs leadership assessment prediction that my leadership traits of being a very strong, orderly leader who understood the time factor and how to complete a project, come to the forefront. I met with various obstacles from hesitant administrators to commuting across

town to another location to confer with the participants for the first time. I believe my vision as a transformational leader also inspired me during this uncertain period.

Cycle one of my research project was divided into three phases beginning July 9, 2008 and ending October 6, 2008. Phase one involved selecting Bear Elementary School as my research site and making initial contact and bonding with the Bear Elementary administrators and the professional development district office. Phase two included an organizational scan of Bear Elementary. In phase three, the vice principal recruited the three participants. In addition, phase three included me collaborating with the vice principal to submit a board request item letter to the district office of the assistant superintendent in order to obtain district approval to perform my study.

CHAPTER VI

CYCLE TWO: CAPACITY BUILDING

Cycle Two Overview

Cycle two of my project occurred from October 7, 2008 until November 19, 2008 and consisted of four phases. In the cycle two stage, I facilitated teachers to capacity build their lessons from traditional teaching practices to differentiated instruction. I was prepared to select my participants and learn about their DI knowledge and needs through an interview, questionnaire form, four discussion group meetings and one unscheduled classroom observation. I was ready to implement my D.O.O.R.S. change ideas and ask the participants to implement them into practice (Fullan, 2007).

By the end of cycle two I discovered my purposively selected 3 participants Pam, Tim and Dina, who represented a mixture of bilingual, general and special education Bear School teachers spanning from teaching grades kindergarten through third, had strengths and limitations as classroom teachers. Pam and Tim's limitations appeared to be in several areas of teaching including classroom management, collaboration and reflective practices. Dina, my third participant appeared to possess these three skills. However, Dina had scheduling conflicts and did not receive the same coaching and mentoring from me on D.O.O.R.S., my action plan, as the other two participants. Dina did receive all the written handouts and resource literature that I distributed to my other two participants. She attended none of my workshops and only the first discussion group session. Having to concentrate on other professional development issues besides the ones I planned to implement in my research project caused me to perform other roles such as being a confidante and advisor. Also, I had to introduce other professional development

issues such as classroom management into my workshops and meetings with

the participants.

Cycle Two – Outline of the Four Phases

My goal in cycle two was to finally select the 3 participants and then assess the

differentiated instruction knowledge they possessed. After selecting my participants, next

I planned to bond with the participants and to assist the participants with capacity

building differentiated instruction in their classrooms. Through four weekly discussion

groups, one scheduled interview session, one unscheduled classroom observation and

coaching sessions I planned to achieve my goals.

Cycle two occurred in four phases. Phase one focused on me selecting the

participants. I found out the strengths and limitations of the participants whom I had

named Pam, Tim and Dina and discovered their knowledge in regard to differentiated

instruction, action research cyclic inquiry and culturally aware teaching. This information

was obtained at our first discussion group meeting, asking the 3 participants to complete

a questionnaire and to gain their permission to allow me to do an unscheduled

observation of the participants teaching in their own natural classroom settings.

In phase two, I facilitated DI capacity building through four weekly discussion

group meetings where I was able to gain insight into the opinions of each participant with

DI and understand their needs. I addressed the participants' needs in these four discussion

group meetings and I introduced the participants to my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines. I also

supplied the 3 participants with literature on differentiated instruction, action research,

and cultural awareness in teaching and other related teaching matters I discovered where

I believed the participants needed support.

In phase three, I facilitated capacity building with the participants by completing my first unscheduled classroom observation with each participant as an observer. Also, I was able to assess each participant's classroom management skills with the unscheduled observations. During phase three I also completed the initial interview session with Pam and Tim. In phase four, I conducted my first scheduled mini-workshop with the participants where I introduced the participants to differentiated instruction through my D.O.O.R.S. action plan. In addition, during phase four I had an unscheduled meeting with the Bear School vice principal where I obtained information from the vice principal that later prepared me for her two month absence.

Cycle Two Phase One – Selection of the Participants

The criteria I used for the selection of my participants was searching for teachers with a high interest in DI, change in the classroom and who had a compatible teaching schedule with my schedule. The vice principal, Ms. Young, assisted with this effort by recruiting teachers via the public announcement system at the Bear Elementary School. Teachers who were interested in participating in a DI study were asked to drop their name off in the vice principal's mailbox. Three teachers responded to the vice principal's effort of solicitation. I had maintained the option to reject any participant. After the first meeting with the participants on October 7, 2008, I decided to keep all 3 participants because of their strong interest in learning about DI and implementing it in their classrooms. I did not anticipate any problems with any of them.

First Meeting With the Participants

The 3 participants and I met in Dina's classroom on the second floor. This was an opportunity for me to do an assessment of the participant's needs and level of experience

with use of differentiated instruction in the classroom. I provided each participant with a copy of a questionnaire with questions related to their educational and DI backgrounds. I also provided each participant with two copies of a letter of consent, a welcome letter and an information sheet listing the upcoming workshop dates. After distributing the documents I explained the requirements for my project. I explained briefly about how to develop a curriculum program for the students by using action research cyclic inquiry.

Next I asked each participant to share with me their background with differentiated instruction. The participants began to discuss their backgrounds. Pam and Dina seemed to feel I would not want them for the project. Pam claimed she had no experience at all with differentiated instruction and she was currently a special education teacher. She felt because she was special education I did not want her. Dina said, "I have a great deal of training and experience with differentiated instruction. I use it in my classroom all of the time. However, I am a bilingual teacher and I speak Spanish most of the time. You may not want me for your research project." Tim said, "I have taken two courses on differentiated instruction at River University. I would be happy to participate in the research" (Lee, Field notes, October 7, 2008).

The 3 participants decided they wanted to meet weekly every Tuesday after school to discuss problems in their classroom related to differentiated instruction. I was surprised that the participants agreed to meet each week because I thought they would not commit to meeting outside of the classroom due to the lack of time in their teaching schedule. I was glad to hear the participants wanted to learn more about differentiated instruction, my action plan D.O.O.R.S. and allow me to observe and coach them in their

classrooms. Therefore, my study began with the participants' taking the first step to group on the topic of DI.

Pam's Profile

Pam was a Caucasian female teacher who had taught elementary school for fourteen years. I had pre-established a good rapport with Pam when she was the pre-kindergarten inclusion teacher from my previous employment at Bear School 3 years ago as an administrative intern. I had observed Pam team teach with the other pre-kindergarten co-teacher, Ms. Rook, on many occasions. Her knowledge of DI came from curriculum manuals. In her initial interview on October 21, 2009 she said, "Well, I have a limited knowledge of..um.. differentiate…differentiated instruction is about. um.. I..The little bit that I know about it I found in my, um, teacher's curriculum guide. Where it outlines differentiated instruction" (Lee, Interview, October 21, 2008).

Pam held a dual degree in teaching in the area of elementary general education and special education. Pam's current teaching assignment was teaching kindergarten as an inclusion teacher to 16 students, five students were SE. She had a general education co-teacher and one paraprofessional who taught with her in the class. She had no professional training with DI and later in my first interview with her; I learned that her DI knowledge came from the curriculum planning guidelines.

Applying DI Classroom Elements to the Participants

According to Tomlinson (1999), an effective DI classroom demonstrated certain similar elements. The DI classroom elements were that a teacher was a capable diagnostician because she is good at analysis and understood how to be flexible with classroom time. The teacher knew how to give specific ways for varied instruction and

can make instruction interesting by using different learning modalities. In addition, the teacher began the lesson on the students' levels and comprehended how to differentiate the lesson.

Pam and the DI Classroom Elements

Pam had limited capabilities as a diagnostician as displayed in her questions that she asked in the discussion groups. At the second discussion group on October 14, 2008 Pam asked me "Can you show us different ways to assess the students' capabilities and knowledge?" Also, at the unscheduled observation on October 16, 2008, I observed that she did not display this skill to diagnose the behavior problem between two boys in her class who were openly pushing and shoving each other and whom she ignored. Another time was at the feedback session held after the November 20, 2008 scheduled observation. Pam was not able to adequately assess the number of students who understood her lesson when I questioned her during the reflective conference after her scheduled observation (Lee, Journal, November 20, 2008).

Pam did not understand how to be flexible with her classroom time because at the first October 16, 2008 unscheduled and November 20, 2008 scheduled observations, I observed that the beginning, middle and end of her lessons were disjointed. I observed that she was allowing disruptive students to interfere with the flow of the lesson and therefore creating large gaps and spaces of time in her lessons because of these students.

I observed that Pam did not initially display the elements of varied instruction and use of different learning modalities because she had a teacher-directed classroom. In the first interview on October 21, 2008, she said that she did not know how to use different learning modalities. Also, in discussion groups one through four, she expressed that she

did not understand these elements. In addition, her questionnaire revealed that she did not have any DI experience.

Pam did not display the element of starting the lesson on the student level and understanding how to differentiate. I observed on a lesson about phonics on November 20, 2008 that she was confused during the first reflective conference about what level of knowledge to start the lesson. She inquired if she should start the lesson at the level of the instructional manual or another level. In addition, in the discussion groups two through four, she displayed her lack of knowledge in this area by asking me questions on how to assess where to start the lesson level.

Tim's Profile

Tim, my second participant, was a Caucasian male teacher who was a novice teacher without any years of teaching experience. He was a recent college graduate from River University. He was teaching for the first time as a full-time teacher. He taught third grade consisting of African American, Hispanic and Vietnamese children. He seemed to have classroom management problems because he groaned and received pats on the back from the other participants at our first meeting when I mentioned that I was there to support them and not to be concerned about students' behavior during my unscheduled classroom visits. Tim had taken a couple of DI courses in college (Lee, Journal, October 8, 2008).

Tim at his initial interview session on October 28, 2008 seemed to display he had general knowledge about the importance of DI use in the classroom.

During the interview session Tim stated:

> Researcher: Okay, so, can I ask you when I bring up differentiated instruction, what would your definition of differentiated instruction be, then? What would it mean to you as the teacher?
>
> Tim: As a teacher…it…...it's my responsibility to, number one, find the individual learning styles of each of my students and then correlating that in my instruction but…It's recognizing that each student learns in a different way and… using, um, using assessing my students based on those learning styles and getting understanding of their…their personalities, as well. There's so many things go into how…what affects their…their learning that as a teacher I need to plan ahead with my lessons…uh…based on what I understand of that.
>
> (Lee, Interview, October 28, 2008).

Tim and the DI Classroom Elements

Tim had limited capabilities as a diagnostician because at the first unscheduled observation on October 23, 2008 and scheduled observation on November 20, 2008 I observed that Tim did not have effective classroom management skills because he did not curtail the students misbehaving in class. I observed that he allowed several students to randomly roam around the classroom and interfere with the flow of the lesson. I also observed that he permitted students to randomly call out and disrupt the lesson. In the discussion groups two, three and four, he asked me about different ways to assess DI needs for the students.

I also observed that Tim did not understand how to be flexible with his classroom time. At the first unscheduled and scheduled observations, I observed that the beginning,

middle and end of his lessons were disjointed. His lessons were disjointed because he allowed students to disrupt the time flow of the lessons by randomly calling out, getting out of their seats and roaming around the classroom.

In addition, I observed that Tim did not initially display the elements of varied instruction and use of different learning modalities because he had a teacher-directed classroom at his first unscheduled observation on October 23, 2008. Also, in discussion groups two through four, he asked me questions about how to implement various DI strategies into the lessons. I did explain to him about implementing DI strategies in discussion groups and workshops.

Tim did not display the element of starting the lesson on the student level and understanding how to differentiate. He asked me questions during the discussion groups two to four on how to assess the student level of knowledge according to DI methods. Also, during the reflective conference of December 18, 2008 he was confused about the level of comprehension of his students. He believed that only 74% of the students comprehended the mathematics lesson when I observed that 100% of the students displayed proficiency with the lesson.

Dina's Profile

Dina had taught at Bear Elementary School for 3 years. She taught a second grade bilingual Spanish speaking group of students. She was recently made the technology teacher of the month. She had a great deal of DI training and used DI all the time in her classroom.

Dina and the DI Classroom Elements

I observed that Dina displayed proficient capabilities in all of the elements for an effective DI classroom. Dina was a proficient diagnostician. In the reflective conference after her unscheduled observation on October 17, 2008, Dina knew exactly which different levels of instruction were needed for her classroom in literacy and mathematics. In addition, Dina demonstrated she understood how to be flexible with her classroom time because she knew how to transition between one phase of the lesson to another phase.

At the first unscheduled observation Dina displayed elements of varied instruction through her lesson delivery style. With the use of different learning modalities she had a student-directed lesson. Dina had the students engaged in utilizing the learning center activities in small groups (Lee, Field notes, October 17, 2008).

Also, Dina displayed the element of starting the lesson on the student level. She demonstrated that she understood how to differentiate by the varied learning activities for the small groups of students at each station. Dina also displayed in-depth knowledge with her written responses concerning DI strategies in the initial questionnaire. She was able to fully describe the DI philosophy.

Dina's Personal Time Conflicts

Dina never completed an introductory interview with me. I tried to communicate with her via e-mail and the telephone, however, never received any kind of response except for one e-mail response. She told me she had a time conflict due to being in graduate school. Dina was also in the midst of assisting with organizing the Hispanic Month Assembly program at Bear School.

Reflections on DI Classroom Elements

I surmised that because Tim was inexperienced with zero years of teaching, he would need to be coached more than Dina, an experienced bi-lingual teacher with an extensive background in DI. She had attended several DI workshops and used DI methods regularly in her classroom. Pam would also require more coaching than Dina. Pam was an experienced teacher of 14 years but she had no training in DI.

Cultural Bias Surfaces

The first time I recognized that cultural bias may be an occurrence in teacher performance was in Pam's and Tim's first unscheduled observations in cycle two on October 23, 2008. Tim was allowing one of the 3rd grade African American student and one Hispanic boy 3rd grade student to roam freely around the classroom during the spelling bingo activity. He spoke repeatedly in a sharp tone only to the African American student, who ignored him, while he allowed the Hispanic student to walk freely up to him to ask questions about the lesson, without giving him a verbal reprimand. Both students were misbehaving in the same way, yet Tim spoke harshly only to the African American student.

Pam, during my first October 16, 2008 unscheduled observation session in her classroom, allowed two of her African American male students to push and shove in line, while preparing for dismissal. Was Pam ignoring the boys because she was tired or had she become apathetic about the African American students and no longer cared about the student's learning discipline? This incident of students shoving in line could have readily escalated into a more serious situation where a student could have been injured.

I had no valid proof to make a statement that overt cultural bias was occurring in either of these incidents. In addition, again I was concerned with developing an opinion that cultural bias was occurring with my participants and this would interfere with my objectivity, so I decided not to explore this area.

Cycle Two Phase Two – Implementing D.O.O.R.S. – My Action Plan

After my first discussion group meeting with the participants on October 7, 2008, my first unscheduled observation and the completion of the questionnaires, I began to analyze the needs of each participant. I began to plan each discussion group with a topic requested by the participants and one topic concerning DI. My plan was to begin to scaffold or build information mainly on the topic of DI through my D.O.O.R.S. action plan at each session.

Literature Rich Environment

I supplied literature and research-based data to add to the participants understanding differentiated instruction, action research and cultural diversity. At the first meeting where I met the participants on October 7, 2008 I gave each participant a Gregory and Chapman (2007) text *Differentiated Instructional Strategies: One Size Doesn't Fit All* as a resource book. At the first mini-workshop where the participants learned about my D.O.O.R.S. action plan each participant received the McNiff and Whitehead (2006) book *All You Need to Learn About Action Research*. I gave the participants specific articles highlighting differentiated instruction. I also provided a copy of each group session folder, handouts and carryall to the school principal each week in order to keep her current on my project. I reviewed ways of planning lessons using DI

and action research cyclic inquiry by providing the participants with charts to assist them with preplanning lessons.

     I became concerned that neither Pam nor Tim was taking the time to read the literature I was providing because they claimed a lack of time issue in their schedules. In order to overcome this challenge I began to make up charts and graphs to be used in our discussion group and workshops for the participants to better understand DI and action research cyclic inquiry so that the participants could begin to start capacity building with DI in their classrooms. Also, I made the charts and graphs to simplify the information concerning DI, action research and cultural proficiency.

Summary of Time Spent With Participants in Discussion Groups, Observations and

     Interviews

     I collected data on my study through interviews, observations, discussion groups, workshops, field notes, reflection journals and artifacts. By the end of my research the total number of hours I spent performing classroom observations was eight hours and thirty minutes (see Appendix L). The full amount of interview hours I spent with my 3 participants totaled 3 hours and thirty minutes. The total number of scheduled and unscheduled discussion group hours I spent at Bear School for my study totaled eight hours and fifty six minutes (see Appendix M). The complete number of professional development workshop hours I spent with my participants was 3 hours and with the entire Bear School certified and non-certified staff was 2 hours and 15 minutes (see Appendix N).

Discussion Group Goals

Effective professional development is essential to school operations and should be mainly school based. Professional development should revolve around collaborative problem solving and provide learning opportunities that relate to the individual needs (Valli & Hawley, 2002). I was attempting to provide an integral part of professional development in the Bear Elementary School through my research endeavors, after I selected the participants in phase one and prepared to begin my phase two stage.

Phase two involved me building a small professional learning community of 3 participants in the Bear Elementary School in order to create a group of informed teachers who understood how to differentiate in the assessment of their students' needs, knew how to implement differentiated instruction strategies to meet the needs of the diverse group of learners and knew how to evaluate their own performance and the students' learning outcomes (Lindstrom & Speck, 2004). This goal was partially accomplished in the discussion groups where I facilitated discussions with the participants that related to DI topics.

Discussion Group One

For my first meeting with the participants on October 7, 2008 I did not prepare an agenda because I did not want to restrict which areas of knowledge the participants needed to examine. When I learned the participants were interested in beginning weekly discussion group meetings concerning DI I believed this displayed that they were highly enthusiastic and committed. I polled the participants openly about what they desired to discuss at these meetings. Pam asked to learn about the use of portfolios. Tim hoped to

learn about implementing DI in the lesson. Dina appeared to be interested in action research because she asked questions mainly about this subject.

I gave each participant a questionnaire to complete in order to find out their past experience with DI and their expectations for this project. I asked them to return it to me as soon as possible in the mail. Pam and Tim returned their questionnaire and letter of consent within one week. Dina took several weeks to return the forms.

The four questions I prepared on my questionnaire assisted me with assessing the 3 participant's background experience with DI and what their future expectations were with my project. I learned Pam's recent experience with DI was with small group instruction. Pam stated on her questionnaire:

> In our classroom, the co-teacher and I discussed how we would deliver the reading lessons. We looked at tests and observations to form groups. Leveled reading books were used. One group worked on letter/sound identification and beginning and ending sounds. We tried to use the ideas presented in the teacher's guide for leveled instruction.

Pam listed her expectations for my study and stated:

> My expectations for this research study are:
>
> - to learn how to create a classroom where students are actively learning and are excited about their learning.
>
> - to learn how to give choices about their learning and keep them on tract in their development.
>
> - to learn new tools to re-evaluate my classroom instruction and strategies.

Pam further stated, "I have a strong commitment in wanting a change in my classroom instruction. There is a lot of stress involved trying to teach the student. Hopefully, differentiated instruction will relieve this stress."

Tim's recent DI use in the classroom also included small group instruction. He stated on his questionnaire "I consistently provide partner work scenarios and small group work. I understand the other basic strategy of reaching out to visual, aural and kinesthetic learners."

Tim stated his expectations for this research project on the questionnaire. "I have strong expectations that positive support and helpful teaching will put me in a position to make a difference!" He further stated, "As a first year teacher, I have a lot to learn. The positive part of it all is that I truly want to make the difference."

Dina commented that her recent use with DI was with group teaching. Dina stated, "We use DI everyday because we teach in groups based on each student's individual ability." Her expectations were "I believe with further research we as teachers will become better equipped to help all learners thru DI."

After the questionnaires were completed I understood what each participant's background experience was with DI and what they hoped to learn with my research project. I also gained some insight into their opinions concerning DI. Pam's opinion was positive towards DI. She stated, "My overall evaluation of teaching with differentiated instruction strategies is: DI is a valuable tool for delivering successful classroom instruction." Both Tim's comments and Dina's were also encouraging. Tim stated, "DI provides truly beneficial options for all students. DI strategies are one and one with an

effective teacher." Dina stated, "Good. It becomes easier to teach when working with the student's academic ability."

Discussion Groups Two, Three and Four Summary

Discussion groups two, three and four occurred surrounding DI related topics which overlapped. Some of the topics for our discussions included classroom management, cultural awareness, DI strategies, portfolios, Bloom's taxonomy, choice boards and learning assessment. By discussion group four, I began to create agendas highlighting a specific theme of the session and outlining our discussions. I discussed DI concepts with the participants including pre-assessment strategies that assisted the participants with learning about the student's abilities and learning preferences.

I stressed in our discussion groups that a teacher needs to have knowledge concerning learning theories. I informed the participants that learning theories were important in order to understand how to compliment the students' learning preference with an instructional theory or model. It is one thing to develop the learning preference and learning profile and another thing to understand how to address the needs of the learner. These sessions included discussing Bloom's taxonomy (1956), multiple intelligences (Gardner, 2004, 2006) and Dunn et al. (1992) multisensory perception theory. In addition, during the discussion groups we discussed the DI elements of content, process and product. Unfortunately due to holidays and other interruptions we did not meet as a group again from October 28, 2008 until January 13, 2009. However, I believed each session assisted the participants Pam and Tim with increasing their knowledge concerning DI.

Discussion Group Two Activities

I stated in my journal concerning discussion group 2 meeting:

After we discussed Tomlinson's (1999, 2001) DI elements of pre-assessment,

content, process and product, I then went over pre-assessment with Pam and told

her to think about ways she can pre-assess the student and observe the students

needs. Pam mentioned she knew a lot of her students were tactile because they

had to touch things – hands on. Tim also mentioned he had the same problem

with students wanting to touch things all the time when Tim entered late. I

suggested they think about using more hands on manipulatives in their lessons if

they had students who were highly tactile. I again reviewed the elements of DI,

pre-assessment, content, process and product and asked the two participants to

try to think each week about one of these concepts.

I handed Pam and Tim a carryall of DI items and reviewed the information

after he entered the room late and sat down next to Pam. I particularly explained

how I used Bloom's taxonomy and Gregory's cubing and choice board activity

to assess what the student's had learned the past two months. I was upset when to

my dismay some of my students could not demonstrate competency even though

they were given a choice as to what activity they wanted to do and allowed

5 minutes to practice the activity before I heard or saw it.

At the end of the meeting I asked the two participants to think about

assessment this week and observing their students needs. I shared with them

sometimes I prepare 4 to 6 different lessons based on the needs of the students

that particular day (Lee, Journal, October 14, 2008).

Discussion Group Three Activities

Discussion group three topic focused on the choice boards as a DI strategy to help assess the students' comprehension of content taught. I also polled Pam and Tim as to what they felt was the most important problem in their classroom presently while implementing DI. I stated in my journal:

At our third discussion group meeting Tim mentioned classroom management was his most important concern. Pam felt social skills was a problem with her students in kindergarten. I shared with them that I had a student who uses profanity. I also shared with them that the choice board activity I passed out to them last week was more of a success this week because it helped me to assess what the students had learned.

Tim asked did I already teach the students these activities listed on the choice board and I responded yes. Having students work in pairs on one of the six activities on the board which is based on Bloom's taxonomy levels of knowledge I found to be very helpful with accessing their knowledge. Also, this pre-class activity of 10 to 15 minutes made my lesson and my day flow smoothly. By sharing my teaching experience with the choice board DI activity I began to build the trust and also bond with the pilot group participants. The participants also began to share their problems or concerns openly with me during the discussion groups.

Reflecting on the main concern for each participant in their classroom, I could see that effective classroom management coaching sessions would be needed with Pam, since her students were having trouble with social skills. An

experienced teacher typically has some kind of rules, policies or practices the

students know to follow by the second week of school that help promote positive

social skills. This was late September and Pam seemed to be uncertain as how to

develop a plan for her students to improve their social skills. In Tim's case he

recognized he needed effective classroom management strategies, however, his

question about the choice board displayed he was not knowledgeable in what

constitutes an assessment strategy. I realized I would have to start having

unscheduled classroom visits or more mini-conferences with the participants

highlighting these limitations they had in teaching, even if this meant deferring

from concentrating on DI implementation. I was a little concerned that I had to

take a detour from the teachers concentrating on content, product and process in

DI. However, I believed the teachers' needs were what was most important and

right now both Pam and Tim seemed to have a need to learn more about effective

classroom management (Lee, Journal, October 24, 2008).

Discussion Group Four Activities

At our discussion group four which occurred on October 28, 2008, I gave each

participant the Shores and Grace (1998) text titled *The Portfolio: A Step-by-Step Guide*

for Teacher as a resource guide since the topic of portfolios was our theme for this

meeting. I discussed various kinds of portfolios a teacher can use for student assessment.

I stated in my journal:

I asked Pam how things were going. She was unable to go through the literature

I have been giving her and seemed a bit frustrated. She said she is minimally

writing in her journal. I asked her if she could please try to write each day. I gave

Pam and Tim a book *The Portfolio Book: A Step by Step Guide for Teachers* by

Elizabeth Shore and Cathy Grace (1998).

After Tim arrived a few minutes late I pointed out Chapter 5 - *Ten Steps to Making a Portfolio*. I shared information with the participants that I used this book last year when I set up stations in my classroom. I reviewed different kinds of portfolio. I pointed out that the book only mentions three types – private, learning and pass long. Pam pointed out that we need to decide what the purpose was for the portfolio and was concerned whether to just use portfolio for her SE students or the entire classroom.   Also, she was concerned whether instruction should stay direct with her students. I shared with her a DVD I had recently viewed about a first grade teacher teaching interactive reading/writing. The teacher on the DVD tape encouraged her students from day one in September to become independent writers.

Pam and Tim seemed curious about the interview portion of the portfolio assessment. I told them I interviewed my middle school students once a semester. Then you need to think about a whole group activity that can go on while you are interviewing each child one by one. The interviews can be as often as weekly or monthly. This is a good assessment tool because urban learners tend to be vocal more so than literate in expressing themselves. They can usually tell you an answer but when asked to write it in a test or quiz fashion they have trouble. Therefore, the interview method is an effective approach to assessing a student's knowledge.

However, I mentioned to be very careful because if the student is not mature enough to understand the portfolio use – they may cry to their parents and take the critique the wrong way. Therefore, make sure the student is mature enough or be careful about how you present the idea of the portfolio to the students (Lee, Journal, October 28, 2008).

Gaining Participants' Confidence

By discussion group three I believed I began to obtain the participant's confidence. After Tim had brought baked cookies to our first discussion group session, I decided to have two items at every session. One item given to each participant was a carryall case that enclosed a folder of information on our weekly discussion topic. I also brought either baked cookies or candy bars to each session, since the sessions usually lasted 45 to 60 minutes after school hours. The participants began to share with me freely some of their classroom problems. I stated the following in my journal for discussion group three session:

> I then continued by asking if they were able to review any of the DI literature I had given them. Tim did not respond, however, Pam said she had read some interesting things. We shared real life problems.
>
> Tim said classroom management was his most important concern. Pam felt social skills. I shared with them that I had a student who uses profanity. I also shared with them that the choice board activity I passed out to them last week was more of a success this week because it helped me to assess what the students had learned. Tim asked did I already teach the students these things and I responded yes. Having students work in pairs on one of the six activities on the board which

is based on Bloom's taxonomy levels of knowledge I found to be very helpful with assessment of their comprehension. Also, this pre-class activity of 10 to 15 minutes made my lesson and my day flow very smoothly.

However, I shared with them the previous year I had my room situated in learning center stations. I talked a little about Dina's classroom which was set up in learning stations and asked each participant had they thought about how they could arrange their room to better suit the students' needs (Lee, Journal, October 21, 2008).

All discussion group sessions in cycle two occurred in Dina's classroom. Dina was not present physically at any of the sessions. I made sure each week when we used her room for our discussion group meetings that I left her a carryall full of the information we discussed along with some kind of baked cookies or sweet items at her computer terminal desk. Dina told me she received these items when I spoke to her in-person briefly in her classroom during an unscheduled visit.

Cycle Two Phase Three – Meeting Tim in His Classroom

On October 14, 2008 I visited Tim after school in his classroom when he was late for our discussion group two session. The state of his classroom was in disarray. The desks and chairs were scattered across the room haphazardly. Balled up clumps of paper were scattered all over the floors. Tim was concerned that as a new teacher my project would require too much time away from his normal teaching schedule. I stated in my journal:

As I spoke to him and looked around the classroom I saw the room in total chaos. Papers the students had balled up were all over the floor. The inside of the

student's desk which could be seen were a mass of unorganized notebooks and text books stuffed into the desks in an unorganized manner. The desks were in disarray by the desks being in uneven rows and even one student desk had balled up sheets of paper inside their desk.

I suggested that Tim think about placing the desks in groups of 4 in a cooperative learning setting. He mentioned he liked the paired seating because he felt they would talk in small groups. I then suggested the paired desks face one another. He then asked how many groups you could have and I responded I would have no more than 4 students in a group. He asked what about 9 in groups because he was going to have 9 pairs. I then asked what do you do if a student is absent one day, then the other is left without a partner? I suggested I would keep the regular seating to only 4 or 5 in groups which he could easily handle. I complimented him on his choice of where the teacher's desk was situated where he could see all the students and whoever entered the door. After 5 minutes of speaking with me he decided to stay with the study a few more weeks. I told him he can quit then if he wishes. He then said he would meet me in 5 minutes with the other teachers in Room 206 (Lee, Journal, October 14, 2008).

Unscheduled Observation – Pam

My unscheduled observation occurred with Pam on October 16, 2008. I discovered that Pam in the beginning of the study appeared to have several limitations in classroom management and her collaboration skills. I stated in my observation log on October 16, 2008 stated:

I noticed Pam was seated near the door of the classroom in a chair. The class of about eighteen students were preparing for dismissal. The students were seated at rectangular tables. Ms. Green, the co-teacher, was standing behind her desk. Ms. Stone the paraprofessional was standing behind her desk. When the students lined up one at a time when their names were called by Pam, I noticed two African American boy students called John and James begin to push and shove each other very hard. Ms. Green, Ms. Stone and Pam said nothing to the boys. After ten seconds of pushing I mentioned to Pam and Ms. Green, "Look, Pam and Ms. Green, those two boys keep pushing and shoving each other!"

Ms. Green and Ms. Stone said nothing. Pam said in a weak voice, "Now let's try to behave." Finally when I stood near the boys and told them to stop pushing. They stopped pushing.

I was surprised to see that Pam, her co-teacher, Ms. Green, and her paraprofessional, Ms. Stone, allowed two students to shove each other in-line without interceding as teachers and making some kind of verbal reprimand to the students who were showing disruptive behavior while standing in-line for dismissal. This act signaled to me that Pam, her co-teacher and paraprofessional had not yet bonded in support of one another in instruction. In addition, Pam was not using the inflection of her voice to control the class.

However, moving forward in time with Pam's progress as a teacher implementing DI, I noticed by the end of cycle three Pam demonstrated in her scheduled observation on December 18, 2008 the use of voice inflection which she knew when to harden or soften according to the response she hoped to receive from her kindergarten class. The ability

to use voice inflection to stress a concept certainly was now one of Pam's strengths in instruction.

Unscheduled Observation –Tim's First Teaching Assignment

My first unscheduled observation with Tim occurred on October 23, 2008. I was impressed at observing Tim teach a large group of twenty-three third grade students a spelling bingo activity. He had a strong, clear voice when teaching. He moved around the classroom and checked everyone's work to see if they comprehended the lesson. Tim appeared to have established a good rapport and good interaction with the majority of his third grade students.

Although Tim was teaching a well constructed DI lesson concerning the activity of *Spelling Bingo* for his group of students, Tim appeared to have a problem with several students in the class who continually disrupted the lesson by either calling out or getting up out of their seats and roaming around the classroom. I stated in my journal:

I entered the classroom at 10:00 a.m. and Tim was in the middle of a pencil and eraser *Spelling Bingo* writing activity with his students. I sat in the back of the room first as an observer. I heard Tim ask the students to draw a table and fill the table in with a list of spelling words he had written on the chalk board. Tim was holding a chart with the words and the meaning written out for each word. Tim would call out a meaning or definition of a word and then the students had to place an X on the word in the table they drew.

Two students one African American male, called Adam and one Hispanic male, named Joe kept getting out of their seat roaming around the room. Joe stood

up to walk over to Tim to ask him questions several times. Adam was not focused on the lesson at all and was randomly walking around the room.

Tim had an interesting DI lesson. However, Adam was a constant distraction by roaming around the room with no purpose. Also, Tim allowed the students to call out at will. This seemed to work because the students seemed focused on the lesson and they appeared to understand the meaning of the words. I plan to work more with Tim on classroom management, rules, rewards etc. (Lee, Journal, October 23, 2008).

Unscheduled Observation – Dina

I observed Dina as a bilingual teacher facilitating her learning center stations with her students on October 17, 2008. Each learning center station had words written in Spanish, the native language of all of her students. The students seemed at ease reading, writing or listening to Spanish at the learning stations. I observed when I entered the room and sat down to observe the lesson unscheduled, the students continued their activities in Spanish, without becoming inhibited. Dina truly understood the concept of the teacher becoming the facilitator, not the director in DI instruction. Dina's role became secondary to the students in this scenario. I stated in my journal:

Dina explained to me that the students were working in small groups in stations. Each student understood what was expected at each station. Referring to some of the stations where they were writing or flashing cards, Dina said the student who gives the most answers gets to be the teacher and flash cards or flash the writing strips.

Dina informed me she has been to several workshops on differentiated instruction and uses it all of the time in her classroom. She showed me the teacher workbook where one of her reading lessons came from. Dina explained all of her stations were up and running except the computer because the students had not yet learned how to do research on it. I noticed Dina had her learning stations set up using Spanish word descriptions such as "pared de palabras" which means word wall in English. Even her calendar which said "calendario" had the days of the week and month in Spanish (Lee, Journal, October 17, 2008*).*

First Interview with Pam and Tim

My first scheduled interview with Pam occurred on October 21, 2008. My first scheduled interview with Tim occurred on October 28, 2009. Pam's interview responses supported what I had already learned about her strengths and limitations through the discussion groups and questionnaire concerning DI. Pam had little knowledge about DI implementation in the classroom; however, had strong motivation to change her classroom into a student-centered learning environment. Tim's responses supported my findings that he was a novice teacher and lacked general knowledge in effective classroom management. I used this data for triangulation purposes for my study.

Cycle Two Phase Four – Mini-Workshop Overview

I facilitated my first mini-workshop with my participants on October 30, 2008 during phase four of cycle two. The title of the workshop was *Bridging Differentiated Instruction* and was scheduled for a 45 minute session. Due to a scheduling conflict only two participants Pam and Tim were able to attend.

The purpose of my mini-workshop was to present to the participants various ways to implement DI in the classroom through my D.O.O.R.S. action plan. I gave the participants handouts and cooperative learning partner and small group activities to perform. Before implementing differentiated instruction in the classroom a teacher needs to possess diversified knowledge in general areas of teaching (Holloway, 2000).

Mini-Workshop Activities

I created an agenda and passed it out to the participants in a folder at my mini-workshop. Included in the folder with the agenda were six handouts created by me titled: *The Emperor's New Clothes Pre-workshop Activity*, *Tips for Helping Your DI Lessons Be More Action Research*, *D.O.O.R.S. A Bridge for Implementing Differentiated Instruction Teacher's Guide,* 5 copies of the chart *Planning Your Lessons Using DI and Action Research* for additional lessons, 5 copies of the *Reflective Log* forms and a flyer announcing three future DI workshops I planned to give at Bear School. These seven items in the folder were inside a carry-all bag which included the McNiff and Whitehead (2006) text *All You Need to Know About Action Research* for a resource guide.

> Concerning the sequence of events at the mini-workshop I stated in my journal:
>
> After I arrived in Dina's classroom the location of my mini-workshop, I decided to pull out a circular table instead of having the participants sit off by themselves at the student desks – which is the usual place. The circular table allowed everyone to see each other and made communication a little easier (Lee, Journal, October 30, 2008).

During the mini-workshop I followed the agenda beginning with Pam who arrived first about 4:05 p.m. and the pre-workshop activity *The Emperor's New Clothes*.

Tim arrived a few minutes later and missed this activity. I then methodically went

through each item in the folder beginning with the teacher handout *Tips for Helping Your*

DI Lessons Be More Action Research, *D.O.O.R.S. A Bridge for Implementing*

Differentiated Instruction Teacher's Guide. I then reviewed *Planning Your Lessons*

Using DI and Action Research form and the *Reflective Logs* form with the participants.

I stated in my journal:

> I mentioned to the participants that they would be asked to use the D.O.O.R.S.
>
> guidelines or action research principles into planning their lessons. I then took the
>
> time to collaboratively go through the lesson planning process using the action
>
> research cyclic principles. Pam came up with several problems she needed
>
> solving in her classroom 1. Students calling out the wrong answers before taking
>
> time to think.
>
> 2. The other students copy cats – or repeating the same answers that
>
> are wrong – which one student has already called out (Lee, Journal,
>
> October 30, 2008).

The main activity event for the mini-workshop dealt with me and the participants

collaboratively filling out the *Planning Your Lessons Using DI and Action Research*

chart. I had created this chart to assist the participants with understanding the five basic

steps a teacher has to go through with planning lessons traditionally and also when using

DI elements, action research cyclic inquiry methods and when using my D.O.O.R.S. five

step action plan. The one flaw in the chart was the participants lacked an area to write in

their lesson plan outline. I stated in my journal:

Using the table I created for *Planning Your Lessons Using DI and Action Research* I brainstormed with the participants on how they could resolve the active listening problem of calling out. I mentioned first let us discuss if calling out is a good or bad thing to do. I mentioned an article supporting students calling out to build their communication skills and not inhibit them by making them raise their hands and go through the teacher. I shared with the participants I tried to allow students to call out anytime they wanted to after reading this article. However, I set rules that you could not talk on top of someone else, had to let them finish their sentence and the calling out answers or open discussions had to be topic oriented. This worked for half of my classes, however half could not adhere to this new guideline and I had to revert back to students raising their hands and obtaining permission to speak for some of my classes. Therefore, step by step we tried to share ideas to resolve this problem. However, I discovered that a blank column of boxes was needed on the table in order for the participant to write in their brainstorming ideas and infuse the different ideas and concepts (Lee, Journal, October 30, 2008).

Applying the D.O.O.R.S. Action Plan

The remainder of the mini-workshop involved the participants and me collaboratively applying my D.O.O.R.S. action plan for the same challenge in the classroom of students calling out in class. I stated in my journal:

Again step by step we tried to share ideas to resolve this problem. For D.O.O.R.S. step one - *Developing Diversity Pathway to Change your Classroom* – Pam and Tim came up with ideas for a lollipop stick with the student's name on it and

assigning student think time monitors as ways that would help the class wait 10 seconds (what research has suggested) before answering questions.

For step two – *Observe Your Students' Needs* the three of us decided there are some children who need to call out and speak because that is part of their character trait. However, in order to develop listening skills students would be encouraged to have a pause time for reflection before having to answer the question or be allowed to talk with a friend first before saying the answer aloud.

For step three – *One Bridge to Learning is Not Enough* we brainstormed different types of strategies such as allowing the student who calls out all the time to do some kind of writing or scoring activity on the chalk board.

For step four – *Re-evaluate and Re-examine the Curriculum Program Success* Pam and Tim decided that if the students gave more correct answers, or if the students waited before answering and were given rewards or stickers, this would help to know if the new activity listening strategy was a success.

For step five – *Success depends on your training and commitment* which is the modify step – Pam and Tim decided coaching may be needed for those students who still need more time to come up with the correct answer. Also the action research cyclic inquiry would begin again as we are confronted with new problems – students copy cats the wrong answers, students who are too shy, or students who have a language barrier with communication skills. Also, student monitors who could be allowed to speak anytime they wanted could be appointed on a rotation basis – to encourage communication in the classroom (Lee, Journal, October 30, 2008).

Cycle Two – Summary of Participants' DI Barriers

Several barriers to the participants implementing DI surfaced while involved in these activities. The barriers were:

1. The participants appeared to lack thorough knowledge in learning theories, student learning preferences and differentiated instruction strategies.

2. The participants were not planning lessons around students' learning preferences.

3. The participants appeared to have low self-esteem and lack confidence in their teaching abilities.

4. The participants appeared to possess limited skills in reflective practice and self-analysis.

5. The participants had a lack of time to read the DI related resources.

6. DI was not utilized while the students were practicing to take standardized tests.

To overcome these barriers I did the following actions with the participants:

1. I presented major learning theories at the discussion groups and workshops.

2. I facilitated the participants building a knowledge base on student-centered DI lesson strategies and infusing DI into lessons.

3. I encouraged the participants to discuss their concerns and possible solutions openly without prejudging what they would say.

4. I helped the participants build a knowledge base on reflective practices and infused reflective practice into lessons with student pre-assessment and evaluation.

5. I created charts and graphs to summarize key concepts in the DI resources.

6. I helped the participants infuse DI into lessons through modeling and discussion groups.

Cycle Two Analysis

As I reflect on the purpose of cycle two which was to facilitate DI capacity building I can see how my project occurred progressively in gradual phases and how Pam and Tim, two of the participants, gradually began to transform into competent DI teachers. Cycle two occurred in four phases during my period of research from October 7, 2008 until November 19, 2008 and involved me conducting an interview with two of the participants, four discussion groups, unscheduled classroom observations and one mini-workshop. Phase one involved the selection of the participants, the first meeting with the participants, the first interview session with Pam and Tim and assessing the strengths and limitations of each participant.

Phase two involved me helping the participants to understand DI better through providing them with resource materials on the topic of DI and action research. During this phase I also created charts and graphs to assist the participants with better understanding differentiated instruction and the use of action research cyclic inquiry to capacity build sustaining change in the classroom. Phase three involved making unscheduled classroom observations to assess the participant's teaching methods and classroom environment.

Phase four involved me facilitating my mini-workshop. Data analysis of this cycle began to display emerging themes surrounding the participant's limitations in self-esteem and reflective practices. The question of whether or not two of the participants had

culturally biased practices in the classroom surfaced, however, I decided to subdue this question because this was not the central focus of my research and I did not want to develop cultural biased opinions towards my participants.

I surmised by the end of cycle two that effective professional development involved ongoing, developmental phases that needed to occur chronologically in pre-planned tiered stages. Oddly enough I never believed I was overwhelmed by the many roles I found I had to perform, since both Pam and Tim were lacking in effective classroom management trends. A teacher who has acquired competency in effective classroom management has set certain rules, policies and practices in place with rewards and consequences for students who behave in a positive or negative manner. Pam and Tim both allowed disruptive behavior to interfere with the flow of their lesson. Therefore, during our unscheduled reflective mini-conferences and during our discussion group sessions I would spend time addressing the issue of how and when to give out rewards to the students and what consequences needed to be in place when they displayed deterrent behavior. This of course, took away from time that I had planned to spend on DI implementation strategies.

I believe my servant leadership traits and the desire to help others in need took the central focus of my project during this cycle. Also, I begin to see how the use of reflective practice began transforming Pam and Tim into knowledgeable DI teachers. Tim and Pam began to discuss more openly during our discussion group sessions the needs and learning preferences for their students and their own remedies they had created to assist their students. Unfortunately, Dina's personal schedule did not allow her time to attend the DI discussion groups or workshops. I believed that if Dina had attended these

activities, this would have helped her develop a richer DI classroom environment for her students, although her classroom was already effectively managed. I ensured that every week Dina would receive all of the handouts that I had distributed for the week.

CHAPTER VII

CYCLE THREE: CHANGED TEACHING STYLE AND

STAFF PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT

Cycle Three Goals

Cycle three occurred in three phases during a period of my research from

November 20, 2008 until December 31, 2008. For cycle three my goal was to assist the

participants and the entire learning community with overcoming challenges of DI. This

cycle included me planning to stay focused on my action plan, D.O.O.R.S. Despite the

challenges that began to become apparent with the needs of the participants I had to

become committed to implementing my D.O.O.R.S. action plan based on three main

components of my participants learning how to use differentiated instruction, action

research cyclic inquiry and culturally aware teaching in the classroom in order to build

sustaining change. In order to validate my action research plan, I was now prepared

publicly to discuss my D.O.O.R.S. action plan through a series of three workshops

I offered to the entire certified and non-certified staff at Bear Elementary School. Two of

the three workshops occurred during my cycle three research stage.

Cycle Three – Overview

Learning the individual's needs was important for me to become an effective

servant leader (Greenleaf, 2002). By the end of cycle three I discovered that my

participants were having difficulty reflecting on their own performance in lesson delivery

as an instructor. They needed to learn how to use reflective practice methods in

evaluating their lessons. I learned this information by probing to find out reasons why the

participants were not completing my reflection logs after they presented a DI lesson.

I also discovered by my second scheduled observation that my participants were not highly informed on student learning theories and preferences. I had to make learning theories the topic of my Workshop III in cycle four in order to try to assist my participants with trying to understand these important concepts related to DI.

During phase one of cycle three, I conducted two scheduled classroom observations and collected a hard copy of Pam and Tim's lesson plans. I continued to meet with my participants on a weekly basis or communicate with them through e-mail correspondence and prepared agendas for two discussion group sessions which had to be cancelled due to scheduling conflicts. During phase one of cycle three I supplied my 3 participants individual coaching sessions, advice on DI implementation and literature on differentiated instruction, action research and other related topics for them to use for resource guides in planning DI lessons. The weekly DI group discussion sessions were interrupted during this cycle due to a conflict with holidays and vacation days when school was not in session.

For phase two of cycle three I provided two professional development workshops for the entire Bear Elementary School learning community to assist them with understanding how to build sustaining change in the classroom through DI and my D.O.O.R.S. action plan. Phase two also provided me the opportunity to receive written feedback from the workshop participants through a questionnaire on my leadership performance as workshop facilitator and the importance of the information I provided.

Phase three of cycle three permitted me to bond more with the Bear Elementary School principal and build trust (Sergiovanni, 2001). The vice principal who had planned to be the key administrator overseeing my study had an extended leave of absence.

This unexpected occurrence allowed me the opportunity to keep the principal actively informed through e-mail correspondence and brief in-person meetings.

Cycle Three Phase One – Pam's Changed Teaching Style

On November 20, 2008, I saw Pam teach for a 45 minute session with her class of eighteen students. I was surprised to see a remarkable difference in Pam's instruction and the assistance her co-teacher, Ms. Green, provided from the last time I visited her class on October 16, 2008. Pam was conducting a writing lesson with her class of eighteen students. Pam was the special education instructor. Ms. Green was the general classroom instructor. Ms. Stone was the paraprofessional teacher's aide. I stated in my journal:

When I entered the classroom I noticed the students were seated at four

rectangular tables. The boys and girls were evenly dispersed in seating. The

morning announcements were finishing up on the public announcement system.

Then for two minutes an aerobics movement tape was played on the public

announcement system. I saw all of the teachers and the students perform

movement in sync with the music – which told you what kinesthetic activity to

use. Pam began the lesson by telling the students in a calm but firm voice "Today

we are going to do a writing prompt."

The co-teacher, Ms. Green, who was also present, seemed to act as the

disciplinarian with the few students who kept calling out or talking, telling them

they should be listening to the lesson. I told Pam and her co-teacher that you can

tier this lesson since you have some students who finished early – take it to

another level – add crayons and coloring and then have the students spell the

name of their pet. Pam and Ms. Green followed my suggestion after they saw

three students, two African American females and one Hispanic male had already

completed step two of the assignment. The lesson ended with 99% of the students

completing the assignment and about 80% coloring and 5% giving their pets

another name and spelling the name out (Lee, Journal, November 20, 2008).

I saw great improvement in how Pam executed her lesson. She was effectively

using her voice to influence the student's writing skills in a lesson about liking pets and

animals. I was able to utilize modeling by interjecting during the course lesson and taking

the activity to a higher level. The students were writing original first names for each

animal after they drew a picture of the animal in a square and labeled the type of animal it

was under their pencil drawing. After the lesson I was able to discuss with Pam and

Ms. Green the important aspects of her lesson at lunchtime. Pam informed me she began

to understand a tiered activity better from my demonstration. I mentioned to her that she

had some high achievers in the classroom who finished the activity earlier than the rest

and perhaps she needs to think about tiered activities more in their lessons to keep these

fast learners interested. Both Pam and her co-teacher seemed to agree with this idea. I

stated in my journal:

> Pam explained she understands now what I am talking about with tiered
>
> activities since we did this with her lesson going from sketching, to labeling, to
>
> coloring, to creating their own words. Pam criticized herself for drawing on the
>
> chalk board instead of bringing in photos of the animals. I commended her on this
>
> type of lesson delivery because she was demonstrating to the students what they
>
> were expected to do with the drawing. The only problem is that to date Pam or her

co-teacher has not completed the reflection logs and I need to find out from them how they perceived themselves. I will have to use some probing questions to find out why this occurred (Lee, Journal, November 20, 2008).

When I visited Pam's classroom again for a second scheduled observation on December 18, 2008 I was very surprised because Pam and Ms. Green had altered their classroom into DI learning stations. In addition, Pam visibly displayed a choice board with student name's and activities on the bulletin board. Pam further astonished me by delivering a mathematics lesson having the students use their fingers and body parts to count to ten. I stated in my journal:

> I noticed the room now had a choice board with activities listed on large cards. Each card which was placed in a plastic pocket had clothes pins bearing the different student's name in print. A sign saying *Writing* now appeared in the northeast corner of the classroom. In addition, I learned later from Pam that an entire table with 6 head phones was the Listening Center. The Listening Center was located in the southwest corner of the classroom. In an interview following the lesson I learned the 2 teachers decided to differentiate instruction by building their classroom into learning stations to attempt to address the needs of the different learners. However, presently, Pam was alone with the students. Ms. Green, her co-teacher, and the paraprofessional teacher's aide were both absent from the classroom. I chose to sit in the far back of the classroom in a small student's chair to begin my scheduled observation as a participant/observer (Lee, Journal, December 18, 2008).

I further stated in my field notes:

> I observed Pam begin her lesson by saying "Good morning, everybody get
> your fingers and hands ready." She wiggled her fingers. The majority of students
> held both of their hands in the air and began wiggling their fingers imitating
> Pam's movements.
>
> Pam said, "We are going to talk about 10 fluffy chicks. We have 5 over
> here (wiggling fingers on her right hand) and how many over here (wiggling
> fingers on her left hand)?"
>
> After a female Hispanic student named Sharon called out, "Five" Pam
> sang a chant about ten little chickens several times. Pam then asked the class if the
> word chicken is the same as chicks. She wrote on the board the word *chicken* in
> print and then printed the word *chicks* below it. She asked the students, pointing
> to the two words, "Is this the same word as this?" Some of the students responded
> aloud, "Yes." Then Pam asked the student, "Look again (pointing to each vowel
> and letter in the two words) are these two words the same?" The majority of the
> students responded aloud in chorus, "No." Next Pam x's out the "en" in chicken,
> added an "s" and pointed to the two words asking the students, "Are these two
> words the same now?" The majority of the students responded, "Yes" to Pam's
> question (Lee, Field notes, December 18, 2008).

Tim's Second and Third Teaching Assignments

I was able to complete two observations of Tim teaching on November 20, 2008
and again view two teaching sessions with Tim on December 18, 2008. My role was as a
participant/observer. However, on November 20, 2008 Tim had now been moved

to a new team teaching situation with a first grade teacher, Ms. Blue, who had twenty-

three students in her class. He no longer instructed third grade students. Next on

December 18, 2008 when I observed Tim again he had been moved again to another first

grade classroom assignment as a team teacher with Ms. Jones.

I stated in my field notes for Tim's November 20, 2008 teaching session:

I entered the room at 10:30 a.m. I sat at a computer desk off to the side. The

students were seated on the 4 by 6 foot multicolored block design carpet. Tim

said, "Today we are going to learn about counting." Tim called on 7 students to

stand up in front of the chalk board. Next he asked the class of students, "How

many students do we have?" The students responded in chorus, "Seven." Tim

then asked several students by name to sit down. Then Tim asked the class, "How

many students do we now have left?" The students responded in chorus the

correct number and Tim continued this activity for about 5 minutes by either

taking away the number of students standing or adding to the numbers standing.

Next Tim proceeded to show the students a cube. I interjected and said, "Tim

do the students know what a cube is?" Tim and Ms. Blue then took the time to

explain to the students the difference between a cube and a square. Ms. Blue held

up a small Kleenex box which was shaped like a cube to demonstrate the cubes

are all around us.

Next Tim allowed Omar, an African American male student, who had

trouble sitting still on the carpet to be his helper and hold the cubes. Tim had the

class count aloud until they counted 7 cubes, which he then had a helper stick

together in a row unit. He continued this activity as a whole group until it was

recess time for the students to go to the rest room. Ms. Blue took the boys and Tim took the girls. I showed Tim how he could ask the students to stand in the square tile boxes and give them a magic star if they stood quietly in the line. Tim told me he continues to use this magic reward gesture to instill good behavior in the students. He claims, it has really worked well for him (Lee, Field notes, November 20, 2008).

I further stated in my journal:

Tim appears to be adapting to his new classroom environment very well. His co-teacher, Ms. Blue, is not dominating Tim and is allowing him to grow as a teacher using his own teaching style. I believe Tim is making a great effort to incorporate his differentiated instruction strategies into his lessons. He uses lesson delivery in various ways – visual, aural, tactile and kinesthetic. He, however, is having classroom management issues particularly with the male students. The female students respond to his commands however, the male students do not seem to pay attention to Tim. I plan to work with Tim on applying more diverse classroom management strategies.

I did speak with Tim and Ms. Blue after school. I mentioned to Tim and Ms. Blue to think about ways he can utilize the space in the classroom more to get students to pay attention. They have the carpet area, desk area and the computer area and can ask students who are not focusing to sit at their desk until they are ready to be active listeners on the carpet. I am concerned they have placed Tim in this classroom which has one SE student. Tim does not yet have his certification.

Tim's afternoon teaching session with Ms. Blue I believe went smoother (Lee,

Journal, November 20, 2008).

I stated in my field notes for Tim's afternoon session on November 20, 2008:

Tim said several times, "One two, three, eyes on me." The students responded to

coming attention and focusing on the lesson the second time. I observed Tim

teach a reading lesson. He started by reviewing a morning story about a girl

named Beth. He drew a circle and asked the students to explain the jobs Beth

liked to do and did not like. Tim listed the jobs on the White board as the students

began brainstorming and naming the different jobs, watering flowers, waving the

flag etc.

I mediated in conversation during Tim's lesson and asked that Tim call on

a student to draw a picture of a flag, the flowers, the water etc. Tim followed my

suggestion and called on student volunteers. I also told Tim, "Why don't you ask

the students to do the writing and help list the activities Beth is doing?" Ms. Blue

and Tim followed my suggestion and called on student volunteers to help write

the words. The students remained focus and attentive throughout the entire lesson

once they became participants.

At the end of the lesson Tim told the students, "You did a good job

today." He then lined the students up at the door to go to the rest rooms after

Ms. Blue said she would take the boys this time if Tim would take the girls

to the bathroom.

In the hallway, the girls did not respond to Tim's directions. They did not

stand in a straight line and clowned around with one another. I reminded Tim

of the magic star activity from his morning class session. He followed my

suggestion and awarded invisible magic stars to the girls who were standing

quietly in line. In a few minutes all of the girls were responding positively to

Tim's commands. (Lee, Field notes, November 20, 2008).

After my two observations on November 20, 2008 I began to understand Tim's

needs. He did not understand how to infuse differentiated strategies into his lesson

delivery. He also still appeared to be having classroom management issues concerning

student behavior.

When I observed Tim on December 18, 2008 he was once again placed in a new

first grade class setting with a new co-teacher, Ms. Jones.

 I stated in my journal:

Tim is now in his third classroom setting at Bear Elementary. He is working

with Ms. Jones who is an experienced veteran lead teacher of more than ten years.

Ms. Jones is the lead co-teacher. Tim's relationship with Ms. Jones is more as a

student mentor relationship than an equal as a teacher. I observed this from my

first observation in Tim's new classroom because Ms. Jones set the tone and

gave all leadership commands for activities in the classroom (Lee, Journal,

December 18, 2008).

I was greatly concerned that Tim who appeared to start developing as an effective

DI classroom teacher may digress working with the new co-teacher, since she appeared to

have a dominant personality. Ms. Blue, Tim's previous co-teacher, had provided Tim the

space to grow and develop on his own as an instructor. Ms. Jones had already set the

authoritative teacher directed tone for her classroom with years of practice. As a new teacher in education I saw Tim losing his assertiveness as a teacher implementing DI.

Tim was presently in his third teaching assignment at Bear School. I asked Tim why the administration kept moving him around. He explained that the reason was he was needed as the second teacher in the classroom that had special education inclusion students. Inclusion students were students who were part of the special education program who were placed in a general classroom setting with a general education teacher and a special education specialist. Tim did not yet have his certification in special education and I was leery of Tim being placed three times in different classroom settings in one school year. In my experience this frequent change of classroom assignments denoted that a new teacher usually was having trouble with classroom management issues and therefore the administration moved the teacher around to a new classroom in a co-teaching situation. However, I accepted Tim's excuse as valid, when Tim asked me if I knew about the teacher special education certification process because he had been told by a Bear School official that he needed to obtain his SE certificate as soon as possible.

I noticed that Tim adapted well to his third classroom setting. He went into a subordinate role and allowed Ms. Jones to act as the lead teacher. However, I begin to notice that Tim was not as vocal with praise as he was in his previous classroom settings. I found Tim to be less dominant in spirit and praise as the key instructor when he was teaching the lesson. I stated in my journal:

> Tim and Ms. Jones had the class do four exercises in pairs. I left my seat and walked around the carpet, looking over the shoulder of the students to see if they were completing the mathematics exercises correctly. Tim and Ms. Jones

remained stationery as the students went through the exercises. I asked one

student if she understood the problem and then caught myself on using the word

problem because this may make the student apprehensive using this term (Lee,

Journal, December 18, 2008).

Tim's needs had changed with his new classroom environment. He needed to be

more dominant with his use of differentiated instruction in his lesson. Although for the

one reading lesson I observed in the morning and one mathematics lesson I observed in

the afternoon Tim was having the students do paired activities and work, Tim had

dropped his student-centered approach to teaching and had picked up Ms. Jones' teacher-

centered approach. I begin to see how his behavior towards the students which was caring

in the other situations was now beginning to become neutral. I stated in my field notes on

December 18, 2008):

Next Ms. Jones asked the class to split into two groups. She took the boy students

to the left area of the carpet. Tim took the girl students to the right. The students

were now to complete 8 more exercises in small groups. As soon as Tim's small

group of 6 girls surrounded him and he began to speak, an African American

female student, Asia, began to cry in a loud voice, for what appeared to be no

reason. Tim tried to shout over the student. I mediated the conversation with Tim

and asked Tim, "Is it okay for the student to sit at the table and put her head down

because maybe she isn't feeling well?" Tim said, "Yes." Next I ushered the

student to a seat and told her, "It is almost time to go home, you do not have much

longer." I then asked Ms. Jones aloud, "Does she do this often?" Ms. Jones

responded, "Yes." I then told the crying student, "As soon as you feel better you can come and join us on the rug."

Asia, the crying girl student, decided to join the students on the carpet when she noticed the students seemed to be having fun counting and adding up the tens and ones columns. I asked Tim, "Do you want me to work with her to catch her up?" He said, "Yes." Just as I was finishing up the last exercise with the student, Ms. Jones at this point said to me, "Could you move somewhere else with the student?" I said, "We are almost finished, we just have one more question." Ms. Jones said, "I need that area of the rug for students to work." I then said, "Okay, let us go sit at the table." The student I was working with completed the work within thirty seconds and rejoined the students on the carpet (Lee, Field notes, December 18, 2008).

First of all I was surprised at Ms. Jones' behavior with not stepping in to mediate and assist Tim with Asia, the crying student. Even if this student frequently cried, her behavior was disrupting the lesson for the rest of the students. My action of mediation suggesting the crying student move to an isolated spot assisted Tim with executing his lesson.

I was able to discuss with Tim later that afternoon after my Workshop II session how he felt about his performance. I believe Tim, who asked me what I thought of his lesson, became perturbed with me, when I told him it was not what I thought about the lesson that is important, it is what he thought about his performance that counts. I responded to Tim in this manner to make him more introspective about his own performance rather than relying on an outsider for performance evaluation.

I then inquired to Tim about how many of his students did he believe understood his mathematics lesson. Tim only claimed 74% understood the lesson. I was surprised because all of his girl students and all of Ms. Jones boy students had completed the one page exercise. I then asked him, "Don't you recall all of the girls and boys completed the mathematics page exercise, so wouldn't it be 100% of the students who understood the lesson? Why do you feel only 74% understood? Tim could not explain. I told him he needed to give himself more credit for what he is doing, which is a good job instructing the students.

I also addressed Asia, the crying student at this mini-conference. I told him perhaps he could work with the nurse on strategies to assist him, since obviously she had emotional problems. However, her loud crying was disrupting the lesson for the entire class and he should not let this occur in the class continuously. Her loud crying needs to be addressed because it is affecting his classroom climate (Lee, Field notes, December 18, 2008).

Dina's Proficient DI Teaching

I observed Dina in two 45 minute scheduled observation sessions during phase one of cycle three. The first session occurred on November 20, 2008 and the second session occurred on December 18, 2008. The first scheduled observation Dina was involved in teaching a whole group mathematics lesson on counting in groups of two. She told me because she had been so involved with the Hispanic Month Assembly program which was presented the night before, she did not have time to prepare a DI lesson. I remained anyway to observe Dina and noticed she used her computer and SMART Board the majority of the time to assist with delivering instruction.

During the second scheduled observation that occurred on December 18, 2008 I observed Dina teach an effective DI literacy arts lesson on the fairytale story about *The Gingerbread Man*. I stated in my journal:

> Dina is a 2nd grade bilingual teacher which means 100% of her students speak a native language other than English at home. Dina's students are all Spanish speaking. I speak Spanish moderately fair. Dina had introduced her students to the story of *The Gingerbread Man* by using a computer video story narrated by a male teacher in Spanish. Dina allowed me to view the video on her computer later that afternoon. I begin to see why Dina was chosen as the Technology Teacher of The Month of June because I observed her infuse technology throughout these lessons (Lee, Journal, December 18, 2009).

As I observed Dina instruct the students in the literacy arts lesson by recounting the story of *The Gingerbread Man*, I noticed that she gave the key directions in both the English and Spanish language. I was fascinated at observing Dina teach her DI lesson in two languages. She was comfortable going back and forth between the English and Spanish language, in order for her students to understand the lesson activities.

I was able to have a reflective conference with Dina after her lesson. She completed a reflection log. She told me that she did not have time to write this lesson up in her standard lesson plans. Dina had a proud look on her face when I explained to her the reason why her lesson was DI because she delivered the lesson in various ways appealing to the visual, aural, kinesthetic and tactile learners. Dina seemed impressed with her lesson. However, I noticed she was not knowledgeable that she had used a multisensory approach to DI in her lesson delivery (Lee, Journal, December 18, 2008).

Dina's need included first trying to find time to attend my workshops or discussion groups in order to learn more about how to implement DI into her lesson plans. Dina's needs also included her having to learn how to connect the learning theories with her student's learning preferences. Dina needed to learn how to choose the individual student learning preferences and then apply the learning preference or preferences to individual or small groups of her students in her lesson delivery.

During phase one of cycle three I was able to meet individually on a weekly basis with each participant and give them DI related topic literature. The second week of December I prepared for them a CD with copies of DI articles and a copy of my reflection logs and planning your DI and action research chart. After the scheduled observations during this phase, I discovered the participants' strengths and limitations had changed.

Cycle Three Phase Two Goals

During phase two I continued with the goals to assist my participants to overcome perceived challenges in implementing DI and continue to capacity build with the entire staff. For phase two of cycle three I was able to provide professional development to the entire Bear School staff by facilitating two workshops on DI. Workshop I occurred in a 45 minute session after school on November 20, 2008 and was titled *Understanding Differentiated Instruction and Doors*. Workshop II also occurred in a 45 minute session after school on December 18, 2008 and was titled *Managing Change in the Classroom*. Each workshop was attended by eleven participants. I facilitated these workshops to reinforce the learning of my 3 participants and to offer to the entire staff my action plan to promote greater school-wide impact with DI (Newmann & Wehlage, 1995).

Workshop I - Understanding Differentiated Instruction and D.O.O.R.S. Overview

My first workshop for the entire staff on *Understanding Differentiated Instruction and D.O.O.R.S.* occurred on November, 20, 2008 at 3:00 p.m. in the Bear School multipurpose room. The multipurpose room had a dual purpose. The room served as the school's cafeteria, gym and auditorium, since the room had a small stage. I arrived 30 minutes early to set up for the workshop. I was excited about conducting my first workshop on DI for the Bear School staff but stayed focused. I made sure the handout folders, sign in sheets and free ink pens were set out on a side table for the participants to take on entering

Workshop I – Activities

For each workshop I presented at Bear School I established a routine of remaining with the items listed on the agenda. Each workshop began with a pre-workshop cooperative learning activity and ended with a cooperative learning activity followed by questions and answers. Each workshop included me giving all participants a folder with DI information which each participant was given when they signed in on the sign-in sheet. Inside the folder was a questionnaire with four open-ended questions concerning the participant's workshop experience and my leadership performance. Another routine at each workshop included me giving the participants their own ink pens and some type of seasonal treat like a lollipop or candy bar with a seasonal design.

For example, during Workshop I the participants were given left over Halloween candy. During Workshop II the participants were given snowmen lollipops because we were now in the winter month of December. During Workshop III, which occurred on January 22, 2008 during my cycle four phase, the participants received a red envelope

with Chinese candy and fortune cookies, since the workshop occurred near the Chinese New Year date.

My goal for Workshop I was to review the basic concepts of DI with the participants discussing pre-assessment, content, process and product while introducing the participants to DI lesson planning through my D.O.O.R.S. action plan. The participants were paired off to complete cooperative learning activity planning tiered lessons on a choice board for students in the fourth grade on the topic of *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* (Lewis, 1950). I was very elated to see the participants working together cooperatively so intensely and everyone participating as a group when we reviewed the lessons each partner group created.

I did have some disappointment with the number in attendance at my workshop, although both of my study participants Pam and Tim were present at Workshop I. The workshop was open to the certified and non-certified staff members which totaled over fifty. However, only eleven teachers, 20% of the staff, attended the workshop.

Workshop II – Managing Change in the Classroom Overview

My second workshop on differentiated instruction for the entire staff took place on December 18, 2008 after school in the third floor technology room, due to the after school program needed the use of the multipurpose room. The last minute change in location for my workshop may have affected the number of teachers who attended, since the workshop was moved from the first to third floor by the principal. Eleven participants attended representing a diverse background. Two of my participants, Pam and Tim, were both in attendance with Tim's former co-teacher, Ms. Blue. Five of the eleven participants were present who had attended my first workshop on DI. The title of my

Workshop II was *Managing Change in Your Classroom*. However, after the session
I realized what the teachers at Bear School really needed was a workshop on reviewing
learning theories and preferences in order to accommodate the diverse learning needs of
the students in their classes.

Workshop II – Activities

I facilitated the second workshop using the same format that I had for my
previous workshops. I stated in my journal:

> I asked the participants to try to recall a lesson they taught or saw taught that they
>
> felt was memorable. I said, "I can think back to a science lesson I had as a child in
>
> 6th grade and still remember it after all of these years." After one minute of
>
> silence Pam spoke up and shared with the group a lesson on the sound of the word
>
> apples she delivered to her students. She brought in three different kinds of apples
>
> and cut them up for the students to taste. I asked the group did they understand
>
> what she did? They responded she used the student's sense of touch and smell to
>
> teach her lesson. I mentioned this is called multisensory learning which deals with
>
> the aural, visual, tactile and kinesthetic (Lee, Journal, December 18, 2008).
>
> > I further stated in my journal about other Workshop II activities:
> >
> > After reviewing the handouts in the packet, I split the group into 3
> >
> > subgroups. Group one, had 4 participants, group two had 4 participants
> >
> > and group three had 3 participants. I reviewed the directions for the
> >
> > activity *Where in the World Does My Time Go*. I emphasized no one could
> >
> > speak for phase one of the activity for 5 minutes once the box is open
> >
> > containing a puzzle and flash cards. After 5 minutes the group could move

to phase two of the activity and sing to one another – however still not speak. After I gave the start signal "go" the groups worked in silence putting together a Tiger and Pooh 25 piece puzzle while at the same time going through 10 flash cards and indicating they knew the answer. Once the 5 minutes was up, only group one had completed the phase one activities. During phase two each group erupted in song, giving directions, asking questions of one another in song and then finally writing a 14 word phrase on their greeting cards. Each member had to write the exact words on their card.

At the end of the activity – suddenly laughter and fraternity erupted among the group members. I reviewed the purpose of the activity – to understand the importance of communication in a lesson – understanding students who are not English language learners who may not be able to explain their thoughts and feelings in English and therefore must remain silent.

I ended the workshop with reminding the group to please think about communication between students and teachers in order to build change in the classroom and I hope to see them at my next workshop on January 22, 2009 entitled *Understanding Cultural Proficiency*. After filling out the questionnaire all participants left except for two and we continued to share experiences of using DI in the classroom, specifically, how to handle students who may be behavior problems. I suggested they learn the student interests such as computers and allow the student to learn through that medium. The workshop ended at 3:48 p.m. (Lee, Journal, December 18, 2008).

At the end of Workshop II I was satisfied that I had recognized that out of the three cooperative learning activities I had planned the pre-workshop activity was the best. I therefore, made the pre-workshop cooperative workshop activity *Where In the World Does My Time Go* the highlight of the workshop so that the participants could understand the need for the students who represents all types of different learners to be presented lessons using differentiated instruction strategies and methods. Questionnaires were completed by the participants that evaluated my performance. The next day, as I did in Workshop, I sent a copy of the Workshop II sign-in sheet and the evaluation forms to the Office of Professional Development director. A duplicate copy of this correspondence was sent to the Bear School principal. One week later workshop certificates were distributed to the participants in their mailboxes by the Bear School principal, Ms. Shirley.

Cycle Three Phase Three – Bonding with Principal via E-mails

I was under a time schedule constraint commuting back and forth between my work site, Homer Middle School and the research site Bear School. I decided the best way to save time for communication with the administrators at Bear School was to rely on e-mails. Fortunately, Ms. Shirley, the Bear School principal was computer savvy and open to corresponding through the personal communication system of e-mails. This factor turned out to be important because during phase three of cycle three I had to rely on Ms. Shirley, the principal of Bear School, for my project needs since Ms. Young, the vice principal was absent for several months. I decided to use e-mails as my main system of communication with Ms. Shirley in order to keep her informed.

During the course of cycle three I sent Ms. Shirley four e-mails dated November 19, 2008, December 4, 2008, December 9, 2008 and December 16. 2008, concerning upcoming activities at Bear School that related to my project. Before I visited Bear School I made the practice of always sending Ms. Shirley an e-mail that I was coming to the building to visit the participants.

I received three e-mails from Ms. Shirley dated December 3, 2008, December 10, 2008 and December 16, 2008 in response to my five e-mails I sent her during cycle three. The first two e-mails I received from Ms. Shirley concerned the state review curriculum team visiting the school and interviewing Bear School staff members during the time of my discussion group meeting. The e-mail dated December 10, 2008 thanked me for letting Ms. Shirley know what to expect from the state review team since several years ago I had been one of the first teachers to participate on the state review curriculum team.

Lesson Plans and Reflection Logs

I should have been more concerned that the participants were not turning in written documents, such as reflection logs, diaries, journals or lesson plans in a timely manner. Tim was consistent in turning in hard copies of his lesson plans to me. An analysis of Tim's lesson plans for the week of November 17, 2008 and the week of December 15, 2008 displayed his attempt at providing tiered activities for his three reading groups labeled below level, on level and above level. Each lesson was labeled as tier one, tier two or tier three. Each lesson was listed as teacher-directed activities and not student-directed differentiated instruction activities. Tim stated in both sets of his lesson plans: "Teacher-directed activity" for each phase of his lesson.

Pam's lesson plans for the week of December 15, 2008 displayed she was applying differentiated instruction strategies by asking the students to sing, play games, or discuss or re-tell the lesson. She stated: "Give students directions for hand motions. Ask: What do you call a baby dog? Prompt students to talk in complete sentences. Name other animals and ask students the names of the babies. Write some responses on the board."

I also regret during the cycle three phase not being more aware of the possible reasons why none of the 3 participants were completing my reflection logs after delivering a DI lesson. Nor did I recognize that none of the participants were keeping a reflective log, diary or journal, until cycle four. Pam on several occasions would ask me what to write in the journal and I answered her question by saying anything about your teaching experience with trying to implement DI.

However, it was not until the end of cycle three that I discovered the reflection logs were not being completed because they required a teacher have general knowledge of student learning theories and preferences. My participants were limited in this knowledge which they may have once learned in college, however, have forgotten how to use. The teacher needed to have self-reflective analytical skills to assess the student's level of comprehension to complete the reflection logs. For a traditional teacher who is used to written tests and multiple choice quizzes to assess student performance, asking the teacher to differentiate and assess the student's knowledge by other means such as vocal answers may be challenging.

Cycle Three – Summary of Participants' DI Barriers

During the course of my research period for cycle three I discovered similar barriers that began to occur in cycle two occurred in cycle three: 1) The participants appeared to lack thorough knowledge in learning theories, student learning preferences and differentiated instruction strategies. 2) The participants were not planning lessons around students' learning preferences. 3) The participants appeared to possess limited skills in reflective practice and self-analysis. However, I did not find the barriers that the participants appeared to have low self-esteem and lack confidence in their teaching abilities as a reoccurring pattern. By cycle three Pam had begun to develop into a highly skilled DI instructor changing her method of lesson delivery and her classroom environment to become more student-centered. Dina displayed her expert skill with DI in a lesson about *The Gingerbread Man* using the multisensory approach to instruction. Tim had changed classrooms three times as a teacher by the end of cycle three. His needs changed also with his new setting and environment. Tim possessed the knowledge concerning DI however, as a new teacher had not yet found his assertiveness in implementing his DI lessons with his co-teacher.

In addition, the Bear School staff who attended my workshops was highly receptive to DI. However, the Workshop I and II participants were not clear on how to go about setting up DI in their classroom. In addition, they appeared to possess limited knowledge about the use of learning theories and student learning preferences.

Cycle Three Analysis

My aim for cycle three was to assist the participants in addressing perceived DI challenges. By completing two scheduled classroom observations, leading individual

coaching and reflective discussion sessions with the participants while at the same time

capacity building with the entire staff by presenting two workshops on DI and my action

plan D.O.O.R.S. I planned to achieve these goals. I discovered similar barriers that were

dominant in cycle two became dominant in cycle three:

1. The participants appeared to lack thorough knowledge in learning theories,
    student learning preferences and differentiated instruction strategies.

2. The participants were not planning lessons around students' learning
    preferences.

3. The participants appeared to possess limited skills in reflective practice and
    self-analysis.

On reflection I could see the three main barriers prevalent at Bear School with

the participants and the general teaching staff who attended my DI workshops may be a

school wide problem. I decided to address these problems not by critically making the

teachers aware of the dilemmas but through professional development discussion in the

workshops. Learning theories became a central focus of my study by cycle four. I had to

coach, model and demonstrate various ways to the participants and the Bear School

learning community how connecting learning theories to student learning preferences

assisted with a smoother transition of DI implementation into the classroom.

CHAPTER VIII

CYCLE FOUR: SUSTAINING CHANGE

Cycle Four Overview

Cycle four consisted of me following Fullan's (2007) phase three concept that involved analyzing the change idea's outcome and if it will be sustained. Cycle four occurred in three phases from January 1, 2009 until February 13, 2009. During my research cycle four I became greatly concerned that I would lose two of my participants, Tim and Dina. Tim's third new teaching experience at Bear School was becoming overwhelming for him and he requested I step back to be an observer/coach only. Dina did not have enough time in her schedule to actively participate in my study.

In phase one, I facilitated my final DI discussion group five and I gave each participant another resource guide with a DI related topic. I completed my final observation session with my 3 participants, Pam, Tim and Dina, on January 22, 2009. I also collected one hardcopy of Tim's lesson plan. During phase two, I completed my third DI workshop for the entire staff on January 22, 2009. For phase three, I completed my final interview with each participant. I obtained feedback on my leadership performance at the interviews and also with the evaluation questionnaires given at the workshop.

Cycle Four Phase One Goals

I facilitated my final discussion group five on January 13, 2009. During the meeting I distributed DI related resource books individually to each participant. I gave each participant a different book based on their needs and asked them to share the book with the other participants. Tim received a Tomlinson (2001) text titled

How to Differentiate Instruction in Mixed-ability Classroom. Pam received a book concerning multicultural and special education teaching titled *Multicultural Special Education: Culturally Responsive Teaching* (Obiakor, 2007). Dina received a resource guide book with a DVD titled *50 Strategies for English Language Learners* (Herrell & Jordon, 2008). I collected a hard copy of Tim's lesson plans. In addition, I conducted my final classroom observation of Pam, Tim and Dina in phase one of cycle four.

Strengthening DI Classroom Elements

The participants' limitations with classroom elements were overcome through efforts I made to address these elements. The diagnostician element and the using different learning modalities were addressed through coaching and a literature rich environment. The element of flexible classroom time was addressed through coaching and discussion. The element of providing ways for varied instruction was addressed by changing the lesson delivery style by way of modeled lessons. The participants learned about beginning the lesson at the student's readiness level and then differentiating from coaching, discussion groups and workshops.

Participants' Professional Development

The participants each followed a different way towards professional development. Pam recognized her limitations and her need to change. She attended all professional development sessions. She responded to modeling lessons and did change her classroom environment. She changed her delivery style from teacher-centered to student-centered. She became the second-change agent to her co-teacher. Also her opinion became more positive towards DI.

Tim recognized his need to change but not his limitations. He also attended all professional development sessions. He did respond to the modeling lessons. He preplanned his lessons for DI. His opinion became more positive towards DI.

Dina was already proficient with implementing DI in her classroom. She recognized the importance of DI but not the need to change. She attended only one of the professional development sessions. She also responded well to modeling lessons.

Discussion Group Five

I facilitated my discussion group five session on January 13, 2009. We met in Ms. Blue's first floor classroom because Dina's classroom, our usual meeting place was locked. Ms. Blue, Tim's former co-teacher, attended this session with Tim and Pam. The topic on the agenda was *Interest Inventories and Multiple Intelligences to Plan Lessons on DI.* I reviewed the topics on the agenda with the participants and gave them a folder with several handouts I created on assessing the students' learning preferences and interests. I also gave them an interest inventory (see Appendix O) and a multiple intelligences information sheet.

I informed the participants who attended discussion group five session that the teachers must let the administration know what their aims are in implementing DI. Ms. Blue and Pam mentioned they did not understand why they had such critical evaluations by the administration. They were still distressed over this occurrence that happened in the fall of 2008. Ms. Blue also mentioned that other teachers, she was not the only one, were unhappy with their evaluation. Tim remained mute through this encounter and said nothing.

I made several suggestions to the group. If you receive an evaluation you do not agree with then meet with the administration privately and request they remove the negative remark or check. Do not let anyone on the staff know you have made this request. I shared with them over my 18 years of teaching I had two incidents where this occurred. I privately met with the administrator and they agreed to delete the negative remark. However, I never let any other staff member in the building know this occurred. Secondly, if the administrator decides not to change the remark, then you have ten days to attach a rebuttal memo to your evaluation, before it is sent downtown to the central office.

After this discussion I continued the meeting, I gave each participant another resource guide with DI related topics. Tim seemed to recognize the Tomlinson (2001) book I gave him from being a resource guide for one of his previous DI college courses at River University. Pam appeared very pleased to receive her book on multicultural teaching and special education (Obiakor, 2007). Dina's book *50 Strategies on Teaching English Language Learners* (Herrell & Jordan, 2008) I dropped off in her mailbox in the main office because she was not in attendance at the session. During Dina's interview session she told me she had received the book, however, did not have time to read the text.

Next at our final discussion group session I mentioned a DI workshop was occurring in the northern part of the state in several months. I suggested Tim and Pam request professional development credit to attend the workshop. I told them I would check with the Bear School administration to see if they could cover the cost of the workshop which was $200.

Pam's Student-Centered Teaching Observed at the Final Observation

I observed Pam and Ms. Green teach a morning lesson for 45 minutes on mathematics on January 22, 2009. The district mathematics specialist was present also during this observation. My role in this observation was solely as an observer, since the mathematics specialist was observing the two kindergarten teachers and was preparing to model mathematics lessons for the two teachers the next three periods.

I stated in my field notes:

> When I entered the classroom Pam was standing in the center of the classroom teaching a lesson on skip counting in mathematics to the entire class. Her co-teacher, Ms. Green, was assisting with Ms. Stone, the paraprofessional, in instruction. Pam began the lesson with stringing together colored chain links tacked on the bulletin board. Each chain had 10 links. Pam demonstrated how 10 chain links represented 100. She asked the class how many rows of chains are needed to obtain 20. Samuel, a Hispanic male student, called out two. Pam continued this exercise with asking the students how many more chains are needed for 30, 40,…..all the way to 100. Each time she added 10 to a row of chain links she asked the class, "How many links do we have now?" The class responded in chorus with the correct answer.
>
> During this lesson Ms. Green would add encouraging comments, such as "Very good boys and girls, now listen to what else Pam is going to say about counting in tens."
>
> Next Pam taught the whole group skip counting by tens and pointed to a chart located on the wall which displayed numbers 1 through 100 as she first

demonstrated to the class how to count. Then Pam asked the class to count aloud from 10 to 100 in groups of ten. Pam repeated this exercise several times. The first time she counted. The second time the whole group counted. The third and fourth time she called on individual students to count. "What comes after 10?" Helen can you tell me?" Helen responded "Twenty" (Lee, Field notes, January 22, 2009).

I was impressed that Pam and Ms. Green had showed great improvement in teaching. Pam varied the lesson delivery by using the plastic chain links to visually demonstrate groups of ten in counting for the students. She also used a chart which the entire class seemed to follow as they all skipped counted in groups of ten with Pam and Ms. Green. I was impressed by the new décor of the classroom which was now set up in learning center stations. In addition, Pam had choice board activities listed on a bulletin board with the student's names under each activity. I took photographs that day so I could have proof of Pam and Ms. Green's growth as instructors in setting up a DI learning environment.

At the end of the lesson I was unable to complete a reflection conference with Pam about her lesson because the mathematics specialist was present. I stated in my journal some suggestions I would have given Pam for her mathematics lesson:

I was impressed by the interaction of Pam with the students and with her co-teacher who was just as intensely involved in the lesson as Pam. Their relationship had bonded deeper where each one was supporting each other. Pam used the chain link rods to differentiate her lesson. However, I believe it would

have been better to ask the students to touch or hold the chain links and add them

to her rows on the bulletin board. The students could have pointed to the chart to

signify the skip counting by tens. Student engagement could have been more

hands on, not only verbal. I had to also take into account the sudden appearance

of the supervisor may have caused the level of intensity with teaching between the

co-teachers. However, I recalled this intensity was present during my previous

observation session when Pam and Ms. Green were co-teaching. Therefore, I

decided to dismiss this reason for the two teachers demonstrating such great

improvement (Lee, Journal, January 22, 2009).

Pam and Ms. Green showed a great deal of growth and development since my

first informal visit to their classroom in October 16, 2008. However, now I was

concerned as to whether they had coaching help from the district office. I was able to

briefly interview Ms. Monica, the special education specialist, as to how many times she

had visited Pam's classroom. She mentioned this was only her second visit. She could not

schedule any other day of the week due to her district commitments. Ms. Monica also

informed me that she usually visits the classroom when an administrator requests it,

so I assumed either the vice principal or principal at Bear School had invited her to

Pam's class.

I stated in my journal:

I mentioned to Ms. Monica, just as Ms. Johnson, the literacy coach entered the

classroom that I needed to observe these teachers in their natural setting,

therefore, I will return in the afternoon after she finishes her modeling session. I

informed Pam and Ms. Green that I would return in the afternoon for my

observation modeling session. I left their classroom to visit Tim's classroom next, only to find he also had a morning conflict with my observation schedule.

When I visited Pam's classroom again during lunch with the hope of having a reflection conference with her, I observed Pam and Ms. Green were in conference with Ms. Monica and the Bear School literacy coach, Ms. Johnson. I waited twenty more minutes until 12:30 p.m. and walked down the hallway of the Bear School to attend the afternoon session with Pam. I saw Ms. Monica exit Pam's classroom during this time period. Apparently Ms. Monica and Ms. Johnson had stayed for a four hour modeling and coaching session with Pam and her co-teacher (Lee, Journal, January 22, 2009).

For the afternoon session Pam and Ms. Green had asked me to model a lesson for them on DI for their kindergarten class of 18 students. I chose to model a lesson on students understanding the meaning of abbreviation letters from the alphabet and use a lesson on Dr. Martin Luther King as a theme. Dr. King's holiday had just occurred earlier in the week and I thought this theme would be a relevant topic. My lesson plan stated my topic was learning abbreviations from alphabet letters. My objective stated: students will be able to identify letters of the alphabet as symbols for different professions and sing a song about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. – Civil Rights Leader. My learning theories listed were Bloom's taxonomy and multisensory.

I stated in my field notes on January 22, 2009:

I opened up the lesson with holding up a photograph of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. to the class of 18 kindergarten students and asked the students, "Who is this man?" Several African American girl and boy students called out, "Dr. King."

I then asked does anyone know what day we celebrate his holiday?" Several African American students called out, "On his birthday, it was Monday." I said, "Correct." to the student's response and began teaching the students a song about Dr. King.

The students listened to me sing the song one time and then formed a circle and repeated singing the song together three more times. I then asked the students to take their seats and explained, "Today we are going to learn how the letters of the alphabet when used as abbreviations or short letter symbols help us to identify someone's job or profession. I then asked does any one know how to spell the word, doctor, in Dr. King. The first time we sounded out the letters and Pam helped spell Dr. on the board. I then asked, "Does anyone know how to spell doctor a different ways? After there was no response Pam wrote on the chalk board answering this question writing the full word doctor and the abbreviation next to it. I continued the lesson by explaining other types of doctors and professions – MD, DDS, DVM or Ph.D. etc. and showed the students pictures of those types of doctors. We sang the song about Dr. King several more times joining hands in a circle. I finished the lesson with a coloring activity with the students– coloring Dr. King's silhouette on a coloring page.

At the end of the lesson I gave Pam and her co-teacher Ms. Green a copy of my lesson plans and picture prompts displaying doctors in various fields of study. I also gave them some coloring activity on Rosa Parks. The time was now 1:30 p.m. and I was due in Tim's classroom for my next observation session.

 I apologized to Pam and Ms. Green for having to leave the students in the

midst of their coloring activity and exited the classroom (Lee, Field notes,

January 22, 2009).

A few weeks after I modeled the lesson on Dr. Martin Luther King and

professional names and alphabet letters, Pam informed me that she was inspired by my

Dr. King lesson in her classroom. She went home and scanned her library to find books

she already owned that could be used for themes for her DI lessons. I was elated to hear

I was having impact on Pam's teaching (Lee, Journal, February 13, 2009).

Tim's Final Observation and Teacher-Centered Teaching Style

I observed Tim teach his first grade class of twenty students with his co-teacher,

Ms. Jones, in a one hour session on the afternoon of January 22, 2009. Tim's lesson plans

for the week of January 19, 2009 revealed to me that he was trying to differentiate his

lesson by having the students work in pairs. In his lesson plans he stated: "students will

work in pairs to skip count by 2's, 5's and 10's."

I was not very impressed with Tim's main style of lesson delivery on

January 22, 2009 lesson because it was teacher-directed instruction which lasted for sixty

minutes. Because Tim and Ms. Jones used a teacher-directed style of instruction, this left

little time for student interaction and engagement. In addition, Tim had requested I not

step in as a co-teacher to support him in his lesson delivery. He wanted me to observe as

an administrator. I researched traditional classroom observation practices (Peterson,

1995) and began my observation with clocking every five minutes what events were

occurring. Every five minutes it appeared Tim or Ms. Jones was talking and giving

directions to the students about what they should do or learn.

I stated in my journal:

The most exciting activity during the lesson occurred at the end when Ms. Jones

directed a skip counting pop up or stand up activity on the carpet. I thought this

was an excellent DI strategy to assess if the students understood the lesson.

However, I discovered later during a brief reflection conference with Tim that

Tim did not decipher that the students during this activity were acting as copy

cats. I observed the few students who knew the answers were calling out loudly

their response doing the pop up or stand up activity. The majority of the students

who were not certain of the correct answer quickly caught on to mimicking the

group who knew the answers and learned quickly to pop up from the carpet with

the group who knew the correct answers (Lee, Journal, January 22, 2009).

Later that day I let Tim know in a brief conference that his mathematics lesson

was too much teacher-directed and not enough hands on activities. I also pointed out to

Tim that when another interesting part of the lesson occurred when Ms. Jones decided to

teach the class after Tim's mathematics lesson about the map and allow a hands on

activity with the globe, this was a good lesson. However, Ms. Jones and Tim decided

three students, 2 Hispanic males and 1 Black female were not allowed to participate in

the globe touching activity because they were sent to isolation seating at their desk for

some infraction they did earlier in the day. I told Tim this was almost cruel to punish a

child for something they did earlier by denying them knowledge. There is a necessity for

leaders to gain cultural awareness in order to recognize cultural bias (Lindsey et al.,

2005) Apparently neither Tim nor Ms. Jones was aware of the cultural biased behavior in

this instance, so I decided to send both teachers an e-mail the next day outlining

suggestions for better lesson delivery and punishment/reward treatment because I became so ethically disturbed by this kind of punishment.

My e-mail dated January 23, 2009 stated:

RE: Great Lesson/Here Are Some Suggestions

1-23-09

Dear Tim and Ms. Jones:

Ms. Jones I still need your signed letter of consent. I am attaching another copy of the form with this e-mail. I would appreciate you dropping it in the mail to me at Homer Middle School or giving it to Tim whom I should see Tuesday after school with our discussion group in Room 206.

Tim and Ms. Jones great mathematics and social studies lesson! Please complete a reflection log and return it to me. I particularly enjoyed the mathematics Pop Up Activity where the students demonstrated their knowledge as a group. I have the following suggestions.

1. Have you thought about the POP UP activity in round robin individual fashion for the students to individually demonstrate they can skip count?

It appeared only a small group of girls - as the group who understood skip counting aloud? The rest of the class was mimicking the girls with chorus answers...which happened to be correct. However, I believe not all students demonstrated they really understood how to skip count. If you test them individually with POP UP this should tell you if they

do or don't understand skip counting. What do you think?

  2. Have you thought about making more time for student-centered engagement? Tim has been given a lot of books and material on this with differentiated instruction. In one hour I only clocked student engagement for 1/6 of the hour. It should be less teacher-centered and more student-centered engagement - this is a constructivist approach. You may want to cut the time of lesson delivery by the teachers for more student engagement. How do you feel about this?

  3. Have you thought about creating transparency graphs so that when the overhead project is being used by the teacher, the students at the same time are engaged in writing or coloring on their transparency graphs which are erasable? This would help increase the time of student engagement.

  4. Your classroom management is excellent. One suggestion is that when a student does an infraction or breaks a rule - I would isolate or ask the student to sit at their desk in time out immediately when they break the class rule or infraction. I would not wait until the end of the day which may be hours later to make the child sit by themselves at their desk, not participating in the final social or learning activities. Although rewards (like stars, stickers etc.) can be delayed until the end of the day, I believe punishments such as time out should occur immediately when the student does the infraction. You want to punish the bad behavior, not have the student lose their self-esteem and or not participate in social or learning

group activities. Also, be sure to get the child to verbally apologize to you

and please say "I'm sorry, can I join the class again with the lesson?" I

have found this technique has worked for me. What do you think?

Please let me know if I can be of anymore assistance.

Thank you for your continued help with my research.

Sincerely, Cynthia

Tim and Mrs. Jones did not respond to this e-mail. This was the last

scheduled observation and we never had a reflective conference. However, Tim

demonstrated during his final interview of February 6, 2009 he was still highly motivated

in implementing DI.

Dina's Final Observation With Implementing DI

I observed Dina during a morning session on January 22, 2009 for 45 minutes.

Dina agreed for me to observe her class at 10:30 a.m. that morning.

I stated in my journal:

Background for Dina's Lesson:

Yesterday President Barack Obama, the first Black president of the United

States, was sworn in at his inauguration in Washington D.C. This has generated a

lot of excitement in the education community.

Dina has a class of 18 students who are Spanish speaking at home, whom

she teaches in her class daily. This period she was teaching a writing lesson on the

topic of President Obama. When I entered the room Dina was seated at a chair in

the center of the room explaining the lesson in Spanish. I moderately speak

Spanish and understood that Dina was trying to get the class to write a paragraph

or a few sentences about President Obama recently being elected as the first Black president of the United States.

Observation:

When I entered the room and sat in a back chair near a window the lesson Dina was teaching had already commenced. I said "Good Morning" to Dina and she responded back to me with a "Good Morning." The students were all seated at their desks with writing paper and a pencil trying to write two to three sentences in English about their impressions of President Obama. Many of the students appeared to be having difficulty with doing this activity.

I had a newspaper that had a large section of photographs (photos) on President Obama. I asked Dina if I could show the photos to the class and maybe this would help some of the students. Dina said, "Yes" so I circled the classroom showing the students photos in the newspaper of the inauguration ceremony (Lee, Journal, January 22, 2009).

Dina chose an interesting writing lesson activity on President Barack Obama that was a current event. However, I decided Dina could have used picture prompts more to inspire the students into writing about this historic event surrounding the first Black president of the United States. Dina could have used her interactive SMART Board screen to display a sequence of photos of President Obama to inspire the students writing. My role as participant/observer where I interjected newspaper photos for the students to review caused some type of inspiration and excitement among the students to write more about President Obama. I observed several of the students respond to my newspaper

photos and began to write more about the new president after they viewed my newspaper photos.

I also observed that Dina once again when she is instructing the whole group lesson, is not actively on her feet observing the students in their writing activity. She remained seated off to the side near her computer. I noticed her non-activity to walk around the classroom occurred previously during the first scheduled observation in November. Also, I was perturbed a little with Dina because this was the third time Dina knew well in advanced that I would be visiting her classroom. I never told her I had considered dropping her from my study due to her lack of participation in my DI workshops. I became a little annoyed with Dina not taking the time to prepare a DI lesson, after I had gone to so much effort at least to continuously give her DI information and data. I asked her if she received the information I left her and she said she had but did not have time to read it.

Lack of time became a major issue for Dina during my study. I believed she was an expert teacher with DI instruction; however, her busy schedule prevented any further growth as a DI instructor. Dina needed more professional development at a higher level for DI. I was prepared to give her this instruction. However, her schedule with taking graduate courses did not permit my DI training to occur. This is a barrier that occurs with DI implementation and teacher training (Santangelo et al., 2008).

I stated in my journal:

I observed no growth in Dina as a DI instructor and no change in her classroom environment. However, Dina did inform me that she did use my material concerning the multisensory theory (Dunn et al., 1992) and applying the concepts

of aural, visual, kinesthetic and tactile to her lessons, so perhaps Dina did display

development in the area of learning theories and learning preferences (Lee,

Journal, January 22, 2009).

Cultural Bias Is a Concern

When I made my final observation of Tim's classroom, I clearly could see that

Tim's DI teaching practices had digressed. He no longer gave verbal praise frequently to

his students both African American and Hispanic. His catchy phrase, "One, two, three,

eyes on me" was not used during his lessons. When Tim did make a positive verbal

remark, it usually was in a weak voice and did not use the superlative degree of "very

good." I observed this at Tim's second and third scheduled classroom observation. I saw

Tim and his co-teacher isolate or reprimand both Hispanic and African American

students at the end of the school day, denying them participation in a class social activity

because of some kind of infraction that had occurred earlier in the day. I began to realize

that perhaps cultural bias practices and opinions had been a challenge to implementing DI

because this outlook interferes with the teacher developing a positive relationship with

his or her students (Lindsey et al., 2003; Tatum, 2002).

Cycle Four Phase Two Workshop III Overview: Understanding Cultural Proficiency and

Differentiated Instruction through D.O.O.R.S.

I facilitated my Workshop III *Understanding Cultural Proficiency and*

Differentiated Instruction through D.O.O.R.S. on January 22, 2009. Seven participants

attended the workshop including three African American teachers, one Hispanic male

teacher, one Vietnamese female teacher, Pam and Tim who are Caucasian. The workshop

starting time again ran into another conflict. The River University professor overseeing

the student teachers at Bear School needed to meet with the entire staff. The principal had to call a general staff meeting to accommodate the professor. My workshop occurred at 3:45 p.m., 45 minutes after the staff meeting. I believed this workshop was the most interesting concerning DI and cultural awareness through D.O.O.R.S.

The aim of Workshop III was to introduce my D.O.O.R.S. action plan along with DI and cultural proficiency to increase DI capacity building in the Bear School learning community. Two of my participants, Pam and Tim, were in attendance. The seven teacher participants, through my workshop cooperative learning activities, were shown examples of how to infuse lessons about the student's various cultures into their lessons at Bear Elementary School. The participants also were shown how to plan a DI lesson using my D.O.O.R.S. action plan.

Bear School already had a unique African American, Caucasian, Hispanic and Vietnamese staff and student population who were highly collaborative. The level of the school's cultural awareness was high. For example, the interactive bulletin boards often reflected cultural themes. During the month of November the displays reflected Hispanic heritage. During February both Asian American and Black History Month displays were reflected as themes in the hallway (see Appendix P photo gallery). They were already at a higher proficiency level than other schools because of the diversity of their staff and students.

Workshop III Activities

The workshop started with a pre-workshop cooperative learning activity *The Magic Post Card Ride*. Each participant was asked to pair up with another individual who had the same postcard photograph and the two individuals together had to decide the

name of country the photograph was taken. After deciding the country, they had to try to guess the language, form of government and the popular foods of the country in their photograph. I teamed up with an African American female participant to even out the activity which only had seven participants.

After completing this activity I reviewed the other items in the folder which consisted of my *The Magic Post Card Ride* pre-workshop activity page, D.O.O.R.S. five step action plan, my student interest inventory sheet, a chart *Planning Your Lessons Using DI and Action Research*, my Reflection Log, Bloom's taxonomy (1956), Gardner's (2004, 2006) multiple intelligences and Dunn and Dunn (2009a; 2009b) and Dunn et al. (1992) multisensory perception theories synopsis sheets, a learning theory quiz, a learning theory/culturally responsive practice lesson, a workshop questionnaire and my article *Build a Bias-Free Classroom* (Lee, 2000) (see Appendix Q).

At the conclusion of the workshop I gave the participants fortune cookies and more red and golden Chinese envelopes with red heart-shaped lollipops inside, so that the participants could remember the importance of understanding the student's culture when planning lessons. I was not able to spend time on action research and cyclic inquiry due to lack of time. I was disappointed that not more staff members had attended because I believed this workshop was the most informative with DI literature combined with cultural proficiency. The next day I sent the Office of Professional Development director a copy of the workshop sign-in sheet and the participant evaluations. The participants received their certificates one week after the workshop when they were placed in their mailboxes in the office by the principal.

Cycle Four Phase Three Goals

I searched for DI elements (Tomlinson 1999, 2001) in the classrooms of my

participants during my final observations and interviews. During phase three of cycle

four I completed an open-ended audio taped interview session with Tim, Pam and Dina.

I conducted Tim's 60 minute interview on February 6, 2009 after school. I completed a

thirty minute interview with Dina during her lunch hour on February 9, 2009. I completed

Pam's 45 minute interview after school on February 11, 2009. I began each interview

with the same open-ended question. I allowed each participant to freely explain their

experience with my research project and attempted to extract their opinion concerning

how they felt about my leadership abilities.

The interview sessions conducted individually with the 3 participants had a two-

fold purpose. First, they were completed to evaluate what information the participants

learned during my project and how my action plan, D.O.O.R.S., influenced their opinion.

Second, the interview sessions were completed to obtain feedback from the participants

concerning how I influenced their implementation of DI with my leadership.

Pam's Final Scheduled Interview

I learned through Pam's responses during the interview that Pam had lost her low

self-esteem concerning DI that she had displayed at her first interview on October 21,

2008. She now was confident about using DI in her classroom because she understood

the process of implementing DI. Pam stated the following opinion when asked what she

thought about DI:

Well, I think differentiated instruction for me, it was a change of mind set.

I began to think differently how I was going to teach the children. And it came to

a point where I wanted to listen to what the children were saying to me and watching what they were doing to get input into how they would enjoy learning best. So, it took me to another plane where I was sitting back and observing and trying to understand how I could change my curriculum so that it would facilitate better learning (Lee, Interview, February 11, 2009).

I learned during the interview with Pam that my action plan, D.O.O.R.S., had assisted Pam with becoming more aware diagnostically as a teacher and changed her opinion as a teacher concerning DI. When I asked her if there had there been any change in her opinion towards DI she stated:

Yes, because I really didn't have a good handle on it. I feel like this really has some worth to it. You know how to evaluate instruction and how to hit all the levels of the intelligence. And it helps me to, you know, look closer and do a better evaluation of the student's progress and the enjoyment in learning (Lee, Interview, February 11, 2009).

Pam displayed with her responses that she had learned how to engage her students through observation and assessment. She also demonstrated she knew how to use different kinds of learning theories and preferences to suit the needs of her students. Pam stated:

Pam: ….I am thinking about one student, Sissy. I have been watching, observing what was going on with her. When I turn around she is touching something. When she is in a large group she has a hard time sitting still.

Lee: So what kind of differentiated instruction did you infuse in your lessons to grab her attention and to keep her focused on the lesson?

Pam: Well, of course we used something with writing…the dry eraser board each morning.

Lee: A manipulative.

Pam: For example, we will go and make a word and call letters out in the words. I think she needed to look at the word. Manipulate it and be a part of it.

Lee: Visually see it, not only hear the sound of the word.

Pam: Yes. She needed to see it, hear it and manipulate it. She needed to write it down in whatever form on the dry eraser board or in her books (Lee, Interview, February 11, 2009).

Tim's Final Scheduled Interview

At Tim's interview session I was impressed that Tim showed me student work that was completed after several of his DI lessons. Tim now showed he had thorough knowledge of DI by his responses. Tim stated:

With differentiated instruction, the main things that I have learned with the end of 2007 and the beginning of 2008, when I used DI. I have to take into effect more than just everything that goes on in the classroom. Cultural values, cultural aspects at home are so very important. Knowing that some students, they may need to learn through putting some music into the lesson. Maybe drawing a picture of what we are talking about.

The best approach that I recognize with everything that we're learning is it's not just reading from a text book. You need to have the students be actively engaged. For it to really stick, what you are teaching them, you need to evaluate in the beginning and then after the lesson takes place, you need to go back and

reflect on everything. And, you know, to evaluate initially. That's when you're taking into consideration the cultural values.

You're taking into effect…maybe everything that's going on in that classroom. What you know about your students, you're writing that down and you're applying it into the lesson. Their learning styles. Not every student is going to learn the same way. So, those are things that you need to think about (Lee, Interview, February 6, 2009).

Tim's responses displayed he had developed as a teacher knowledgeable about implementing DI. His responses also demonstrated he had begun to become a better diagnostician and prescribe the best practices or learning theories for his students. Tim stated:

Tim: Well, I knew the basics of DI but this study has broadened my understanding of what DI is. And you'll see all different, I guess, gurus of DI. But, it's funny that they all say something that if you take into consideration everything that they are saying. All of it is important. So you don't just listen to what one person is saying about DI. Take a little piece from what everybody is saying and that's how I really learn something. Using D.O.O.R.S., I've learned, you know, that's when I talked about first evaluating a lesson. Seeing how it goes. Then going back and reflecting on it. I've learned different, wow, his name…

Lee: Gardner, Multiple Intelligences

Tim: Yes, Different intelligences. And we also talked about the …

Lee: Bloom's taxonomy?

Tim: Bloom's taxonomy…names are slipping from me.

Lee: That's alright.

Tim: Bloom's Taxonomy. And it's funny that you just can't get one piece of

paper and say here's DI. You have to really go into all of those different ways of

learning and how the mind works. That needs to be reflected into the lesson. So,

to answer your question, I've broadened my understanding of what DI is and I

think that I've recognized how important DI is. It's not just something you put

into a lesson here and there. It really needs to become consistent with our lessons.

It needs to become something you think about every day when you do a lesson.

It's not just the evaluation and procedures. You have to really think about each of

your students---where they've come from and there may be a cultural difference.

But then you have to recognize that and apply it into your lesson so that they can

feel connected to what you are teaching (Lee, Interview, February 6, 2009).

Dina's Final Scheduled Interview

 I discovered through Dina's interview session that Dina was very content with

her teaching style and her classroom environment. She had been to several DI workshops

and felt no need to change her classroom environment. Dina did not believe she needed to

reach out to the parents of the students to possibly build sustaining change. She basically

felt because she had been very busy and discovered my project was very intense that she

never would have volunteered to participate.

In addition, Dina's opinion of DI was negative. Dina stated when I asked her to

tell her current opinion of DI:

Well, my current opinion of DI is that it does work with some of the

children. It may not work for all the children. It all depends on the classroom you

are running. It's really hard to have three or four groups when there are so many

different issues that you're facing (Lee, Interview, February 9, 2009).

After Dina gave a negative response of her opinion I asked her some probing

questions on DI.

Lee: Okay. So currently do you feel it's needed? What is your opinion currently?

Dina: Yes. I think it is needed so that all children are able to learn.

Lee. Okay. Thank you. What do you believe is affecting your opinion of DI?

Dina: I'm actually trying to teach it.

Lee: Okay.

Dina: It's affecting my opinion because it works with some of the children.

Lee: Okay.

Dina: But not all.

Lee: Could you tell me if your opinion has changed towards differentiated

instruction since the beginning of the year when my project started in October or

stayed the same?

Dina: It's basically the same because we started last school year with DI through

another program (Dina gave the abbreviated initials for the program).

Lee: Could you please explain what the initials of this program stand for?

Dina: (Explained what the initials stood for). It's where you group the kids based

on reading levels and you work on the reading level and bring them up a little

bit higher.

Lee: So did you go through a series of workshops and training?

Dina: Yes. We did workshops and extensive training last year (Lee, Interview, February 9, 2009).

For the remainder of the interview I asked Dina about her classroom and if she felt change was necessary. Dina did not feel any change was needed presently in her classroom environment. I learned from the interview that Dina, who may have been extensively trained in DI strategies and methods, was not embracing the concept of DI because of her challenges in implementing DI in her classroom. Dina seemed misinformed on DI and was skeptical about DI being used as an instructional vehicle to address the needs of all of her students. I regretted not having the opportunity to interview Dina for a session in October, because I could have discovered this earlier and perhaps assisted her with her challenges.

Cycle Four Analysis

After further analysis of my data I recognized tendencies of culturally biased behavior was present among two of the participants at the start of my study in cycle two. I had to decide if the culturally biased behavior I viewed would contradict or support my findings and if I should I mention this occurrence in my findings. The suspect culturally biased behavior I viewed in Pam's class on October 16, 2008 and in Tim's class on October 23, 2008, was not probed into further because I was not investigating this matter in my research.

I discovered by the end of cycle four of my study two participants, Pam and Tim, developed significantly into DI instructors. Dina maintained her effective level of DI methods in her classroom. My D.O.O.R.S. action plan was a success because it helped

me transform my participants into effective teachers in the DI classroom who used action research to overcome DI implementation challenges.

During my final observations of the participants I was able to assess their growth and development with DI. Both Pam and her co-teacher appeared to have changed their classroom environment by having learning stations and developing a more cohesive relationship as co-teachers with DI lesson delivery. Tim who was now in his third teaching room assignment continued to struggle with learning how to implement DI and manage his classes. Tim's lesson plans revealed he was trying to differentiate his lesson by having the students work in pairs. Dina was infusing the multisensory learning theory approach into her lessons.

Cycle One to Four Analysis – Leading to Second Order Change

Second order change involves deep change in the individual or organization where double loop learning occurs (Argyris, 1990; Tomlinson et al., 2008). Double loop learning goes to the root of the problem and helps find a resolution that leads to sustaining change. Tomlinson et al. (2008) explains that when differentiated instruction is applied to meet the needs of all student learners this involves movement towards second order change in the classroom. By the end of cycle four I discovered two of my participants developed significantly into DI instructors.

Various factors provided evidence that second order change had occurred with the two participants, Pam and Tim. These factors were the change in classroom climate from teacher-centered to student-centered, the style of lesson delivery and the response of the participants at the final interview session and on the Workshop III questionnaire. I was

able to ascertain the depth and scope of their understanding of DI for each participant and that the change initiative had been sustained.

Pam who appeared the weakest in the beginning ended up as the participant who made the most significant changes with DI capacity building. Pam had started at the base line level of limited DI knowledge and experience in cycle one. Evidence that second order change had occurred with Pam by the end of cycle four includes seeing the significant change in her own teaching style and Pam prompting change in her co-teacher's style of teaching from teacher-centered to student-centered. Her role in becoming a second change agent in DI implementation with Ms. Green, her co-teacher, who never attended any of the DI workshops, displayed that Pam had moved from Model I single loop to Model II double loop learning with problem solving in her classroom. Double loop learning helped Pam and her co-teacher move to find resolutions involving deep change about certain classroom problems: effective classroom management, classroom climate, differentiated instruction and cultural diversity awareness.

Evidence that deep change had occurred in the classroom by the end of cycle four included Pam and Ms. Green regularly meeting to confer at the end of each school day about infusing DI strategies into the classroom. Pam and her co-teacher met without any input or suggestion from me to have these meetings. Pam also used this time to share with Ms. Green what information she had acquired from me about D.O.O.R.S. Again, Pam shared her new found knowledge with Ms. Green without any suggestion from me.

By the end of the project Ms. Green had learned how to employ DI elements into the classroom through Pam's orientation. Both instructors began to take more time to discuss the readiness level for each student at these meetings. Ms. Green informed me

one day after school during cycle four, "I understand how important it is for a teacher to be able to differentiate instruction in the classroom in order to help students to learn. Sometimes you have to step out of the ordinary way of teaching and take risks, and not do what the curriculum manuals tell you to do in order to be successful as a teacher." (Lee, Field notes, January 22, 2009)

Evidence of classroom management resolutions included Pam and Ms. Green collaborating with the students on classroom rules and procedures and posting the new rules the students and teachers created publically for all students to see and follow. In addition, Ms. Green and Pam's co-teaching relationship visibly improved during the observation sessions in cycle three. The two teachers became more unified in their pre-planning and execution of DI lessons. Also, the classroom climate became more student-centered by being altered into learning stations and having choice board activities for each student. As previously stated, the lesson delivery style of the two teachers changed from teacher-centered instruction to student-centered instruction because they engaged the student in the learning process more frequently. Also, assignments using Hispanic and African American themes were more often used in their student assignment activities.

Tim began the study almost with equal knowledge to Dina concerning DI implementation since he had several college courses on implementing DI. However, Tim had a unique teaching situation with ever changing classroom environments that even I would have had trouble with adapting to as a seasoned classroom teacher. Evidence that Tim had moved to second order change appeared at least in his philosophy of education and the fact he kept to the forefront DI strategies in his lesson planning. This became clear in his lesson planning and lesson preparations efforts where he would consciously

make attempts to infuse DI strategies in his lesson execution. In addition, there was evidence that Tim had turned at least one of his co-teachers, Ms. Blue into a second change agent with DI because she attended one of our DI discussion group meetings, one of my DI workshops and was open to any suggestion I gave to her and Tim on using DI strategies to enhance the student learning outcomes in her classroom.

Tim who had unfortunately as a novice teacher been placed into three different classrooms with two different co-teachers, still maintained his educational outlook with using DI as an effective instructional method. Tim's third teaching assignment found him in a first grade class with an authoritative co-teacher. Tim, even in this adverse environment infused DI wherever he could in differentiating the rock names in a science lesson or the geometric shapes in a math lesson. After my study terminated, Tim went on to create a bilingual homework web page on the Internet and pursuing more professional development in taking DI workshops. All of these factors demonstrated Tim was attempting to sustain DI methodology as a novice teacher.

Dina had begun the study with significant knowledge on DI implementation. Dina had just completed a series of year long DI workshops for with an early literacy program. Dina was already using DI extensively in her classroom.

Dina appeared to be teaching at second order change level from the start of cycle one because she had already infused DI elements into her instructional practices (Tomlinson et al., 2008). Her room was set up to accommodate the needs of all of her students and she knew their readiness levels and when to use DI strategies to enhance the student's learning experience. Dina's ability to also use Model II double loop learning to resolve issues became apparent when at the end of the study, Dina was able to recognize

her weakness was not understanding DI strategies and learning theories concepts. At Dina's final interview session she even mentions that the most helpful information was on the multisensory perception learning theory by Dunn and Dunn (1987). Dina also demonstrated when she had to provide the students teacher-centered instruction and when she needed to provide them learning-centered DI methods. Dina sustained her DI classroom throughout the project and showed evidence that she intended to keep her continuous DI practices by responding during the final interview that she felt her classroom environment was already successful and did not need change. Dina already knew she had a successful DI classroom in place and needed little to change her warm, inviting DI classroom environment for her students she already had in place.

Consequently, high quality professional development which is ongoing and has the participants involved in the problem solving issues leads to more intensity in teacher training and helps build sustaining change (Anderson, Herr & Nihlen, 2007; Fullan, 2007; Sergiovanni, 2001). The transformation of the participants occurred through their own empowerment. The participants decided on the issues that were addressed at the discussion group session, decided on the content, process and product of their lesson plans, teaching styles, lesson delivery styles and classroom environment. The participants became empowered to change their classroom from traditional practices to DI student-centered instruction.

My action plan D.O.O.R.S. and my supportive leadership styles: transformational, servant and culturally proficient leadership assisted the participants with transforming their classrooms to DI student-centered instruction. A leader is responsible for the culture of the organization and a teacher is responsible for the culture of her classroom

(Fullan, 2007). When a teacher improves in instructional training then student learning outcome improves (Anderson, et al., 2007). The improvement of my participants in DI implementation should have assisted the students with receiving a higher quality learning environment. Better quality teaching using DI instruction has proven to promote higher student productivity (Tomlinson et al., 2008).

CHAPTER IX

LEADERSHIP FINDINGS

Prelude Six: David

David's story relates to my concepts of leadership. His story begins with a child asking me a question.

I was standing in the hall at Bear Elementary School, my research site, when I heard a child's soft voice behind me ask, "Homer Middle School?" I was puzzled because I was at Bear, why was the child asking me about another school? Why was a child who was at Bear asking me about Homer, my work site?

By questioning the boy, I learned that his name was David and he had met me last night at Homer Middle School. His sister, Sheila, attended Homer Middle School and David along with his sister and parents came to the Homer School Holiday Family Night Program. The unexpected occurrence of meeting David, who is a relative of one of my Homer Middle School students, while working as a researcher at Bear Elementary School made me realize that the educational learning community in the district is interconnected by the staff and family members. I thought about Wheatley's (1999a) theory of change that a butterfly in one location is connected to an occurrence in another location.

In addition, I thought about leadership and David recognizing me in another setting. I must have had a strong enough impact on him to remember me. I thought that sometimes leaders are in too great a hurry and do not listen to the small voices like David's in the crowd, they may miss the most important factor…leadership is influence.

Overview

Maxwell's (1993) definition of leadership connects leadership to the ability to influence people. This definition of leadership resonates with me because it relates to all three of my leadership theories-in-action: transformational leadership, servant leadership and culturally proficient leadership (CPL). This definition correlates to the transformational leadership trait of bonding with people (Sergiovanni, 2001). A leader should connect with the people she is trying to lead through shared goals. The definition also relates to the servant leadership trait of acknowledging that people are central to an organization (Block, 2008). A leader should value or realize the importance of a person if she is to influence or persuade someone to act. Maxwell's definition also relates to culturally proficient leadership. CPL leadership understands and respects another's culture. Respecting a person's culture should greatly improve how well a leader connects to the people she has to influence.

Besides exploring my three espoused leadership theories while performing my research, I also made five important discoveries about my leadership style, beliefs and my role as project director and researcher. My first discovery was that I learned that the center of my leadership beliefs is ethical leadership. When I began my study, I thought that transformational leadership was at the heart of my leadership because I had used this style the most through my musical career. Through my interactions with my participants and my role as a participant observer in my participants' classrooms, I found that I led based on my core values of care and justice. The second discovery I made was the realization that I was combining and intertwining my leadership traits and creating a new leadership style that I called tri-river leadership. My third discovery was exploring the

impact of my living theory question on my research project and how my values affected my actions. My fourth discovery was that the MBTI personality assessment findings were valid but were not completely accurate concerning all four of my personality types. My fifth discovery was finding the answers to my research questions and in finding these answers I had to delve into my capabilities as a leader.

First Discovery – My Ethical Leadership Core Values

My first discovery was that ethical leadership was a central part of my leadership style and my core values provided the ethical foundation for my leadership theories-in-action. An ethical leader is people oriented and is involved with the interests of many stakeholders. She is concerned with the means or how an act is accomplished as well as the success of the venture. An ethical leader creates values and institutionalizes these values within the organization. She is an ideal role model for others because she acts with integrity and is trustworthy (Primeaux & Hartman, 2001).

An ethical leader has values that are central to her leadership style. These are core values and they drive her leadership style (Primeaux & Hartman, 2001). My core values are care and justice. Caring for the welfare of others is a major concern to me. I demonstrate my caring trait when I act first to rectify a situation and do not wait until someone else prods me to act.

I define caring through the ethical theory of the ethics of care. Nodding (2005) expressed my viewpoint by proposing that caring in relation to education means that children are the center of the educational process and should be nurtured and encouraged. When I say that I care this means I am concerned about the welfare of another and that I am willing to act or to lead and therefore affect the person's situation.

My other core value is justice and I define justice through the ethical theory of the ethics of justice. I relate to Kohlberg's (1981) concept of the justice when applied to education. He views justice as providing equal opportunity and permitting freedom of belief but also the schools should educate children to be free-thinkers and just people (as cited in Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). Traditionally, caring is the second step of importance and justice is the first step in ethical leadership development (Shapiro & Stefkovich, 2005). However, for me, the core value, caring, is primary. Caring makes me aware of the person's situation and then justice or being fair becomes secondary and ensures that I will act in a way that does not overly favor another because I care about the person's welfare.

Applying Ethical Leadership

There were situations that occurred in my project where I was motivated to lead based on my core values of caring and justice. The first occurred in Pam's class when I observed two boy students who were pushing. Pam was slow to respond, since it was at school before dismissal time. I jumped in and told the boys to stop because I was concerned and cared about their welfare. If they continued to push and shove then a critical incident might ensue. On reflection I was motivated to intercede because I cared about the welfare of the students and about them being harmed. Pam was the authoritative figure in this instance; however, her lax behavior did not prevent me from acting in a situation which could have become a crisis. I was motivated to act by my core ethical value of caring in this situation.

Another instance of caring occurred in Tim's room, when I observed Tim teaching a spelling bingo activity. I interceded with Tim trying to subdue a boy who was

misbehaving by telling Tim to call the boy's home in order to get him to sit down. I interrupted Tim's lesson because I knew Tim needed support as a new teacher with classroom management. My interruption was part of my co-teaching support of Tim. Tim was aware that I was going to interrupt at various points in his lesson to openly provide support or counsel. My core value of caring for Tim to perform as an effective classroom instructor led me to assist Tim with the disruptive student. In the discussion group three I furthered discussed effective management strategies with the participants.

The third instance where the core value of caring motivated me happened when I displayed the Obama's newspaper photograph to Dina's class of second grade students to augment Dina's lesson. This act of taking my personal newspaper out of my bag to show the students demonstrates that I care about the students' learning experience. Some students were visibly having difficulty writing and I saw them write more after I showed them the photograph of President Obama.

My core value of caring became prevalent during another defining moment at my second scheduled classroom observation with Tim. A girl student was crying for some unknown reason. I escorted the crying girl to her seat and after a few minutes she became calm. I was concerned not only for the crying student but for Tim and the other students. Tim could not complete his lesson until the student stopped her loud wailing and the crying child was a distraction for the rest of the class. All of these instances I had to intervene because I knew as a leader that the student was either somehow being harmed, doing harm to the rest of the class by preventing them to have an effective lesson or the student was having a limited educational experience due to DI strategies not being applied. In these situations, my core value of caring shaped my behavior as a leader.

The disruptive student behavior of the crying girl was interfering with implementation of the DI because the noisy behavior was a major distraction.

The education of the African American student needs to be addressed more thoroughly by educators in applying ethical leadership (Williams, 2001). Justice and fairness concerning students whose culture is different from the traditional Eurocentric modes of instruction needs to be probed more by ethical leaders in education (Williams, 2001). In my research I subjectively determined what was right and fair by applying my core value of justice. My research study involved the subjectivist epistemology.

An occasion when I predominantly applied my core value of justice where I judged the fairness of the situation was when I observed both African American and Hispanic students on January 22, 2009. The African American and Hispanic students were isolated at the end of the school day in Tim's classroom and denied participation in a social studies lesson where other students were permitted to touch a globe of the world. My sense of justice became disturbed so greatly that I had to address this issue in an e-mail asking Tim and his co-teacher to remember to punish the poor behavior, not the child. The goal should not be for the student to lose their self esteem with punishments given hours after a bad incident occurs. I told Tim and his co-teacher in the e-mail that although rewards can be delayed, punishments should occur immediately when the infraction happens.

Another experience displaying my core value of justice occurred during discussion group five when the topic of teacher evaluations given by school administrators arose. Some of the teachers were upset over negative classroom observations given by a principal, vice principal or district supervisor. I could have told

them to try to improve as teachers for the next observation session. Instead, I shared with the teachers some situations I had experienced in receiving negative comments about my performance on evaluation forms at my worksite. I advised my participants that they had two options. They can meet with the administrator, explain why the poor evaluation was wrong and ask them to change the mark. In both of my situations, the administrators removed their negative comments on my evaluations after I justified why something occurred. The unsatisfied teacher can also write a rebuttal memo of the negative comments within ten days of receiving the evaluation and request to have it attached with the evaluation. My sense of justice came to light in both of these instances.

An effective administrator should provide various methods of feedback and professional development for their teaching staff, such as peer coaching or collaborative methods of teaching and critique (Sergiovanni, 2001). Had the principal, Ms. Shirley already had other methods in place other than formal evaluations, perhaps the teachers would have not felt so upset over an administrator providing negative feedback. Although the administrator may have been justified in providing negative feedback, the teacher would have perhaps been more open to the feedback, if she had already somehow been a part of the process through other evaluation techniques (Fullan, 2007).

Limitations of Ethical Leadership

What is proper ethical behavior is not always clear. The unethical behavior of leaders can be rationalized so that improper behavior can be made to appear proper. A leader can play mental games with herself and mentally justify improper behavior (Kerns, 2003). For example, a leader can oversimplify complex problems and result in poor solutions to the problem. To prevent oversimplification, a leader can discuss the situation

with her peers to obtain other viewpoints of the situation (Kerns, 2003). Another mental game is the leader wants to be appreciated and liked so she will overlook poor behavior. A leader may have to establish objective boundaries in her relations with her subordinates (Kerns, 2003).

A leader can also play the mental game of softening or minimizing a harsh action such as firing a person and referring to it as improving a person's career. To prevent this mental game from occurring, a leader needs to be direct and not dwell on euphemisms (Kerns, 2003). Another tactic is for the leader to minimize her unethical behavior by comparing it to behavior that is worse than what she is doing. A leader can prevent this mental game by asking herself direct questions about her behavior and would three impartial observers agree with what she is doing (Kerns, 2003). Also, a leader can be so overconfident that she overlooks other people's viewpoints. To avoid this behavior a leader can ask open-ended questions about her actions and not justify her actions because that is the way it is done (Kerns, 2003).

Transformational Leadership Theory-in-Action

One of my leadership theories-in-action for my action research was transformational leadership. Transformational leadership involves bonding, building and binding (Sergiovanni, 2001). I had to utilize these transformational leadership traits to be successful with my project at Bear School. I had to bond with my participants to capacity build with DI. I had to build a series of workshops to bind the learning community to implementing change in their classrooms using DI. I assisted with creating vertical articulation with communication in Bear School. It was in this area that Bear School was criticized for being weak according to the state curriculum report.

As a transformational leader I inspired and influenced my participants, Pam, Tim and Dina, with small encouraging remarks to capacity build DI in their classrooms. I provided ongoing professional development on DI related topics so that they would develop into effective instructors implementing DI in their classrooms. I effectively used my influence in order to bring about change in the classrooms of Pam and Tim.

In addition, as a transformational leader I was able to transform my three participants into skilled practitioners who were knowledgeable in DI implementation by becoming a more intuitive leader. The validation I had that my leadership influenced the growth of the participants was found in the change in the classroom environment, lesson delivery by the participants and a change in their opinions and outlook about DI. By the end of my study my three participants understood how to continue to implement DI in their classroom regardless of the challenges they might encounter. How I was able to assist my participants with this venture was through my D.O.O.R.S. action plan and my leadership influence which was based on my leadership theories-in-action: transformational, servant and culturally proficient leadership with ethical leadership at the core.

I am proud of my participants for persevering. I am proud of my three participants Pam, Tim and Dina not giving up to quit on their quest to find new knowledge about DI even though they were faced with challenges. However, I am prouder of myself for showing my participants how to change their teaching style to accommodate their diverse group of learners. There are theorists who may disagree with me on whether or not teaching skills can be taught. I strongly believe, no one individual is a born teacher. I believe just like a concert piano virtuoso has to practice scales daily to perfect his talent, I

firmly believe an effective teacher must practice the best teaching practices to become the most effective teacher. When I began this research I firmly believed in this philosophy and think this is what motivated me as a leader to want to assist others with change in their classrooms.

In order to influence Pam to become a better instructor with her students I had to become a transformational leader. I believe what I did as a leader to help Pam and Ms. Green her co-teacher to improve their classroom management and collaboration skills between October 16, 2008 and November 20, 2008, was to first build their trust as a confident (Sergiovanni, 2001). I shared my experience of teaching differentiated instruction through weekly unscheduled conferences and mini meetings with both teachers and stressed that it takes a long time sometimes to build a classroom into a differentiated instruction program. I shared with Pam and Ms. Green that it took me two years to successfully build and implement my learning center activities for all of my students.

After I began to share my problems with them, Pam and Ms. Green felt relaxed with sharing with me, their challenges with differentiated instruction. The administration at first telling them to stick to the curriculum and then chastising them for not being more inventive with differentiating their lessons on their scheduled evaluation forms. I took on the role of their coach, but also had to become their friend, confident and advisor. I believe what greatly assisted my input being received by both teachers was that my suggestions I gave were invited suggestions by both Pam and her co-teaching partner Ms. Green. I believe if Pam's co-teacher had been resilient in accepting the information,

then this would have slowed Pam's progress. In a conference with both teachers
I recalled Ms. Green stated:

> Ms. Lee, I am sorry I cannot attend your workshops and afterschool
>
> meetings. However, I am willing to give up my lunch hour for you to come in and
>
> give me any advice you think will help us in teaching. Pam then said, Yes, I
>
> agree. Anything you want to do, model a lesson would be helpful for us. I am
>
> available to meet anytime with you too (Lee, Field notes, October 28, 2008).

Servant Leadership Theory-in-Action

Another leadership theory-in-action was servant leadership. My servant
leadership style was used in order to recognize the needs of the participants in my study
and at the workshops and address these needs with the highest priority. By the end of
cycle two I recognized there was a need for the participants and Bear School staff to learn
more about learning theories. With my servant leadership style I had to learn intuitively
when to become assertive.

I grew as a leader in my sensing and feeling traits and begin to empower the
participants. One of my leadership aims was to let the participants discover that they can
empower themselves by designing their curriculum to include DI lessons. I believed the
once a week contact with the participants worked to their advantage because the
experience became their own. I was there as a coach to facilitate and provide support. I
was not there to direct or train. I was there as a leader to inspire and encourage. I was not
there to dictate their teaching styles. The ideas had to come from them. However, I had to
become more feeling about the needs of the participants to learn how to empower them
more as DI teachers. I saw my feeling aspect of my leadership grow during this period.

Culturally Proficient Leadership Theory-in-Action

My third leadership theory-in-action was culturally proficient leadership. An effective culturally proficient leader is aware of the individual and organization's culture and understands how to value and respect the culture throughout her lessons as a teacher. I learned, however, that the Bear Elementary School staff already existed on a high culturally aware continuum level due to the various displays with cultural themes that was posted throughout the hallways and classrooms of the building.

However, in some instances my participants did not display cultural proficiency in their actions as teachers. I had to send Tim an e-mail about withholding punishments until the end of the day. He may not have viewed this behavior towards his students of color as being culturally biased but when I observed this type of punishment occur. I became concerned. In addition, Pam initially showed indifference in classroom management with her students of color. During the incident where the two African American boy students were pushing and shoving in line during dismissal was revealing because I had to intercede before Pam noticed them.

Culturally proficiency awareness is important to teaching a diverse group of students. The questionnaire forms completed by my workshop participants and the interviews with my 3 participants in my project provided me with valuable feedback as to how effective I was as a leader and the four workshops I facilitated. The evaluations as given under *My Theories-in-Action Leadership Limitations* (see p. 246) also gave me information on the impact of D.O.O.R.S. with their teacher opinions concerning DI. All of the participants had positive comments about my leadership style and my action plan D.O.O.R.S. Therefore, I had to become overly critical of my performance as a leader to

obtain a critical review of my leadership style. Figure 6.1 summarizes my leadership experiences that occurred in the four cycles of my study.

I discussed culturally proficient leadership traits with my participants because cultural proficiency was one of the goals for teachers using my D.O.O.R.S. action plan. I used the discussion group sessions to openly discuss culture and race and believe this heightened Pam and Tim's awareness as teachers concerning cultural bias. By the end of cycle four when Pam and Tim completed their second interview session they displayed cultural awareness in instruction by their responses. Tim even went on after my study to develop his own bilingual homework webpage that included both the English and Spanish languages.

Understanding the cultures and knowing how to infuse cultural awareness into the lesson, is an important element of becoming culturally proficient (Lindsey, Robins & Terrell, 2003). After an unscheduled observation with Dina I understood how Dina was faced with having to combine the English and Spanish lessons with her Hispanic student population in the class. My sensing, thinking, feeling and intuitive personality became dominant. I reflected back to my job as a choir director in Puerto Rico where I had to perform at two different religious services, one in English and the other in Spanish. My aptitude at being culturally proficient leader came easily for me because cultural proficiency had been a major factor since early childhood.

However, I did have limitations as a culturally proficient leader. My limitations for this cultural proficiency leadership phase included that I needed to learn how to sometimes read between the lines and develop my probing skills. Becoming more skilled in intuitiveness, investigative practices and not to prejudge situations was a clear need in

my leadership style. In other words it is not what people say it is what they do not say. I believe I improved my probing skills by consciously being aware of this skill and having to utilize it during my research project.

Figure 6.1 My Leadership Findings

Cycle	Transformational	Servant	Culturally Proficient
1	Built trust with school administration	Established partnership in leading professional development	Understand the organizational culture
2	Bonded with participants	Assisted participants in prioritizing their needs	Valued and respected culture of participants
3	Role modeling	Improved staff relations through professional development workshops	Valued and respected culture of staff
4	Empowerment of participants.	Not leader first, sought participant input.	Orientated staff on cultural proficiency.

My Theories-in-Action Leadership Limitations

Each one of my four workshops on DI ended with the participants completing a questionnaire and providing me feedback concerning my leadership. A total of thirty evaluation sheets were completed by the participants who attended my four DI workshops. My first mini-workshop titled *Bridging Differentiated Instruction* involved an evaluation only from Pam and Tim. Both participants wrote positive comments concerning me as a facilitator. One participant wrote: "This workshop was very helpful. Ms. Lee did a wonderful job and communicates effectively. Ms. Lee addressed each section with positive ideas. She also provided generous resources and materials."

Other workshop evaluations also gave very positive feedback about my performance in leading the workshops. Some of the feedback comments were:

"Ms. Lee's workshop was very helpful. We need to be culturally responsive."

"Yes. It improved my opinion. I strongly support D.O.O.R.S."

"Only pros….a great communicator."

"The discussion was meaningful. I enjoyed listening to the different cultural differences."

"Yes, very helpful. As an "old" teacher, reminders are always needed for me. I realize we need to individualize in the classroom, sometimes forget to do it. Ms. Lee's suggestions and ideas were very helpful."

I had to probe deeper in comments made by the participants and workshop attendees to determine the limitations of my leadership from their perspective because of the overall positive feedback I received. A few comments offered suggestions to improve my workshops. One of the participants on the questionnaires stated anonymously:

You can improve your next workshop session by continuing to discuss our progress as teachers and discuss ways to improve our classroom."

Another participant anonymously stated, "Additional time on each section would improve the next workshop. It was an excellent experience though and very much appreciated."

I determined that one of my limitations was being too flexible in enforcing the policies of my action research. For example, when Tim moved to his third classroom assignment with his new co-teacher I should have had Tim stay with the plan in my study and allow me the opportunity to continue to co-teach or model lessons for him. I should

not have agreed to silence my criticism concerning Tim's teaching methods and become an observer only in his classroom and no longer an active participant. I should have stayed true to my role in the project as participant observer and coach. However, I realized Tim had been placed in three different classrooms as a teacher in a period of four months. He was in a unique situation and I believed at the time would need more flexibility with how I administered my research study.

Another limitation was not asking probing questions because I am sometimes too polite. As a result I did not probe into the reasons why my participants were not keeping journals. I stated in my journal:

My limitations during the study was not to recognize sooner the reason the participants were not writing in their journals or completing reflection logs after my scheduled observations where I saw them instruct their classes in DI lessons. I assumed the lack of time issue was the reason they were not completing journals, diaries or logs. As a transformational leader I need to learn how to probe more into certain situations in order to discover if there are underlying reasons a phenomena occurred.

Another example is that, I never pressed Ms. Shirley, the principal, to have me do a workshop on days where the entire day was devoted to professional development. The majority of the thirty completed questionnaires had statements that they wanted my workshop to occur longer and the session was too short. This problem could have been remedied by Ms. Shirley scheduling me on a date when the teachers were given more time for professional development (Lee, Journal, February 25, 2009).

Second Discovery – My Transforming Leadership Style – Tri-River Leadership

My second leadership discovery involved me recognizing that I developed my own blended leadership style I entitled tri-river leadership. This style of leadership stems from when I began my espoused leadership platform three years ago I felt none of the leadership styles presented to me during my doctoral studies reflected my leadership style. I believed that the leadership styles presented to me as an African American had a Eurocentric based ethics and value system or had a Eurocentric historical perspective. As discussed in my literature review, the White European had a tendency to treat non-whites in education as inferior. According to the cultural proficiency theory, most members of the White racial group are blind to their cultural biases (Lindsey et al., 2003). During the course of my leadership and educational courses in the doctoral program, there was little discussion of theorists belonging to cultures other than the Western cultures. The discussion of leadership never began with the Native Americans or African leadership concepts. The leadership theorists were predominantly members of the White European or White American society. As an African American graduate student I had to research the CRT and other theories on my own that supported my leadership platform.

After further research, this led to me creating my own leadership style entitled tri-river leadership (Lee, 2008). Tri-river leadership merges two or more leadership styles into one harmonic framework (see figure 6.2) and the two leadership styles combined result in some kind of resolution of the problem or the situation. The name tri-river leadership refers to the three rivers that I daily saw flowing through my hometown, Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. Two distinct rivers, Monongahela and Allegheny joined into one river, the Ohio. However, I abandoned my search for tri-river leadership and decided

to choose an espoused leadership theory which was already commonly validated by educational leadership scholars and theorists in the United States. I chose transformational leadership, servant leadership and CPL for my leadership theories-in-action.

By the end of cycle four I discovered my living theory (Whitehead, 2008), or my unique contribution to educational leadership research included me balancing, blending and threading three leadership styles: transformational leadership, servant leadership and CPL to affect change in my participants and the Bear School learning community. This experience was not situational leadership where a specific leadership style is applied to a specific situation. This experience was authentic and original, a living leadership theory which I had not found in any literature. I have decided to return to the use of my original term *tri-river leadership* in order to explain the transformation or metamorphosis I had as a leader. My tri–river leadership was what served as a basis for my project. I believed had I used only one or two of these leadership styles, instead of all three blended together, my research would have not warranted the success which did occur in transforming my participants into expert DI practitioners.

Figure 6.2 My Leadership Platform

Tri-River

Transformational

Cultural Proficiency

Ethical Leadership Caring & Justice

Servant

Living Theory
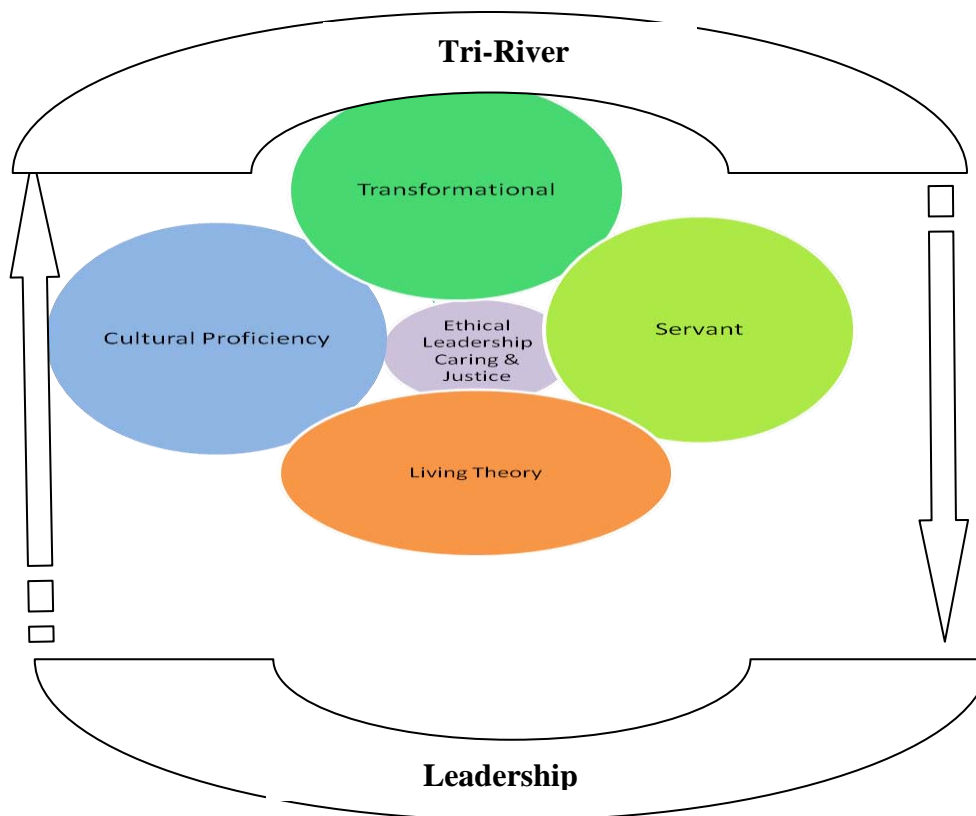
Leadership

In addition, I had utilized my three espoused leadership styles in narrow, well-defined ways prior to my D.O.O.R.S. project. My CPL style was a personal experience because the CPL style encompassed my cultural background. My servant leadership style was mainly applied to my family and to political jobs. My transformational leadership style was only through my music. I grew through this research project by combining my three leadership styles and therefore applying my three espoused leadership styles as theories-in-action in different ways. However, the basis of my multi-leadership style became my core ethical values.

For example, I trained and coached teachers in being culturally proficient by engaging in meaningful discussion and dialogue during discussion groups and conferences but because these teachers were my peers, I had to incorporate the servant leadership trait of addressing the employees' needs also. For example, cultural bias was discussed at our Workshop III session. I explained to the participants the need to understand classroom climate and curriculum guides used in the classroom may or may not represent cultural bias. I provided all workshop attendees with an article (Lee, 2001) on creating a biased-free classroom (Lee, Journal, January 22, 2009).

In addition during discussion group three I explained to Pam and Tim that the classroom teacher needs to be aware of this issue and make up for any lack of supportive material in the classroom by bringing in posters, stories or even real-life individuals from the diverse minority groups to speak (Lee, Journal, October 24, 2008). I mentioned that Dina was already representative of the Hispanic student minority group she teaches, so she represents a positive figure. Yet, Dina had photographs and pictures of famous Hispanic and African Americans on the walls of her classroom for her Hispanic students to openly view (Lee, Journal, October 17, 2008).

Also, I influenced the participants as a transformational leadership to build DI capacity and change into culturally proficient leaders while being mindful of the participant's individual needs as a servant leader by giving each participant their own resource guide (Herrell & Jordon, 2008; Obiakor, 2007; Tomlinson, 2001) at discussion group five session. The merging of the leadership styles was more than just applying

three different leadership styles to a given situation. The blending of the leadership styles

encompassed the merging of the leadership traits into new forms.

Applying Tri-River Leadership

I had to further analyze my data to decide when my leadership style transformed

into tri-river leadership, balancing all three styles together in order to affect change. I

discovered four defining events that occurred throughout the four cycles that concerned

my transformation into becoming a tri-river leader.

Tri-River Leadership Incident 1 – Combining Leadership Styles

The first transformation as a leader I noticed began in cycle one which started on

July 7, 2008. There was urgency for me to obtain a research site in cycle one. Since my

present work site had no principal, I had to return to my past work site Bear Elementary

School to seek approval for my project. Bear School had a new principal, Ms. Shirley,

who was a former colleague. However, I was faced with having to apply a combination

of all of my leadership styles in order to secure Bear School as my research site. This

effort included me having to use styles not listed in my theory-in action. My reflection

journal stated:

> Sergiovanni (2001) stated transformational leadership begins with transactional
>
> leadership skills. I had to pull out all of the stops in order to obtain Bear School as
>
> my research site. First I had to show the vice principal my proposal and action
>
> plan which is based on research. Secondly, I had to charismatically approach Ms.
>
> Shirley, the principal, with the same information while at the same time show her
>
> I was very transactional with details and organization skills. Next I had to inspire
>
> Ms. Shirley as a transformational leader to support my project. Then as a servant

leader I had to look to the needs of Ms. Shirley and see what she would need for the school.

Combining all of my leadership styles to gain the support of the Bear School principal and vice principal left me understanding why River University required the researchers to have at least three leadership theories-in-action. Just as Bolman and Deal (2003) believe an effective leader can combine multiple frames, I understand that an effective leader needs to have the ability to combine multiple leadership styles to affect change (Lee, Journal, July 30, 2008).

Tri-River Leadership Incident 2 – Lack of Time Cause of Blending Leadership Styles

Cycle two involved me continuing to thread my leadership styles to affect change. I discovered that the commute between the two schools and lack of time issue may have been the major reason I had to combine leadership styles. I stated in my journal:

Throughout the entire research project I traveled one to two times per week from Homer Middle School my work site to Bear Elementary School my research site. There was little time for delay in shifting my leadership styles to accommodate the needs of my participants (Lee, October 31, 2008).

In addition, the dichotomy I experienced in commuting back and forth between the two schools left little time for me to retain oneness in leadership style. Therefore, I believe the commuting between two buildings and time issue was a factor in me developing a blending and balancing of my three leadership theories-in-action. I had little time to change my personality and adapt to the new setting at Bear Elementary School which had a different setting from my work site, Homer Middle School. The scheduling

in the K through 12 setting is very tight and regimented. Similar to factory work, bells occur typically in a 45 minute interval to announce the change of classes or the beginning or end of a class period. To intrude into a classroom lesson in the midst of the 45 minute time slot can be deemed offensive in some settings.

Although the bell schedules and tightly run time periods for student learning were the same at both Bear School and Homer School, the age groups of the students were different and the organizational cultures were not similar. Bear School had a highly collaborative staff. Homer Middle School had a highly independent staff. Bear School had a minority SE student population. Homer School had a majority SE population.

Tri-River Leadership Incident 3 – Thinking Process Improved

My discernment of situations (Myers-Briggs, 2005) became more heightened as I continued to write in my journals at least once a week. I began to see my logical reasoning improving. On September 5, 2008, I had a meeting with the Bear School vice principal. My thinking process can be seen in my writings. I stated in my journal:

> Today was a one day session (1/2 day for students). This was their first day of school. As soon as dismissal occurred at 12:40 p.m., I walked to my car (out of the back entrance) in the parking lot to attend my meeting with Bear School's vice principal. I marked the time I left Homer School where I am currently employed as the vocal music teacher to be 12:49 p.m. Right before I left I heard the secretary announce on the PA system lunch for the staff today is between 12:45-1:45 p.m. and please be prompt on returning. This remark annoyed me, since I noticed the day before most teachers did not leave for lunch until 1:00 p.m.

However, the new me took it as a reminder meant for someone else who

perhaps yesterday had violated their lunch hour stay and made it too lengthy. I

had been on time. Besides, I had checked with the principal via e-mail today to let

her know I had a meeting at Bear School with the vice principal and she had

responded it was okay – to just inform her when I return to Homer School.

Therefore, I proceeded to cautiously drive down the avenue across town to Bear

School (Lee, Journal, September 5, 2008).

Tri-River Leadership Incident 4 – No Longer Prejudging

The fourth critical incident occurred when I transformed from a prejudgmental

leader (Myers Briggs, 2005) to a tri-river leader concerning Ms. Maria's loss of her

Workshop II certificate. I stated in my journal:

The date was February 9, 2009. I planned this day as the last for my visit to my

research site. I completed my final interview with Dina and was exiting the

building when I unexpectedly met Ms. Maria in the hallway. Ms. Maria stated,

"Ms. Lee, I attended all three of your workshops and only received one workshop

certificate. I am missing two workshop certificates."

I was caught off guard. I could only remember Ms. Maria attending the

first of my DI workshops. I did not recall her attending the other two workshops.

I began thinking as a tri-river leader with my response. My focus was to extract

information to validate that she attended all of my workshops without questioning

her honesty. I asked Ms. Maria a series of questions. "Were you at the Workshop

II where we had to complete holiday cards in groups?" She responded, "Yes, I

was in the group with the holiday cards. I remember some people came in late."

Next I asked Ms. Maria, "Were you in Workshop III where I gave the participants Chinese envelopes and cookies?" Ms. Maria responded, "No, I was not in the workshop where Chinese envelopes were given to the participants. I was called to another meeting that day across town."

After we both realized she had not attended Workshop III, then Workshop II became the only workshop in question. I next asked Ms. Maria, if she signed the sign-in sheet for Workshop II. She responded, "Yes." However, I still could not remember Ms. Maria attending Workshop II. Next I explained to Ms. Maria, I needed to check the sign-in sheet I have at home. If her name is not on it, I will have her sign it and have to send a duplicate copy of the sheet to the Office of Professional Development downtown. Apparently, the certificate I had mailed via the Bear School principal was either lost, or when the principal had her receptionist place the workshop participants' certificates in their mail boxes, Ms. Maria's certificate became lost. I was able to hand deliver another copy of the Workshop II certificate to Ms. Maria the next day (Lee, Journal, February 10, 2009).

What is significant about this incident is that I blended my transformational, servant and culturally proficient leadership skills to extract information from Ms. Maria with probing questions that did not offend her. In the past I would have prejudged Ms. Maria and blamed her for the lost of her certificate. In addition, I saw to Ms. Maria's need as a servant leader by hand-delivering a certificate within twenty-four hours to her. I showed Ms. Maria that I valued and respected the honesty traits of her culture as a teacher by believing her at face value when she informed me she attended the workshops,

however, never received her Workshop II certificate. I never thought about blaming her, the principal, the receptionist or Ms. Maria for this inconvenience. I pondered at home later concerning how this error occurred and concluded that Ms. Maria's certificate could have been placed in the wrong mail box at school. I decided next time to personally dispense the certificates to the participants, so that this would not occur. However, recognizing the loss of Ms. Maria's certificate was no one person's fault showed that I was on my way to becoming an effective transformational, servant and culturally proficient tri-river leader.

Summary of Tri-River Leadership

I decided to create a new leadership style because in order to become an effective leader I had to merge leadership styles (see Figure 6.2). Although some of my leadership findings were using the Myers-Briggs personality traits, transformational, servant and culturally proficient leadership traits to guide my leadership findings, what is significant about my tri-river leadership style (Lee, 2008) is that during my research it occurred in a merging or blended manner where I balanced, blended and threaded my three styles of leadership to affect change in my participants and the Bear School learning community.

Third Discovery – My Living Theory

An important part of my leadership findings involved me discovering the unique contributions I made during the course of my research concerning my third discovery, the answers to my living theory questions. My living theory which is a self-reflective examination of my leadership actions included my search to explore *how do I assist teachers with DI capacity building in their classrooms while influencing the participants as a transformational, servant and cultural proficient leader*? In addition, my living

theory involved exploring *how do I improve my transformational, servant and culturally proficient leadership to better guide my action research project*?

To discern my living theory I had to analyze the data collected from the participants and search through my own journals. What I discovered is that through empowerment and applying encouraging, motivational techniques I assisted the teachers to develop into better DI practitioners. I did not lecture and severely criticize the participants in my sessions. I provided them a strong basis for success by suggesting reflective practices and the use of action research cyclic inquiry methods (McNiff &Whitehead, 2006) to overcome DI challenges.

My living theory became motivated by two elements, empowerment and cyclic inquiry methods and led to a collaborative growth of both the participants and the researcher. By constantly asking the participants to reflect on their own performance and classroom environment, this helped me to reflect on my own living theory. The proof of these occurrences can be seen by the positive change in the participants towards DI. By the end of the study I had influenced the participants to change their opinions, lesson planning techniques and lesson delivery styles to include DI practices. In addition, Pam's classroom now reflected a student-centered environment. Dina already had a student-centered DI classroom, but Tim did not.

I was relieved to find literature on the living theory approach used by Whitehead (2008) in action research because by cycle three of my action research study I began to believe my project may be developing into case study research project. I believed my study was becoming similar to a case study because I was problem solving the issue of DI implementation through 3 participants and began to wonder as to whether or not I needed

to begin to view the participants in-depth as individual cases. Viewing case study as a methodology where a detailed, in-depth data collection occurs involving multiple sources of information in a case or multiple cases over a period of time is a closed or bounded system of inquiry, according to Whitehead (2009). Whitehead (2009) discussed about the similarities of a living theory to a case study in a report *Justifying the Use of a Living Theory Methodology in the Creation of Your Living Educational Theory*. However, Whitehead (2009) explained that a case study is dissimilar from a living theory approach due to the living theory being generated from a perspective of inclusionality that emanates from the perspective of "I" or the viewpoint of the researcher on how do I improve a problem or situation. In addition, because a living theory concerns the unbounded, transformational experience of the researcher and the participants for this reason a case study would be the opposite closed or occlusional approach to research compared to the open or inclusional approach of a living theory which is not bounded (Whitehead, 2009).

Applying Leadership Theories to Future Plans

"My hope is one day to create a charter school," I told my professor several years ago at River University. Now that I have completed my second research study in DI, I believe I am moving closer to my goal. I am confident my knowledge concerning my own tri-river leadership and ethical leadership styles will sustain me through my future endeavors. I plan to apply to a grant agency program next year that assists a future leader who wants to become a director of a charter school with a tutor/mentoring position for the first year of the program. The second year of the program the agency assists you with establishing your charter school. I would need to research the needs of the community

where I plan to establish my charter school, before deciding the school's purpose or mission. Through my endeavors with this action research project, I have learned to always think and reflect before proceeding forward with a new idea. My D.O.O.R.S. action research study has enforced this capability. However, as a principal of a new school I would definitely base the curriculum foundations on the underlying principles in DI with an attempt to meet the needs of the learners.

For the future, I also intend to publish the information I have acquired through my D.O.O.R.S. project in an educational journal and present the study in public forum at an educational conference in the United States or England. I believe public approval is necessary before a change theory or action plan like my D.O.O.R.S. can become legitimate in educational circles and validated by professionals. Leadership is influence and influencing my peers in the professional community through publication of my study to accept my concepts will be part of me continuing to be a transformational, servant and culturally proficient leader.

I also have had an offer to begin conducting workshops on cultural awareness and plan to develop my career as a professional consultant in this area. In addition, I plan to complete more studies relating to tri-river leadership and DI to share with my colleagues in future publications.

My project D.O.O.R.S. has influenced me in three ways. First, I believe I have discovered a viable guideline for teachers to use in their classroom to promote student achievement while at the same time improving the teacher's cultural proficiency and reflective inquiry skills. Second, I discovered good ethics is the underlying basis for effective leadership practices and a successful leader must apply sound ethical principles

to all decisions and actions to promote sustaining change in a learning organization.

Lastly, I discovered that an effective leader must analyze and re-analyze the data through

different perspectives to discern what findings are valid or invalid.

Fourth Discovery – MBTI Valid

My fourth discovery was that the MBTI personality assessment findings were

valid but were not completely accurate concerning all four of my personality types.

Patterns clearly emerged supporting the MBTI findings that my personality type was

dominated by a thinking, orderly, systematic character. The plan I outlined for capacity

building DI in the classroom of my participants with scheduled workshops, discussion

groups, coaching sessions, observations, attending methodologically to the needs of my

3 participants and some members of the staff of Bear School demonstrated I definitely

had the ability to project the needed steps to accomplish a task. The MBTI assessment

was also correct in finding my sensing trait to also be dominant. Through my

intuitiveness I recognized what priorities were needed by the workshop participants and

created graphs and charts to aid my participants through this experience of capacity

building DI in their classrooms. However, I found my feeling side which was clearly

dominated by my core ethical leadership values of care and justice to also be a

motivational force in my study. I believe the MBTI was inaccurate in assessing this trait

as the most subdominant in my personality type. Actually, my emotions or feelings

concerning ethical values were the central core of my leadership style. This was

demonstrated during critical incidents where I interceded in lessons because I felt the

students may be harmed by the participants not implementing DI principles or instructing

in a caring or just manner.

Fifth Discovery – Answers to Research Questions

Finding the answers to my research questions was an on-going event through triangulated data analysis. Although I refer to this venture as my fifth discovery, the quest to discover the answers to my four research questions became a major part of my research project. My research questions were:

1. What impact does my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines have on the teacher's capacity building for differentiated instruction?

2. What are the most effective factors needed to create a positive environment in the classroom conducive to differentiated instruction?

3. What impact does implementation of my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines have on the participants' opinions of differentiated instruction?

4. What impact does my research experience have on my leadership theories-in-action?

At the conclusion of my study I became faced with finding the outcome trustworthiness of the project. Outcome trustworthiness concerns the extent of which actions occurred that provided a solution to the problem or led to a deeper understanding of the problem and assists with discovering ways in how to resolve the problem in the future (Anderson, Herr & Nihlen, 2007). I arrived at the following answers for my research questions through triangulated data:

1. D.O.O.R.S. guidelines impacted the teacher's capacity building for

   differentiated instruction because:

   - D.O.O.R.S. guidelines informed the teacher of the three main components

     needed to build sustaining second order change in the classroom – DI,

     action research cyclic inquiry and cultural proficiency awareness.

   - D.O.O.R.S. guidelines assisted the classroom teacher with what action

     plan is needed for making the transitional phase from traditional

     classroom practices to best teaching practices for DI.

   - D.O.O.R.S. guidelines offered the teacher instructional plans to assist the

     curriculum program in a diverse classroom setting.

Triangulated data supports my research question one findings. Through

interview responses, questionnaires and discussion groups I discerned these findings

were valid. All 3 participants responded that they believed my D.O.O.R.S. guidelines

impacted them in some way during their final interview. In addition, the completed

questionnaires given at the end of each workshop displayed the impact of D.O.O.R.S.

on their teaching (see My Theories-in Action Leadership Limitations, Chapter Nine).

Analysis of participant feedback during discussion groups supports this claim, also

(see Discussion Group Four Activities, Chapter 6). Pam felt my research was equal to

a college course because she learned so much new data through D.O.O.R.S. Tim

equated D.O.O.R.S. with Tomlinson's DI method. Dina believed my action plan was

comprehensive and very intense.

Other issues were demonstrated in the expectations that the participants listed

on the questionnaire given to them on October 7, 2008. Pam desired to make learning

exciting with more student involvement. Pam did transform in her implementation of DI but she had to also learn how to effectively impart knowledge to students and manage her classroom. However, Tim recognized on his questionnaire that he needed positive support. Tim had an unusual situation because within a few months, he had three different teaching assignments. I gave Tim positive support as he stated in his final interview but the co-teachers Tim had to work with daily were not as accommodating to Tim. For example, the e-mail, I sent to Tim and his co-teacher about punishing students on January 22, 2009.

However, I encountered several limitations in finding answers to research questions one concerning the impact of the D.O.O.R.S. action plan. These limitations involved the participants not completing their reflection logs after their DI lessons or writing in their journals. The reflection logs had they been completed properly would have informed me which one of the five bridges were used in preparation for the lesson. In addition, the journals would have given me deeper insight into the participant's knowledge, growth and opinion of DI. In retrospect, I can see that perhaps a short opinion survey or open ended questionnaire may have been more useful in extracting this information from the participants.

2. Various factors are needed to create a positive environment in the classroom conducive to DI and they include:

- The teacher having a positive outlook or opinion about change in their classroom (Fullan, 2007).

- The teacher learning to become a diagnostician in prescribing the best practices and learning theories for their students through proper professional development (Tomlinson, 1999; 2001).

- The teacher obtaining ongoing support during the implementation and change phase of introducing DI into their classroom environment, especially from their teaching partners, supervisors and the administration (Sergiovanni, 2001).

- The administrators needing to have the same scheduled agenda in promoting professional development.

Planning for high-quality professional development involves pre-planning and using multiple steps. Sustainability or long term impact is difficult to achieve (Seyfarth, 2008). I attempted to making the DI experience sustainable for my 3 participants by making the DI workshops and informal discussion group activities collaborative. In addition, I had the participants choose topics they would like to discuss. I enabled teacher growth through empowerment and reflective practices. I used mediation, direct coaching and modeling to improve DI instructional practices (Gregory & Chapman, 2007; Sergiovanni, 2001; Lindsey, et al., 2007).

However, one limitation for research question two concerning positive factors needed in DI instruction was that I did not present the specific academic content the teachers were expected to cover in their classroom lessons. Limiting professional development to only teaching techniques and not addressing specific content that teachers are covering sometimes leads to non-sustainability (Seyfarth, 2008).

I chose not to emphasize subject content because the 3 participants were representative of different grade levels and focusing on specific content would have turned the experience into an individual and not collaborative experience. In addition, the focus on specific content would have restricted the participants in choosing their own learning theories and taken away their enrichment experience to become empowered DI instructors. Also, the previous study on DI by Stetson, et al., 2007 that I was trying to design my study after, allowed their 48 teachers the freedom to choose which DI content area they wanted to use. Empowerment of the teachers in instruction is important in building a sustaining professional development community (Fullan, 2007; Sergiovanni, 2001).

3. The opinions of two of the participants changed towards DI after the implementation of the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines because:

- Two of the 3 participants attended all four of the DI workshops and five discussion group sessions and appeared to follow most suggestions.

- Two of the 3 participants received ongoing feedback and coaching on DI from the project director.

- Two of the 3 participants applied the D.O.O.R.S. guidelines of using DI, action research cyclic inquiry and cultural proficiency awareness into their classroom in lesson planning activities.

Triangulated data which I found that supported these findings in research question three and four answers was discovered in my observations, reflection journal, field notes, reflective conferences with the participants, feedback during the discussion groups and workshop questionnaires. Pam proved these factors the most throughout the study.

Pam, who was uncertain about her knowledge concerning DI at the beginning of cycle two, displayed at her final interview in cycle four that she now had a much better DI knowledge base. Her outlook which initially was uncertain had become positive towards DI. In addition, Pam significantly had major transformations occur in her lesson planning, lesson delivery style and classroom environment making it a student-centered classroom. The support of her co-teacher appeared to be a major factor along with my ongoing personalized coaching and modeling of DI lessons.

My action plan D.O.O.R.S. involved me setting objectives for the participants in implementing DI. After careful analysis of my project I decided the D.O.O.R.S. objectives were helpful to the participants because during the final interview session each participant demonstrated they were either influenced by D.O.O.R.S. or transformed as DI instructors due to following D.O.O.R.S. guidelines. Bridge one involved the participants infusing cultural proficiency and diversity into their classroom was met when the 3 participants created an environment that embraced the students' diversity. Both Pam and Dina began to base the topics of their lessons on prominent African American figures, while Tim spoke about the need for cultural awareness in his interview session. Also, I noticed in the 3 participants' classrooms photographs of prominent African Americans or Hispanics were openly displayed (Lee, Journal, January 22, 2009).

Bridge two concerned the observation of student needs was met when Pam and Tim began to use reflective practices in instruction after teaching lessons. More importantly the use of action research cyclic inquiry methods to address student problems or needs such as Pam creating music rules collaboratively with her students demonstrated D.O.O.R.S. had a positive effect. In addition, both Pam and Tim were able to create

second change agents through contact with their co-teachers, Ms. Green and Ms. Blue, after my professional development sessions.

Bridge three concerned understanding that one bridge to student learning is not enough to create change was met when Pam and Tim became more skilled as diagnosticians they began to use DI concepts of learning theories and student learning preferences to enhance instruction. Pam and Dina began to infuse multisensory perception learning styles into their lessons (Dunn & Dunn, 2009a; 2009b). Tim began to differentiate his lesson through using variety of choice for his students. For instance, Tim allowed students to choose different rocks in a science lesson or different shapes in a mathematics lesson. In addition, Pam transformed her classroom into student-centered learning stations while Dina maintained her learning stations throughout the study (Lee, Journal, February 13, 2009).

Bridge four concerned re-evaluation of the curriculum was met when Pam and Tim began to use other forms of content, product, process and assessment (Tomlinson, 2001; Tomlinson et al., 2008). Pam instituted the DI strategy of choice boards in her classroom. Tim and his co-teacher Mrs. Jones used a pop-up activity in mathematics class. Dina used a multi-sensory hands-on arts and crafts activity on the topic of *The Gingerbread Man* along with technology using the SMARTBOARD for the content, process and product portion of her DI lesson.

Bridge five involved the teacher understanding high quality training and professional commitment is important was displayed through Pam and Tim attending all of my DI workshops and showing interest in signing up for DI workshops that occurred externally outside of school. In addition, Dina was presently enrolled in a graduate

educational program in educational leadership at a local college, Concord University. Also, Tim decided to continue his professional development in becoming a certified SE instructor by enrolling at River University for their summer course program.

4. The impact my research experience had on my leadership theories-in-action caused me to recognize:

- The ethical principles of care and justice were the basis of my leadership foundation and my transformational, servant and cultural proficient leadership style developed into a new style of leadership I called tri-river leadership (see Figure 6.2).

- The positive impact my leadership theories-in-action had on the participants.

- Two ethical principles that guided me through my research were care and justice.

- My ethical principles of care and justice provided the firm foundation for my leadership style and were the source of my motivation.

Action research as a methodology has several limitations. In retrospect, to what I already stated in previous chapters as limitations, I can see how more limitations are involved with the use of action research. First, this type of research has not yet found its own language of discovery. Action research still relies on quantitative and qualitative principles and terminology which do not always explain the experience accurately (Anderson, et al., 2007). I turned to the living theory (Whitehead, 2008) as an attempt to fill this gap to explain my educational influences and the educational influences experienced by my practitioners.

In addition, action research can be viewed as a narcissist form of self-study which reinforces the policy and practices in education of the dominant or status quo group who yield the power (Anderson, et al., 2007). For instance, this can lead to a large proportion of African American students being placed in special education and this placement becoming the norm with few challenging this practice. Even though action research studies may occur in larger quantities in the future concerning African American students and SE placement, because action research does not centralize on critical reflection principles, as a self-study or practitioner research method, it is possible that action research methods can cause a researcher to miss discovering the truth or identifying the underlying cause and effect of a problem due to the limited self-reflective analytical skills of the practitioner(Anderson, et al., 2007). In defense of action research, however, because this form of research is based on insider or practitioner knowledge, when a solution to a problem is discovered, more than likely the resolution will become long-term (Anderson, et al., 2007).

Differentiated instruction represents a new model or paradigm for our curriculum programs. New models can either support or challenge the organizational culture in education (Fullan, 2007). I do not believe that DI scholars understood that DI in the traditional format (Heacox, 2002; Tomlinson, 1999) without Maslow's (1968) hierarchy of needs or without Dunn and Dunn's (2009a; 2009b) perceptual readiness levels taken into account, supports the educational policies and practices that oppress the African Americans. When a new idea or model challenges the status quo then organizational defenses move in to counter this effect (Argyris, 1990; Anderson, et al., 2007). Therefore, I am concerned that action research and differentiated instruction may not develop into

needed critical reflective practices because then they become a challenge to organizational cultures in education and eventually will be silenced.

As I already mentioned in my literature review DI literature (Heacox, 2002; Tomlinson, 1999) has been void of mentioning the needs of the African American students (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Maslow, 1968; Lindsey et al., 2005) because education and educational literature as a whole for the past several hundred years had a tendency to ignore the needs of the African American and other minority groups (Kunjufu, 2002; Noguera, 2008). The norm was to focus on the educational needs of students in the K through 12 setting belonging to the dominant White European group and their descendents (Harry & Klingner, 2006). Therefore, assumptions and myths concerning the African American students and intelligence took root in education and these racist beliefs concerning genetics and intelligence are presently upheld among various writers (Herrnstein & Murray, 1996).

Consequently, missing pieces of relevant knowledge concerning DI and its relationship to the African American student is lacking from the literature (Heacox, 2002; Tomlinson, 1999; 2001). I could not find any literature which specifically addresses this issue. In addition, DI literature also is lacking in specific guidelines for teachers to follow, i.e. those teachers who have a need to shift from traditional paradigms to DI paradigms in their classrooms. I could not find any literature which specifically addresses this problem. Therefore, at least for the purpose of my study I discerned the need to include cultural proficiency (Lindsey et al., 2007) and action research cyclic inquiry (McNiff and Whitehead, 2006) with my D.O.O.R.S. action plan to address these limitations. Some writers may argue these points and explain that DI literature currently

addresses the needs of all classroom teachers by providing clear guidelines and ways of implementing DI into the traditional classroom. However, Gregory and Chapman (2007) discuss the need to know the student's readiness level in terms of Maslow's (1968) safety needs before instituting DI instruction. In addition, Tomlinson et al. (2008) mentions the importance of understanding the student's economic status and background before assessing the readiness level. Therefore, I believe this perspective supports my D.O.O.R.S. action plan.

Analysis – Leadership Findings

My study is significant because as a researcher I recognized the need for practitioners to develop a critical perspective in teaching through cultural proficiency and devised an action plan D.O.O.R.S. which merged three newer concepts: DI, cultural proficiency and action research cyclic inquiry in order for individuals and organizational cultures to attempt to move to second order change and penetrate the older traditions of cultural bias in education with African American students in grades K through 12. I discerned the need as a researcher and a practitioner for creating an action plan with sets of guidelines to assist classroom teachers with implementing DI in an African American student setting. I cannot explain other writers' perspectives on DI or conjecture why or why not they have not yet fully developed a professional development plan for implementing DI in incremental stages leading to long term effects. Some scholars may argue this issue because they believe DI literature already exists to address these issues (Tomlinson, 2001). However, the evidence that DI is not being used as frequently as it should in the classroom or when it is used it is because of poor quality teaching is the amazing figures of overrepresentation of African American students being placed in SE.

My Leadership with Capacity Building

What was also unique about my study was the collaborative leadership used throughout the four cycles in all leadership theory-in-action styles: transformational leadership, servant leadership, cultural proficiency leadership, ethical leadership and the blending of my leadership styles to form an authentic style of leadership I called tri-river leadership made my project a success. I used six approaches to professional development: modeling, workshops, individual and group interaction with discussion groups and cultural proficient coaching to influence my participant's to change into DI instructors. With modeling I used servant leadership (Block, 1996; Greenleaf, 2002) principles where I discerned the participants' needs then supported and guided the participants to adopt and implement the change initiative (Fullan, 2007).

Through my workshops I created high quality training sessions (Gregory, 2003; Sergiovanni, 2001; Tomlinson et al., 2008) where I inspired the participants as a transformational leader (Burns, Du Bois, 2002; Senge et al., 1994; Sergiovanni, 2001; Wheatley, 1999a) to adopt DI as a new instructional approach. During my individual and group interaction discussion group sessions I personalized the DI experience based on the participants needs. I used transformational and servant leadership (Block, 2008; Greenleaf, 2002) to discern and see to the needs of the participants during these encounter sessions. Through cultural proficient coaching I used my cultural proficiency leadership skills (Lindsey, et al., 2007) to explain the importance of understanding cultural proficiency and diversity in an effective DI classroom to the participants who had to teach in a minority student setting with African American and Hispanic students. I assisted 3 participants in my project, Pam, Tim and Dina, to become more culturally

proficient as DI teachers. I used data collected through interviews, observations, discussion groups, workshops, questionnaires and reflection logs to validate my research.

My third discovery involved me finding the answers to my living theory (Whitehead, 2008). My living theory included my search to explore *how do I assist teachers with DI capacity building in their classrooms while influencing the participants as a transformational, servant and cultural proficient leader*? In addition, my living theory involved exploring *how do I improve my transformational, servant and culturally proficient leadership to better guide my action research project*? My fourth discovery was that the MBTI personality assessment findings were valid but were not completely accurate concerning all four of my personality types. Patterns clearly emerged supporting the MBTI findings that my personality type was dominated by a thinking, orderly, systematic character. However, critical incidents occurred during observation sessions where the emotional or feeling side of my ethical leadership personality became dominant. My fifth discovery, the quest to discover the answers to my four research questions, became a major part of my research project.

Recommendations

In reflection, I believe as an educator I cannot ignore the underlying problem that the taint of African slavery for the African American student is still with us today through overt and institutional cultural bias practiced in many institutions. I, like so many others before me can silence my dialogue and ignore the plight of the African American students by making my research findings reflect what the dominant group wants to hear (Delpit, 1988). I can cease asking questions about why are so many minority students in SE and become content with not probing to find the real, in-depth answer. However, my

ethics of care and justice which are the basis of my leadership traits drive me to further investigate and articulate that the importance of understanding the historically oppressed African American's plight in education is central to understanding why or why not any new instructional method such as DI is a success.

My action plan was uniquely successful because I discerned there was a need for classroom teachers of African American students to set the stage in their classroom for DI which involved a shift from a traditional approach of instruction into a newer paradigm. The DI paradigm shift involved second order deep change (Tomlinson et al., 2008). Even if a teacher finds herself skilled enough to make this change by following Tomlinson et al.'s (2008) suggestions for infusion of DI elements in the classroom, when involved with diverse student populations, there are certain assumptions made in the classroom concerning race and intelligence (Harry & Klingner, 2006; Lindsey, et al., 2003) which can possibly hinder the teacher in implementing DI. Perhaps, one day in the future some scholars will consider my D.O.O.R.S. action plan a major finding in DI literature because I could not find any literature that challenges or tries to resolve these issues in education, at least written by the most prominent writers in DI literature.

I chose three elements in my action plan to assist the teacher with dropping the cultural bias practices prevalent in many learning organizations and help the teachers of African American students teach in ways that they can reach their fullest potential and not be inhibited by culturally biased practices prompted by middle class teachers' values, beliefs and opinions. Two of my three teachers where impacted by D.O.O.R.S. I recommend that educators need to look directly at the needs of the African American students and their needs in relationship to the historical educational doctrines prevalent

in contemporary literature and instructional practices that may have adverse effect on their progress. Caring educators need to discern its impact which can still be felt in the fabric of our educational system and try to eradicate these old forces of segregation through ongoing professional development similar to D.O.O.R.S. and cross-cultural racial dialogue to change these old traditions (Lindsey, et al., 2005; Tatum, 2002).

On reflection, I cannot stress anymore that another reason I believe my study was successful was due to the choice and combination of my three leadership theories-in-action: transformational leadership, culturally proficient leadership and servant leadership which were driven by my underlying ethical leadership style. I believe my servant leadership or the desire to assist others in need is what also carried me through my graduate school endeavors at River University. I volunteered for two years as the vice president of membership for the Graduate Honor Society while pursuing doctoral study. I found purpose as a student and a strong link with the university becoming acquainted with key graduate school personnel. I assisted the Honor Society with creating a graduate student address and e-mail contact book annually to try to improve the vertical and horizontal articulation in communication between the students. I also, loosely became acquainted with doctoral students trying to start a social organization at River University and lended my support with this group. In addition, I continue to grow and assist River University by volunteering as a lecture to speak about cultural proficiency and to also work in partnership with the university to present music teacher workshops on the topic of diversity. Therefore, my relationship with the university is not a short-term occurrence like it may be for some students but a long-term event due to my ethical leadership sense

of duty to help others in need or to give back to the learning community which provided me a rich knowledge base in leadership.

Lastly, I believe my change initiative D.O.O.R.S. was instrumental in making my study a success and this was due I believe to Fullan's (2007) three phase change theory which provided a long-term goal or overview for my project with recognizing a change initiative was needed, implementing the change idea and finding out if the change initiative was sustaining. Sergiovanni's (2001) approach to capacity building also assisted with my professional development action plan goals being achieved along with McNiff and Whitehead's (2006) action research cyclic inquiry method.

Action research and action research cyclic inquiry methods may be the resolution for many problems the world of K through 12 education is encountering. I recommend our American school leaders, who include certified as well as non-certified individuals closely linked to K through 12 educational institutions, become more aware of the action research method of inquiry, the need for a paradigm shift from traditional educational methods to DI and the need for all key stake holders in education to learn cultural proficiency in order to solve many of the major dilemmas confronting them in education. In addition, now that we have a global community of educators, probably due to technological advancements in communication, I recommend that we as educators need to become more cognizant that the diverse student populations of the world which we now teach should be valued and respected just as greatly as the dominant group cultural in our society (Lindsey et al., 2003).

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Appendix A – Pilot Study Factors

Positive and Negative Codes	
12 NEGATIVE DI FACTORS CODED	12 POSITIVE DI FACTORS CODED
MD = method of delivery CEP=classroom environment poor ENL=environment has a negative impact on learning LOT=lack of time CNG=communication not good HENG=home environment not good SIL=student interest low or not focused SC=school climate TIL=teacher interest low TCLS=teacher centered learning style PNI=physical needs inadequate or lacking PED=poor ethical decision-making	DI=differentiated instruction SS=student strategies to overcome barriers TS=teacher strategies to overcome barriers TEU=time efficiency use CEG=communication effective EGP=environment good physically SIH=student interest high TIH=teacher interest high TRT=teacher remained on task MTH=mood of teacher happy MSH=mood of student happy GED=good ethical decision-making

Categories of Factors		
Teacher- Related Factors	Student-Related Factors	Environment-Related Factors
Positive DI TEU CEG TIH TRT MTH GED	Positive SS TEU CEG SIH MSH	Positive EGP
Negative MD LOT CNG TIL TCLS PNI PED	Negative LOT SIL	Negative CEP ENL HENG SC

D.O.O.R.S.

A Bridge
For Implementing
Differentiated Instruction

By
Cynthia Cozette Lee
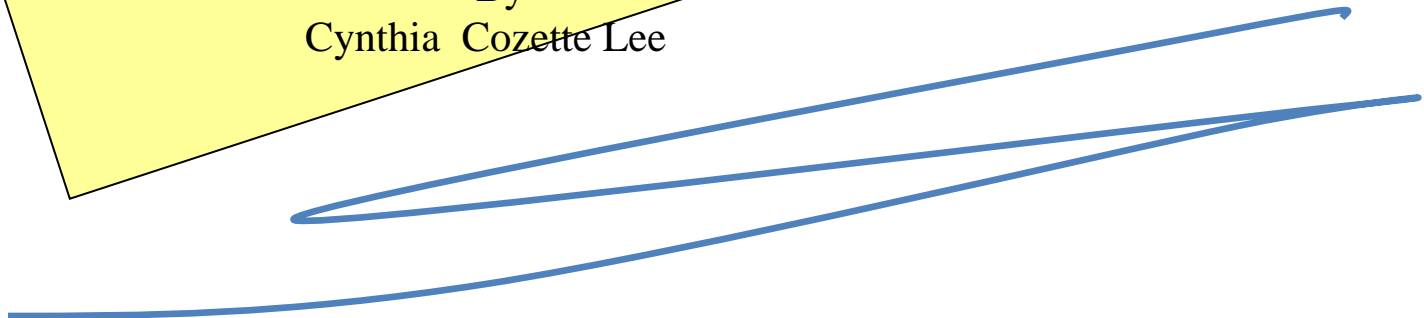
D.O.O.R.S. 5 STEP DI BRIDGE GUIDELINE

(Lee, 2007)

Getting started…..use any one, two, three, four or all five BRIDGE guidelines to CONNECT BETWEEN TRADITIONAL LESSON PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTING DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION INTO YOUR CLASSROOM THROUGH D.O.O.R.S. – AN ACTION RESEARCH APPROACH.

Bridge 1 - DEVELOP diversity pathways to change your classroom.

Bridge 2 - OBSERVE your students' needs.

Bridge 3 - ONE bridge to learning is not enough.

Bridge 4 - RE-EVALUATE & re-examine the

curriculum program success.

Bridge 5 - SUCCESS depends on your training and

commitment.

Bridge 1 - DEVELOP diversity pathways to change your classroom.

Look at the classroom through CRITICAL LENSES…Change the environment.

ASK 10 KEY SELF-REFLECTION QUESTIONS concerning CAPACITY BUILDING before planning the substance of your lessons...

1. Who am I as an individual and how do I improve my teaching?
2. Am I passionate about teaching my students?
3. What kind of physical, social and emotional environmental support do I give my students?
4. What kind of physical, social and emotional environmental support is given to me as a teacher?
5. How do my values and beliefs affect my classroom environment?
6. How do I improve my learning environment?
7. Do I continuously read more books/articles and inquire about diversity or cultural proficiency approaches to teaching?
8. Do I try to grow as a teacher taking ongoing professional development training in diversity or differentiated instruction?
9. Do I try to network with my more culturally proficient peer group in order to capacity build in my classroom?
10. Do I apply newer teaching models in my classroom lessons or stick to my old ways in order to reach my diverse group of learners?

Bridge 1 - DEVELOP diversity pathways to change your classroom.

Look at the classroom through CRITICAL LENSES…Change the environment.

Traditional:

Culturally Biased Literature	Classroom Seating Congested	Size of Desk Too Big/Small
Culturally Non-Responsive Teaching	Too Many Decorations on Walls	Teacher-Centered Lessons
Seat Too Far Away from Teacher	Seat Too Close to Teacher	Lessons Too Lengthy
Verbal Praise Only to a Few	Rewards Only for the Smart	Lessons Not Data Driven

Differentiated Instruction:

Create Positive Social Setting	Create Positive Physical Setting	Seek Training in Diversity
Create Student-Centered Lessons	Change Pace of Lessons	Make Learning Interesting or Fun
Learn Cultural Responsive Teaching	Team Teach	Celebrate Small & Large Accomplishments
Ask Student Opinions on Setting	Ask Student Opinions on Rules	Change Seating/Change Student Helpers
Form Student Decorating Committee	Create Project/Theme on Decorations	Reward & Praise Everyone for Good Deed
Sympathize with Student Needs	Bring in Positive Living Role Models	Seek Training in DI Implementation

Bridge 2 - OBSERVE your students' needs.

Look at your students' LEARNING NEEDS from far away & close up…Change where needed.

OBSERVE YOUR STUDENTS' NEEDS to DISCOVER YOUR CHALLENGES & USE ACTION RESEARCH CYCLES IN PLANNING your lesson objectives & procedures….

WHY IS IT IMPORTANT TO UNDERSTAND ACTION RESEARCH CYCLES?

Action research is a newer form of research which respects and values the opinions of the practitioners (experienced teachers). It gives the practitioners the opportunity to provide their own expert solutions in resolving important social or educational issues. Action research uses a reflective cycle system where you look, act, think & modify in an ongoing reflection cycle which is important in the learning growth process of both teachers and students.

McNiff & Whitehead (2006) Action Research Cycles

Observe → Reflect → Act → Evaluate → Modify

1. After observation & reflection decide how to execute differentiated instruction goals & objectives for lessons.
2. Decide what learning theories are needed that agrees with the D.O.O.R.S. Approach.
3. Decide what differentiated action steps to take including substance, procedures pre & post assessment.

Bridge 2 - OBSERVE your students' needs.
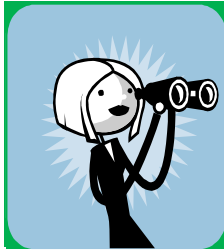
Look at your students' LEARNING NEEDS from far away & close up…Change where needed.

Traditional:

Classroom Climate Poor	Learning Style Not Differentiated	Teaching Style Not Differentiated
Curriculum Based on Standardized Tests	Lessons for Homogeneous Grouping	Verbal & Math Scores Sole Importance
Student Interest Low	Teacher Interest Low	Lacking Cultural Responsiveness Training
Mission of School is Weak	School Climate Unsafe	Home Environment Not Supportive

Differentiated Instruction:

Observe the Learning Needs	Observe the Physical Needs	Observe the Social & Emotional Needs
Commit to Changing Classroom	Commit to Differentiating Instruction	Commit to Using Other Learning Styles
Learn How to Redesign Curriculum	Learn the Multiple Intelligences	Learn How to Differentiate Assessment
Learn How to Utilize Time Better	Learn How to Utilize Technology	Learn How to Connect with Parents

Bridge 3 - ONE bridge to learning is not enough.

Think about the MANY METHODS or ways students learn. Choose a learning theory that agrees with D.O.O.R.S. like Gardner's Multiple Intelligences. Learn how to MODIFY YOUR LESSONS…. Do not be afraid to try different models.

Traditional:

Standardized Tests	Quizzes	Multiple Choice Questions	Poor Grades
Disciplinary Action	Rote	Repetition	Memorizing
Independent Work	Homework	Drills	Ditto Sheets
Overhead Projector	Teacher Made Tests	Parent Conference	Other Media

Differentiated Instruction:

Differentiated Instruction	Differentiated Content	Differentiated Process	Differentiated Product
Differentiate Assessment	Multiple Intelligences	Role Models	Peer Groups
Narrative Inquiry	Games	Sports/Music	Action Research
Brain-Based	Bloom's Taxonomy	4MAT - 4 Learners	Rap Music
Compacting	Tiered Lessons	Parent DI Class Visits	Videos/Computers

Bridge 4 - RE-EVALUATE & re-examine the curriculum program success.

Reflect & think about **HOW YOU ARE DOING** as a teacher, how your students are doing in learning & what proof you have in reflection journals and logs.

Traditional:

Poor Student Test Scores	Poor Student Behavior	Student Interest Low	Teacher Interest Low
Parent Conferences Frequent	Disciplinary Action Frequent	High Absenteeism	No Professional Development

Differentiated Instruction:

Student Engagement High	Student Test Scores High	Good Attendance	Parent Contact Ongoing
Differentiated Process	Different Learning Theories	Differentiated Assessment	Differentiated Evaluation
Positive Student Engagement	Smoother Lesson Flow	Communication Improves	Less Discipline Problems

Bridge 5 - SUCCESS depends on your training and commitment.

Stay PASSIONATE AND COMMITTED to DI...continue to ask hard questions, do not be afraid to ask for help...continuing your DI instruction & professional development training...

Traditional:

Challenge to Lesson Planning	**Pre & Post Assessment Timely**	**More Energy Needed**	**Untimely Reflection**
Parent Conferences Frequent	**Lack of Support**	**Sometimes Misunderstood**	**Untimely DI Training**

Differentiated Instruction:

Student Engagement High	**Student Test Scores High**	**Good Attendance**	**Parent Contact Ongoing**
Differentiated Process	**Different Learning Theories**	**Differentiated Assessment**	**Differentiated Evaluation**
Take Time Out to Refresh	**Take Time to Recharge Energy**	**Positive Student Engagement**	**Smoother Flow of Lessons**

Multiple Intelligence   Project Based Instruction   Game Design

FLOW CHART FOR DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION CYCLES – D.O.O.R.S (Lee, 2007)

DEVELOP A SETTING FOR CHANGE

OBSERVE YOUR STUDENTS' NEEDS

D.O.O.R.S.

CHOOSE A LEARNING THEORY THAT AGREES WITH STUDENTS' NEEDS & INFORM THE STUDENTS OF LEARNING PREFERENCES & THEORIES.

SUCCESS DEPENDS ON YOUR TRAINING & PASSION

ONE BRIDGE TO LEARNING IS NOT ENOUGH

RE-EVALUATE, RE-EXAMINE & MODIFY CURRICULUM PROGRAM
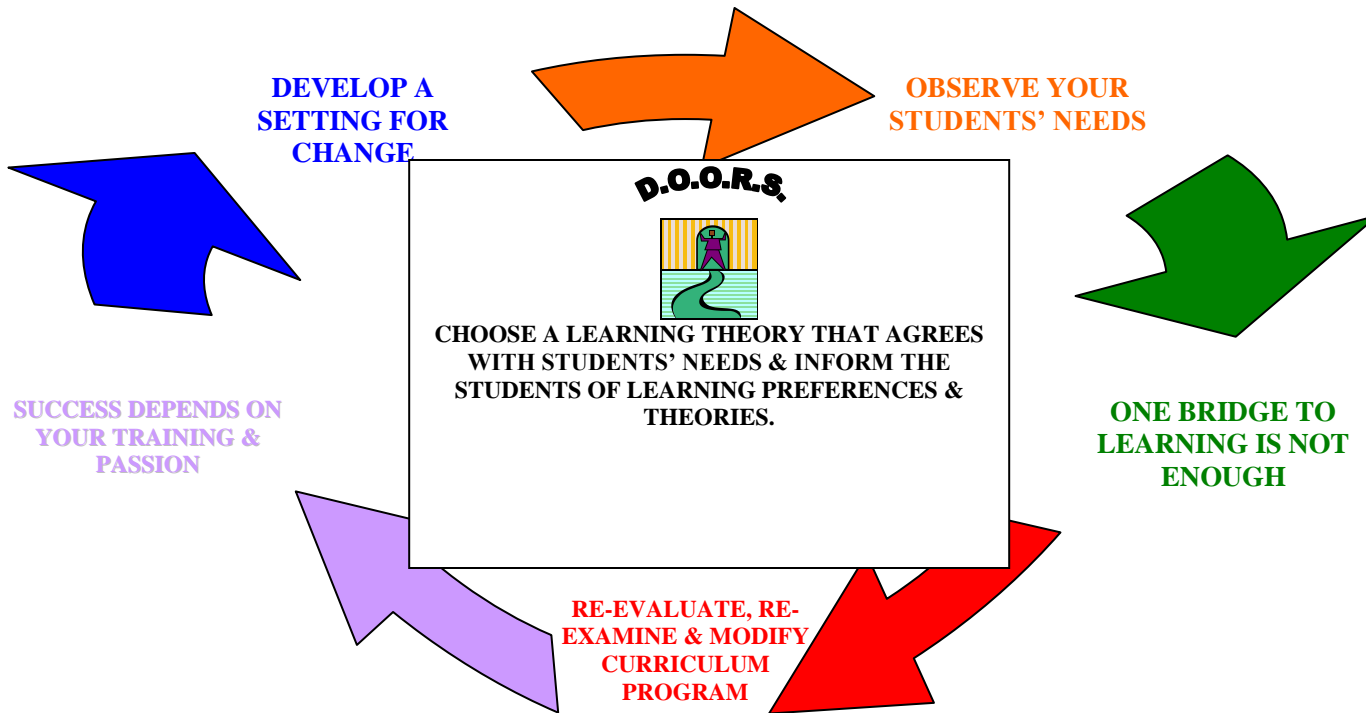
SELECT LEARNING THEORY THAT AGREES WITH STUDENTS' NEEDS

Disney Learning Partnership - Tapping Into Multiple Intelligences

- **Multiple Intelligences agrees with D.O.O.R.S.**
- **Web sites about Multiple Intelligences by the Educational Broadcasting Corporation**
  - http://www.thirteen.org/edonline/concept2class/month1/index.html
  - http://www.stemnet.nf.ca/~dsulliva/EP/Multiple%20Intelligences.htm

  Project Zero and World Education Incorporated web site:

  - http://www.pz.harvard.edu/Research/ResearchMI.htm

Howard Gardner's 8 Multiple Intelligences are:

1. Verbal-Linguistic Intelligence -- *well-developed verbal skills and sensitivity to the sounds, meanings, and rhythms of words*

2. Mathematical-Logical Intelligence -- *ability to think conceptually and abstractly, and capacity to discern logical or numerical patterns*

3. Musical Intelligence -- *ability to produce and appreciate rhythm, pitch and timber*

4. Visual-Spatial Intelligence -- *capacity to think in images and pictures, to visualize accurately and abstractly*

5. Bodily-Kinesthetic Intelligence -- *ability to control one's body movements and to handle objects skillfully*

6. Interpersonal Intelligence -- *capacity to detect and respond appropriately to the moods, motivations and desires of others.*

7. Intrapersonal Intelligence -- *capacity to be self-aware and in tune with inner feelings, values, beliefs and thinking processes*

8. Naturalist Intelligence -- *ability to recognize and categorize plants, animals and other objects in nature*

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION STRATEGIES

       Differentiated instruction principles are introduced into the classroom in various ways. These various ways are called strategies and have been defined as buckets which teachers can use to deliver content, process, or products of teaching (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 61). Differentiated instruction strategies are found to be numerous and complex (Tomlinson, 1999; Gregory & Chapman, 2007, Gregory, 2003). Some of the instructional strategies Tomlinson suggests are stations, agendas, and orbital studies.

STATIONS – The stations strategy creates different places in the classroom where students may work simultaneously on different tasks. These places can be color-coded or numbered. They allow flexible grouping of students and tasks. They can be visited based on the teacher or student's choice and the tasks can vary daily. (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 62).

AGENDAS - The agendas strategy involves a personalized list of activities that a student must accomplish within a certain amount of time. Teachers usually develop the lists and indicate when the students are to complete the list. However, the students can decide the order in which the activities are performed. (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 66).

ORBITAL STUDIES- The orbital studies strategy consists of independent investigations lasting a few weeks that center on some aspect of the curriculum. The students select the issues to be investigated and the teachers assist the student through coaching and providing guidance. (Tomlinson, 1999, p. 71).

No two students learn alike and no one method of instruction is adequate to teach all students. The instructional strategies vary according to the strengths, abilities, and needs of individual students (Cohen & Spenciner, 2005, p.221). The variations usually involve student participatory interaction, collaboration, students energized and responsible for their own learning with the students engaging in multi-disciplinary authentic tasks (Theroux, 2004). **Theroux, 2004 provides a more detailed list of teaching and management strategies at *Strategies for Differentiating* at the following website: http://members.shaw.ca/priscillatheroux/differentiatingstrategies.html**

DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION REFERENCES & RESOURCES

Cohen, L., & Spenciner, L. (2005). *Teaching students with mild and moderate*

      disabilities: research-based practices. Upper Saddle River: Pearson.

Gregory, G. & Chapman, C. (2007). *Differentiated instructional strategies: one size doesn't fit all.* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Gregory, G. (2003). *Differentiating instructional strategies in practice: training, implementation, and supervision.* Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Gregory, G. (2005). *Differentiating instruction with style: Aligning teacher and learner intelligences for maximum achievement.* Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

Heacox, D. (2001). *Differentiating instruction in the regular classroom: How to reach and teach all learners, 3-12.* Los Alamitos: Free Spirit Publishing.

Project Zero and World Education, Inc. (1999). *Project zero research projects: Multiple Intelligences*. Retrieved July 18, 2008 from

http://www.stemnet.nf.ca/~dsulliva/EP/Multiple%20Intelligences.htm

Theroux, P. (2004). *Strategies for Differentiating*. Retrieved July 17, 2008 from http://members.shaw.ca/priscillatheroux/differentiatingstrategies.html

Tomlinson, C. (1999). *The differentiated classroom: Responding to the needs of all learners*. Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development.

Tomlinson, C. (2001). *How to differentiate instruction in mixed-ability classrooms*. (2nd ed). Alexandria: Association for Supervision and Curriculum Development

Appendix C – Reflective Log

Check Off Area of D.O.O.R.S. you concentrated on for this lesson.

() DEVELOP DIVERSITY PATHWAYS FOR CHANGE IN YOUR CLASSROOM.

() OBSERVE STUDENT'S NEEDS.

() ONE BRIDGE NOT ENOUGH - MULTIPLE LESSON DELIVERY USED.

() RE-EVALUATE LESSON.

() SUCCESS DEPENDS UPON YOUR PASSION, TRAINING AND COMMITMENT

Reflective Log

This reflective log is to help you with planning your next lesson or reflecting on a past lesson using differentiated instruction.

DATE_____ **SECTION**_____ **PERIOD/TIME**_____

**Lesson
Objective:**_____
_____

**(Core Curriculum Content
Standards)CCCS:**_____

**Style of
Teaching**_____
_____

**Learning Theory in
Use**_____
_____

**List Individual or Student Group
Needs**_____
_____

**Reflection(How your lesson turned out – how could you improve lesson delivery –
Did all students learn material – Why or Why
Not)?**_____
_____
_____

Did you do a preassessment?   () YES   () NO
WHAT KIND?_____   WHY NOT?_____
Did you do a postassessment?   () YES   () NO
WHAT KIND?_____   WHY NOT?_____

Appendix D – Interview Questions

Interview 1 Questions

1. Demographic Information

    a) What grade do you teach?

    b) What subjects do you teach?

    c) How long have you taught in this position?

    d) How long have you been at this school?

    e) How long have you been teaching?

    f) How long have you been teaching?

2. DI Background

    a) How many workshops have you had on DI?

    b) When did you have these workshops?

    c) What are the topics covered in the workshops?

    d) What is your evaluation of these workshops?

3. DI Knowledge

    a) What book/workshop/coaching has been the most helpful for you in learning DI?

4. DI Teaching

    a) What instructional strategies do you find work the best for you?

    b) Why do you think these strategies work well for you?

    c) Do you inform the parents of the DI strategies used in your classroom?

    d) If you do inform the parents, how do they receive the DI strategies?

    e) Do you collaborate with other teachers concerning DI strategies?

Interview 2 Questions

1. Teaching with DI

    a) What is your opinion of DI?

    b) What do you believe is affecting your opinion of DI?

    c) Has your opinion changed since the beginning of the study?

    d) If your opinion has changed, can you give the reasons for the change?

2. Research Study

    a) Did you feel that you were in control of your participation in the research study?

    b) Did you benefit from being in this study?

    c) If you did, what were the benefits?

    d) What were the negative experiences that you had in the research study?

    e) Was there enough collaboration?

3. My leadership

    a) Was I receptive to your questions?

    b) Did I give you adequate coaching?

    c) Was I available for you?

Appendix E – Questionnaires

Questionnaire for Bear Elementary School Participants

1. Please describe your overall evaluation of teaching with differentiated instruction strategies.

2. Please describe how you recently used differentiated instruction in your classroom.

3. Please give your expectations for this research study.

4. Please give other comments you may have about differentiated instruction.

<u>**Workshop Questionnaire**</u>

1. **Tell me how you feel about the overall information obtained at this DI workshop? Pros and cons.**

2. **Do you believe this workshop was helpful for you as a teacher?**
   a) **Briefly describe why or why not.**

3. **Please give your opinion of how I performed in conducting this workshop? Pros and cons**.

4. **In your opinion how can I improve my next workshop session for the staff**

Appendix F – Literature Rich Environment

Literature Rich Environment

I plan to create a literature rich environment for the participants by providing each

teacher with three resource books of their own, access to a mini-library of books on DI or

other related topics.

Resource Books for Participants

1. Gregory, G., & Chapman, C. (2007). *Differentiated instructional strategies: One
   Size doesn't fit all*. (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press.

2. Gregory, G. (2005). *Differentiating instruction with style: Aligning teacher and
   learner intelligences for maximum achievement.* (2nd ed.) Thousand Oaks:
   Corwin Press.

3. McNiff, J., & Whitehead, J. (2006). *All you need to know about action research*.
   Thousand Oaks: Sage Publications.

Articles on DI

October

1. Rebora, A. (2008). Making a Difference: An interview with Carol Tomlinson
   Retrieved on September 24, 2008:
   http://www.teachermagazine.org/tsb/articles/2008/09/10/01tomlinson.h02.html

2. Tomlinson, C., Brimijoin, K., & Narvaez, L. (2008). The differentiated school:
   Making revolutionary changes in teaching and learning. Chapter 1. Setting the stage
   for change toward differentiation. Retrieved on September 24, 2008: http://www.
   ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/template.chapter/menuitem.b71d101a2f7c208cdeb3ffdb6210
   8a0c/?chapterMgmtId=c4d1f0214637a110VgnVCM1000003d01a8c0RCRD

November

1. Wiggins, G., & McTighe, J. (2007). Schooling by design: Mission, action and
   achievement. Chapter 5. What is the teacher's job when teaching? Retrieved on
   September 24, 2008:
   http://www.ascd.org/portal/site/ascd/template.chapter/menuitem.b71d101a2f7c208cd
   eb3ffdb62108a0c/?chapterMgmtId=7713f2e3401b3110VgnVCM1000003d01a8c0
   RCRD

2. Dunn, K., & Dunn, R. (1987). Dispelling outmoded beliefs about student learning.
   Educational Leadership, 44, 55-62.

December

1. Shaughnessy, M. (2008). An interview with Janna Echevarria and Josie Tinajero: About Tesoros. Retrieved on September 24, 2008:

   http://ednews.org/articles/26564/1/An-Interview-with-Janna-Echevarria-and-Josie-Tinajero-About-Tesoros/Page1.html

2. Zehar, M. (2007). Instructional Model May Yield Gains for English-Learners. Retrieved on September 24, 2008:

   http://www.edweek.org/ew/articles/2007/12/05/14brooklyn.h27.html?tmp=31275 2071

January

1. Neely, A. (2004). Teaching African American students: A look at instructional methods and cultural differences. Retrieved on September 24, 2008:

   http://web.wm.edu/education/599/04projects/Neely.pdf?&=&svr=www

February

1. Hertzog, N. (2004). Open-ended activities: Differentiation through learner responses. In C. Tomlinson & S. Reis (Eds.). Differentiation for gifted and talented students. Thousand Oaks: Corwin Press. Retrieved on August 27, 2008:

   http://books.google.com/books?id=5wRZHs5bXIMC&pg=PA81&lpg=PA81&dq=ward+and+differentiated+instruction&source=web&ots=7vBCnmIuu7&sig=WpZPZNNn4czu8o7ULKlWsyGFAq0&hl=en&sa=X&oi=book_result&resnum=1&ct=result#PPA77,M1

Appendix G – Professional Development Form

Midway Public Schools

Office of Professional Development

REPORTING /REQUEST FORM

FOR

IN-SCHOOL /DEPARTMENT

PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT ACTIVITIES

This form is to be submitted to the Office of Professional Development a minimum of two months prior to the professional development activity with the following information:

School/Department_____ Date_____

Exact Title of Professional Development Training/workshop/In-service_____

Training/Workshop/In-service Provider/Facilitator_____

Provider Number: _____ Location of Activity_____

Date of Activity:_____ Target Audience:_____

Please attach supporting documentation and a description of the activity.

Please indicate any School PD Plan/Recommendations that this training supports.

Please Circle the appropriate State	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Required Professional Development Standards for	1.1	2.1	3.1	4.1	5.1	6.1	7.1	8.1	9.1	10.1
Teachers that this activity supports.	1.2	2.2	3.2	4.2	5.2	6.2	7.2	8.2	9.2	10.2
Circle all that apply.	1.3	2.3	3.3	4.3	5.3	6.3	7.3	8.3	9.3	10.3
	1.4	2.4	3.4	4.4	5.4	6.4	7.4	8.4	9.4	10.4
	1.5	2.5	3.5	4.5	5.5	6.5	7.5	8.5	9.5	10.5
	1.6	2.6	3.6	4.6	5.6	6.6	7.6	8.6	9.6	10.6
	1.7	2.7	3.7	4.7	5.7	6.7	7.7	8.7	9.7	10.7
	1.8	2.8	3.8	4.8		6.8	7.8	8.8	9.8	
	1.9	2.9	3.9	4.9		6.9			9.9	
			3.10	4.10		6.10				
				4.11		6.11				
				4.12		6.12				

Professional Development Instructional Goals	1	2	3	4	5	6
For 2008-2009						

Please check the appropriate box which represents the professional development instructional goal that this activity supports.

In-district Contact Person_____   Telephone #_____

Signature of Principal, Director, Supervisor_____

Please send this form to the Office of Professional Development – 4th Floor.

Revised: October 2008

Appendix H – Action Research Cycles-July 7, 2008 to February 13, 2009

Cycle One-3 Phases
- Obtained Bear Elementary School as research site
- Organizational scan
- Recruitment of participants

Cycle Four-3 Phases
- Had Discussion group 5
- Final scheduled observation and interview

Cycle Two-4 Phases
- 1st meeting, interview and unscheduled classroom observation

- Had discussion groups 1 to 4

- Mini-workshop for participants only

Cycle Three-3 Phases
- 2 scheduled classroom observations with each participant
- 2 workshops open to the entire staff
- Had to bond closer to remaining school administrator after lost of my key contact

Appendix I – Welcome Letter

Cynthia Lee – Contact Numbers: cell # 000-000-0000
Home # 000-000-0000
(Main Office – Homer Middle School 000-000-0000)
E-mail:
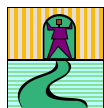
**A LETTER OF INTRODUCTION FROM
CYNTHIA COZETTE LEE – PROJECT DIRECTOR OF D.O.O.R.S.**

Dear Participant:

Thank you for volunteering to assist with my action research study "D.O.O.R.S. of Change: Capacity Building to Differentiated Instruction." ACTION RESEARCH MEANS YOUR INPUT AS A PARTICIPANT IS JUST AS IMPORTANT AS MY PERSPECTIVE AS THE PRACTITIONER. I AM HERE AS YOUR COACH AND SUPPORT TO ASSIST WITH YOUR DI EXPERIENCE. ALL INFORMATION IS ANONYMOUS, SINCE YOU WILL RECEIVE A PSEUDONYM NAME FOR THE DURATION OF THE STUDY FROM OCTOBER 1, 2008 – FEBRUARY 28, 2009.

I CREATED D.O.O.R.S. TO HELP PROVIDE A GUIDELINE FOR TEACHERS TO BUILD SUSTAINING CHANGE IN IMPLEMENTING DI. I WILL BE MAKING INFORMAL AND FORMAL VISITS TO YOUR CLASSROOM WEEKLY OR BIWEEKLY. I WILL BE ASKING YOU TO CONSIDER WAYS OF SOLVING YOUR OWN PROBLEMS WITH DI IMPLEMENTATION USING ACTION RESEARCH CYCLIC INQUIRY – OBSERVE – REFLECT- ACT – REEVALUATE & MODIFY(McNiff & Whitehead, 2006). EACH LETTER TO D.O.O.R.S. REFERS TO A SPECIFIC GUIDELINE I AM PLANNING ON YOU FOLLOWING WHEN YOU IMPLEMENT DI:

D <u>Bridge 1</u> – **D**evelop a diversity pathway to change in your classroom. Give students choices. Take action to change your classroom into a better learning scenario.

O <u>Bridge 2</u> – **O**bserve your students needs.

O <u>Bridge 3</u> – **O**ne bridge to learning is not enough. Shake up instructional practices. Inform your students of the various types of instruction methods. Do your homework become familiar with Multiple Intelligences – Gardner and other learning theories that compliment D.O.O.R.S.

R <u>Bridge 4</u> – **R**eflect, re-evaluate and re-examine the curriculum program success. Feedback from students and peers is a great help.

S <u>Bridge 5</u> – **S**uccess depends on your training and commitment

Cynthia Lee – Contact Numbers: cell # 000-000-0000
Home # 000-000-0000
(Main Office – Homer Middle School 000-000-0000)
E-mail:

IMPORTANT DATES - PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDARS

- 1 MINI-WORKSHOP ON "WHAT IS D.O.O.R.S. & DI?" **WILL BE GIVEN FOR YOU AND THE OTHER PARTICIPANTS ON**

THURSDAY, OCTOBER, 30, 2008, 3:00-3:45 P.M.

- 3 ADDITIONAL DI WORKSHOPS WILL OCCUR ON THURSDAYS **OPENED TO ALL STAFF MEMBERS ON THE FOLLOWING DATES:**

NOVEMBER 20, 2008, 3:00-3:45 P.M.
DECEMBER 18, 2008, 3:00-3:45 P.M.
JANUARY 22, 2009 , 3:00-3:45 P.M.
- YOU WILL BE ENCOURAGED TO ATTEND THESE WORKSHOPS.

- YOU WILL BE GIVEN ARTICLES & OTHER RESOURCE MATERIALS ON DIFFERENTIATED INSTRUCTION (DI) AT NO COST.

- YOU WILL BE ASKED TO GIVE OPEN & HONEST FEEDBACK ON YOUR READINGS, ON D.O.O.R.S., DI & YOUR EXPERIENCE IN IMPLEMENTING DI.

- YOU WILL BE ASKED TO KEEP A REFLECTIVE DIARY AND DO REFLECTION LOGS ON AT LEAST 2 DI LESSONS YOU TEACH (WHICH I CAN COLLECT AT THE END OF THE STUDY IN FEBRUARY, 2009).

YOU WILL ALSO BE ASKED TO COMMUNICATE 1 TIME PER WEEK VIA E-MAIL WITH THE PROJECT DIRECTOR TO DISCUSS ANY SUCCESS OR CHALLENGES YOU MAY ENCOUNTER IN IMPLEMENTING DI.

- YOU CAN LEAVE THE STUDY AT ANY POINT WITH NO PENALTY.

- THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE STUDY MAY BE PUBLISHED IN A PROFESSIONAL JOURNAL OR GIVEN IN A PUBLIC FORUM (YOUR NAME WILL REMAIN ANONYMOUS).

- COPIES OF TRANSCRIPTIONS OF THE 2 FORMAL TAPED INTERVIEWS WILL BE GIVEN TO THE INTERVIEWED PARTICIPANT ON REQUEST.

- ALL NAMES & PLACES WILL BE ANONYMOUS.

I need your signed letter of consent, teaching schedule & e-mail a.s.a.p.

Thank you for your support. Cynthia Cozette Lee – Project Director

Appendix J – Letter of Consent

CONFIDENTIAL
Cynthia Cozette Lee

Post Office Box 0000 • Northeast, U.S.A. 00000 • (000) 000-0000 • Cc_@ccccccccc.com
October 7, 2008
RE: *D.O.O.R.S.* **Participant Letter of Consent - Differentiated Instruction_Research**
Project
Dear Colleague/Participant:

I would like to invite you to participate as a volunteer teacher participant in my action research study. I am presently enrolled in my dissertation phase at River University under the guidance of Professor of Research Dr. Jury. I plan to do an action research study during the months of September through February, 2009 to explore the world of the traditional teacher concerning differentiated instruction (DI). I am searching for individual teachers who are willing to volunteer as a participant in my action research study on differentiated instruction (DI). This will involve teachers with high interest in differentiated instruction willing to participate in my study during the 2008-2009 School Year between the months of October through February. As a volunteer you will be requested to participate in a series of DI workshops I will be facilitating to assist you with bridging the transition between traditional to DI in your classroom. You will be asked to keep reflection logs and journals on your experience with DI. You will be asked to read articles and books on DI and openly provide feedback and constructive criticism on your DI experience. Your role as a participant will be highly valued.

The title of my study is *Doors of Change: Capacity Building to Differentiated Instruction*. D.O.O.R.S is the name of an action plan I created to assist classroom teachers during this project. The acronym, D.O.O.R.S., represents a five step guideline plan for teachers. The letters represent the following:

- **D**evelop diversity pathways to change your classroom
- **O**bserve your students' needs.
- **O**ne bridge to learning is not enough.
- **R**e-evaluate and re-examine the curriculum program success
- **S**uccess depends on your training and commitment (Lee, 2007).

___PARTICIPANT'S INITIALS

CONFIDENTIAL

This study is in partial fulfillment of course requirements under the supervision of Jury, Ph.D., Professor, Department of Educational Leadership, River University. E-mail: 0000@riveruniversity.edu and Telephone: 000-000-000000 ext. 000.

Workshop Sessions & Other Activities

The study will involve me in the capacity as project director, research practitioner and coach (not supervisor) conducting a series of workshops on differentiated instruction and the D.O.O.R.S approach. You will be asked to implement some of the D.O.O.R.S guidelines into your classroom activities. You will receive reflection log forms, journal book, DI books, handouts and articles to assist you with your endeavors. In return for my support I would request several taped (anonymously) 30 minute interview sessions with you. In addition, you would allow me to observe you informally and formally for at least two or more forty-five minute sessions while you teach your class of students using a DI method. Also you would be willing to participate in person or via e-mail in my DI informal discussion groups and we meet weekly or bi-weekly on an individual or group basis to see how your DI strategies are working with your lessons.

I have already spoken to the principal concerning this project. If you are willing to participate, your name will be changed to a pseudonym and all information that will be obtained will only be used for the confidential research purpose of the course. The information obtained will be kept in a locked cabinet. If you wish to request it, a copy of the transcribed interview sessions which I need to record on cassette tape can be given to you along with a copy of my classroom observations. I can be contacted at my above address or by my home telephone 000-000-0000 listed in the letter head or via my cell phone 000-000-0000 or by leaving a message at Homer School 000-000-0000. Since your name will appear as a pseudonym – there should be no risk at anyone who reads my final paper knowing that you are the source of my findings. There are no alternative procedures other than those stated. Your participation is entirely voluntary, and you may withdraw consent and terminate participation at any time with no consequences.

_____PARTICIPANT'S INITIALS

CONFIDENTIAL

The taped interview transcripts with unknown identities and disguised sites, will be shared with the supervising instructor, Dr. Jury for feedback. The results of this study may be published.

If you choose to participate in this study, please sign the following consent form by <u>Friday, October 10, 2008</u> and return the original copy to me in the enclosed sealed envelope. Please keep a copy of the form for your own records.

Thank you again for your willingness to volunteer.

Sincerely,
Cynthia Cozette Lee
Cynthia Cozette Lee – D.O.O.R.S PROJECT DIRECTOR

<u>CONSENT FORM TO PARTICIPATE IN ACTION RESEARCH STUDY</u>

I_____have been fully informed of the study on implementing differentiated instruction into the classroom. I understand its

 (PRINT NAME OF PARTICIPANT)

guidelines, procedures and risks outlined in the above letter, and I have given my permission to participate in this study. I understand at any time I can withdraw from the study and terminate my participation without any penalty

_____ _____ _____

SIGNATURE OF PARTICIPANT   PRINT NAME OF PARTICIPANT   DATE

_____ _____ _____

SIGNATURE OF PROJECT DIRECTOR   PRINT NAME OF DIRECTOR   DATE

Appendix K – Agendas of Workshops

Mini-Workshop: Bridging Differentiated Instruction
Presenter-Cynthia Cozette Lee

October 30, 2008 3:00 PM Room 206

AGENDA

Pre-Workshop Activity

- o   The Emperor's New Clothes

What is Differentiated Instruction?

- o   Pre-assessment
- o   Content
- o   Process
- o   Product
- o   Evaluation

Using Action Research (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006)

- o   **Observe**
- o   **Think**
- o   **Act**
- o   **Reflect**
- o   **Modify**

Understanding D.O.O.R.S. (Handout)

- o   **D**evelop diversity pathways to change your classroom
- o   **O**bserve your student's needs
- o   **O**ne bridge to learning is not enough
- o   **R**e-evaluate and re-examine the curriculum program success
- o   **S**uccess depends on your training and commitment

Workshop 1: Understanding Differentiated Instruction (DI) and D.O.O.R.S.

Presenter – Cynthia Cozette Lee

November 20, 2008 3:00 PM MultiPurpose Room

AGENDA

Pre-Workshop Activity

- Who In The World Is My Favorite Sport Star?

What is Differentiated Instruction?

- Pre-assessment
- Content, Process, & Product
- Evaluation

Using Action Research (McNiff & Whitehead, 2006)

- **Observe**
- **Think**
- **Act**
- **Reflect**
- **Modify**

Understanding D.O.O.R.S. (Handout & Lesson Plan Activity – Choice Boards)

- **D**evelop diversity pathways to change your classroom
- **O**bserve your student's needs
- **O**ne bridge to learning is not enough
- **R**e-evaluate and re-examine the curriculum program success
- **S**uccess depends on your training and commitment

Discussion/Questions

Workshop II: Managing Change in the Classroom
Presenter – Cynthia Cozette Lee

December 18, 2008   3:00 PM   MultiPurpose Room

AGENDA

Pre-Workshop Activity

- **Where In The World Does My Time Go?**

Review

- **Differentiated Instruction (DI)**
    - Pre-assessment, Content, Process, Product, Evaluation
- **D.O.O.R.S.**
    - **Develop diversity pathways to change your classroom**
    - **Observe your student's needs**
    - **One bridge to learning is not enough**
    - **Re-evaluate and re-examine the curriculum program success**
    - **Success depends on your training and commitment**

Managing Change in The Classroom

- Assessing the Student
- Creating an environment for learning
- Using Action Research

Discussion/Questions

Workshop III: Understanding Cultural Proficiency & Differentiated Instruction Through D.O.O.R.S.
Presenter – Cynthia Cozette Lee

January 22, 2009   3:00 PM   MultiPurpose Room

AGENDA

Pre-workshop Activity

- **The Magic Post Card Ride**

Review – Getting Started

- Differentiated Instruction (DI)
  - Pre-assessment, Content, Process, Product, Evaluation.

Understanding Cultural Proficiency

- Valuing and respecting cultures
- Building a Cultural Curriculum
- **D.O.O.R.S. – building sustaining change.**
  - **D**evelop diversity pathways to change your classroom
  - **O**bserve your student's needs
  - **O**ne bridge to learning is not enough
  - **R**e-evaluate and re-examine the curriculum program success
  - **S**uccess depends on your training and commitment

I - Learning Style Quiz Partner Activity

II - Culturally Responsive Group Activity

Discussion/Question

The Role of World Music Instruction in Understanding Cultural Diversity
Presenter – Dr. Cynthia Cozette Lee

June 2, 2009   8:30 - 3:00 PM

AGENDA

PRELUDE - Pre-Workshop Activity

o   The Magic Post Card Ride

Around the World with Music   Understanding Cultural Diversity

o   Why is cultural awareness important?
o   Cultural Proficiency in Music
o   Developing a Cultural Curriculum Program
o   Multisensory Learning (aural, visual, tactile, kinesthetic)
o   Multiculturalism
o   Movement Activity–"Rap of the Presidents", "Billy Jean"

INTERLUDE – 15 MINUTE BREAK

Cooperative Learning Activities

o   Where in the World is My Instrument?
o   Name That Cancion
o   Movement Activity-"Rhythm Nation"-SHARING

LUNCH – 1 HOUR BREAK

PRELUDE - Pre-Workshop Activity

o   The Emperor's New Clothes

Why Use Differentiated Instruction?

o   pre-assessment, content, process, product, evaluation
o   Managing change in your classroom
o   Linking Traditional to Non-Traditional Music
o   Activity – What's Up Major, Minor or Modal?
o   **Discussion/Evaluation/Questionnaire**

Appendix L – Observation and Interview Times

Participant	Activity	Date	Total Hours/Minutes
Pam	Interviews	10-21-08	30 minutes
		2-11-09	<u>45 minutes</u>
			75 minutes
		Subtotal	1 hour 15 minutes
Dina	Interviews	0	0 minutes
		2-9-09	<u>30 minutes</u>
			30 minutes
		Subtotal	30 minutes
Tim	Interviews	10-28-08	45 minutes
		2-6-09	<u>60 minutes</u>
			105 minutes
		Subtotal	1 hour 45 minutes
		Total Interviews	**3 hours 30 minutes**
Pam	Observations	10-16-08	30 minutes
		11-20-08	45 minutes
		12-18-08	45 minutes
		1-22-09	60 minutes
		Subtotal	180 minutes = 3 hours
Tim	Observations	10-23-08	30 minutes
		11-20-09	60 minutes
		12-18-09	30 minutes
		12-18-08	60 minutes
		1-22-10	60 minutes
		Subtotal	180 minutes = 3 hours
Dina	Observations	10-17-08	30 minutes
		11-20-10	30 minutes
		12-18-10	45 minutes
		1-22-11	45 minutes
		Subtotal	150 minutes = 2 hours 30 minutes
		Total Observations	**8 hours 30 minutes**

Appendix M – Discussion Group Times

Participant	Scheduled Activity	Date	Total Hours/Minutes
Pam	Discussion Group 1	10-7-08	40 minutes
Tim	Discussion Group 1	10-7-08	40 minutes
Dina	Discussion Group 1	10-7-08	40 minutes
Pam	Discussion Group 2	10-14-08	50 minutes
Tim	Discussion Group 2	10-14-08	50 minutes
Dina	Discussion Group 2	10-14-08	0 minutes
Pam	Discussion Group 3	10-24-08	60 minutes
Tim	Discussion Group 3	10-24-08	60 minutes
Dina	Discussion Group 3	10-24-08	0 minutes
Pam	Discussion Group 4	10-28-08	40 minutes
Tim	Discussion Group 4	10-28-08	40 minutes
Dina	Discussion Group 4	10-28-08	0 minutes
Pam	Discussion Group 5	1-13-09	65 minutes
Tim	Discussion Group 5	1-13-09	65 minutes
Dina	Discussion Group 5	1-13-09	65 minutes

Subtotal Scheduled Discussion Groups   **4 hours 15 minutes**

Participant	Unscheduled Activity	Date	Total Hours/Minutes
Pam	Discussions	10-7-08 – 2-13-09	120 minutes
Tim	Discussions	10-7-08 – 2-13-09	120 minutes
Dina	Discussions	10-7-08 – 2-13-09	40 minutes

Total Discussion Groups   **8 hours 56 minutes**

Appendix N – Workshop Times

Participant	Activity	Date	Total Hours/Minutes

Bridging Differentiated Instruction – Offered for 3 Participants Only

Pam	Mini-workshop	10-30-08	45 minutes
Tim	Mini-workshop	10-30-08	45 minutes
Dina	Mini-workshop	10-30-09	0 minutes

Understanding Differentiated Instruction and D.O.O.R.S. – Offered for Entire Certified and Non-Certified Staff

Pam	Workshop 1	11-20-08	45 minutes
Tim	Workshop 1	11-20-08	45 minutes
Dina	Workshop 1	11-20-09	0 minutes

Managing Change in the Classroom – Offered for Entire Certified and Non-certified Staff

Pam	Workshop 2	12-18-08	45 minutes
Tim	Workshop 2	12-18-08	45 minutes
Dina	Workshop 2	12-18-09	0 minutes

Understanding Differentiated Instruction through Cultural Proficiency and D.O.O.R.S. – Offered for Entire Certified and Non-certified Staff

Pam	Workshop 3	1-22-08	45 minutes
Tim	Workshop 3	1-22-08	45 minutes
Dina	Workshop 3	1-22-09	0 minutes

Pam Total Workshop Hours	**3 hours**
Tim Total Workshop Hours	**3 hours**
Dina Total Workshop Hours	**0 hours**
Entire Staff Total Workshop Hours	**2 hours 15 minutes**

Appendix O – Lee (2008) Interest Inventory

Interest Inventory

NAME_____ SECTION____ DATE_____

PART I. Directions: Please take this interest inventory so that I can learn as your teacher what your interests are in my class. Please place an X or a circle around the happy face, if you like the subject or activity. If you are not interested in the subject or activity, please place an X or a circle around the sad face.

1. Dance

2. Drama/play acting

3. Reading

4. Spelling

5. Writing Poems/Stories

6. Writing Make Believe Stories

7. Orally Making Up Stories

8. Computers

9. Television/DVD

10. Mathematics

11. Music

12. Sports

PART II. Please circle your FAVORITE subjects. Be prepared to tell me what makes them your favorite.

MUSIC

MATH

READING

WRITING

COMPUTERS

ART

GYM/SPORTS

SCIENCE

HISTORY

GEOGRAPHY
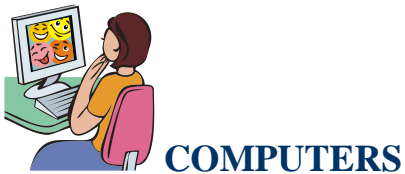
Appendix P – Photo Gallery of Classrooms and Bulletin Boards at Bear School

BEAR SCHOOL – 2004 – 2005 SCHOOL YEAR

Photographs by Cynthia Cozette Lee

   I was satisfied as an administrative intern highlighting community & parent involvement 3 years past. I decided to return to my former worksite for my D.O.O.R.S. research.

1. C. Lee overseeing parent computer workshop   2. C. Lee directing Open House in
computer lab.   Back to School Night Activities

BEAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL 2008 – 2009 SCHOOL YEAR– CYCLE TWO

1. Observations - Pam's hallway bulletin boards differentiated colors & cultural themes.
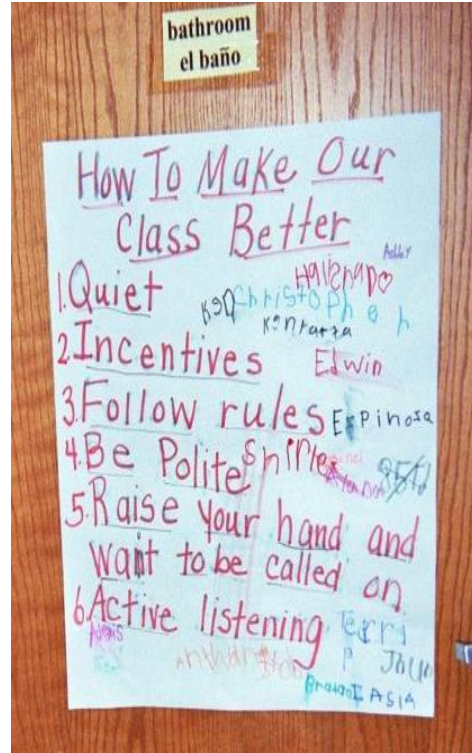
PAM'S KINDERGARTEN DIFFERENTIATED CLASSROOM – CYCLE FOUR

1. Pam's Choice Board/Word Wall
-students' differentiated activities.

2. Pam's students created rules

3. Pam's Student Listening Activity Center

TIM'S 1st GRADE DIFFERENTIATED CLASSROOM – CYCLE FOUR

1. Tim differentiated rocks choice in Science Lesson.

2. Tim differentiated geometric shape choice in Mathematics Lesson

DINA'S 2nd GRADE DIFFERENTIATED CLASSROOM – CYCLE FOUR

1. Dina's Class - Learning Center Reading Station - students make activity choices.

2. Dina's Class – student's seated in small groups of four.

BEAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL CULTURALLY DIVERSE BULLETIN BOARDS

1. Bulletin Boards seasonally reflect different cultures – Black History Month.

2. Three dimensional bulletin board – Celebrating Asian New Year

BEAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SYMBOLIC HALLMARKS

1. Colorful display cases in the hallways reflect cultural diversity.

BEAR ELEMENTARY SCHOOL SYMBOLIC HALLMARKS

3. Pink shinning tile floors can be seen under Suggestion Boxes for staff with colorful mosaic in background.

Appendix Q – Lee NJEA Article – Build A Biased-Free Classroom

DROP barriers to high self-esteem

Build a bias-free classroom

We can overcome built-in stereotypes & prejudices in our schools & help free our students' minds in the process. Here's one teacher's approach.

by Cynthia Cozette Lee

Whether your school has students of European, Asian, Hispanic, African, or Native American descent, your classroom is most likely a place that reflects these many diverse cultures and traditions. Even so, most American educational programs and curricula do not cater to cultural groups which fall in the minority.

Many of us are trying to adapt our classroom curricula. We can't do that unless we examine not only the cultural biases inherent in our educational system, but those in our teaching strategies, approaches, and techniques as well. As educators, we must learn how to drop these biases and establish an environment free of cultural prejudices in which to teach our students.

Here are four basic steps you can use to "DROP" those barriers to bias-free schools and programs:

Drop all of your prejudices at the front door of the school building.

No matter where you grew up in the world, you most likely have been exposed to bias based on race, ethnic group, or other background.

Even if you are fortunate enough to have grown up in a home without prejudice, your exposure to a culturally biased outlook through advertisements and other media has affected your perceptions of races or ethnic groups consciously or subconsciously and most likely negatively.

Some psychologists estimate that the average American views almost 10,000 images of varying forms of advertisements each day.

As a caring educator, ask yourself the questions detailed in the remaining steps.

All students, especially students of color, must continuously see themselves reflected in positive images.
(PHOTO BY JEFFREY HIGH)

R ealize the impact of your environment.

Are the visual aids and materials in your classroom culturally biased?

Your environment and the materials you use have an impact on your teaching and on learning. Preview all literature and materials your students use to see if they are free of bias and reflect our multicultural society. If a book lacks pictures or positive stories of people of color or different backgrounds, then bring in pictures, stories, articles, and photographs that do. Display these articles and pictures throughout the entire school year, not just during Black History Month or Hispanic Heritage Month.

Critically, all students—especially students of color— must continuously see themselves reflected in positive images. The images they see daily in ads and other media do not usually give them that positive sense. We, as educators, must bridge that gap.

To reinforce students' positive feelings of self-worth, consider bringing in ethnically diverse community leaders, business leaders, or other role models to speak or work with your classes. As students' sense of self-worth increases, so will their motivation to achieve higher academically, making them better able to compete in a culturally biased system.

O pen-minded teaching works.

In your classroom do you try to mix your student population in group activities? Do you call upon or only choose certain students to give answers or to do special activities? Are you always pointing out the faults and not the good points in certain students'

classroom behavior and performance?

As educators, I realize we sometimes feel like we are in a war trying to get the resources we need, and we get battle fatigue from trying to teach students who are distracted by life's crises or demand all our attention. Even I sometimes have to check myself about criticizing students too often, instead of giving them more praise when they perform well.

Be careful not to fall into a rut. Patience is the key to fairness in teaching. Try to keep an open mind in all activities and not be too critical of yourself or your students when they do not achieve the goals you have in mind. The important thing is that you try to be open minded and fair in your teaching strategies.

Nobody is perfect. We all make mistakes. A good teacher learns along with the student various ways of making education a more meaningful and fun experience.

Plan culturally diverse lessons and involve parents.

Are your teaching strategies culturally biased?

Even if they aren't, the educational system we work in often is. Multiple choice achievements tests, while supposedly free from cultural bias, often aren't. They assume children have had certain types of experiences and are familiar with certain terms.

It does not take into account that perhaps a student scored low on an achievement test because he or she didn't have breakfast that morning. It doesn't take into account if no one was home to attend to the children's needs because Dad is in jail, and Mom had to go to court today. It doesn't take into account that the student couldn't complete a homework assignment because Dad was shot on the corner by a stray bullet last night and the entire family spent the night in the hospital emergency room.

Our educational system is often blind to the social and emotional strains that so many of our students face.

That doesn't mean that we should lower standards or set lower expectations for our students. It simply

means that we can't concentrate on children's academic needs without addressing their physical, emotional and social development needs and giving them the support they require. We must insist they meet high standards, but we must be flexible and sensitive to their situations and adjust accordingly.

That may mean arranging for before-school or after-school tutoring, creating a safe environment for them to do their homework in school, or hooking them up with a social worker or school nurse. It may mean involving parents in the learning process or taking the time to send parents a brief note about

Review your classroom environment and materials for cultural bias.

their child's academic or personal success—no matter how small. It may mean simply letting students know they can discuss their problems with you, being flexible, and getting them to take responsibility for their learning.

If the school system you are working in still uses achievement tests, letter grade systems, and standardized evaluation practices, then you are working in a culturally biased educational structure.

Consider including oral exams, as well as written ones, in your classroom. Try to incorporate portfolios in your student evaluation process. Talk to the principal or superintendent about pass/fail grades or a different grading system which works better to reflect students' achievements. Before giving a test, teach the child how to study, as well as how to take a test.

Consider team teaching to bring other perspectives to the classroom and gain feedback on how well you are succeeding in creating an environment and program that is free of cultural bias.

Most important, involve parents in your classroom activities and reach out to parents in various forums. Attend PTA meetings. Go to district Board of Education meetings. Work with your association to implement a family involvement program.

Keep in constant communication with parents. Inform them of your expectations and the obligations of everyone involved in the child's training and education throughout the year. Tell parents positive things about their children, as well as areas in which the children need to work or in which they require added help or attention.

Be consistent, fair, and honest. Most parents respond positively by supporting a teacher who is trying to teach the best way for their child.

The D.R.O.P. method of teaching should help eliminate fights, arguments, and negative discourse among your students. Students look to their teachers and other school staff as role models. If they see you acting fairly, they will be fair. If they see you being honest, they will try to emulate that behavior.

W.E.B. Dubois once voiced the belief that it is never too late for a child to learn. It's not too late for us, either. We can achieve a healthy, productive educational environment for all our students—one in which each individual's culture and ethnicity is valued and cherished.

Dr. Cynthia Cozette Lee
P.O. Box 2074 Philadelphia, PA 19103
July 6, 2009

Editor
NJEA Review
180 West State Street
Trenton, NJ 08607-1211
RE: **PERMISSION NEEDED TO PUBLISH ARTICLE**
Dear Editor:

I am completing a doctoral dissertation at Rowan University entitled *D.O.O.R.S. of Change. Capacity Building to Differentiated Instruction.* I would like your permission to reprint in my dissertation appendix section a copy of the complete 3 page article I wrote *Build a Bias-Free Classroom: The DROP Method,* that you published in your November, 2000 NJEA Review, pages 14 through 17. The excerpts to be reproduced would include my three page article and the 2 photographs by Jeffrey High in a black and white format that I would reproduce on a scanner to be attached to my electronic version of my dissertation. I also would need permission to Xerox 3 copies of this same article to be attached as hard copies to my dissertation in black and white paper format to be given to Rowan University.

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Sincerely,

Cynthia Cozette Lee, Ed. D.

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