

## PART II

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# MAKING SENSE OF BELIEFS AND VALUES THROUGH RESEARCH: CULTURE, DEVELOPMENT, ENVIRONMENT, GENDER, POLITICS, AND RELIGION



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5

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## IN SEARCH OF BEST PRACTICES FOR MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION: EMPIRICAL EVIDENCE FROM THE FORUM BEVI PROJECT

*If we are to achieve a richer culture, rich in contrasting values, we must recognize the whole gamut of human potentialities, and so weave a less arbitrary social fabric, one in which each diverse human gift will find a fitting place.*

—Margaret Mead

As of 2010, 308.7 million people resided in the United States (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Of these, 72% of the total population reported their race as White, 13% reported Black or African American, 5% reported Asian, 0.9% reported American Indian or Alaskan Native, and 0.2% reported Native Hawaiian or Other Pacific Islander. In addition, 3% of the total population responded by indicating more than one race, and 6% reported “Some Other Race,” which includes “multiracial, mixed, interracial, or a Hispanic or Latino group” (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011, p. 3). More than half of the growth in the total population was attributed to an increase in individuals from Hispanic origin (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Moreover, current projections indicate that non-White residents will become the majority of the population by 2042 (U.S. Census Bureau, 2008). Such trajectories are illustrated by the fact that in 2009, 43% of students in elementary through high school belonged to a minority population (U.S. Department of Commerce, 2011).

Despite such dramatic demographic shifts, kindergarten through twelfth grade (K-12) teachers remain remarkably homogeneous. For example, according to a survey of public school teachers in the United States conducted by the National Center for Education Information (NCEI), 84% of K-12 teachers are Caucasian; of these individuals, 85% are female. Out of all individuals surveyed, 22% are under the age of 30 (Feistritz, 2011). As Gay (2010) observes, “Teacher education continues to be dominated by European American students and instructors, but the children to be taught in public schools are radically different in both aspiration and actuality” (p. 143). An examination of postsecondary school enrollment reveals that from 1976

to 2009, the percentage of minority students enrolled in U.S. colleges and universities increased significantly from 3% to 12% for Hispanic students, 9% to 14% for Black students, and 2% to 7% for Asian/Pacific Islander students. At the same time, the percentage of White students enrolled in postsecondary education decreased from 83% to 62% (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). In addition, from 2009 to 2010 approximately 60% of graduate degrees were awarded to international students residing in the United States. Although China, India, South Korea, Taiwan, and Canada are the top five countries of origin for international graduate students in the United States, China, India, and South Korea account for half of all non-U.S. citizens attending American graduate schools (Council of Graduate Schools, 2012). In terms of college and university faculty as of 2009, 7% of total faculty surveyed identified themselves as Black, 6% as Asian/Pacific Islander, 4% Hispanic, 1% American Indian/Alaskan Native, and 79% as White (National Center for Education Statistics, 2011). Consistent with these data, the postsecondary education student body continues to diversify while the faculty demographics remain predominately the same. Engberg (2004) argues that "the history of intergroup relations on college and university campuses is deeply embedded in the changing demographic composition of the postsecondary student body" (p. 473). As such, White (2004) contends that "the classroom must become a meeting ground of cultures, where the worldviews of students meet those of their teachers and the institutions in which they teach" (p. 113).

Such data provide a compelling portrait of rapidly expanding diversity within U.S. society. More to the point, from an educational perspective, student demographics are not congruent with the characteristics of those who are charged with educating them, at least in terms of ethnic background. Extant research has demonstrated that demographic matches between students and teachers could affect educational outcomes such as academic achievement (Steele & Aronson, 1995) and teachers' perceptions of their students (Dee, 2005). Based on the National Education Longitudinal Study of 1988, Dee found that both White and minority (i.e., Black and Hispanic) students are more likely to be perceived as disruptive by a teacher who does not share the student's racial traits. At a larger level, emerging trends offer a window into a future that will look and sound far more diverse than anything we ever have experienced as a nation (U.S. Census Bureau, 2011). Thus, as the composition of the United States continues to become more diverse, a corresponding need exists to facilitate understanding and positive relations among individuals from different backgrounds. The promotion of positive intergroup relations is important because increased diversity means we must work across as well as within our own social group, which not only increases our interdependence, but may be associated with inevitable cross-group tension (Lopez & Sabudeco, 2007). Indeed, the reduction and resolution of intergroup conflict is a crucial undertaking that has received substantial attention in research and practice.

A recent report from the Higher Education Research Institute at the University of California at Los Angeles found that minority students attending school at a low diversity campus face more stereotyping, harassment, and other forms of discrimination when compared to majority students (Hurtado & Ruiz, 2012). Although there are many reasons for such prejudicial processes and tensions (e.g., relative access to economic and political resources, social categorization and stereotyping, ethnocentrism and prejudice, systematic privilege and inequality), one substantive source of conflict derives from different worldviews, which influence the ways in which humans from diverse racial groups understand and relate to

each other. If by worldview, we mean “the gestalt of internalized beliefs, values, and schemattitudes through which self, others, and the larger world are experienced and explained” (Shealy, 2016, p. 47), then one’s worldview may include preconceived notions regarding individuals of other cultural backgrounds, including prejudices and stereotypes (Aronson, 2012). Many disciplines, including psychology, sociology, and education have attempted to understand why prejudice and stereotyping occur, identifying factors such as social categorization, parental influence, interaction with peers, media influence, heritability of attitudes, individual differences in authoritarianism or social dominance orientation, previous personal experiences, and extant contingencies, which may sanction individuals and groups differently depending upon personal characteristics such as ethnicity (Brown, 2010; Stangor, 2009). Likewise, multiple interventions have attempted to promote positive intercultural relations such as multicultural education in schools, intergroup contact/dialogue (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006), and transformative learning experiences (Gorski, 2006).

The following literature reviews the values-based nature of “multicultural education,” as well as its underlying goals and methodologies. Factors that appear to influence the effectiveness of such educational interventions (e.g., instructor characteristics, instructional methodology, multicultural curricula) as well as behaviors and attributes of individuals who conduct them (e.g., current beliefs and values, experiences that mediate worldview) are considered. To examine the potential perils of attempting to teach tolerance, literature related to student resistance strategies and theories of cultural identity change also are discussed. Then, findings are presented from a multiyear, multi-institution initiative—the Forum BEVI Project—which examine the processes and outcomes of international, multicultural, and transformative learning (e.g., see Chapter 4 and [www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects](http://www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects)). Implications of this project are juxtaposed with questions for consideration that are at the heart of the rationale for developing and implementing such programs and courses. Such questions include: How is the formation of worldviews affected by Formative Variables (e.g., demographic characteristics; life history)? What is the etiological basis of human belief systems? If and when our capacity to reflect upon our own worldview is exceeded by the experiential demands placed upon us, what are the consequences in terms of learning? The theoretical framework for answering these questions will be grounded in the Equil-integration (EI) model, which seeks to explain “. . . the processes by which beliefs, values, and worldviews are acquired and maintained, why their alteration is typically resisted, and how and under what circumstances their modification occurs” as well as the Beliefs, Events, and Values Inventory (BEVI) method, which is “designed to identify and predict a variety of developmental, affective, and attributional processes and outcomes that are integral to EI Theory” (Shealy, 2004, p. 1075) (see also [www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects](http://www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects)).

## THE ORIGINS AND PRINCIPLES OF MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION

Multicultural education has been described as “. . . an idea or concept, an educational reform movement, and a process” as well as a method of improving intercultural awareness and a central component in the reduction of prejudice and racism among diverse groups (Banks, 2005, p. 3; see also Bennett, 2003). Sleeter and Grant (1987) further describe multicultural education as a reform movement aimed at modifying

both the content of education and the processes by which it occurs. In terms of goals, Banks (1993) contends multicultural education should:

... help students to understand how knowledge is constructed. Students should be given opportunities to investigate and determine how cultural assumptions, frames of references, perspectives, and the biases within a discipline influence the ways the knowledge is constructed. Students should also be given opportunities to create knowledge themselves and identify ways in which the knowledge they construct is influenced and limited by their personal assumptions, positions, and experiences. (p. 11)

In the United States, multicultural education likely has its clearest origins in response to the Civil Rights Movement, which eventually developed into the Black Power movement, and later evolved to encompass the needs and agendas of many other minority groups, such as women (Bennett, 2001). At the same time, although the 1954 *Brown v. Board of Education* decision by the U.S. Supreme Court marked the official end of segregation in schools, children and youth from minority backgrounds continued to be denied equal access to education for reasons that seemed often arbitrary at best, if not wantonly prejudicial. As Bennett further documents, the K-12 curricula reflected these biases in its codification of an Anglo-European American worldview across the entire spectrum of academic content.

Multicultural education had its genesis in response to such historical and socio-cultural factors, culminating by the 1970s into a burgeoning set of core values and principles. Even so, many scholars contend that a unifying definition of what multicultural education is, and should be, is lacking (Bennett, 2001). As such, Gorski (2006) examined conceptualizations offered by leading multicultural education pioneers such as Nieto (2000), Sleeter (1996), Grant and Sleeter (1998), and Banks (2004) in order to identify principles that define the field. His analysis yielded the following five overarching commonalities (p. 165):

1. Multicultural education is a political movement and process that attempts to secure social justice for historically and presently underserved students.
2. Multicultural education recognizes that, while some individual classroom practices are consistent with multicultural education philosophies, social justice is an institutional matter and as such, can be secured only through comprehensive school reform.
3. Multicultural education insists that comprehensive school reform can be achieved only through critical analysis of systems of power and privilege.
4. The underlying goal of multicultural education—the purpose of this critical analysis—is the elimination of educational inequities.
5. Multicultural education is good education for all students.

Historically and currently, despite its good intentions, research suggests that actual multicultural education practice tends to fail in its realization of these principles at multiple levels (Gorski, 2006). For example, using qualitative content analysis, Gorski (2009) evaluated 45 syllabi from multicultural teacher education courses taught within the United States. His focus was on the ways in which multicultural education is outlined in course descriptions, goals, and objectives. Findings suggest that although the majority of the courses included in his analysis were intended to prepare teachers with “cultural sensitivity, tolerance, and multicultural competence”

(p. 316), only 26.7% were designed in a way that was consistent with the defining principles of multicultural education.

In other words, most of the syllabi failed to frame multicultural education as a political movement concerned with social justice, as an approach for comprehensive reform, as a critical analysis of power and privilege, or as a process for eliminating educational inequities. (p. 316)

Along similar lines, Banks (1996) proposed that five types of knowledge should be taught in multicultural curriculum: personal/cultural, popular, mainstream academic, transformative academic, and school knowledge. Specifically, personal or cultural knowledge refers to the influence of personal experiences across diverse environments that contribute to the types of interpretations and explanations that students hold. Popular knowledge consists of concepts, interpretations, and beliefs that are depicted by and through the mass media, including movies and television. Mainstream academic knowledge refers to the traditional “Western-oriented canon” (p. 14), such as that seen in the social and behavioral sciences. Transformative academic knowledge has to do with challenging current paradigms and mainstream academic knowledge in such a way that current theories and explanations are able to be reviewed and revised. Last, school knowledge encompasses facts that are present in student texts, instructor lectures, and other media forms (Banks, 1996).

## Multicultural Education in Learning Institutions

Bennett (2001) contends that curricular reform activities are highly salient to the goals of multicultural education since such efforts have resulted in an emphasis on contributions made by ethnic minorities and women, which further have led to scholarly revisions (e.g., of world and U.S. histories). Such research likely has its most significant impact upon university-level curricula, subsequently resulting in novel courses, academic departments, and programs. Many higher education institutions actually have implemented formal diversity experiences into their curricula (e.g., courses addressing issues of diversity). Based upon the most recent identified survey of diversity requirements in higher education published by the Association of American Colleges and Universities (2000), 62% of colleges and universities either currently have a diversity requirement or were in the process of developing one (54% had a diversity requirement in place, and 8% were in the process of developing one at the time they were surveyed). According to this same survey, however, of those institutions that have a requirement in place, 12% exempt certain students from the requirement (for unarticulated reasons), and 44% allow students to fulfill the requirement without having to address issues of diversity within the United States (e.g., through courses that address diversity outside the United States or non-Western culture courses).

From the standpoint of specific disciplinary emphases, a number of professional organizations have promulgated diversity requirements at the level of curricula or programs. As only one example, Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako (2008) evaluated the National Association of Schools of Public Affairs and Administration (NASPAA) standards—*Diversity Across the Curriculum*—which now require master’s degree programs in public affairs, policy, and administration to include a diversity focus in their program activities and curricula. The researchers were interested both

in determining the extent to which diversity training is included in these programs, as well as the perception of the standard itself according to program administrators. Results suggest that although administrators who responded to the researchers' survey felt that it was important for graduate programs to promote diversity awareness, the majority of training opportunities were limited to courses that assimilated diversity issues into existing courses. In addition, 68% of those surveyed indicated that they did not intend to increase the number of stand-alone diversity courses offered in the program. In examining administrator perceptions, two themes emerged: lack of clarity in terms of how such standards should be implemented as well as the need for flexibility in terms of standard implementation. The research of Wyatt-Nichol and Antwi-Boasiako succinctly demonstrates the divide between diversity education theory and practice (e.g., although administrators felt that diversity education was important, few seemed inclined or able to create novel opportunities).

### **Self Awareness and Multicultural Education**

Despite limitations at the level of implementation, multicultural educators often emphasize the crucial role that educational institutions across the spectrum play in bolstering—or hindering—*intra-* and *intergroup* awareness in students (Banks, 2005). As Camicia (2007) observes, schools “have the potential to be effective agents of social change” (p. 225) by providing students with the necessary tools to deconstruct prejudice through comprehensive examination of conventional narratives across subject areas. Given the increased focus on multicultural education, related questions arise regarding the nature of training in the development and dissemination of such curricular material. For example, how do we prepare teaching faculty—from K-12 through higher education—to teach multicultural educational materials in a way that is appropriate? What practices currently are recommended and how do we know they are effective? What is the role of the multicultural educator in facilitating the overall goals of multicultural education? As Feistritz (2011) contends, “Who teachers are, where they are coming from and what they think are of great interest to every segment of society” (p. viii), particularly within the diverse and value-laden field of multicultural education. Along these lines, Sfeir-Younis (1993) describes three basic principles that apply to all multicultural education: (a) an individual's race, gender, ethnicity, and cultural background influence his or her worldviews, as well as the experience he or she has in the classroom and understanding of course content; (b) power dynamics in the classroom influence student participation, their ability to trust and feel safe in the classroom environment, and the interactions in which they engage; and (c) the educational experience should be approached in such a way that all students in the classroom are able to benefit through the recognition and validation of diverse student experiences.

Adherence to such principles requires specific skills in order to address the needs of all students in an individualized but equitable manner while validating the relevance of diverse cultures and worldviews (Bennett, 2003). However, other scholars suggest that training in cultural competency typically is limited to courses that incorporate diversity issues into existing courses or stand-alone diversity courses (Wyatt-Nichol & Antwi-Boasiako, 2008). Brown (2004a, 2004b) argues that in limiting student experience to stand-alone diversity courses, preexisting stereotypical perceptions by students of self and other may inadvertently be reinforced. If and when they occur, such antithetical outcomes could be due to many different factors. For



example, Brown (2004a, 2004b) points to student resentment of, or resistance to, multicultural education resulting from insufficient preclass preparation, reluctance to engage in course-related activities and discussion, and a lack of overall commitment to cross-cultural engagement. Along these lines, Mildred and Zuniga (2004) found that student resistance is demonstrated via a lack of awareness of the relevancy of diversity issues, lack of acknowledgment in terms of the need to self-reflect, and minimizing or undermining classroom activities—consciously or unconsciously—that are designed to address these issues. In addition, Brown (2004b) contends that:

. . . student resistance is further exacerbated by the lack of opportunity to: build and sustain a class community, facilitate postclass peer interaction and support, augment student/expert dialogues, develop interdisciplinary connections, and monitor preclass preparation and comprehension. Finally, the race, ethnicity, and/or gender of an instructor, may also influence resistance. (p. 537)

On the potential consequences of student resistance, Whitehead and Wittig (2005) note that “. . . if students reject the messages of an intervention, fail to recognize its value and actively participate in it, then it is unlikely that the intervention will achieve its desired results” (p. 4).

Not surprisingly then, one best practice for teaching multicultural content is for educators to engage in a systematic evaluation of their own backgrounds and histories, understanding how such processes may have influenced their own personal beliefs and values as well as their subsequent experience of and interactions with individuals from other cultures (Shealy, 2004). Such self-examination may not only facilitate the effective sharing of multicultural content, but also enhance the receptivity of those who are exposed to such material. As Banks (1994) contends:

Because the teacher mediates the messages and symbols communicated to the students through the curriculum, it is important for teachers to understand their own personal and cultural values and identities in order for them to help students from diverse racial, ethnic, and cultural groups to develop clarified identities and relate positively to each other. (p. 250)

Likewise, Gay (2010) also recommends a focus on increasing self awareness, to include apprehending one’s own beliefs and values, since such factors may significantly impact how content is developed and conveyed. In addition to self-appraisal, it is also important for multicultural educators to acquire specific knowledge about why multicultural education is necessary in the first place. As Bennett (2003) notes,

Teaching aimed at reducing prejudice and discrimination can be difficult as well as rewarding. It requires an understanding of the prevalence and nature of prejudice, as well as clarity about key concepts such as prejudice, stereotype, discrimination, racism, and sense of racial or ethnic identity. (pp. 73–74)

Therefore, multicultural educators would be well-advised to engage in regular evaluations of self as well as teacher–student dynamics in the classroom, and evaluate how these processes may be impacting the effectiveness of their educational interventions.

## Theories of Cultural Identity Change

Consistent with the preceding prescriptions and proscriptions, it may be helpful to highlight leading theoretical propositions regarding the nature of change vis-à-vis multicultural education. Here, we focus on three such models in order to illustrate the types of perspectives that are relevant to an understanding of *why* change may, or may not, occur (see McAllister & Irvine, 2000). First, Helms's (1990) model of White racial identity development consists of six stages, and focuses upon relations and interactions between Black and White individuals. White individuals enter the first stage, *contact*, when they encounter "the idea or the actuality of Black people" (p. 55). During this stage, White individuals either are curious or fearful of Blacks depending upon their familial environment and an "inconsistent awareness of being White" (p. 55). Behaviors characteristic of this stage include limited interactions with Black individuals; when they do occur, such encounters are marked by cognitive comparisons of such individuals to racial stereotypes. The second stage, *disintegration*, typically is marked by feelings of anxiety as White individuals become consciously aware of their ethnicity and its associated privilege, with concomitant feelings of dissonance resulting from "moral dilemmas associated with being White" (p. 58). During the third stage, *reintegration*, individuals acknowledge their White identity and retreat back into White culture through avoidance or overt discrimination, while also experiencing reactive anxiety and anger perpetuated by feelings of White superiority and Black inferiority. During the *pseudo-independence* stage, White individuals begin to redefine their Caucasian identity in more positive ways. Here, Whites start to question the idea that Blacks are inherently inferior, and acknowledge their role in a racist society. This "racist identity" causes discomfort, propelling the individual to self-reflect on his or her feelings related to racial identity that emerged in the previous stages. As a result, the individual may seek increased interaction with Blacks; yet, this interaction tends to focus on trying to modify Black behavior so it is more consistent with "White criteria for success and acceptability" (p. 61). During the fifth stage, *immersion/emersion*, Whites seek out more accurate information regarding their roles and responsibilities in a racist society, shifting from a paternalistic stance vis-à-vis Blacks to greater advocacy efforts with other Whites in an effort to promote change. In the final stage, *autonomy*, Whites pursue opportunities to learn from other cultural groups, internalizing a clearer sense of their own racial identity and that of others (Helms, 1990).

Banks's (1994) Typology of Ethnic Identity also consists of six stages beginning with *ethnic psychological captivity*, wherein individuals internalize "negative ideologies and beliefs" about their own ethnic group, resulting in "ethnic self-rejection and low self-esteem" (p. 224). During this stage, the individual feels shame relative to his or her ethnic group, which may lead to avoiding individuals of other ethnic groups or significant attempts to become "highly culturally assimilated" (p. 224). In the second stage, *ethnic encapsulation*, a split emerges in the experience of dominant and marginalized cultural groups, such that groups that are marginalized may become relatively "insular" whereas dominant groups develop "mythical" feelings of superiority. During the *ethnic identity clarification* stage, all groups regardless of ethnicity begin to experience a more objective view of positive and negative attributes relative to their own group affiliation. During stage four, *biethnicity*, individuals are motivated to function in two cultures and acquire the necessary skills in order to do so.

We can describe such an individual as biethnic. . . many African Americans, in order to attain social and economic mobility, learn to function effectively in Anglo-American culture during the formal working day. The private lives of these individuals, however, may be highly African American and monocultural. (p. 226)

In the *multiethnicity and reflective nationalism* stage, individuals who have developed cross cultural competencies deepen their understanding of other cultures, moving beyond an awareness of obvious aspects (holidays, food) to deeper considerations such as the values and practices of another culture. Finally, individuals enter the *globalism and global-competency* stage, in which they learn to balance their global, national, and ethnic identities (Banks, 1994).

As a final example, Bennett (1986) argues that to be effective in teaching intercultural communication, the subjective experience of the trainee must be considered. More specifically,

Since intercultural sensitivity is not ‘natural’ to any single culture, the development of this ability demands new awareness and attitudes. As trainers, we need to know how the attitude of intercultural sensitivity develops so we can facilitate precise movement in that direction (p. 180).

Understanding where individuals may fall along a continuum of cultural sensitivity can assist educators in selecting appropriate methods and sequencing certain programmatic elements based on how students might respond to such material. Bennett’s Developmental Model of Intercultural Sensitivity (1986) is offered as a model to assist in this process, which begins with a period of *denial* by members of the majority group. Here, individuals are not aware that worldviews exist that are different from their own as a result of isolation from such cultural differences. During the second stage, *defense*, recognition of differences occurs, with accompanying efforts directed to preservation of one’s own views through denigration of other cultures and/or the attribution of superiority to one’s own. In the third stage, *minimization*, cultural differences are acknowledged yet minimized, overshadowed by perceived cultural similarities. Individuals in this stage minimize cultural differences through a belief in certain universal principles that are thought to underlie all of human behavior. The fourth stage, *acceptance*, is characterized by the recognition that individuals of diverse cultures have different worldviews and ways of behaving. Here, difference is no longer seen as a “thing” but rather as a “process” (p. 185). During the fifth stage, *adaptation*, behavioral and psychological changes occur in the way that one’s own reality is processed, in one’s conduct toward different cultures, and in the capacity to take the perspective of a culture that is different from one’s own. The final stage, *integration*, is characterized by contextual evaluation, or the ability to evaluate phenomena from another perspective or within different cultural contexts, and constructive marginality, in which people are able to stand apart from all cultural perspectives, including their own, while also engaging in an ongoing process of self-examination vis-à-vis culture (Bennett, 1986; McAllister & Irvine, 2000; see also Hammer, 2012).

## Examining the Effectiveness of Multicultural Education

Informed by such theoretical frameworks regarding how multicultural identity evolves, it is worth asking if multicultural education actually accomplishes that which it intends. Despite calls to evaluate the effectiveness of multicultural education

and better prepare multicultural educators, institutions often resist the evaluation of whether their programs are effective as well as the attendant modification to extant curricula (Brown, 2006; Bennett, 2003). Exceptions do occur, however, and we highlight a few exemplars here.

For example, Brown (2006) examined the relative impact of transformative learning strategies on the beliefs and attitudes of preservice teachers regarding issues of diversity and multiculturalism. Participants included 40 educational administration graduate students in a Southeastern university, who were enrolled full time in a 2-year master's program in school administration. The study was designed to evaluate student responsiveness to a diversity curriculum spanning 2 years. During the first year of study, students were required to enroll in a social context course titled *The Social Context of Leadership*. As Brown describes,

Social context provides a retrospective, contemporary, and prospective evaluation of the social, cultural, political, economical, and philosophical contexts from which the current issues that affect school and schooling have evolved. During this foundations course, students are asked to investigate the trends in educational studies, as well as the social and academic goals of education. (p. 714)

During the second year of study, students engaged in an internship at various school sites, which included a seminar with reflective practices related to the challenges that faced them as educational leaders. Throughout both experiences, students completed weekly reflective analysis journals.

Brown (2006) describes such curricular content as falling under the rubric of transformative learning in that it "can lead to a transformation of one's personal agency as well as deepen one's sense of social responsibility toward and with others" (p. 706). Grounded in adult learning theory, transformative learning theory, and critical social theory, the program employed methods that have been identified by previous researchers including critical reflection, policy praxis, and rational discourse in order to assess whether these strategies can increase student perception of growth in the areas of acknowledgment, awareness, and action toward social justice (Brown, 2006). At the beginning and conclusion of this 2-year program of study, students completed the Cultural and Educational Issues Survey (Version B), a 63-item questionnaire aimed at discerning the attitudes of preservice leaders concerning issues of education and culture. Previous analysis suggested this instrument has strong reliability (Cronbach's alpha 0.92). In terms of qualitative assessment, students completed weekly reflective analysis journals as a component of the social context course described previously; engaged in a structured internship with a seminar component designed to foster integration of theory and practice based on their internship experience; completed a cultural autobiography and life history interview; participated in a 1-day prejudice-reduction workshop; conducted a cross-cultural interview; engaged in an "educational plunge" where they visited a setting they had never been before and reflected on this experience in writing; researched and facilitated a class focused on a marginalized group and their educational experience in the United States; and finally, created policies and practices that fostered equitable education for all students (Brown, 2006).

The results of the quantitative analysis suggest that participating in transformative learning strategies such as those listed may improve preservice teachers' attitudes relative to diversity in education (i.e., posttest scores on the Cultural and Educational Issues Survey Version B were significantly lower than pretest scores at the  $p < .001$  level, which suggests preservice teachers' attitudes toward diversity and

education can be improved through participation in transformative learning strategies). However, two caveats are offered for these conclusions. First, it cannot be determined whether results are attributable to the transformative learning strategies employed, the instructors' personal style, and/or the course material. Second, the study employed a small sample size and did not utilize random assignment, limiting definitive interpretations of the observed results.

From a qualitative standpoint, students reported growth in the areas of "awareness of self," "acknowledgment of others," and "action" through policy practice. During this 2-year program,

students wondered, questioned, and hesitated. They reportedly stretched themselves, pushed their boundaries, grew, and developed. Many of the learner responses were emotionally laden. At times, they revealed being amazed, enthralled, awakened, and grateful. At other times, they were afraid, stressed, angry, and guilt ridden. (Brown, 2006, p. 719)

Despite the important caveats (e.g., regarding the etiology of these changes), Brown (2006) argues that such results "can help educational administration programs begin to better understand the connections between leadership preparation experiences and the knowledge, disposition, and skills garnered" (p. 732).

From the standpoint of teacher preparation, McAllister and Irvine (2000) focused on the type of training that preservice teachers receive prior to delivering multicultural education content. Overall, they found that much attention is focused on *content* with relatively little emphasis on the *process* of cross-cultural learning. In other words, theories of change such as those noted previously, which might help understand what is or is not "happening" and why, are de-emphasized relative to the acquisition of content knowledge. Their overarching point is that greater awareness of underlying processes associated with exposure to multicultural education programs (e.g., resistance) can help teachers understand better how to sequence course content and create environments that are more conducive to learning.

Along these lines, some scholars focus explicitly upon intrapsychic processes that are thought to be integral to the effectiveness of multicultural education. For example, in their analysis of the literature, Mildred and Zuniga (2004) found that the relationship between developmental and psychological issues and students' readiness to engage in the necessary components of multicultural education are critical in regard to both process and outcome. Brown (2004a) further evaluated such processes by examining the role of instructor methodology on the resistance of teacher education students to cultural diversity awareness. Study participants included 109 junior-level students enrolled in a required, stand-alone cultural diversity course at a midsized, urban, Midwestern University (only Caucasian students [ $n = 100$ ] were included in the analysis). This course is taught in two segments; the current study focused on the first 10 weeks of the course, which emphasize diversity in learners (including culture, class, gender, race, ethnicity, and religion). The study employed a mixed methods design. Qualitative data in the form of reflective journals, reaction papers, field experiences, and research projects were collected throughout the semester in order to measure incremental changes in student attitudes, beliefs, and behaviors. In addition, students were administered the Cultural Diversity Awareness Inventory (CDAI) as a pretest and posttest measure in order to examine the effects of instructional methodology on changes in cultural diversity awareness. The CDAI is a 28-item questionnaire, which uses a 5-point Likert scale and reports excellent psychometric properties. For the purposes of this particular study, instrument items were

divided into five subtests, including diversity awareness, classroom environment, family/school interaction, cross-cultural communication, and alternative assessment. Previous researchers consistently have identified these areas as essential in preparing informed multicultural educators. Prior to conducting this study, Brown completed observations of, and interviews with, students and instructors in two stand-alone diversity courses, and then implemented a pilot study to determine appropriate test materials and strategies for the current research study. The pilot study (i.e., the modified course which emerged from the interviews and observations of the two stand-alone diversity courses) was focused on “reducing resistance by increasing self awareness and a cognizance of others” (p. 329).

Students were divided into two groups. Group 1 was taught by the investigator and employed all instructional strategies and materials implemented in the pilot phase of the study. Class periods 1 to 8 were focused on creating an understanding of why cultures develop, their interdependence, and resistance to change (Great Fruit Race simulation); self-examination and cultural influence (“cultural puzzle” activity); in-depth examination of cultural bias (role-play activity and “same and different” simulation); and fostering cross-cultural awareness through cooperative groups. Field experiences for Group 1 included three separate interactions with an ethnic culture (minimum of 6 hours); students then were required to discuss their field experience with their group members (four students in each group) and write an individual and group reflection paper. In addition, Group 1 also completed a research project consisting of a 12- to 15-page paper and group presentation designed to examine marginalized cultures, explore educational issues within this identified culture, investigate initiatives designed to minimize impediments to this culture’s academic and social development, and develop strategies that can be used in the classroom to meet the needs of all children.

Group 2 was taught by two instructors who had been observed and interviewed during the pilot study and followed their own previous course format. These courses included: viewing videos portraying atrocities against historically marginalized ethnic groups and completing a “cultural worksheet”; reading an article focused on racism in education, viewing a video depicting slavery, and engaging in a class discussion; and participating in a simulation designed to increase empathy for marginal cultural groups. Additional course content included guest speakers, videos, class discussion, and articles concerning religion, gender, language, and ethnic discrimination. Group 2’s field experience included three observations (and in a few cases tutoring) of students at an inner-city elementary school. Group 2’s research project consisted of a 2- to 3-page reaction paper, which asked students to identify a social problem, describe it, and use five different sources to help explain why this problem exists. It should be noted that the same message and text were used for both groups; however, course goals, instructional strategies, and objectives were not identical as indicated in the preceding.

Quantitative results indicate a significant relationship between CDAI scores at pretest and posttest depending upon course format. Group 1, which followed the modified course format focused on increasing student self awareness and cognizance of others, demonstrated a statistically significant increase in scores on the total diversity and family/school interactions and communication subtests ( $p < .001$ ), and environment ( $p < .01$ ) subtest. Group 2, which followed a course format previously employed by current instructors, demonstrated a statistically significant increase between pretest and posttest scores on the total diversity and environment subtests ( $p < .05$ ). Except for the environment subtest, scores on all subtests improved more for Group 1 compared with Group 2. In terms of qualitative data, the researcher was

unable to compile accurate statistics for Group 2 because assignments often were incomplete. Results from Group 1 indicate that by the study's conclusion, 95% indicated a need to raise their cultural awareness and increase sensitivity in multicultural classroom settings as well as in social interactions with teachers, students, and parents. In addition, 65% indicated they would research different cultures represented in their respective classrooms; 83% stated they would get involved in community projects in their school's neighborhood; and 63% indicated they would invite parents and students to informal gatherings throughout the school year. Another finding concluded that the best approach in terms of community/school interaction was to understand the beliefs, values, and traditions of one's students. In addition, 100% indicated they would employ a variety of instructional strategies in order to address the needs of culturally diverse students.

Although instructor variables and learning strategies undoubtedly play a key role in the effectiveness of diversity education, it is equally important to consider other contextual factors, such as message framing and student motivation. Recent evidence, for instance, suggests that the promotion of positive attitudes toward other cultural groups depends on the underlying source of motivation to regulate prejudice (Legault, Gutsell, & Inzlicht, 2011). Using the theoretical foundation of self-determination theory, Legault et al. (2011) developed two prejudice-reduction interventions designed to induce either internally generated motivation to reduce prejudice (autonomous) or externally elicited motivation (controlled). In line with past work suggesting that those with an autonomous motivation to be nonprejudiced also displayed less prejudice and discrimination than those with a controlled motivation (e.g., Legault & Green-Demers, 2012; Legault, Green-Demers, Grant, & Chung, 2007; Legault, Green-Demers, & Eadie, 2009; Plant & Devine, 1998), the authors created two different types of motivational messages. These messages were conveyed in brochures, which were framed as a campus-wide initiative to reduce prejudice and promote diversity. Thus, non-Black undergraduates ( $N = 103$ ) were assigned randomly to one of three conditions: the autonomy brochure condition, the controlling brochure condition, or the no-brochure condition. The autonomy brochure aimed to promote autonomous motivation toward prejudice reduction by emphasizing the value, importance, and personal significance of nonprejudice and diversity. It outlined the various benefits of diverse and fair classrooms and societies, and also highlighted the ways that diversity and intergroup relating can be meaningful and enjoyable. The controlling brochure, in contrast, targeted controlled motivation by stressing the social requirement to be nonprejudiced. The need for political correctness was underscored and the negative consequences of failing to behave in nonprejudiced ways were described. Students in the no-brochure (i.e., neutral) condition read basic information related to the definition and problem of prejudice, but motivation to be nonprejudiced was not manipulated. After carefully reading the brochures, participants' degrees of autonomous versus controlled motivation to be nonprejudiced and their levels of prejudice were ascertained using the 24-item Motivation to be Nonprejudiced Scale (Legault et al., 2007) and the Symbolic Racism 2000 Scale (Henry & Sears, 2002).

Results indicated that those in the autonomy brochure condition demonstrated significantly less prejudice than those in the no-brochure condition. In other words, supporting autonomous motivation for being nonprejudiced decreased prejudice (Legault et al., 2011). In contrast, promoting prejudice reduction using controlling tactics elicited an ironic effect; those who read the controlling brochure demonstrated more prejudice than those in the no-brochure condition. As the authors noted, an attempt to control prejudice reduction using pressure was worse in terms of outcomes

than doing nothing at all. Because the researchers employed an explicit measure of prejudice—which they thought might have alerted subjects to the fact that their level of prejudice was being assessed (thus affecting validity through social desirability effects)—they conducted a follow-up study using more implicit manipulation and measurement.

In this second experiment, 109 non-Black undergraduate students were once again randomly assigned to conditions aimed at manipulating autonomous or controlled motivation to reduce prejudice. However, in this study, motivational priming was achieved more subtly through the use of items embedded in a survey. That is, participants were induced to agree with either autonomous reasons (e.g., “I value diversity”) or controlled reasons (e.g., “Prejudiced people are not well-liked”) for being nonprejudiced (versus a neutral, no-prime condition). Motivation to be nonprejudiced then was assessed before participants completed the Symbolic Racism Scale and performed the Implicit Association Test (Greenwald, McGhee, & Schwartz, 1998), which is a measure of automatic racial bias. Results suggested that the priming manipulation was successful in targeting differences in the source of motivation to regulate prejudice. That is, those primed with autonomous motivational content displayed more autonomous motivation to be nonprejudiced compared to those primed with controlled motivation or no motivation. Complementing findings from the first experiment, priming autonomous motivation to be nonprejudiced reduced prejudice relative to the neutral, no-prime condition. In addition, priming controlled motivation to be nonprejudiced ironically increased prejudice, relative to no motivational priming. Importantly, these effects held across both implicit and explicit measures of prejudice. Thus, even subtle or implicit messages relating to motivation to control prejudice can exert vastly divergent effects on prejudice and attitudes toward outgroups. Moreover, the source of motivation matters. Interventions that support autonomous motivation to be nonprejudiced appear to be more effective than the controlling approach that is so often used in anti-prejudice programming and policy. Indeed, whether it is explicitly controlled or subtly prompted, Legault et al. (2011) show that external motivation to comply with nonprejudiced standards is more detrimental to the goal of prejudice reduction than doing nothing at all.

Perhaps the most basic conclusion from these findings is that multicultural education programs and courses may “work,” but the likelihood of their effectiveness is enhanced substantially if one: (a) adopts a sufficiently sophisticated conceptual framework regarding the underlying mediators of change; (b) takes “who students are” prior to the experience into account; and (c) recognizes potentially powerful priming and motivational processes, which may mediate the degree to which multicultural education is experienced as imposed, congruent, or welcomed.

The complexity of such interacting processes is revealed in a meta-analysis by Engberg (2004), who reviewed related studies in four primary domains: multicultural courses, peer-based interventions, service-based interventions, and diversity workshops and training. Although the overall conclusion was positive in that these various experiences were determined to reduce prejudice, multiple theoretical, empirical, and methodological limitations across studies meant that firm conclusions were not possible. Moreover, four specific limitations were noted: (a) lack of conceptualization or a guiding theoretical framework; (b) insufficient instruments employed to measure racial bias; (c) quasi-experimental designs (e.g., convenience sampling, short study durations, lack of control for confounds, the absence of longitudinal analyses); and (d) the insufficient demarcation of different groups on the basis of important background variables (e.g., race, gender), which may have obscured differences and inflated positive findings. In the context of overall positive findings—by



addressing these limitations at the level of theory, methods, and analysis—Engberg believes that research in the effectiveness of multicultural education strategies such as the reduction of racial bias could significantly be enhanced.

The aforementioned literature reveals a number of important suggestions and themes, which we seek to address in the current study. In conducting our analysis, we will touch on a range of issues that were referenced earlier including (a) the processes by which multicultural content is conveyed; (b) the role that differences among students may play in ultimate outcomes of such a course; (c) the relative degree to which faculty and students are or are not prepared for the multicultural education experience they are about to facilitate and encounter; (d) the effect that underlying psychological processes (e.g., affective, attributional) may have in mediating course outcomes; (e) whether the required course (e.g., in this case, a “World Cultures” course) actually achieved its desired impact of enhancing multicultural tolerance and appreciation by students; and (f) any implications that emerge from this analysis for the design, implementation, and understanding of how multicultural education should, and should not, be conveyed. In an attempt to address these questions, we next highlight EI Theory, the EI Self, and the BEVI, an interrelated model, framework, and method that have been in development since the early 1990s, to examine and apprehend the processes by which beliefs and values are acquired, maintained, and transformed.

### **EI Theory, the EI Self, and the BEVI**

EI Theory seeks to explain “the processes by which beliefs, values, and ‘worldviews’ are acquired and maintained, why their alteration is typically resisted, and how and under what circumstances their modification occurs” (Shealy, 2004, p. 1075). Derivative of EI Theory,

the Equilintegration or EI Self seeks to represent in pictographic form the integrative and synergistic processes by which beliefs and values are acquired, maintained, and modified as well as how these are linked to the *Formative Variables* (FoVs), *Core Needs*, (CoNes), and *Adaptive Potential* (AP) of the self. (Shealy, 2016, p. 96)

Informed by scholarship in a range of key areas (e.g., “needs-based” research and theory; developmental psychopathology; social cognition; psychotherapy processes and outcomes; affect regulation; theories and models of “self”), the EI Self seeks to illustrate how the interaction between our core needs (e.g., for attachment, affiliation) and Formative Variables (e.g., caregiver, culture) results in beliefs and values about self, others, and the world at large that we all internalize over the course of development and across the life span.

Concomitant with EI Theory and the EI Self, the BEVI is a comprehensive analytic tool in development since the early 1990s that examines how and why we come to see ourselves, others, and the larger world as we do (e.g., how life experiences, culture, and context affect our beliefs, values, and worldview) as well as the influence of such processes on multiple aspects of human functioning (e.g., learning processes, relationships, personal growth, the pursuit of life goals). For example, the BEVI assesses processes such as: basic openness; the tendency to (or not to) stereotype in particular ways; self- and emotional awareness; preferred strategies for making sense of why “other” people and cultures “do what they do”; global engagement (e.g., receptivity to different cultures, religions, and social practices); and worldview shift

(e.g., to what degree do beliefs and values change as a result of specific experiences). BEVI results are translated into reports at the individual, group, and organizational levels and used in a variety of contexts for applied and research purposes (e.g., to track and examine changes in worldviews over time) (e.g., Anmuth et al., 2013; Atwood, Chkhaidze, Shealy, Staton, & Staton, 2014; Brearly, Shealy, Staton, & Sternberger, 2012; Hill et al., 2013; Shealy, 2004, 2016; Shealy, Bhuyan, & Sternberger, 2012; Tabit et al., 2011; for more information about the EI model and BEVI method, see Chapters 2, 3, and 4 as well as [www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects](http://www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects)).

## METHODS AND RESULTS

### Study 1: When the Promotion of Cultural Engagement May Not Be Effective

Students enrolled in a midsized, rural, Midwestern University were selected for the following analysis ( $N = 137$ ), aimed at better understanding the degree to which undergraduate students benefit or do not benefit from participation in diversity courses (i.e., World Cultures). World Cultures is part of a four-course general education requirement that all enrolled students complete during their first 2 years of study. As described in the syllabus, the purpose of this course is to provide students with the necessary tools to understand and appreciate the diverse cultures that they will encounter throughout their personal and professional lives. Study 1 employed a one-group pretest–posttest design, utilizing a convenience sample.

All students who were enrolled in the World Cultures course were included in the analysis. Students registered for one of four sections of the course online; each section was taught by a different instructor. In terms of demographics, 3 students identified as Black or African American, 126 Caucasian/White, 0 Asian or Pacific Islander, 1 American Indian or Alaskan Native, 2 Hispanic/Latino, and 5 Other. The mean age was 18.91 (standard deviation  $SD = 2.8$  years); the number of males was 111 and the number of females was 26.

Students who chose to participate in the research project were provided with a username and password and asked to complete the 336-item BEVI pretest during the beginning of the course. Student participation was voluntary and informed consent was required before completion of the BEVI could commence. At the conclusion of the course, students were asked again to complete the BEVI as a posttest measure. Upon completion, analysis of pre–post data was analyzed across all BEVI scales using repeated measures analysis of variance (ANOVA). This study was exploratory in nature, and as such, research questions focused mainly on whether Time 1/Time 2 differences would be observed, and if so, on which BEVI scales. Given the goals of the course, it was anticipated that some changes would be observed—in a positive or desired direction—particularly on scales that purport to measure sociocultural openness and global engagement.

As indicated in Table 5.1, results overall suggest that the World Cultures course, designed to facilitate learning outcomes including sociocultural openness and tolerance for cultures different from one's own, appears to be associated with the opposite effects. More specifically, upon completion of the course as compared to course entry, students were more rigid in their belief systems, more inclined to endorse simple causal attributions regarding why human beings do what they do, more emotionally aware and activated, and less open to developing a deeper engagement with other

**TABLE 5.1**  
*Degree of Worldview Shift*

SCALES	TIME			GENDER		
	PRE	POST	F	FEMALE	MALE	F
<b>Causal Closure</b>	1.229	1.317	7.780 (1, 133)**	1.196	1.351	11.595 (1, 133)***
<b>Basic Determinism</b>	1.718	1.856	9.187 (1, 134)***	1.615	1.958	19.196 (1, 134)***
<b>Emotional Attunement</b>	3.013	3.133	6.920 (1, 133)**	3.257	2.889	13.581 (1, 133)***
<b>Global Engagement</b>	2.647	2.579	4.454 (1, 134)*	2.691	2.535	7.662 (1, 134)**

Note. \* $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$ .

cultures. Although it cannot unequivocally be concluded that the course is “causing” these changes—or even that greater “negative” changes might have emerged had the course not occurred—it is striking that theoretically desirable attributes (e.g., openness, engagement) diminished over the duration of the course.

In addition to observed Time 1/Time 2 differences, a second trend emerged with the data analysis in terms of gender differences (see Table 5.1). In comparison to males, females endorsed a greater degree of openness and ability to hold cognitive complexity, as well as a less rigid sense of self, at both pretest and posttest. When looking at each of the BEVI scales included in the analysis specifically, our results indicate that Basic Determinism and Causal Closure, which collectively measure (among other factors) the degree to which individuals prefer basic/simple explanations for why people think, feel, and behave in particular ways indicate that females endorse this way of thinking to a lesser degree at both pretest and posttest. At the same time, scores on the Basic Determinism and Causal Closure scales increase for both genders from pre-course to postcourse. On the Emotional Attunement scale, which measures the degree to which an individual is aware of and accessible to affect in self and other, results suggest that females endorse a higher degree of Emotional Attunement as compared to males at pretest and posttest; however, at course completion both males and females indicated a higher degree of emotional attunement. These intriguing results suggest perhaps that both male and female students may be more emotionally activated at the conclusion of the course, but such activation is not experienced as positive, at least when juxtaposed with the overall pattern across the other scales noted previously (which suggests less openness to, and engagement with, “the other” overall).

One hypothesis we propose to explain this finding is the possibility that students begin reevaluating how their own experiences influenced the development of personal belief and value systems, particularly in relation to content disseminated throughout the course, at a time of acute emotional activation (i.e., at the conclusion of the course). Implications for future research emerging from this finding include the following: (a) Re-administer the BEVI after a specified amount of time has elapsed following course completion to determine whether allowing students additional time to reflect on course material would lead to deactivation on this specific scale, as well as

across other BEVI scales (e.g., as a Time 3 administration); and (b) Extend the length of such courses over more than one semester. Perhaps providing students with additional structured time to engage in both course material and self-reflection would create a deeper sense of personal understanding regarding the etiology of one's own beliefs and values, as well as allow for more openness related to diverse perspectives and cultural frameworks (e.g., see Wandschneider et al., 2016).<sup>1</sup> Finally, data from the Global Engagement BEVI scale—which measures an individual's level of empathy, emotional openness, the degree to which he or she values respectful relations and healthy traditions within and between cultures, cultural awareness, inclination toward advocacy efforts, and concern for the environment—indicate a decrease on this scale both for males and females upon the completion of this course.

In short, from a programmatic standpoint, a course designed to create deeper understanding of the larger world should theoretically be associated with greater sophistication regarding why humans do what they do as well as greater engagement with the larger world. However, as evidenced by these results, participation in the course appears to be associated with the opposite tendencies, a finding that not only is supported by the statistically significant findings, but also by other trends across various scales, such as Identity Diffusion, which suggests that individuals may feel more unclear or stuck vis-à-vis who they are and where they are going at the conclusion of the course ( $p < .08$ ). Statistical analysis also revealed that females in general appear to be significantly more open than males to the sorts of outcomes that would theoretically be desirable for such a course, not only across the scales listed previously, but on other BEVI Scales such as Socioemotional Convergence, which indicates that females at this developmental stage may have a greater capacity than males to “hold” complexity, in terms of beliefs and values that may superficially appear opposed, but in fact are reconcilable ( $p < .001$ ). In other words, females overall tended to be significantly more open than males to the content and objectives of this World Cultures course, a gender-based finding that receives strong support from other Forum BEVI Project analyses (Pendleton, Cochran, Kapadia, & Iyer, 2016).

In addition to gender, previous research has indicated a multitude of variables that have the potential to impact the effectiveness of multicultural interventions, including but not limited to, instructor characteristics (Banks, 1994; Gay, 2010; Bennett, 2003). Thus, as is discussed next, it would be useful to hone in on the relative contribution of specific variables to such learning processes and outcomes (see Wandschneider et al., 2016).

## Study 2: Exploring the Complex Factors That Influence Sociocultural Openness

In conducting this project, the researchers were interested in gaining a better understanding of who learns what and under what circumstances as well as the factors that interact to produce particular outcomes; we also wished to understand *why*, from an explanatory standpoint, these processes may or may not occur. Study 1 was designed to evaluate the “what” of this equation, whereas further analysis (Study 2) was conducted in an attempt to gain insight into the “why” dimension. Findings of Study 1 (i.e., that individuals showed decreases in openness and engagement after completing a course designed to produce the opposite effects) beg an overarching question of

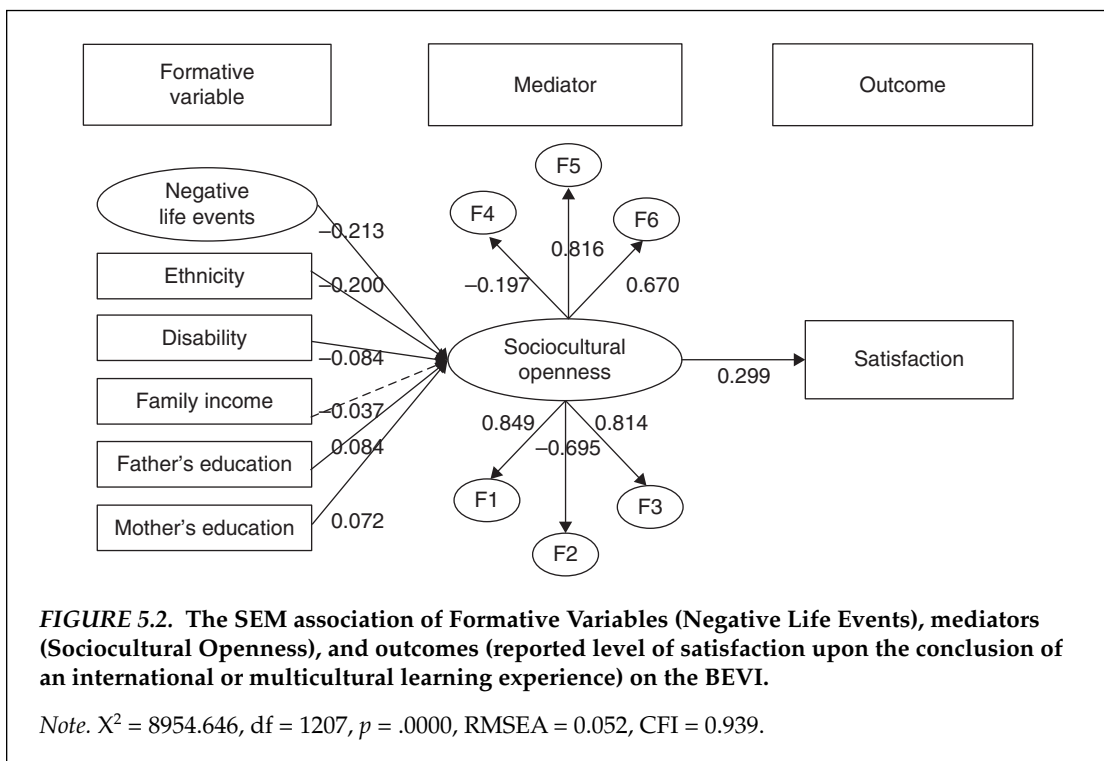
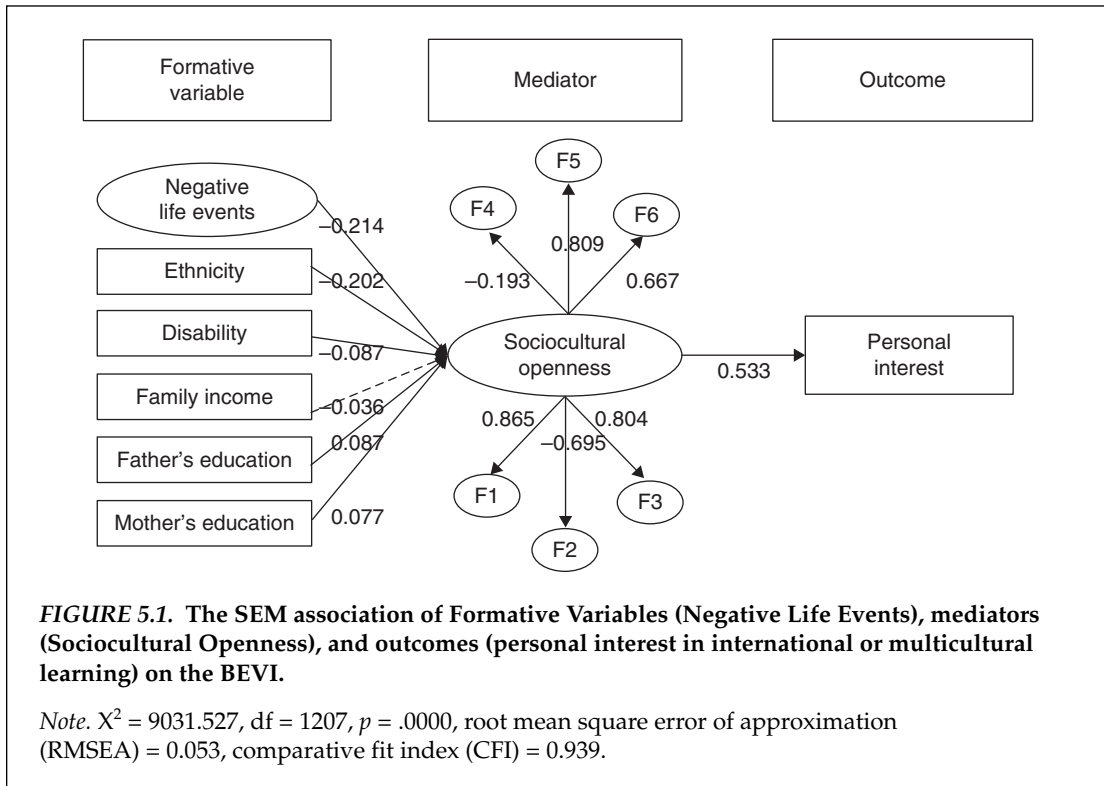
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<sup>1</sup> Indeed, although such results are striking—particularly in light of the specific goals of this course—they are not without precedent from other analyses of this nature (e.g., see Wandschneider et al., 2016).

why students are responding in this way. On the one hand, experimental and mixed methods approaches could allow for a fine-grained analysis of relevant variables (e.g., potential variation among instructors, the effects of modified approaches to content delivery, examination of qualitative data to ascertain why, and which, students are having negative or positive experiences of this course). Although this sort of research is worthy of pursuit, a more basic and immediate question could be examined from the larger database of which the World Cultures participants are a part. Specifically, as previously described, the Forum BEVI Project is a multi-institution, multiyear initiative designed to understand the processes and outcomes of international, multicultural, and transformative learning. A fundamental rationale for conducting this project was the proposition that human beings learn differently in part because of who they are prior to engagement in the experience itself. Thus, it may be erroneous to attribute the results of a learning experience only to the experience itself, since there is good reason to believe that there is an interaction between who people are prior to the experience with the experience itself. This fundamental proposition is at the core of the Forum BEVI Project, and is highly relevant to the current discussion. Why? Because if students differ in their predisposition to an intercultural experience, and we could identify both commonalities and differences within a specific learning cohort, it might be possible to approach that cohort in a more nuanced and sophisticated manner vis-à-vis multicultural coursework, rather than assuming that all participants are equal. It might even be possible to integrate those very findings (about similarities and differences) into the learning experience itself. To examine these issues, we conducted a series of analyses from a larger dataset of 2,331 participants from 11 universities throughout the United States, who had completed the BEVI under the auspices of the Forum BEVI Project (see Wandschneider et al., 2016; [www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects](http://www.ibavi.org/content/featured-projects)). ANOVA, regression analysis, and structural equation modeling (SEM) were employed to analyze the results of this exploratory study.

The first set of analyses examined whether and which demographic variables might differentiate the sample at an item level of analysis, with a particular focus on sociocultural and global engagement items. As noted, gender proved to be a highly discriminating Formative Variable throughout this project (e.g., Pendleton et al., 2016). For example, on the BEVI question—*We should try to understand cultures that are different from our own*—significant differences emerged at the level of gender ( $p < .01$ ), accounting for 5.2% of the variation in responding ( $R^2 = 0.052$ ). In short, females appear to believe it is more important to try to understand cultures that are different from their own than do males. Similar gender-based differences ( $p < .01$ ) also emerged for the BEVI question, *I enjoy learning about other cultures*. Females indicated greater enjoyment accounting for 7.0% of the variation in responding ( $R^2 = 0.070$ ). As a final exemplar, for the BEVI item—*We should do more to help minority groups in our society*—both gender and political orientation differences were observed at the  $p < .01$  level of significance. Specifically, females endorsed this statement more strongly than males ( $R^2 = 0.044$ ), as did Democrats when compared to other political affiliations including Republicans, Independents, and Other ( $R^2 = 0.093$ ) (see Edmunds, Federico, & Mays, 2016).

SEM examined the relationship between (a) specific Formative Variables, including Negative Life Events on the BEVI (which measures the degree to which individuals report unhappy childhood experiences and difficulties in life), (b) mediators, including Sociocultural Openness on the BEVI (which measures, among other subfactors, the degree to which individuals are inclined toward the beliefs and values of cultures that are different from their own), and (c) outcomes (which, in Figure 5.1, indicates the degree of *interest* an individual expresses in engaging in international



or multicultural learning; and in Figure 5.2, indicates the degree of *satisfaction* an individual expresses after participating in an international or multicultural learning experience).<sup>2</sup>

Taken together, these two structural equation models offer a number of intriguing findings. For example, a higher degree of Sociocultural Openness—as well as interest in and satisfaction from a wide range of international and multicultural learning experiences—was associated with a lesser degree of reported negative/unhappy life events, a greater tendency to report non-Caucasian status, a lesser tendency to report “disability status” (e.g., physical, psychological), and a greater tendency to report more education by fathers and mothers alike. From an EI theoretical perspective, such results make sense, particularly in light of the needs-based considerations that are at the core of this framework. Specifically, the greater the degree one reports that their “core needs” were met in a “good enough” manner, the more likely that same individual will demonstrate the capacity and inclination to attend to “other” as well as “the larger world” in addition to the concerns of one’s “own self” (e.g., see Chapters 2, 3, and 4).

This tentative proposition receives additional support from a final level of analysis, consisting of correlation matrix data between Sociocultural Openness and other BEVI scales as presented in Table 5.2 on the “long version” of the BEVI<sup>3</sup> (see also [http://www.thebevi.com/docs/bevi\\_scale\\_pairwise\\_correlations\\_and\\_significance\\_levels.pdf](http://www.thebevi.com/docs/bevi_scale_pairwise_correlations_and_significance_levels.pdf)). Essentially, these correlations suggest that the inclination to be open and accepting of cultural difference is associated with various other belief/value constructs. More specifically—and in full recognition that these are oblique constructs (i.e., statistically overlapping but differentiable factors, derived on the basis of EFA)—individuals who are higher in sociocultural openness tend to report that they had more core needs met (e.g., for acceptance, affiliation) during childhood and adolescence (Needs Closure); are more likely to be concerned about the environment and natural world (Ecological Resonance); are more likely to hold and tolerate cognitive/affective complexity or ambiguity (Socioemotional Convergence); are less likely to deny basic thoughts, feelings, or needs (Basic Closedness); are less likely to feel stuck, lost, or confused (Identity Diffusion); are more likely to be interested in and open to affect in self and other (Emotional Attunement); are less likely to report traditional religious beliefs (Socioreligious Traditionalism); are less likely to insist that they are completely confident and assured about who they are (Hard Structure); are less likely

<sup>2</sup> As described in Chapter 4 of this book, Negative Life Events consists of self-report statements regarding one’s own upbringing and life history. Among other dimensions, Socioemotional Convergence measures the degree to which individuals demonstrate an overarching capacity to “hold complexity” (i.e., avoid black and white characterizations regarding how the world “is” and “should be”). For more information, see [www.thebevi.com](http://www.thebevi.com).

From an interpretive standpoint, ethnicity is a dummy measured variable; value “0” indicates the respondent is a minority, and “1” means the respondent is a Caucasian. Disability also is a dummy variable; “0” indicates the person is not eligible for services for students with disabilities, and “1” means otherwise. Family income is measured by a series of numbers indicating the respondent’s annual family income. It ranges from “1” (Less than \$10,000) to “10” (\$175,000 or more). Both father’s education and mother’s education are ordinal measured variables. They range from “0” (Some high school or less) to “8” (Doctoral degree). The dependent variable “Democrat” also is a dummy variable; “0” means not a Democrat and “1” means a Democrat. It is not clear why “disability status” is negatively associated with Sociocultural Openness. Although an empirical and theoretical question, it could be that self-identification as “disabled” (e.g., with a psychological condition) may be associated—at an aggregate level—with less psychological “energy”/capacity to engage with cultural practices and perspectives that are different from one’s own, at least as measured by this construct on the BEVI. Finally, we used weighted least squares means and variance adjusted (WLSMV) as the estimator for all the structural equation models because the variables have ordinal or dummy measures.

<sup>3</sup> These findings are derived from the “long BEVI” on the basis of Exploratory Factor Analysis (EFA) findings. See Chapter 4 for more information about the “long” and “short” versions of the BEVI.

**TABLE 5.2**

*Correlation Matrix Findings Illustrating the Relationship Between Sociocultural Openness and Other BEVI Scales*

BEVI SCALE	CORRELATION
Needs Closure	-.90
Ecological Resonance	.88
Socioemotional Convergence	.82
Basic Closedness	-.81
Identity Diffusion	-.71
Emotional Attunement	.77
Socioreligious Traditionalism	-.62
Hard Structure	-.58
Negative Life Events	-.57
Divergent Determinism	-.50

to report experiencing unhappy childhood events or experiences (Negative Life Events); and, are less likely to express contrary or argumentative attitudes for the sake of doing so (Divergent Determinism).

## DISCUSSION

We are inclined to agree that the goals of multicultural education are worthy, if not necessary and inevitable; these include the promotion of cultural awareness and understanding, inclusion of marginalized social groups, encouragement of students to be active participants in the knowledge construction process, and ultimately, increasing tolerance for diversity (Banks, 1993, 2005; Bennett, 2001, 2002, 2003; Brown, 2004a, 2004b; Gorski, 2006). Nonetheless, evidence suggests that the reach of multicultural education often exceeds its grasp (e.g., Banks, 1993; Bennett, 2001, 2003; Gorski, 2006), especially if we do not appreciate that urging individuals to engage in anti-prejudice thought and activity may inadvertently result in more rigid and stereotyped beliefs about the self, the world, and others (e.g., Legault et al., 2011). As the interrelated analyses presented in Study 2 suggest, people bring a range of different attributes and experiences to any international or multicultural experience (such as their experiences of their own life histories). These differences are associated not only with the capacity to be open to different cultures, but may further influence the degree to which people are inclined to engage in and enjoy diversity experiences. On the basis of such findings, we offer the following suggestions to educators, researchers, and practitioners who wish to promote understanding within and between cultural groups, which we believe fall under the rubric of best practices.

*First, understand the etiology and nature of beliefs and values.* It is important for multicultural educators to appreciate the complex and interacting factors that culminate in how and why people experience society and culture the way they do. For example,



we need to understand what prejudice is, how prejudicial beliefs are acquired, and why *all* human beings are capable of such experiences. Moreover, as the data indicates, it is important to understand the cultural self as integrally related to other aspects of self, such as religious or political convictions (or lack thereof), environmental values, and the capacity to attend to affect in self and others. In short, we need to demonstrate a sophisticated understanding of beliefs and values and of human nature—from a theoretical, empirical, subjective, and real world perspective—in order to grasp and convey the complexity of why we are who we are in an informed and accessible manner (Shealy, 2004, 2016; Shealy et al., 2012). Our understanding of such matters should be integrated into all aspects of multicultural coursework and programs in order to enrich and humanize our pedagogy. A lack of sophistication at this level may lead to interventions that are experienced by recipients as superficial and polemical, if not alienating. The types of perspectives that we are offering here dovetail nicely with initiatives that are attempting to increase awareness and competency around multicultural education within teacher training programs as well. For example, the international education organization—National Association of Foreign Student Advisers (NAFSA)—is attempting to integrate international perspectives into teacher preparation programs, including Interstate New Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) criteria. We see the data presented here as having a strong bearing not only on the content that is integrated into these standards, but also aspects of process, as well as education, training, and learning writ large (e.g., see *Cultivating the Globally Sustainable Self*, 2015).

*Second, process is as important as content.* When we introduce content that may violate the extant belief/value structure of our audience, we bear a particular responsibility to anticipate and address such processes proactively, in an effective and respectful manner. Because such material inherently is evocative, it stands to reason that participants in multicultural experiences are differentially activated even before the experience begins; such activation may run the gamut from highly favorable to highly unfavorable for reasons that may not be at all clear to the individual who is experiencing the reaction. If we do not recognize that such processes potentially are operative, create time and space for individuals to become aware of what they believe and feel, and normalize such experiences, we unwittingly forfeit the opportunity to focus on what we are trying to accomplish: deepening the capacity and inclination for reflection on self, others, and the larger world. Put in more positive terms, if we do attend to such processes, we are that much more likely to lower defensiveness and heighten receptivity to the content we are about to share. By stepping back from the content of “what we should believe” in order to emphasize process reflection on “why we believe what we believe,” we open up a space in ourselves—and others—to reflect openly. In doing so, we may cultivate self awareness as well as the necessary and sufficient competencies to facilitate such complex pedagogical processes and outcomes. In short, whereas most people are able to learn sufficient content knowledge vis-à-vis multicultural education, the capacity to deliver such knowledge with wisdom and care may be the most important competency of all.

*Third, appraise worldviews before, during, and after an intervention.* Conveying multicultural content to an audience without knowing what that audience already believes about such content is counterproductive at best, and anathema to the respect, growth, and development we are trying to promote. Likewise, assuming that all is going well, or that we achieved our goals—in the absence of any data to affirm such conclusions—is an indefensible practice for any multicultural educator, mainly because the whole purpose of such intervention is to promote deeper reflection and awareness, if not belief/value change. In the pursuit of such goals, it is imperative

that educators be flexible in their approach and are willing to modify both content and methodology in order to improve effectiveness through routine assessment of beliefs and values, as well as related personal experiences, before, during, and after interventions. Research repeatedly has demonstrated that effective teachers are those who constantly reevaluate themselves and their teaching methods. As indicated, the BEVI offers one, and by no means the only, method for facilitating such objectives, by helping individuals understand what they believe and value, and how their beliefs and values are similar to, or different from, the group to which they are a part. As interventionists, such awareness helps us develop, present, and sequence content and processes in a more deliberate way in order to foster self awareness and understanding in a more accessible manner.

Ultimately, any type of valid assessment that appropriately ascertains what an audience actually believes and feels is worthy of development and implementation. However, because most people *want* to be perceived by others as being non-prejudicial, it is important that researchers conduct high quality assessments that are psychometrically sound (e.g., reliable and valid) in order to attenuate the likelihood of social desirability response confounds (e.g., should not be face valid). This point cannot be overemphasized. In short, especially with affectively loaded material as is the case in the multicultural realm, it is imperative that we know who our audience is before we intervene, how we are doing as processes unfold, and whether and to what degree we achieved our goals. Ecologically valid assessment is indispensable to pursuing such means and ends.

*Fourth and finally, own personal beliefs and values.* Individuals who assume a position of authority vis-à-vis multicultural education bear a particular responsibility to know themselves overall as well as their own issues and biases in particular. Along these lines, agitated diatribes by a multicultural educator or scholar about “power and privilege” or “microaggressions” may be cathartic for the presenter and induce guilt in the audience, but the transformational impact of these interventions is questionable. As the aforementioned results suggest, this approach may increase defensiveness, resistance, and dismissal, and possibly a change in one’s beliefs in the opposite direction of what was intended. Since people tend to be suspicious of those in positions of power who use their platforms to “work out” issues under the aegis of multicultural paradigms and epistemologies, we contend that it is better to strive for authentic, caring, and sustained engagement regarding multicultural issues and processes.

The capacity for prejudice and misuse of power is part of the human condition, and not the purview of any one group. Wise multicultural interventionists acknowledge and communicate such realities. Their audiences are likely to appreciate and resonate with such self aware candor. In short, as educators, researchers, and practitioners, we must recognize that we are not somehow immune to the same biasing forces and factors that shape all human beings, and should acknowledge and account for these very real possibilities in ourselves, in the roles we assume, pedagogies we develop, and interventions we deliver.

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