

# From Colorblindness to Intercultural Sensitivity: Infusing Diversity Training in PETE Programs

Joe W. Burden, Jr., Samuel R. Hodge,  
Camille P. O'Bryant, and Louis Harrison, Jr.

In this paper, we advocate infusing diversity training across physical education teacher education (PETE) programs and curricula (DeSensi, 1995). Specifically, we call for PETE programs to provide curriculum content and professional socialization experiences that enhance *intercultural sensitivity* to better prepare novice teachers for working effectively with students of various cultures and ethnicities (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge, 2003). We discuss (a) changing demographics in society and schools with implications for preparing teachers, (b) moving from *ethnocentrism* to *ethnorelativism* of intercultural sensitivity, (c) implementing NCATE diversity initiatives, (d) infusing diversity training in PETE programs, and (e) understanding physical activity and sport participation patterns of a diversity of learners and athletes. We also provide some closing arguments for implementing diversity training in PETE programs.

When I first entered the multicultural, multiethnic classroom setting I was unprepared. I did not know how to cope effectively with such 'difference'. Despite progressive politics, and my deep engagement with the feminist movement, I had never been compelled to work within a truly diverse setting and I lacked the necessary skills. This is the case with most educators. (Hooks, 1994, p. 41)

The preceding quote from Bell Hook's (1994) book titled, *Teaching to Transgress: Education as the Practice of Freedom*, provides an apposite entrance

to this paper. This quote exemplifies the continued need for (physical) educators and teacher educators to seek ways to develop curricula and pedagogical practices that empower, reflect a diversity of learners and address their needs, and is socially just. This is no less true for physical education teacher education (PETE) programs.

In this paper, we (a) expose the ever-widening cultural and ethnic gap between school and PETE students and their teachers in physical education; (b) provide an overview of how the (traditional) ethnocentric paradigms in education often leave physical educators ill-prepared to teach, especially in culturally and ethnically diverse settings; (c) provide our view of why implementation of diversity training in PETE programs is more likely to lead to ethnorelative paradigms and intercultural sensitivity in teaching; and (d) provide suggestions of how to transform PETE programs so that future physical educators for all levels of education are prepared within an ethnorelative framework that reinforces intercultural sensitivity.

There have been a variety of reports and projections related to the ever increasing cultural and ethnic diversity in the United States (U.S.). For example, Blaine (2000) stated that White Americans<sup>1</sup> made up roughly 83% of the U.S. population in 1997. Thus, the remaining 17% of the population was comprised of “. . . Black, Asian, and all other ethnic groups combined” (p. 3). The U.S. Census Bureau predicts that by the year 2025, 78% of the U.S. population will consist of White (Anglo) Americans. Also it is estimated that by the year 2025, ethnic minorities<sup>2</sup> (people of color) will comprise 22% of the population (Blaine, 2000). This ascending trend of population diversification is supported by recent U.S. census data (Nasser, 2003).

Scholars in teacher education, including physical education, have called attention to the widening gap between cultural and ethnic diversity of school children and their teachers. Most novice teachers across various disciplines in teacher education programs are White Americans (McIntrye, 1997). Currently, 35% of enrollments in elementary schools consist of students of color (Futrell, Gomez, & Bedden, 2003).

Over a decade ago, demographic data of elementary school teachers across disciplines indicated that 95% of them were middle-class, White American females (Zimpher & Ashburn, 1989). Moreover, Smith (1993) called attention to the disparity between the percentages of school-aged children (30%) of color (e.g., African American) and their physical education teachers of color (5%) versus White American teachers (92 to 95%). In fact, it was projected that the proportion of students of color would increase dramatically, from the 30% in 1990 to 38% by 2010 (Smith, 1993).

Clearly, the number of students of color in American schools is increasing. For example, more than half of the students in 25 of the largest cities in the U.S. are from linguistically, ethnically, and culturally diverse groups (Smith & Luckasson, 1992). Today, our nation's elementary and secondary schools' enrollments have reached 53 million children, 35% of whom are students of color. It is projected that students of color enrollments will increase 51% by the year 2050 (Futrell et al., 2003).

Over 11 million of the 46 million children enrolled in America's public schools attend school in an urban school district and it is estimated that 575 of the nation's school districts are urban (Argon, 1998). Often the American government and, in-turn, the educational system fails to effectively provide efficient resources

in educating youngsters from improvised environments, especially youngsters of color in urban schools. Argon (1998) pointed out that the dilemmas facing urban schools include (a) social and disciplinary problems, (b) large overcrowded class sizes, (c) large percentages of poor students of color, (d) little involvement from parents compared to their suburban counterparts, and (e) a rapidly deteriorating and aging education infrastructure. All to which it is estimated that nationally, urban school districts will need about 50 billion dollars to refurbish their crumpled school facilities.

Collectively, these factors are threats to the effectiveness of urban schools and may influence teachers in such schools to conceptualize physical education goals differently than do physical educators in suburban and rural areas. Fine (1991) asserted that physical education teachers in urban schools respond to environmental constraints and cultural norms by selecting curriculum that is more specific to the school context and thus perceived as most interesting to their students. In that regard, Knop, Tannehill, and O'Sullivan (2001) encouraged physical educators to develop an urban awareness and pay special attention to the curricular and pedagogical issues relevant to stressed urban high school environments.

Furthermore, the number of African American children entering school in the elementary grades has increased. Confronted with the potential decline of African American teachers and teachers desiring or prepared to teach in urban schools, there is a high probability that many White American novice teachers will find employment in urban schools (Haberman, 1999; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). This is confounded by the decline of African Americans, for example, entering the physical education profession.

Scholars have called attention to the decreasing number of graduate students and future professionals in physical education higher education (King & Chepyator-Thomson, 1996). Crase and Walker (1988) referred to African American physical educators as an endangered species. In that regard, King and Chepyator-Thomson (1996) reported that African American graduate students, once enrolled, have negative experiences and higher attrition rates compared to their White American peers. They also reported that African Americans lag far behind their White American peers in degree attainment.

### **Ethnocentric (Colorblind) Teacher Education Does Not Prepare Physical Educators for Culturally Diverse Schools**

The background of many of our professionals, future and current, is based on an ethnocentric view in the sense that cultural diversity is excluded, minimized, and/or ignored. The existence of ethnocentrism is exacerbated when (physical) educators have had limited direct knowledge, minimal shared interactions, or have not been exposed to diverse populations (Hodge, 2003). In such instances, these individuals may be colorblind or unaware of their fears, stereotypical beliefs, or ignorance in accepting others with cultural differences (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge, 2003; McIntyre, 1997; Valli, 1995).

A study conducted by the National Center for Education Statistics (1999) revealed that only 20% of teachers surveyed felt prepared to work with children from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds, especially students of color. Gollnick and Chinn (1998) argued that most novice teachers are prepared to work

effectively with only one socioeconomic group, which is the middle class. Further they implied that most novice teachers have only an ethnocentric perspective and therefore are only prepared to work effectively with students from the mainstream or dominant culture.

Schultz, Neyhart, and Reck (1996) reported that novice teachers were somewhat naïve and held stereotypical beliefs about African American and other students of color. For example, stereotypic beliefs suggesting students of color bring attitudes to school environments that are detrimental to learning. What is more, Su (1997) claimed that novice White American teachers at times have little cognizance of racism or discrimination and their effects on schooling. Yet, there is increasing likelihood that White American teachers, for example, will teach students whose cultural and ethnic backgrounds are different from their own (Fox & Gay, 1995). Cothran and Ennis (1999) stated that the dilemma to meet students' needs and maintain identity and connection in physical education programs will continue to exist unless cultural bridges are built and crossed in preparing educators.

Also troubling, Pang and Sablan (1998) reported that teachers' self-efficacy for teaching African American children seemed to decline from the preservice to inservice stages. This becomes problematic in teaching a diversity of learners. Thus, such issues must be confronted in PETE programs. To which, scholars suggest the need to implement diversity training that provides novice PETE teachers with experiences teaching a diversity of learners and prepares them to regularly reflect on the cultural relevancy of their pedagogy (Hodge, 2003; Sparks, 1994; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). PETE programs must strive to adequately prepare teachers for working with a variety of students from different social, ethnic, and cultural backgrounds (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge, Tannehill, & Kluge, 2003; Stanley, 1995). For instance, Hodge et al. (2003) reported that providing novice PETE teachers multiple teaching contacts in structured, well-supervised and success-oriented (e.g., planned, one-on-one, and/or small group teaching opportunities) physical activity contexts led to favorable attitudes and behaviors toward a diversity of youngsters with and without disabilities. Plus, they claimed that providing opportunities for novice PETE teachers to reflect (via journaling) on such experiences was beneficial to their preparation. PETE programs have a responsibility to implement diversity training such that novice teachers are trained and socialized with culturally relevant content knowledge, pedagogy and management skills, and multiple experiences teaching culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse learners (Hodge et al., 2003).

### **The Implications of Increasing Cultural Diversity in the Preparation of Teachers: Making a Case for Diversity Training in PETE Programs**

Since physical education is socially, politically, and culturally situated, it is by its very nature part of the larger sphere of oppression and it reproduces dominant cultural values and norms. Despite the attempts of teacher education to infuse new methods and materials into the traditional physical education curriculum, it has remained essentially unchanged in the last twenty years. (Lock, 1995, p. 219)

An increasing focus has been given to concerns about how best to prepare teachers such that they practice culturally sensitive pedagogies (Stanley, 1995). Traditionally, PETE supervision practices have addressed the development of teaching skills while sometimes failing to account for other concerns of novice teachers, such as behavior management and occupational socialization (Lawson, 1983; Stroot & Whipple, 2003).

More and more scholars have called for PETE programs to infuse multicultural content throughout their curriculum offers and to ensure that their PETE trainees engage in teaching experiences (e.g., practicum experiences, field-based internships) in environments that have a diversity of learners (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge et al., 2003; O'Bryant, O'Sullivan, & Raudensky, 2000; Sparks, 1994; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). Stated differently, novice teachers learn how best to work with a diversity of learners from multiple opportunities to teach in diverse settings (e.g., urban schools; Hodge, 2003; Stroot & Whipple, 2003).

For years, the increasing diversity in America schools has led many educators and policy makers to call for reform in teacher education programs (Hodgkinson, 1991). One rationale behind some of the teacher education curricular reform movements was to enhance the preparation of teachers to work effectively with a diversity of learners (Zeichner et al., 1996). It was hoped that these reform movements would help teachers become more socially sensitive to the needs of a diversity of learners and equip these teachers to work effectively in diverse settings.

Of concern, Williams and Williamson (1995) reported that several novice physical education teachers experienced a reality shock when placed in inner-city areas comprised of predominantly students of color. Teachers who experience reality shock often struggle, particularly if their perceived reality differs from what they encounter or differs from their own cultural norms (Stroot & Whipple, 2003; Williams & Williamson, 1995). Novice teachers may feel unprepared to teach students from cultural backgrounds different from their own, for instance in urban schools, whenever they graduate or take courses from PETE programs that fail to provide them with exposure to a diversity of students in such schools (Stroot & Whipple, 2003), particularly if they lack training in how to implement culturally relevant pedagogy (Sparks, 1994).

It is important that PETE teacher educators understand that they can help those novice teachers in need of transitioning from ethnocentric to ethnorelativist views do so by infusing diversity training that promotes multicultural, multiethnic, and disability awareness throughout the curriculum. Moreover, our call is for diversity training that embraces teaching experiences (e.g., practicum experiences, internships in urban schools) and socialization with a diversity of learners to help novice PETE teachers in their efficacy for practicing culturally relevant pedagogy (Hodge et al., 2003; Sparks, 1994; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). This will do much to ensure that novice PETE teachers are prepared to teach a diversity of learners (DeSensi, 1995).

Of concern also is to health status and physical inactivity levels among students of color, particularly African Americans and Hispanic, non-Whites, as well as those economically disadvantaged populations (McKenzie, 2003). Research indicates that African American and Hispanic, non-White youth tend to be less vigorously active and exhibit lower physical activity levels than White American

youth (Kriska, 2000; McKenzie, 2003; McKenzie, Sallis, Nader, Broyles, & Nelson, 1992; USDHHS, 1999). Research also indicates that African American and Hispanic women report higher engagement in lower intensity activities and lower engagement in the higher intensity activities (Eyler et al., 1998).

The stereotypic image of the lean muscular African American (male) athlete runs counter to the reality of the aforementioned research findings and may impede future efforts to find solutions to these disparities (Harrison, 2001). To address such concerns, both physical education and health professionals must acquire an understanding of the barriers that impede the physical activity behaviors of ethnic minority populations. In an effort to maximize our understanding of minority populations, editors of mainstream journals should improve the receptivity of research that addresses socio-cultural aspects relevant to sport, physical activity, and health related behavior. Troubling, a study by Burden and Harrison (2003) found that in some instances, African American faculty members perceived that their research was marginalized and politically downplayed in the scope of mainstream journal publications. Problems of this nature could minimize opportunities for teachers and teacher educators to gain a more comprehensive understanding of diverse learners. This is another rationale for infusing diversity training throughout the curriculums of PETE programs.

Because contextual variables and the behaviors of both teacher and student influence each other, it follows that their interactions within any particular context influence student learning outcomes (Goh & Fraser, 2000). That is, children learn specific skills as well as attitudes and beliefs regarding schooling and school attainment through their relationships with significant others, including their teachers and the environment (Baker, 1999). As such, some children are exposed to ethnocentric assumptions that devalue their cultural norms on schooling, which places them in danger of not establishing meaningful links to the school culture. This is especially problematic when void of meaningful interpersonal and academic support from teachers (Ogbu, 1992).

There have been studies that reveal situational constraints of physical activities due to cultural differences and social status. Physical education can be considered a cultural practice because the discourse physical education uses are founded on specific aspects of human existence and social life (Kirk, 1992). According to Lawson (1979), the predominant patterns that emerge from cultural studies are as follows: upper class persons prefer individual-dual activities that place primary value on individual achievement, physical skill, and strategy (i.e., such activities as tennis, golf, swimming, skiing, and fencing). Persons from lower social strata prefer collective activities or activities in which chance plays an important role; included in this group of activities are football, basketball, and baseball. Teacher educators should be cognizant that these and other factors play a key role in PETE students' pedagogical practices in diverse settings. Thus, it is important to emphasize that sport and physical activity preferences vary among ethnic groups and by gender. Developing a cognizance of such diverse perspectives to sport and physical activity participation would be beneficial in the training and occupational socialization of PETE students and practicing teachers.

We use the term *diversity* with an evolving and expansive meaning of differences associated with diversities of gender, ethnicity, national origin, social status, religion, age, ability and disability status, personality, sexual orientation, and so on (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge, 2003). As student demographics continue to

change, teachers must be cognizant of the need to implement culturally relevant pedagogy in their classes. Traditional or *ethnocentric* curricular in PETE programs does a disservice to the professional development of novice teachers (Hodge, 2003).

### ***Implications of National Council for Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE) Diversity Initiatives***

In 1979, the National Council for the Accreditation of Teacher Education (NCATE), an organization responsible for the development of criteria defining quality teacher education programs, initiated a call for attention to multicultural education. NCATE adopted a mission statement for the implementation of a diversity component of the teacher certification program. The diversity mission statement provided to teacher education programs was described in the NCATE guideline manual as follows:

Provision should be made for instruction in multicultural education in teacher education in teacher education programs. Multicultural education should receive attention in courses, seminars, directed readings, laboratory and clinical experiences, practicum, and other types of field experiences. (NCATE, 1982, p. 4)

Over the past two decades, NCATE multicultural education provisions have been modified and strengthened, but effective implementation into the curriculum remains a problematic issue for many teacher education programs. In fact, Kea and Bacon (2000) asserted that the achievements of NCATE multicultural provisions are not only systematically neglected, but that most teacher education programs have limited methods for ensuring the incorporation of these provisions. For example, Gollnick (1992) concluded, after examining 59 accreditation reports, that less than 14% of the institutions were in compliance with the NCATE multicultural education guidelines. This finding sheds a revealing light on the importance of multicultural training in PETE programs.

Colleges of education (COE) teacher-education programs across the U.S. seeking to comply with the NCATE standards to provide culturally diverse accountability and improve teacher preparation are challenged by two NCATE standards in particular: the composition of the (a) candidates for licensure and (b) faculty (Gallavan, Troutman, Jones, & Paul, 2001). Standard II.B deals with the composition of candidates for licensure and the indicators for this standard require evidence to show that the unit recruits, admits, and retains a diverse student body. Whereas, Standard III.B deals with the composition of the faculty and the indicators for this standard require evidence that the unit recruits, hires, and retains a diverse faculty.

For most teacher-education programs, these two NCATE standards present the greatest concerns yet remain as two of the most neglected initiatives in educational policy today (Gallavan et al., 2001). These standards are no less key for addressing diversity-related issues faced in PETE. Thus far, such support mechanisms as minority scholarships, affirmative action, and equal employment policies have not proven to be sufficient in ensuring that a culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse PETE student body and faculty are recruited, admitted or hired, and graduated or retained.

## **Moving from Ethnocentrism to Ethnorelativism of Intercultural Sensitivity: Strategies for Change**

For all of the aforementioned reasons, we call for PETE faculty to infuse diversity training throughout their curriculums to help those novice teachers in need of progressing from a dependency on ethnocentric views toward ethnorelative values of intercultural sensitivity to do so. DeSensi (1995) provided an excellent description of Bennett's (1991, 1993) developmental model of intercultural sensitivity from ethnocentrism toward ethnorelativism:

The ethnocentric stages include the denial of, defense against, and minimization of difference. The denial of difference indicates that one does not recognize cultural differences, perhaps due to isolation or intentionally separating oneself from it. Dehumanization of individuals is the result of isolation or separation. Defense against difference involves the recognition of cultural difference accompanied by a negative evaluation of most variations from one's native culture. Within this phase, individuals become more negative as the difference between individuals or groups increases. The minimization of difference involves recognizing and accepting superficial cultural difference, but at the same time holding that all human beings are essentially similar. (1995, p. 36)

In contrast, she explained the following:

The ethnorelative stages include the acceptance of, adaptation to, and integration of difference. The acceptance of difference involves recognizing and appreciating cultural differences in behavior and values. Adaptation to difference requires developing communication skills that enable intercultural communication. The integration of difference is the authentic internalization of bicultural or multicultural frames of reference. (Bennett, 1991; DeSensi, 1994, p. 36)

We agree that understanding and valuing cultural diversity is a developmental process, and initiatives toward ethnorelativism (to ensure intercultural sensitivity) need to be thought of as a series of progressions (DeSensi, 1995). It is argued, however, that many teacher education programs fail to implement multicultural education effectively or methodologically in their curricula requirements (Grant, 1993). To which, novice physical education teachers have echoed these sentiments (O'Bryant et al., 2000). Hence, it is important that PETE faculty, graduate students, and novice teachers revisit, reflect on, and revise their understandings of the process of organizational socialization into physical education (Stroot & Whipple, 2003).

### ***Professional Socialization of Prospective Physical Educators***

Socialization outcomes provided for our students in PETE programs become the foundation or lens through which they view intercultural interactions. Lortie (1975) described socialization as a subjective process, which happens to people as they move through a series of structured experiences and internalize the subculture

of the group. Socialization and teaching experiences for novice teachers in diverse school settings would assist those in need of eliminating stereotypical beliefs about learners from various culturally, linguistically, and ethnically diverse backgrounds do so; allow for positive socialization experiences; and improve communication between these groups. This would at the same time encourage novice teachers to confront any misconceptions they may have about teaching in such settings as well as any misconceptions about teachers and learners from varied ethnic and cultural backgrounds (O'Bryant, 1996).

According to Ladson-Billings (2001), the development of a curriculum with a multiethnic and multicultural focus is paramount because such a curriculum would provide students with relevant and appropriate educational experiences. In contrast, however, sparse opportunities for interaction coupled with limited experiences socializing or working in diverse contexts might inhibit novice teachers' ability to interact in meaningful ways and work effectively with a diversity of learners in unfamiliar contexts (e.g., an urban school) during their *occupational socialization* (Stroot & Whipple, 2003). Lawson (1986) described occupational socialization as "all of the kinds of socialization that initially influence persons to enter the field of physical education and later are responsible for their perceptions and actions as teacher educators and teachers" (p. 107). Here again, the infusion of progressive diversity training in PETE programs is of importance to better prepare novice teachers as they transition through the stages of occupational socialization (Hodge, 2003; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). This is of paramount importance as shortages of teachers of color and teachers desiring and prepared to teach in urban schools continues, many newly certified teachers, who seek a teaching position immediately after becoming licensed, will begin their careers in large, inner-city schools (Kozol, 1991; Stroot & Whipple, 2003).

### ***Culturally Relevant Pedagogies***

The shortage of teachers of color and those desiring or willing to teach in an urban school environment has been characterized as a devastating crisis in American education (American Association of College Teachers, 1994). Nelson-Barber and Mitchell (1992) asserted that it is not only important to increase the number of qualified teachers of color, but also to improve the preparation of teachers of all backgrounds. The lack of teacher education programs that emphasize urban education to adequately prepare future teachers for teaching a diversity of learners in urban schools has contributed to the high rate of teacher attrition in urban schools (Matus, 1999).

To counter this in physical education, teacher educators should ensure that novice teachers are trained to reflect on their personal assumptions, stereotypical beliefs, and behaviors toward learners from various diverse groups (Hodge et al., 2003; Sparks, 1994). Hodge et al. (2003) argued that journaling provides a medium for novice teachers to identify issues, address problems, and think critically about best practices. Moreover, physical educators should be cognizant, for example, that differences that occur between urban, rural, and suburban schools are most evident in economic resources (e.g., supplies, equipment, and faculty salaries); cultural and ethnic diversities of the students; as well as differences in learning styles, preparedness, and readiness of students to learn (Kantor & Brenzel, 1992). Among other variables, the cultural identification of school-age youngsters

plays an influential role in their learning (David & Capraro, 2001). An informed understanding and valuing of diversity will prove beneficial to novice teachers' occupational socialization (Stroot & Whipple, 2003).

PETE faculty must also consider the studentship of their students. Graber (1989) described *studentship* as the means by which students react to the training program environment, enabling them to acquire the skills they believe are important while ignoring those that they believe to be irrelevant or dysfunctional. Novice teachers do not enter schools as empty buckets waiting to be filled by the influence of teacher educators. Often, novice teachers have strongly preconceived stereotypic beliefs about varied pedagogical issues in physical education (Doolittle, Dodds, & Placek 1993). These beliefs are molded and shaped by the students' experiences. If those experiences do not include meaningful contact with other cultures, it may negatively influence their future interactions with students who are culturally different.

Britzman (1991) claimed that learning to teach is a social process in which novice teachers must negotiate the contradictions between their previous conceptions of teaching and their present attempts to construct a provisional teaching identity. Therefore, it is important that novice teachers engage in meaningful teaching experiences in diverse environments to improve their overall understanding and eliminate any stereotypic conceptions of their role as a teacher with learners from diverse backgrounds (Stroot & Whipple, 2003). Thus, teacher educators are responsible for developing coursework and learning experiences that help progress novice teachers from ethnocentric perspectives to ethnorelative values of intercultural sensitivity in meaningful ways (DeSensi, 1995; Hodge, 2003), while also accounting for the influence of studentship. For instance, teaching internships in multiethnic and multicultural urban schools would allow the novice teacher the opportunity to confirm and perhaps dispel any stereotypic beliefs held about various learners (Stroot & Whipple, 2003).

On the other hand, if a teacher or coach begins to show differential treatment to students as a result of their own biases, a student or athlete's motivation for physical activity or sport participation and improvement may be adversely affected (Mavi & Sharpe, 2000). In order for novice teachers and coaches to obtain the highest levels of motivation and academic or athletic achievement with a variety of learners and athletes, respectively, they must develop an understanding of these issues.

Importantly, novice teachers are often taught that they should view their learners as unique individuals with varied backgrounds, knowledge, and experiences. Yet, teacher educators too often fall into the tendency of making broad generalizations about learners of particular ethnic, cultural, and linguistic backgrounds (Articles & McClafferty, 1998). Articles and McClafferty studied teachers enrolled in a multicultural education course and reported that a significant number of them were in the midst of reconfiguring and reconciling certain racial beliefs and theories. In this view of these teachers as learners, they transformed their cognitions and teaching repertoires as they refined their practice. Moreover, these teachers adapted their pedagogical approaches as they learned more about teaching specific diverse or ethnic minority populations. As Harro (2000) suggested, ". . . we are each born into a specific set of social identities . . . and these social identities predispose us to unequal roles [in society]" (p. 15). Harro's model for the cycle of socialization could provide a framework for understanding the complex interaction

of social identities (e.g., culture, ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation) and how such similarities and differences impact novice teachers' values and understanding of what it means to work with a diversity of learners in diverse contexts.

### ***Diversity Training for Members of the Professorate***

According to Sevick (1993), opportunities for African Americans in the teaching profession have never been greater, nor has the shortage of such teachers been more severe. In fact, there has been a general decline in the number of African American college students entering education majors (Webb & Hodge, 2003). In addition to a diminutive representation of college/university students of color in PETE programs, Cross (1998) calls attention to the overall lack of faculty of color in most predominantly White American institutions of higher education (IHE). It has been advocated that PETE faculty ought to engage in diversity training themselves, and they, in-turn, would be better able to infuse informed diversity training throughout their courses (Hodge, 2003). For example, taking advantage of opportunities for PETE teacher educators to co-teach physical education classes in urban settings would be one obvious strategy for improving their own practice. In doing so, they could more authentically contribute to the professional development of their students (Hodge, 2003; Matus, 1999).

### ***Social and Cultural Meanings of Physical Activity That May Influence the Attitudes of Students in Physical Education Settings***

A related concern in preparing teachers to effectively work with a diversity of learners is how best to motivate learners to participate in physical education as it relates to their varied cultures and identification to specific sports, fitness, and physical activities, which are often termed racially identified activities (Harrison, Moore, & Harrison, 2002). Ennis (1994) discussed this perspective by asserting that teachers' views of neighborhoods or peer influences often affect activities they choose to offer in physical education classes.

Harrison (1995) and Harrison, Lee, and Belcher (1999a, 1999b) highlighted the cognitive development of race/gender self-schema in sport and physical activity. Harrison argued that there is sociological segregation based on cultural self-schema that may influence movement patterns and activity choices unique to various ethnic and cultural groups. Thus, race/ethnicity plays a role in valued activities within sociocultural contexts, but this does not imply that physical educators should only reinforce skill development in activities of students' choice but rather to point out that when teachers have different values and beliefs than their students, often the students experience less valued educational opportunities (Ennis & Chen, 1995).

### ***Culture Influences Physical Activity and Sport Participation Patterns***

Over three decades ago, Yetman and Eitzen (1972) reported that basketball, football, baseball, track, and boxing were among the highest sport preferences for young African American males. These sports were viewed as most popular due to family preferences, urban city factors, low socioeconomic identification, accessibility to those sports, and their patterns of participation prior to school matriculation. Lawson (1979) claimed that from a very early age, many African

American males begin the specialized training in sport that marks an economic commodity as much as an educated person. Furthermore, some African Americans are socialized into specific sport activities based particularly on their accessibility and socioeconomic status. This was further confirmed, two decades later with Harrison's (1999) monograph on racial attitudes toward sports and physical activities, which revealed that African American youth continue to follow many similar sport and physical activity preference patterns. The point here is that cultural norms and values influence one's sport and physical activity behaviors (Chepyator-Thomson, 1995; Pittman, 2003).

### ***Diversity Training in PETE Programs: A Progressive Step Forward***

The infusion of multicultural, multiethnic, and disability-related content into the curriculum plus the use of practicum and teaching internships in varied diverse contexts will better prepare PETE students and practicing teachers for working with a diversity of learners (Hodge et al., 2003; Stroot & Whipple, 2003). Previously, researchers and practitioners have used diversity training to increase trainees' cognitive complexity by increasing their knowledge of the target culture and by focusing on salient cultural differences in intercultural training materials such as cultural assimilators (Fielder, Mitchell, & Triandis, 1971). Too often, however, teacher education programs require a single multicultural course to address issues of equity, diversity, and social justice. This is inadequate. Instead, teacher educators should infuse diversity content that promotes multiculturalism across courses (Hodge, 2003; Larkin & Sleeter, 1995; Grant & Zozakiewicz, 1995). Plus, PETE faculty must be able to provide experiences that ensure that novice teachers engage in multiple experiences teaching a diversity of learners in various contexts (Hodge, 2003; Stroot & Whipple, 2003).

O'Sullivan and Tsangaridou (1992) reported that well-constructed, early field experiences can provide opportunities for novice teachers to explore their understandings of teaching, schooling, and the role of the teacher in educating youth. Moreover, Sleeter (1996) claimed that via diverse field experiences, novice teachers gain greater acceptance of a diversity of learners in varied school settings.

Teacher educators have a responsibility to prepare novice teachers who will help learners enjoy physical education in culturally relevant ways that are exciting, accessible, and attentive to their needs (Bain, 1990; Sparks, 1994; Sutherland & Hodge, 2001). Plus, it is imperative that PETE programs help novice teachers gain an understanding of how knowledge is constructed (Rovegno, 2003); how perspectives, biases, and assumptions are formed; and ways in which culture, ethnicity, social class, gender, ability/disability status, and other differences affect the creation of knowledge (DeSensi, 1995) and influence behaviors. In doing so, novice teachers, along with the teacher educators that socialize them, should reflect on their own cultural values and perspectives as well as those upheld within society. It is also critical that we all understand diversity in terms of social justice values because informed and reflective practice can help ensure that physical education and physical educators contribute to educational environments that are culturally relevant and socially just in our nation's schools. Additionally, greater creditability is given to those PETE programs at predominantly White IHE that demonstrate

an authentic commitment to diversity and social justice by recruiting, hiring, and retaining a diverse student body and faculty, including persons of color.

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### ***Authors' Notes***

<sup>1</sup>We decided to use the terms White and White American, rather than European American in an effort to be more inclusive of Anglo (White) descendants from European countries as well as non-European countries (Hodge & Stroot, 1997).

<sup>2</sup>Although we used the term *minority* to emphasize a particular point or cite other scholars' work, we typically avoid this term in referring to individuals or group status with respect to people of color (e.g., African Americans, Latino/Latina, Native Americans) as the term (a) lacks globe validity and (b) often imparts a negative connotation toward such individuals (Coakley, 1998; Hodge & Stroot, 1997). The term *Black* is used within a historical context in reference primarily to African Americans in the United States and other people of African ancestry.