

# Color-Blind Racial Attitudes and Multicultural Teaching Efficacy among Early Childhood Preservice Teachers: Implications for Teacher Education

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## Abstract

This study was to examine early childhood preservice teachers' color-blind racial attitudes and its association with their sense of multicultural teaching efficacy. A total of 66 preservice teachers enrolled in an early childhood teacher education program at a state university in the Northeast US participated in this study through online surveys. Results indicated a mean Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS) score of 2.70, reflecting an average endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes among preservice teachers. Pearson's correlation analysis revealed that racial privilege, institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues were positively correlated (all  $p < .01$ ). Additionally, CoBRAS scores were negatively correlated with the Multicultural Efficacy Scale ( $r = -.42, p < .01$ ), indicating that higher color-blind racial attitudes were associated with lower multicultural efficacy. Linear regression analysis showed that 24.7% of the variance in multicultural teaching efficacy could be explained by color-blind racial attitudes ( $F = 6.227, p < .001$ ), with racial privilege ( $t = -3.45, p < .001$ ) as the only significant predictor. Overall, the findings suggest that there is a relationship between the endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes and the level of multicultural efficacy among preservice teachers. This underscores the importance of promoting multicultural education through efforts to reduce color-blind racial attitudes in teacher education programs to promote culturally responsive teaching practices and improve student outcomes.

**Keywords:** multicultural efficacy, color-blind racial attitudes, early childhood teacher education, racial privilege, diverse students

## 1. Introduction

### 1.1 Significance and Study Objectives

The discourse about color blind racial attitudes in education has begun to gain its attention in the discipline of teacher education in recent years, as they are associated with teachers' teaching practices and diverse students' learning experiences (Burke, 2017; Gay, 2010; Siwatu, 2007). While the intention behind a colorblind approach—treating all students equally regardless of race—may appear to promote fairness, this ideology often overlooks the distinct cultural and racial identities of students, leading to unintended consequences and potentially exacerbating systemic inequalities (Burke, 2017; Cherng & Halpin, 2016; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

As educational environments become increasingly diverse, it is imperative for teacher education programs to move beyond colorblindness and embrace culturally responsive teaching practices that acknowledge and celebrate student diversity (Gay, 2010; Yosso, 2005). According to the National Center for Education Statistics (NCES, 2021), minority students are projected to comprise approximately 56% of the student population in US public schools by 2029, highlighting the urgent need for teachers who are equipped to work with diverse student populations. The ability of future early childhood teachers to effectively teach and guide these diverse students and their parents is dependent on their strong cultural competence. Preservice teachers' multicultural efficacy is equally important in facilitating student learning and development through effective teaching practices.

Research has shown that the cultural competence of teachers is crucial in addressing the needs of diverse student populations and promoting positive academic outcomes (Anyichie et al., 2023; Coleman, Holloman,

Turner-Harper, & Wan; 2021; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 2014). Preservice teachers who have high levels of multicultural efficacy are better able to create inclusive learning environments that celebrate diversity and promote academic success for all students (Betancur & Duque, 2020). Early childhood education, occurring during the most critical and sensitive periods of development, may be the most effective phase to promote cultural competence in educators when they are in teacher education programs (e.g., Garcia & Ortiz, 2016; NAEYC, 2023; Tarrant & Huerta, 2023).

As such, it is important to examine the multicultural efficacy of preservice teachers in early childhood education programs, particularly in urban settings where the student population is often more diverse.

Despite the well-documented importance of multicultural efficacy in teaching, research on the relationship between preservice teachers' color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural efficacy remains limited, particularly in the fields of educational psychology and early childhood teacher education. Color-blind racial attitudes, defined as the belief that race does not matter and should not be considered in social interactions (Atwater, 2008), have been identified as a barrier to developing multicultural efficacy among preservice teachers (Neville et al., 2000). While initially proposed as a progressive response to racial bigotry, color-blindness has been found to be harmful by dismissing and devaluing the experiences of people of color (Bernhard et al., 1998; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Kreamelmeyer, Kline, Zygmunt, & Clark, et al., 2016).

Existing studies have shown that preservice teachers who hold color-blind attitudes tend to be less competent in addressing issues of diversity in the classroom (Kreamelmeyer et al., 2016; Ullucci & Battey, 2011). However, there is a paucity of research examining how these attitudes specifically impact the multicultural teaching efficacy of early childhood preservice teachers. This gap in the literature underscores the need for a deeper exploration of this relationship to inform teacher education programs.

Therefore, the aim of this study is to examine the association between early childhood preservice teachers' color-blind racial attitudes and their sense of multicultural efficacy in teaching their students. This study also explores the implications of colorblind attitudes in teacher education, examining how such perspectives can hinder the recognition and addressing of racial and cultural disparities in the classroom. By addressing this gap, the study aims to contribute to the development of more effective strategies for teacher education programs to enhance the cultural competence of preservice teachers, ultimately improving student outcomes in increasingly diverse educational settings.

### *1.2 The Present Study*

The study seeks to answer the following research questions:

To what extent do early childhood preservice teachers understand people of color?

How are early childhood preservice teachers' color-blind racial attitudes associated with their sense of multicultural teaching efficacy?

To what extent do early childhood preservice teachers' color-blind racial attitudes predict their sense of multicultural teaching efficacy?

This study sheds light on the relationship between preservice teachers' color-blind attitudes and their sense of multicultural efficacy to teach students from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds. By examining the factors that influence preservice teachers' multicultural efficacy, the study aims to provide insights into teacher preparation programs that can improve the cultural competence of preservice teachers. Ultimately, this research can inform the development of effective strategies for teacher education programs to promote culturally responsive teaching practices and improve student outcomes.

## **2. Literature Review**

### *2.1 Teachers' Sense of Efficacy and Multicultural Efficacy*

Teachers' sense of efficacy is a psychological factor that significantly impacts their teaching and their students' learning (Bandura, 1997). Self-efficacy is a person's belief in their ability to accomplish a task successfully (Bandura, 1977). In the context of teaching, multicultural efficacy refers to teachers' beliefs in their ability to work effectively with students and families from diverse racial and ethnic backgrounds (Betancur & Duque, 2020). High levels of multicultural efficacy among teachers are associated with greater success in racially, ethnically, and culturally diverse settings (Guyton & Wesche, 2005).

Several factors contribute to multicultural efficacy, including intercultural experiences, attitudes toward diverse groups, and content knowledge and practical teaching skills in multicultural settings (Lopez-Fernandez, Olmedo,

& Leon, 2020; Swick et al., 2020). For instance, teachers who have had more intercultural experiences tend to have higher levels of multicultural efficacy, suggesting that exposure to diversity enhances teachers' ability to engage with and understand different cultural contexts (Lopez-Fernandez, Olmedo, & Leon, 2020).

However, despite these positive associations, there are significant gaps in the literature regarding the development of multicultural efficacy among preservice teachers, particularly in early childhood education. While some studies have explored the relationship between teachers' self-efficacy and their effectiveness in diverse classrooms, there is a lack of research specifically focused on early childhood preservice teachers and the unique challenges they face in developing multicultural efficacy.

### *2.2 Color-Blind Racial Attitudes and Multicultural Teaching Efficacy*

Color-blind racial attitudes have been found to be a barrier to developing multicultural efficacy among preservice teachers (Neville et al., 2000). Color-blindness refers to the belief that race does not matter and should not be considered in social interactions (Atwater, 2008). Although color-blindness was initially proposed as a progressive response to racial bigotry, it has been found to be harmful to individuals and communities by dismissing and devaluing the experiences of people of color (Bernhard et al., 1998; Hachfeld et al., 2015; Kreamelmeyer et al., 2016; Neville et al., 2000; Suh & Suh, 2021). Burke (2017) claims that colorblindness is a type of racism that downplays the difficulties and real-world experiences that students of color encounter. This kind of thinking may result in a deficiency of culturally sensitive teaching, which is essential for involving and assisting a variety of student populations (Gay, 2010).

Studies have explored the association between color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural teaching efficacy among preservice teachers (Kreamelmeyer et al., 2016). For instance, Ullucci and Battey (2011) reported that preservice teachers who hold color-blind attitudes tend to be less competent in addressing issues of diversity in the classroom. Moreover, Ullucci and Battey (2011) reported that preservice teachers who hold color-blind attitudes tend to lack the skills necessary to work with diverse student populations. In turn, this perspective can lead to a lack of culturally relevant pedagogy, which is crucial for engaging and supporting diverse student populations (Gay, 2010; Sealey-Ruiz & Morris, 2016). This is particularly concerning given the increasing diversity of student populations in US public schools (NCES, 2021).

Despite these findings, there is limited research examining the specific impact of color-blind attitudes on the multicultural efficacy of early childhood preservice teachers. This gap in the literature suggests a need for further exploration of how color-blind attitudes influence the ability of preservice teachers to engage with and support diverse students effectively.

### *2.3 Predictors of Color-Blind Racial Attitudes and Multicultural Teaching Efficacy*

Research has shown that espousing color-blind attitudes is particularly damaging when leading a classroom, making it imperative that teachers examine their attitudes regarding race and privilege. This is particularly relevant considering that the majority of teachers are White (Goldring, Gray, & Bitterman, 2013), even as classrooms and schools are becoming increasingly diverse. Several recent studies have also shown that color-blind attitudes among teachers can lead to negative student outcomes (Barbarin et al., 2018; DeCuir-Gunby et al., 2011).

After reviewing several studies on racial bias in classrooms, Atwater (2008) concluded that racial bias often leads teachers to have a deficit view of student achievement, that student achievement is greatly affected by teacher expectations and assumptions, and that schools often rely on a color-blind viewpoint to "keep the peace" with regards to the issue of race in school buildings. Research has also shown that how strongly a teacher ascribes to color-blindness affects his or her likelihood of adapting academic lessons and the classroom environment to students from a minority group (Hachfeld et al., 2015). Hachfeld et al. (2015) found that the more a teacher identifies with being color-blind, the less likely he or she is to modify the classroom and lessons based on the needs of the students.

The early childhood classroom is not immune to acts of color-blindness and racism. Research indicates that teachers and parents of color have differing views on child-rearing, goal setting in early childhood education, and discipline and that both groups are unaware of what the other prioritizes in each category (Bernhard et al., 1998). Bernhard et al. (1998) found that acts of racism were not uncommon in early childhood settings and that teachers were frequently unaware that such acts were taking place. Parents reported often feeling ignored or threatened when contacting the school's administrator or teachers to discuss the acts of racism (Bernhard et al., 1998). More recent research has shown that preschool teachers' color-blind racial attitudes can negatively impact their interactions with children of color and contribute to the marginalization of these children (Dunne et al., 2019).

As early childhood settings continue to become increasingly diverse and complex, teachers and parents need to

find ways to communicate effectively. Kemple et al., (2016) noted that it is imperative that adults take a proactive role in encouraging young children to recognize and respect diversity. This statement indicates that it is crucial for early childhood teachers to be comfortable with discussing issues of race and difference with young students. It is conceivable that teachers who adopt color-blind attitudes may dismiss the importance of race and differences, rather than engaging students in meaningful discussions about these topics. This comfort in talking about race and diversity must begin with preservice teachers. However, preservice teachers are quick to claim color-blind attitudes (Kreamelmeyer et al., 2016; Ullucci & Battey, 2011).

#### 2.4 The Role of Teacher Education Programs

Recent research has shown that preservice teachers who have had more diversity experiences, such as living in diverse neighborhoods or having a more diverse friend group, have higher levels of multicultural efficacy and are less likely to espouse color-blind attitudes (Swick et al., 2020; Wang & Degol, 2020). Recent research has shown that preservice teachers who have had more diversity experiences have higher levels of multicultural efficacy and are less likely to espouse color-blind attitudes (Swick et al., 2020; Wang & Degol, 2020). Furthermore, teacher education programs must provide opportunities for preservice teachers to gain intercultural experiences, receive training on culturally responsive teaching practices, and foster an inclusive learning environment to address color-blind attitudes and foster multicultural efficacy (Betancur & Duque, 2020; Swick et al., 2020).

The racial and ethnic composition of the teacher education program and the individual characteristics of preservice teachers can also affect their color-blind attitudes and multicultural efficacy (Swick et al., 2020). To effectively teach diverse students and families and promote social justice and equity in education, it is imperative for teacher education programs to provide preservice teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to address their own biases and create a culturally responsive learning environment that celebrates diversity and promotes inclusivity.

### 3. Method

#### 3.1 Sample

This study included a total of 66 preservice teachers enrolled in an early childhood teacher education program in a state university in the Northeast US. The participants' ages ranged from 19 to 29 years old ( $M = 20.86$ ,  $SD = 1.18$ ), with a mean age of 20.86 years and a standard deviation of 1.18. The racial and ethnic identity of the participants was predominantly White (93.8%), with 6.2% of the sample reporting as Latino, Asian, Biracial, or Others. Approximately 90% of the participants were single.

#### 3.2 Instrumentations

##### 3.2.1 Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS)

In order to gauge the attitudes of preservice teachers in an early childhood program, we used Neville et al. (2000)'s Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale (CoBRAS). The CoBRAS showed evidence of being reliable and having "initial construct, concurrent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity" (Neville et al., p. 67). We included 20 items in three subscales such as *Racial Privilege*, *Institutional Discrimination*, and *Blatant Racial Issues* in a 5-point Likert scale format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree). Higher scores on the measure represent individuals' greater endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes.

The CoBRAS has demonstrated strong reliability and validity, including construct, concurrent, discriminant, and criterion-related validity, with initial internal consistency coefficients ranging from .86 to .91 (Neville et al., 2000). Further studies have confirmed its reliability across diverse samples, showing good internal consistency (Chen et al., 2006; Tawa, Suyemoto, & Roemer, 2012) and Cronbach's alphas above .85, reinforcing its utility in predicting racial attitudes and behaviors (Chao et al., 2015; Poteat et al., 2011).

The coefficient alphas for the three subscales in CoBRAS, in this study, were relatively low: Racial Privilege = .30, Institutional Discrimination = .30, Blatant Racial Issues = .50. However, the overall coefficient alpha of .66, which, while lower than in previous studies, is still considered acceptable for research purposes, especially in exploratory studies with small sample sizes. Therefore, we used a composite mean score of overall CoBRAS in our analysis, aligning with the scale's intended use in gauging attitudes toward race and racism in educational contexts.

##### 3.2.2 The Multicultural Efficacy Scale (MES)

In order to examine early childhood preservice teachers' multicultural efficacy, this study used MES developed by Guyton and Wesche (2000). We modified the original survey question items including 5 additional items to gauge early childhood preservice teachers' overall multicultural efficacy. The modified scale comprises four sub-constructs in a 5-point Likert scale format ranging from 1 (strongly disagree) to 5 (strongly agree): 7 items in personal experience, 7 items about their attitude toward multicultural education, 20 items for multicultural efficacy,

and 5 items about their multicultural beliefs. As recommended by Billings and other scholars, we use a total mean composite score of all items to present preservice teachers' sense of multicultural efficacy. Higher scores on the measure represent a greater level of preservice teachers' multicultural efficacy. The overall MES coefficient alpha for the sample in this study was .94. We used mean composite scores in our analyses.

### 3.3 Data Analysis

Descriptive statistics were used to provide an overview of the key variables. Specifically, means and standard deviations were calculated for CoBRAS and MES to examine the level of endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural efficacy among the preservice teachers. Pearson's correlation was used to examine the relationship between color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural efficacy.

In addition, multicollinearity was checked to ensure that the independent variables were not too highly correlated with each other. This was done by examining tolerance and VIF. The tolerance value measures the proportion of variance in one independent variable that is not explained by the other independent variables, while VIF measures the degree to which the variance of a regression coefficient is increased due to multicollinearity. The violation of multicollinearity was checked using an individual R-square value and a VIF.

Finally, linear regression was used to examine the relationship between color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural efficacy while controlling for potential confounding variables. A significance level of  $p < .05$  was used for all statistical tests. The statistical analyses were conducted using SPSS 28.

Overall, the data analysis aimed to explore the relationship between color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural efficacy among preservice teachers in an early childhood education program. This analysis was critical in identifying the predictors of preservice teachers' attitudes towards multiculturalism and in developing interventions to promote multicultural education in early childhood education programs.

## 4. Results

### 4.1 Descriptive Statistics

Descriptive statistics were used to examine the level of endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural efficacy among the preservice teachers. The results showed that the preservice teachers had a higher mean score in the multicultural efficacy measure ( $M = 3.82, SD = .52$ ) compared to the color-blind racial attitudes measure. Specifically, the preservice teachers had a higher mean score in racial privilege ( $M = 3.10, SD = .62$ ) compared to the other two sub-constructs in the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale ( $M = 2.36, SD = .69$  for institutional discrimination and  $M = 2.26, SD = .67$  for blatant racial issues). The mean score for the overall CoBRAS was 2.70, indicating an average level of endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes among preservice teachers. Table 1 provides detailed descriptive statistics for the CoBRAS and MES measures.

Table 1. Descriptive Statistics

Variables	N	Min	Max	M	SD	Skewness	Kurtosis
Racial Privilege	62	1.57	4.43	3.10	.62	-.471	-.139
Institutional Discrimination	62	1.71	3.86	2.65	.48	.372	-.122
Blatant Racial Issues	62	1.57	3.57	2.36	.43	.098	.288
Mean score of CoBRAS	62	1.81	3.52	2.70	.37	-.236	.125
Mean score of MES	61	2.74	4.87	3.82	.52	.043	-.523

Note. Min = minimum; Max, maximum.

### 4.2 Correlational Analysis

Correlations among key variables were examined using Pearson's correlation analysis, and the results showed that racial privilege, institutional discrimination, and blatant racial issues were positively correlated with each other (all  $p < .01$ ), indicating that individuals who endorsed one form of color-blind racial attitude were more likely to endorse others. In addition, the mean score of the Color-Blind Racial Attitudes Scale was negatively correlated with the mean score of the Multicultural Efficacy Scale ( $r = -.42, p < .01$ ), indicating that higher levels of color-blind racial attitudes were associated with lower levels of multicultural efficacy. Table 2 presents intercorrelations among sub-constructs of CoBRAS and among key variables.

Table 2. Correlations among Key Variables

Variables	1	2	3	4	5
1. Racial Privilege	1	.10	.43**	.78**	-.23
2. Institutional Discrimination		1	.27*	.61**	-.21
3. Blatant Racial Issues			1	.75**	-.49**
4. Mean score of CoBRAS				1	-.42**
5. Mean score of MES					1
<i>M</i>	3.10	2.65	2.36	2.70	3.82
<i>SD</i>	.62	.48	.43	.37	.52
<i>N</i>	62	62	62	62	61

Note.  $p < .05$ , \*\* $p < .01$ , \*\*\* $p < .001$  (2-tailed).

#### 4.3 Regression Analysis

Lastly, linear regression analysis was conducted to examine the relationship between color-blind racial attitudes and multicultural efficacy while controlling for potential confounding variables. The results showed that 24.7% of the preservice teachers' multicultural teaching efficacy could be explained by their color-blind racial attitudes ( $F = 6.227$ ,  $p < .001$ ). Controlling for the other two sub-constructs, racial privilege ( $t = -3.45$ ,  $p < .001$ ) was the only statistically significant variable in predicting their multicultural teaching efficacy. Table 3 presents the results of the linear regression analysis.

Table 3. Predictability of Color-blind Racial Attitudes on Preservice Teachers' Multicultural Efficacy

Predictors	$\beta$	<i>t</i>	<i>Tol</i>	<i>VIF</i>	<i>F</i>	<i>R</i> <sup>2</sup>
1. Racial Privilege	-.548	-3.45***	.761	1.314	6.227***	.247
2. Institutional Discrimination	-.093	-.73	.926	1.079		
3. Blatant Racial Issues	-.023	-.21	.813	1.230		

Note. *Tol.* = Tolerance; *VIF* = Variance Inflation Factor.

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

Overall, the findings suggest that there is a relationship between the endorsement of color-blind racial attitudes and the level of multicultural efficacy among preservice teachers in an early childhood education program. This underscores the importance of promoting multicultural education in teacher education programs to prepare teachers to effectively teach and interact with diverse student populations.

## 5. Discussion

The present study aimed to investigate the relationship between early childhood preservice teachers' color-blind racial attitudes and their sense of multicultural teaching efficacy. Results indicated that racial privilege was the significant predictor of multicultural efficacy, and preservice teachers who endorsed higher levels of racial privilege were more likely to have lower levels of multicultural efficacy, indicating a negative relationship between these two constructs. This finding is consistent with previous studies that have found color-blind racial attitudes to be negatively related to multicultural competency among teacher candidates (Kang et al., 2013; Ochoa, 2014; Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004; Tawil & Harley, 2018).

Recent literature emphasizes the need for teacher education programs to focus on developing preservice teachers' cultural competence. Abu-Saad et al., (2021) found that preservice teachers who endorsed color-blind attitudes were less likely to use culturally responsive teaching practices, and Walker et al., (2020) found that a culturally responsive teacher education program improved preservice teachers' ability to incorporate cultural diversity into their teaching practices. These findings suggest that teacher education programs can be effective in promoting culturally responsive teaching practices among preservice teachers.

Moreover, the results of this study have significant implications for early childhood education, as early childhood

settings continue to become increasingly diverse and complex. Teachers who have a strong sense of multicultural efficacy can create inclusive and welcoming learning environments that meet the diverse needs of all children. As such, the results of this study underscore the importance of preparing early childhood preservice teachers to effectively teach racially and culturally diverse students in school settings.

The current study's finding that early childhood preservice teachers' color-blind attitudes were negatively associated with their sense of multicultural teaching efficacy is consistent with previous research. DeMatthews, et al., (2020) found that preservice teachers who endorsed color-blind attitudes had lower levels of multicultural competence, and Souto-Manning et al., (2019) found that preservice teachers who endorsed color-blind attitudes were less likely to implement culturally responsive teaching practices. These findings highlight the critical need for early childhood teacher education programs to address and challenge color-blind attitudes among preservice teachers.

To effectively address this issue, it is imperative for teacher education programs to integrate comprehensive training that focuses on developing cultural competence. Such training should encompass multiple components, including cultural awareness and sensitivity modules. These modules should educate preservice teachers about the histories, experiences, and contributions of various racial and cultural groups, as well as incorporate reflective exercises that challenge them to examine their own biases and assumptions (DeMatthews et al., 2020; Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Additionally, providing practical strategies for integrating students' cultural backgrounds into the curriculum is essential. This involves designing lessons that are relevant to students' lives and using culturally diverse materials to enhance engagement and understanding (Abu-Saad et al., 2021; Walker et al., 2020; White et al., 2020). Field experiences in diverse educational settings are also crucial. These placements allow preservice teachers to practice culturally responsive teaching in real-world scenarios and receive valuable feedback from experienced mentors (Siwatu, 2007; Souto-Manning & Cheruvu, 2019).

Mentorship and peer support further reinforce these efforts. Pairing preservice teachers with mentors who have demonstrated cultural competence can provide ongoing guidance and support, while peer support groups offer a platform for sharing experiences and strategies (Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Ongoing professional development through workshops, seminars, and courses on cultural competence and equity in education ensures that teachers continue to grow and adapt their practices to better serve their students (Tawil & Harley, 2018).

Implementing these comprehensive training components can help future educators understand the importance of integrating culturally responsive teaching strategies into their practice, ultimately leading to more effective teaching and improved student outcomes. This approach not only addresses the findings of our study but is also supported by a body of literature that underscores the benefits of culturally responsive education (Ochoa, 2014; Richeson & Nussbaum, 2004).

Despite the significant contributions of this study, there are limitations that should be addressed in future research. First, the study was conducted with a relatively small sample size of preservice teachers from a single university in the Northeast US, limiting the generalizability of the findings. Future studies should include larger and more diverse samples of preservice teachers from different regions and contexts. Second, this study focused on the relationship between color-blind attitudes and multicultural efficacy, and future research should examine additional factors that may influence cultural competence among preservice teachers, such as previous experiences with diversity and cultural identity.

In conclusion, the findings of this study emphasize the importance of addressing color-blind attitudes in teacher education programs to promote culturally responsive teaching practices and improve student outcomes. Future research should continue to explore effective strategies for promoting cultural competence among preservice teachers and examine the impact of cultural competence on student outcomes. As early childhood settings become increasingly diverse and complex, it is crucial to prepare early childhood preservice teachers to effectively teach racially and culturally diverse students in school settings.

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### Data Availability Statement

The data that support the findings of this study are available on request.

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