

White Teacher's Challenge: Racial and Cultural Differences Between White Teachers and Students of Color

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Abstract. Across the United States, students of color, make up approximately 69% of the urban school population. More than 85% of the classroom teachers are white, predominately female, and 40% of the urban schools do not have teachers of color in the classrooms. Educational systems often struggle in their efforts to support the needs of racially and culturally diverse students and a student's culture is often not regarded as a function of his/hers educational success. The purpose of this study was to capture and analyze stories of teachers who had experienced a transformation in understanding racial and cultural differences and shifted their teaching practices to meet the needs of their students that were racially and culturally different; to facilitate culturally relevant instruction. A qualitative methodology of the narrative inquiry allowed participants an opportunity to share their experiences through storytelling. The teacher participants shared their experience regarding racial and cultural difference. They told how their experiences shaped their instructional classroom practices.