

SOURCE 3

The article “Changing preservice Teacher’s Attitudes/Beliefs About Diversity” investigates the motives behind racial bias and what is needed to reform the bias into awareness. M. Arthur Garmon is the author and a professor of early education and human development at Western Michigan University and uses past study’s results to introduce us to the issue of preservice teachers having discriminatory biases. He created his own study of one of his students, Leslie P., who becomes a great example of the development of the racially sensitive mindset that is crucial in teaching. Garmon bases his study around the question “what are the factors that appeared to be most critical in the development of her multicultural awareness and sensitivity?” Through 10 hours of recorded interviews, Garmon analyzes the conversations he had with Leslie in her senior year of college and categorized her reflections on diversity and multiculturalism throughout her life and how she developed a healthy perspective on the topic. The article is filled with large quotes from their conversations, between them, professor Garmon adds in his inferences and analysis of Leslie and her mindset. His focus points towards the development a culturally sensitive mindset, and how we can help preservice teachers build that ideology into their own. He continually mentions Leslie’s mindfulness and how she is more perceptive than any of his other students. Like most of her white classmates, Leslie came from a homogenous rural town where diversity was rarely discussed. Her interest to open her mind to the topic is what stood out so much to Garmon, although she had not grown up surrounded by multiple cultures she believed it was important to be engaged in all the different walks of life that surrounded her when she arrived at college.

Leslie opened up about the prejudices that had formed in her childhood and the ignorance that the biased beliefs fed off of. Although, she affirms that this openness and mindfulness to one’s own prejudiced views is a necessary step to forming the multicultural awareness that all people should work towards. She places a lot of the responsibility of this mindfulness on going to college, which was the first time Leslie had really become a part of a culture that included many varying cultures. This is common amongst white college students primarily, a large majority of them don’t have a strong cultural sensitivity before entering college because of their upbringing. It is especially helpful because the article gives a detailed depiction of the development a biased open mind goes through as it analyzes itself and matures. The article also addresses her commitment to social justice and it’s importance that should be taught and encouraged in everyone, not just teachers. The development of a culturally sensitive system of beliefs will help Leslie understand and connect with her students, and her interviews act as a strong piece of information on the position many student teachers are in. This is crucial to understand when the goal is to enact change in people’s biased ideologies.

Garmon, M. Arthur. “Changing Preservice Teachers’ Attitudes/Beliefs About Diversity.” *Journal of Teacher Education*, vol. 55, no. 3, 2004, pp. 201–213., doi:10.1177/0022487104263080.