

Working Toward Equity: A Framework for Exploring Racial and Ethnic Diversity in Teacher Education Programs

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Abstract

This paper provides a framework that identifies the understandings and skills preservice teachers need to teach in racially and ethnically diverse K–12 schools. This framework was developed from a literature review from which five key themes emerged: Awareness, Knowledge, Attitudes, Collaboration, and Experiences. Each aspect of the framework is detailed with “I Understand” and “I Can” statements for preservice teachers. Examples of key understandings include: the harm in purporting a colorblind ideology, the need to develop affirming views of all students, and the recognition of the school community as a source of strength. Examples of key skills include: the ability to participate respectfully and receptively in conversations surrounding race/ethnicity, the ability to create instructional experiences that emphasize critical thinking over summative assessment, and the ability to cultivate caring and inclusive classrooms. Ideas for activities consistent with the framework are incorporated.

Keywords: Diversity, Teacher Education, Race/Ethnicity

Teacher education faculty recognize the need to prioritize preparing preservice teachers to work with an increasingly diverse K–12 student population (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Bennett, 2012; Larson, 2015; Sleeter, 2001). This is especially true given the fact that in 2018, there were over 26.6 million students of color among the 50.7 million students in U.S. public schools (NCES, 2018). Particularly with regard to race and ethnicity, preservice teachers must be ready to teach students from a wide range of backgrounds and lived experiences. Programs now require student teaching placements in schools serving low–income and/or multicultural populations, courses geared toward increasing cultural competence, and assignments embedded across the entire program meant to help preservice teachers think critically about their own

positionality in a diverse society (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Bennett, 2012; Brewley–Kennedy, 2005; Cochran–Smith & Villegas, 2015; Cochran–Smith et al., 2015; Darling–Hammond, 2010; Ronfeldt, 2012; Sleeter, 2001; Sobel, Gutierrez, Zion, & Blanchett, 2011).

Purpose

The purpose of this paper is to share the development of a framework to assist teacher educators in graduating new teachers prepared to use culturally relevant (Ladson–Billings, 1995) and culturally responsive (Gay, 2001) pedagogical practices. Specifically, we sought to identify what the literature indicates preservice teachers must know and be able to do as they teach in a multiracial and multiethnic society. This study seeks to determine what knowledge and skills preservice teachers need to improve the experiences and achievement for students of historically underrepresented racial and ethnic groups. Following the literature in response to this question, we will provide examples of specific experiences to help preservice teachers learn to promote equity and diversity in their future school communities.

Literature Review

We explored the literature to examine ways in which teacher education programs have attempted to educate their students to develop cultural competency. In addition to a comprehensive search for relevant peer–reviewed articles, we examined the following: the Core Values of the American Association of the Colleges of Teacher Education (AACTE, 2017), the Interstate Teacher Assessment and Support Consortium (InTASC) Standards (2011), the Council for the Accreditation of Educator Preparation (CAEP) Standards (2016), and the Cultural Competence Manual (Stith–Williams & Haynes, 2007) shared on the Virginia Department of Education website. This review is organized according to the following themes: (a) Experiences of Preservice Teachers of Color; (b) Racial Positionality; (c) Resistance and “Safe Spaces;” (d)

Colorblindness; (e) Affirming Views; (f) Field Experiences; and (g) Culturally Responsive Pedagogy.

Preservice Teachers of Color

Although the population of the nation's schoolchildren is growing increasingly diverse, the percentage of White teachers remains disproportionately high (Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2015). As a result, much of the literature related to diversity in teacher education revolves around helping White preservice teachers learn how to work successfully in multicultural settings. Unfortunately, this approach can marginalize and frustrate prospective teachers of color. Ndemanu (2014), for example, wrote about an African-American preservice teacher who felt that a multicultural education class in which he was enrolled was designed "specifically for middle-class, White students" and never attended to the need for preservice teachers to develop cultural understandings of predominantly White school communities, as if Whiteness was simply the default racial status. Similarly, preservice teachers of color who worked with a Teach for America alternative certification program felt that discussions in required multicultural studies courses were superficial and centered on the presumed needs of White participants (Lapayese, Aldana, & Lara, 2014). Rather than pushing their White peers to recognize the role of White privilege in society and its effects on their own life experiences, students of color felt that "everything was catered to White teachers feeling comfortable, everything being positive and constructive" (Lapayese et al., 2014, p. 21).

In general, this points to a need for recruiting more candidates of color to teacher education programs, which would both diversify the teaching force and widen the conversation about race in education to include a greater variety of perspectives. The goal of diversification is shared by the AACTE, which listed a commitment to "increasing the diversity of their faculty

and the educators they prepare” among one of its Core Values (2017). Hill–Brisbane and Easley–Mosby (2006) recommended that teacher education programs actively recruit preservice teachers from urban areas who demonstrate a commitment to their communities, a strong content knowledge base, and a high degree of pedagogical talent.

Racial Positionality

Even as teacher education programs strive to recruit, retain, and prepare preservice teachers who better reflect the diversity within PK–12 schools (AACTE, 2017), teacher education programs must prioritize training all preservice teachers to consider their own positionality with regard to race and ethnicity and how their background experiences affect their interactions with students (Anderson & Stillman, 2012; DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2011; InTASC, 2017; Matias, 2016; Picower, 2009). In particular, “with the likelihood of the teaching force remaining overwhelmingly White, examining and interrupting the Whiteness of teaching remains one of the most vital tasks for those concerned with improving educational opportunities and outcomes for students of color” (Picower, 2009, p. 213).

Often, White preservice teachers from middle–class backgrounds lack perceptions of themselves as having an ethnic identity (Allard & Santoro, 2006). But, when preservice teachers fail to understand how their actions are grounded in White cultural norms, they may inadvertently show favor to White students and form negative judgments about students of color, perceiving their abilities as lacking (Blaisdell, 2005; DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2011). Teacher educators, too, must conduct meaningful self–examinations and seek professional development to help them continually consider matters of equity and power structures as they relate to education (Brewley–Kennedy, 2005; Sobel, Gutierrez, Zion, & Blanchett, 2011). Bauml, Castro, Field, & Morowski (2016) stressed the importance of teacher educators in “supporting future

teachers' identity development as curriculum–decision makers, those who can and ought to challenge potentially oppressive and marginalizing curricula” (p. 23).

Resistance and “Safe Spaces”

Preservice teachers, especially White preservice teachers, often show resistance to conversations about race and racism (Brewley–Kennedy, 2005; DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2011; Matias, 2016; Picower, 2009). White preservice teachers in a study by Picower (2009) expressed resentment that they were being “pressured” to learn about how to “be aware of all the cultures in your classroom” when they already felt overwhelmed with trying to master the content they would be teaching (p. 207). As a result of such prevailing attitudes, teacher educators sometimes feel they must create “safe spaces” for preservice teachers to speak freely about their concerns regarding racial and cultural differences (Allard & Santoro, 2006; Brewley–Kennedy, 2005; DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2011; Matias, 2016).

While it is true that teacher educators should strive for trusting environments where preservice teachers can collectively grapple with “complex, troubling, and deeply challenging notions of identity” (Allard & Santoro, 2006), they must be willing to push preservice teachers out of their comfort zones and welcome cognitive dissonance to promote growth. Otherwise, teacher educators may be complicit in the “reproduction of Whiteness” that occurs when preservice teachers avoid risk by remaining silent during challenging discussions of race because they fear saying the wrong thing (Brewley–Kennedy, 2005, p. 24).

Colorblindness

The literature reveals that White preservice teachers often present themselves as “racially innocent” (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2011). They may claim not to notice race and to believe everyone is essentially “the same” (Allard & Santoro, 2006; Sleeter, 2001), but this colorblind

ideology causes harm to students because the inequity in opportunities available among people of different races must be acknowledged if it is ever to be changed (Lewis, 2001; Puchner & Markowitz, 2015; Sleeter, 2001). “Critical educators,” wrote Matias (2016, p. 194), “must have a thorough understanding of the racialized context that results in the lack of achievement by urban students of color.”

Affirming Views

In addition to ensuring preservice teachers do not engage in colorblind thinking, teacher educators must help them develop affirming views of all students (Anderson & Stillman, 2012; Bennett, 2012; Cochran-Smith & Villegas, 2015; Sobel et al., 2011). Many preservice teachers enter the profession with deficit views, which are perceptions of people of different races as lacking (Anderson & Stillman, 2012; Bennett, 2012; Picower, 2009) and sometimes manifest as negative characterizations of intellectual aptitude of students of color (Kinloch, 2011) or a belief that families of color—particularly Black families—do not value education (Puchner & Markowitz, 2015). They may even perceive that having a race or culture different from their own is a problem to be overcome (Allard & Santoro, 2006) rather than understanding that their judgment of the value of students’ experiences must not be based on White norms (Blaisdell, 2005). Teacher educators must teach preservice teachers to identify various forms of deficit thinking, interrogate the assumptions on which negative perceptions are based, and then create new, additive statements (Bauml et al., 2016; Naidoo & Kirch, 2016). Instead of thinking that their students simply do not care about school, for example, preservice teachers could seek ways to make their own instruction relevant and motivating (Bauml et al., 2016). In particular, preservice teachers must be taught to view the parents and communities within which their students live as assets to be continually incorporated into experiences designed to promote

learning (Anderson & Stillman, 2012; Darling–Hammond, 2010; InTASC, 2011; Sobel et al., 2011).

Field Experiences

Much of the literature emphasized the need for preservice teachers to have student teaching placements in racially and culturally diverse settings (Anderson & Stillman, 2012; Bennett, 2012; Cochran–Smith & Villegas, 2015; Darling–Hammond, 2010). The partnerships with local schools must be carefully curated to ensure preservice teachers are paired with cooperating teachers who demonstrate culturally responsive practices (Darling–Hammond, 2012; Sleeter, 2001). It can be harmful, according to Larson (2016), for preservice teachers to work with practicing teachers who rely on classroom management practices which reflect a prioritization of the need to control students’ behavior over providing all students with challenging coursework and engaging instructional experiences (Anderson & Stillman, 2012; Ronfeldt, 2012; Toshalis, 2010). So, teacher educators must stay actively involved in monitoring and evaluating the experiences preservice teachers have in local schools to ensure they benefit from positive examples.

Good practice with regard to student teaching, according to Darling–Hammond (2012), is when learners are

encouraged to participate in all aspects of school functioning, ranging from special education and support services for students; to parent meetings, home visits, and community outreach; to faculty discussions and projects aimed at ongoing involvement in students’ opportunities to learn (p. 43).

Some articles also discussed field experiences outside of the student teaching, such as volunteering with community organizations in multicultural areas (Naidoo & Kirch, 2016; Sobel, et al., 2011).

Method

Considering the above body of literature as our data source, we began our analysis by both authors independently in vivo coding the articles and standards (Saldana, 2016). This was done because we sought to identify unifying aspects of the literature that might be relevant to teacher educators on a program development level. Next, we examined our codes for common themes and checked that our themes subsumed the in vivo codes while holding true to the original literature in a manner consistent with the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967). The agreed-upon themes are outlined in Table 1 and make up the overarching statements in the following framework. The “I understand” and “I can” statements were built from the in vivo codes to provide a framework that is thoroughly grounded in the literature on racial and ethnic diversity in teacher education.

Table 1

Themes Derived From the Literature on Teaching About Diversity in Teacher Education

Programs

Awareness	Preservice teachers need opportunities to explore their own racial positioning within society; they must recognize that race/ethnicity is a key part of identity that must not be dismissed under the guise of “colorblindness.”
Knowledge	Preservice teachers must have knowledge of the historical underpinnings of racial injustice and its impact on present societal structures, particularly the public education system. They must replace deficit views of students from diverse racial, ethnic, and language groups with affirming views.

Attitudes	Preservice teachers must be willing to continually engage in discussions surrounding race and racism with an openness toward listening and learning from the experiences of others.
Collaboration	Preservice teachers need to be prepared to provide collaborative learning opportunities among students in their future classrooms and to encourage participation from families and the larger community in interactive learning experiences, recognizing that community is an asset to education.
Experiences	Preservice teachers need opportunities to apply their knowledge of culturally responsive teaching practices during field experience placements in schools that serve racially and ethnically diverse populations.

Framework

We identified five themes from the literature that frame needed understandings and skills related to racial and ethnic diversity: Awareness, Knowledge, Attitudes, Collaboration, and Experiences. The themes are described in the following sections and in Table 1. For each theme, we identified key understandings we believe all preservice teachers need concerning racial and ethnic diversity. These are presented as “I understand” statements in our framework, which is found in Table 2. We also identified key skills we believe all preservice teachers need to be able to do in conjunction with each theme, which are presented as “I can” statements in our framework (Table 2). A brief explanation of the “I understand” and “I can” statements further clarifies their meaning and the necessity for each theme. When we refer to students, we mean K–12 students, not preservice teachers.

Table 2

A Framework for Exploring Racial & Ethnic Diversity in Teacher Education Programs

Awareness	
<i>I Understand:</i>	<i>I Can:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The problem with ethnocentrism and the role it plays in the classroom • The problem with “colorblindness” as it ignores a key piece of a student’s history and identity • The challenges given the social/political/economic impact of race/ethnicity • The problem of seeing race as a deficit element of a child’s culture • The problem with seeing a student’s race as an indicator of her or his academic capability 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reflect on explicit and implicit beliefs and attitudes regarding race/ethnicity in schools • Consider a teacher’s responsibility regarding equity in schools • Examine the social/political/economic discussion around race/ethnicity • Recognize cognitive dissonance when in unfamiliar situations
Knowledge	
<i>I Understand:</i>	<i>I Can:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The need to appreciate differences within and across racial/ethnic groups • How language and the social nature of race/ethnicity affect how students approach learning • The inequitable distribution of resources among people of different racial/social groups 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adopt affirming views of all students • Focus on students’ strengths rather than perceived weaknesses
Attitudes	
<i>I Understand:</i>	<i>I Can:</i>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Race/ethnicity is a complex, nuanced social construct • Mostly–White schools are not “ideal” schools that diverse schools should try to emulate • The importance of holding high expectations for all students 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Participate respectfully and receptively in conversations about race/ethnicity • Provide equitable opportunities for students to achieve high expectations

Collaboration

I Understand:

- Learning is a social experience and should be active and interactive for everyone
- Successful teaching is evidenced by student learning and growth, not a “controlled” classroom environment
- The school is the center of the community and drawing support and resources from community agencies is essential to student success

I Can:

- Teach in racially and ethnically inclusive, student-centered ways that encourage collaboration
 - Create and adapt instruction to focus on critical thinking rather than summative assessment
 - Use culturally appropriate management strategies
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Experiences

I Understand:

- All teachers, regardless of race, ethnicity, and background, need preparation in how to teach diverse learners

I Can:

- Reflect critically on pedagogy decisions with regard to cultural differences among students
 - Feel comfortable building positive relationships with all students
 - Connect my university coursework and field experiences with regard to cultural awareness
 - Engage parents/guardians and the community in student learning
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Awareness

Preservice teachers should be mindful of their attitudes and biases about race and ethnicity as well as the sociopolitical issues and personal beliefs concerning society, the purpose of schools, and their responsibility toward students (Brewley–Kennedy, 2005; Cochran–Smith & Villegas, 2016; Stith–Williams & Haynes, 2007). Preservice teachers of all races and ethnicities need opportunities to increase their awareness of their own racial positioning and to learn about what exactly discussions around race and ethnicity entail, both socially and politically.

Preservice teachers need chances to learn and understand that claims of being racially neutral

under the guise of colorblindness only communicates to students and their families that a central part of who they are does not matter. Furthermore, preservice teachers need to realize that students of traditionally minoritized population groups do not have a struggle to overcome simply because of their race; rather, it is the social constructs *surrounding* race that create potential disadvantages.

With opportunities for discussion and reflection, preservice teachers can become aware of the impact of race and culture on society and can understand their responsibility to all students in the school. They also need to examine situations in which they feel uncomfortable working with students of different races or ethnicities by reflecting on why those feelings occurred and seeking support. This type of evaluation can help preservice teachers become aware of their own beliefs and may begin to break down existing stereotypes and prejudices.

Knowledge

Preservice teachers should advance their knowledge about different races and ethnicities in order to replace any deficit views with affirming ones and to understand biases and stereotypes they may hold (Cochran–Smith & Villegas, 2016; Stith–Williams & Haynes, 2007). Preservice teachers need to learn that the race, ethnicity, and home language of a student are not weaknesses; rather, students’ racial and ethnic perspective is a source of strength. In particular, the inclusion of their home language—referring to the first language of bilingual students as well as the various dialects of English spoken in the U.S. classrooms (Hollie, 2018)—can positively influence how students learn, and preservice teachers need to be aware and respectful of this.

Further, preservice teachers need to understand the disproportionate allocation of resources in schools is often caused by underlying racist beliefs and practices and is not simply due to socioeconomic factors (Anderson & Stillman, 2013). Preservice teachers must acknowledge the social interconnectedness between race and education, and teacher educators

must help them adopt affirming views of communities of color. That is, by introducing literature and in-person experiences into the curriculum, teacher educators can promote the understanding of cultural values and practices as assets that can be used to advance children's education in meaningful ways rather than hindrances to traditionally understood educational methods.

Attitudes

Preservice teachers should be open to differences in opinion concerning race and ethnicity by being continual learners and examining their own attitudes toward others (Brewley–Kennedy, 2005; Cochran–Smith & Villegas, 2016). The literature suggests preservice teachers, especially White preservice teachers, are resistant to conversations about race (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2014; Matias, 2016). This is an attitude concern that teacher educators should address in their courses on racial and ethnic diversity. Preservice teachers need to understand these discussions are useful because learning about different races and ethnicities will help them appreciate how their students' experiences may be similar or different from their own schooling experiences. This understanding will facilitate preservice teachers' ability to create safe learning spaces for their students. However, it is not enough to engage in conversations about race and ethnicity in courses. Preservice teachers must show they can participate in these discussions both respectfully and receptively and, if they have not personally experienced racism, they should position themselves primarily as listeners (DiAngelo & Sensoy, 2014).

Conversations about race can help diminish stereotypes of what the “ideal” school looks like and can provide opportunities for preservice teachers to explain what it means to have high expectations for every learner. For example, one misconception that can arise in discussions on race and ethnicity is that of homework, and the rationale not to assign any because teachers believe parents will not support students in completing it. This notion has the added implication

that parents, particularly those in racially diverse communities, do not value education, a sentiment that is unfounded and harmful to the necessary home-school relationship. There are situations in all communities where working or otherwise busy parents are not able to participate in daily homework activities, but that certainly does not mean they do not care. Preservice teachers need to understand there are resources available at YMCAs, community centers, and places of worship where students spend time after school. These community resources are placed to support busy parents who *do* care about their children's education by helping students complete homework, play sports, participate in clubs, and learn life skills. Talking through misconceptions such as this one can help preservice teachers see that the "ideal" school is one where students are learning, and this learning is not necessarily confined to the school's walls. Also, having high expectations for students does not mean making pedagogical choices out of resignation for a situation the preservice teacher might not understand, but instead making sure every student has access to the resources needed to reach her or his potential.

Collaboration

Preservice teachers should be able to respond to racial and ethnic differences in the classroom in respectful, sensitive, and positive ways to encourage collaboration (Framework for 21st Century learning, 2009; InTASC, 2011; Stith-Williams & Haynes, 2007; University of Michigan, 2017). They need to be able to create a classroom environment where all students, regardless of their race or ethnicity, can collaborate on their coursework. Teacher preparation courses can help preservice teachers understand that student learning and attention to the development of humanity is the focus of education (Anderson & Stillman, 2013) and that when students are engaged in learning together, everyone benefits (Anderson & Stillman, 2013). Occasionally, preservice teachers express fear about being placed in a "hard" school, usually in

urban areas, or working with “unruly” students who attend urban schools (Bauml et al., 2016; Sleeter, 2001), which makes collaboration impossible. Teacher educators can provide opportunities for preservice teachers to understand that all children can be motivated to learn when they feel empowered over their education, successful, cared for by their teacher, and see that what they are learning is useful and interesting (Jones, 2018). Preservice teachers should be able to show they can (a) create lessons that are motivating for students and can (b) develop classroom management plans that do not rely heavily on removing disruptive students from the classroom. Instead, preservice teachers should learn to examine antecedents before challenging students’ behaviors to better understand why students act out and what can be done to support them.

Part of encouraging a diverse population of learners to collaborate means teaching in ways that are culturally responsive (Ladson–Billings, 1995). Preservice teachers need to show they can provide equitable opportunities for students to achieve. They should also prepare and enact lessons with a mind toward inclusive collaboration and be aware of grouping patterns in their student teaching placements. Part of preparing these lessons means adapting instruction for inclusion by, for example, teaching math through a social justice lens, reading a selection of literature by authors of multiple races/ethnicities, or teaching history through the eyes of the colonized instead of the colonizers. To be culturally responsive, preservice teachers can also work to ensure community resources, discourses, and leaders are a part of the classroom community, conversations, and projects. When the school is part of the community and the community part of the school, students have opportunities to see the people they learn from in different situations working together for their good (Anderson & Stillman, 2013).

Experiences

Preservice teachers should have field placements in schools and community agencies that serve populations which have been historically minoritized (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Bennett, 2012), and they must be equipped to use a critical pedagogy which aims to deconstruct and counteract the racism inherent in today's society. As essential as it is to emphasize preparing preservice teachers to teach in a diverse society during coursework, a disconnect exists if the knowledge they gain is not applied in their placements. Preservice teachers, then, need to show they can create lessons to be culturally relevant for their students, reflect thoughtfully on classroom experiences, and develop plans for creating positive relationships with all their students. Ultimately, though, to really understand the lives of traditionally minoritized students, preservice teachers need opportunities to interact with parents, guardians, and community members (Darling-Hammond, 2012). Teachers are agents of change in students' communities, and their positive impact is strengthened if they are connected to the other agents of change in those communities.

Discussion

It is important to stress that the information contained in each of these themes is vital for all preservice teachers because everyone, not just White preservice teachers, needs the opportunity to learn about how to teach diverse learners. The above framework for understandings and skills related to racial and ethnic diversity is grounded in the literature. It is meant to help teacher educators design meaningful coursework to support preservice teachers to teach their students in culturally responsive ways.

While it is a helpful programmatic organization tool, the framework may also be used for designing specific class activities. For example, awareness could be taught by sharing a selection of literature about people of different races, geared for both adults and children. Reading and

discussing novels can be particularly meaningful as they provide a deep view of characters' experiences over time. The American Library Association website (www.ala.org) provides lists of high-quality children's literature celebrating the contributions of authors from different racial and ethnic backgrounds such as the Coretta Scott King Book Awards (honoring Black authors) and the Pura Belpré Award (honoring Latino/a authors). Teacher educators could consult these lists to design literature discussion groups where preservice teachers would read the books, then meet to talk about what they learned about the experiences of people of diverse backgrounds. Awareness could also be taught by learning about how mathematics and science are learned in other countries and are immersed in the culture and economic situations of those countries. Mathematics especially is often thought of as "universal," but it is instead situated in the culture and values of different countries (d'Ambrosio, 1985).

During their student teaching semesters, preservice teachers could write weekly reflections based on what they notice regarding equity and diversity in their field placements. Faculty might provide guiding questions for consideration and could facilitate practical conversations about race and ethnicity stemming from these reflections during education classes, allowing opportunities to discuss any evidence of deficit beliefs observed during field experiences. It is not enough to send preservice teachers into local schools hoping they will gain insight into working with diverse communities. Instead, teacher educators must help preservice teachers unpack these experiences to ensure that negative stereotypes are being abandoned—and not reinforced.

Field trips to local sites of racial or ethnic significance, coupled with written reflections and class discussions, may promote new knowledge which preservice teachers could be taught to apply in non-superficial ways in the classroom. For example, many communities have museums

or exhibits celebrating Civil Rights leaders. Visiting these sites together can prompt discussion of key historical figures while also teaching preservice teachers how to plan and execute successful field trips to such sites with their own future students.

Another idea would be to assign preservice teachers to engage in three activities (approved by the professor) with people from racial or ethnic groups different from their own. This could involve visiting an unfamiliar church, volunteering at a community center, or attending a class for adults who are learning to speak English. Preservice teachers would then write reflections on what was learned and how the experience may have helped challenge and replace deficit views with affirming views.

In terms of attitudes, teacher educators and preservice teachers could co-construct classroom norms for how to position themselves as respectful and receptive participants in discussions of race as described in the InTASC (2001) critical dispositions. This would set the expectation that engaging in such discussions would be a regular part of their coursework, helping to reinforce the importance of continually revisiting these topics throughout the program and into their teaching careers.

Collaboration could be taught by having class discussions about what it means to have high expectations for every learner and how those expectations are demonstrated in field placements. Preservice teachers could also consider how a classroom can be collaborative when high expectations vary by student, leading to a discussion on equity, equality, and implicit bias that can make expectations inequitable. Preservice teachers could write and teach lessons that are racially and ethnically responsive, explaining how pedagogical decisions made for the lessons reflect best practices for critical educators. Finally, preservice teachers early in their university experience could tutor at a local community center, coach a sport, or tutor high school or adult

learners seeking their General Educational Development (GED). Journaling about these experiences could provide an avenue for reflection and prompt preservice teachers to think about the value of community resources. No matter what practical experiences are expected, teacher educators must engage in constant dialogue with preservice teachers to help them connect pedagogical knowledge and practice.

Implications Toward Teacher Education Programs

Teacher educators can use the framework to consider how—and how often—they are engaging in critical discussions about race and racism throughout their programs. We hope this framework will encourage teacher educators to interrupt instances where preservice teachers demonstrate deficit thinking or colorblindness and help them reframe their views toward people from backgrounds different than their own. We hope teacher educators will feel emboldened to provide pedagogical spaces that are more than simply “safe.” Having established a community of respect and collaboration, teacher educators can learn to tolerate needed discomfort in their classrooms in order to challenge preservice teachers’ thinking for the good of the students they will one day teach. Our framework can serve as a checkpoint for planning individual courses and for influencing broader program design. By ensuring preservice teachers have opportunities to develop the awareness, knowledge, attitudes, collaboration, and experiences needed to teach in a diverse society, teacher educators can better prepare them to provide positive educational experiences to students throughout their careers.

Limitations and Recommendations for Future Research

One of the limitations we faced when doing this research was our own positionality as White teacher educators. We both taught for years in schools with racially and ethnically diverse populations, and our interest in the topic grew from those experiences. However, considering our own races, it seemed inappropriate to design a framework without basing it in the literature,

experience, and hard work of established researchers. It is out of our respect for their accomplishments, our love of teaching diverse learners, and our deep-rooted need to share that love with future generations of preservice teachers that we present this framework. With it, we hope to help build a common language for designing coursework or research on teaching preservice teachers about racial and ethnic diversity. As this framework is still largely conceptual, more research is needed to explore its application within teacher education programs. Empirical studies outlining the use of this framework with preservice teachers and describing its effectiveness would add support to our recommendations.

Conclusion

Addressing the needs of a racially diverse society is a non-negotiable component of today's teacher preparation programs. Our framework, which was grounded firmly in existing literature, can provide guidance for teacher educators who wish to design a comprehensive program for ensuring that preservice teachers are prepared to effectively teach all students. We hope future researchers will continue to research and revise what it means to teach about racial and ethnic diversity with respect to awareness, knowledge, attitudes, collaboration, and experiences.

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