Fostering Pre-Service Teachers' Antiracist Expectations through Online Education: Implications for Teacher Education in the Context of Global Pandemics

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ABSTRACT: The increase in online education programs, accompanied by the current COVID-10 pandemic, has led universities to reconsider alternative ways to prepare teachers for social justice. One under-researched area in this conversation is the need for teacher candidates to examine their racialized expectations that often negate students of color in TK-12 classrooms. This self-study describes one faculty member's *digital critical race praxis* (DigitalCrit praxis) as a mediator of her expectations to prepare pre-service teachers for social justice. Research findings have implications for critical multicultural education, digitally based instruction, and teacher preparation.

KEYWORDS: DigitalCrit, distance education, online pedagogy, praxis, teacher dispositions

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On March 11, 2020, the World Health Organization officially declared COVID-19 a pandemic (World Health Organization, 2020). Severe medical cases were multiplying unimpeded globally, prompting schools and other social institutions to close or move their operations online (LeBlanc, 2020). This pandemic presented universities in the United States with unprecedented circumstances, as in-person courses were unexpectedly transitioned online in the middle of a semester. Through social media, many faculty shared their apprehension regarding this interruption due to their limited experience with online teaching. This result of the pandemic has led both new and experienced faculty to

contemplate their online pedagogy, especially where platforms are perceived to inhibit real-time interactions with students.

Online pedagogy is an essential element of the educational system and, with it, comes unique challenges in preparing pre-service transitional kindergarten to 12th grade (TK-12) teachers for social justice. Villegas (2007) contends that attending to issues of social justice is an important prerequisite for the preparation of teachers. She reports that teachers situating their work in social justice issues are more likely to conceive their classrooms through an equity perspective and understand their roles and responsibilities in a highly stratified and inequitable society. Noguera (2003) posits that schools, despite their intended goals toward equity, often operate with negative views of students of color, re-creating the very racial inequities that many equity efforts purport to ameliorate. The practice of using students' racial and other intersectional backgrounds to predict their intellectual capabilities has been largely reinforced through the social hierarchy in a white supremacist educational system (Holbrook, 2006). In the context of teacher preparation, Villegas (2007) explains that pre-service teachers' dispositions and beliefs about students' abilities are often animated through actions and relationships in the classroom to impact achievement. This dynamic raises the question of what and how much distance education can do to disrupt pre-service teachers' dominant beliefs and conscious and unconscious expectancies for students. Given that online courses are often delivered asynchronously in a prescriptive manner, it is difficult to gauge the authenticity of remote interactions and how individuals receive content considered discomforting (Zembylas, 2015).

Colorism and white supremacy are deeply entrenched globally (Allen, 2001; Mills, 1997), which has led COVID-19 to further amplify the salience of race in the United States. The president and White House officials' repeated racialization of COVID-19 as the "Chinese virus" and "kung flu" have incited anti-Asian American racism and xenophobia (Wong, 2020). Further, white supremacist groups have increased membership through online messaging to incite racism (Perrigo, 2020). Due to deep racial and economic inequities, COVID-19 has disproportionately impacted people of color, the elderly, and the medically uninsured (Artiga et al., 2020). Some have referred to these injustices as a "double pandemic" (Wong, 2020), especially since the government has failed to exert any intentional efforts to address them. As many social justice educators respond to this global phenomenon in their own lives, they have been operating with a great deal of sensitivity toward those who have been directly affected. Our responsibility as educators to confront white supremacy must continue, as we explore alternative ways faculty can address injustices through online education.

Given that teachers' educational expectations are direct and powerful predictors of student success (Boykin & Noguera, 2011), the ways universities virtually engage in these moral and ethical dimensions of educational social justice remain under-theorized. Whereas some may perceive online instruction as merely a facilitation of ideas and technical know-how, the preparation of effective teachers cannot be condensed into watered-down curricula or superficial intercultural exchanges. Uzum et al. (2019) discovered that pre-service teachers in Turkey and the United States have varying degrees of acceptance and reluctance with an online curriculum that challenges their worldviews and hierarchical attitudes about TK-12 students and their families. In the

United States, some pre-service teachers envision their roles in education through a race-evasive perspective (Annamma et al., 2017; Marx & Pennington, 2003; Matias & Grosland, 2016), which can result in politically neutral analysis of social structures and inequities (Pabon & Basile, 2019). Denying the salience of race in education sustains ideologies of white superiority (Fergus, 2017) and inhibits teachers' abilities to fully support students in performing to higher levels of academic expectation (Diamond et al., 2004).

To effectively prepare teachers for the classroom, there is an urgent need for a better understanding of the role of online pedagogy in (1) supporting pre-service teachers' orientations toward antiracism and (2) assisting them in (re)constructing their educational expectations as a method to build anti-oppressive education. This self-study provides a starting point to theorize ways to (de)construct knowledge about race and white supremacy through online instruction and offers concrete curricular examples of building pre-service teachers' anti-racist expectations of students in the United States. Our objective is to use the first author's self-study to provide a conceptual grounding for university faculty and other teacher educators to remotely prepare pre-service teachers to situate their educational expectations in the broader context of racial hegemony. This self-study is guided by the following questions:

(1) How does a university faculty member define and animate her curricular expectations to prepare pre-service teachers for social justice in an online learning environment in the United States?

(2) How does a university faculty member virtually facilitate pre-service teachers' (re)constructions of their educational expectations for TK-12 students of color?

Literature Review

We begin this literature review by defining online education. We then outline its challenges and possibilities, presumed political neutrality, and alleged universality in its benefits and rewards for individuals and communities. By understanding the political nature of online education, we explore how online pedagogy can be a tool to prepare educators for social justice.

Challenges and Possibilities of Online Education

Despite the aforementioned concerns regarding computer-based education, research has proven its capacity to increase access to systems of higher education by including those living in rural spaces and others looking to continue their education with flexible schedules (Marx & Kim, 2019). However, Anderson and Dron (2011) remind us that technology is neither static nor ideologically neutral, as the platform itself reflects a particular epistemology and is able to shape the ways knowledge is constructed. Research shows that access to online education can be a barrier for many populations, which further perpetuates the ongoing race/class digital divide (Domingue, 2016). The

fallacy of platform neutrality further sets barriers for immigrant or international students, faculty, and those with (dis)abilities, as modes of engagement are oriented toward white, ableist, and English-monolingual paradigms. These challenges impact online pedagogy and can subjugate students and faculty to dubious measures of assessment (Domingue, 2016; England, 2012).

For instance, some faculty tend to include grammar as part of discussion-board rubrics, something that would not be an issue in an in-person class. And while asynchronous formats may provide multilingual individuals with more time to engage in discussions when compared to in-person classrooms (Domingue, 2016), the emphasis on English grammar over content and ideas reinforces punitive models of education while perpetuating linguistic hierarchies in the learning environment. Likewise, when students complete evaluations of faculty based on race and gendered appearances and expectations, accents in videos, and perceived grammatical issues in discussion threads, their potentially different reviews (versus in-person courses) have consequences for faculty members' tenure and promotion. Online education is not politically neutral, and these negative consequences are especially damaging when universities view students' satisfaction surveys as objective measures of faculty effectiveness. So far, universities have yet to acknowledge and ameliorate online education's disproportionate impact on politically marginalized populations in both the student body and the faculty.

Ukpokodu (2008) defines online pedagogy as "facilitative activities that include organizational strategies, delivery strategies, and management and communication strategies used to promote teaching and learning 'together' in an online learning context" (pp. 232-233). Anderson and Dron (2011) document three typologies of distance education pedagogies that historically engage learners from cognitive-behaviorist, constructivist, and connectivist stances and describe how technology both shapes and is reshaped by instructors' usage for teaching and learning. This requires faculty to heavily consider students' experiences in navigating the tools, organization, and facilitation of the modules in addition to the extent to which they engage with the content. However, Belt and Lowenthal (2020) argue that present faculty development programs are often one-and-done endeavors, focusing on technological competency instead of preparing them for pedagogical change to reimagine their classrooms.

Online Pedagogy for Social Justice

The literature tends to focus on the importance of instructor navigation in creating online environments, which infers a sense of passivity in online instruction at the expense of conceptualizing these classrooms as pedagogical spaces. From our perspective, the ongoing usage of prescriptive curriculum in online education further deprofessionalizes the teaching profession, perpetuating a form of low expectations for pre-service teachers. In the last decade, research has shown the potential of online education to be increasingly pedagogical in meeting learning objectives associated with social justice. Caruthers and Friend (2014) refer to the online learning environment as a socially constructed thirdspace built from multiple belief systems of students and faculty, which we argue also includes the platform and course designers. Such space may be constituted by dominant

narratives from various participants, but according to the researchers, critical pedagogy (Freire, 1970) can play a role in creating conditions and processes for the emergence of an exploratory space for students and faculty to reconsider material and power relations. In doing so, new knowledge is then co-constructed between the instructor and the students, connecting mindsets and skill sets and eliciting transformative learning and social action (Caruthers & Friend, 2014). Uzum et al. (2019) posit that, under such conditions, telecollaboration becomes a means to unpack topics and discussions that students perceive as deeply personal, controversial, and discomforting. These online pedagogical spaces are beginning to evolve through new levels of criticality to assist students in interrogating the self in relation to the experiences of others in an inequitable society.

Consistent with these approaches, Jaffee (1997) highlights four online pedagogies that are important to equity and social justice—(1) interactivity, (2) actively learning, (3) mediation, and (4) collaboration—to elicit knowledge (re)construction through problem-posing, information-sharing, perspective-taking, and support. Through pre-service teachers' perspectives, Ukpokodu (2008) discovers that her deployment of critical pedagogy focusing on discussion threads, partner-shared learning, and writing assignments was effective in creating conditions for rigor, relevance, and positive relationships in her equity and social justice course. In this course, Ukpokodu (2008) carefully describes the curriculum that enables pre-service teachers to examine sources regarding teachers' dispositions toward negative expectations and educational equity to raise consciousness. She then utilizes weekly modules to scaffold students to (re)construct knowledge to shift their belief system and to engage them in pre- and post-narrative inquiry assignments to elicit critical reflection and agency for self and social transformation.

Similarly, Domingue (2016) points to the importance of using technology in ways that advance rather than hinder the larger goals of social justice. She identifies eight essential social justice pedagogies for online courses: (1) fosters community and interpersonal relationships, (2) insists on inclusivity in learning environments adaptable to diverse learning needs and social identities, (3) emphasizes dialogue and multiple perspectives, (4) facilitates inclusivity in participation, (5) provides curriculum that situates contemporary social justice issues in historical contexts, (6) establishes experimental activities that elicit students' intellectual curiosity and ability to pose questions to think beyond their comfort zone, (7) assists students in exploring social identities and ways they are politically constructed through institutional power, and (8) provides opportunities for students to apply their knowledge to their local context with assignments that promote activism beyond the virtual classroom.

Theoretical Framework: Digital Critical Race Praxis (DigitalCrit)

To prepare teachers to counter systems and practices of race-evasiveness, deficit thinking, and negative expectations in education, we utilize critical race theory (CRT) in teacher education to examine pedagogies associated with online teacher preparation (Solórzano, 2019). CRT acknowledges the centrality of race and racism in schools in

negating students and communities of color (Ledesma & Calderón, 2015). Building on CRT as a means to provide "structure to justice practice" (Yamamoto, 1997, p. 876), we developed *digital critical race praxis* (DigitalCrit) as a new analytic lens to understand how pre-service teachers are prepared to foster antiracist expectations through reflective action. This analytical lens draws on the work of critical pedagogy and critical race praxis to counteract dominant narratives in the areas of (1) teacher preparation and (2) online education that continue to situate race and racism in the periphery. Freire (1970) explains that education should be conceived as a process toward ideological clarity in igniting humanistic education for liberation. This literature has since evolved to center race in illuminating praxis in community organizing (Fuentes, 2012; Horsford et al., 2019; Stovall, 2013), schooling (Alemán et al., 2013; Lynn, 1999; McKay, 2010), parenting (Bernal, 2018), and higher education (Croom & Marsh, 2016).

Building on this work, we define DigitalCrit as the structural and curricular conditions that digitally and pedagogically facilitate organizational, delivery, management, and communication strategies for online classrooms as spaces for liberatory struggles against coloniality and white supremacy. DigitalCrit emphasizes that online education does not occur in a vacuum and supports educators in developing their dispositional, ethical, and pedagogical dimensions of social justice teaching to (1) interrogate individuals' knowledge and the ethics of those norms and practices; (2) reconstruct collective knowledge and curriculum repositioning the epistemology, expectations, and material conditions of people of color; (3) explore interdisciplinarity and counternarratives to decenter dispositions associated with dominant ideologies and narratives; and (4) pedagogically recast the self, theory, and reflective action to generate new knowledge, expectations, and impact. These practices consist of the conceptual, the performative, the material, and the reflective as guideposts toward DigitalCrit in online environments (Yamamoto, 1997). DigitalCrit can assist pre-service teachers in cultivating the willingness and ability to translate theoretical insights into actually recognizing and responding to injuries they have personally committed, witnessed, or experienced as a method to reconstruct their educational expectancy (Garcia, 2015).

Self-Narrativization as Reflective Methodology

Our methodological approach, self-narrativization, is based on the traditions of (1) memory studies (Keightley, 2010), (2) bearing witness (Fine, 2006), and (3) counter-storytelling (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). Such a method illuminates the first author's retrospective account of her online pedagogy in the last five years, providing a systematic approach to examining her curricular expectations of pre-service teachers for social justice. The experiential knowledge of faculty of color is often marginalized and ignored as concrete evidence of race inside and outside academia. Such negation is especially salient in faculty participation and resistance within and against systems of oppression and meritocracy. The method of self-narrativization offers the opportunity for researcher reflexivity and a counter-perspective to results stemming from deficit-oriented, race-evasive research designs (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002). This study focuses on the

significance of memories and retrospective accounts from the margins to make meaning of the complexity and contradictions situated in the human condition.

Keightley (2010) posits that,

> memory is a lived process of making sense of time and experience in it. This process of sense-making has potential value for research both as an object and technique, but the ways it can be used to illuminate social and cultural experience require examination. (pp. 55-56)

Rather than searching for patterns and consistencies in our accounts of teaching and learning, our findings are based on the nuances and most significant memories of our lives as faculty of color and our own expectancy in online environments. Similar to other oral history traditions, we consider memories as data, along with online archival information such as course syllabi, records of modules, curricular activities, assignments, and pre-service teachers' comments from teaching evaluations to inform analysis. We drew upon these sources from the last five years to inform the self-narrativization, which allows us to unpack the meaning and consequences of race, elicit counternarratives, and disrupt western epistemologies.

Further, Fine (2006) emphasizes the importance of bearing witness through research, in particular when "surveillance and fear surround, the walls between rich and poor have thickened, and global despair and terror contaminate everyday life" (p. 86). As we conceive online education as a site of knowledge disruption, formation, and affirmation, self-narrativization allows for us to reach into our historical past to conduct an (auto)biographical analysis of personal resistance, evolution, and liberatory practices learned from students and other social justice colleagues. Self-narrativization creates the conditions for praxis to recount our life experiences at the intersections of race, class, and gender struggles, building coalitions from the margins to uphold reflective action (Solórzano & Yosso, 2002).

Research Context and Positionality

This study took place in a self-paced teacher certification program at a large non-profit private university with multiple campuses operating across the state of California. The university offers blended and fully online courses through Blackboard Learn, an online learning management system. The objective of this teacher education program is to support pre-service teachers in earning either their multiple- or single-subject teaching credential and special education certification, emphasizing technology and innovation, fieldwork, and adherence to California's credentialing requirements. Students are majority white females and come from both urban and rural spaces.

The program has an established system for building new online courses, with faculty leveraging their expertise to work collaboratively with course designers to streamline course shells, modules, content, grading systems, and navigational tools. While new full-time faculty are required to complete a three-week university-sponsored training, information is mostly oriented toward technology and software programs. Aside from supporting teacher candidates in meeting state anti-bias standards, such as the

Teacher Performance Expectations (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2019), the program's majority white faculty have largely attended to the technological instead of the pedagogical dimensions of online instruction. Faculty are mandated to use the same course shells to teach different sections of the same course to allow students to experience some level of consistency. The first author noticed her predecessors' cognitive-behaviorist approach that expected students to learn from prescribed text, rote memorization of reading assignments, and other curricular activities stifling pre-service teachers' voices and abilities to generate meaningful reflection and dialogue. From an epistemological standpoint, the shells were structured in a way that confused and failed to embed a wider range of technology to support online pedagogy.

The first author, a second-generation Queer Chicana and the first in her family to graduate from a university, has almost 20 years of experience as a TK-12 classroom teacher and university professor. In her prior experiences with in-person schooling, she witnessed many classmates of color not afforded the same opportunities as their white peers, such as access to college-going courses or rigorous curriculum. Too many of her classmates' successes were contingent upon their race, as teachers considered them intellectually inferior, perpetuating white supremacy. These observations fueled her desire to become a high school teacher and later a teacher educator committed to school transformation. The first author's efforts have since assisted many pre-service teachers in examining their own educational expectations in connection to social justice teaching. However, upon initially taking on this role at the university, she felt underprepared to teach online. Navigating this learning curve has helped her to reconsider her pedagogy and ensure teacher candidates in her courses are prepared for social justice.

The second author, a first-generation Asian American heterosexual immigrant, was the first in his family to graduate from high school and college. He has 28 years of experience in education, and has been teaching online at the university level for the last 10 years. In his prior experiences in in-person schooling, he was placed in an English monolingual environment, which later steered him into remedial and vocational programs where teachers did not expect him to graduate from high school. These experiences with low teacher expectations greatly influenced his commitment to asset models of education. Despite the lack of university training for online teaching, the second author was consistently pressed into redeveloping online courses where he explored how to more effectively prepare educators for transformative education.

Findings

In the following, we describe how the first author defined and animated her curricular expectations in preparing preservice teachers in her online classroom. Through self-narrativization, the first author provides concrete exemplars of her online pedagogies in facilitating pre-service teachers' (re)construction of their educational expectations for TK-12 students of color. We find digital critical race praxis (DigitalCrit) to be informed by pre-service teachers' abilities to: (1) interrogate the individual knowledge and the ethics of those norms; (2) reconstruct collective knowledge and curriculum repositioning one's

epistemology; (3) explore interdisciplinarity and counternarratives; and (4) recast the self, theory, and reflective action.

Interrogating the Individual Knowledge and the Ethics of Those Norms

In retrospect, my expectations for pre-service teachers were to assist their private and collective reflexivity about their positionalities in society so they could explore ways to reposition themselves to effectively respond to the existing axis of power. Given the tendency of students' perceptual framework to influence a pattern of current and predictive future actions, it was important to create conditions for pre-service teachers to examine their knowledge systems and the ethics of their thoughts and actions. To convey these expectations in an online format, I developed activities to assist pre-service teachers in reflecting upon their beliefs and values and engaging in multiple forms of digitally enhanced dialogues as a method to create an ecological space to interrogate the intersubjective lens they bring to schools.

One of those activities used weekly journals as an invitation for students to go through a series of experiences interacting with the self. In my fully online course, "Introduction to Teaching," the journal prompted pre-service teachers to provide examples of their lived experiences. They then drew on the field notes from their TK-12 internships and compared them to the weekly reading assignments. One reflective assignment prompted pre-service teachers to develop their own philosophies of education as a result of exploring traditional philosophies that covered essentialism, perennialism, progressivism, and the ways they each failed to center race and equity in education (Moss & Lee, 2010). As students contemplated the potential significance of race and equity in their personal and professional lives, we explored the literature concerning the historical purposes of American education and the legacies of those narratives that shaped how teachers often think about classroom management and test-based accountability.

Through self-reflection, many pre-service teachers were able to write about their own educational philosophies, which led them to question their experiential knowledge of race, equity, and society. This exploration of the literature created the conditions to scaffold pre-service teachers' beliefs as they engaged with the work of Freire (1970), hooks (2013), Valenzuela (1999), and other critical theorists. They then discussed their educational philosophies in the context of the school-to-prison pipeline, behaviorist and conformist approaches to education, and how the logic behind these practices may create racialized consequences for students. In these carefully scaffolded entries, I found that many pre-service teachers began to journal about the nature of policies that might be disproportionately subtractive to students of color and initiate topics such as Positive Behavior Intervention Supports (PBIS) and other expectancy models that focus on social control over co-constructing authentic, caring relationships with students. Since these journal entries were private and not shared with others, these individual assignments eventually evolved into reflective spaces for solitude and silent dialogue. In those spaces, pre-service teachers were invited to be vulnerable and were supported through my scaffolded approach to constructive feedback, which further instilled confidence in them to freely raise questions and reconsider their expectations of racialized populations.

Reconstructing Collective Knowledge and Curriculum Repositioning One's Epistemology

Once the teacher education students became deeply contemplative about their beliefs about and expectations for students, my goals were to expand this reflective space to include the rest of the classroom to deepen dialogue through (1) discussion boards and (2) synchronous meetings. In doing so, my expectations were to create an online ecology through which students could advance social justice ideas beyond the emotional state of self-reflection and consider perspectives that have traditionally been silenced (Domingue, 2016). These discussion boards were purposely designed to avoid brief "yes" or "no" answers from students. Instead, students were expected to interact with each other through a series of probing questions regarding the reading assignments: (1) Identify key ideas in the literature; (2) share thoughts and critiques regarding the content; (3) make connections to their lives; (4) discuss the implications of the literature for social justice; and (5) pose one to two questions to their classmates to deepen debates and ideas.

These expectancy practices built on an existing protocol aiming to elicit students' critical skills for deepening reading and dialogue. To foster virtual connectedness and broaden students' ecology of reflective space, I served as an active observer to ensure these dialogues were not simply eliciting superficial responses such as "I like your points" or "Nice job." My role was to provide the scaffold to assist students in framing and reframing their thoughts and statements through questioning, sharing of my own experiences, and affirming the process through which students became more race-conscious and justice-oriented. Through these interactions, pre-service teachers often exchanged ideas for practices they found effective. I also found them to refer each other to outside sources and form support networks.

Another layer in the ecology of reflection was synchronous meetings for pre-service teachers. I did not want the lack of physical proximity to impede students from challenging one another in a collective space, so these group activities were designed to hold real-time discussions for reconstructing and repositioning the collective knowledge toward social justice. For example, in my fully online class, "Teaching English Language Learners," pre-service teachers were expected to participate in one-hour weekly meetings so that they could take turns leading small group projects and case studies. Using Adobe Connect and Zoom, these project-based learnings were facilitated through video conferencing and use of whiteboards, polls, and breakout rooms to promote leadership and collaboration to further develop ideas aligned with the course content. My role was to assist students in applying complex ideas from the discussion boards to address real-world problems and to highlight key concepts to confirm students' understandings as related to their expectations of TK-12 students.

For instance, during one synchronous meeting in which we reviewed the concept of *authentic caring* (Valenzuela, 1999), pre-service teachers were prompted to share their field observations of such practices. They were then organized into small breakout rooms to reflect and apply their collective learning to determine tangible solutions that they could implement to counteract problems associated with aesthetic caring in schools. I

periodically attended these breakout rooms whenever pre-service teachers needed me. After the breakout rooms, students then shared their thoughts and practices, with the rest of the class actively listening and recording their ideas to generate a list of effective practices in TK-12 classrooms. At this particular meeting, I recall groups explaining what it means to be authentically caring and its linkages to equitable educational expectations. I also used breakout rooms for pre-service teachers to role-play or design projects that met particular teaching standards, and to build community.

Exploring Interdisciplinarity and Counternarratives

To expand pre-service teachers' theoretical understandings and move toward reflective action, I expected them to take in the perspectives of people of color as a method to recast the self. I wanted to emphasize the importance of understanding the community surrounding their schools as a critical part in being culturally responsive to students and to have them challenge deficit discourses that can paint students of color and their communities as inferior, especially for those whose racialized experiences did not match those of their students. To counter dominant narratives pathologizing students of color to lack social capital as an explanatory lens to inform one's expectancy practices, I created online assignments expecting pre-service teachers to conduct asset-mapping of their students' communities. For instance, I designed a course titled "Teaching English Language Learners" to assist pre-service teachers in constructing knowledge about students' communities and the various forms of epistemologies and cultural assets available. They would physically take a two-hour walking tour of the community surrounding the school and apply Yosso's (2005) framework of community cultural wealth to identify various forms of capital that communities of color possess. Pre-service teachers often wrote about the various languages, resources, and practices they observed during the tour.

Pre-service teachers were expected to take their observational notes and develop a report that examined the school demographics and community resources such as Boys and Girls Clubs, churches, parks, and other innovative systems of support. The paper expected them to connect their findings to their teaching and address the question, "How have you deployed the theory of community cultural wealth to inform your expectations of students at the intersections of race and other politically constructed differences?" I then invited community leaders to share the history of the community to recast these community resources into counternarratives. My objective was to support pre-service teachers in reconsidering their curricular expectations to build on the knowledge and strengths of communities of color. I created a platform for pre-service teachers to perform a multimedia presentation through Wiki called "To Teach Me Is to Know Me," where they summarized their findings and provided reflections and photos that captured multiple forms of cultural wealth that were previously unrecognized. They then received feedback on Wiki from at least two other classmates. It should be noted that the context of COVID-19 may dissuade in-person assignments due to the importance of physical distancing; however, we believe they can potentially be simulated through Google Maps and SIMS.

Recasting the Self, Theory, and Reflective Action

To further their process of recasting the self, I created modules to help pre-service teachers utilize curricular design as a strategy to counteract societal inequities, redefining their own praxis through reflective action (Freire, 1970). California teaching performance expectation (TPE) standards posit that curricular design and lesson planning are primary responsibilities of teachers (California Commission on Teacher Credentialing, 2019). In addition to learning about how to design curriculum for their students, I wanted pre-service teachers to reconstruct their expectations regarding the role of curriculum in influencing TK-12 students' abilities to construct knowledge. A part of the reading assignment was to interrogate Western conceptions of curriculum, where Eurocentric canons superimposed white knowledge, negating the ancestral knowledge of people of color (Goodwin, 2015). Pre-service teachers were asked to read the article and engage in a discussion board with their classmates about the implications of Eurocentric knowledge in shaping their curricular expectations in the classroom.

I did not want the pre-service teachers to arrive and end at a structural critique, as naming sources of oppression can at times be paralyzing when people are not introduced to the alternatives. After facilitating these online discussions, I moved to further center race and equity in their concrete lesson planning and curricular skills. I utilized the Understanding by Design (UbD) framework that focuses on designing effective student-centered curriculum (Wiggins et al., 2005), where each unit is interdisciplinary, building around a specific theme, with essential questions and culminating projects to connect TK-12 students to content. By focusing on the community cultural wealth of students of color, I created a student-centered curriculum that by default centered on the epistemologies and cultural assets of racialized populations. I then followed these online exchanges with a synchronous curriculum that further clarified pre-service teachers' understandings of the UbD framework and showed them how to apply it to designing essential questions related to issues of equity and justice. In this synchronous meeting, I modeled several of my own units that I had created as a high school English teacher, which focused on themes such as "criminalization of youth," "identity and community," and "disobedience and organizing for justice." These units included an emphasis on writers of color and curricular projects that aimed at increasing students' agency.

Pre-service teachers later were assigned to breakout rooms where they brainstormed ideas, created their own units, and shared with the larger class. While the synchronous meeting was an opportunity to receive feedback from one another, the activity led each to design four project-based curricular units centered on social justice themes and essential questions that they believed would resonate with California's racially and linguistically diverse students. Despite being remote, the online platform still provided opportunities for pre-service teachers to collectively brainstorm and debrief ways to implement their curricular design. Based on the unit plans they submitted, I was able to assess pre-service teachers' progress in embedding antiracist expectations into their curricular and pedagogical choices. Admittedly, I observed several pre-service teachers presenting a series of units of canonical novels written by white authors, including *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *The Adventures of Tom Sawyer*, *Lord of the Flies*, and *Romeo and Juliet*. I realized that the process for pre-service teachers to reconstruct their curricular

expectations was a challenging one and that we still needed to confront an ongoing issue of pre-service teachers defaulting to dominant societal narratives.

On the other hand, I also recall other curricular designs that included novels written by authors of color that pertained to issues of justice, including a unit where TK-12 students were reading Malcolm X's *Autobiography* and using his life story to interrogate the prison system and the rise of the Black power movement in the United States. Other units included themes and projects about environmental justice, multicultural literature, and spoken word poetry, among other expressions of justice by people of color. These examples do not fully capture the wide range of assignments that pre-service teachers submitted, as they were cautioned against reducing the experiences of people of color to a singular narrative. I observed that learning theories and counternarratives led many pre-service teachers to develop new ways of unpacking dominant narratives through curricular design as a first step to building knowledge with communities of color.

Conclusion

Research shows that the aforementioned online-learning challenges are not static, as the continual evolution of technology has increasingly responded to concerns regarding the individualistic (instead of community-oriented) nature of online learning. Online and in-person classrooms should not be viewed as competing paradigms, as they each can play an important role in advancing education. We also caution against the idea that an online classroom can simply supplement the in-person format and yield identical experiences, and vice versa. These modes of education are not silver bullets on their own, and they are each unique in helping faculty to animate their curricular expectations through reconceptualizing pedagogy, structure, and spaces (Gunawardena & McIsaac, 2013). However, the question remains whether online education can help faculty to raise their expectations in deepening the preparation of teachers. The burgeoning literature is starting to recognize the importance of having social justice online pedagogy be relevant and contextually grounded, theoretically exploratory, and accompanied by applied projects that increase one's self-awareness and sense of responsibility to the human condition. More examples from university faculty and studies on how pre-service teachers experience these effects are necessary to further inform race-based praxis in online environments.

For the first author, the classes mentioned in this study were structured similarly to all others in their emphasis on both reflection and action. To nurture teachers' antiracist expectations in online environments, the first author utilized DigitalCrit in creating curricular activities to prepare pre-service teachers to teach in diverse communities. One of the key strategies underpinning the first author's virtual expectations was the cycle of self-questioning, perspective-taking, and individual and collaborative knowledge production to assist pre-service teachers in shifting from dominant notions of reality to ideas that are actionable for social transformation. In using this strategy, the first author's courses were conceived as pedagogical spaces for self-recognition that situated pre-service teachers' educational expectations in an inequitable society to inspire social justice teaching. By virtually linking theory to practice, DigitalCrit can be a useful

framework for raising consciousness, unpacking systemic oppression, and recasting one's dispositions to affirm humanity through education.

The first author's self-narrativization demonstrates concrete examples of online instruction, which we believe has implications for teacher education and teaching in the context of global pandemics. Given the impact that teachers' educational expectations have on student outcomes (Boykin & Noguera, 2011), the findings highlight the importance and possibility of teacher education as a space for pre-service teachers to reconsider their expectations of racialized populations and move toward reconstructing their knowledge and curriculum to center the narratives and lives of students of color in their classrooms. By implementing various concrete practices, such as journaling, critical dialogue, and assignments aimed at increasing the understanding of students of color and their communities, teacher education can better prepare pre-service teachers to challenge the systemic negative expectations that limit their students' educational opportunities. Additionally, given that the discourse on online education is largely focused on learning new technologies or on the limitations of personalizing the learning experience for individual students, this study provides possibilities for teacher education programs to rethink how they structure online programs for students.

Lastly, during this COVID-19 pandemic, university faculty and TK-12 educators everywhere are pressed to sustain the educational system without any acknowledgment of their frontline status and contributions to the world. As a response to having limited time to transition their courses online, many university faculty and TK-12 teachers organized together to develop resources and tools to better serve the needs of their students in humanizing ways. This study adds to the collective knowledge on the types of effective online tools and activities for student learning, as well as aims to pause and shift the conversation toward centering issues of equity and justice in education. As we reflect on what schooling will look like after the COVID-19 pandemic, we take this opportunity to reconstruct teachers' educational expectations for students of color, as well as reimagine an education that serves all students.

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