This study used qualitative and quantitative methodology to ascertain preservice teachers' attitudes toward multiculturalism and diversity and determine how they viewed their student teaching and internship experiences with respect to issues of diversity. The 46 participating student teachers completed a cultural inventory in the spring of 1998 and then again in the fall of 1998 (after 3 months of student teaching). Students who did not student teach or complete internships were the control group. Students who were student teaching or had internships during the fall of 1998 also completed an open-ended questionnaire. The questionnaire asked about school demographics, student teacher classroom experiences, and views of cultural harmony and disharmony with respect to race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Data analysis indicated that there were no statistically significant changes for the total group or treatment group, though there were more positive gains than losses as indicated by students' responses to questions about their views of cultural diversity, intelligence, and other personal views. Students' views on issues of diversity provided information about their various classroom settings and schools. The data revealed complex issues, greatly disparate teaching environments, and some student awareness of issues of race, ethnicity, class, and gender in teaching. (Contains 32 references.) (SM)
Comparing Pre-Service Teachers' Attitudes Toward Diversity: Internship and Student Teaching Experiences

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Abstract

This study utilized quantitative and qualitative methodology to ascertain pre-service teachers' attitudes toward diversity. Two main foci of the study were to answer the questions: 1) Do internship and student teaching experiences affect attitudes about multiculturalism and diversity as indicated by a cultural sensitivity inventory? 2) How do pre-service teachers view their intern experiences and student teaching experiences with respect to issues of diversity. A pre- and post-survey were administered to 46 pre-service teachers enrolled in two secondary approaches classes during the Spring of 1998 and Fall 1999. Those students who student taught were the treatment group and those not student teaching were the control group. Although no significant statistical changes were found overall, there were more positive gains than losses as indicated by the student responses to questions about their views of cultural diversity, intelligence, and other personal views. (See discussion and three tables that reveal the data). Also, qualitative interviews were sent to the treatment group to elicit more in-depth details about school demographics, student teacher classroom experiences, and views of cultural harmony and disharmony with respect to race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Item analysis was performed and a narrative constructed around the most salient features of respondents' opinions. The major discussion herein focus on class and race, school harmonies and disharmonies, specific gender insights, individuals and difference, and academics and culture.
Introduction

The topic of teachers' abilities to address diversity in the classroom more than ever before is one of the major factors in rethinking and restructuring pre-service teacher education (Texas Education Agency, 1994). Given this concern with teacher attitudes toward diversity in the context of rapidly changing populations and the call for comprehensive education programs to address the needs of diverse learners, there is a need to determine if site-based teacher preparation classes do indeed promote cultural sensitivity and the action needed to overcome the adversity of educational structures that have traditionally excluded the history and perspective of many students (Hirsch, 1987; Bennett, 1984; Bloom, 1987). Further, it would be helpful to ascertain to what degree pre-service teachers' attitudes change or if there is change over time between the internship and student teaching experience.

A variety of responses on a cultural inventory and follow-up interviews led us to a somewhat complex discussion of what pre-service teachers think about diversity. Two specific questions guided this study:

1) Do internship and student teaching experiences affect attitudes about multiculturalism and diversity as indicated by a cultural sensitivity inventory?

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1 Diversity has a number of connotations. The authors use this term broadly to encompass non-mainstream individuals, but more specifically race, ethnicity, class, and gender. Simone de Beauvoir utilized the term "other" in *The Second Sex* (New York: Vintage Books, 1952 [1949], pp. xviii-xxiii). Michel Foucault and other poststructuralists have referred to "the other" as the marginalized such as the insane, criminals, and those unable to speak for themselves. The authors have utilized the word "Anglo" loosely in this paper to refer to the broad spectrum of non-minority student teachers who are predominated generally by white females.
2) How do pre-service teachers view their intern experiences and student teaching experiences with respect to issues of diversity?

Literature Review

The goal of many teacher educators has been to promote an anti-bias or anti-racist education for pre-service teachers, who in turn will use such a curriculum in classrooms (Gomez, 1993; Tettegah, 1996). Yet, if we look to the larger institutional goals of colleges of education and the mandates issued by the state, teacher education discourses are centered on needs, practice, "commonsense," classroom management, efficiency, and achievement for legislative accountability, and worker education (McWilliam, 1994; Agnello, 1998; Kahne, 1996). Kemp's study (1997) found that discipline knowledge is emphasized over considerations of questioning knowledge and/or teaching in the preparation of teachers. Nieto (1995) and Banks (1995) have done some of the seminal and definitive work on multicultural education with the objective of transforming traditional learning and teaching with multicultural reconsiderations of what the curriculum is and should be if all cultures were mutually informed about each other and consequently striving for equity through representation in the curriculum aimed at social transformation.

Critics of current restructuring efforts that have not altered schooling structures agree that teacher ideologies and deep structural changes must occur if multicultural needs are ever going to be met in schools (Borman and
Greenman, 1995; Cuban, 1990). Various teacher educators have generated several means of encouraging pre-service teachers' responsiveness to their students' lives. Zeichner (1996 a, b) and Zeichner and Liston (1987) urge teacher reflection while Cochran-Smith (1989) encouraged learning to teach against the grain. Some venues for action through critical politics of teacher thinking encourage teacher engagement in student-centered learning, community-building, and democratized classrooms (Kincheloe, 1993; Stringer et al, 1997; Agnello, 1998). Pinar (1989), Grumet (1989), and other reconceptualists re-defined the curriculum to include more phenomenological ways of knowing and researching that encompass more theory into practice, affording teachers the broadest view possible of teacher roles in social production and reproduction.

Challenging white supremacy and the status quo through multicultural education is the optimum goal for teachers who are most conscious of the mission of transforming classrooms, schools, and society (Nieto, 1992; Freire, 1970; and Banks, 1992). Recognizing diversity and its implications for education has been recognized by the state (Texas Education Agency, 1994) as a primary goal of teacher education. However, what happens in teacher education courses and field experiences does not guarantee that pre-service teachers who are conscious of the needs of diverse learners will alter the curriculum accordingly. Neither can we be certain that their experiences in various educational settings do not produce the opposite of the intended effect by promoting more emphasis on discipline knowledge, rigor for accountability
sake, and focus on classroom management rather than promoting good instruction to meet individual students' needs and interests. One relatively recent study found pre-service teachers' attitudes toward diversity differed from their cooperating teachers' views (Kemp, 1997). McDiarmid and Price (1990) found that multicultural presentations had little effect on student's beliefs about teaching decisions, about provision of equal opportunities to empower students with challenging subject matter, or about the capabilities of learners labeled "high" or "low" ability. Butler (1994) found that with regard to homosexuality, pre-service teachers held educator-specific views and were slightly homophobic because of a general lack of knowledge and/or misinformation about homosexuality, suggesting carefully implemented instruction about sexual orientation. In general, the research suggests that multicultural education for cultural diverse classrooms is necessary, yet it is no panacea for social and educational problems because often pre-service teachers do what their cooperating teachers expect. The outlook is not much better for inexperienced in-service teachers who are focused on survival and classroom control and who are not given innovative instructional leadership to actuate curricular changes.

Design

This study had two components. Quantitative survey data was compiled to discern if the on-site teacher preparation had an impact on cultural attitudes of pre-service teachers. Qualitative data attained from student interview surveys and personal interviews was analyzed for salient issues, concerns, and
articulations by pre-service teachers with regard to their student-teaching. The cultural inventory was designed by Katherine P. McFarland (1992) in her research on pre-service teachers' multicultural attitudes, consisting of 20 questions with five Likert-type scale responses (See Appendix A). Some of the questions were scaled with a large number being a "positive" response and some with a small number being a "positive" response. The reason for this was to avoid response sets dominating the response patterns. A response of "three" was neutral. The questionnaire (See Appendix B) was designed by the authors to explore student-teachers and one in-service teacher's views (who was emergency-certified and consequently did not student teach) and perspectives of their school setting and classroom assessments of diversity.

The original group (n=48) included students from two Spring 1998 secondary approaches classes taught by two instructors at a large urban university. The course is taken during the semester prior to student teaching and the students are required to observe at least 20 hours in a classroom and teach two lessons. These 48 students were given the cultural inventory during Spring 1998 and were then mailed the cultural inventory to complete during the second week of November 1998 after three months of student teaching as a follow-up. Along with the cultural inventory and a stamped return envelope, the students who were either student teaching or doing internships during the Fall 1998 were also sent an open-ended questionnaire.
Twenty-six cultural surveys were returned; the treatment group (n=16) was comprised of student teachers or interns during Fall 98, and the control group (n=10) was not student teaching or interning in Fall 1998. The experiment was designed this way in order to determine if classroom experiences of the treatment group affected cultural attitudes.

Results for Follow-up Study

Since the data were pre-and post-measurements, the nonparametric sign test was utilized. After a statistical analysis was performed there were no statistically significant changes in either the whole group or treatment group. There was one statistically significant change in the control group for question 14, but there were only two changes and they were both positive. The researchers did not expect any statistically significant changes since the sample size (n=26) was small and in order to have significance a=0.10 with 11 or fewer changes all the changes have to be “improved” to show statistically significant improvement (i.e., n=k). Table 1 shows (n,k) for total, treatment, and control groups with improvement/changes ratio and the cutoff needed for statistical significance at 0.10.

TABLE 1-TOTAL TREATMENT AND CONTROL

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
<th>TREATMENT</th>
<th>CONTROL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>11.7 (.636)</td>
<td>6.4 (.667)</td>
<td>5.3 (.6)</td>
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<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>17.7 (.412)</td>
<td>10.1 (.1)</td>
<td>7.6 (.857)</td>
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<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>19.11 (.579)</td>
<td>12.8 (.667)</td>
<td>7.3 (.429)</td>
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<td>4</td>
<td>7.2 (.286)</td>
<td>3.1 (.333)</td>
<td>4.1 (.25)</td>
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<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>10.2 (.2)</td>
<td>8.1 (.125)</td>
<td>2.1 (.5)</td>
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</table>
Discussion of Follow-Up Changes

Though there were no significant changes for the total group or treatment group, there are some interesting observations to be noted. For question 1, "Equality of educational opportunity exists in most public school", both groups showed about 66.7% improvement. For question 2, "I prefer teaching students whose ethnic culture is similar to mine", there was an 86% improvement from the control group and only 10% for the treatment group. There was only about a 33% improvement in all groups for question 4, "I believe that all children can learn." Eighty-two percent of the treatment group were prone to disagree more with the statement in question 7, "Cultural background is a good predictor of how well children will do in school." The treatment group also showed improvement (80%) with the question 10 statement "I believe that teaching in an
inner-city school would be a rewarding experience.” Only 17% of the treatment group showed improvement on the question 12 statement, “Minorities that do not do well on I.Q. tests are genetically deficient”, while 68% of the control group showed improvement. For question 18, “When I encounter people that share my values and my culture, I feel I can trust them more”, all groups showed improvement with ratios being (total (71%), treatment (63%) and control (83%).

Table 2 shows the median for the survey questions both pre (Spring 1998) and post (Fall 1998). Six questions showed the following changes: question 9 went down by 10%; question 10 went down by 10%; question 14 improved by 20%; question 18 improved by 20%; question 19 went down by 20%; and question 20 improved by 20%.

**TABLE 2- MEDIAN FOR SURVEY QUESTIONS**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>QUESTION</th>
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<th>FALL 98</th>
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<tr>
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<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
Table 3 shows the total change for each person in both the control and treatment groups. The possible points range from -100 to +100 since there are 20 questions with five choices each.

**TABLE 3 - POINTS IMPROVED**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>TREATMENT</th>
<th>CONTROL</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>-13</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>3</td>
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<tr>
<td>-3</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

After performing a two sample t-test to determine if there is a difference in the means between the treatment and control groups, it was determined that there was no significant difference. The mean of the treatment group was 1.1875 and the mean of the control group was 0.9000. This showed that classroom teaching for one semester had not statistically affected the cultural attitudes of these pre-service teachers even though the magnitude of positive change was more for the treatment group.
Statistical analysis was performed and revealed no significant changes in either the whole group or treatment group. There was one significant change in the control group for question 14. Overall, we really did not expect any significant changes since the sample size (n=26) was small and, as stated earlier, in order to have significance at $\alpha=0.10$ with 11 or fewer changes all the changes have to be "improved" to show significant improvement.

Qualitative Findings: Interview Data

Although the respondent's attitudes toward cultural diversity as measured by the cultural inventory instrument showed no significant changes between the interns and the treatment group (those who had student taught), the student teachers' views on issues of diversity enlighten us about their various classroom settings and schools. A narrative of specific statements and opinions ascertained from interviews follows. Pseudonyms are used in reporting the students' perspectives of aspects of their student teaching experiences.

Demographics

The schools where the pre-service teachers did their internships gave them fairly good exposure to cultural diversity. One school was comprised of 70% African Americans, 25% Hispanic Americans, and 5% Anglos, whereas the other school was made up of approximately 33% each of African Americans, whites, and Hispanics. In comparison, the demographics of the schools where
the students student taught varied greatly. Three student bodies were composed of predominantly white students. Most of the schools were ethnically and racially mixed with about one-third white, African-American, and Mexican-American students. Two of the schools had much greater representation by one group or another: for example, one had an 80% Mexican-American population, with 10% each of white and black students, and another had 99% Hispanic students. Another had 50% Anglos and 50% Hispanics. One of the schools was comprised of 40% white, with 20% Hispanics, and 20% black students.

When asked what their opinion of student teaching was, most of the students expressed satisfaction. Their views included such responses as “I’m having a wonderful experience. I love being in the classroom”, to “It’s great”, to “Very positive”, to “Very beneficial”. The most dissatisfaction about student teaching was paying the university for the credit hours to be able to work in the schools for no recompense.

Interview responses pertaining to the most agreeable and least agreeable aspects of the student teaching setting (e.g., cooperating teacher, grade-level, subject, school, district, students) showed favorable attitudes. However, Sally, an Anglo female, found that the school and students (which was comprised of 33% African-Americans, whites, and Hispanics) were least agreeable about her experiences, citing disharmony caused by gang members. Jane, another Anglo female, commented that the least agreeable aspect of the experience was the “apathy of students to homework,” in a school that had 80% upper middle class Anglos.
Lana, an Anglo female, described the demographics of the school in which the student teaching experience occurred as approximately 30% African American, 30% Caucasian, 25% Hispanic, and 5% less or other. At this particular school, her expectations of students have been confirmed: “Students are all there to learn; you just have to make the connection between the curriculum and their own lives.”

Class and Race

Some specific observations about race and class made in the school follow. Lana commented on the great disparities of socioeconomic background of the students at her school site.

There are great expanses of classes from the low-income apartments on the left of the school to the half-million dollar homes in the subdivision on the right. Everyone seems to get along. The only ones that seem to separate themselves are the gifted and talented kids.

On the issue of race, her insight was grounded in a negative experience of a student's appraisal of her view of African-Americans:

I was taking roll and several students were gathered around my desk; two African-American students walked up to my right at the same time. I acknowledged them, along with everyone else. One of the two African-American students was insistent upon m[e] signing his absence slip. I took it,
signed it, and without looking up, returned it. Well the other student took it thinking it was his. Once he saw it didn’t belong to him, he handed it to the other student. I heard him make a remark, “She think[s] ‘we’ all look alike.” This remark upset me greatly.

Jack, an Anglo male student teacher, based in a school with a primarily upper class white population found teachers and students most agreeable and the district least agreeable. He commented that unity exists in the upper middle class white school where there are student economic and social advantage. The school becomes a clique that disparages other “lower class schools. Snobbery is evident.”

Monica, an older female student teacher of mixed heritage, found her school where the population demographics were estimated at 80% Hispanic, 10% Black, and 10% Caucasian, “not so bad.” Richard, A Hispanic male commented on the differences between the students at his interning versus student-teaching site: “Black students are very, very noisy; Mexican-American and Anglo students are quiet. That is the truth.”

School Harmonies and Disharmonies

Jeff, an Anglo male, found an undesirable ethos in his school where there is a similar breakdown of Caucasian, Hispanics, and African Americans created by students with sarcastic attitudes and with lack of respect for teachers.
On the other hand, Ann, an Anglo female student teacher who taught in a school with a demographic breakdown of 50% Anglos and 50% Hispanic found cultural harmony exists. She also found it surprising that there was "acceptance of [an] individual with severe brain trauma by members of [a] class commonly labeled gifted."

Burt, a white male pre-service teacher, described his school with a 65% urban and 35% rural population made up of 40% white, 20% African-Americans, and 40% Hispanics. The student stated that cultural harmony is in place here, I'm amazed. Cultural disharmony happened with one incident in my classroom where one African American got up and pushed a white, small kid because the latter drew a racial portrait.

Burt's view was that such disharmonies as these exist as a subtext, "by going on in class, building up, because the teacher is unaware of everything going on in class all of the time."

Sally described the situation in the school that has gang problems with the following insight: "On a good day, we have a few problems and can work in groups. On other days (maybe during a full moon?) tension is thick, fights break out and most students refuse to cooperate."

Jane found her school made up of mostly white upper-middle class whites, with a few Hispanics and fewer blacks, to be a place where respect for the teacher is lacking. In general, she stated that cultural interrelations are good: "Harmony is pretty universal. Disharmony exists where students want to
deliberately stand out." The disharmony manifests itself in student behavior. All in all, "the lack of respect for teachers in truly appalling."

For the most part, most of the student teachers described what they saw as cultural harmony at their schools. Nine of the respondents said that harmony exists in their classrooms, with little or no negative intersocial relations extant. Lana said that in her school, "Harmonies manifest themselves in the support of students helping students and school spirit. Disharmony in the overcrowded classrooms leads to frustration of students." Monica thought that "All of the students get along very well in spite of the fact that they are of different races." Angie said, "I see a mixture of cultures coming together and getting along." Jeff sees his classroom as "very harmonic--never a negative issue."

Specific Gender Insights

Comments made on gender by those student teaching were brief with some varied responses that might be attributable to the cultural background of the students in their various settings or the students' own cultural up-bringing. Susan, a middle-aged Russian immigrant, who has earned her Texas teacher certification and is now working on her masters, noted that "girls misbehave more than boys; they also physically fight." She has also seen boys dominate girls in her 99%-Hispanic school. Evidence of this view is in comments overheard in dialog between girls and boys, "You're going to be a housewife anyway."

On a more positive note, Nancy, an Anglo female student teacher, said that "Girls have made great advances. They do not hold back; they have answers
before the boys." Yet she also noted surprise at some of the females' clothing, hairstyles, and make-up. Lana commented with respect to gender that

The boys still over talk the girls. Since learning of gender bias, I try very hard to have a system of asking the girls questions as frequently as boys. I've decided boys are louder and much more persistent.

Individuals and Difference

Jeff, an Anglo male student teacher, had an interesting insight into race, class and gender. He said that in each "division" (groups of students from various backgrounds), that there are individuals with different personalities, characteristics, and attitudes. In his estimation these divisions do not necessarily determine how the individual is as a person. Millie, an Anglo female, said that most of the problems in classrooms are related to procedures rather than cultural issues. In general, she felt that race, class, and gender were non-issues.

Academics and Culture

John, who described his intern setting as comprised of 66% urban and 33% rural students had interesting insights into class and gender manifestations at his school. For example, the rural students often come to school with mud on their shoes and everyone knows that they live in the country. As for John's description of his students' academic and class
circumstances, he felt that students in one of his classes fell into three general categories: one-third wish to go to college, one-third are on welfare, and one-third struggle to make a living. Overall, none of the students is a middle-class academic type. He described the general attitudes toward performance in algebra as one of the following: 10 do not take the final, 10 do not care how they perform, and 10 work hard although they do not always succeed.

The principal diversity that John finds among his three algebra classes are the students’ learning styles. He said that,

What works in one class does not work in another. In one, for instance, the overhead is effective; in another, board explanations are useful; and in a third class, I use all methods to achieve maximum instructional effects.

Although John attempts to educate the girls about the possibilities for their independent achievement, he finds that gender attitudes originate at home as in the case where one girl said, “I belong to Salvador.” Also, he added that many structures and activities at school are gender specific with the girls doing cheerleading and the boys involved in drill squads, football, and other sports. John described an interesting strength found in single parent families when the mothers are assertive in the direction they give their children. On the other hand, he noted that in re-constituted families, women tend to defer to males as indicated in such comments as “I’ll tell his father about a [student] behavior problem.”
Appearance and gender roles in John's school were interconnected in the social life of the students. He found it typical that girls spent lots of time on make-up. However, he found an interesting transformation occurring in boys' behavior. Now the boys wear as many earrings as the girls and have intricate hairdos. He suggested that this change is some indication for future possibilities in gender roles.

Researchers' Commentary

Although the cultural inventory results did not show statistical importance of gains and/or losses in student attitudes toward diversity, there were some obvious gains made as far as the instrument revealed. A caution is to understand the many ways that pre-service teachers report to teacher educators what they think that their professors want to hear or see in student attitudes. Thus, some of the scale choices might have been skewed toward positive responses. Students might also not have revealed to professors what they felt would be perceived as a negative attitude in class discussion or on the interviews.

Overall, the interviews revealed complex issues, greatly disparate teaching environments, and some awareness of students to issues of race, ethnicity, class, and gender in teaching. As Jane reported, there are still fewer girls than boys in science classes, as well as more Caucasian than others, and mostly upper middle class students.
With the exception of one student teacher, pre-service teachers are attuned to cultural differences as they relate to teaching (unless this student meant on the interview response that race, class, and gender were non-issues in the particular student teaching setting, rather than in general). Unfortunately, at least two responses reveal that students feel that minorities perform less well academically and have undesirable traits (loudness). One respondent reported doing special instruction in math for Hispanic students who were encountering difficulties in math because of language difficulties with English. Unfortunately, the student teachers made no remarks about working with speakers of Black English Vernacular in special ways, beyond the regular curriculum. Neither of the survey instruments utilized was sensitive to such curricular adjustments.

Implications

The cultural sensitivity necessary for equitable, caring, and just education develops over time as professionals seek to become the best teachers possible. Gomez (1993) emphasized that the work of teacher educators "...just begins the critical self-inquiry demanded if prospective teachers are to successfully educate diverse learner" (p. 468). With the focus on standards, diversity issues are often viewed as secondary, rather than directly related to achievement of students like many researchers have found them to be (Gomez, 1993; McWilliam, 1994; Tettagah, 1996; Chiang, 1998; Tatt, 1996; Shultz, 1996). We suggest
three improvements and needs for further research to improve the research being done in this area of teacher education as it overlaps with developing cultural awareness. Teacher educators who understand the necessity to transform the curriculum can perhaps foster such transition by following their student teachers for several years into their service careers. Researchers can work to develop more sensitive instruments to probe students' attitudes toward their students and cultural differences. Finally, more attention can be given to discipline-specific relationships between student and in-service teachers and their interactions with students, with particular emphasis on literacy as it carries over into all subject areas.

References


Interview Questions--
Pre-Service Teachers' Views on Culture

Write your responses to your questions. Should you need more space, write on the back or another sheet of paper.

1. What is your opinion of student teaching?

2. What do you find most agreeable and least agreeable about your setting (teacher, grade-level, subject, school, district, students, etc.)

3. What is a general demographic breakdown of your school?

4. Describe cultural harmony and disharmony in your classroom.

5. How do these harmonies and disharmonies manifest themselves?

6. What have you found to be most surprising about social interaction in your classroom/s?

7. Which courses best prepared you for your student teaching?

8. Have your expectations of students been affirmed or disconfirmed?

9. What are some observations about race, class, and gender that you have made in your school? in your classroom?
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