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Student teachers' beliefs about diversity: analysing the impact of a 'diversity week' during Initial Teacher Education

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Student teachers' beliefs about diversity: analysing the impact of a 'diversity week' during Initial Teacher Education

This paper reports findings from a week of enrichment placements framed around 'diversity' within a secondary Initial Teacher Education (ITE) programme in England. We outline the demographics of the county - a largely rural, white county in the East Midlands of England – and describe the challenges this presents for ITE. A mixed methods approach was used to study student teachers' (n=56) beliefs about diversity, generating data through: pre- and post- survey of beliefs and attitudes; student-created reflective videos; journaling; and one pre- and post- diversity week interview. The findings reveal shifts in student teachers' perceptions about gender, race, and sexuality, and these attitudinal shifts were more significant in those attending all week than those attending only the first day. This is particularly interesting because for some topics the only formal input was on the first day, and so we argue for the importance of time and space for creative reflection in beginning teachers' professional development.

Keywords: diversity; initial teacher education; gender; race; sexuality

Introduction

Astounding to think just how long it has taken for society to openly engage with and debate these issues. How long so many have suffered repression and isolation due to a simple lack of understanding / awareness / education.

(Student teacher's response during post-session feedback survey)

The above reflection was written by a student teacher during an intensive week of enrichment activities broadly framed around a notion of 'diversity' during a one-year ITE (Initial Teacher Education) course in England. The course leads to award of PGCE (Post Graduate Certificate of Education) and recommendation for QTS (Qualified Teacher Status). The course is delivered in partnership between schools and a university: approximately two-thirds of the year is spent on placement in schools, and

one third is spent on other training, including university-based sessions. The length of the course creates challenges, related to: the breadth of the discipline of education (Furlong 2013; Furlong and Lawn 2010); the breadth of areas of teachers' competence (DfE 2011); the complex nature of teachers' professional knowledge (Burn and Mutton 2013; Winch, Oancea, and Orchard 2013); and the substantial changes that occur in student teachers' beliefs during ITE (Giboney Wall 2016). In response to these demands, there are longstanding calls for the length of ITE to be expanded (Winch, Oancea, and Orchard 2013; McDonald, Kazemi and Kavanagh 2013; Allsop and Scott 1998). The particular challenges that we sought to address through this week of 'diversity' enrichment were also stimulated, in part, by the particular demographic challenges of this region of the East Midlands that makes it harder for student teachers to experience a diversity of schools more representative of national demographics.

The Teachers' Standards in England include the requirement for teachers to have 'a clear understanding of the needs of *all* pupils' (DfE 2011, 12). The active involvement and engagement of all pupils from a diversity of backgrounds enriches schools and has been argued to be vital for democratic society (Liu and Milman 2014; Fernsten 2009; Dewey 1916). In the OECD's (Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development) terms, the diversity of pupils is '[not] a problem that needs to be avoided, or, if possible, "solved"' (OECD, 2010, p.13). Instead, diversity is seen as a source of growth: their driving principle is that 'diversity is an asset for educators and societies in general and that efforts should be made to make the most of this rich resource' (OECD, 2010 p.13).

'Diversity' has been used in relation to the number of different ethnic groups (Laurence 2016) and a wide range of phenomena including; culture, class, and beliefs (Acquah and

Commins 2013; Pugach and Blanton 2012; Allard 2006; Bender-Szymanski 2000). Echols and Stander (2002, 1) define diversity broadly as ‘different racial and ethnic groups, cultures, traditions, and belief systems’, whereas Bhopal and Rhamie (2014) distinguish between diversity, race, and inclusion. A significant body of research has critically explored diversity across all phases of education (Khattab and Modood, 2018; Mills, 2009; Mirza, 1992). This literature consistently argues for greater sensitivity towards pupil experience on the part of teachers (Sleeter 2017; Ogay & Edelman 2016), with studies highlighting teachers’ lack of confidence with issues around diversity (OECD 2010; Gaine 2005) and naïve colour blindness (Sleeter 2017; Milner 2012). For example, student teachers’ confidence levels for working with BAME (Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic) students are low relative to other areas: only ‘63% of NQTs felt their preparation to teach pupils from BAME backgrounds was satisfactory or worse’ (Lander 2011, p.352). More recently, Noguera and McCluskey (2017) found that, among their sample of Australian and Spanish early career teachers, ‘most participants agreed that the university programme did not address preparation for student diversity in connection with skills, race and gender well’ (110), and that their ‘most serious challenges’ in the classroom are ‘dealing with diversity’. Therefore, there continues to be strong international support for Fernsten’s (2009) argument that ‘understanding and helping teacher candidates rethink diversity issues and learn as well as practice a discourse that is inclusive and supportive of all students is critical’ (248). This is particularly important because the multiple intersecting factors affecting participation, aspiration and attainment have been shown to be so complex (Khattab and Modood, 2018). As an aside, we recognise that the phrase ‘diversity issues’ used throughout this literature and the current paper, is potentially problematic because of the way it implies the diversity itself is a (problematic) ‘issue’, when in fact it is the

responses to diversity that are the issue. Following others in the literature, we are using the phrase ‘diversity issues’ in a descriptive and non-evaluative sense.

Through and beyond individual teachers there is also a need to more critically engage with the ‘structures, ideologies and stereotypes of Whiteness that operate in schools to reinforce institutional hierarchies and systems of Whiteness’ (Myers and Bhopal, 2017, p.127). Smith (2013) links these concerns about structures, ideologies and stereotypes with a critique of the Teachers’ Standards in England, and Wilkins (2014) offers a similar analysis of the inspection of ITE in England, arguing that the inspectorate’s prompt questions are ‘crafted to deliberately reduce racism to its surface phenomenon of individual prejudice, overlaid by notions of ‘difference’ and ‘diversity’, rather than as a structural problem’ (450). Our aim – particularly through this week, but also throughout the course – is to begin the process of fostering ‘a dynamic and complex understanding’ (Ogay & Edelmann 2016, p.388) of diversity. This is part of a broader critical tradition seeking to create schools that do not simply reproduce existing inequalities (Sleeter 2017; Willis 1977), but actively work towards more just and equitable futures.

Diversity is, for the purposes of the current study, used to refer to issues around gender, sexuality, and race. These choices were driven by our context, and there is no sense in which these particular choices are argued to be definitive, or to capture all of what ‘diversity’ might involve: as the literature above demonstrates, diversity is multifaceted, complex, and based on deeply held beliefs and assumptions. This aspect of the ITE course can only ever be a starting point on which to build through ongoing critical reflection and professional development. ‘Diversity week’ is an intensive week during which PGCE student teachers take part in activities involving speakers from different organisations, enrichment placements in schools, and with social workers, and creative

film making. The research presented in the current paper reports on the mixed methods study we used to explore the possible changes in the beliefs and attitudes of student teachers through this week. From the outset, we acknowledge the problematic nature of ‘a week’ of such work, and it is important to emphasise the way in which this only represented one specific and intensive period of activity, rather than the totality of attention given to the issues during the ITE programme.

Context and background

The ITE partnership analysed in this paper is based in the East Midlands of England. The population of the area is growing in line with the national average of just over 8% (between 2004-2014), and is largely rural. The main urban centre experienced more rapid population growth over the same period (nearly 10%), and this increase is due in part to the inflow of students and migrant workers (ONS 2015a). The majority of migrant workers are from within the EU (ONS 2015b), and the population profile by ethnicity remains overwhelmingly white (Figure 1).

[Figure 1 near here]

This urban non-white population of 2.4% in 2011 – despite having nearly doubled from 1.4% in 2001 – remains well below the national non-white population of 14% (ONS 2015a), and further below the national non-white secondary school population of 20.6% (Cardona Moltó et al. 2010). Rapid increases in ethnic diversity may lead to inter-ethnic tensions (Demireva and Heath 2014), or a ‘hunkering down’ (Putnam 2000, Laurence 2011). Tensions are the most obvious response, for example, with the first Mosque to be

built in the area attracting protest marches by far-right groups the East Anglia Patriots and the English Defence League, and various hostile engagements on social media constructed around a narrative of the city 'losing' its identity and 'Englishness'. There are similarities between these local descriptions and the national summary offered by Elton-Chalcraft et al. (2017, 31): a 'model of Britishness [that is] fearful of strangers, under siege and unsure of itself'. These demographics exacerbate what has been suggested - both nationally and internationally - to be an issue for teacher education programmes (Edgeworth and Santoro 2015; Bhopal and Rhamie 2014; Lander 2014, 2011; Larzen-Ostermark 2009; Mills 2009; Allard 2006; Ambe 2006; Clarke and Drudy 2006; Milner et al. 2003; Ball 2000; Larke 1990), which 'have been found to be increasingly homogenous – primarily White, middle class and from the dominant culture' (Acquah and Commins 2013, 445). As Milner (2012) suggests, 'it is difficult to have a conversation about discrimination in urban education when those participating have never experienced discrimination themselves' (p.704). Issues around race and Whiteness are argued to be unexamined (Picower 2009) and marginalised (Wilkins 2014) so that ITE 'reproduce[s] and transmit[s] the 'racial order' to the next generation' (Solomon et al. 2015, 148). In particular, white, middle-class student teachers are likely to have had little experience with different ethnicities or socio-economic backgrounds (Larke 1990; Nieto 1998; Ahlquist 1991; Carpenter 2000) with implications for the beliefs and assumptions shaping their conceptions of diversity, and subsequent implications for their curriculum making and pedagogical practices (Milner 2010).

Similarly, the recent changes in legislation to protected characteristics mean that teachers would have experienced their own schooling under quite a different policy regime. In particular, The Equality Act 2010 is an important aspect of this policy

context. In this act, trans people are defined as having a protected characteristic. The Women and Equalities Select Committee (2016) have discussed possible implications for education, including increasing levels of support from schools and ensuring that all staff are trained sufficiently to be ‘compliant’ across protected characteristics, ‘especially gender-variant young people’ (Paragraph 360).

The local demographics of Lincolnshire, recent policy, and the national and international ITE context support the argument that it is ‘increasingly important to have teacher candidates explore their personal attitudes and understandings of the ways in which their racial ascription and social positioning inform their actual practices and interactions with students’ (Solomon et al. 2015, 149). This translation into practice is clearly important. However, we have restricted the current study to changes in student teachers’ attitudes through ‘diversity week’. Existing research suggests that changing attitudes is a challenge because student teachers’ beliefs about these issues are deeply ingrained (Bender-Szymanski 2000). For example, Cox, Watts, and Horton (2012) used a three-hour simulation representing the experiences of families living in poverty over a four-week period to introduce student teachers (n=289) to accounts which are likely to be outside their previous experience. They found no statistically significant differences between pre- and post- survey results, and from this argue that student teachers’ beliefs may be a challenge to change. However, they also draw on the student teachers’ personal reflections to argue there actually were subtle changes in attitude and understanding. Findings from other research also supports the claim that student teachers’ beliefs change, sometimes substantially, during ITE (Giboney Wall 2016). Cox et al.’s (2012) findings have implications for the methodological approach we

developed. In particular, the range of multiple methods we designed to address our research question:

In what ways, if at all, do student teachers' understandings of diversity change through 'diversity week'?

Diversity week

The timing of the week within the ITE year was positioned so that the student teachers had been on their school placements for sufficient time to be able to contextualise their experiences, and also to have sufficient time in school following the week to begin enacting potentially reshaped praxis. The week was immediately prior to the February half-term break which also allowed for further reflection. This was particularly useful because many of the student teachers found the week emotionally challenging. The first day involved workshops and seminars aimed at introducing issues and challenging preconceptions. Over the next two days, student teachers were placed in pairs with social workers. Their placements ranged from foster-care workers to those working with families where abuse had been reported. Their brief was to 'shadow' these social workers, which involved travelling with them on visits, observing meetings with clients, and also provided opportunities for informal discussions. On the fourth day schools in more ethnically diverse areas were visited (for example, one of these schools records that 72 different languages are spoken by pupils). Student teachers spent the final day in University, reflecting and engaging with creative film making from a critical perspective, provoking teacher educators and student teachers to examine diversity in new ways, challenging the content of the curriculum and what counts as knowledge. This process was designed to address findings of previous research on the deep-seated nature of student teachers' beliefs (Bender-Szymanski 2000; Cox, Watts, and Horton

2012) by enabling student teachers to ‘seriously address the concept of cultural politics by both legitimizing and challenging cultural experiences that comprise the histories and social realities that in turn comprise the forms and boundaries that give meaning to student lives’ (Darder 1991, 77). Data about student teachers’ experiences of diversity week were generated through a range of methodological tools.

Methodology

In the discussion of related literature on student teachers’ experiences of diversity above, we noted the implications of Cox, Watts, and Horton’s (2012) study. In particular, we highlighted the tension between their finding of no statistically significant differences between pre- and post- survey results, against the student teachers’ personal reflections that suggested subtle changes in attitude and understanding. In addition, Gee (2015) argues that the ubiquity of Likert-style evaluations ‘has led to complacency, misunderstanding and apathy, with the adoption of completion strategies that lack deep engagement’ (1). In response, we developed a range of data generation methods: attitude and belief survey, conducted with all student teachers before and after the week; journals by three case study student teachers (Acquah and Commins 2013); interviews before and after the week with one of the case study student teachers; videos created by student teachers at the end of the week; anonymous feedback after sessions (‘two stars and a wish’); and we also drew on relevant questions asked in the regular course evaluation ‘Trainee ITE survey’ that is conducted twice a year. The whole of the PGCE secondary cohort were invited to participate in a 50 item questionnaire (n=56). This was administered prior to diversity week and repeated one week later. Student teachers who attended for the whole week and those who attended only the first day were identified by codes to preserve anonymity and to allow paired responses. The questionnaire used Likert-style responses (Table 1).

[Table 1 near here]

To develop this instrument we drew on previous studies of student teachers' beliefs about diversity (Clarke and Drudy 2006; Acquah and Commins 2013; Kumar and Hamer 2012; Chiner et al. 2015). Much of this research adapts Pohan and Aquilar's (2001) Professional Beliefs about Diversity Scales, which has shown strong internal consistency and reliability. For example, in Chiner et al.'s (2015) use of these scales with their sample of teachers (n=233), the analysis of internal consistency ($\alpha=0.67 - 0.81$) similar to the strong internal reliability ($\alpha=0.816$) found by Clarke and Drudy (2006). These findings suggest that it is a reliable instrument which could be adapted for our study. We returned to Pohan and Aquilar's (2001) source questionnaire when creating our instrument. The capacity to bring about change was framed in the creative process (Pope 2005) of film-making, producing a video on the topic of diversity. The self-reports of understanding and confidence are limited, in particular by the student teachers' position as trainees on a programme in which they will be judged against the teachers' standards: the desire to perform and be seen to perform as 'good trainees' may be strong (Puttick, 2018). The data we report are, therefore, a partial account from this specific perspective.

Summary of data analysis

Working as a team of researchers, data analysis was undertaken thematically, with individuals taking gender / race / sexuality, and also methodologically, with others analysing videos or questionnaires as a whole. Through an iterative process, emerging findings were then shared and discussed with the aim of integrating and synthesising

data across the range of sources. In our analysis of the questionnaire data, a set of statistical analysis techniques - descriptive and inferential – were used. Some questions were coded from most negative to most positive (for example: Question 1. There is nothing wrong with people from different racial backgrounds having/raising children). Others were coded from most positive to most negative (for example: Question 5. It is not a good idea for same-sex couples to raise children). All negatively coded items were re-coded, so that a higher value was equivalent to a great tolerance or confidence level. The internal reliability of the questionnaire was then tested using Cronbach's Alpha. Descriptive statistics were tabulated (means, standard deviations, and a five number summary). The Likert data was explored as categorical ordinal, though Likert scales can be considered continuous if centred well, and are often treated as continuous (Rhemtulla, Brosseau-Liard, and Savalei 2012). Goodman and Kruskal's gamma (γ) was used for measuring the association between ordinal values and, therefore, was suitable when investigating Likert type scales (Goodman and Kruskal 1954).

Findings

Gender

[Table 2 here]

At the start of the week the majority of student teachers reported not knowing how to recognise and make an appropriate professional response to an incident of transphobia, which shifted towards a majority agreeing or strongly agreeing that they did know by the end of the week. Those attending the whole week had a positive, statistically significant change (1.34), whereas there was no statistically significant change for those attending only the first day. In contrast, there is very little shift in student teachers'

views on whether the NHS should spend money on transgender treatment with a significant number in the middle ground (neither agreeing nor disagreeing).

By the end of the week fewer student teachers agreed or strongly agreed that there were no transgender pupils in their placement schools. Perhaps this is evidence of the impact of the training at the start of the week by a facilitator who, part way through his presentation disclosed his identity as a transman. He commented that it would be wise to assume that student teachers would be teaching trans pupils now or in the future and that they might not be visible, particularly if they have not disclosed. In terms of confidence when discussing transgender issues there is small but significant movement from disagreeing to agreeing and strongly agreeing, with only 4 student teachers responding in a way that indicates that they would not feel confident discussing trans issues with pupils at the end of the week, in contrast to 12 before the training. 11 who, at the start of the week, neither agreed nor disagreed had reduced to 2 by the end of the week. There is less change with regards to confidence in teaching trans pupils, with the vast majority reporting high levels of confidence at the start and end of the week, but there is also a minority who reported a lack of confidence at both the start and end of the week.

Race

[Table 3 here]

The opportunity to visit a school in another area, including specific training alongside unstructured discussions with pupils and teachers, seems to have had a positive impact as indicated by responses to the pre- and post- survey of beliefs and attitudes. For the question 'I feel confident to teach BAME pupils' there was positive change in confidence (0.25), statistically significant at the 5% level. It is interesting that, in response to the statement 'Accepting many different ways of life in the UK will strengthen us as a nation', those attending for the first day only showed no statistically significant change in their response. Those attending all week - including the school visit – showed a positive change in attitude (0.23), statistically significant at the 5% level.

The impact of this experience on one particular student teacher, as described in their journal, suggests that it is possible to influence a shift in their reported levels of their 'perception of things', despite beliefs about such issues potentially being deeply ingrained (Bender-Szymanski 2000):

Throughout the day I actually felt quite intimidated, as I did feel like the ethnic minority in that college. The part I will definitely remember the most was walking into the large corridor, the students stopped talking as loudly and were staring at us, there were a few quiet murmurs and it suddenly hit me that this was what it was like to be considered an ethnic minority. It definitely changed my perception of things (Student teacher's journal)

The number of student teachers who feel well prepared to teach pupils from ethnic minority backgrounds rose against the data from the previous year's cohort who had not taken part in a diversity week: from 64% to 73% feeling 'well prepared' in data from the Trainee ITE survey conducted at the end of February. This approach of 'visiting' more ethnically diverse schools presents a danger of 'tourism', and is just one aspect of the response to the challenges of training to teach all students in a largely ethnically

homogenous region. Structural issues around Whiteness, briefly introduced above, also demand curricular responses which should be seen as an essential part of ongoing critique and development of the role that education does, could, and should play.

Sexuality

[Table 4 here]

The student teachers' engagement with issues around sexuality show positive shifts in their reported knowledge and confidence. The week had a greater reported impact on the student teachers who attended for the whole week. For the question 'I feel confident to discuss lesbian, gay and bisexual issues with my pupils', those attending the first day showed no statistically significant change. For those who attended all week there was positive change in reported confidence (0.42), statistically significant at the 5% level. Similarly, in response to the question 'I know how to recognise incidents of homophobia in school and make an appropriate professional response', those attending for only the first day had no statistically significant change. Those attending all week reported a positive change in confidence (0.53), statistically significant at the 5% level. This is particularly interesting for the sexuality theme because the only formal input was on the first day.

In line with findings from previous studies (Cardona Moltó et al. 2010; Chiner et al. 2015), the student teachers mostly began the week with limited knowledge about diversity:

I... have had some students tell me that they're bisexual, I haven't – I've guessed that some students might be gay, based on stereotypes. Um, in particular males acting in a feminine- traditionally feminine way. But I couldn't say that they've actually told me that they're gay... I'm aware of a year ten boy who is quite

effeminate and has a younger brother and it's more that his younger brother gets bullied (Pre-diversity week interview)

The positive increases in student teachers' knowledge and confidence seem to move through stages from increases in basic propositional knowledge through to more transformational understandings in which they articulate desires to effect positive change. For example, in response to the journaling question 'What have you learnt from today?', one student teacher described the increases in their (propositional) knowledge:

LBGT+: I've learnt what the plus '+' means, and that there are so many more 'categories' that could describe a person's sexual preference. For example, pansexual or gender fluid. Also the possibility of homophobia in the staffroom. (Student teacher's journal)

This increased knowledge of categories was then developed into a reflective account with hints of a transformational experience in which personal assumptions and beliefs are challenged. The results of this are described in emancipatory, ambitious terms about the kind of environment this student teacher now hopes to go on to create:

Although I didn't consider myself to be at all prejudiced before receiving the information from today, there was a lot I had never thought about and I can now prepare myself more for situations where issues such as these arise in school. I feel more empowered to challenge homophobic bullying and to assist students' understanding of various issues where necessary, but mostly to create an absolutely inclusive and safe environment. (Student teacher's journal)

Discussion

The themes of gender, sexuality, and race were explored through sessions at the start of diversity week which also included placements with social workers and visits to schools with greater cultural diversity. The social worker placements challenged the student

teachers' thinking from a professional perspective (in particular, around the relationships between different groups of professionals), and from a personal perspective (focusing on the emotional response that many had to the situations of poverty, neglect, and abuse that they encountered). For example:

I was surprised to hear that there is some history of mutual distrust between teachers and social workers. To my mind there is too much critical overlap to allow for that, and I gather the shift in safeguarding towards a more communicative 'multi-agency' approach has put paid to any such petty bureaucratic tribalism!

...Opened my eyes to what goes on outside of the education setting in terms of support for children and safeguarding.

(Student teachers' comments on Social Services placements)

Ogay and Edelmann (2016) suggest two dangers when exploring issues around diversity: culturalisation – an essentialism that makes too much of cultural differences; and indifference – when diversity is ignored, such as becoming colour blind; culturalisation, and indifference. In the presentation of findings for sexuality, gender, and race, there is evidence that diversity week improved student teachers' understandings of diversity. There are many examples of indifference being challenged, with previously hidden assumptions about diversity being opened to critique. This is illustrated in the terms discussed above: 'Although I didn't consider myself to be at all prejudiced before receiving the information from today...' There is little evidence of the opposite – culturalisation – in these student teachers' views about diversity: they do not seem to be making 'too much' of diversity. In Allard and Santoro's (2008 201) terms, their 'taken-for-granted assumptions' have been 'troubled'. One way in which our findings make a particularly interesting contribution is by extending the conclusions reached by Cox, Watts, and Horton (2012). They found that their three-hour intervention found no statistically significant differences in the participants' views, yet

argue that their qualitative data shows subtle shifts in participants' views. For each theme we discussed above there is a difference between the change in perceptions of those having experienced just one day against those who took part in the whole week with more significant changes in the views of the latter group. This difference is interesting because the rest of the week did not include any additional input or content related to the issues of gender or sexuality: only the space to reflect through filmmaking. The act of giving space to revisit the ideas and create something (in this case, a short film) seems to have allowed these student teachers to engage more deeply to the extent that their perceptions of their understandings actually shifted. The popular refrain 'I'm not racist, but...' is brilliantly reversed in these student teachers' realisation that 'I didn't consider myself at all prejudiced before...' The differences between student teachers' understandings of diversity, and the differential impacts we found associated with revisiting the ideas together support an argument for ongoing CPD (Continuing Professional Development) that will support teachers' engagement with these, in some cases rapidly changing, social, moral and legal issues. It is also important for this CPD to be available to and work closely with experienced teachers in addressing potential misconceptions, unexamined assumptions, and prejudice, so that new teachers' emerging beliefs are developed in a supportive and knowledgeable environment, rather than being undermined or dismissed. The rapidly changing nature of some of these issues should mean that high-quality CPD for teachers is a priority, and our study offers support for models of this CPD that move beyond stand-alone, one-off courses.

Conclusions

Changing demographics, increasing immigration, the enhanced legal status of trans

people, and the continuing homogeneity in terms of socio-economic and racial background of student teachers all contribute to the urgent importance of ITE to engage with issues around diversity.

Our study offers one response to these challenges, and there is strong evidence of the ‘diversity week’ being positive for these student teachers. For some, this includes shifts in their confidence with a range of diversity issues, including; race, gender, and sexuality. The sessions, combined with school visits and social worker placements, later drawn together in the creative film-making are associated with the greatest changes in student teachers’ understandings of diversity. Through each theme – gender, race, sexuality – we highlighted the differences between attitudinal changes in those attending only the first day against those attending the whole week.

An intensive period such as this during ITE may be a good starting point for ongoing CPD to build on to ensure that all develop dynamic and complex understandings about diversity. The deeply embedded Whiteness and potentially unexamined beliefs and assumptions brought to and reproduced through ITE suggests that intensive attention needs to be given and carefully planned during ITE to begin addressing these issues. The marked differences between student teachers’ preconceptions also has implications for the kinds of ongoing development and support that is necessary: in Sleeter’s (2017, p.164) terms, ‘there is no one formula’ that will successfully address these issues. The lack of awareness reported by student teachers at the start of the week across a range of issues suggests that ITE courses might find ways to develop this knowledge earlier, for example, by increasing their engagement with this literature earlier in the course. The dynamic nature of research in this field, and the ongoing refinement of understandings

(Khattab & Modood, 2018) adds to the case for continued critical engagement with issues around diversity during ITE and beyond through ongoing CPD.

Postscript

In this paper we presented our analysis of a ‘Diversity Week’ that took place during the 2015/16 academic year, and the manuscript was first submitted to a journal in 2017. Since then, public discourse around some of the transgender issues we have discussed have grown exponentially and some of these developments highlight the complexity of the decision-making facing teachers and school leaders. Such as: decisions over toilet use and challenges in developing supportive policies for schools, illustrated through the way in which Oxfordshire County Council’s (2019) ‘Trans Inclusion Toolkit’ was withdrawn after legal challenge from a school girl; transgender participation in sport (for one example, see the ongoing World Rugby 2020 consultation); and discussion of planned reform of the Gender Recognition Act, particularly focusing on the role played by self-identification (Guardian, 2020). Published texts and resources have grown significantly, for example the Gender Diversity list (published by Jessica Kingsley Publishers) did not exist when the current paper was first submitted, and since then has grown to include over 75 books, providing an important source largely removed from more sensationalising journalistic coverage. In terms of race and racism, one example of the brilliant work that has been produced recently includes interventions such as Kendi’s (2019) *How to be an Antiracist* and this, along with many others, drawing on a much longer tradition of decolonisation work (Esson et al. 2017), provide much support for what we would now term efforts towards anti-racism. This shift in language also relates to the definition we noted at the outset about the phrase ‘diversity issues’.

Looking back, this is not strong enough and, in the case of race, framing this as a drive towards anti-racism is more appropriate for the vital task of working towards more just

and equitable futures. Recent publications, including Joseph-Salisbury's (2020) *Race and Racism in English Secondary Schools*, and McIntosh, Todd and Das' (2019) review *Teaching Migration, Belonging and Empire* also provide highly pertinent insight and practical suggestions for the ways in which ITE and CPD can better support these aims. Findings from the programme we have reported on support their calls for greater attention to be given to addressing these issues, including through: clearer anti-racism policies; refreshing and transforming school curricula; and diversifying the teacher workforce. McIntosh et al.'s TIDE-Runnymede report includes suggestions for government funded support, particularly through a Centre for migration, empire, and belonging (similar to the UCL Centre for Holocaust Education) which has the potential to address some of the challenges we have discussed, including providing greater support for anti-racist teaching.

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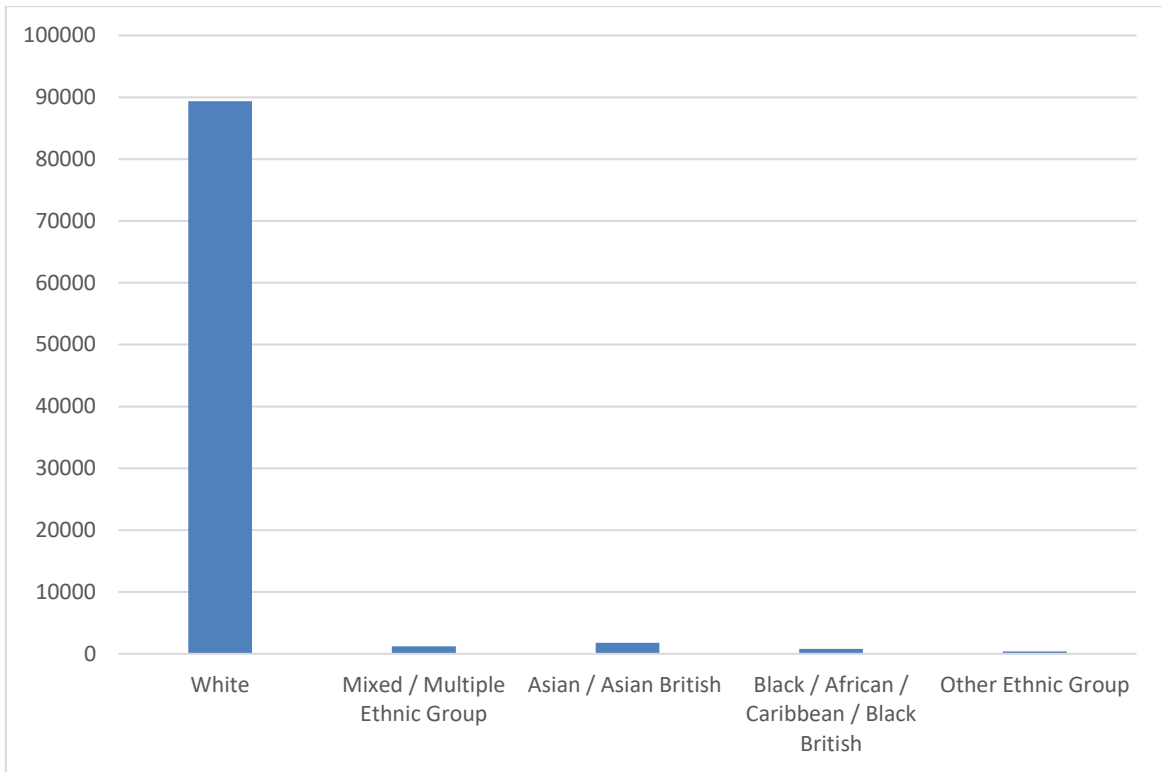


Figure 1. Population of the area by Ethnicity, from 2011 Census (ONS 2015a)

1	Strongly disagree
2	Disagree
3	Neither agree nor disagree
4	Agree
5	Strongly agree

Table 1 Likert-style responses

Item	Monday	All Week
	Only	

Q3	.168	Not sig	.000	<0.1%	I know how to recognise incidents of transphobia in school and make an appropriate professional response.
Q42	.642	Not sig	.037	5%	There are no transgender pupils in my placement school.
Q48	.052	Not sig	.007	1%	I feel confident to discuss transgender issues with my pupils.

Table 2 Significant Transgender results

Item	Monday Only		All Week		
Q4	.591	Not sig	.044	5%	Accepting many different ways of life in the UK will strengthen us as a nation.
Q20	1.000	Not sig	.025	5%	Students and teachers would benefit from having a basic understanding of different (diverse) religions.
Q32	.010	5%	.677	Not sig	Whenever possible, second language learners should receive instruction in their first language until they are proficient enough to learn via English instruction.
Q46	.443	Not sig	.032	5%	I feel confident to teach BAME pupils.

Table 3. Significant BAME results

Item	Monday Only		All Week		
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Q24	.096	Not sig	.001	<0.1%	I know how to recognise incidents of homophobia in school and make an appropriate professional response.
Q44	.509	Not sig	.005	1%	I feel confident to discuss lesbian, gay and bisexual issues with my pupils.

Table 4 Significant LGB results