

Cross-border Community-based Learning as a Strategy in Diversity and Multicultural Teacher Preparation: A Comparative Case Study

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Abstract

As students in K-12 classrooms reflect the increasing racial, ethnic, and linguistic diversity of the United States as a whole, understanding diverse worldviews and inclusion of diverse students are important skills for classroom teachers. However, the pedagogical practices for training teacher education students with the knowledge and skills to effectively teach their racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students range greatly. This study explores the potential of one teacher training strategy, cross-border community-based learning, and the impact of this strategy on teacher education students' understanding of diversity and commitment to future actions in their classrooms. The research employs a comparative case study of two sections of a diversity and multicultural education course for undergraduate education students: one section participated in community-based learning at an Indigenous school in Guatemala, and one section participated in traditional classroom learning. The mixed-methods analysis of pre/post survey data, student journals, and student presentations suggests that community-based learning, which centers Indigenous Knowledges and assets, holds the potential to motivate teacher education students to include diverse students in their future classrooms and challenge colonial systems of education in their future teaching. This research contributes five main recommendations to inform teacher education and community-based learning curriculum, including important differences between learning for teacher education Students of Color and White students on one particular survey scale.

Keywords: community-based learning, global learning, social justice, diversity

Introduction

Understanding diverse worldviews is important for teachers, as students in K-12 classrooms reflect the increasing racial and ethnic diversity of the United States. According to the most recent data from the U.S. Department of Education, Students of Color (SOC) makeup 49% of public school-aged children, while the teaching population is 80% White (U.S. Department of Education, 2019). And the percentage of SOC in public education is predicted to continue to increase. However, teaching professionals remain predominantly White European-Americans who speak English only and often lack the cultural knowledge and skills to effectively teach their racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse students (Aronson & Laughter, 2016). This disparity leads to what multicultural education scholars term the demographic imperative (Banks, 2013) or the demographic divide (Gay & Howard, 2000): a disparity in educational resources and opportunities between SOC and their White peers.

One part of a response to the demographic divide in teacher preparation curriculum is diversity and multicultural education, which often takes the form of one or more courses, such as working with diverse students and families or creating culturally relevant curricula. The aim, pedagogical practices, and impact of these courses on teacher education student learning about diversity in the classroom range greatly (Castro, 2010; Sleeter, 2001). Thus, understanding what aspects of diversity and multiculturalism courses impact student understanding of diversity is imperative for training future teachers to engage in increasingly diverse classrooms.

This article employs a comparative case study of two sections of a diversity and multiculturalism teacher education course at Quinnipiac University, located on the traditional homelands of the Quinnipiac People. One section participated in community-based learning at an Indigenous school in Guatemala, and one section did not participate in community-based learning. Community-based learning refers to the instructional strategy of field-based experiential learning with community partners, which includes applied learning and guided reflection (Kuh, 2008). One section of students in the diversity and multiculturalism course participated in community-based learning at an Indigenous school in Guatemala during spring break, which I refer to as the community-based learning section. One section did not participate in community-based learning, which I refer to as the traditional section. The Guatemala school, *Centro Educativo Pavarotti* (Pavarotti Center), serves about 150 students who predominately identify as Kaqchikel Mayan. Through this research, I explore the question: How does participation in community-based learning as part of a diversity and multiculturalism course impact teacher education students' understanding of diversity and anticipated actions in their future classrooms?

I argue in this paper that community-based learning, which centers on non-Western expertise, has the potential to impact students' justice-oriented understanding of diversity and motivation to include diverse students in their future classrooms. This article proceeds with four broad

sections. First, I provide background on research regarding community-based learning as a strategy in teacher diversity and multicultural education. Next, I provide findings regarding student learning from my research. I then conclude with implications for practice and research for those interested in improving diversity and multicultural education for future teachers.

Background

To give context for the rest of the paper, I first provide a brief background of the two sections of the undergraduate diversity and multiculturalism course as well as the community-partner school in Guatemala.

The diversity and multiculturalism course in this study is required for all teacher candidates in the School of Education at Quinnipiac University. However, students outside the School of Education may also take the course to fulfill a general education requirement. The course focuses on the social, economic, and political organization of public education in the United States, emphasizing populations historically marginalized due to race, gender, class, ability, or sexual orientation. It is important to note that while students in the community-based learning and traditional sections took a diversity and multiculturalism course with the same general learning goals as the School of Education outlined, the professor and syllabus differed for each section.

As the course is about diversity and multiculturalism, it is relevant to look at the racial/ethnic and gender identities of the course participants. In both sections, the racial/ethnic and gender demographics were roughly similar, although the traditional section had more students, and thus more diverse racial/ethnic identities were represented.

TABLE 1. Participant profile

Demographics		Community-based Learning Section	Traditional Section
Race	SOC	38%	38%
	White	62%	62%
Gender	Female	100%	90%
	Male	0%	10%
Total Students		8	21

The partnership between Quinnipiac University and the Indigenous school in Guatemala, *Centro Educativo Pavarotti* (Pavarotti Center), began in 2007. The Pavarotti Center is located in San Lucas Tolimán, in the Sololá Department near Lake Atitlán, and the majority of the population are Mayans who speak Cakchiquel. The partnership is called a Global Solidarity Program, the name the Pavarotti Center coined. The Pavarotti Center is part of the Rigoberta Menchú Foundation and focuses on promoting the rights of Indigenous people through several initiatives,

including education. The school primarily serves Mayan students who are from low-income families and receive financial assistance to attend the school. The Pavarotti Center is committed to educating students to respect diverse cultures, including their own Mayan culture, and promote peace, human rights, and anti-racism. Dorms for up to twenty-five people were built with the explicit purpose that visitors would come and stay at the school. Students from Quinnipiac University participate in Global Solidarity Programs with the Pavarotti Center two to three times per year for one-week periods, and the teachers at the Pavarotti Center create the itinerary.

During the spring break 2020 program, the itinerary included engagement with students and teachers, presentations from local community members, visiting community organizations, and participating in cultural traditions. The time spent engaging with students and teachers at the school intentionally did not include any teaching from the education students at Quinnipiac University nor traditional “service” type of engagement. Instead, community-based learning focused on activities such as participating in a social consciousness-raising activity with students and lunch with student families in their homes. Presentations from community members included information about history, religion, culture, and education. Some community organizations students visited were a coffee cooperative, the Ministry of Education, a public school, and an educational non-profit focused on people with disabilities. The Quinnipiac students also participated in cultural traditions like dancing, weaving, and cooking. As the Mayan teachers created the itinerary, they decided what it was in their community that they wanted to share and how they wanted the Quinnipiac University students to engage with the school and wider community.

Theoretical Foundations

This study is shaped by the classic American philosopher and educational reformer John Dewey’s philosophy of experience (1938) as well as a few key aspects of Indigenous Knowledge Systems as highlighted through “the story of the bean” (Brayboy & Maughan, 2009) which is an account of an Indigenous student teacher’s reinterpretation of a science lesson through an Indigenous lens. Dewey’s philosophy of education is based on the interdependence of two principles: the principle of interaction and the principle of continuity. The principle of interaction holds that knowledge needs to be applied to a situation for it to be useful, and this is closely tied to Indigenous Knowledges that resist the Western notions of searching for universal truths for their own sake and instead values knowledge which leads to “purposeful action” (Brayboy & Maughan, 2009, p. 12). Dewey’s second principle of continuity poses that experiences build on one another to promote growth in learners. Dewey’s philosophy of experience also states that the principles of interaction and continuity shape one’s purpose or a specific action plan. Another foundational element of this research is Dewey’s (1927) conviction that face-to-face interaction with diverse people is the most desirable form of community life, which can be related to

Indigenous Knowledges that see relationships as key to understanding oneself and community and “at the core of our existence” (Brayboy & Maughton, 2009, p. 12). These Dewian ideas and Indigenous Knowledges guide the analysis and implications of the research in a way that values practical and developmental learning.

This study is also informed by Westheimer and Kahne’s (2004) conception of the justice-oriented citizen. Westheimer and Kahne’s research followed two cohorts of high school students who participated in community-based learning over two years, finding that students see their role as citizens as personally responsible, participatory, or justice-oriented. According to Westheimer and Kahne, the justice-oriented citizen is able to “critically assess social, political, and economic structures and explore collective strategies for change that challenge injustice and, when possible, address root causes of problems” (Westheimer & Khane, 2004). A justice orientation to teacher preparation is imperative to address the deepening education gap between SOC and White students in U.S. schools.

Literature Review

Researchers and practitioners increasingly advocate that community-based learning is a promising strategy for justice-oriented diversity and multicultural teacher education (Civitillo et al., 2018; Yuan, 2017). Community-based learning, as related to diversity courses for teacher education students, often takes the form of domestic (Boyle-Baise & Sleeter, 2000) or global service-learning (Larsen & Searle, 2017), home visits (Vesely et al., 2016), and international practicum or field placements (Smolcic & Katunich, 2017). For example, in one study which examined how a domestic service-learning experience affected teacher candidates’ learning about diversity and social justice, the researchers found that through collaborating with students on an urban oral-history project and a rural motor skills program, teacher candidates changed their preconceived deficit notions about SOC and low-income students and instead came to examine their teaching practices critically (Baldwin et al., 2007). Moreover, a review of thirty-six longitudinal studies on the effects of training on preservice teachers’ beliefs about cultural diversity in education found that programs with a community-based component “were reported nearly always as effective in targeting beliefs about cultural diversity” (Civitillo et al., 2018). The authors specify the importance of experiential or field experience along with guided reflection in these findings. Another literature review of community-based teacher education programs found that such programs were most impactful when they focused on community strengths (including strengths of community teachers) and incorporated an intersectional multicultural understanding of issues such as culture, race, and class (Yuan, 2017). Several studies suggest community-based learning as an effective practice in diversity and multicultural teacher education; however, more research is needed to better understand the impact on students’ thinking and teaching practices.

A small body of literature exists regarding community-based learning with Indigenous communities to prepare education students to teach racially and ethnically diverse learners. Much of this research focuses on student learning outcomes after student teaching in an Indigenous community. In one study, education students engaged in a 17-week student teaching experience on American Indian Reservations across the Navajo Nation. Students examined cultural values and applied these to their professional and personal actions, for example, education students recognized the cultural value of family or clan and then planned lessons in which their students interviewed family members (Stachowski et al., 2003). In another study, Australian students who participated in a two-week practicum experience on the Anangu Pitjantjatjara Yankunytjatjara Lands reported that immersion in the unfamiliar culture of the Indigenous school shaped an understanding of privilege and respect of Indigenous cultures (Stahl et al., 2020). Some researchers caution that though there is great value in students learning about privilege and diversity through community-based learning in Indigenous contexts, these programs in and of themselves do not generally challenge colonial education systems which center Western or European knowledge (Lees, 2016; Stahl et al., 2020). Additionally, most of this literature focuses on education student learning and not outcomes for the community partner schools.

Methods and Data

This research utilizes a mixed-methods comparative case study to explore the understanding of diversity and future anticipated actions of students who participated in two sections of a diversity and multiculturalism teacher education course. The two bounded systems (Smith, 1978) of study, or two cases, in this research are the two sections of the diversity and multiculturalism course. As this study aims to investigate multiple variables in two complex social units (the two sections of the education class), a case study is an appropriate methodology.

I employed three data collection techniques: a pre/post survey, mid-semester journal prompt, and observation of final presentations. Students in both sections of the diversity and multiculturalism teacher education course took the Global Engagement Survey (GES) within the first three weeks of the course start date and during the final exam. I also collected data from the community-based learning section through two additional methods: a mid-semester journal prompt and observation of student final presentations via Zoom.

The GES is a pre/post-mixed-methods survey that aims to better understand student global and civic learning (Hartman et al., 2015). The GES assesses changes in students' perceptions of their knowledge, skills, values, and intended future actions related to three components of global learning (cultural humility, global citizenship, and critical reflection). There are 58 closed-ended questions that respondents answer according to a five-point Likert scale (strongly agree, agree, neither agree nor disagree, disagree, strongly disagree) and 17 responsive open-ended questions.

Pre/post surveys, like the GES, are a useful tool to assess the impact of an instructional intervention, such as an academic course or community-based learning program, on student learning.

The GES is a conceptually grounded and empirically verified tool utilized in quantitative, qualitative, and mixed-methods research published in several peer-reviewed academic journals (Gendle & Tapler, 2022; Hartman et al., 2020; Vandermaas-Peeler et al., 2018). The survey is conceptually grounded using the American Association of Colleges and Universities' definition of global learning “Global learning is a critical analysis of and an engagement with complex, interdependent global systems and legacies (such as natural, physical, social, cultural, economic, and political) and their implications for people’s lives and the earth’s sustainability” (*Global Learning VALUE Rubric*, n.d.). The survey also draws on existing research in global citizenship, service-learning, international volunteering, study abroad, and related fields (Hartman et al., 2015). Scale validation for the survey took place from 2015 to 2017, with more than 1,300 students from 28 different educational institutions and 240 different global learning programs participating (Reynolds et al., 2021). The validation process utilized confirmatory factor analysis to confirm eight scales (openness to diversity, cultural adaptability, civic efficacy, political voice, conscious consumption, global civic responsibility, human rights beliefs, and critical reflection). Further, as a reliability measure, the internal consistency of each scale was tested using Cronbach’s alpha statistics. The two scales of particular relevance to the research question in this study are the openness to diversity and civic efficacy scales.

TABLE 2. Global engagement survey scales explored in this study

Scale	Closed Q	Open Q	Cronbach’s α
Openness to diversity	8	4	.78
Civic efficacy	9	1	.79

The conceptual grounding, validation process, and wide use of the GES make it an excellent tool for this study.

Data Coding and Analysis

I employed an explanatory sequential mixed methods approach to address the research question (Creswell, 2013). First, I conducted quantitative analysis and then used qualitative data to explore these results further. I used SPSS to run the quantitative analysis comparing pre- and post-survey means using a paired sample t-test for each survey scale to determine differences in self-reported learning between the community-based learning and traditional course sections. In

the community-based learning section, five students completed the pre- and post-survey (5 matched cases). In the traditional section, twenty-two students completed the pre- and post-survey (22 matched cases). Statistical significance cannot be determined for this number of cases; therefore, the data I present is descriptive.

During phase two, I analyzed the open-ended survey responses for both course sections. I further analyzed mid-semester journals and the transcription of student final presentations for the community-based section. Next, I generated the initial code list using one round of in vivo coding, a strategy in which the researcher uses the participants' literal words to generate a code list that reflects the participants' everyday lives instead of academic terms assigned by the researcher (Saldana, 2010). I then employed two additional rounds of theoretical coding to group codes into themes (Saldana, 2010) under two broad categories: understanding of diversity and future actions.

Results

The data from this study offers suggestive findings regarding education students' understanding of diversity and anticipated future actions. The paired sample t-test results show that students in the community-based learning section (n=5) started and ended the course with higher average means than the traditional section (n=22) on both the openness to diversity and civic efficacy scales (see figure 1). I specifically explore these two quantitative scales below, along with qualitative survey data. Further, I delve deeper into the additional qualitative components (mid-semester journals and observation of final presentations) for the community-based section in relation to the research question.

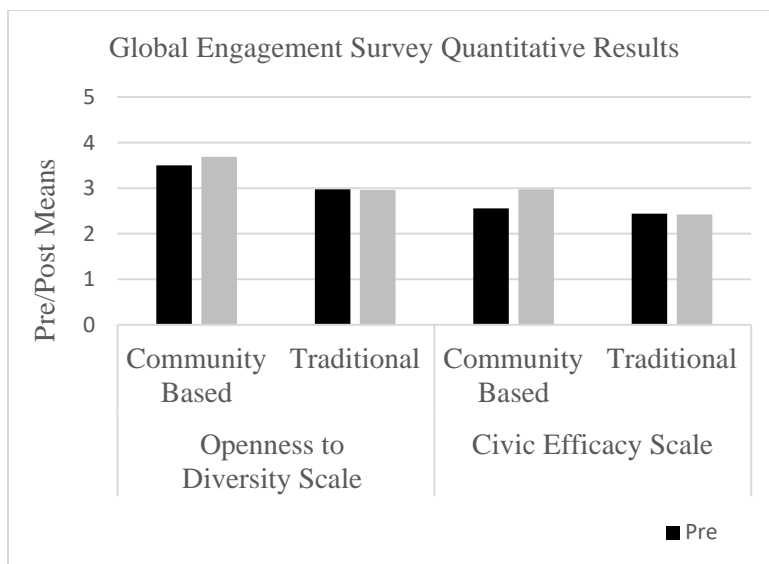


FIGURE 1. Global engagement survey quantitative results.

Understanding of Diversity

Openness to diversity is vital to developing a commitment to justice-oriented actions (Mills & Ballantyne, 2010; Stahl et al., 2020). The GES openness to diversity scale includes three questions about behaviors, or students' perception of their ability to communicate across differences, and five questions related to cognitive understanding of diversity, such as "thinking and ideas" or "appreciation" of diversity. Differences are evident when analyzing the specific questions for each course section. The mean score of students in the community-based section increased on the post-survey for all three questions related to behaviors. It increased or stayed the same for all five cognitive questions, meaning that, overall, students in this section were confident in their ability to communicate across differences after the course ended. Students who participated in community-based learning had many opportunities to interact with Mayan students, teachers, and other community members during their experience in Guatemala, which meant they could practice communicating across different cultures, ethnicities, and languages. One education student recalled:

During an activity with the students, we brainstormed different plans for helping reduce poverty, and we had difference in opinions about how education can help. Still, through active communication, we were able to agree. As this student's experience suggests, the opportunity to interact and communicate with community members at the Pavarotti Center may have made the education students in the community-based section more confident in their ability to communicate across differences.

In the traditional section, the student mean score decreased on the post-survey in all three of the openness to diversity scale questions related to behaviors and increased or stayed the same in all but one of the questions related to cognitive abilities. However, the decrease in the behavioral questions for the traditional section does not necessarily indicate a decrease in learning about diversity; it could mean just the opposite. Given that the mean score of students in the traditional section generally increased in the cognitively related questions, the decrease in behaviorally-oriented questions may indicate critical self-reflection. In response to the question, "Can you provide a brief example of a time you satisfactorily resolved a misunderstanding with a person from another culture?" a student in the traditional section commented in the post-survey:

I one time had a view on a topic that I was passionate about and stated my beliefs, and I slightly offended someone who was in the group I was hanging out with. I could tell because of the face they made. I didn't realize I did something offensive, but I had little education about different cultures other than textbooks, so I didn't know how to act or what is appropriate to say.

This student realizes that they should adjust their behaviors when communicating with people from different cultures and acknowledge that they have not had the opportunity to practice this

skill. Notably, this student left this same question blank in the pre-survey, suggesting that this self-reflection may have occurred through learning in the course. Another student in the traditional section reflected, “I did not necessarily adjust my behavior, but I became more aware of privilege.” Both of these quotes suggest that for these students, the classroom learning in the diversity and multiculturalism course facilitated deep self-examination, which they can potentially build on in future classrooms and real-world experiences related to communicating and collaborating with diverse people.

Understanding of Diversity Among the Community-based Learners

Analysis of additional qualitative components for the community-based section revealed that students in this section generally displayed an understanding of diversity which was either assets-based or critical of inequity. In their final presentations, students attributed their learning about diversity and inequity overwhelmingly to engaging with Mayan students in the classroom as well as to visiting community organizations, such as a public school and a center run by and for people with disabilities.

Most students held an assets-based understanding of diversity that related to the inclusion of non-dominant racial and ethnic cultures in classroom learning and society more generally. Students overwhelmingly said that Indigenous pride was a strong central point of the Pavarotti Center, made visible through traditions such as *traje* (traditional Mayan clothing) as well as cultural traditions like music and dance. The education students also commented that Indigenous pride was displayed through the curriculum, including a critical history of Guatemala and the teaching of Indigenous languages, like Cakchiquel. As one student recounted:

Their curriculum was based a lot around their culture. And I think culture in classrooms is extremely important for students because the students were able or are able to be themselves at their school, and they don't have to hide who they are. So, because a lot of these students are Mayan, and in other schools, they're not welcomed in the same ways.

Overall the education students saw that the sense of Indigenous pride at the Pavarotti Center encouraged the Mayan students to be engaged at school and enjoy learning. Through witnessing the Indigenous pride present at the Pavarotti Center, Quinnipiac University students displayed an assets-based understanding of ethnic and cultural diversity.

The majority of education students expressed a justice-oriented understanding of diversity in which they were critical of inequities, particularly in education systems. One student described putting on the traditional Mayan *traje* as a connection point between them and the Mayan people at the school, saying it was the “pinnacle of immersing myself in another culture.” This statement taken out of context, could be viewed as problematic cultural appropriation. However, this student reflected critically on the experience, saying:

Some students shared with me that the reason that they don't have a *traje*, is because their families talk about the barriers for Mayan people put up by the Ladinos [non-Indigenous Guatemalans], such as inhibiting their access to adequate health care and adequate education and how the *traje* makes them stand out in many settings. But at the center, the Mayan culture is embraced. So again, some students wear *traje* because their families want them to show pride in where they come from.

This education student was able to link the powerful experience of wearing traditional Mayan clothing herself with an understanding of the discrimination that Mayan students face when wearing their traditional clothing in public schools.

Understanding the discrimination that Mayan people in Guatemala experience caused the education students to reflect critically on inequities not only within Guatemala but also within the United States. Like many universities in the United States, Quinnipiac University is located on native land. The university takes its name from the Quinnipiac tribe who, according to the Native Northeast Research Collaborative, inhabited much of the Connecticut coastline during the 17th century (2020). Many education students began to consider how colonialism in the United States, and at their university, is often ignored. As one student stated:

If we look at us— at our university, for example, as a university, we take our name, we take our legend, we take our mascot from Indigenous people. But nowhere in our curriculum, our school history, or in our tours do we talk about the actual Indigenous people who lived on our land. We don't give any justice to them at all. We need to acknowledge our own part in the problem as well.

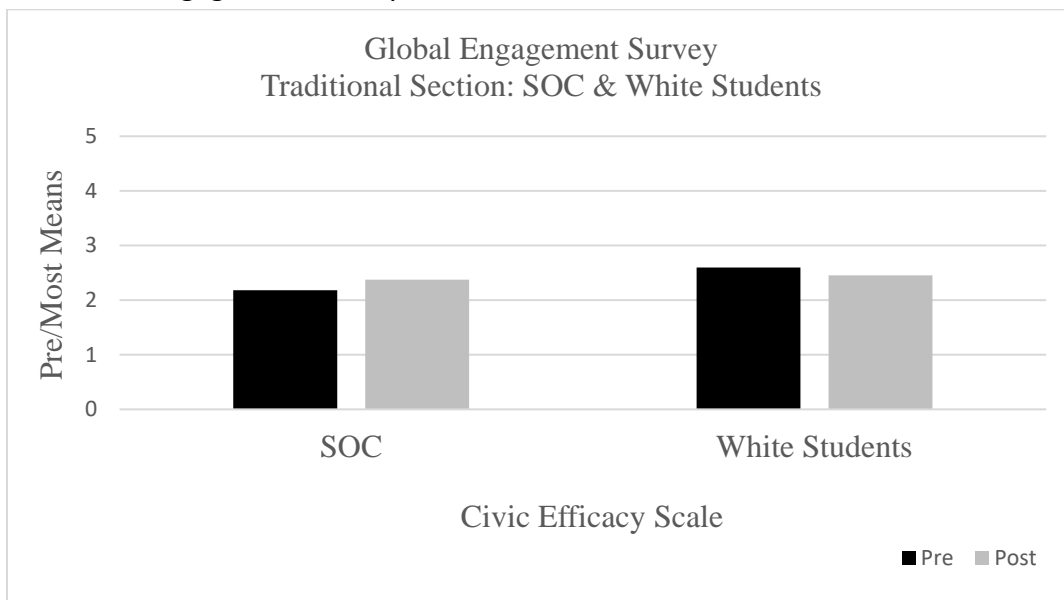
This student's comments suggest that through the experience of interacting with an Indigenous community in another country, the Quinnipiac University students became more aware of injustices in their day-to-day lives at home which are translated into a motivation to take justice-oriented actions in the next section.

Future Actions

The civic efficacy scale on the GES relates closely to students' anticipated future actions, and for this scale, the community-based section student mean score increased, and the traditional section student mean score decreased after the course. The most important finding related to this scale comes from data disaggregated by race, which suggests that SOC in the traditional section are more likely than their White peers to be civically engaged. While overall, the pre/post means for students in the traditional section decreased on the civic efficacy scale, the mean score for SOC increased (see figure 2). I disaggregated the data according to SOC and White students for each scale of the GES. The civic efficacy scale was the only one that showed a directional difference between these two populations. It was impossible to disaggregate data according to race for the community-based section as only one SOC completed the pre and post-survey. It is possible that SOC in the traditional section were motivated to participate in social action by drawing on first-

hand experiences of inequality in their own lives in relation to the course material. SOC in the traditional section described facing discrimination at both school and work due to speaking English as a Second Language as well as for their religious beliefs. One student stated, “My education has made me feel invisible.” This finding is similar to what diversity education scholar, Smith found in research regarding a masters level diversity course in which they posed that students from minoritized racial or cultural groups will have more concrete experiences to reflect on in the diversity education course (Smith, 2011). The responses of SOC show that they hold valuable cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005), such as knowledge, experiences, and skills acquired through navigating and resisting oppression in their everyday lives, which can be applied to classroom learnings. The beneficial lived experiences that SOC bring to the classroom are particularly relevant in justice-oriented diversity and multiculturalism classes. These experiences may have motivated students in the traditional section towards a greater commitment to future civic engagement than their White peers.

FIGURE 2. Global engagement survey traditional section: SOC & White students.



Community-based Section and Future Actions

Analysis of the additional qualitative data for the community-based section reveals that students' future actions were generally related to their future careers as teachers in two areas: including diverse students in their future classroom and incorporating course learning in their future teaching pedagogy. In their final presentations, students most often attributed their motivation to take certain actions in the classroom to engagement with Guatemalan students and teachers, as well as presentations from local Mayan community members.

Several students stated that their experience in the diversity and multiculturalism class impacted how they intend to include diverse students, specifically English Language Learners (ELLs) and Students with Disabilities, in their future classrooms. One education student stated that after working with Guatemalan students in the classroom, they are motivated to make ELLs “feel more comfortable” in their future classroom. And other students said that after visiting a community organization in Guatemala run by and for people with disabilities that they will be able to “help these students [students with disabilities] better after visiting this organization and seeing the endless possibilities.” These students were not specific in their intentions but said they had greater awareness and desire to include diverse students in their future classrooms.

Education students stated that their experience in the course would influence their future teaching pedagogy in several ways. Some students stated that they plan to discuss diversity or cultural learning in their future classrooms, as one student stated:

I truly want my students to be well-rounded in every regard, but after our trip, I really want to put a focus on the idea of cultural learning. I have so many ideas for how to implement these concepts in lessons, and I am really excited for my future in the classroom.

As seen through this comment, most students were not specific in how they would incorporate cultural learning into the classroom but rather stated that they are motivated to do so.

Several students reflected an intention to teach a critical history of the United States regarding Indigenous people. As one student said in reference to learning about the “extermination and shoving Native Americans off their land:”

And even discussing these topics inside the classroom is always hard, and no one ever said this was going to be easy, but this is something that we as future educators need to perform and execute in our classrooms.

For this student, classroom discussions about difficult topics, like the genocide of native populations, inspired a desire to facilitate these types of discussions in their future classroom.

Another student commented on learning throughout the course:

In Guatemala, my attitudes towards diversity shifted a lot. Considering that I aspire to teach history, problems of diversity and racism are going to be very prevalent in a lot of the content I cover. Before this trip, talking about diversity seemed very taboo.

This student describes becoming more comfortable talking about diversity through the practice of talking about diversity and racism, which points to the importance of including these topics in teacher education curriculum. These students’ comments also show that it is important for future teachers to have the opportunity to practice participating in conversations around diversity, inequity, colonization, and racism throughout their educational experience.

Implications

Implications for Practice

My analysis suggests that community-based learning, which centers Indigenous Knowledges and expertise, has the potential to impact students' motivation to include diverse students in their future classrooms and challenge colonial systems of education in their future teaching. I provide four main recommendations to inform the development of teacher education and community-based learning curriculum.

Practice Communication Across Differences

As an increasing portion of students in the United States is from ethnically, racially, and linguistically diverse backgrounds, future teachers must be prepared to communicate and collaborate with these diverse students and families. The quantitative data presented here shows that students who participated in community-based learning as part of a diversity and multiculturalism course ended the course with higher self-reported abilities to communicate across differences than at the beginning of the course. While students who did not participate in community-based learning in their diversity and multiculturalism course ended the course with lower self-reported abilities to communicate across differences than at the beginning of the course; however, potentially with increased self-reflection about their cross-cultural communication skills. Both of these findings point to the merit of Indigenous knowledges, which values “purposeful action,” as well as Dewey’s principle of interaction, which poses that for knowledge to be useful, it must be applied to a situation. A recommendation for those developing diversity education curricula for education students is to incorporate the opportunity to not only learn about and critically reflect on topics like diversity and inclusion but also to practice communication across differences through community-based learning.

Bridge the Gap between a Changed Perspective and a Change in Actions

While most students who participated in community-based learning named general future teaching practices influenced by the course, they did not name a specific plan for action that they would take in the future. According to Dewey’s philosophy of education, through experience and reflection, these students hold a desire to act on new learning; however, they are not yet articulating a clear purpose or plan of action. Dewey poses that educators must guide students to bridge the gap between a changed perspective and a change in actions. For example, at the end of the diversity and multiculturalism course students could be asked to create a lesson plan incorporating their new learnings. As education students said that presentations from local people in Guatemala were impactful for their learning, another suggestion for those designing diversity and multicultural curricula with a justice orientation is to introduce students to concrete ways that they can take social action through presentations from non-profits or advocacy groups in which they can become involved after the course ends.

Provide Multiple Opportunities to Engage in Community-based and Justice-based Oriented Learning

It is essential to understand that education that aims to change perspectives and actions with a justice orientation is a developmental process, and this course was one semester. The students in this study were majority first-year students, which means they can integrate new learning about diversity and inequality into their future coursework and practicum experiences. For example, the traditional section students could participate in community-based learning in the future, allowing them to practice their learning about diversity, inequity, and privilege. Typical teacher education curriculum includes a one-time diversity and multiculturalism course and the first community-based learning experience as the teaching practicum in the final year of study. A recommendation for teacher education curriculum designers is to incorporate multiple opportunities to engage with justice-oriented diversity education and community-based learning throughout the curriculum.

Forge Partnerships with Non-Western Community Partners as Co-Educators

The aspects of the community-based learning experience that students named as most impactful were related to interacting with and learning from local people. In their final presentations, students overwhelmingly identified the following elements as impactful: engaging with Guatemalan students and teachers (both inside and outside of the classroom), visits to community organizations (such as a public school and a center run by and for people with disabilities), and presentations from local Mayan community members (such as a Mayan priest and educator and an educational panel). This finding supports Indigenous scholar Anna Lees' (2016) research which poses the merit of Indigenous community partners having active leadership roles in co-educating student teachers in a way that values and centers their knowledges and assets. One way that the partnership between the Pavarotti Center and Quinnipiac University centers Indigenous Knowledges as opposed to White European knowledge, is that the Indigenous teachers plan the itinerary and thus the community-based aspects. Student comments identified valuing relationships over a strict testing culture as a strength of the Pavarotti Center, which reflects a recognition and value of Indigenous Knowledges which centers relationships and see community "at the core of our existence," as well as Dewey's conviction that face-to-face interaction with diverse people as the most desirable form of community life. These findings point to the benefit of centering non-Western voices in teacher diversity education.

Develop an Asset-based Teaching Pedagogy for Students of Color

An important finding of this research is that SOC in the traditional section of the diversity and multiculturalism course ended the course with higher self-reported motivation to become civically engaged than their White peers, potentially due to valuable lived experiences of interacting with racially, ethnically, and linguistically diverse people as well as resisting discrimination themselves. This points to the need for differentiating teaching pedagogy for SOC and White students in diversity and multiculturalism courses for education students.

Recommendations for educators include: create an assets-based pedagogy that draws on the cultural wealth (Yosso, 2005) that SOC brings to the classroom, facilitate opportunities for SOC to engage a cognitive understanding of their past lived experiences with diversity (Smith, 2011), and utilize affinity groups for reflection with members of the same race in community-based learning courses (Mitchell & Donahue, 2009). Overall, those designing teacher education preparation must recognize the diverse identities and lived experiences of their students and develop a curriculum that is inclusive of these students.

Implications for Research and Conclusion

Further research with larger samples comparing community-based learning with traditional classroom learning in diversity and multiculturalism teacher education classes is needed to expand on the descriptive analysis presented here. Future longitudinal research which observes students' actual future actions, for example, teachers' actions in the classroom after participating in diversity education and community-based learning, would greatly benefit the field of teacher education. Further, research with a larger sample should examine differences in learning between SOC and White students in courses that include community-based learning and traditional classrooms. Overall, the education students in this study reported being highly impacted by community-based learning, and this pedagogy has the potential to be integrated into teacher education curriculum, which fosters justice-oriented learning about diversity.

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