OLLSCOIL NA GAILLIMHE
UNIVERSITY OF GALWAY

Developing Culturally Responsive Pedagogies in Irish Secondary Schools: Perspectives from Student and Beginning Teachers and Migrant Parents of Minority Ethnic Backgrounds

A Thesis Submitted in Fulfilment of the Requirements
for the Degree of Doctor of Philosophy
to the School of Education
at the University of Galway

Seun Bunmi Adebayo, B.Sc., M.A.

Supervisor: Dr Manuela Heinz

July 2023

Abstract

This qualitative research study explores the experiences of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds in relation to teaching and learning in culturally diverse classrooms and with regard to developing Culturally Responsive Pedagogies (CRP) in Irish secondary schools. The study is significant as it is the first in-depth examination of this topic in Ireland, providing unique insights for teachers and teacher education on implementing CRP in Irish schools. The study utilises CRP and Critical Race Theory (CRT) of education as analytical lenses to critically examine the experiences of student and beginning teachers (n=16) and migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds (n=30) concerning culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Irish schools. The research study is conducted in the context of Ireland, which presents an interesting study case due to its history of being an emigrating nation and the relatively recent rapid influx of immigrants, impacting its demography.

The study's findings highlight the challenges faced by migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds with schooling in Ireland, including their children's sense of isolation and lack of acceptance as well as the impact of stereotypes, discrimination, and bullying. The parents' experiences show that various challenges their children face in Irish schools can result in poor academic performance, low self-esteem, and psychological distress. Additionally, the study found that migrant parents felt excluded from decision-making and inadequately informed about their children's schooling experiences and academic progress.

The findings of this study uncover a significant recognition among student and beginning teachers in relation to the importance of cultural inclusivity within the realm of teaching and learning. This includes being responsive to all students, utilising diverse methodologies, and acknowledging and adapting to the cultural values of students. However, the study also uncovers the struggles student and beginning teachers face in the practical implementation of CRP which is consistent with the challenges experienced by beginning teachers internationally. One particular noteworthy challenge identified by student and beginning teachers in this study was their fear when engaging with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Student and beginning teachers' fear can relate to a wide range of imagined or experienced challenges including confrontations with students, their own limited intercultural competence and/or the possibility of causing offence. A key contribution of this study is the evidence it provides regarding how teachers' fear can perpetuate silence and

‘culture-blind’ teaching approaches, thus acting as a very significant barrier to authentic intercultural engagement.

This study also importantly highlights that levels of interest, comfort, and openness regarding the implementation of culturally responsive practices may be impacted by teachers’ own cultural identities and positionings. It is the first qualitative study in Ireland, where teaching cohorts remain culturally homogenous, to explore the perspectives and experiences regarding CRP of student and beginning teachers from minority cultural backgrounds. The findings relating to the understandings, attitudes and practical experiences of student and beginning teachers from majority (White Settled Irish) compared to minority cultural backgrounds illustrate how cultural identity, personal experiences and (conscious or unconscious) positioning(s) in (or between) different cultural spaces are intertwined and significantly impact teaching experiences and approaches to CRP.

Overall, this research study significantly contributes to the field of education by providing valuable insights into the experiences of student and beginning teachers and of migrant parents regarding culturally diverse schools and classrooms and with culturally inclusive teaching and learning approaches in Ireland. It has the potential to inform the development of more effective teacher education programmes and teaching and learning approaches which, together with other strategies, can enhance the supports for minority ethnic families, ensuring that all students have access to equitable and quality education in Irish schools.

Acknowledgments

In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father who is in heaven. – **Matthew 5:16**

The path towards my PhD has been inspired by my Heavenly Father, who has granted me the strength, wisdom, resources, helpers, and a supportive community that has made it possible for me to embark on and successfully complete this doctoral journey. To God alone be all the glory!

I extend my heartfelt appreciation to my Supervisor, Dr. Manuela Heinz, whose unwavering support throughout the last four years has been invaluable. Even amidst the challenges posed by a global pandemic, she has guided and mentored me, not only as a supervisor but as a personal professor and a source of inspiration. Her belief in the power of education to make a positive impact on the world has truly motivated me. I am also grateful to my Graduate Research Committee members, Prof. Gerry MacRuairc, Dr. Elaine Keane, and Dr. Kathy Reilly, for their time, expertise, and guidance, which have been instrumental in making this PhD possible. I would also like to express my gratitude to the publishers and reviewers who have supported the development and dissemination of my research work. Special thanks go to the Irish Research Council Postgraduate Scholarship and the Galway Doctoral Research Scholarship for their financial support.

To the wife of my youth, Chiedza Seun-Adebayo, a soon to be Dr (PhD), who has been an incredible support in this journey, I express my deepest appreciation. After my salvation in Jesus Christ, you are the most significant decision I have made in this life. You entered my life during my PhD adventure, believed in God's vision for my life, and added vibrant colours to my world. I am continually in awe and inspired by your love for Jesus and how you skilfully balance your roles as a wife, mother, scholar, and my 'bestie of life.' Thank you for everything, and I will love you forever. To my son, Royal Seun-Adebayo, and our upcoming child, you are both precious gifts from God, and we are honoured to nurture and witness the fulfilment of God's great plans for your lives. I love you all dearly!

To my parents and first teachers, Mr. Joseph and Mrs. Adenike Adebayo, I am immensely grateful for your unwavering love and sacrifices from the very beginning. Your roles as teachers have instilled in me a passion for seeing educators as 'transformative intellectuals' who shape the future change-makers. To my siblings, Mr. Tosin and Ms. Ayomide Adebayo, thank you for your continuous support and dedication.

I extend my appreciation to the members of my spiritual community, World Mission Agency-Winners Chapel International (Mission To Europe), who have been instrumental in my spiritual, academic, and personal journey since I began my Master's programme in 2015. Your unwavering support across Europe has been a tremendous source of strength, and I am deeply grateful.

Special thanks go to Mrs. Millicent Adebayo of Positive Health for All in Galway, Ireland. Your rare opportunity to volunteer and serve marginalised communities in Galway has been immensely valuable. You played a crucial role in helping me recruit parents for my research study and

providing facilities for conducting focus groups. I express my sincere gratitude to you, ma'am. I would also like to thank all the student-teachers, teachers, and parents who participated in this study. Your time, effort, and wisdom have contributed to our collective goal of ensuring equitable and quality education for all students in Irish schools.

To all my friends, mentors, and loved ones, though there are too many to mention individually, please know that I appreciate each and every one of you. You have shown me that the 'gift of people' is one of the greatest blessings from God. I am truly grateful for your presence in my life.

To everyone, thank you very much! e ṣeun pupọ! go raibh míle maith agat!

Table of Contents

List of Figures

List of Tables

List of Abbreviations and Acronyms

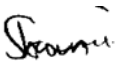
BME	Black and Minority Ethnic
CI	Critical Interpretivism
CNS	Community National Schools
COVID-19	Coronavirus Disease
CR	Critical Realism
CRP	Culturally Responsive Pedagogies
CRT	Critical Race Theory
CSO	Central Statistics Office
CSPE	Civic, Social and Political Education
DEIS	Delivery Equality of Opportunity in Schools
DES	Department of Education and Skills
EAL	English as an Additional Language
ET	Educate Together
EU	European Union
GEMR	Global Education Monitoring Report
GoI	Government of Ireland
GRC	Graduate Research Committee
ITE	Initial Teacher Education
LGBTQ+	Lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer/questioning and more
NCCA	National Council for Curriculum and Assessment
NQT	Newly Qualified Teachers
OECD	Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development
PHD	Doctor of Philosophy
PLC	Post Leaving Certificate
PME	Professional Master of Education
SDGs	Sustainable Development Goals
SPHE	Social, Personal and Health Education
SSA	Sub-Saharan Africa
TA	Thematic Analysis
UK	United Kingdom

UN	United Nations
UNCRPD	United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities
UNESCO	United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation
US	United States

Declaration

I declare that this thesis has not been submitted in any form for another degree at the University of Galway or any other university. All research contained herewith is entirely my own and the use of all material from other sources has been properly and fully acknowledged.

Signature Date

……  …. …17/07/2023….

Acknowledgement of Previously Published Work

Parts of Chapter Eight, describing findings from the qualitative study conducted with migrant parents from minority-ethnic backgrounds, were previously published in an academic article in the International Journal of Inclusive Education and in a chapter in the book Perspectives on Transitions in Refugee Education: Ruptures, Passages, and Re-Orientations [Adebayo, S. B., & Heinz, M. (2023). 'Teachers should put themselves in their students' shoes': Perspectives of Parents from Minority-ethnic Backgrounds on Schooling in Ireland. International Journal of Inclusive Education, 1-19. / Adebayo, S. B., & Heinz, M. (2023). Migrant students' schooling experiences in Ireland: Perspectives from parents. In Seyda Subasi Singh, Olja Jovanovic and Michelle Proyer (Eds.) Perspectives on Transitions in Refugee Education: Ruptures, Passages, and Re-Orientations, 225-238]. The research forming the basis for both publications was conducted as part of this PhD study. Both publications were co-authored by the PhD candidate (lead author who prepared a full first draft and a number of revisions for both papers) and his supervisor (supporting research design, implementation, data analysis, and reviewing, providing feedback on, and some editing of the publications in line with her PhD supervisor role). The PhD supervisor and second author of the two publications has given her permission for this work to be included in the thesis.

SECTION 1 – INTRODUCTION, BACKGROUND AND CONTEXT

Chapter One - Background of the Study

1.1 Introduction

The United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) 4, adopted by UN member-states in 2015, mandates the achievement of inclusive, equitable, and quality education, as well as lifelong learning opportunities for all, by 2030. However, with less than seven years remaining to reach this target, the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO) 2019 Global Education Monitoring Report (GEMR) reveals that "teachers need special training to develop strategies to deal with over-crowded, mixed-age or multilingual classrooms," as a means of guaranteeing quality education for all learners (UNESCO, 2019, p. 69). The GEMR shows that globally, teachers are challenged to apply differentiation skills, and teacher education programmes must ensure that teachers are adequately trained and supported to manage the increasing complexities of classrooms in developed and developing countries. In other words, teachers going into classrooms that are increasingly culturally diverse due to the movement of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers must be adequately prepared pedagogically to deliver on the global educational targets of SDG 4 (UNESCO, 2019, 2020).

It is essential to state that school environments need to be inclusive of different socio-cultural students' backgrounds because changing socio-cultural compositions of societies have been reflected within their education systems (UNESCO, 2019, 2020). Accordingly, in order to effectively address diversity and inclusion within educational settings, it is imperative that school environments exhibit a commitment to supporting students hailing from diverse ethnic and cultural backgrounds. This can be achieved by recognising and valuing their unique characteristics and by incorporating ethnic and cultural diversity into the school curriculum. By doing so, both "students and their parents" are empowered to actively participate in the educational process (Faas, Smith, & Darmody, 2018a, p. 4).

Several international legal frameworks have stipulated the entitlement of all students, including those with disabilities, to receive accommodations within mainstream classrooms. Prominent among these frameworks are the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (1989), the Salamanca Statement (UNESCO, 1994), the Dakar Statement (UNESCO, 2000), and the SDG 4.

These instruments require governments worldwide to ensure that all children, regardless of their cultural backgrounds or dis/abilities, are accommodated in mainstream educational institutions that offer equitable and quality education.

Over the past few decades, it has become evident that the migration of individuals, both within and across national boundaries, has intensified significantly, leading to situations where teachers cannot cater to the educational requirements of learners in culturally diverse classrooms (UNESCO, 2019, 2020). In the European context, the movement of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers has been labelled as a 'migration crisis' by the European Union (EU) (Curtis, Thompson, & Fairbrother, 2018). This phenomenon has resulted from the influx of over two million individuals from non-EU countries into the EU since 2014 (Curtis, Thompson, & Fairbrother, 2018). Research findings indicate a lack of equitable and quality educational opportunities for learners of migrant backgrounds in the EU. Moreover, the insufficient representation of cultural values held by migrant populations within the educational institutions of the host country has been identified as a significant contributing factor to suboptimal educational outcomes and diminished levels of academic achievement among migrant learners (Janta & Harte, 2016; Rodriguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019).

The recent global pandemic of Coronavirus disease (COVID-19) and the consequent closures of educational institutions implemented to mitigate its spread have heightened the pre-existing inequalities prevalent in numerous education systems. Consequently, there is an urgent need to prioritise efforts aimed at enhancing access to equitable and quality education for all learners. Furthermore, providing teachers with adequate training and support to effectively teach in culturally diverse settings can contribute to quality teaching and the teacher's role in modern-day education systems (Brownell et al., 2009; Darling-Hammond & Bransford, 2007).

This qualitative research study is the first in-depth investigation of its kind in Ireland, exploring the experiences of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds in developing Culturally Responsive Pedagogies (CRP) within Irish schools. The study uses CRP and Critical Race Theory (CRT) as analytical frameworks and provides valuable insights for educators and teacher education on implementing culturally inclusive teaching and learning practices in Irish secondary schools.

Existing literature that examines the preparation of student-teachers for culturally responsive teaching has primarily emphasised the importance of increasing diversity in the teaching profession and equipping predominantly White teachers with the skills to adopt culturally inclusive teaching practices (Arshad, 2023; Bigler, 2002; Ellerbrock et al., 2016; Goodwin & Keane, 2023; Sleeter, 2004). Numerous studies have highlighted the advantages of CRP and the resources available to support student and beginning teachers in becoming culturally responsive in their teaching practices. These studies, including works by Brown (2007), Chou, Su, and Wang (2018), Ellerbrock et al. (2016), Gay (2002a, 2002b), Hammond (2014), and Ladson-Billings (1995a), recommend that teacher education programmes provide support to establish a positive classroom learning environment, implement purposeful learning activities, and offer appropriate field experiences with a focus on diversity. Teacher educators are also advised to train teachers to understand the experiences of teaching in culturally diverse contexts and provide ongoing professional development opportunities to enhance their cultural competence and create culturally responsive classrooms that cater to the diverse needs of their students. For this research study, culturally responsive pedagogies, or culturally relevant pedagogies will be used interchangeably as they possess similar attributes, meanings, and values. CRP is an approach that aims to empower all students while ensuring that no student is left behind or isolated (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c). In addition, CRP enable teachers and students to develop a critical consciousness, which is essential for establishing connections between their identities, schools, and the broader society (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995b, 2009; Olson & Rao, 2016).

1.2 Why the Irish context?

Ireland presents an interesting context of study due to its history of being an emigrating nation (Rodriguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019) which has relatively and recently experienced a rapid influx of immigrants into the country. While the demographic changes in Ireland have resulted in the demand for multi-denominational school types, the Catholic School system still mainly dominates the Irish educational sector (Darmody, Smyth & McCoy, 2012). However, the number of Educate Together (ET) schools which have a multi-denominational orientation are growing as a response to the increasing diversity in Irish society (Smyth et al., 2009). Furthermore, Smyth et al. (2009, p. 2) posit that with the continuous rise of "cultural and ethnic diversity among the student population in Ireland," there is a need for the development of CRP and intercultural education in Irish schools (Faas, Smith, & Darmody, 2018a; Heinz & Keane, 2018).

The teaching profession in Ireland is notably homogeneous, which poses a significant challenge to adequately representing the diverse student population in Irish schools (Heinz, 2008; Heinz, Keane & Davison, 2017; Heinz & Keane, 2018). However, despite the current lack of diversity in the teaching profession, it is crucial to ensure that all students in Irish schools receive an equitable and quality education. This means that while efforts are made to promote diversity and inclusivity in the teaching profession, it is essential to prioritise providing quality education for all students. By doing so, concerned stakeholders can work towards a future where Irish schools have a more diverse teaching workforce that represents and supports the needs of all students (Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023a, 2023b).

Based on the findings of the most recent census conducted in 2022, it was revealed that approximately 12 per cent of the Irish population consists of individuals who hold non-Irish citizenship. Among the population typically residing in and present in the country in 2022, 77 per cent self-identified as White Irish. Also noteworthy is an increase of 23 per cent compared to the 2016 figure of 612,018 individuals who reported speaking a language other than English or Irish at home (Central Statistics Office [CSO], 2023). The census data further highlights that citizens from India, Romania, and Brazil have experienced the most substantial numerical growth since 2016 (CSO, 2023). The increasing cultural diversity in the Irish population is seen as presenting "both new opportunities and challenges", as identified by the Irish Department of Education and Skills and the Office of the Minister for Integration (2010, p. 1).

Smyth et al. (2009, p. XVI) emphasise that "Irish society will remain culturally diverse for the foreseeable future." With the growing diversity of the student population in Irish schools, ensuring equality of opportunities for all in Ireland has become increasingly important (Heinz, 2008, 2011; Heinz & Keane, 2018). However, despite the growing diversity in the general society as well as in student populations, the teaching profession has remained homogeneous with most teachers from majority White Irish and Settled backgrounds. International and Irish research has established a strong case for teachers to develop CRP as schools, globally, are becoming more heterogeneous socially and culturally (Forghani-Arani, Cerna, & Bannon, 2019; Rodriguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019; UNESCO, 2019).

1.3 Research objective and questions

This research study primarily investigates the experiences of student and beginning teachers who teach in culturally diverse Irish second-level schools. Through an in-depth exploration of these experiences, the study seeks to provide valuable insights that can inform the improvement of policies and practices employed by teachers in culturally diverse classrooms. Additionally, the study takes into account the perspectives of minority ethnic parents and their personal experiences with schooling in Ireland. This is particularly valuable because parental viewpoints are crucial for educational research on inclusion and social justice (Hanafi & Lynch, 2002). Overall, the findings of this research study hold significant potential for enhancing the educational landscape in culturally diverse classrooms and improving the general educational experience for all students.

Therefore, this research study responds to the following central question and five sub-questions:

Central Research Question:

What are the experiences and perspectives of student and beginning teachers and of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with regard to teaching and learning in culturally diverse classrooms in the Republic of Ireland?

Sub-questions:

A. What are the experiences of student and beginning teachers with teaching in culturally diverse classrooms in Ireland?

B. What are student and beginning teachers' understandings of and experiences with culturally responsive pedagogies?

C. In how far, and in what ways, are the understandings, perspectives and pedagogical practices of student and beginning teachers from cultural majority and minority backgrounds similar or different?

D. What are Irish student and beginning teachers' perspectives regarding their preparation for culturally diverse classrooms, and what recommendations do they have for teacher education?

E. What are the perspectives and recommendations of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with regard to culturally responsive teaching and learning?

1.4 Original contributions and relevance of the study

This research study makes a significant contribution to the field of education by exploring the experiences of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds in culturally diverse Irish second-level schools. By focusing on the development of CRP and intercultural education, this study aims to fill a gap in research by detailing teachers' understandings of, beliefs about and pedagogical practices related to culturally diverse classrooms in Ireland. Devine, Fahie, and Mcgillicuddy (2013, p. 83) have highlighted the need for more research on "teachers' classroom practices and their beliefs on why they teach the way they do." This study aims to address this gap by providing an in-depth analysis of the experiences of student and beginning teachers at the forefront of developing their pedagogical practices in culturally diverse Irish second-level schools. The study, therefore, contributes to the development of a better understanding of how teachers and schools may develop CRP in Irish second-level schools.

The findings of this research study are particularly significant as this is the first study that has been conducted by a non-Irish researcher with student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds on culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Irish schools. The researcher's 'insider' and 'outsider' positionality provide unique insights into the experiences of both groups and offers practical recommendations to teachers, schools, and teacher education programmes for developing CRP in Irish second-level schools.

1.5 Overview of the remaining chapters

Chapter 2 of this thesis provides an in-depth exploration of the Irish context to set the scene for responding to the research questions for this study. The chapter provides an overview of several key elements relevant to the study, including the changing composition of the population and student cohorts in Irish society due to migration, the education system's response to cultural diversity, legislations and policies pertaining to intercultural education, and teacher education.

Chapter 3 of this research study reviews the literature on culturally inclusive teaching and learning. Key concepts central to this study, such as CRP, multicultural education, and inclusive education, are conceptualised and examined in detail. The chapter also examines the academic

literature on preparing culturally responsive teachers emphasising, in particular, the role of attitudes, beliefs, challenges, and expectations.

Chapter 4 provides a detailed analysis of academic literature concerning the experiences of migrant families in their host countries. The chapter provides an overview of the experiences of these families, particularly of those from minority ethnic backgrounds, with schooling.

Chapter 5 provides the researcher's critical autobiography, which aims to provide the reader with a better understanding of the researcher's background, experiences and values which guided the research study and subsequent analysis of the research data.

Chapter 6 presents the methodology, including the ontological and epistemological approaches that inform this qualitative study. The chapter begins by acknowledging that all research is influenced by the values and beliefs present within the context being studied, as well as the knowledge production processes. Thus, the chapter provides an overview of the ontological and epistemological approaches that underpin this research study, namely critical interpretivism and critical realism. Additionally, the chapter describes the research design and methods employed in this study, including data collection and analysis.

Chapter 7 presents the findings from the analysis of data gathered from the interviews with student and beginning teachers. This chapter covers various themes, including the backgrounds, motivations, and experiences of student and beginning teachers in initial teacher education (ITE), challenges encountered within culturally diverse classrooms, advantages of and recommendations for promoting cultural diversity for equitable teaching and learning, student and beginning teachers' expectations and experiences with CRP, and advice for teachers working in culturally diverse schools.

Chapter 8 presents the findings from the analysis of the data collected through focus groups with migrant parents from minority-ethnic backgrounds. Themes such as parental experiences with culture, challenges faced by their children, relationships, and experiences with schools from the parents' perspectives, and their recommendations for developing CRP and intercultural education in Irish schools are explored.

Chapter 9 discusses the original contributions to knowledge derived from the study. It summarises key themes from previous chapters, examines student and beginning teachers backgrounds, and explores their experiences in culturally diverse Irish second-level schools. The chapter analyses the experiences of minority-background students and beginning teachers in relation to ITE and

culturally diverse schools. It also explores culturally responsive teaching and teacher education. Recommendations for developing CRP and intercultural education in Irish schools are provided based on insights from parents and student and beginning teachers.

Chapter 10 highlights key findings from this research study, revisits the research questions and underscores significant findings. Additionally, it scrutinises the implications of these findings for both policy and practice, recognises the study's limitations and suggests potential avenues for further research.

Chapter Two – Context: Irish Society and Education System in the Face of Increasing Cultural Diversity

2.1 Introduction

In this chapter, a detailed exploration of the Irish context is presented to provide a comprehensive background for addressing the research questions of this study. The chapter covers several crucial elements relevant to the study, including the shifting demographics of the Irish population and student cohorts due to migration, the response of the education system to cultural diversity, intercultural education policies and legislations, the Irish school system, teaching profession and teacher education. Additionally, this chapter examines and describes relevant legislations such as the Equal Status Act (2000) and the Intercultural Education Guidelines (2005, 2006).

2.2 Migration patterns in Ireland: Arrival of 'new Irish families'

In recent decades, Ireland has undergone a significant transformation with respect to its demographic makeup, brought about by the arrival of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers. The rapid influx of people from diverse cultural backgrounds has had a profound impact on various aspects of Irish society, including its education system and schools, which have become more culturally diverse as a result (Bryan, 2010; Bryne et al., 2010; Condon, 2017; Devine, 2005; Röder et al., 2014). According to Parekh (2000, p. 165), cultural diversity is "the presence of a variety of cultures and cultural perspectives within a society." The latest Irish census of 2022 revealed a notable increase in the number of non-Irish citizens, comprising 12 per cent of the total population. Among the prominent non-Irish groups, Polish and United Kingdom (UK) citizens were the largest, followed by individuals from Indian, Romanian, and Lithuanian backgrounds. Additionally, Brazilian, Italian, Latvian, and Spanish citizens were also significant contributors to the non-Irish population in Ireland (CSO, 2023). Consequently, many Irish schools' classrooms have become "culturally diverse places of learning" (Connaughton, 2019, p. 1). Table 1 below shows the population usually resident and present in the State by citizenship, 2016 to 2022.

Table 1: Population usually resident and present in the State by citizenship, 2016 to 2022

Citizenship	2016	%	2022	%	Percentage change since 2016
Total Irish	**4,082,513**	**87**	**4,283,490**	**84**	**4.9**
Irish Only	**3,977,729**	**85**	**4,112,893**	**81**	**3.4**
Dual Irish	**104,784**	**2**	**170,597**	**3**	**62.8**
Non-Irish	**535,475**	**11**	**631,785**	**12**	**18.0**
No nationality (incl. not stated)	**71,933**	**2**	**169,604**	**3**	**135.8**

Source: Central Statistics Office (CS0) (2023)

From Table 1 above, the 2022 census results reveal significant shifts in the population composition of Ireland, particularly among different citizenship groups. Indian, Romanian, and Brazilian citizens experienced the largest increases in numbers since 2016. Conversely, the number of Polish residents declined by 24 per cent compared to the previous census, with similar decreases observed among individuals holding the UK and Lithuanian citizenship. Specifically, the number of Polish residents, despite a steady increase from 63,276 in 2006 to 122,515 in 2016, exhibited a substantial decline of 28,835 individuals in 2022. Similarly, the pattern for Lithuanian residents followed a similar trajectory, rising from 24,628 people in 2006 to 36,552 in 2016, only to decrease to 31,177 in 2022.

It is worth noting that the figures presented for country of citizenship are based on individuals who were usually resident in Ireland at the time of the census. However, there were 18,566 people present in the State on Census Night who identified their country of citizenship as Ukraine. As many of these individuals indicated that their usual country of residence was not Ireland, they are not included in the citizenship figures published in the census results (CSO, 2023).

Ireland's rapid economic growth and prosperity during the 'Celtic Tiger Years' (1996-2008) significantly contributed to the increase in inward migration and resulting cultural diversification of Ireland (Barrett & McCarthy, 2006; Breen, 2000; Jackson, 2015). Many of the migrants who came to Ireland during this period were considered as 'cheap labour' despite being "highly

educated with 48 per cent having a higher education qualification" (Ní Dhuinn, 2017, p. 2). As a result, modern-day Ireland can no longer be characterized as "exclusively White, Catholic and Gaelic" but instead reflects the country's newly found cultural diversity (Connaughton, 2019, p. 8).

It is vital to share that the post 'Celtic Tiger' came with economic drawbacks, which further contributed to economic inequalities among families of migrant background (Ní Dhuinn, 2017). This is why Gilmartin and Mugge (2013, p. 286) posit that the "economic recession coupled with political instability may make it more difficult for newcomers to become part of a society, particularly if that society is becoming more exclusionary, protectionist or xenophobic." Moreover, the increasing racism and discrimination towards newly arrived migrants and the 'new Irish families' has been aided by a lack of adequate policy responses informed by evidence on the part of the Government of Ireland (GoI) (ENAR, 2013). Organisations that attend to newly arrived migrants, including refugees and asylum seekers, such as the Irish Refugee Council (2015, p. 3), have strongly advocated for the Irish government to commit to a "strong intercultural and anti-racist ethos in policy."

For migrant families, integration into Irish society and economic prosperity have been limited, with evidence indicating a "de-skilling and downward mobility" among them (Gilmartin & Mugge, 2013, p. 297). Röder et al. (2014) conducted a mixed-method study on 'New Irish Families' and found a greater diversity among such families, and certain groups may require additional support to ensure that all children have equal opportunities in life. They note that even more advantaged migrant families face issues such as childcare and returning to work. The study highlights the need for continuously monitoring the progress of families, and policies should be designed to cater to a greater variety of backgrounds to attract and retain highly skilled migrants (Röder et al., 2014). The research also reveals that 71 per cent of African-origin families reported socio-economic challenges, such as a lack of access to employment opportunities, compared to 58 per cent of native Irish families (Röder et al., 2014). Similarly, McGinnity et al. (2018) found that poverty levels were higher among non-EU nationals, with 29 per cent of them living in poverty compared to only 8 per cent of native Irish people. These challenges, particularly low socio-economic status, can have a negative impact on the educational opportunities and outcomes of 'new families' in Ireland.

The Growing Up in Ireland project is among the few studies exploring new families' experiences in Ireland over 16 years (Growing Up in Ireland Study Team, 2009, 2011, 2018; Nixon, 2012; Williams et al., 2010). In their analysis of the Growing Up in Ireland data, Röder et al. (2014) found

that ‘New Irish families’ accounted for 28 per cent of families included in the project’s database. Furthermore, the data revealed that approximately 42 per cent of mothers from African and Asian backgrounds spoke more than one language, including English, at home (Röder et al., 2014). As a result, a growing number of students within the Irish education system are becoming multilingual.

It is important to note that while Ireland has seen increased cultural diversity in recent decades, it has not always been a completely homogenous society. The Travellers’ Community, a distinct minority group with their distinct cultural values and beliefs, has been present in Ireland for centuries. There has also been a representation of the Roma ethnic minority group in Ireland (McGinley & Keane, 2021). Despite this, there has been a dominant perception of Ireland as a monocultural state, contributing to the marginalisation and discrimination of ethnic minorities and indigenous groups regarding access to social and economic opportunities (Mac Éinrí & White, 2008; Ní Dhuinn, 2017).

In the education sector, a lack of recognition of cultural diversity has led to challenges in creating a culturally inclusive and responsive learning environment for all students. According to Darmody, McGinnity, and Kingston’s (2016) research on migrant children in Ireland and McGinley and Keane’s (2021) mixed-method study on the experiences of Traveller and Black students in post-primary Irish schools, the cultural diversity of students is not being effectively acknowledged or reflected in Irish schools. As a result, the education system is facing challenges in meeting the needs of all students, regardless of their cultural background. To address these gaps in understanding and recognition of cultural diversity, it is crucial to develop an inclusive and responsive education system that caters to the needs of all students (Darmody, McGinnity, & Kingston, 2016; McGinley & Keane, 2021).

2.3 Overview and history of education system in Ireland

The formation and growth of the Irish education system can be characterised as a collaborative effort between the government and other institutions, primarily through financial support, to provide educational services (Buachalla, 1985). These institutions include churches, corporate bodies, and trusts, with churches significantly impacting education development at all levels. Specifically, the Catholic and Protestant denominations have played a dominant role in shaping educational policies and practices in Ireland. In contrast, the GoI has provided the necessary

funding and political support to ensure the smooth operation of the education system (Buachalla, 1985; Coolahan, 1981).

Heinz, Keane, and Davison (2017) contend that legislation has played a crucial role in shaping the relationship between the church, state, and schools in Ireland since its independence in 1922. Although more than 90 per cent of primary schools and over half of second-level schools are under the administration of the Catholic Church, these state-run schools are bound by national employment legislation that prohibits discrimination across nine grounds, including religion. Despite the existence of Section 37 in the *Irish Employment Equality Act*, which includes an exemption clause enabling discrimination on the grounds of preserving the religious ethos of an educational institution or preventing actions that could undermine it, various challenges arise concerning lesbian, gay, bi, trans, queer/questioning and more (LGBTQ+) teachers and individuals from non-Catholic backgrounds, consequently impeding the progress of diversity within the Irish education system (Heinz, Davison, & Keane, 2018; Heinz, Keane, & Davison, 2017).

This exemption clause has far-reaching implications as it permits institutions to discriminate against LGBTQ+ teachers based on their sexual orientation or gender identity, thus inhibiting their ability to fully participate in the teaching profession. Similarly, individuals from non-Catholic backgrounds face potential discrimination, limiting their career prospects and contributing to a lack of representation and inclusivity within Irish educational institutions. Furthermore, the presence of such an exemption clause hinders the advancement of diversity within the Irish education system. By allowing discrimination in the name of preserving religious ethos, it perpetuates a climate that prioritises religious homogeneity over embracing and celebrating diverse perspectives, cultures, and identities. This not only impacts the experiences and opportunities of teachers and staff but also undermines the creation of an inclusive and equitable learning environment for students of all backgrounds (Heinz, Davison, & Keane, 2018; Heinz, Keane, & Davison, 2017).

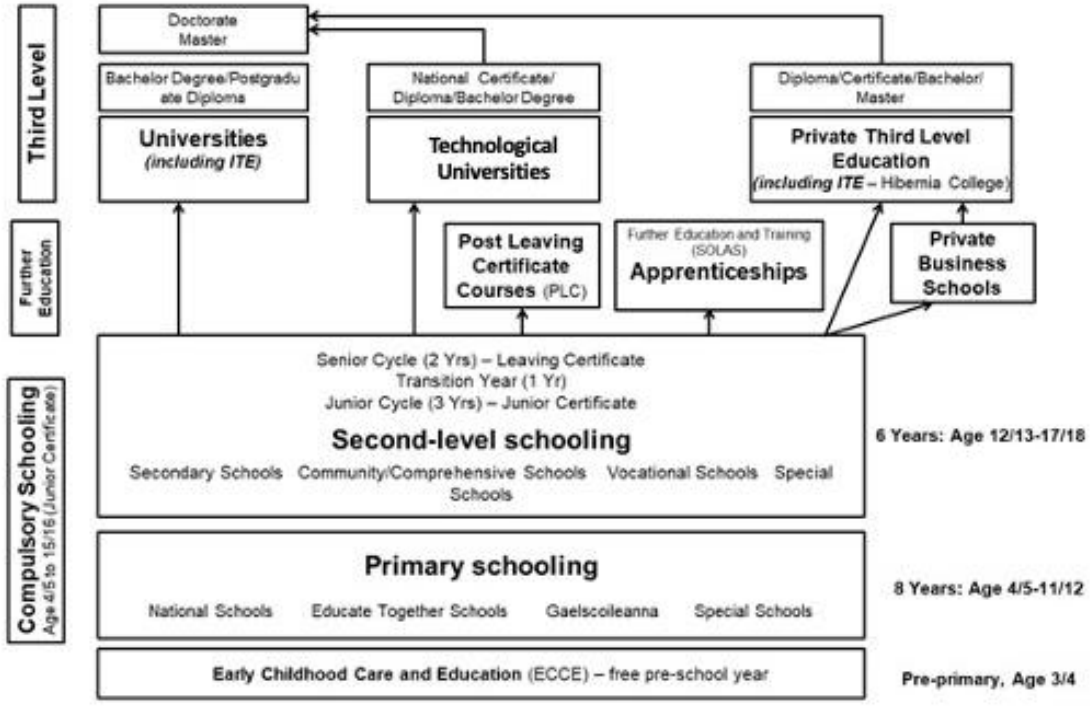
During the 19th century, numerous commissions were established in Ireland to investigate the national education system, examining its structure, administration, and public impact. The Stanley Commission (1831) aimed to encourage a mixed denomination school system, but it faced opposition from denominational churches due to fears of proselytism (Coolahan, 1981). The Belmore Commission (1897) studied the Irish education system compared to other European countries and recommended education reform to promote child-centred pedagogical approaches (Coolahan, 1981).

In the 1950s and 1960s, the GoI introduced policy initiatives, such as the White Paper on Economic Expansion (1958), which viewed education as an investment in economic development. The Comprehensive Schools (1964), Grants for School Expansion (1964), County Council Scholarships (1961), and Free Post-Primary Education (1967) aimed to increase student participation from diverse backgrounds and abilities (O'Reilly, 2012). The Education Act of 1998 established agencies to manage the education sector and reduced the Church's control over Irish education (O'Reilly, 2012). However, the Irish education system still faces challenges in developing and implementing education policies to improve the system's quality and equity for all learners (Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018a, 2018b; O'Reilly, 2012).

As of now, there are 750 secondary schools and 3421 primary schools in Ireland, with "just over 88 per cent of primary schools and over half of second-level schools" being Catholic-run (Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023b, p. 36). In the context of language of instruction in Ireland, it is noteworthy that both Irish and English are utilised, but English predominantly prevails, largely attributed to the limited usage of Irish in homes and society (Rodríguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019). This preference for English has particularly impacted Irish medium schools, where the primary aim is to provide education through the Irish language (Mac Gearailt, Mac Ruairc, & Murray, 2023).

The Republic of Ireland's education system is unique in its control by churches and needs more effort to create equitable and quality education policies that will benefit all learners (Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018a, 2018b; O'Reilly, 2012; O'Sullivan, 2005).

Figure 1: Structure of the Irish education system



Source: *Heinz, Keane & Foley (2017)*

In the Republic of Ireland, school attendance is expected from age six. However, it has been reported that children between the ages of four and five are also enrolled in 'reception classes' within primary schools (Smyth, 2008). While at the second-level (secondary school), students are enrolled at the age of 12 and 13 and are expected to attend on a full-time basis until the age of 16. Homeschooling in Ireland is legal, but certain regulations must be followed. Parents who choose to home-school their children must register with their local education and training board and provide evidence that their child is receiving a quality education. Further, the curriculum used for homeschooling must align with the curriculum used in national schools, and the child's progress must be regularly assessed (Flynn et al., 2021; O'Brien, 2014).

Several patronages administer Irish schools, and it has been observed that a school's ethos influences parental school choice and the school's admission policies (Boyle, Flynn, & Hanafin, 2018; Cotter & Kolawole, 2015). Faas, Smith, and Darmody's (2018b) research on ethos and practice in 11 Community National Schools (CNS) argues that having an official ethos, such as the CNS model, can be useful in promoting a school identity and guiding school staff in their everyday practice. The study reveals that while all the CNS in their sample promote an inclusive and equal ethos, there were some differences in the approach to delivering the curriculum, especially between

urban and rural schools, and in sacramental preparation for Catholic children. Additionally, schools with a religious or denominational ethos have been observed to prioritise the admission of students who share their religious beliefs over those who do not. Furthermore, the patronages within the Irish education system can be categorised as denominational, interdenominational, and multidenominational, as outlined by Darmody and Smyth (2016). Table 2 provides a detailed description of these patronages.

Table 2: Description of the patronage schools in Ireland

Denominational patronage	Interdenominational patronage	Multidenominational patronage
A school under the patronage of a single religious community. Such a school provides religious education according to the traditions, practices and beliefs of the specified religious community. It may also provide a wider education about religion and facilitate parents/guardians of other faith traditions to enable them to provide for religious education in their belief system.	A school under the patronage or trusteeship of more than one religious faith community. Such a school provides for a variety of religious education opportunities.	• Schools that do not provide religious education as formation during the school day, but do provide education about religions and beliefs, and where, if they so desire, parents/guardians can arrange for denominational religious education outside school hours in such schools; • Schools that provide education about religions and also provide some faith formation for different denominations, depending on parental requests, during the school day, over a three or four week period.

Source: Adapted from Darmody & Smyth (2016, p. 7)

2.3.1 Primary education system in Ireland

In Ireland, the primary education sector is predominantly owned and controlled by religious orders. About "96 per cent of primary schools are denominational with a religious ethos, the largest being Catholic (89%)" (Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018a, p. 489). Other remaining schools do not have a single religious ethos, but they are either interdenominational or multidenominational. "While multi-denominational schools have an inclusive and equal school ethos, many denominational

schools also have children from different faith backgrounds" (Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018a, p. 489). Also, the GoI provides free education at the primary level (Darmody & Smyth, 2016). As of 2018, Table 3 presents the classification and number of primary schools in Ireland.

Table 3: Classification and number of primary schools in Ireland as of 2018

School type	Number	Percentage
Denominational	**3,004**	**96**
Catholic (including Gaelscoileanna)	2,808	89.8
Church of Ireland	175	5.6
Other Christian	17	0.5
Muslim	3	0.1
Jewish	1	0.03
Multi-denominational	**108**	**3.4**
Educate Together	81	2.6
Community National Schools	12	0.4
Irish medium (Gaelscoileanna)	10	0.3
Other	5	0.2
Inter-denominational (Gaelscoileanna)	**18**	**0.6**
Total	**3,130**	**100**

Source: *Faas, Smith & Darmody (2018b)*

According to Table 3 presented above, the majority of primary schools in Ireland are Catholic, accounting for 89.8 per cent of the total number of schools. Multidenominational and inter-denominational schools constitute only around four per cent of all primary schools, even though student populations in primary schools have become more culturally diverse in recent years (Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018b). This highlights significant concerns regarding inclusive education and equal opportunities for all students in Ireland (Banks & McCoy, 2017; Boyle, Flynn & Hanafin, 2018). While the GoI has introduced education policies aimed at diversifying the education sector in recent years (see Table 4 below), more work is needed to address the issue of denominational monopolies at the primary level (Brown et al., 2019; Connaughton, 2019).

Table 4: On diversifying the primary education sector

The first type of multi-denominational school, Educate Together (ET), was set up in 1978 due to parental demand to provide an alternative to the dominant Catholic denominational primary system. Educate Together schools are now under the patronage of a charity body of the same name and are the fastest growing school type at primary level. At present, there are 82 ET primary schools, mostly in urban areas. The ethos of ET schools stipulates equal respect for children from all social, cultural and religious backgrounds. This is represented through the specific ethics curriculum, which comprises ethics and values with a comparative view of world religions where pupils learn *about* religion instead of being instructed *in* religion. Unlike in Catholic denominational schools, pupils wear no school uniforms, address teachers informally using first names and sacramental preparation for Catholic children takes place outside regular school hours instead of during school time. Schools are also mostly named after their geographical location rather than after saints. In 2008, the Irish state established and became patron, for the first time, of multi-denominational Community National Schools (CNS). These are run by the Education and Training Boards (ETB) and combine elements from the Catholic denominational and ET schools – for example, pupils wear a school uniform and they address their teachers formally. Unlike in ET schools, however, pupils in CNS learn about religion as well as *from* religion through what is referred to as 'belief-nurturing' whereby children are encouraged within class to discuss and share their own experiences of their home beliefs. In most CNS, sacramental preparation is also offered as part of the school day to Catholic children, unlike ET schools… 11 CNS in Ireland. One more has since been established (September 2017).

Source: *Faas, Smith & Darmody (2018b, p. 5)*

2.3.2 Secondary education system in Ireland

The Irish "second level schools comprise three sectors: voluntary secondary schools (mainly founded by religious orders), vocational and community/comprehensive schools. They fall within a common curriculum and assessment framework but differ in their management and funding structure" (Bryne et al., 2010, p. 274). In response to the growing segregation and inequality in the Irish education system, the GoI established the Delivery Equality of Opportunity in Schools (DEIS) programme, which provides additional resources and funding to schools that mainly serve students from migrant and socio-economically disadvantaged backgrounds (Bryne et al., 2010).

Research has shown that "DEIS schools are less likely to be oversubscribed than non-DEIS schools" due to school choice limitations in Ireland, which may prevent some families from accessing certain schools (Bryne et al., 2010, p. 276; Faas, Darmody & Sokolowska, 2016; Faas,

Smith & Darmody, 2018a, 2018b). As a result, immigrant students are more likely to attend DEIS schools rather than non-DEIS schools (Byrne et al., 2010).

Full-time attendance is expected at the post-primary level following pre-primary and primary schooling (Smyth, 2008). However, homeschooling is also a viable option at the post-primary education level (Flynn et al., 2021; O'Brien, 2014). See the table below for the description of Ireland's three types of secondary-level institutions.

Table 5: Three types of secondary-level institutions in Ireland

Voluntary secondary schools	**Vocational schools**	**Community and comprehensive schools**
These schools are privately owned and controlled, mainly by religious orders, although they are subject to public regulation and inspection. The vast majority (95 per cent) of voluntary secondary schools are Catholic, with a small number of Protestant, Jewish and Quaker schools.	Are schools publicly owned and are administered by local education authorities, which are called Vocational Education Committees.	Schools established in an attempt to bridge the gap between the secondary and vocational sectors, by providing a broad curriculum catering for pupils of different backgrounds and ability levels. Comprehensive schools are denominational in character, with religious orders also represented on the board of management in community schools.

Source: Adapted from Smyth (2008, p. 303)

The official curriculum of Irish second-level schools consists of junior and senior cycles of academic programmes. The system is primarily academic, with some vocational pathways, and is heavily reliant on the Leaving Certificate as the final exam that determines "access to higher education" (Condon, 2017, p. 65). The Junior Cycle Reform was introduced in 2014 to modernise the junior cycle of secondary education. The reform aims to move away from a traditional focus on rote learning and memorisation and towards a more student-centred approach to learning. One of the fundamental changes introduced as part of the reform is the introduction of Short Courses which aim to introduce new topic areas. Also, the Short Courses are additional subjects not part of the traditional Junior Cycle curriculum but designed to allow students to develop essential skills such as critical thinking, problem-solving, and creativity. The reform also introduced a new

assessment system called the Junior Cycle Profile of Achievement, which includes a combination of school-based assessment and external assessment (MacPhail, Halbert & O'Neill, 2018; Printer, 2020). School-based assessment is a form of assessment carried out by teachers based on the student's performance in class throughout the year. External assessment is a form of assessment carried out by the State Examinations Commission and is based on written exams, oral exams and project work (MacPhail, Halbert & O'Neill, 2018; Printer, 2020). See Table 6 below for information on the Irish second-level Leaving Certificate Cycle subjects.

Table 6: Irish second-level leaving certificate cycle subjects

Leaving Certificate Subjects	
Mandatory Subjects	**Optional Subjects**
English	French, German, Spanish and Italian
Irish	History
Mathematics	Geography
Social, Personal and Health Education (SPHE)	Engineering
Civic, Social and Political Education (CSPE)	Construction Studies
Physical Education	Technical Graphics
	Economics
	Art
	Business
	Home Economics
	Accounting
	Biology
	Physics
	Chemistry

According to the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA) (2006), certain subjects are more feasible to implement an intercultural curriculum than others, and Irish teachers play a significant role in adjusting their curricula to reflect intercultural education objectives. However, research indicates that many Irish teachers lack the skills to deliver intercultural education or are not ready to implement CRP in their classrooms (Connaughton, 2019; Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022; Smyth et al., 2009).

The Post Leaving Certificate (PLC) courses, which last for one to three years and cover topics such as business and healthcare, are available, as well as apprenticeships, which require about four years to complete and cover 25 specific craft fields. Both PLC and apprenticeships have become increasingly popular as a second chance at education for adults and a path to qualifications for 'non-university-bound' youth (Smyth, 2008).

Entrance into tertiary education in Ireland is based on a point system. After completing the Leaving Certificate examinations, students are awarded points based on their grades. Securing a place at tertiary institutions is subject to students' rankings by points and the demand on the subject (Smyth, 2008). The point-based Leaving Certificate exams in Ireland have faced criticism for several reasons. One major critique is that the point system emphasises rote learning and memorisation rather than fostering a deeper understanding of the material. This can lead to students feeling disengaged and unmotivated in their studies and can also lead to a lack of critical thinking skills (McCormack, Gleeson, & O'Donoghue, 2020; McCoy et al., 2019). Another critique is that the point system emphasises high grades and creates a culture of competition and pressure among students. This can lead to high stress and anxiety levels among students and discourage those who may not perform as well academically (McCormack, Gleeson, & O'Donoghue, 2020; McCoy et al., 2019). It is also argued that the point system is not inclusive to students from lower socio-economic backgrounds as they do not have the same access to resources and support as students from more privileged backgrounds (McCoy et al., 2019). Therefore, students from less privileged backgrounds are disproportionately affected by the pressure to achieve high points in the Leaving Certificate (McCoy et al., 2019).

While all secondary schools in Ireland are publicly funded, and mostly 'free' for students, Smyth (2008, p. 303) highlighted that "there are hidden costs associated with educational participation, including schoolbooks, lunches, school uniforms, extra-curricular activities and transport." These 'hidden costs' may affect the required policy response to adequately cater for individuals, particularly migrant families, who may be economically challenged to provide needed resources to allow their children access equitable and quality education.

2.4 Cultural diversity and inclusion in education - concepts, policies, and practice

2.4.1 From multicultural to intercultural education: Multiple overlapping concepts

In the realm of policy and research, there was a noticeable shift from using the term "multicultural education" to "intercultural education" in the early 1980s, as documented by Coulby (2006). However, Fiedler et al. (2008, p.16) point out that there was "no consensus across Europe about the distinction between intercultural education and multicultural education."

Mansouri and Modood (2021) investigate the evolution of multiculturalism and interculturalism as strategies for managing ethnic diversity. At first, multiculturalism was regarded as the future of diversity management, but in the wake of the 9/11 attacks, it came under criticism. In response, interculturalism emerged as a pro-diversity policy perspective that critiques multiculturalism. Sociologists, particularly, have supported interculturalism, highlighting the changing nature of cultural diversity in urban centres in the new millennium and the limitations of multiculturalism (Kavanagh, 2013; Mansouri & Modood, 2021).

Within Irish policy and governmental circles, the discourse and documentation pertaining to education and cultural diversity, frequently employ the concept of intercultural education. A noteworthy illustration of this usage can be seen in the intercultural education guidelines of 2005 and 2006, as published by the NCCA (NCCA, 2005, 2006). In contrast to this, the terminology of multicultural education is more commonly adopted in other nations, including the "United States (US), Canada, Australia, New Zealand, Asia, and the United Kingdom, among others" (Kavanagh, 2013, p. 8). This distinction in terminology highlights the need for further investigation into the conceptual and practical differences between intercultural and multicultural education (Byerly, 2016; Mansouri & Modood, 2021). Furthermore, it suggests that the appropriate terminology and strategies for responding to diversity are context-specific and culturally situated (Kavanagh, 2013; Mansouri & Modood, 2021).

International organisations, including UNESCO and the Council of Europe, use intercultural education, while the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development (OECD) uses the term multicultural education (Kavanagh, 2013). Hannigan, Faas, and Darmody (2022, p. 4) explain the distinction between intercultural and multicultural education:

> Multiculturalism on the other hand, is based on the belief that mere tolerance between cultures is the answer to diversity [...] Intercultural education encourages a deeper understanding of difference and diversity. It aids investigation into how ethno-cultural diversity is understood in theory and practice.

Byerly (2016) argues that the concept of intercultural education is complex and multifaceted, making it impossible to provide a single, definitive definition. The term is often used interchangeably with "multicultural and anti-racist education" and encompasses a broad range of educational approaches and practices that aim to foster understanding and respect between individuals from different cultural backgrounds (Byerly, 2016, p. 34). Byram's (2003) review on being 'bicultural' and 'intercultural' discusses the potential of analysing biculturalism to better understand how to teach intercultural competence. According to Byram (2003), becoming bicultural can be challenging and depends on the level of acceptance from others. Additionally, more research is necessary to identify successful cases of biculturalism. Byram (2003) posits that changing attitudes is more crucial than changing learners' cultural, ethnic, or national identity. A teacher should help learners become aware of their basis for approval/disapproval rather than impose their views.

Intercultural competence encompasses a multifaceted understanding that extends beyond mere adaptation and assimilation into a different culture. It necessitates a heightened level of analytical awareness and the capacity to navigate and negotiate cultural differences with sensitivity and respect (Byerly, 2016). This concept of intercultural competence recognises the complexity of interactions between individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds. It involves the development of cognitive, affective, and behavioural skills that enable individuals to effectively engage and communicate across cultural boundaries (Byerly, 2016). Byram (2003) suggests that individuals exposed to diverse cultures are more likely to develop intercultural competence, as they can see their own culture from an outsider's perspective.

2.4.2 Intercultural education in Ireland

Intercultural education, according to the Council of Europe (2016), refers to educational practices that aim to develop intercultural competencies and skills in all students. In her doctoral research on emerging models of intercultural education in Irish primary schools, Kavanagh (2013, p. 9) suggests that intercultural education aims "to promote human rights, democracy, equality, and social justice. It has the capacity to foster a respect for diversity and difference, critical thinking skills, multiple perspectives, empathy, and a sense of civic responsibility." Based on this definition, it can be argued that intercultural education prioritises equity and social justice and seeks to provide students with the practical skills necessary for leading responsible lives. Similarly, intercultural education is a multifaceted approach emphasising the importance of developing skills and attitudes

that promote intercultural understanding and appreciation (Coulby, 2006; Fielder et al., 2008). This includes skills such as communication, empathy, critical thinking, and an understanding of diverse cultural perspectives and histories (Council of Europe, 2016; Kavanagh, 2013). By equipping students with these skills, intercultural education can help to reduce prejudice and discrimination, promote social cohesion, and foster a more inclusive and equitable society (Leeman & Reid, 2006; Le Roux, 2001).

The concept of interculturalism emerged as a policy response to address issues of racism in Irish society. It was highlighted in the Report of the Task Force on the Travelling Community (1995) and subsequently became an official state policy response through the Guidelines of Traveller Education in Primary Schools (2000) (Kavanagh, 2013). Although the Irish Education Act (1998) mandates that schools should not discriminate in their admission policies and promote equal access and participation, the need for the development of intercultural education practices in Ireland remains pressing. Reilly, Basu and Ledwith (2019, p. 6) contend that since:

> the majority of schools are under the patronage of the Catholic Church, school choice applications are often differentiated on the grounds of faith. Furthermore, newcomer and migrant communities are discriminated against as they do not have the social capital (sibling or parent as a past pupil) to provide access to broader school choice networks.

The GoI has, in recent years, taken several proactive steps to address discrimination and racism within the Irish education system as well as to promote the values of intercultural teaching and learning (Banks & McCoy, 2017; Faas, Smith, & Darmody, 2018a; Meegan & MacPhail, 2006). One such policy is the Equal Status Act (2000), amended in the Equality Act (2004), which strongly prohibits any form of racial discrimination within the Irish education sector. More specifically, this legislation guides against discrimination in school admissions; access to school courses, facilities, or benefits; participation in school life and expulsions of student sanctioning. The Equality Act (2004, p. 17) also clearly outlines the important role of schools in supporting learners from culturally diverse backgrounds:

> Schools have a role in helping students, including those from minorities and disadvantaged groups, to learn about themselves and their differences from others in a way that is positive and affirming of diverse identities. Schools can also play an important role in helping students to understand the causes of inequality and empowering them to oppose these inequalities.

Moreover, the Equal Status Act (2000) mandates that access to and provision of education should not be influenced by learners' socioeconomic status, gender, marital status, and ethnic affiliation, including membership in the Traveller community. Additionally, the National Children's Strategy, published in 2000, addresses racism in society through intercultural education by advocating "respect for socially and culturally diverse communities" (Department of Health and Children, 2000, p. 70). This strategy was followed by the Planning for Diversity - National Action Plan against Racism Policy (2005-2008), which aimed to combat racism within Irish society and promote interculturalism by stressing the need for "interaction, equality of opportunity, understanding, and respect" among culturally diverse communities in Ireland (Department of Justice and Equality, 2005, p. 27). This policy was further reinforced with the 'Migration National Statement on Integration and Diversity Management' issued by the then Minister of Education. The statement underscored the importance of developing intercultural education in Irish schools to address racism and discrimination in Irish society and the education system (Office of the Minister for Integration, 2008).

Howe and Lisi's (2013) review on becoming a multicultural educator suggests the need for research-based guides to prepare student-teachers to teach in culturally responsive ways. Such guides should aim to develop a critical understanding of culture and its influence on teaching and learning, as well as empower teachers to address current issues in multicultural education. They also propose that an intercultural curriculum should include the following features in teaching and learning:

> • Help students navigate from the familiarity of their own culture to learning about other cultures
>
> • Promote positive ethnic identity
>
> • Involve increasingly more frequent and positive relationships among students who are different from one another
>
> • Build students' personal knowledge of their culture and the cultures of other people
>
> • Help students to use their knowledge of other cultures to better understand and resolve social problems, and, ultimately, to lead lives as multicultural persons (Howe & Lisi, 2013, p. 193).

Over the years, the NCCA has published two Intercultural Education Guidelines for Irish schools. The first guideline released in 2005 was titled 'Intercultural Education in the Primary School: Guidelines for Schools.' This was followed by the 'Intercultural Education in the Post-Primary

School: Guidelines for Schools,' published in 2006. The main aim of the guidelines was to provide the needed support for schools to foster the development of intercultural education and instil the values of interculturalism within the school environment. More specifically, the guidelines for promoting intercultural education among students' purpose to ensure that all students are taught to "appreciate the richness of a diversity of cultures… and to challenge prejudice and discrimination where they exist" (NCCA, 2005, p. 17). The NCCA (2006, p. i) defines intercultural education as:

> Education which respects, celebrates and recognises the normality of diversity in all areas of human life. It sensitises the learner to the idea that humans have naturally developed a range of different ways of life, customs and worldviews, and that this breadth of human life enriches us all. It is education, which promotes equality and human rights, challenges unfair discrimination, and promotes the values upon which equality is built.

The NCCA (2005, 2006) guidelines are organised into four main sections:

- Curriculum: This section focuses on how schools can integrate intercultural education into their curriculum, including subjects such as language, history, and geography. It also includes suggestions for creating a more inclusive and diverse learning environment, such as using various teaching methods and resources.
- Policy and Planning: This section guides how schools can develop policies and plans that support intercultural education, such as creating a school culture that values diversity and promoting the active participation of students from different cultural backgrounds.
- Professional Development: This section focuses on how teachers can develop the knowledge and skills to teach intercultural education effectively. It includes suggestions for ongoing professional development opportunities, such as workshops and training programmes.
- Partnerships and Community Involvement: This section emphasises the importance of building partnerships with community groups and organisations to support intercultural education. It also includes suggestions for how schools can involve parents and families in the intercultural education process.

The guidelines also provide a more comprehensive approach to intercultural education, including using technology, developing critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving skills, and promoting active citizenship among students. It also encourages a more active participation of students from diverse backgrounds in school life and decision-making.

In 2013, the Department of Education and Skills (DES) published the 'Anti-bullying procedures for primary and post-primary schools' (DES, 2013). This policy mandates schools to develop their anti-bullying policy and to use the SPHE curriculum to "prevent and tackle allegations and incidents of racially motivated bullying" (Connaughton, 2019, p. 17). The GoI further reaffirmed the need for anti-bullying awareness and policy with the release of the 'Action Plan for Education, 2016 – 2019,' which sets guidelines and calls for schools to create their anti-bullying strategies (DES, 2016).

In their review on religious diversity in Irish primary school, Faas, Darmody, and Sokolowska's (2016) highlights that, despite the GoI's introduction of policies aimed at promoting respect and tolerance for cultural diversity within the education sector and society at large, Ireland is a society amid significant social change and is working to strengthen a non-discriminatory perspective in education, as well as promote religious pluralism. Schools may collaborate with churches and parents to provide religious instruction outside of school hours, and religious education within schools has the potential to foster tolerance and challenge discrimination. Nonetheless, Faas, Darmody, and Sokolowska (2016) argue that the GoI's failure to consider the strong influence of religious denomination groups on the Irish education sector in light of increasing secularisation and cultural diversity in Irish society is concerning. The highly denominational Irish education system's limitations in catering to non-Catholics or students with no religious background led to the establishment of ET schools in 2014 for primary and post-primary education sectors (Faas, Darmody & Sokolowska, 2016). Furthermore, scholars view the introduction of the ET schools, which provide learning for students under a multidenominational ethos, as a crucial step towards achieving 'religious pluralism' within the Irish education system (Faas, Darmody & Sokolowska, 2016).

Several researchers have questioned the effectiveness of the NCCA's intercultural education guidelines in Irish schools (Bryan, 2010; Faas, Smith, & Darmody, 2018a, 2018b). Bryan (2010) and Faas, Smith, and Darmody (2018a, 2018b) have argued that the guidelines have not been adequately implemented, and their impact have not been convincingly observed in schools. Additionally, some scholars have criticised the guidelines for taking a tokenistic approach to celebrating differences and failing to adequately address the challenges of racism and discrimination in Irish schools (Bryan, 2010; Devine, 2005; Kitching, 2010). They noted the limitations of the guidelines in this regard, highlighting the need for more comprehensive policies and practices that address the root causes of inequality and discrimination in the educational system (Bryan, 2010; Devine, 2005; Kitching, 2010).

Kitching (2010) argues that the NCCA's intercultural education guidelines have limitations in their focus on anti-racism efforts without acknowledging the need to address institutional inequalities. Kavanagh (2013) similarly suggests a need to reframe the conceptualisation of intercultural education in the Irish education system. Drawing on her study of intercultural education in three Irish schools, she proposes that effective and transformative intercultural education should be grounded in the "principles of democracy, critical consciousness, and equity" (Kavanagh, 2013, p. 291). Kavanagh contends that a transformative intercultural education framework has the potential to address "inequitable school power relations, organisational structures, policies, and practices" within schools, leading to more equitable educational outcomes for all students (Kavanagh, 2013, p. 302).

According to Faas, Smith and Darmody (2018b, p. 2), despite the introduction of various policies by the GoI to promote inclusive and intercultural education, "it remains unclear… how successful schools have been in implementing the recommendation" for inclusive teaching and learning. Further, Faas, Smith and Darmody (2018b) find that schools celebrate cultural inclusivity and diversity through once-off events where students with their families are encouraged to dress in their cultural attires and share meals from their home culture. This, they argue, does not sufficiently reflect the fundamental ideals of intercultural education. Similarly, Rodríguez-Izquierdo and Darmody (2019, p. 51), examining the impact of the intercultural education strategy in Ireland, present that "it is not known how this [intercultural education strategy] is reflected in the everyday school practices." Therefore, they suggest "that at school level there needs to exist an official school policy on intercultural education that recognises the importance of mother tongue and supports the role of parents in the language maintenance" (Rodríguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019, p. 51).

The Intercultural Education Strategy (2010-2015) emphasises the significance of valuing and acknowledging students' linguistic backgrounds in relation to language policies and development in schools. It underscores the notion that "educators at all levels should recognise students' prior learning, and value this experience. Mother tongue is an asset and not a hindrance. Accordingly, it should be utilised in learning environments" (Department of Education and Skills & the Office of the Minister for Integration, 2010, p. 47).

In light of the growing migration trends, Batardière et al. (2022) draw attention to the increasing importance of English as an Additional Language (EAL) teaching in teacher education in Ireland. Starting from September 1998, the Modern Languages in Primary School Initiative was put into

action, providing government funding until 2012. This funding aimed to support the teaching of French, Spanish, German, or Italian to fifth and sixth-grade students (the final two years of primary school), with a weekly duration of 1.5 hours. This initiative was implemented in 545 schools across the country. However, "there was no renewal of state-funding for the teaching of Modern Foreign Languages until the introduction of the language sampler module in 2021" (Batardière et al., 2022, p. 3). On a different note, there has been a significant increase in the adoption of foreign languages at the secondary level. French has been the most popular language, followed by German, Italian, and Spanish. Additionally, other languages have been added to the curriculum in recent years.

Furthermore, Batardière et al. (2022) argue that fostering respect and affirmation of home languages plays a vital role in promoting social cohesion. Disregarding or denying the significance of home languages not only undermines the languages themselves but also diminishes the identities of the individuals who speak them. Such disregard is likely to result in resentment, which could have long-term consequences for Irish society in the future.

2.5 Migrant and minority-ethnic families' experiences with schooling in Ireland

2.5.1 Migrant parents' experiences within the Irish society and education system

In Ireland, parents are constitutionally responsible for their children's education (Government of Ireland, 1937). However, recent research has revealed a decline in parental involvement in education processes in the country (Brown et al., 2020). More worryingly, parents from minority ethnic backgrounds have been excluded or have limited engagement within the Irish education system, despite the increasing number of migrant parents in the educational sector (CSO, 2017; Connaughton, 2019; DES, 2018). Thus, my research, which focuses on the experiences of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds, is essential in developing CRP and intercultural education in Ireland.

Research has demonstrated that involving parents in their children's education leads to improved academic achievement and learning outcomes for students, regardless of their cultural background (Durisic & Bunijevac, 2017; Goodall, 2017). Therefore, the importance of promoting parent-school partnerships or relationships cannot be overemphasised, particularly with migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds. Connaughton's (2019) Master's thesis on 'new Irish parents' and the primary school system in the Irish context highlights that migrant parents highly value education and have high aspirations for their children. However, they encounter obstacles to their

involvement, including their low socio-economic status, lack of English and Irish language proficiency, and limited knowledge of the Irish education system. Connaughton (2019, p. 3) further argues that a strong home-school partnership can notably impact students' academic success, "school retention rates, social skills development, motivation, resilience, mental health, and self-confidence." Parent-school partnership or parental engagement do not always happen 'organically,' proactive steps need to be taken by schools that create the enabling platform for parents to "take their place in the education for their children" (Pushor & Ruitenberg, 2005, p. 13).

Minority ethnic families, especially those with migrant backgrounds, have experienced racism within the Irish education system (Connaughton, 2019; Sheridan, 2018). Specifically, 'name-calling' has been identified as a common experience of racism in Irish schools (Kennedy, 2014; Mannion, 2016). Teachers' lack of effective engagement with minority groups' families has perpetuated varying degrees of racism, leading to lower academic achievement for students from culturally diverse backgrounds (Cotter & Kolawole, 2015; McGillicuddy & Devine, 2018). Moreover, a bias exists in the placement of students of culturally diverse backgrounds, with teachers more likely to identify students from Eastern European and Nigerian backgrounds as "having average academic ability", while students "from Slavic countries, Romania, Brazil and Irish Traveller ethnic backgrounds are often placed in low ability groups" (Connaughton, 2019, p. 13). Similar deficit attitudes towards students of culturally diverse backgrounds have been observed in other contexts, such as Finland, the US, Australia, Austria and China (Acquah & Commins, 2015; Glock & Klapproth, 2017; Santoro, 2014; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021; Yuan, 2019).

Cross-cultural conflicts or identity crises are often experienced by children from culturally diverse backgrounds when they try to assimilate into the majority culture to avoid being marginalised and bullied, as evidenced by studies conducted in various countries, such as Ireland, the Netherlands, and the US (Glock & Klapproth, 2017; Ní Dhuinn, 2017; Röder et al., 2014; Vermeij, Van Duijn & Baerveldt, 2009). For instance, Cotter and Kolawole (2015, p. 315) found in their study on immigrant parents in Ireland that "new families" feel that they are more likely to be accepted and "tolerated" in Irish society and education system if they adopt "the Irish way" of doing things.

According to a study conducted by Doyle and Keane (2019, p. 12), parental experiences with schooling in marginalised areas in Ireland indicate that their children dropping out early from school was perceived as a result of "an unsupportive, and at times discriminatory education system." This finding is significant because other studies have shown that many newly arrived

families are overrepresented in DEIS schools, which suggests that they are vulnerable to encountering the same schooling challenges (Connaughton, 2019; Darmody, McGinnity & Kingston, 2016; Ní Dhuinn, & Keane, 2021). Based on their findings, Doyle and Keane (2019) recommend that meeting basic human needs, such as physiological and safety needs, to parents and families in disadvantaged or marginalised areas is crucial to enable individuals to meet higher-level needs, such as engagement in education.

2.5.2 Migrant and minority ethnic students' experiences within Irish schools

Research internationally on minority-ethnic student experiences in schools reveals that the curriculum does not adequately respond to the learning needs of students from diverse backgrounds, leading to exclusion and segregation (Glock & Klapproth, 2017; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Stylianou, 2017). Teachers' negative perceptions of culturally diverse students' ability and language proficiency have led to lower academic expectations for these students (Baysu et al., 2021; Bhowmik, Kennedy & Hue, 2017).

McGinley and Keane's (2021) qualitative case study in Ireland reveals that students from Travellers' backgrounds perceive a lack of inclusion of their cultural values in the curriculum, leading to a sense of irrelevance and inadequacy in addressing their learning needs. In addition to McGinley and Keane's (2021) recent research on the experiences of students from Traveller backgrounds in Irish secondary schools, several other studies have identified similar challenges (Boyle, Flynn, & Hanafin, 2018; Devine, Kenny & Macneela, 2008). Chapman and Bhopal (2019), Darmody, McGinnity, and Kingston (2016), and Ní Dhuinn and Keane (2021) have noted a potential 'segregation' of Traveller and minority ethnic students in the Irish school system, particularly in urban areas where they are overrepresented in DEIS schools. Other ethnic minority students in Irish secondary schools also encounter challenges such as a lack of belonging, lower academic expectations, and poor relationships with teachers and peers (Condon, 2021; Darmody, McGinnity & Kingston, 2016).

In the context of various international settings, including Ireland, teachers have been observed to perceive cultural diversity among students, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds, as a hindrance to their learning abilities (Castro, 2010; Chapman & Bhopal, 2019). In her analysis of migrant children in education in Ireland, Devine (2013) emphasises the crucial role of schools in shaping the identities of migrant children and the value attributed to them, which can result in both recognition and misrecognition. To address this issue, teachers need to work with these

children in a sustained and respectful manner that recognises and fully incorporates their ethnic backgrounds, requiring a radical, strategic, careful, and nurturing pedagogical approach. Devine's (2013) research further reveals that teachers held negative perceptions of Roma and African students due to cultural differences, which led to the misinterpretation of their behaviour in the classroom as disruptive and their learning capacities being perceived as limited. Furthermore, McGinley and Keane (2021, p. 3) argue that "negative constructions of minority ethnic students' ability are related to perceptions of English Language proficiency." Specifically, studies conducted in Ireland demonstrate that teachers often misjudge the language proficiency, particularly the English language proficiency, of students from migrant and minority ethnic backgrounds. As a consequence, Irish teachers have been found to hold lower academic expectations for students from culturally diverse backgrounds (McGinley & Keane, 2021; Ní Dhuinn & Keane, 2021).

In their investigation of language support for newly arrived migrant children in Ireland and Spain, Rodríguez-Izquierdo and Darmody (2019) argue that the lower academic performance of children with a migrant background compared to their native peers can be attributed to various factors. These factors encompass the age at which children arrive in the host country, financial hardships, parental involvement and educational attainment, school-related elements, including teacher interactions, socioeconomic status, individual characteristics, "as well as community and neighbourhood conditions" (Rodríguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019, p. 42).

From Rodríguez-Izquierdo and Darmody's (2019) research, the teaching profession in Ireland and Spain is highly homogeneous despite the vast diversity and multilingualism among students. They point out that teachers in these countries often come from monolingual backgrounds, which may pose challenges in addressing the linguistic needs of the student population. Additionally, the education systems in both countries were found to be lacking in support and recognition of language development plans for newly arrived migrant children. Rodríguez-Izquierdo and Darmody (2019) argue that these findings are concerning, as they suggest a lack of appreciation for diverse cultures within these countries' education systems. This, in turn, may have serious consequences for the students' sense of belonging to the school. They stress the importance of creating inclusive educational environments that value and support cultural diversity, particularly in light of the increasing numbers of migrant children in schools. Rodríguez-Izquierdo and Darmody (2019) recommend that policy and practice in education systems should be revised to provide more comprehensive support for language development plans for migrant students and to ensure that teachers are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to address the linguistic and cultural needs of diverse student populations.

Several studies have indicated that minority ethnic students from culturally diverse families experience an identity crisis and confusion due to the lack of recognition of their complex identities (Cohen & Kassan, 2018; Glock & Klapproth, 2017; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Stylianou, 2017). The increasing number of students from migrant families in Irish schools has resulted in an identity crisis and confusion among minority students (Ní Dhuinn, 2017; Röder et al., 2014). Additionally, first, second, and third-generation migrants, who may identify themselves as Irish despite their minority ethnic background, may still be perceived as non-Irish by Irish society (Röder et al., 2014). In a related study, Ní Dhuinn (2017, p. 6) conducted qualitative doctoral research exploring the higher education experiences of black and minority ethnic (BME) students in Ireland. The findings of her study indicate that BME participants encountered discrimination and the enduring impact of colonialism in the Irish education system, both at the primary and secondary levels and in higher education.

2.6 Teachers and teacher education in Ireland

2.6.1 Overview of structure and content

In Ireland, entry into the teaching profession typically involves completing a Bachelor of Education degree or an Undergraduate Degree followed by a Professional Master of Education (PME) programme at a recognised third-level institution. All teachers must register with the Teaching Council of Ireland, which is the regulatory body responsible for the registration and professional development of teachers in Ireland (Heinz, Keane & Foley, 2017).

In recent years, the Teaching Council of Ireland has published guidelines and standards for ITE programme providers and for the induction of newly qualified teachers (NQT). These guidelines and standards are intended to ensure that the quality of the ITE provided, and the induction process for NQTs meet the highest standards and that the teachers graduating from these programmes are well-prepared to enter the profession (O'Doherty & Harford, 2018).

ITE programmes are designed to provide a comprehensive education that combines coursework and practical experiences, equipping future teachers with the necessary knowledge, skills, and competencies (O'Doherty & Harford, 2018). The content of ITE programmes in Ireland encompasses various areas of study to ensure the development of well-rounded and competent teachers (The Teaching Council, 2020).

One crucial area of study in ITE programmes is pedagogical knowledge, which focuses on instructional strategies, curriculum design, assessment techniques, and classroom management. Subject-specific knowledge is another essential component of ITE programmes, providing aspiring teachers with in-depth understanding of the subjects they will teach. Depending on their chosen specialisation, such as primary or secondary education, prospective teachers acquire subject-specific knowledge in areas such as mathematics, sciences, humanities, languages, and arts (The Teaching Council, 2020). Educational psychology is also a critical area of study in ITE programmes, as it equips future teachers with an understanding of child and adolescent development, learning theories, motivation, and inclusive education (O'Doherty & Harford, 2018).

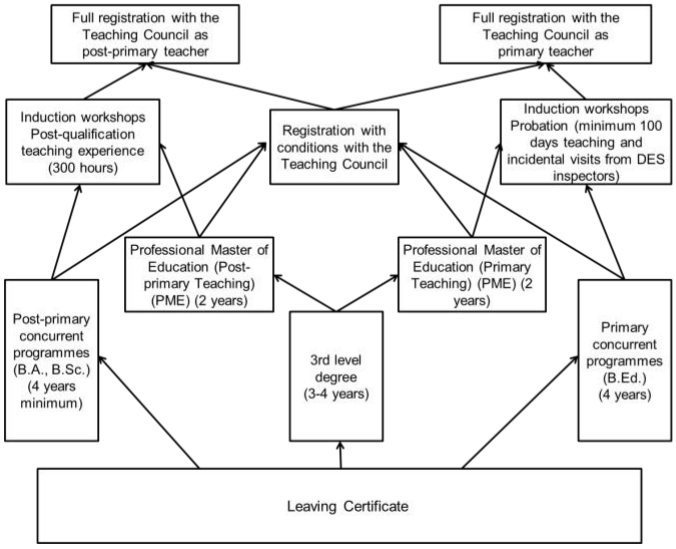
Inclusive education, particularly addressing special educational needs, is emphasised in ITE programmes (O'Doherty & Harford, 2018). Prospective teachers learn about differentiation strategies and assistive technologies to effectively support students with disabilities or special educational needs (The Teaching Council, 2020). An understanding of educational policies and legislation is another crucial element of ITE programmes in Ireland (O'Doherty & Harford, 2018). Future teachers gain knowledge about child protection guidelines, curriculum frameworks, and national educational initiatives, ensuring they adhere to legal and ethical requirements (The Teaching Council, 2020).

ITE programmes incorporate key elements to provide practical experiences and facilitate the development of effective teaching practices. Classroom observations are commonly included, allowing student-teachers to visit and observe experienced teachers in action (The Teaching Council, 2020). This enables them to gain insights into effective teaching strategies. Furthermore, student-teachers gradually assume increasing responsibilities during these placements, culminating in a teaching placement where they take charge of their own classes under supervision (O'Doherty & Harford, 2018; The Teaching Council, 2020). Requirements for school placements vary based on the ITE programme and the level of education (primary or secondary). Student-teachers must complete a minimum of 200 hours in supervised school placements (The Teaching Council, 2020). They are expected to demonstrate competence in planning and delivering lessons, effectively managing classrooms, and addressing the diverse learning needs of students (O'Doherty & Harford, 2018; The Teaching Council, 2020)

Reflective practice is encouraged throughout ITE programmes, fostering critical analysis of teaching practices, evaluation of student learning, and informed adjustments to enhance teaching effectiveness. Student-teachers are encouraged to engage in self-reflection and receive feedback

from experienced teachers and college mentors (The Teaching Council, 2020). See Figure 2 on entry pathways into the Irish teaching profession.

Figure 2: Entry into the teaching profession in Ireland



Source: Heinz, Keane & Foley (2017)

2.6.2 Background of student-teachers and the teacher-pupil diversity gap

Even with the increasing diversity of the student population in Irish schools, the teaching profession has remained relatively homogeneous, with many teachers having successful academic backgrounds (Heinz, 2008; Heinz & Keane, 2018). According to Heinz, Keane, and Davison (2017, p. 102), teachers are "predominantly white Irish, female, and of majority group ethnic and social class backgrounds." The homogeneity within the Irish teaching profession is a cause for concern, considering the increased learner diversity within the school system. A look at the socio-demographics of entrants to state-funded ITE programmes in 2014 showed the ethnicity of student-teachers as 99.0 per cent, 98.2 per cent and 98.3 per cent White Irish Settled across undergraduate primary ITE, undergraduate post-primary ITE and post-primary ITE programmes respectively. Please find a more detailed account of the socio-demographic characteristics of the 2014 cohort in Table 7, presented below.

Table 7: Summary of socio-demographics of 2014 entrants to state-funded ITE programmes

	Undergraduate Primary ITE Entrants	*Undergraduate Post-primary ITE Entrants*	*Postgraduate Post-primary ITE Entrants*
Sex	Female: 85.8% Male: 14.0% Intersex: 0.2%	Female: 64.1% Male: 35.2% Intersex: 0.7%	Female: 60.2% Male: 39.5% Intersex: 0.3%
Socio-Economic Group	Highest Represented Groups: 1. Employers and Managers: 25.1% 2. Manual Skilled: 18.7%	Highest Represented Groups: 1. Manual Skilled: 22.5% 2. Employers and Managers: 18.3%	Highest Represented Groups: 1. Manual Skilled: 22.8% 2. Employers and Managers: 20.0%
Age	Mean age: 18.35 (SD = 2.10) Mature-aged (23+): 2.7%	Mean age: 19.46 (SD = 4.48) Mature-aged (23+): 11.3%	Mean age: 24.89 (SD = 5.94) Mature-aged (25+): 32.4%
Nationality	Irish Nationality *Only*: 96.2% Irish + Other: 3.8% Other (single or mixed, not including Irish): 0%	Irish Nationality *Only*: 93.8% Irish + Other: 4.8% Other (single or mixed, not including Irish): 1.4%	Irish Nationality *Only*: 95.8% Irish + Other: 3.9% Other (single or mixed, not including Irish): 0.3%
Ethnicity	White Irish Settled: 99.0%	White Irish Settled: 98.2%	White Irish Settled: 98.3%
Disability	Yes: 4.8%	Yes: 13.8%	Yes: 8.9%
Religion	Highest Represented Groups: Roman Catholic: 90.4% Church of Ireland: 3.7% None: 4.8%	Highest Represented Groups: Roman Catholic: 86.5% Church of Ireland: 2.2% None: 9.4%	Highest Represented Groups: Roman Catholic: 85.8% Church of Ireland: 1.9% None: 9.7%
First Language	English: 96.9% Irish: 3.1% Other: 0%	English: 98.6% Irish: 1.4% Other: 0%	English: 93.1% Irish: 6.6% Other: 0.3%
Sexual Orientation	No data	No data	No response: 20.2% Of respondents: 94.8% Heterosexual

Source: Keane, Heinz, & McDaid (2023b, p. 41)

Efforts to diversify the teaching profession in Ireland have been made, as highlighted by Goodwin and Keane (2023). One such effort is the National Access Plan for Diversifying the Irish Teaching Profession, a comprehensive strategy developed by the Irish government to increase diversity within the teaching profession. Launched in 2015 with a 5-year implementation period, the plan focuses on improving the representation of ethnic minorities, members of the Traveller community, people with disabilities and achieving gender balance (Higher Education Authority, 2015). Additionally, the 2022 National Access Plan emphasises the importance of diversifying the Irish teaching profession as part of the government's broader efforts to promote social inclusion and diversity (Higher Education Authority, 2022).

Keane, Heinz, and McDaid (2023b) argue that neglecting to prioritise the inclusion of minority groups, such as the Traveller community and migrant teachers, in the teaching profession will perpetuate their under-representation. Therefore, to address this issue and promote diversity within the teaching profession, the Irish National Access Plan should specifically target and include marginalised groups (Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023b).

Several states in the United States (US) have endeavoured to diversify the teaching profession in order to better reflect the diverse student population in schools. To this end, the US Department of Education has supported both the Teacher Pipeline Programme and the Teach for America programme. These initiatives strive to enhance the number of highly qualified teachers in high-need schools and subject areas throughout the country while simultaneously promoting diversity in the teaching profession (Lac, 2021; White, 2016). One example of the Teacher Pipeline Programme is the Future Educators Programme, which encourages and supports students from diverse backgrounds to enter the teaching profession.

However, recruitment and retention of teachers of colour in the US still face institutional and structural barriers, as Carter Andrews et al. (2019) highlighted in their review of historical and contemporary factors. These barriers include the disproportionate impact of standardised exams on teachers of colour, particularly African Americans, and the additional challenges faced by teachers of colour who are accepted into pre-service programmes at predominantly White institutions, including racism, stereotyping, microaggressions, and colour-blindness. Cook (2013, p. 46) argues that many teacher education programmes in the US reinforce and perpetuate "the very systems of White supremacy and ethnocentrism that they purport to prepare teachers to resist." Therefore, institutional, and structural changes are necessary to diversify the teacher workforce and retain teachers of colour.

2.6.3 Preparation of student-teachers for cultural diversity in schools

Within Ireland, research has highlighted the values of intercultural teaching and that teachers' preparedness to teach in culturally diverse schools is limited (Condon, 2017; Smyth et al., 2009). In his doctoral research on the experience of migrant students in an Irish second-level school, Condon (2017) recommends the implementation of an inclusive curriculum that celebrates the diversity of the intercultural classroom as a valuable resource. He advocates for using pedagogies such as cooperative learning, peer education, and action research by teachers and students. Condon

(2017, p. 61) also argues that "pre-service training (ITE) and in-service provision (CPD) in intercultural education are generally seen as ineffective and marginal in that they tend to be an add-on or stand-alone courses which often do not transfer into practice once teachers are back in their school culture and routines." It can be inferred that the teacher education programmes in Ireland have not adequately equipped teachers with the necessary pedagogical skills and competencies to effectively deliver intercultural education to all learners in Irish schools, as noted by Shevlin et al. (2009) and Smyth et al. (2009). As a result, Doyle and Keane (2019) suggest that providing support for teachers working in diverse socio-cultural classrooms is imperative. Similarly, Smyth et al. (2009) emphasise the need to prioritise the development of intercultural education competencies among teachers.

In a comparable context, Scotland faces the challenge of a teaching profession that is predominantly homogenous in contrast to a culturally diverse student population (Arshad, 2023). Acknowledging this disparity, the Scottish Government established a working group in 2018 to investigate strategies for supporting teachers in addressing this issue (Arshad, 2023). Recommendations from the working group include sensitising and increasing school leaders' cultural literacy and awareness, reviewing ITE programmes to prepare teachers for culturally diverse schools, and proactive partnerships with local authorities to support minority teachers in career development (Arshad, 2023).

2.7 Conclusion

This chapter provided an overview of the study context, including the history and structure of the Irish education system, as well as the emphasis on intercultural education. The policies and legislations implemented by the GoI in promoting inclusive and intercultural education demonstrate their commitment to ensuring equitable and quality education for all learners. The schooling experiences of migrant and minority ethnic families in Ireland, and with the homogeneity of the teaching profession, have given rise to numerous policies and legislations that are deemed ineffective. Additionally, the insufficient capacity of Irish teachers to provide intercultural education and inclusive practices in their classrooms underscores the pressing need for a review of teacher education to equip teachers with culturally responsive strategies that enable them to cater to the needs of all students. The insights generated from this context chapter further stress the importance of this research study in exploring the experiences of migrant parents from minority

ethnic backgrounds and student and beginning teachers in developing culturally inclusive teaching in Irish schools. The next chapter focuses on the review of literature on developing culturally inclusive teaching and learning.

SECTION 2 – REVIEW OF CONCEPTS AND LITERATURE

Chapter Three - Research and Conceptualisations in/of Culturally Inclusive Teaching and Learning

3.1 Introduction

The chapter provides an overview and discussion of the central concepts of this research study. The literature review encompasses concepts of education, namely, CRP, multicultural education, teacher education and inclusive education. These areas are pertinent to the study's objective, which is to investigate the development of culturally responsive teaching and learning in Irish second-level schools based on the experiences of student and beginning teachers and parents of minority ethnic backgrounds.

The literature review was conducted using a systematic approach that included searching various databases such as JSTOR, EBSCOhost, Education Resources Information Centre, Social Science Research Network, the Education Policy and Data Centre, and Google Scholar, using relevant keywords such as 'culturally responsive teaching,' 'multicultural education,' 'teacher education,' 'student-teacher,' 'beginning teacher,' 'Irish education system,' and 'inclusive education.' The inclusion criteria were that the article/document must be published online, written in English, and related to the research questions. After screening the articles, 75 articles were selected for further analysis, forming the basis of the literature review. The literature review then focused on critically examining the literature on preparing teachers to become culturally responsive teachers, with a particular emphasis on the role of attitudes, beliefs, challenges, and expectations. The review included research articles, book chapters, and reports investigating the experiences of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds in Irish second-level schools. The exclusion criteria were articles that were not relevant to the research questions, articles written in languages other than English, and articles that did not have full text available.

By conducting a systematic and thorough literature review, this chapter lays the foundation for developing an analytical framework for investigating the experiences of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds in Irish schools.

3.2 Understanding the development of culturally responsive/relevant pedagogies

3.2.1 What is the culture in culturally inclusive teaching and learning?

Attempting to define culture in relation to teaching and learning has been challenging in literature, as Erickson (2005, p. 34) notes that "even experts have not been able to agree on what culture really is." Though not exhaustive, according to Cushner, McClelland and Safford (2003), cited by Valentin (2006, p. 2), they "identified 12 sources of cultural identity (race, ethnicity/nationality, social class, sex/gender, health, age, geographic region, sexuality, religion, social status, language, and ability/disability) that influence teaching and learning, and are universal and present in every culture." While it is quite tasking to define culture or reach a consensus on the definition of culture, Dimmock and Walker (2005, p. 8) provide a summary of the different conceptualisations of culture:

> Culture refers to the whole way of life of the members of a society or group. It includes how they dress, what and how they eat, marriage customs and family life, their patterns of work, religious ceremonies, leisure pursuits and works of art. It is displayed and expressed through language, thought and action. It is also expressed through physical objects, such as works of art, books, icons, monuments and museums, and through social interaction, such as how people relate to one another, make decisions and share experiences.

Similarly, and within the context of culturally responsive teaching and learning, the Ontario Ministry of Education (2013, p. 1) explains that culture "encompasses broad notions of similarity and difference, and it is reflected in our students' multiple social identities and their ways of knowing and of being in the world." In other words, and as established by scholars in literature, culture is crucial to teaching and learning (Brown, 2007; Erickson, 2005; Gay, 2013; Hoffman, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Martin, 2015; Yuan, 2019). The art of teaching and learning is deeply rooted as a socio-cultural phenomenon. Additionally, culture plays a vital role in teaching and learning as it shapes how individuals perceive and interact with the world around them. It influences how students learn, what they learn, and their self-perceptions and social position (Brown, 2007; Erickson, 2005; Gay, 2013). Understanding students' cultural backgrounds can help teachers develop more effective and inclusive teaching strategies and create a positive learning environment for all students (Brown, 2007; Erickson, 2005; Hoffman, 1996; Ladson-Billings, 1998).

Within research, the 'culture of power' has been recognised as a cultural phenomenon that wields a significant impact on the behaviours and attitudes exhibited by individuals and collectives, consequently shaping the dynamics within educational environments, particularly the interactions between teachers and students. In line with this, Martin's (2015) doctoral study examined how teachers negotiate the complexities of teaching in an unequal South African society while striving for social justice. The study employed grounded theory and narrative inquiry methodologies to investigate the challenges and complexities encountered by teachers in underprivileged schools primarily serving Black African students. Martin (2015) contends that the conventional understanding of social justice and equity is insufficient to fully comprehend the experiences of these teachers. Instead, a revised perspective is required that recognises the intricate nature of their reality. The research emphasises the importance of exploring the link between the culture of power and the development of students' socio-political awareness in culturally diverse teaching environments. Martin (2015) argues that this connection must be considered when educating students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The culture of power refers to how power is distributed, exercised, and perpetuated within a society or organisation. It encompasses the values, beliefs, norms, and practices that shape the distribution of power and influence within a group or society. It also includes how power shapes the behaviour and attitudes of individuals and groups (Barton & Yang, 2000). A culture of power can manifest in many ways, such as through force, coercion, manipulation, or persuasion. It can also be seen in how power is concentrated in a few individuals or groups while others are excluded or marginalised, for example, in teachers' influence over students in classroom settings (Barton & Yang, 2000).

3.2.2 Culturally responsive pedagogies

The development of culturally inclusive teaching and learning has evolved over the years, with various terminologies given to teachers' practical and creative responses to the needs of students in culturally diverse schools in academic research and literature. These terminologies include Culturally Compatible (Jordan, 1985), Culturally Congruent (Au & Kawakami, 1994), Culturally Relevant (Ladson-Billings, 1995a), Culturally Responsive Teaching/Pedagogy (Gay, 2002a, 2002b), and more recently, Culturally Sustaining Pedagogy (Paris, 2012).

The origins of the incorporation of CRP in educational research can be traced back to Ladson-Billings' early works, which were published in 1994, 1995a, 1995b, and 1995c. She presents CRP as a response to how teachers' socio-cultural identities, attitudes and beliefs determine learners'

academic achievements and emphasises the importance of teachers' awareness of how their perspectives may influence their teaching methods, particularly in classrooms with cultural diversity. In her analysis of CRP, Ladson-Billings (1995a) suggests that teachers can improve their cultural responsiveness by establishing positive relationships with students inside and outside the classroom. This approach allows for a deeper understanding of students' cultural backgrounds, which is crucial for promoting academic success for all students. Ladson-Billings (1995a) contends that observing classroom practices in real-life settings and learning from teachers' experiences is the most effective way to understand classroom practices. She encourages teachers to research their teaching practices, emphasising the importance of their unique perspectives and dedication to effective teaching as valuable resources that should not be overlooked.

Ladson-Billings emphasises that recognising and incorporating students' cultural values in the process of teaching and learning instils a sense of empowerment in them, leading to academic success (1995a, 1995b, 1995c). In essence, the concept of CRP aims to empower all students while preventing any student from being left behind or isolated, as pointed out by Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b, 1995c). Moreover, a teaching and learning practice that embraces cultural inclusivity enables students to develop a critical awareness that allows them to establish connections between their identities, schools, and the broader society (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c).

To summarise, the objectives of CRP, according to Ladson-Billings (1995a, p. 162), include promoting academic excellence among students, aiding students in cultivating a robust sense of their cultural identity, and empowering them to build a critical consciousness necessary to engage and challenge the "cultural norms, values, moves, and institutions that produce and maintain social identities."

Hefflin (2002), in agreement with the works of Ladson-Billings (1995a,1995b, 1995c) offers that culturally responsive teaching involves teachers using the socio-cultural identities, values and experiences of students to inform their teaching approaches within classrooms. In her qualitative research on learning to develop culturally relevant pedagogy with two teachers, Hefflin (2002) emphasises the critical role of teacher knowledge and reflection in designing and implementing culturally responsive lessons. The teachers in her study tailored their instruction to fit their students' cultural and personal backgrounds to achieve curricular goals successfully. Hefflin (2002) argues that teachers must be multiculturally literate to effectively incorporate their students' lives into teaching. This is crucial for the academic success of culturally diverse students because when

students see clear, authentic representations throughout the curriculum, they "experience a strong sense of affirmation" (Hefflin, 2002, p. 232).

A solid understanding of different cultures is crucial for implementing CRP, as stated by Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b, 1995c). Moll et al. (1992) used the concept of 'funds of knowledge' in their qualitative research on the educational experiences of Latino students from working-class families. They found that teachers and schools can collaborate with minority ethnic families and communities to develop a cultural knowledge base to inform more effective teaching methods for students from minority ethnic backgrounds. They define funds of knowledge as "bodies of knowledge and skills that are historically accumulated and culturally developed" (Moll et al., 1992, p. 133). These funds of knowledge encompass a wide range of expertise and wisdom that individuals and communities possess based on their cultural heritage, experiences, and traditions. These accumulated funds of knowledge hold immense value and can contribute significantly to educational practices and the broader society by promoting cultural diversity, nurturing meaningful connections between students and their communities, and recognising the strengths and assets that learners bring to the educational setting.

Martin (2015, p. 34) asserts that "culturally relevant pedagogy is also an attempt to challenge the validity, legitimation and hegemony of dominant knowledge in classroom practice." This implies that CRP aims to create an inclusive classroom environment that reflects the diverse cultural values present instead of reinforcing one dominant culture. Delpit (1988) also recognises that empowering students culturally can promote better engagement within and outside the school environment. Thus, it can be argued that promoting equity and inclusion in educational research requires a central focus on CRP (Gay, 2000, 2013). Other scholars, such as Gutiérrez (2002) and Martin (2015), have also confirmed the pressing need to develop CRP as a "new equity research agenda." This is because CRP is needed as a "pedagogy that does not call for identities [of learners] to be sacrificed" (Martin, 2015, p. 34).

Gay (2013) conducted a literature review on teaching cultural diversity in the US and argued that culturally responsive teaching is a pedagogical approach aimed at improving the academic performance of underachieving students from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, particularly those of African, Asian, Native American, and Latino American descent living in urban and rural areas and attending schools with limited resources. The primary objective of culturally responsive teaching is to shift the focus of teaching about cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity from addressing problems and challenges to recognising strengths, opportunities, and potential. Gay (2013)

suggested that CRP should involve teaching that leverages the strengths of ethnically diverse students, including their cultural knowledge, power experiences, frames of reference, and performance styles, to make learning outcomes more applicable and effective for them. Culturally inclusive teaching acknowledges that schools are not always homogeneous environments and that students may have cultural attributes that differ from the dominant school culture (Gay, 2002b, 2013).

According to Gay (2002a), culture has a significant impact on the attitudes, values, and behaviours of both teachers and students in the classroom and must be considered when addressing underachievement among students. Inclusive teaching that considers diverse cultural backgrounds has the potential to transform the learning experiences of all students, equipping them with the "knowledge, skills, and values" needed to become critical thinkers and active participants in their personal, social, political, and economic lives (Gay, 2002a, p. 131). She highlights that CRP equips students with the necessary skills to make informed choices and take meaningful action in the world, while promoting critical consciousness relevant to confronting social justice issues (Gay, 2002a). Thus, in addition to providing equitable and quality education to all students, CRP play a crucial role in helping students develop the skills required to address social justice issues (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Gay, 2000, 2010).

In their review on preparing culturally responsive teachers and rethinking the curriculum, Villegas and Lucas (2002) emphasise the importance of establishing a clear understanding of what teaching and learning in a diverse environment entails to equip teachers to work effectively in a multicultural society. This understanding is essential to develop a cohesive approach to prepare teachers for working with diverse populations. Villegas and Lucas (2002) propose that culturally responsive teaching is founded on six core principles: socio-cultural consciousness, affirming views of students, commitments, and skills to act as agents of change, constructivist views of students, learning about students, and culturally responsive teaching practices. Please refer to Table 8 below for the primary descriptors associated with each of the six attributes of culturally responsive teaching.

Table 8: Six qualities of culturally responsive teaching

1. Sociocultural Consciousness
1.1 Knowing that thinking, behaving, and being are influenced by identity
1.2 Examining personal sociocultural identity
1.3 Understanding that sociocultural differences are not neutral
1.4 Understanding that social inequalities are produced and maintained through systemic discrimination
2. Affirming Views of Students
2.1 Validating multiple ways of knowing, communicating, acting, and processing
2.2 Ensuring that students are fluent in mainstream knowledge without validating its supremacy
2.3 Recognising all students as capable learners who bring a trove of knowledge and experience with them to school
3. Commitment and Skills to Act as Agents of Change
3.1 Understanding the moral responsibility of teachers to ensure that students learn
3.2 Recognising the potential of schools to enact social change
3.3 Recognising the reproductive and reductive tendencies of schools
3.4 Recognising the complexity of teaching as inherently ethical and political
3.5 Understanding their position of power as teachers in helping students reach their goals
3.6 Seeing teachers as actors in fight for social justice
4. Constructivist Views of Learning
4.1 Having a constructivist view of learning
4.2 Helping learners build bridges between what they already know and new material
5. Learning About Students
5.1 Knowing about experiences of students outside school
5.2 Knowing how previous learning experiences effect present feelings about school and curriculum
5.3 Knowing how students learn about content knowledge (maths, science, literature, social studies, etc.) outside of school
5.4 Knowing about the knowledge of non-mainstream groups (i.e., literature, history)
6. Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices
6.1 Involving all students in knowledge construction
6.2 Building on students' personal and cultural strengths
6.3 Using varied assessment practices
6.4 Creating an encouraging classroom environment
6.5 Making the classroom culture inclusive of all students
6.6 Using pertinent examples from students' lives to clarify new ideas
6.7 Drawing on the expertise of community members
6.8 Helping students to critically interrogate the standard curriculum
6.9 Broadening the curriculum to include multiple perspectives

Source: Villegas and Lucas (2002) cited by Morrison, Thompson, and Glacier (2021, p. 3)

Similar to Villegas and Lucas (2002), Gay (2002a) also identified five crucial characteristics of culturally responsive teaching:

(1) developing a knowledge base about cultural diversity;

(2) including ethnic and cultural diversity content in the curriculum;

(3) demonstrating caring and building learning communities;

(4) communicating effectively with ethnically diverse students; and

(5) responding to ethnic diversity in the delivery of instruction (Gay 2002a, p. 106).

However, focusing on classroom practice, Sleeter (2012, p. 569) contends that the implementation of CRP is now embedded in tokenism or seen as a mere 'cultural celebration' in schools, therefore, "reducing the pedagogy to steps to follow rather than using it as a paradigm for teaching and learning." This means that CRP is being implemented superficially or symbolically rather than being used as a fundamental approach to teaching and learning. This can limit the effectiveness of CRP in promoting equity and inclusion in the classroom. Also, the above approach to implementing CRP does not allow for "challenging academic knowledge and skills through the cultural processes and knowledge students bring to school with them" (Sleeter, 2012, p. 569). In response to the works

of Ladson-Billings (1995a,1995b, 1995c) and Gay (2000, 2002a, 2002b), Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011, p. 66) contend that for teachers to be effective facilitators of learning in classrooms, they must be "non-judgmental and inclusive of their students' cultural backgrounds." In their article, 'Toward a Conceptual Framework of Culturally Relevant Pedagogy,' Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) highlight that educational research aims to discover effective instructional methods for all students, including those from culturally diverse backgrounds. They argue that CRP is a promising field of research for addressing this issue. Their article synthesises the literature on CRP, identifies common themes across major works, acknowledges the sensitivity of race and social relations in the US, and applies the principles of CRT to examine the importance of race and racism in the discussion of culture.

It is critical to state what CRP is not. According to Siope (2013, p. 40), "culturally responsive is not the missionary approach to teaching with the notion that marginalised or minoritised students need to be rescued from their own culture and be converted to taking on the culture of their teacher or the school in order to achieve." CRP is not a deficit intervention that seeks to address the needs of culturally diverse students by assimilating them into the cultures of their teachers or schools. As Hammond (2014) asserts, CRP is good teaching for all students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds or values. Furthermore, Vialpando et al. (2005) argue that a 'culturally responsive teacher' surpasses a 'good teacher' in delivering equitable and quality education to culturally diverse students. They maintain that while a good teacher can identify the areas of need of diverse learners, a culturally responsive teacher can also identify "their areas of strength" (Vialpando et al., 2005, p. 21).

Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) argue that CRP developed by Gloria Ladson-Billings and Geneva Gay, does not explicitly explore issues of race and racism in schools, making it necessary to further develop and strengthen the conceptualisation of CRP through the use of CRT:

> ...culturally relevant pedagogy, like critical race theory, recognises the value of lived experience by marginalised groups in understanding and making meaning of the world… nonetheless, culturally relevant pedagogy does not question or critically examine the structures that feed into the cultural incongruence perspective [and therefore needs CRT to support CRP] (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011, p. 71).

From the above quote, CRP acknowledge the significance of marginalised groups' lived experiences as a valuable resource for comprehending and interpreting the world. However, Brown-Jeffy and Cooper (2011) suggest that CRP alone does not engage in a critical examination

of the underlying structures that contribute to cultural incongruence. Therefore, CRT is presented as a necessary complement to CRP, as it provides the analytical tools and framework to question and challenge the structures and systems that perpetuate cultural disparities. By integrating CRT with CRP, educators can effectively address the cultural incongruence perspective and work towards creating more inclusive and equitable learning environments.

The principles of CRP reject the notion that students who speak a language other than the language of instruction at home or are multilingual, struggle academically due to their language proficiency (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). This idea, known as 'deficit thinking,' suggests that teachers may misinterpret or misunderstand students' temporary language difficulties as lower academic ability while disregarding their multilingual competencies as a strength. CRP instead recognises the linguistic and cultural strengths these students bring to the classroom (Ladson-Billings, 1995a). Moreover, students' cultural diversity needs to be harnessed and appropriated to ensure their academic success.

3.2.3 Culturally responsive pedagogy and multicultural education

The literature lacks a consensus on the definition of multicultural education, as there exist multiple conceptualisations put forth by various scholars (Gibson, 1984; Grant, 2006; Hoffman, 1996; Leeman & Reid, 2006; May, 1994; Ogbu, 1992). According to Gorksi (2006, p. 164), the absence of a universally accepted definition of multicultural education among scholars is attributed to the presence of "popular but regressive practices wrongly framed as multicultural education." Supporting this argument, Goldberg (1994, p. 7) argues that the increasing demand for multicultural practices in various societies has been subjected to "multiple and conflicting interpretations, meanings, and implications," further complicating the issue. However, it can be inferred from Sleeter's (1996) book titled 'Multicultural Education as Social Activism' that a consensus definition of multicultural education is possible when one considers the works of leading theorists in multicultural education like James Banks (1993) and Stephen May (1994). "One must distinguish between an approach as formulated by its main theorists and superficial applications of it that one often finds in schools as well as in the literature" (Sleeter, 1996, p. 7). Banks (1993), in his review of the historical development, dimensions, and practice of multicultural education, defines multicultural education as education that meets the needs of students from non-White backgrounds, specifically people of colour. For May (1994), multicultural education challenges the

monopoly of knowledge production while providing opportunities for students of culturally diverse backgrounds to access quality education.

Further, Kavanagh (2013, p. 7) asserts that not having a clear-cut and generally agreed definition of multicultural education and what it means in various education systems is amplified "by the fact that multicultural education can also be known as "intercultural education," "multi-ethnic education," "multilingual education," "cross-cultural education," "immigrant education," "bilingual education," "community education" and "minority education."" Therefore, the confusion arising from scholars not being able to reach a consensus on the conceptualisation of multicultural education has led to Grant (2000, p. 65) describing the concept as "untidy and messy" similar to life "in a multicultural society."

Banks (2015) states that cultural diversity is fundamental to multicultural education. Therefore, multicultural education equips students from marginalised backgrounds with "the knowledge, attitudes, and skills needed to become effective citizens who promote social justice within their local communities, their nation-states and the global community" (Banks, 2015, p. 60). Multicultural education has significantly gained prominence within the US context as a response to the huge diversity present within the society due to immigration (Banks, 1993). The field of international research on multicultural education has underscored the imperative of attaining societal equity and addressing the persistent educational disparities faced by marginalised learners and communities, thus ensuring their access to equitable and quality education (Bennet, 2001; McGregor et al., 2015). Moreover, studies on multicultural education have aimed to mitigate prejudices and biases within teaching and learning environments, as teachers' belief systems exert a profound influence on their pedagogical practices, which subsequently impact learners' participation, access, and academic achievement (Martin, 2015, p. 39).

Nieto (2004) contends in her book on affirming diversity, the socio-political context of multicultural education that effective multicultural education must consider both the classroom and broader societal, economic, and political factors that impact student achievement. According to Nieto (2004, p. 346), critical multicultural education entails integrating multicultural perspectives into "the schools' curriculum and instructional strategies, as well as the interactions among teachers, students, and families, and the very way that schools conceptualise the nature of teaching and learning." This conceptualisation of multicultural education aligns with the principles of CRP, which aims to enhance teaching and learning for all students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds. Furthermore, critical multiculturalism entails that students' learning focuses on

knowledge, reflection, and praxis (action as the basis for social change) (Nieto, 2004). In essence, "critical multiculturalism seeks to" (Kavanagh, 2013, p. 9) foster critical consciousness among students, which is akin to the objectives of CRP (Gay, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c).

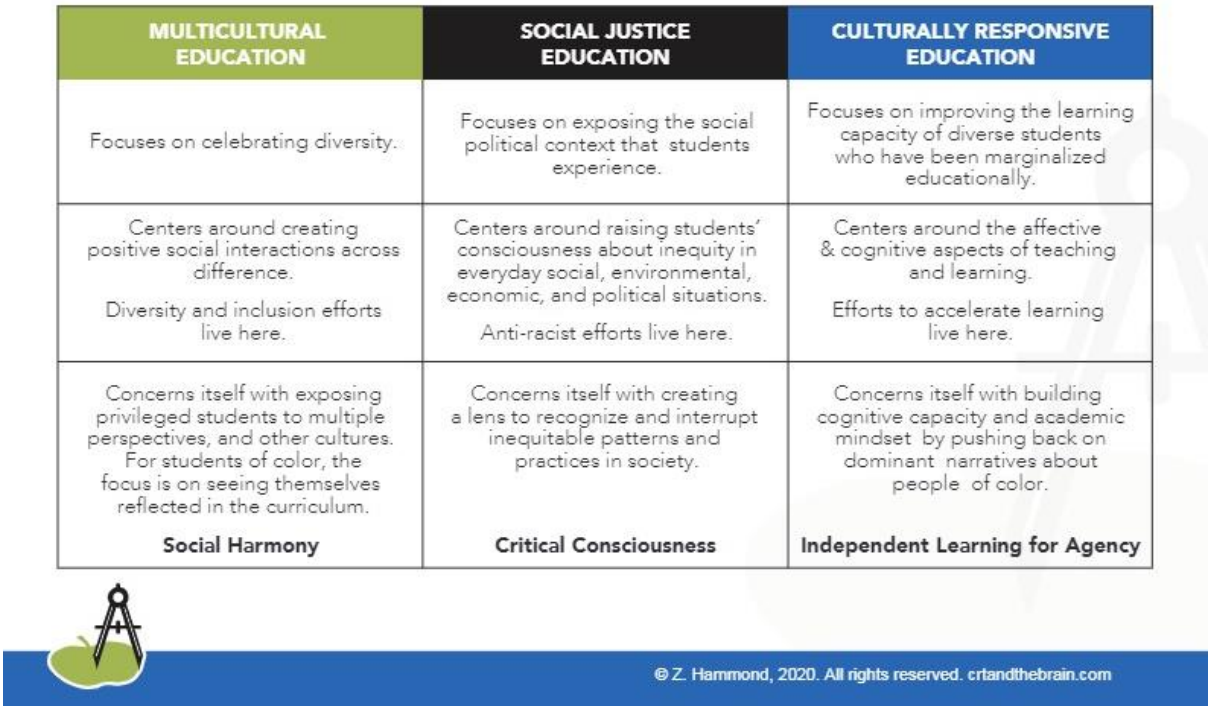
Critical perspectives on multicultural educational research have highlighted its narrow focus on the pedagogical choices of White teachers in culturally diverse classrooms, with limited exploration of gender, class, race, and sexuality in education (Cook, 2013; Montecino, 2004). To overcome this limitation, it is essential to develop cultural competencies for all teachers, including teachers of colour, and equip them with the pedagogical skills necessary to effectively teach in culturally diverse settings (Montecino, 2004). Cook (2013) further argues that African American teachers may also lack the essential pedagogical skills for culturally inclusive teaching and learning for all students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds. Therefore, it is imperative to avoid marginalising and under-preparing "African-American pre-service teachers" for culturally responsive teaching in multicultural education (Cook, 2013, p. 46).

Banks (2015), a prominent scholar of multiculturalism, acknowledged the above limitation of multicultural education by agreeing that multicultural education has not essentially led to the success of learners from minority ethnic backgrounds. Therefore, CRP is complementary to multicultural education as they both seek to equip teachers to effectively meet the needs of students in culturally diverse classrooms (Banks, 2015; Sleeter, 2013). In addition to developing students' critical consciousness for engaging issues of social justice, multicultural education must also commit to all learners' intellectual and academic development.

Rychly and Graves (2012) conducted a review of teacher characteristics for CRP and highlighted the importance of using culturally responsive teaching methods. They proposed methods to improve proficiency in two key areas: experienced classroom teachers and students in teacher training programmes. The study recommended mandatory study abroad and community-based experiences for students in teacher education to promote empathy and cultural understanding. Rychly and Graves (2012) stressed the need to differentiate multicultural education from CRP, as the former can be delivered to a classroom containing students from the same culture, while the latter is focused on reflecting the cultural attributes and values of students within the classroom. The distinction is crucial, as multicultural education may not fully address the needs of culturally diverse students, particularly in terms of their cognitive and academic development. Educators and researchers must avoid conflating multicultural education and culturally responsive teaching, as

the former cannot lead to the latter (Hammond, 2020). See Table 9 below, where Hammond (2020) distinguishes between multicultural education, social justice education and culturally responsive education.

Table 9: Differences between multicultural education, social justice education and culturally responsive education



MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION	SOCIAL JUSTICE EDUCATION	CULTURALLY RESPONSIVE EDUCATION
Focuses on celebrating diversity.	Focuses on exposing the social political context that students experience.	Focuses on improving the learning capacity of diverse students who have been marginalized educationally.
Centers around creating positive social interactions across difference. Diversity and inclusion efforts live here.	Centers around raising students' consciousness about inequity in everyday social, environmental, economic, and political situations. Anti-racist efforts live here.	Centers around the affective & cognitive aspects of teaching and learning. Efforts to accelerate learning live here.
Concerns itself with exposing privileged students to multiple perspectives, and other cultures. For students of color, the focus is on seeing themselves reflected in the curriculum. **Social Harmony**	Concerns itself with creating a lens to recognize and interrupt inequitable patterns and practices in society. **Critical Consciousness**	Concerns itself with building cognitive capacity and academic mindset by pushing back on dominant narratives about people of color. **Independent Learning for Agency**

Source: Hammond (2020)

3.2.4 Culturally inclusive teaching and learning environment

Article 24 of the United Nations Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (UNCRPD) establishes the right to inclusive education for all learners. While the initial emphasis at the global level on inclusive education has focused on providing mainstream education to all learners with disabilities (UNCRPD, 2016), the General Comment No. 4 in 2016, issued by the UNCRPD, emphasises that inclusive education should not be limited in scope but be expanded to cover the cultural needs of learners (UNESCO, 2020). In other words, inclusive education requires teachers to meet all students' learning needs and be willing to be culturally inclusive in their teaching approaches to ensure that no student is left behind academically. This broader scope of inclusive education is critical because Hayes, Turnbull and Moran (2018) in their work highlight that in countries across the world, teacher education programmes for inclusive education mainly focus on preparing teachers to teach students with special education needs and disabilities. Therefore,

Florian (2019) contends that within the context of teacher education, it is critical to adequately train teachers for inclusive teaching that includes students from diverse socio-cultural backgrounds. Findings from the Teaching and Learning International Survey show that teachers in many countries of the Global North reported receiving no training on teaching multicultural and culturally diverse students (Schleicher, 2019). Therefore, UNESCO (2016, p. 6) recommends that "preparing teachers for inclusion should not be treated as a specialised subject that focuses on teaching specific groups; rather, it should be mainstreamed."

Furthermore, it is also essential for school environments to be inclusive of different socio-cultural students' backgrounds (Riehl, 2009). An inclusive school environment "supports students from ethnically and culturally different backgrounds by acknowledging differences, reflecting ethnic and cultural difference in the school curriculum… that empower both students and their parents" (Faas, Smith, & Darmody, 2018a, p. 4).

The role of school leaders in contributing to the development of culturally inclusive teaching and learning cannot be overemphasised (Brown et al., 2019; Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012). Recent evidence from Austria, Ireland, Russia, and Spain highlights that achieving a culturally inclusive school environment begins with teachers and leadership education programmes that prepare school leaders to be culturally responsive in their approaches within culturally diverse schools (Brown et al., 2022). In their recent review, Brown et al. (2022) discuss the challenges and opportunities for culturally responsive leadership in schools across four European countries, Austria, Ireland, Russia and Spain. They suggest that culturally responsive school leaders can comprehend the perspectives of marginalised groups and employ strategies to mitigate the inequalities experienced by these students. Additionally, culturally responsive leaders demonstrate instructional and distributed leadership, actively engage all members of the school community, integrate the cultural norms and values of the diverse student population, and assist teachers in adapting their teaching practices to meet the needs of students from diverse backgrounds. However, Brown et al. (2022) find that the lack of diversity among school leaders in these four countries hinders the development of culturally responsive leadership in schools. They note that "in each of these countries, despite their everchanging demographics, teaching, and by association, the school leaders' workforce has remained relatively homogeneous because school leaders are usually former teachers who are selected to be school leaders" (Brown et al., 2022, p. 601).

Faas, Smith, and Darmody (2018a) conducted mixed-method research on the role of principals in promoting inclusive school environments in 11 CNS in Ireland. The study revealed that the extent of culturally responsive leadership among principals varied across schools, but an ethos of equality and inclusivity was evident. They also identified challenges and opportunities for the CNS model, including the obligation to provide sacramental preparation, which conflicts with the ethos of inclusivity by favouring Catholic children. The study underscores the importance of school leadership, including principals, teachers, and school boards, in establishing culturally inclusive environments (Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018a). Their findings on culturally responsive school leadership in Irish primary schools indicate that a significant challenge in developing a culturally inclusive learning environment is the external relationship between school leaders and parishes, as well as the "traditional expectation in Ireland for primary schools to provide for sacramental preparation" (Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018a, p. 2). The strong religious influence in the Irish education system limits school leaders' capacity to promote culturally responsive practices and intercultural education (Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018a, 2018b).

It is imperative to note that the effectiveness of promoting culturally inclusive teaching and learning in schools is contingent upon its implementation as a comprehensive whole-school approach (Brown et al., 2019; Faas, Smith & Darmody, 2018a). Moreover, successful culturally responsive practices in schools require not just the commitment of school leadership but better parental engagement, an inclusive learning environment and the continuous professional development of teachers in CRP (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015). Mayfield and Garrison-Wade's (2015) case study on culturally responsive practices as whole school reform demonstrates the convincing benefits of culturally responsive practices for all learners. Their study emphasises the vital role of leadership in implementing culturally responsive practices and providing opportunities for students of colour. Teachers are held accountable for incorporating culturally relevant content in their instruction and continuing to learn about cultural competency.

Additionally, parents are empowered as leaders and actively involved in decision-making processes traditionally reserved for school administrators (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015). They assert that implementing culturally responsive practices school-wide "can mitigate historically derived socioeconomic and educational disparities by empowering, rather than repressing the voices of all stakeholders" (Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015, p. 15). Specifically, culturally responsive practices in schools potentially empower all educational stakeholders, particularly parents of migrant or minority ethnic backgrounds, in education decision-making processes.

3.3 Becoming a culturally responsive teacher: Challenges, beliefs, attitudes, and expectations

3.3.1 Challenges of student and beginning teachers going into diverse schools

The implementation of CRP by student and beginning teachers has continued to be challenging across various contexts globally (Brown, 2007; Brown et al., 2019; Brown et al., 2022; Chou, Su & Wang, 2018; Daniel, 2016; Ellerbrock et al., 2016; Hramiak, 2015; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015; Morrison, Thompson, & Glazier, 2022; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Olson & Rao 2016; Siwatu et al., 2016; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021; Vass, 2017; Yuan, 2019). Further, teaching practice has been identified as crucial for student-teachers' professional development (Foncha, Abongdia & Adu, 2015); "the crux of their preparation for the teaching profession" (Menter, 1989, p. 461). However, studies have shown that student-teachers are confronted with multiple challenges during their teaching practice or school placement (Foncha, Abongdia & Adu, 2015; Pomerantz & Pierce, 2004; Thomas, 2006). These challenges include very demanding workloads, challenges associated with the complex task of teaching including classroom management, planning and implementing of impactful lessons, growing learner diversity, including cultural diversity in schools, differences between their teacher training realities and the 'real world' of classrooms, pressure to 'fit into' professional and institutional cultures, financial pressures and lack of quality mentorship and feedback from supervisors or teacher educators (Hanly & Heinz, 2022; Heinz & Fleming, 2019; Foncha, Abongdia & Adu, 2015; Pomerantz & Pierce, 2004; Thomas, 2006).

Subasi Singh and Akar (2021) undertook a qualitative investigation to explore the beliefs of 453 pre-service teachers in Vienna regarding culturally responsive teaching. Their findings indicate that teacher education programmes in Vienna may not adequately prepare pre-service teachers to teach in a multicultural society. While pre-service teachers exhibit confidence in their teaching abilities, they lack a critical understanding of social justice issues and express apprehension towards navigating diverse languages and cultural conflicts in schools. The researchers argue that the failure of teacher education programmes to adequately equip pre-service teachers with CRP has resulted in their anxieties and fears about teaching in culturally diverse schools (Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021). The study also highlights the limited emphasis placed on culturally inclusive teaching in the teacher education curriculum of Viennese teacher education institutions (Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021, p. 56).

In his study, Vass (2017) examined the challenges faced by pre-service teachers in implementing culturally responsive teaching methods in their classrooms in Australia. The study involved three pre-service teachers and utilised a small-scale research approach. Vass (2017) identified that the obstacles in implementing culturally responsive teaching methods arise from a socialisation process that encourages conformity to dominant, White-centric practices. However, pre-service teachers were motivated by shared experiences and an understanding that meaningful connections with culture in education can have positive and protective impacts. Vass (2017) emphasised the importance of teacher mindset, the involvement of supervising teachers and mentoring for pre-service teachers, and the wider educational context in fostering culturally responsive environments.

Furthermore, Vass (2017) argues that mentors (teacher educators) contribute to student-teachers' challenges in becoming culturally responsive teachers. The study found that "mentors encouraging limited and limiting curricula, pedagogic and assessment practices; mentors communicating resistance to doing things differently […]; and a fearful awareness of being evaluated by their mentors" were three barriers that impacted student-teachers culturally responsive efforts (Vass, 2017, p. 451). Additionally, it is essential to involve all stakeholders, such as teacher educators, school leaders, teachers, parents, and students, in building a culturally inclusive teaching and learning practice (Faas, Smith, & Darmody, 2018b; Adebayo & Heinz, 2023a; Brown et al., 2019; Brown et al., 2022).

3.3.2 Beliefs, attitudes and expectations: Experiences of student and beginning teachers in culturally diverse settings

Numerous studies conducted in various international contexts (Civitillo et al., 2019; Gay, 2010; Henkin & Steinmetz, 2008; Seeberg & Minick, 2012; Siwatu, 2007; Peček, Macura-Milovanović, & Vujisić-Živković, 2014; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021; Siwatu et al., 2016; Yuan, 2019) emphasise the importance of student-teachers' and teachers' beliefs towards cultural diversity in relation to the learning of culturally diverse students. These studies reveal the impact that biases can have on student-teachers' perceptions of culturally diverse students and advocate for the development of cultural knowledge and awareness in teacher education programmes to foster culturally inclusive teaching and learning.

In the case of some student-teachers in Serbia and Slovenia, their perceptions of students from Roma backgrounds were filled with biases (Peček, Macura-Milovanović, & Vujisić-Živković, 2014). These biases include some student-teachers not wanting Roma students in their classrooms and "not ready to engage in collaborations with Roma families" (Peček, Macura-Milovanović, & Vujisić-Živković, 2014, p. 359). Similarly, Minami and Ovando (2004, p. 574) posit that student-teachers are prone to view students from culturally diverse backgrounds from a deficit point of view and "either implicitly or explicitly blame the children's environmental, socio-cultural, or linguistic background for their failure in the classroom." According to Yuan (2019), in China, student-teachers attitude towards multiculturalism hinders their inclination towards adopting culturally inclusive pedagogical approaches in their classrooms. The qualitative research conducted in China with five teacher candidates suggests that even though student-teachers demonstrated "acceptance of the existence of various cultural heritages and ethnic diversities" this "was not transformed into [culturally inclusive] teaching strategies before and after entering teacher education programmes" (Yuan, 2019, p. 18). Rodríguez-Izquierdo and Darmody (2019, p. 2), based on their research conducted in Spain and Ireland, advise that "teachers need to be trained not to perceive migrant children only as children 'who lack a language' (deficit perspective) but see them as 'plurilingual students' or 'new speakers' who ought to be the model of reference for all students in the twenty-first century."

According to Subasi Singh and Akar's (2021, p. 46) study, pre-service teachers face two significant challenges, firstly, "anxiety about their own poor cross-cultural knowledge" and, secondly, "their prospective students' poor language skills." However, their study also suggests that positive attitudes towards cultural diversity can support pre-service teachers in developing culturally responsive teaching approaches. Moreover, developing pre-service teachers' critical cultural consciousness during their teacher education can contribute to their improved outlook towards cultural diversity and cultural awareness, as noted by Henkin and Steinmetz (2008) and Seeberg and Minick (2012). However, research conducted in Austria, demonstrated that some student-teachers hold a deficit view towards culturally inclusive teaching and learning, as they perceive cultural diversity as "a source of conflict that needed to be managed" (Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021, p. 57). Additionally, the study found that some student-teachers in Austria express apprehension in effectively handling diverse languages and cultural conflicts (Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021). These findings highlight the importance of addressing the underlying biases and fears among student-teachers to foster a more inclusive and culturally responsive educational environment.

Siwatu et al. (2016, p. 277) in their study present that pre-service teachers in the US going into culturally diverse classrooms shared "self-efficacy doubts" due to insufficient knowledge and awareness of the cultural backgrounds of their students, limited expertise in CRP and lack of experience working in culturally diverse educational institutions. According to Bandura (1997, p. 3), self-efficacy is "beliefs in one's capabilities to organise and execute the courses of action required to produce given attempts." Within the context of culturally inclusive teaching and learning, studies have clearly shown that student-teachers' doubts and beliefs in their ability to implement CRP in the classrooms are determined by the level of their cultural knowledge base and the cultural awareness of students (Civitillo et al., 2019; Gay, 2002a, 2010; Siwatu, 2007; Siwatu et al., 2016).

According to Gay (2002b, p. 613), the extent to which teachers possess knowledge and exhibit attitudes that are supportive of cultural diversity constitutes a significant influence on the "learning opportunities and outcomes for ethnically different students." She asserts that addressing pre-existing assumptions and negative attitudes held by teachers towards these students is a critical prerequisite for successfully implementing CRP within classroom settings (Gay, 2002b). Since teachers are part of society, Gay (2002b) argues that prevailing societal beliefs, particularly against migrant or minority communities, are brought into classrooms by teachers, limiting the development of culturally inclusive teaching in schools. For instance, in the US, Gay (2002b, p. 614) highlights that "children of colour and disability […] are subjected to greater unfair teacher attitudes, expectations and actions." Gay (2002b, p. 616) went further, arguing that teachers' lack of cultural knowledge base of the students in their classrooms has led to students' "cultural variances in behavioural styles" being misinterpreted as "learning disabilities" by the teachers. She gave the example of how African American students' vibrant and emotional communication patterns "may be misdiagnosed as hyperactivity, attention deficit, irritability, attention seeking, disruption and being quarrelsome" (Gay, 2002b, p. 616). Also, some Latino students unwilling to work independently or compete as individuals in-class activities may be misjudged by teachers as lacking motivation. However, this behavioural projection by the Latino students reflects their communal cultural values of working together in groups (Gay, 2002b). In Austria, similar research findings have indicated that certain student-teachers hold the perception that multilingual students' learning abilities are constrained by their perceived insufficient proficiency in the language of instruction within the school context. This belief suggests a potential limitation placed on the educational prospects of multilingual students by some student-teachers in Austria (Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021). Gay (2002b, p. 617) also finds that "speakers of what mainstream U.S. society

perceives as low social status dialects (such as African-American English or Ebonics and Appalachian) and accents (Spanish, Vietnamese, Cambodian, and Hmong) are sometimes perceived to have linguistic deficits in phonology, syntax, morphology, and semantics as opposed to different, rule-regulated cultural communication systems." In other words, students' accents and ability to speak the expected language and dialect of instruction may be used by teachers as a measure of students' intelligence.

In her work, Brown (2007) underscores the crucial role played by student-teachers' attitudes towards culturally responsive teaching. To adequately prepare prospective teachers for the challenges of instructing linguistically and culturally diverse students, Brown argues that teacher education programmes must prioritise the provision of a comprehensive understanding of the unique needs and perspectives of such students (Brown, 2007). This entails going beyond surface-level awareness of diversity and embracing a deeper understanding of the multifaceted factors that influence the learning experiences and outcomes of linguistically and culturally diverse students. By integrating such comprehensive understanding into teacher education curricula, prospective teachers can develop the necessary skills, pedagogical strategies, and cultural competence to effectively support and facilitate the academic success of diverse learners in inclusive classroom environments. Moreover, Brown notes that placing an unyielding teacher in a classroom that lacks the flexibility necessary to "facilitate students' mastery of the curriculum" can be detrimental to the learning outcomes of these students (Brown, 2007, p. 61).

Studies by Howe and Lisi (2013) and Siwatu (2007) have identified a connection between positive student-teacher relationships and improved attitudes towards culturally responsive teaching among student-teachers. Siwatu (2007, p. 1086) notes that pre-service teachers' expectations of achieving "culturally responsive teaching outcomes" were primarily influenced by the potential to establish a positive teacher-student relationship based on trust. In culturally diverse settings, trust is crucial in enabling student-teachers to foster positive relationships with their students. Without a trusting relationship, students from diverse cultural backgrounds may struggle to access a safe learning environment conducive to academic success (Howe & Lisi, 2013; Siwatu, 2007). For Rychly and Graves (2012), culturally responsive teachers must possess features such as being caring and empathetic, reflecting on their attitudes, beliefs and perception towards other cultures and having an adequate knowledge base of the cultures of students present in their classrooms.

3.4 The case for teacher education for culturally inclusive teaching and learning

This section explores the significance of culturally inclusive teaching and learning in teacher education, addressing the increasing diversity within classrooms and the need for teachers to possess the requisite knowledge, skills, and attitudes to create equitable and inclusive learning environments.

According to Furman (2008) and Villegas and Lucas (2002), the effective development of teachers for culturally inclusive teaching and learning begins with teacher education. In other words, "teacher education itself must be culturally responsive" to produce culturally competent teachers in teaching culturally diverse students (Furman, 2008, p. 69). Failure to provide adequate training in cultural diversity can result in what Bigler (2002) terms 'colour blindness,' wherein teachers from majority backgrounds possess limited understanding of diverse cultures. Consequently, these teachers may exhibit limited competencies that, when "translated into classroom practices," can inadvertently "disempower and marginalise large numbers of learners" (Martin, 2015, p. 40).

Mensah (2011, p. 246) emphasises that "teacher education is one context to promote culturally relevant teaching practices with the hope that these kinds of practices will be implemented in the classrooms." As such, Mensah (2011, p. 506) recommends that teacher education programmes adopt practices such as "collaboration and support, personal empowerment to teach, and personal relevance of the subject" to better prepare "teachers for diverse classrooms."

Hramiak's (2015) qualitative study applied the framework for culturally responsive teaching to investigate the adaptations made by twelve beginning teachers enrolled in the UK Teach First programme, to meet the needs of their pupils. The study suggests that teachers' cultural sensitivity evolves and improves with experience and skill development in culturally responsive practices. The findings have significant implications for teacher education programmes, including professional learning programmes, and highlight the importance of incorporating multiculturalism into teacher training programmes. The study's results indicate that beginning teachers who choose "to teach in low-income, ethnically diverse schools... continually adapted teaching in order to better suit the need of their pupils" (Hramiak, 2015, p. 12). Therefore, Hramiak (2015) concludes that the intentional preparation of teachers for culturally diverse schools can lead to improved learning outcomes for all students in culturally diverse classrooms.

Olson and Rao (2016) undertook a mixed-method study to explore the impact of clinical experiences in urban schools on teacher candidates' ability to become culturally responsive teachers. The study involved 80 teacher candidates enrolled in a US college of education. Olson and Rao (2016, p. 133) found that teacher candidates' ability to connect with "students' cultures and communities, the school/classroom context, and university-school partnerships and alignment" played a critical role in their preparation for culturally inclusive teaching and learning. The study also revealed that urban teachers were more likely to adopt culturally responsive approaches and to address the gap between a culturally diverse student population and a homogenous teaching profession. Additionally, Olson and Rao (2016) reported that their research uncovered a phenomenon known as 'praxis shock,' where teacher candidates experienced a significant contrast between their expectations of classroom realities and the actualities of their teacher training. Specifically, teacher candidates in the study were surprised by the cultural heterogeneity of their students in contrast to the cultural homogeneity of their fellow student-teachers.

Whitaker and Valtierra (2018) conducted a mixed-method study aimed at investigating the effectiveness of teacher education in enhancing student-teachers' beliefs and practices concerning culturally responsive teaching. Their research presented a teacher preparation programme designed to equip teachers with the necessary skills to work with diverse student populations. The programme consisted of academic courses, reflective opportunities, and student teaching experiences, emphasising reflective learning to enable teacher candidates to assess their readiness to teach diverse students and comprehend the context-dependent nature of the teaching role. Based on an 'expectancy-value model of motivation,' Whitaker and Valtierra (2018) implemented a teacher education programme that included reflective activities and summer teaching opportunities for student-teachers to teach diverse students in both traditional and non-traditional settings. The results indicated that these experiences enhanced both "affective and cognitive motivational factors," leading to positive changes in pre-service teachers' perceived ability and desire to teach diverse learners (Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018, p. 174). They suggest that teacher education programmes should incorporate multicultural/intercultural education throughout the curriculum instead of limiting it to "a single diversity course" to effectively prepare teachers for culturally inclusive teaching and learning (Whitaker & Valtierra, 2018, p. 180).

Daniel's (2016) case study examined the learning experiences of 16 elementary-level teacher candidates as they grappled with implementing CRP during their practicum and in their diversity coursework. Daniel (2016, p. 592) argues that "the knowledge, skills and dispositions teacher candidates need to educate culturally, and linguistically diverse students should not simply be

relegated to the margins of teacher education or compartmentalised into one or two courses." Specifically, teacher candidates should be taught to apply CRP "across all coursework and field-based practicum experiences" (Daniel, 2016, p. 592). The study found that teacher candidates had knowledge of issues related to instruction and learning opportunities for culturally and linguistically diverse students but struggled to implement CRP in practical settings. To address this, teacher educators should encourage teacher candidates to share examples of their observations regarding culturally responsive pedagogy-related topics in their practical experiences. They should also urge teacher candidates to pay attention to school-wide and classroom practices that align or deviate from CRP (Daniel, 2016). Teacher educators should respond and participate in discussions to help teacher candidates integrate and reconcile the values they observe and hear. In doing so, teacher educators can assist teacher candidates in applying theoretical concepts in practical ways, leading to more effective, culturally responsive teaching practices (Daniel, 2016).

Samuels, Samuels, and Cook (2017, p. 57-58) provide recommendations for teacher education programmes to prepare student-teachers, specifically those from majority backgrounds, for culturally inclusive teaching and learning. These recommendations include:

- Design an instructional assignment that requires students to research individually various fundamental terms associated with culturally relevant pedagogy and social justice.
- Discuss the implications of becoming an ally for their own students by providing opportunities for individual scenarios to be pondered.
- Facilitate an assignment that requires students to explore intensely their own beliefs, which often involve social and psychological influences, so they can think deeply about their own positioning in the world.

In Western contexts, extensive research has been conducted on the development of culturally responsive teachers. However, there are also some studies on this topic in Asia, specifically in Taiwan, Hong Kong, China, and Vietnam. These studies have also emphasised the critical importance of providing training and support to new teachers who will be teaching in culturally diverse classrooms, in order to ensure that students from different ethnic backgrounds have access to equitable and quality education (Bhowmik, Kennedy, & Hue, 2017; Chou, Su, & Wang, 2018; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Yuan, 2019).

Nguyen and Huynh's (2021) qualitative study on teacher agency in culturally responsive teaching and learning for ethnic minority students in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, reveals that teachers are being trained to teach in a manner that only recognises the presence of students from the majority groups, even though student populations are culturally diverse. Moreover, they observed

that many Vietnamese teachers lack the necessary skills to deliver culturally responsive teaching in schools with ethnically diverse students, owing to the failure of teacher education programmes to adequately train student-teachers for culturally diverse settings (Nguyen & Huynh, 2021). The study recommends the integration of culturally responsive teaching into the policies and practices of teacher education in Vietnam, with a particular focus on pre-service teachers and in-service teachers working in areas with significant ethnic minority populations (Nguyen & Huynh, 2021).

Morrison, Thompson, and Glazier (2021) posit that the growing cultural diversity in classrooms has made it imperative for educational researchers to delve into CRP to aid teachers in effectively teaching in such contexts. They assert that cultural diversity presents both opportunities and challenges, as students' cultural background affects their learning experiences, perspectives, and attitudes towards schooling. Therefore, there is a pressing need for teacher educators to equip pre-service teachers with the necessary attitude, skills, and knowledge to meet the needs of culturally diverse learners.

To achieve this, Morrison, Thompson, and Glazier (2021) emphasise the need for more rigorous research that addresses the complexities and nuances of culturally diverse classrooms. They assert that such research must incorporate multiple perspectives, including those of students, families, communities, and teachers, to gain a holistic understanding of the socio-cultural contexts in which learning occurs. Moreover, they assert that such research should examine the intersectionality of various cultural identities, such as race, ethnicity, gender, language, and socio-economic status, as these factors impact students' learning experiences and outcomes. By thoroughly examining these dimensions, researchers can uncover valuable insights into how cultural diversity intersects with other aspects of students' identities, thereby informing the development of effective strategies and interventions to promote inclusive and equitable education.

3.4.1 Teacher education for culturally responsive teachers in Ireland and Europe

In recent years, the advancement of teacher education programmes in Europe and Ireland has witnessed the implementation of various initiatives, including the DICE project in Ireland, MIDE in Cyprus, Tandem project in Spain, and Nightingale in Switzerland. These programmes aim to equip student-teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively teach in culturally diverse schools across Europe (Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022; PPMI, 2017). Like research in other contexts internationally (see Daniel, 2016), in Europe, diversity-related course content tends to relate to diversity in general combining various diversity dimensions and cultural diversity and,

in particular, CRP, receives only peripheral attention (Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022). These teacher education programmes have insufficiently prepared Irish teachers going into culturally diverse schools (Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022; Shevlin et al., 2009; Smyth et al., 2009).

Hannigan, Faas, and Darmody (2022) conducted a case study on the state of ethno-cultural diversity in ITE courses in Ireland. Their findings reveal that higher education institutions in Ireland have implemented ITE programmes aimed at equipping pre-service teachers to effectively engage with multicultural classrooms. However, it is noted that these programmes often lack sufficient emphasis on cultural diversity, potentially resulting in a lack of preparedness among pre-service teachers when faced with the challenges of teaching in culturally diverse classrooms. To address this issue, they recommend standardising guidelines and expanding the coverage of cultural diversity in teacher education programmes to ensure that pre-service teachers acquire the "necessary skills and knowledge" to teach students from diverse backgrounds with confidence and competence (Hannigan, Faas, & Darmody, 2022, p. 13).

In a recent study conducted by Herzog-Punzenberger (2022), utilising a document analysis approach to examine teacher education programmes for student-teachers in secondary schools in Austria, it was revealed that despite ongoing reforms, the training provided to teachers is inadequate in equipping them to effectively address the needs of socio-culturally diverse learners. Herzog-Punzenberger (2022) findings reveal that "the reform of initial teacher education in Austria critically failed to initiate a new orientation for teaching with a sound theoretical basis geared towards equity and practical applications in the highly diverse classrooms of Austrian schools" (Herzog-Punzenberger, 2022, p. 12). Similarly, in another study on how teacher education systems are responding to cultural diversity in Austria and Ireland, Herzog-Punzenberger et al. (2022) posit that while ITE programmes have undergone reforms in recent years in both countries, particularly for secondary education, vital migration-related diversities, i.e., multilingualism and multiculturality are not sufficiently included in the teacher education curricula. In other words, "the teacher education curricula in both countries appear to reflect migration-related diversity in a marginal way and are certainly far off sequentially building up knowledge and competences of productively responding to the challenges of culturally diverse classrooms" (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022, p. 13). In light of this, teacher education reforms aimed at promoting culturally inclusive teaching must take into account policies that prioritise issues of migration, diversity, and social justice as "crucial elements for the success of such reforms to benefit the most vulnerable children," particularly those from minority ethnic, refugee, and migrant backgrounds (Herzog-Punzenberger, 2022, p. 12).

From their findings, Herzog-Punzenberger et al. (2022) contend that developing cultural competencies and awareness for effective teaching in culturally diverse classrooms should be a priority for student-teachers and teacher educators. Additionally, they recommend that teacher education programmes must have "one compulsory core module that covers both the theoretical and practical aspects of multicultural teaching and learning in a multilingual environment to ensure that every student-teacher receives the full knowledge and understanding of the skills needed" for teaching in culturally and linguistically diverse settings (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022, p. 14).

3.4.2 Critical reflection as a means of preparing teachers for culturally inclusive teaching and learning

In the context of teacher education, engaging in critical reflection exercises enables both pre-service and in-service teachers to meaningfully explore their teaching experiences and pedagogies, thereby deepening their understanding and likely enhancing their teaching practices which, in turn, benefits all students (Acquah & Commins, 2015; East, 2014). Despite the potential benefits of critical reflection for developing cultural awareness in student-teachers, research in this area remains limited (Acquah & Commins, 2015; East, 2014).

Furthermore, critical reflection as part of teacher education has been argued to help develop cultural awareness among student-teachers and provide new culturally responsive teachers (Acquah & Commins, 2015; Durden & Truscott, 2013). It is essential that teacher education for culturally responsive teaching and learning situates critical reflection for student-teachers "within the moral, political, and ethical contexts of teaching [and] issues pertaining to equity, access, and social justice" (Howard, 2010, p. 197). For example, in his study, Howard (2010) examined the impact of a critical reflexivity exercise on student-teachers' ability to develop culturally relevant pedagogical practices. The exercise involved student-teachers responding to thought-provoking questions such as "Who am I? What do I believe? Does who I am and what I believe have ramifications for the students I teach?" (Howard, 2010, p. 199). Through this exercise, student-teachers engaged in a process of self-reflection, aiming to increase their cultural awareness, and understanding. The findings of the study revealed that after participating in the critical reflexivity exercise, student-teachers were able to "construct pedagogical practices in ways that are culturally relevant, racially affirming, and socially meaningful for their students" (Howard, 2010, p. 197).

Acquah and Commins (2015) conducted a mixed-method study on the role of critical reflection in promoting awareness of cultural diversity among 45 pre-service teachers in Finland. The researchers argue that critical reflection is essential in promoting pre-service teachers' awareness of cultural diversity, as it prompts them "to examine both the social functions of education and the way their own practices reproduce existing patterns of educational inequalities" (Acquah & Commins, 2015, p. 791). Doing so allows pre-service teachers to make intentional pedagogical choices that provide equitable and quality education for all learners. Furthermore, the study suggests that pre-service teachers can benefit from critically reflecting on cultural, privilege, and equity issues. This can help them confront their biases and beliefs about diverse student groups. As a result, the study recommends incorporating critical reflection into multicultural coursework for pre-service teachers. This would provide opportunities for pre-service teachers to reflect critically on their beliefs and practices, leading to greater awareness of cultural diversity and more effective teaching practices (Acquah & Commins, 2015).

Similarly, Yost, Sentner, and Forlenza-Bailey, (2000, p. 41) postulate that "a reflective/analytical teacher is one who makes teaching decisions on the basis of a conscious awareness and careful consideration of the assumptions on which the decisions are based, and the technical, educational, and ethical consequences of those decisions." Therefore, it can be argued that critical reflection contributes to teachers' professional development, particularly in developing their competencies for culturally inclusive teaching and learning. Another benefit of critical reflection for student-teachers and teachers is that it allows them to challenge their beliefs and assumptions that may influence their teaching attitude towards some students, especially those from ethnic minority backgrounds (Acquah & Commins, 2015; Howard, 2010).

Civitillo et al. (2019) undertook a multiple case study in Germany to investigate the interplay between culturally responsive teaching, cultural diversity beliefs, and self-reflection. The study revealed that teachers' beliefs about cultural diversity and their inclination to engage in self-reflection regarding their teaching practices influence their likelihood of being culturally responsive. Civitillo et al. (2019) found a positive relationship between teachers' beliefs about cultural diversity, their self-reflection, and their practice of culturally responsive teaching.

Durden and Truscott (2013) conducted a study in the US that revealed similar findings regarding the relationship between critical reflexivity and the development of culturally relevant teachers. Pre-service teachers participating in the study were enrolled in four distinct courses: literacy, assessment, classroom management, and social studies. As part of their training, these students

were assigned field experiences in urban schools that encompassed culturally and linguistically diverse classrooms. The assignments within these courses were specifically designed to facilitate the application of theoretical knowledge acquired in the classroom to real-world teaching scenarios. This integration aimed to establish connections between the learning that took place on campus and the practical actions executed by the pre-service teachers in the classrooms, all under the guidance and supervision of a university supervisor and a mentor teacher present within the school setting. Additionally, the pre-service teachers were required to take a cultural diversity course that explored the importance of context (social, cultural, and historical) in creating culturally relevant environments for diverse students (Durden & Truscott, 2013).

The study by Durden and Truscott (2013) highlighted that engaging in critical reflection resulted in improved cultural awareness among the participants. However, despite this increased awareness, the student-teachers faced challenges in implementing CRP in the classrooms. Based on their findings, Durden and Truscott (2013, p. 80) recommended that "teacher education programmes have a responsibility to ensure that pre-service teachers are equipped with the experiences they need to develop as the culturally relevant teachers who provide affirming and equitable classroom experiences for all students."

3.4.3 Studying abroad programme for preparing teachers for culturally inclusive teaching and learning

As classrooms become more diverse, it is essential for teachers to possess the knowledge, skills, and dispositions necessary to effectively engage and support students from various cultural backgrounds. One approach to enhancing teachers' cultural competence is through studying abroad programmes, which provide valuable opportunities for prospective educators to immerse themselves in different cultural contexts, gain first-hand experiences, and develop a deeper understanding of the complexities of teaching in diverse settings (Marx & Moss, 2011; Santoro, 2014).

According to Marx and Moss's (2011) research, a 15-week study abroad programme in London for teacher education had a positive impact on the development of intercultural competency and cultural awareness among student-teachers. The programme provided opportunities for intercultural experiences that facilitated critical reflection, thereby enhancing the participants' ability to become culturally responsive teachers. Marx and Moss (2011, p. 45) also suggest that

"teacher education study abroad programmes can be powerful vehicles in teacher educators' efforts to prepare pre-service teachers for work with culturally diverse students."

In line with the earlier findings, Santoro's (2014) study of 14 Australian pre-service teachers highlights the positive impact of international teaching trips on student-teachers' attitudes toward cultural diversity and their motivation to implement culturally inclusive teaching practices. Specifically, the study focused on a group of pre-service teachers who participated in learning and teaching activities in India. During their participation in the international study programme, the pre-service teachers experienced a level of independence as they undertook daily journeys from their lodging in a central Indian village to various educational institutions. These included an orphanage school and a special needs school, where the pre-service teachers actively engaged in teaching "English to primary school children" (Santoro, 2014, P. 432). While the students were under the supervision and guidance of the teaching staff at these schools, they were afforded a degree of autonomy in their teaching responsibilities. Furthermore, the pre-service teachers had the opportunity to enhance their cultural understanding by visiting tourist sites during weekends (Santoro, 2014).

However, Santoro (2014) cautions that teacher education programmes need to exercise caution and sensitivity when facilitating international trips to developing countries. Such trips must be designed to help student-teachers develop cultural awareness and acquire a knowledge base that can be effectively applied in culturally diverse classrooms. If not carefully facilitated, such trips could lead to the development of "post-colonial and neo-colonial racist attitudes, rather than facilitate the development of culturally aware and responsive practitioners" (Santoro, 2014, p. 442).

3.4.4 Supporting minority student-teachers and diversifying the teaching profession for culturally inclusive teaching and learning

In the context of the teaching profession in Ireland and other contexts, it is important to acknowledge the prevailing homogeneity that exists within the profession, characterized by a lack of diversity among teachers (Arshad, 2023; Heinz, Keane, & Davison, 2017). Research has highlighted the significance of diversifying the teaching workforce, presenting compelling arguments that underscore the benefits of having teachers from diverse backgrounds (Carter Andrews et al., 2019; Condon, 2017; Keane, Heinz, & McDaid, 2023b). These arguments emphasise the connection between teachers from diverse backgrounds and the promotion of

inclusive and culturally responsive approaches in education (Arshad, 2023; Condon, 2017; Goodwin & Keane, 2023; Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023a).

A study on the experiences of 24 student-teachers from BME backgrounds in the UK reveals that BME student-teachers experience "social isolation, stereotypical attitudes amongst Whites and instances of overt racism, particularly in school placements" (Wilkins & Lall, 2011, p. 365). Furthermore, BME student-teachers in the above study perceived being marginalised professionally, "where their contribution is solely defined by their ethnicity" (Wilkins & Lall, 2011, p. 365). The implications of Wilkins and Lall's (2011) findings for ITE include providing a support network for BME student-teachers and ensuring that all student-teachers, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds, have a good understanding of cultural diversity during their teacher training. Ultimately, this will help student-teachers from majority groups become more culturally aware and serve as a peer support network for other student-teachers from minority backgrounds (Wilkins & Lall, 2011).

A recent study conducted in Ireland explored the experiences of student-teachers from lower socio-economic backgrounds and their potential to inspire academic success among students from similar backgrounds (Keane, Heinz & Lynch, 2020). Findings from the study by Keane, Heinz, and Lynch (2020) suggest that sharing their own 'classed self' allowed student-teachers to inspire their students to strive for academic success. The student-teachers in the study also expressed their aspiration to become "a particular type of teacher one who was approachable, caring and actually supportive of the success of all their pupils" (Keane, Heinz & Lynch, 2020, p. 5). The study conducted by Keane, Heinz, and Lynch (2020) aligns with the argument that a diverse teaching population is needed to support the success of all learners. Students' aspirations for academic excellence are significantly influenced by their ability to identify with their cultural identity reflected in the teaching profession (Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023a). In this regard, students are more likely to achieve academic success when they can relate to their teachers and perceive them as supportive and empathetic towards their cultural backgrounds (Keane, Heinz & Lynch, 2020; Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023b).

There is a need to support the entry of student-teachers from minority backgrounds into teaching to develop culturally inclusive teaching and learning (Keane, Heinz & Lynch, 2020; Wilkins & Lall, 2011). The benefits of having a good representation of teachers from minority backgrounds within the teaching profession are multifaceted. Firstly, it leads to improved "engagement and achievement of students with similar 'characteristics.'" Secondly, "minority ethnic teachers can

use their greater insight into their cultural experiences and knowledges as a foundation for their teaching." Thirdly, "minority ethnic teachers can serve as role models for minority ethnic students." Lastly, minority ethnic teachers "are more likely than majority-group teachers to confront racism-related issues in teaching" (Keane, Heinz & Lynch, 2020, pp. 283-286). Keane, Heinz, and Lynch's (2020) study provides empirical evidence of the potential of student-teachers from diverse backgrounds to act as role models and inspire academic success among students from similar backgrounds. The findings of the study stress the importance of promoting diversity within the teaching profession to support the success of all learners.

Extensive research has shed light on the importance of not placing unrealistic expectations on minority teachers to address racism and discrimination within school environments. Such expectations can place undue pressure on these teachers, who may already feel marginalised and unsupported in homogenous teaching communities (Keane, Heinz, & Lynch, 2020; Pizarro & Kohli, 2020). It is essential to acknowledge that addressing systemic issues of racism and discrimination within school environments requires collective efforts from all teachers and staff, rather than placing the burden solely on minority teachers (Pizarro & Kohli, 2020; Wilkins & Lall, 2011). Hence, creating inclusive and supportive environments where all teachers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and skills to address issues of diversity, equity, and inclusion is crucial to promoting academic success and well-being for all learners (Keane, Heinz, & Lynch, 2020; Pizarro & Kohli, 2020; Wilkins & Lall, 2011).

In their new book on diversifying the teaching profession in several contexts including Ireland, Finland, Scotland and Portugal, Keane, Heinz, and McDaid (2023a) debate that while the representation of teachers from minority groups or backgrounds within the teaching profession matters, "teacher diversity work must simultaneously encompass system transformation to achieve a diverse, equitable and inclusive teaching profession" (Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023a, p. 3). Their rationale for the importance of representation builds on the work of Childs et al. (2011) on 'double equity' in the teaching profession which is succinctly explained by Goodwin and Keane (2023, p. 22):

> Equity *in* admissions concerns equitable access to the teaching profession for those from underrepresented groups who previously were unable to access the profession due to the existence of various barriers. Equity *through* admissions relates to the benefits for schools and students (both minority and majority groups), and for society more generally in terms of social cohesion, of a more diverse teaching force.

Additionally, the presence of a diverse teaching workforce has been shown to enhance the establishment of positive student-teacher relationships in culturally diverse educational settings (Brown & Ritter, 2017; Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020). In essence, students from similar cultural backgrounds as their instructors tend to develop healthy and meaningful relationships with their teachers, promoting equitable and quality education for all. For instance, Brown and Ritter (2017, p. 5773) report in their research that "students perceive teachers of the same race to be more effective and to have more positive relationships with them."

3.5 Conclusion

In this chapter, the development of culturally responsive teaching and learning approaches has been discussed through a review of conceptual and empirical literature. The literature shows that culturally inclusive pedagogies are beneficial for student learning, particularly in culturally diverse classrooms, across various global contexts. Given this, the crucial role of teacher education programmes in preparing teachers for culturally diverse classrooms cannot be overstated. This chapter underscores the urgent need for teacher education programmes to prioritise and integrate culturally responsive teaching practices into their curricula. This is because developing culturally inclusive teaching and learning practices begins with teacher education.

Moving forward, the next chapter presents a review of the academic literature exploring migrant and minority ethnic parents' involvement in their children's schooling in different contexts. This review is essential in providing an international perspective on one of this study's objectives, which is to explore the experiences and perspectives of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with schooling in Ireland. By considering a range of contexts, this section will provide valuable insights into effective ways of engaging migrant and minority ethnic parents in their children's schooling.

Chapter Four – Research Exploring the Experiences of Migrant and Minority-ethnic Families with Schooling in their Host Countries

4.1 Introduction

This second review chapter critically explores the engagement and experiences of migrant and minority ethnic families within host countries' education systems, providing a global perspective on their educational encounters. It also investigates friendship patterns, sense of belonging, and the experiences of migrant and minority children in schools. The chapter aligns with the research objective of examining the experiences of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds and their contributions to CRP and intercultural education in Ireland.

4.2 Experiences of migrant families with schooling in receiving countries' education systems

While there are international legal conventions that protect the rights of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in their host countries, particularly the right to education, reports have continually flagged the challenges migrant families and their children face regarding accessing equitable and quality education in their receiving countries (UNESCO, 2019, 2020). Some of these international conventions include the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948), the Convention of the Rights of a Child (1989), the International Covenant on Economic and Social Rights (1966), and more recently, the 2030 Agenda of the Sustainable Development Goals (2015).

Internationally, there is an observed drop in access to equitable and quality education for learners of migrants, refugees and asylum backgrounds (UNESCO, 2016; UNHCR, 2016). In the school year 2015-2016, research shows that in host countries globally, only about 50 per cent of children from refugee backgrounds had enrolled in primary schools and 22 per cent in secondary schools in the education system of their host countries (UNHCR, 2016).

Moreover, migrant families continue to face challenges in achieving both social acceptance within their host communities and ensuring equitable access to quality education for their children (Cohen & Kassan, 2018). Existing research indicates that migrant families face significant challenges in achieving life trajectories similar to those of native families, such as accessing employment

opportunities and leading fulfilled lives (Gabrielli & Impicciatore, 2021). Children from migrant backgrounds occupy a unique position within host communities but often face challenges and deprivation of equal opportunities compared to native children (Alarcon, Parella, & Yiu, 2014).

A qualitative study in Sweden finds that parents of migrant and minority backgrounds are often "ignored and marginalised" by the education system, making the parents feel "unimportant and unappreciated in their contact with Swedish schools" (Löfgren & Aman, 2020, p. 3). The study also suggests a noteworthy discrepancy between the rhetoric of parental involvement and its actual implementation. Students perceive this inconsistency as problematic and have a negative impact on their academic performance and relationship with their parents (Löfgren & Aman, 2020). Further, Löfgren and Aman (2020) point out that the limited understanding of minority parents on how the Swedish school system works, especially the grading process, has resulted in lower academic achievements of their children. Consequently, for many migrant families, the inadequate knowledge about their receiving country's education system makes it challenging for children of migrant backgrounds to attain academic success (McGinnity, Darmody, & Murray, 2015).

It is important to recognise that youth from migrant families often experience a culturally conflicted nature, which refers to the challenges they face in reconciling their cultural backgrounds and identities with the expectations and norms of the host country's education system. This cultural conflict can have a significant impact on their learning processes and subsequent academic achievements (Ngo, 2008). For instance, Ngo's (2008) research conducted in the US shed light on the immigrant experiences of students from migrant backgrounds, revealing that simplistic perceptions of cultural values among school stakeholders impede their access to quality learning and teaching opportunities. The study highlighted that the lack of comprehensive strategies to understand the cultural and identity multiplicities of culturally diverse families exacerbates the cultural clashes and identity ambiguity experienced by migrant families. This results in an educational environment that fails to effectively support the academic and socioemotional needs of these students (Ngo, 2008). The findings underscore the importance of moving beyond superficial understandings of culture and identity to develop inclusive educational practices that acknowledge and value the complex cultural backgrounds of migrant families, thereby encouraging an environment conducive to their educational success and well-being.

As Ngo (2008, p. 6) asserts, "the characterisation of immigrants as traditional, patriarchal and resistant to assimilationist demands are neither neutral nor harmless." Therefore, schools in host

countries must work towards understanding that culture and identity are dynamic and constantly evolving, and each day presents unique challenges for students from migrant backgrounds.

In a longitudinal research study conducted in the US, Feliciano (2006) argues that family's pre-migration circumstances such as educational qualifications and socio-economic status significantly influence second-generational educational achievement and career progression. Therefore, it is crucial to recognise and address the pre-existing factors that may impact the academic success of children from migrant backgrounds.

Several studies (Antony-Newman, 2019; Öztürk, 2013; Theodorou, 2008) have identified various factors contributing to the academic performance of students from migrant or minority ethnic backgrounds. These factors include the limited ability of teachers to implement culturally responsive teaching strategies and "the lack of psychological support to students and parents who experience racist incidents and bullying due to their difference" (Stylianou, 2017, p. 997). In Cyprus, a qualitative investigation by Stylianou (2017) into the absence(s) of poor minority ethnic students in education, utilising a critical realist framework, uncovered that teachers possess lower expectations for students of migrant origin. Teachers' perspectives on the difficulties faced by migrant students in Cyprus schools indicate that some teachers often adopt a deficit-based approach and do not acknowledge their role in the situation (Stylianou, 2017). Consequently, the study recommends interventions to enhance the education of minority students, such as customised resources, the inclusion of a curriculum that reflects their cultural background, and challenging oppressive societal norms. These interventions aim to cater to the specific needs of minority students at individual, micro, and meso levels (Stylianou, 2017).

Schneider and Arnot (2018) conducted a qualitative investigation in England that explored the communication approaches of schools in their engagement with newly arrived EAL students, utilising three dimensions of organisational communication theory. The research revealed that the absence of an effective school-community approach between families and schools led to poor academic performance among students from migrant backgrounds, resulting in their marginalisation within the school system (Schneider & Arnot, 2018). Thus, it is crucial for schools to establish communication channels that "encourage dialogue, recognise the value of" migrant families and their cultural heritage, and enable all students to access equitable and quality education (Schneider & Arnot, 2018, p. 260). Additionally, the study emphasises the significance of teacher and school awareness and sensitivity towards the distinctive needs and obstacles faced by EAL students and their families and their participation in decision-making processes. The study suggests

that partnerships between higher education institutions, schools, and migrant communities can provide training and expertise in this area. Overall, the study highlights the need for inclusive and adaptable communication systems that facilitate dialogue and understanding to eliminate stereotypes and barriers to academic success for these students (Schneider & Arnot, 2018). This aspect holds significant importance, as evidenced by a comprehensive systematic review conducted by Sheikh and Anderson (2018). Their analysis focused on the educational outcomes of refugees and asylum seekers in receiving countries. The review identified a clear association between lower levels of educational outcomes and "a lack of identification with the host cultures" among this population (Sheikh & Anderson, 2018, p. 22). This finding emphasises the critical role of cultural identification and integration in shaping the educational trajectories and achievements of refugees and asylum seekers. It underscores the need for educational systems and institutions to prioritise strategies that promote cultural integration, social cohesion, and inclusive practices to enhance the educational opportunities and outcomes for this vulnerable population.

4.3 Minority parental involvement in the education of their children

In order to ensure quality education for all children, parental involvement is crucial (Domina, 2005; Laureau, 1989; Tett, 2004). However, research has revealed that several obstacles prevent parents, particularly those from migrant or minority ethnic backgrounds, from participating in their children's education. These obstacles include cultural disparities between schools and parents and parents' inability to engage with the language used in schools (Antony-Newman, 2018; Öztürk, 2013). Banks and Banks (2010) also emphasised that particular cultural factors hinder parental involvement in their children's education. These factors include "majority-culture ethnocentrism, negative cultural-stereotyping, insensitivity to cultural and religious beliefs and family traditions, a propensity to lump different ethnic groups (e.g., all Polynesians) together, and discriminatory practice" (Banks & Banks, 2010, p. 349).

For many migrant students and their parents, language is seen as 'a tool of power,' and their limited proficiency in the language of their host countries may hinder migrant families from "navigating the education system and establishing themselves as partners in the home-school interface" (Horgan et al., 2022, p. 4). For instance, in the Netherlands, parents from migrant backgrounds were found to be less involved in their children's school activities than native Dutch parents due to

language barriers, which resulted in a lack of communication channels between migrant families and schools (Denessen, Bakker, & Gierveld, 2007).

Kyereko and Faas (2021) conducted a qualitative study on the educational experiences of migrant families from a South-South migration perspective. Their research revealed that francophone migrant students in an anglophone Ghanaian school were placed in lower age-appropriate grades due to their limited comprehension and use of the English language. This finding is consistent with research in other receiving countries that shows language proficiency as a critical factor in the educational achievement of migrant students in host countries (Antony-Newman, 2018; Denessen, Bakker, & Gierveld, 2007; Horgan et al., 2022). As such, it is imperative for teachers and school leaders to intentionally address the language barriers and establish effective communication channels with students and their parents.

In addition to addressing language barriers, teachers and school leaders should be aware of other factors promoting, or hindering, the creation of conducive environments for relationship-building with migrant families. Öztürk (2013, p. 16) highlights the importance of creating a 'non-threatening' environment that 'nurtures parents' and makes them 'feel comfortable.' Such an environment can encourage parents to be more involved in their children's school activities and increase their enthusiasm for participation. By building relationships with migrant families and creating a welcoming environment, teachers and school leaders can foster a sense of belonging for migrant students and their families in host countries.

Ramirez (2003, p. 93) observes that Latino parents in the US often feel that "schools do not listen or care to listen to their needs as parents." To improve relationships with parents, particularly those from minority backgrounds, schools can implement initiatives that respond to parents' needs by identifying available support services within and outside the school environment (Tarasawa & Waggoner, 2015; Trainor, 2010). Moreover, in Cyprus, some teachers have been found to perpetuate the "social marginalisation of immigrant families" by assuming that parents from minority backgrounds are not interested in their children's education due to their limited knowledge of the diverse needs of parents (Theodorou, 2008, p. 253). As a result, teachers often lack the motivation and willingness to actively involve parents in their children's education. This limited enthusiasm stems from a perception of parental involvement that overlooks the cultural nuances and beliefs specific to migrant families (Crozier, 2001). Consequently, schools have adopted a standardised and uniform approach to parental engagement, failing to recognise and accommodate the diverse cultural backgrounds and perspectives of migrant families. This 'one-size-fits-all'

approach disregards the unique cultural characteristics and values held by these families, hindering their meaningful participation in their children's education (Crozier, 2001).

In a similar vein, Cummins (2000, p.46) highlights the impact of structural and institutional factors that lead to the "exclusion of culturally diverse parents from participation in their children's schooling." This implies that parents' social class and social capital play a significant role in their involvement in their children's schooling. In Ireland, Devine (2011, p. 108) found that "middle-class parents are the most likely to become involved, activating both social and cultural capitals through their focused participation in volunteering, fundraising, and collaborating in a range of school activities." Likewise, Vincent et al. (2012) found that parents from middle-class backgrounds were more likely to engage in school processes and activities such as school board participation and parent-teacher meetings compared to parents from lower social backgrounds in their study in England.

Despite the obstacles to parental involvement in their children's education, empirical evidence indicates that parental engagement has numerous benefits, including "improved parent-teacher relationships, teacher morale and school climate; improved school attendance, attitudes, behaviour and mental health of children; and increased parental confidence, satisfaction and interest in their own education" (Hornby & Lafaele, 2011, p. 37). Engaging all parents in their children's education can, therefore, lead to improved learning experiences and academic achievements for their children (Adebayo & Heinz, 2023a, 2023b).

4.4 Friendship patterns and belonging in schools for students of minority backgrounds

In order for students to succeed academically and thrive personally, it is critical that they feel a sense of belonging in their school environment (Baumeister & Leary, 1995). Goodenow (1993, p. 80) defines a sense of belonging as the "psychological membership in the school or classroom, that is, the extent to which students feel personally accepted, respected, included, and supported by others in the school environment." As such, Biggart, O'Hare, and Connolly (2013) argue that schools and teachers have a significant role in fostering a sense of belonging for all students, regardless of their socio-cultural backgrounds.

In the context of inter-ethnic relations, students' friendship patterns and sense of belonging in schools are reflective of the state of society (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014). Al Ramiah et al. (2013)

note that as the cultural diversity in a school increases, students tend to develop relationships and friendships outside of their ethnic groups. However, Thijs and Verkuyten (2014) argue that a culturally diverse school does not necessarily promote inter-ethnic tolerance. Rather, factors such as the presence of multicultural education, inclusive school identities, positive student-teacher relationships, parental involvement, and peer relations outside of the school context play a crucial role in developing inter-ethnic relations (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014). Importantly, having students from diverse backgrounds does not constitute a deficit, as research indicates that ethnic and cultural diversity in schools promotes students' learning in schools (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014; Van Ewijk & Sleegers, 2010).

Quillian and Campbell (2003) propose that students tend to develop friendships with peers from their ethnic group when they are in the minority in their school. However, it is important to note that this may not necessarily hold true in all contexts. For example, Vermeij, van Duijn, and Baerveldt's (2009) study on relationship patterns in a Dutch secondary school classroom found that the number of culturally diverse students in the classroom did not significantly impact students' relationships. Thijs and Verkuyten (2014, p. 6) suggest that differences in inter-ethnic relations between students across different educational levels may be due to the fact that "the ethnic composition of the classroom is less relevant for secondary compared with primary school students because their classroom composition changes more, and they have more opportunities outside the class to learn to know each other."

Horgan et al.'s (2022) qualitative research on the socio-educational integration of migrant and refugee children and young people in Ireland highlights the importance of schools in facilitating their integration and overall well-being. The study emphasises that supporting the host language, the child's native language, and linguistic diversity is vital in helping these children integrate. Horgan et al. (2022) found that both children and parents valued additional support for learning the host language, as it was necessary for academic success and making friends. However, the research also suggests that students from culturally diverse backgrounds felt that Irish schools were not adequately supporting multiculturalism and multilingualism (Horgan et al., 2022). As a result, they tended to form relationships and friendships with peers who speak their language, leading to a "lack of peer interaction and potential social isolation" among newcomer students (Horgan et al., 2022, p. 9). In Belgium, Baysu et al. (2021) conducted a recent mixed-method study on how diversity approaches affect the trajectories of ethnic minority and majority adolescents. The study found that schools' cultural diversity approaches led to positive school experiences and quality student-teacher relationships for students from ethnic minority backgrounds. Furthermore, students'

perception of their schools “as more equal and multiculturalist” resulted in better relationships between minority and majority students (Baysu et al., 2021, p. 382). These findings suggest that schools can implement measures to protect vulnerable minority adolescents from negative consequences, and positive relationships between teachers and students are essential for long-term positive outcomes (Baysu et al., 2021, p. 382).

4.5 Conclusion

This chapter has provided an overview of the issues faced by migrant families in the education systems of their host countries, including cultural clashes and inadequate parental involvement in their children’s schooling. It has been established that parental involvement is linked to improved learning outcomes and educational achievement. As a result, it is critical for schools in host countries with migrant and minority ethnic families to establish effective communication and home-school partnerships to ensure equitable and quality education for students from these families. In the following chapter, the first methodology section of this research study is presented.

SECTION 3 – RESEARCH METHODOLOGY

Chapter Five - Researcher Positionality

5.1 Introduction

This chapter explores the researcher's positionality and the development of a critical autobiography. A critical autobiography is a reflective process that allows the researcher to explore their positionality, experiences, and perspectives in relation to the research topic and to critically examine their assumptions, values, and biases (Irgil, 2020; Nelson & Gould, 2005). Through this process of self-reflection, the researcher can better understand their positionality and how it may influence the research and take steps to ensure a more objective and nuanced analysis (Adu-Ampong & Adams, 2019; Mayorga-Gallo & Hordge-Freeman, 2017).

The chapter begins with a critical reflection on my positionality, providing an insight into my background and how it shapes my understanding of the research topic. This is followed by a reflection on my values, particularly concerning the two categories of research participants: student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds. Additionally, as a non-Irish researcher, the significance of this study is heightened, as it contributes to the field of CRP and intercultural education within Irish schools. By acknowledging my positionality and its potential impact on the research process, this chapter ensures transparency and validity in the study's findings and interpretations.

5.2 A critical autobiography of my research journey: Positionality

5.2.1 My journey and background: What got me here?

Growing up in Nigeria's post-independent era, I experienced my parents working as teachers in the Lagos State Ministry of Education. Shortly after I was born, as my parents' second child, my mother decided to quit her teaching career to find more time to take care of me, as it was difficult for her to combine teaching duties and spend quality time with her family. She later shared with me that there were not even special provisions or welfare available for teachers that were nursing mothers in Lagos State public schools. She faced a difficult choice between staying in a career she loved and leaving her job to take care of her beloved family. The absence of childcare facilities

meant that women had to choose between being a mother or pursuing their professional aspirations as teachers (Adisa, Gbadamosi, & Osabutey, 2016; Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2016).

In Nigeria, motherhood is a significant aspect of a woman's identity (Adisa, Gbadamosi, & Osabutey, 2016; Gbajumo-Sheriff, 2016). Due to this, my mother chose to become a mother despite the financial implications for our family. This decision led to my father having to work additional jobs to supplement his meagre teacher salary. I remember seeing him work as a teacher on weekdays and take on other jobs on weekends. This often resulted in him being absent from his teaching duties. Despite the financial challenges, my parents enjoyed being teachers and valued the opportunity to educate the next generation.

Nigeria is a highly diverse country with a population of over 200 million people, more than 200 ethnic groups, and around 250 local languages (Falola et al., 2020). During my time as a student in junior and secondary school, I recall being reprimanded by my Social Studies and English teachers whenever I or any of my classmates spoke our native language in the classroom. This experience of being unable to use my mother tongue, Yoruba, as the medium of instruction in school impacted my understanding of subjects. In Nigeria, English is the official language of instruction, which creates language barriers that deny students from different ethnic groups quality learning. Studies show that language is an essential aspect of culture and identity, and students tend to perform better when taught in their mother tongue or first language during their early education (Benson, 2005; Hallett, Chandler & Lalonde, 2007; Murray et al., 2021).

In 2012, I completed my Bachelor's degree and went on to work as a teacher in a junior high school in the southern region of Nigeria, Bayelsa State. This was part of the mandatory one-year National Youth Service Corps programme for Nigerian graduates under the age of 30, established in 1973 to promote national unity, rural development, and selfless service among Nigerian youths. During my time as a teacher, I was shocked by the poor state of education in the community. The lack of school materials and widespread teacher absenteeism were major contributing factors to this situation. I often had to manage a school of over 200 students because the principal and other teachers were absent. I learned that this was due to various challenges faced by rural teachers, including a lack of healthcare facilities, inadequate housing and banking facilities, insufficient school supplies, and a lack of professional development opportunities (Adebayo & Adebayo, 2017). At first, I was unhappy about this situation, and I began to understand why my father had been absent from his teaching responsibilities in the past. However, I realised that perpetuating this cycle would only make things worse, and I started to think about how I could be part of the solution.

During my year of teaching, I wrote a book targeted at high school students (see Adebayo, 2014) to inspire resilience in a learning environment where teachers were not motivated enough to provide individualised attention and resources to students.

When presented with the opportunity to travel abroad, I discovered the works of Paulo Freire and Henry Giroux on critical pedagogy and transformative teaching, respectively. Freire's seminal works, 'Pedagogy of the Oppressed' (1970) and 'Education for Critical Consciousness' (1973), provided me with a new lens for analysing education and the power dynamics within it. I began to understand how education could be used as a tool for liberation and social justice, rather than simply reproducing existing inequalities. Similarly, Giroux's (2004) ideas about teachers as 'transformative intellectuals' expanded my understanding of the role that teachers can play in challenging and changing societal norms. His work emphasises the need for teachers to be critical thinkers and advocates for their students, particularly in culturally diverse contexts where the dominant culture may not reflect the experiences or perspectives of all students. These works profoundly impacted my thinking about education, and I became passionate about supporting teachers in culturally diverse contexts to implement these principles. I recognised the importance of providing teachers with the tools and strategies to critically examine their biases and assumptions to create a more inclusive and equitable learning environment for all students.

5.2.2 Journey to and through Europe: Assumptions and values

Coming from a Nigerian teaching family and having studied up to the first degree in Nigeria, I embarked on a master's programme in Europe with certain assumptions and values. I strongly believed that teachers are vital to the success of any education reform and that cultural diversity should be celebrated. It was the first time I left Nigeria to study on a joint Erasmus Mundus master's programme focusing on education policies and global development, funded by the European Commission. During the two years studying on this master's programme, I lived and studied in Spain, the Netherlands, Malta, and Norway and completed internships in Belgium, France, and Italy.

I was struck by the opportunity to experience cultural diversity in Europe. Specifically, I was exposed to diversity in terms of race and had the chance to interact with migrants from minority backgrounds trying to settle down in their host countries. During my travels in Europe, and through conversations with people and media, I noticed that the increasing numbers of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers were viewed as problematic or challenging for many European countries.

Additionally, I observed that migrants from minority-ethnic backgrounds faced various social, political, and economic challenges in their host countries. For instance, while in Malta, I got to know a friend from West Africa who had been living in the country for 14 years but had yet to find a job that could ensure his economic stability. He shared his struggles navigating the labour market and the lack of support available for migrants to access job opportunities.

As a student in the field of education and international development, I developed a strong interest in the UN's SDGs (2015). Specifically, I was drawn to SDG 4, which emphasises the importance of providing all students, regardless of their socio-economic backgrounds, with equitable and quality education and opportunities for lifelong learning (Boeren, 2019). During my studies, I conducted educational research in Liberia as part of my master's thesis, which focused on teacher development and teachers' role in contributing to quality education. The findings of my research showed that teachers in Liberia were seen as second parents, humanitarians, 'town criers,' role models, guardians, counsellors, unifiers, agents of peace, 'Hercules' and psychologists to help students who have post-traumatic stress disorder after the 2003 civil war and 2014 – 2015 Ebola crisis (Adebayo, 2019). However, despite their critical role in shaping the lives of their students, teachers faced numerous challenges, including a lack of resources, political instability, and a demotivating financial situation, which limit their ability to contribute effectively to quality education (Adebayo, 2022). My research experience highlighted the importance of prioritising teacher well-being and professional development as integral components of any efforts to promote quality education for all students.

After gaining one year of post-master's programme work experience, I decided to pursue a Doctor of Philosophy (PhD) programme and applied to various opportunities in Europe. Despite submitting applications to multiple institutions, I was only accepted to a programme in Ireland. Initially, my research focus was centred on teachers and quality education within the specific context of Sub-Saharan Africa (SSA). However, my interest in the Irish community grew as I became immersed in the culture through interactions at university, church, and with migrant parents. Upon arriving in Ireland, I sought assistance from migrant communities in settling in. During my engagements with members of migrant communities in Galway and its surroundings, I was made aware of the challenges parents face within the Irish education system.

My PhD supervisor and colleagues in the School of Education at the University of Galway have been engaged in initiatives to increase diversity in the second-level teaching profession in Ireland for over a decade (Heinz & Keane, 2018; Keane & Heinz, 2015, 2016). I participated in workshops

and seminars related to the Diversity in Teaching Research Study and realised that the Irish teaching profession was very homogenous while student as well as the general population continued to diversify.

I am passionate about promoting equitable and quality education for all learners. As a migrant in Ireland, I have a personal interest in improving the education system for students from migrant backgrounds. In the future, I hope to continue my research in this area, particularly as I plan to start a family here and anticipate that my children may face similar challenges to those experienced by other students from migrant backgrounds in the Irish school system. Through my conversations with migrants in Ireland and my research in SSA, I have realised that teachers, internationally, are struggling to meet the needs of culturally diverse classrooms (see UNESCO, 2020).

Drawing on my personal experiences with diversity, particularly in Nigeria and across several European countries, I hold a positive view of the benefits of cultural diversity. As such, I have decided to undertake a PhD research study to support Irish teachers in becoming more culturally inclusive. This study aims to raise awareness among teachers that cultural diversity should be embraced as an opportunity to enrich students' learning experiences and contribute to the socio-economic growth of Ireland. Given the significant demographic changes in Ireland in recent years, it is essential that teachers are equipped with the skills and knowledge needed to cater to students from diverse cultural backgrounds.

5.2.3 Unpacking my relationship with research participants

Initially, I intended to take a Participatory Action Research approach to develop CRP with teachers in Ireland. This approach would have involved me working with teachers over a long period of time, going into schools and observing classrooms. When COVID-19 struck, I was forced to think of different methods of carrying out my research. With the help of my supervisor and looking at what was achievable during this very uncertain time, I redesigned my study to follow a more traditional qualitative approach. I collected data with student and beginning teachers via semi-structured in-depth interviews. The interviews were conducted using the online video conferencing software, Zoom. This was also a big transition for me as a researcher experienced with data collection through on-site fieldwork to internet-mediated research. However, I successfully conducted five face-to-face focus group discussions with my parents' participants before the pandemic, and social distancing regulations took effect in Ireland. The remaining focus groups (n=3) with parents were conducted via Zoom. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, my original

research plan, which involved sharing and discussing parents' data with teachers in schools as part of a participatory action research study, was disrupted and could not be implemented as intended.

I reflected on my relationship with the people who participated in my research, specifically student and beginning teachers, and migrant parents. To guide my reflection, I used the questions suggested by Milner IV (2007, p. 395):

1. What is my racial and cultural heritage? How do I know?
2. In what ways do my racial and cultural backgrounds influence how I experience the world, what I emphasise in my research, and how I interpret others and their experiences? How do I know?
3. How do I negotiate and balance my racial and cultural selves in society and in my research? How do I know?
4. What do I believe about race and culture in society and education, and how do I attend to my own convictions and beliefs about race and culture in my research? Why? How do I know?
5. What is the historical landscape of my racial and cultural identity and heritage? How do I know?
6. What are and have been the contextual nuances and realities that help shape my racial and cultural ways of knowing, both past and present? How do I know?
7. What racialised and cultural experiences have shaped my research decisions, practices, approaches, epistemologies, and agendas?

I saw my relationship with the student and beginning teachers who participated as a collaboration to address a common issue prevalent in the Irish education system. This was a shared feeling because we openly communicated our objectives and intentions at the beginning of the interviews/focus groups. Our collective commitment and enthusiasm to tackle the challenges faced by the Irish education system built a strong foundation of trust and respect, which contributed to the success of the research study. Eight of the student and beginning teachers who participated in my research study belonged to White Irish and Catholic backgrounds. As a 'Black African' researcher engaged in a study involving participants from various racial backgrounds and drawing on Gunaratnam's (2003, p. 23) perspective on conducting research across different races presents valuable opportunities to establish connections between "lived experiences, political relations," and knowledge production. I aimed to delve deeper into the socio-cultural experiences of the student and beginning teachers who participated in my research study. This provided insights into the considerations, challenges, and methodological choices made to ensure a comprehensive

understanding of the participants' perspectives and the complex dynamics at play within the research context.

For instance, I gained a deeper understanding of the complex and interrelated factors influencing their views, including race, ethnicity, religion, and socio-economic status. Moreover, engaging with participants from different backgrounds allowed me to gain insights into the similarities and differences in their perspectives, which enriched my understanding of the research topic. For example, I was able to identify commonalities in the experiences of the migrant parents who participated in the research study, despite coming from different racial and ethnic backgrounds. This helped me to develop a more nuanced understanding of the challenges faced by migrant parents in the Irish education system and how these challenges intersect with other socio-cultural factors.

My positionality sparked student and beginning teachers in my research study curiosity and invited questions about my positionality as a researcher. Participants asked me several questions, such as 'What made you choose to conduct this research study?' 'What is your story?,' 'What do you intend to do after this PhD?' and 'How do you define your own culture?' I believe these questions resulted from the participants' fascination with a 'Black African' migrant researching the Irish education system. Their inquiries allowed me to establish a deeper level of rapport and trust with the participants, as well as to provide context for my research and clarify any misunderstandings or assumptions.

In contrast to the student and beginning teachers, the relationship and responses from my research participants who were parents were different. In all the focus groups with parents, they appreciated that their voices were being heard and were open to sharing their experiences, especially those related to their own and their children's education within the Irish education sector. The parents saw me as a member of their community. I also viewed myself as part of their community, based on our shared characteristics of being migrants from minority ethnic groups in Ireland. This mutual sense of belonging fostered a level of trust with the parents who participated in my study.

Furthermore, the parents in the focus groups believed that I could empathise with their struggles of feeling invisible and unheard in Ireland, as a migrant myself. As a researcher, it was particularly fulfilling for me to see that the parents in my study felt that their voices finally mattered in an area that directly impacted their stay in Ireland. When I shared with them my plans to disseminate the research findings and insights from the study with Irish teachers, they expressed their gratitude and appreciation.

5.2.3.1 The 'insider-outsider' researcher

The differences in how I approached the relationships with the student and beginning teachers and the parents who participated in my research study could be attributed to my positionality as an 'insider-outsider' researcher (Adu-Ampong & Adams, 2019), due to my background as a migrant from a minority ethnic group in Ireland. To navigate this complex positionality, I used the credibility and approachability framework proposed by Mayorga-Gallo and Hordge-Freeman (2017) to negotiate my positionality and establish credibility with both sets of research participants. This allowed me to build trust and create a safe space where participants felt comfortable sharing their experiences, which ultimately enhanced the quality of data collected in the study. To clarify, navigating one's position as an insider-outsider in a diverse cultural setting is essential for establishing credibility and gaining access to research participants. In my case, my parents' research participants perceived me as an 'insider' (see Ganga & Scott, 2006) due to our shared experiences as migrants from diverse cultural backgrounds in Ireland. When engaging with the parents in my study, I recognised the importance of building rapport and addressing any potential power imbalances. I made intentional efforts to listen actively, respect their perspectives, and value their knowledge and expertise as parents. As a result, they were more open and trusting in sharing their experiences and opinions on the research topic.

On the other hand, for the student and beginning teachers in my study, I was perceived as an 'outsider,' becoming an 'insider.' This means that while they acknowledged my position as a researcher, they also saw me as an "impartial observer" (Irgil, 2020, p. 4) who could help address the issue of culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Ireland. Furthermore, I actively listened to their concerns, experiences, and aspirations, ensuring that their voices were heard and validated throughout the interview process. I maintained transparency in my intentions and communicated the significance of their contributions in shaping the study's outcomes. By establishing myself as a credible and approachable researcher, I built a level of trust and rapport with both sets of research participants.

In the research study, I prompted the participants to reflect on their perception and understanding of culture and share what they considered part of their own culture. During these discussions, some participants also asked me to share my views on culture. In response, I explained that, to me, culture encompasses many aspects of a person's way of life. For instance, my culture includes my Christian faith, my personal values, and beliefs such as empathy, tolerance, love, community and respect,

my ethnic group, and my country of origin. I believe that understanding and valuing different cultural perspectives is fundamental in promoting diversity and inclusivity in educational settings.

Acknowledging one's positionality is important in qualitative research because it can influence how data is interpreted and analysed. In my research, my positionality as a Black African migrant in Ireland may have influenced my interpretation of the data. For instance, when analysing the experiences of student and beginning teachers, I may have focused more on issues of cultural competence and inclusion because of my own experiences with cultural differences and discrimination. Similarly, when analysing the experiences of parents, I may have been more attuned to issues of marginalisation and invisibility because of my own experiences with being an 'outsider' in a new country. In both cases, my positionality may have influenced my interpretation of the data and shaped the conclusions I drew from it. Braun and Clarke (2020) emphasise the importance of recognising the subjectivity inherent in qualitative research, and Brown (2010, p. 238) notes that "a different researcher, or the same researcher in a different frame of mind, might write a different report from the same data." By disclosing my positionality and the values that inform my perspective, readers can better understand how I approached the study and the conclusions drawn from the data.

5.3 Conclusion

In this chapter, I have unpacked my positionality in this research study to provide a background context of who I am as a researcher and how this influenced the development of the research design adopted. This chapter has supported the argument that it is critical for qualitative researchers to declare their positionality when conducting sensitive research, such as with culturally diverse and marginalised groups. This allows readers to understand the extent to which the researcher's lived experiences influence the research design, implementation, and subsequent analysis of research data. The next chapter details the methodology used in this study, which includes critical interpretivism and critical realism approaches, research design, and methods of data collection and analysis. The chapter lays the foundation for the subsequent analysis and interpretation of research data.

Chapter Six - Research Paradigm, Design and Methodology

6.1 Introduction

This chapter delineates the research paradigm and methodology employed in the present study. The study aims to investigate the progress of CRP and intercultural education in Irish secondary schools through an exploration of the perspectives of student and beginning teachers. Moreover, the study aims to delve into the experiences of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds regarding their children's education in Ireland. The research questions that underpin this study are as follows:

Central Research Question:

What are the experiences and perspectives of student and beginning teachers and of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with regard to teaching and learning in culturally diverse classrooms in the Republic of Ireland?

Sub-questions:

A. What are the experiences of student and beginning teachers with teaching in culturally diverse classrooms in Ireland?

B. What are student and beginning teachers' understandings of and experiences with culturally responsive pedagogies?

C. In how far, and in what ways, are the understandings, perspectives and pedagogical practices of student and beginning teachers from cultural majority and minority backgrounds similar or different?

D. What are Irish student and beginning teachers' perspectives regarding their preparation for culturally diverse classrooms, and what recommendations do they have for teacher education?

E. What are the perspectives and recommendations of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with regard to culturally responsive teaching and learning?

This chapter also presents the theoretical framework that underpins the study, drawing upon elements of Critical Race Theory (CRT), Critical Interpretivism (CI), Critical Realism (CR), and Culturally Relevant Pedagogies (CRP). By integrating these theoretical perspectives, this study

aims to provide a comprehensive and multifaceted understanding of the complex dynamics at play within a culturally diverse educational context.

6.2 Research paradigm: Qualitative research

This research sets out to examine the experiences of student and beginning teachers in culturally diverse Irish second-level schools. By delving into these experiences, the study aims to offer valuable insights to enhance policies and practices in culturally diverse classrooms. Furthermore, the research considers the perspectives of minority ethnic parents and their experiences with schooling in Ireland. Qualitative research facilitates an in-depth exploration of social issues, surpassing the capabilities of a quantitative investigation into social phenomena. Furthermore, qualitative inquiry endeavours to comprehend human conduct from the perspective of the participants themselves (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003).

The adoption of qualitative research methodology recognises the existence of multiple interpretations of societal realities (Hammersley, 2013). Furthermore, according to Martin (2015), the significance of research lies in the interpretations and meanings that participants ascribe to their evolving and expanding social experiences. Hammersley (2013) further asserted the significance of subjectivity in qualitative research, defining it as follows:

> A form of social inquiry that tends to adopt a flexible and data-driven research design, to use relatively unstructured data, to emphasise the essential role of subjectivity in the research process, to study a small number of naturally occurring cases in detail, and to use verbal rather than statistical forms of analysis.

Artinian (1988, p. 138) stresses the importance of incorporating participants' voices in social research, as it enables "a detailed description of what is happening in some setting or with a particular group of subjects, so that the point of view of the subjects can be understood." In this research study, the views, and experiences of two affected groups in the Irish education system, namely student and beginning teachers and migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds, are explored, and amplified to address the identified research questions.

By amplifying the voices of these participants, the study aims to provide a rich and nuanced description of their experiences and perspectives, shedding light on the challenges and opportunities they encounter within the education system in relation to cultural diversity. By

adopting a qualitative approach, the present study seeks to delve deeper into the subjective experiences of these participants, allowing for a more comprehensive and nuanced understanding of their lived realities. Qualitative research methods provide a valuable means of collecting rich and detailed data that go beyond surface-level observations. The use of techniques such as interviews, observations, and focus groups allow for in-depth exploration of participants' perspectives, emotions, and experiences (Artinian, 1988; Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Hammersley, 2013).

This research study acknowledges the need to understand the experiences of these groups (student and beginning teachers and migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds) from their perspectives. The inclusion of their voices is integral to ensuring that their experiences and perspectives are accurately represented and that their contributions to the research process are valued. Scholars such as Artinian (1988), Bogdan and Biklen (2003), Creswell (2007), and Hammersley (2013) highlight the value of qualitative research in uncovering the multiple dimensions and contextual factors that influence participants' experiences.

6.3 Epistemological and ontological frameworks

Ensuring clarity and minimising ambiguity in the social sciences and humanities necessitates a clear understanding of the underlying epistemological and ontological positions that guide research, as noted by James and Vinnicombe (2002). These positions are shaped by the values, beliefs, and knowledge-production processes present within the context of the research (James & Vinnicombe, 2002). In this study, critical interpretivism and critical realism are the epistemological and ontological approaches that inform the research.

6.3.1 Critical interpretivism

This study adopts traditional qualitative research where the natural setting provides the data to respond to identified research questions. This approach has led to the development of the term 'naturalism' (Tuckman, 1999). Naturalism emphasises human perception within a natural setting, which is "often aligned with the interpretive" approach (Wellington, 2000, p. 19). Furthermore, Isaac and Michael (1995, p. 218) explain naturalism as "achieving multiple realities arising from natural differences in the development of human perception." In other words, human beings'

perceptions of their social realities are influenced by their 'unique' differences, such as culture, values, and beliefs.

As argued by Merriam (1998, p. 202), our reality is "multi-dimensional and ever-changing;" thus, this research study takes an interpretive approach. Additionally, Maher (2007, p. 113) asserts that individuals interpret this changing reality differently "depending on their connection with the issues at hand." This implies that researchers may interpret research data differently based on their positionality within the research study. Therefore, the researcher recognises the complexity of providing "sufficient depth and detail" to the diverse perspectives that arise from the research field (Ary, Jacobs & Razavien, 2002, p. 423). This approach enables readers to understand the complexity of perspectives from the research study, similar to the researcher's experience, as noted by Anderson and Arsenault (1998). Moreover, reflexivity throughout the research cycle is essential (Miles & Huberman, 1994). It is important to note that a naturalistic approach to qualitative research allows data to "unfold naturally" (Patton, 2002, p. 39).

This research study on developing CRP and intercultural education in Irish secondary schools, with perspectives from student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds, takes an interpretivist approach. Interpretivism recognises the multiple dimensions of realities within society, and the importance of context in understanding beliefs and behaviours (Maher, 2007; Merriam, 1998). This approach provides a voice to research participants and actively engages them in the research process. Additionally, interpretivism allows for a deeper understanding of how individuals construct meaning and make sense of their world and experiences, as noted by Merriam (1998). Furthermore, Cohen and Mannion (1994) argue that the development of theory begins with individuals seeking to understand their interpretations of the world around them. In contrast to the hypothetical-deductive approach of experimental designs, inductive analysis under interpretivist research produces interrelationships, categories, and dimensions that facilitate sense-making of data (Maher, 2007; Patton, 2002). Therefore, the use of inductive analysis in this study will enable the emergence of categories within the data being analysed, facilitating a better understanding of the development of culturally responsive practices in Irish secondary schools.

6.3.2 Critical realism

CR is positioned as a philosophy of knowledge that falls between positivism and interpretivism (Zachariadis, Scott, & Barrett, 2013). The present research study employs Sayer's (1992, 2000) critical realist framework. Specifically, the study is aligned with Sayer's (1992, p. 5) eight fundamental assumptions of CR, which are as follows:

> 1. The world exists independently of our knowledge of it.
>
> 2. Our knowledge of the world is fallible and theory-laden. Concepts of truth and falsity fail to provide a coherent view of the relationship between knowledge and its object. Nevertheless, knowledge is not immune to empirical check, and its effectiveness in informing and explaining successful material practice is not a mere accident.
>
> 3. Knowledge develops neither wholly continuously, as the steady accumulation of facts within a stable conceptual framework, nor discontinuously, through simultaneous and universal changes in concepts.
>
> 4. There is necessity in the world; objects—whether natural or social—necessarily have particular powers or ways of acting and particular susceptibilities.
>
> 5. The world is differentiated and stratified, consisting not only of events, but objects, including structures, which have powers and liabilities capable of generating events. These structures may be present even where, as in the social world and much of the natural world, they do not generate regular patterns of events.
>
> 6. Social phenomena such as actions, texts and institutions are concept dependent. We not only have to explain their production and material effects but to understand, read or interpret what they mean. Although they have to be interpreted by starting from the researcher's own frames of meaning, by and large, they exist regardless of researchers' interpretation of them. A qualified version of 1, therefore, applies to the social world. In view of 4–6, the methods of social science and natural science have both differences and similarities.
>
> 7. Science or the production of any kind of knowledge is a social practice. For better or worse (not just worse), the conditions and social relations of the production of knowledge influence its content. Knowledge is also largely—though not exclusively—linguistic, and the nature of language and the way we communicate are not incidental to what is known and communicated. Awareness of these relationships is vital in evaluating knowledge.
>
> 8. Social science must be critical of its object. In order to be able to explain and understand social phenomena, we have to evaluate them critically.

The aforementioned assumptions of CR posit that knowledge and its production process cannot be monopolised. The critical realist perspective emphasises that our social realities and institutions influence our knowledge of the world. As an observer or researcher, one must recognise and appreciate the differences between the tools used to study society and the 'real' world. The

construction of the 'real' world and realities is socially determined (Easton, 2010), and therefore, a researcher's approach and perspective shape their observations and findings.

This research study specifically adheres to assumptions six, seven, and eight of CR. It recognises that social institutions, such as education systems, impact the behaviours and interactions of teachers and students. This research study takes a critical approach by examining the various socio-cultural factors that shape the development of intercultural education and CRP in Irish schools. Additionally, it uses a critical realist framework to critically analyse how social and institutional realities and practices impact student and beginning teachers' experiences in culturally diverse classrooms and their perspectives regarding CRP.

6.4 Theoretical framework

In this section, I present the theoretical framework of this study, which incorporates aspects of CRT, CI, CR and CRP. By combining elements of CRT, CI, CR, and CRP, this theoretical framework offers a comprehensive approach to examining the complex dynamics within a culturally diverse educational context. It provides a lens through which to critically analyse power dynamics, understand subjective experiences, uncover underlying structures, and promote culturally responsive practices. The utilisation of this theoretical framework enriches the analysis and interpretation of the study's findings and contributes to the broader field of educational research.

The history of CRT is traceable to "critical race legal scholarship developed in the 1970s, in part because minority scholars thought they were being overlooked in critical legal studies, a better-known movement that examines the way law erodes cultural norms" (Monaghan, 1993, p. 1). CRT views racism and racial injustices as endemic in certain societies and argues that they cannot be ignored or treated as separate from other social inequities (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005; Wallace & Brand, 2012). Initially, the development of CRT in the US was driven by a scholarly need to explore segregation and racism in society (Gilborn, 2006). Moreover, CRT provided legal and academic communities with a vocabulary to address institutional and structural racism in the US. "There was a need for a vocabulary that could name the race-related structures of oppression in the law and society that had not been adequately addressed in existing scholarship" (Dixson & Rousseau, 2005, p. 9).

CRT goes beyond seeing race as a conceptualisation of ethnicity and social class tenets but as a significant reflection of existing 'social structure and cultural representation' within a society (Ladson-Billings & Tete, 1995; Omi & Winant, 1994). The primary case for CRT is that issues of racism and race relations are often not well covered in policy and laws. Consequently, existing legal systems leverage this gap in policy to promote segregation and institutional racism (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). For Byerly (2016, p. 30), "Critical Race Theory offers important insights into the structural and institutional, not only interpersonal, aspects of racial inequality and multiple propositions of how to teach all pupils about racism." In addition, CRT "sees the official school curriculum as a culturally specific artefact designed to maintain a White supremacist master script" (Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 29) by "silencing multiple voices and perspectives, primarily legitimising dominant White upper-class male voicings as the standard knowledge for all pupils" (Swartz, 1992, cited in Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 29).

The application of CRT as an analytical tool in the field of education during the early 1990s has aided educational researchers in developing a more nuanced understanding of race and inequity within education systems (Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995). Within education, CRT has become a vital lens for examining racism and discrimination in educational institutions, including schools. For instance, the landmark Brown v. Board of Education case in the US ruled that segregation within the education system was unconstitutional. The CRT movement played a crucial role in both shaping the outcome of the case and the reality of educational institutions today (DeCuir & Dixson, 2004; Ladson-Billings, 1998; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995).

The incorporation of storytelling into the CRT framework provides a means "to expose and challenge social constructions of race," which is essential in addressing the embedded racism and discrimination within social institutions (Taylor, Gillborn, & Ladson-Billings, 2009, p. 10). As such, CRT is highly relevant to researchers examining issues of marginalisation, multiculturalism, and racism in society, as it permits the use of "counter-narratives" or "counter stories" from historically marginalised or oppressed communities in qualitative research (Harper, 2009, p. 707). Additionally, CRT represents a direct response to traditional educational research that:

> (a) ignored historically marginalised groups by simply not addressing their concerns, (b) relied heavily on genetic or biological determinist perspectives to explain away complex social, educational problems, or (c) de-emphasised race by arguing that the problems minority students experience in schools can be understood via class or gender analyses that do not fully take race, culture, language, and immigrant status into account (Parker & Lynn, 2002, p. 13).

In educational research, CRT provides a framework that enables the use of race-related terminologies to examine issues of equity and social justice in education (Dixon & Rousseau, 2005). This perspective is reinforced by Brayboy (2005) and Ladson-Billings and Tete (1995, p. 58), who contend that the perspectives of marginalised and affected groups are "required for a complete analysis of the education system." This argument further bolsters the rationale for this research study, which seeks to explore the viewpoints of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds in developing culturally responsive practices and intercultural education in Irish schools.

A critique of CRT in education is the limitation of the theory to effectively move "beyond the intellectual space of academia to generate resistance at grassroots level to mobilise against the institution from within the institution" (Ní Dhuinn, 2017, p. 54). This limitation has been posited by Dixson and Rousseau (2005, p. 25) as the "unfulfilled promise of CRT in education." In spite of criticisms against CRT in education, CRT remains relevant to the field of education, given that teachers bear the primary responsibility of ensuring that all students, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds, are acknowledged and supported to have a meaningful learning experience (Byerly, 2016). Richardson (2002, p. 48) emphasises that "teachers' basic task has always been to hold a balance between treating pupils equally and understanding the unique identity, experiences, and life stories of each, and of the communities they belong." Taylor, Gillborn, and Ladson-Billings (2009, p. 10) assert that CRT is valuable in education for investigating the "intersectionality of subordination, including gender, class and other forms of oppression" as well as "questioning dominant notions of meritocracy, objectivity and knowledge."

The use of CRP as a theoretical lens for this research aligns with the principles of CRT by highlighting the critical role of culture in learning and ensuring quality education for all learners. Employing CRP as a lens for this research study is particularly crucial since it seeks to understand the experiences of student and beginning teachers in culturally diverse Irish secondary schools. CRT highlights the intersection of race and racism with other forms of oppression. At the same time, CRP provides a framework for teachers to acknowledge, understand, and address the diverse cultural backgrounds of their students equitably and inclusively.

In this study, I adopt CR and CI paradigms as my epistemological and ontological positioning for data review and interpretation. Specifically, the data analysis process for this research emphasises key concepts such as identity, cultural consciousness, values, beliefs, and racism, which are

fundamental to the philosophical principles of CR and CI. CR postulates that social relations and values influence human actions and reactions to events. In other words, "people choose what they do, but they make their choices from a structurally and culturally generated range of options – which they do *not* choose" (Carter & New, 2004, p. 273, emphasis on original). As such, Molla and Nolan (2019, p. 273) contend that for "critical realists, social reality is not readily accessible – it can only be inferred from its manifestations."

The use of CR as an analytical lens for this research study focuses on examining social systems that contribute to the experiences of the research participants with teaching and schooling in culturally diverse classrooms in Ireland. CR will, thus, be instrumental in "unmasking interactive forces" (Molla & Nolan, 2021, p. 278) within the Irish education system and society that influence the development of culturally inclusive teaching and learning in schools. Furthermore, the CR approach in this study allows an exploration of "human agency" (Asher et al., 2013; Houston, 2010, p. 74) in a specific social and education cultural system, as they work towards developing more culturally responsive teaching and learning approaches in Irish schools.

Bhaskar (1994, p. 93, emphasis in the original), in his postulation of the intimate relationship and the interconnectedness of structure and agency, presents that:

> …all social life is embodied in a network of human relations. This may be demonstrated by the mental experiment of subtracting from society the human agency required for it to be an ongoing affair. What we are left with are *dual points of articulation* of structure and agency, which are differentiated and processually changing *positioned practices* human agents occupied, engaged, reproduced or transformed, defining the (changing) system of social relations in which human praxis is embedded. Here again, on the relational model, we have a figure of a duality-with-a hiatus, preventing reductionist collapse in either direction.

According to Fletcher (2017, p. 182), highlighting the central ideals of CR posits that "human knowledge captures only a small part of deeper and vaster reality." Therefore, "CR treats the world as theory-laden, but not theory determined" (Fletcher, 2017, p. 182). In other words, with CR, researchers are provided with an approach to explain social problems and explore the causes of actions within society.

CR and CI inform the epistemological and ontological positioning of this research study. Additionally, the frameworks of CRP and CRT of education are used to examine possible inequity and discrimination in the Irish education system. CRT promotes critical discourse of racism, making racial inequities visible in society (McGinley & Keane, 2021), which aligns with the CRP

belief that culture significantly affects students' learning (Banks, 1993; Brown, 2007). The research process involved the exploration of multiple perspectives, particularly those from minority backgrounds, and incorporated critical autobiography, positionality, and reflexive journaling, aligning with the principles of CRT.

Scholars have suggested that the integration of multiple theories within a research paradigm can be beneficial for studying cultural diversity in education (Banks & Banks, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; May & Sleeter, 2010). For instance, Banks and Banks (2010) assert that multicultural education should incorporate various perspectives and theories, including CRT, feminist theory, and postcolonial theory. Similarly, May and Sleeter (2010) propose a 'multicultural education praxis' that combines critical pedagogy, multicultural education, and antiracist education to address issues of power and equity in the classroom. Additionally, Ladson-Billings (1995a, 1995b, 1995c) advocates for a 'culturally relevant pedagogy' that draws on multiple theories, including CRP, to address the cultural and linguistic diversity of students. Table 10 below summarises the analytical approaches used in this research study.

Table 10: Summary of analytical approaches underpinning this research study

Paradigms	Summary	Application to research study
Critical Interpretivism (CI)	• The natural setting provides the data for answering identified research questions • An understanding of the phenomenon being researched is seen as the ultimate goal of the research study • Knowledge generated is relative to context, culture, values and beliefs • Relationship between researchers and participants is interactive, participatory and cooperative • Critically explores peoples' perceptions, actions and reactions toward a subject matter	Using this approach, I conducted in-depth interviews and focus groups with student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds to gather their perspectives on intercultural education and culturally responsive practices in Irish schools. The data collected was analysed using a critical lens, considering the influence of social and cultural factors on their experiences and perspectives. The study findings are used to identify patterns and themes that emerge and develop an understanding of the experiences of student and beginning teachers and parents in relation to intercultural education and culturally responsive pedagogies in schools. The findings informed recommendations for developing intercultural education and culturally responsive practices, specifically focusing on the perspectives and needs of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds.

Critical Realism (CR)	• Knowledge cannot be seen from one perspective avoiding monopolisation of knowledge • Social realities and institutions influence the way we see the world • Social researchers must be critical when examining social issues • Critical of social systems that influence the production and understanding of knowledge as well as the positionality of researchers	I engaged a critical realist lens to analyse the data collected through the interviews and focus groups, considering both the objective and subjective aspects of the experiences and perspectives of the participants. I also considered the broader societal and historical context in which the experiences of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds take place and how this context shapes the experiences and perspectives of the participants.
Critical Race Theory (CRT)	• Racism and racial inequities are endemic in societies and need to be examined when addressing social issues • CRT in education allows for a critical examination of and understanding of race inequity in education systems • Race is a reflection of social structures and cultural representations within societies	I applied critical race methodology, which centres the voices and experiences of marginalised communities in the research process, by involving student and beginning teachers (especially from minority cultural backgrounds) and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds. The findings were used to identify patterns and themes that emerge and develop an understanding of the experiences of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds in relation to intercultural education and culturally responsive practices in Irish schools.
Culturally Responsive/Relevant Pedagogies (CRP)	• Culture is essential to teaching and learning • Focuses on the cognitive development of all students irrespective of their socio-cultural backgrounds • Promotes cultural consciousness and competence among teachers and students • Strongly affirms students' cultural diversity as a strength and not as problematic • Entails teachers making an effort to get adequate knowledge about	A culturally responsive framework was used to analyse the data collected through interviews and focus groups, considering how the experiences and perspectives of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds are shaped by their cultural backgrounds and how these perspectives can inform the development of intercultural education and culturally responsive practices in Irish schools. Also, I discussed teaching experiences and approaches related to teaching in culturally diverse classrooms with student and beginning teachers. The findings were used to make recommendations for improving intercultural education and culturally responsive practices in

	students' cultural experiences to teach them effectively • Promotes cross-cultural communications and relationships with students and parents	schools, with a specific focus on the perspectives and needs of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds.

6.5 Sampling design and recruitment of participants

Scholars have argued that the choice of sampling is the most crucial decision to be taken "in the research process because it helps to inform the quality of inferences made by the researcher" (Esposito, 2011, p. 65; Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). A researcher's choice of research sampling must be critically informed by the research study's goals or objectives (Onwuegbuzie & Collins, 2007). This research study adopted the purposive sampling technique, defined by Nieuwenhuis (2008, p. 78) as an instance where "participants are selected because of some defining characteristics that make them the holders of data needed for the study." With the purposive sampling technique, researchers select research participants based on the perception that participants possess vital knowledge and experience relevant to answering a study's research question. In other words, there is a form of intentionality in recruiting participants when using the purposive sampling technique in qualitative research (Best & Kahn, 2006).

This research study examines the development of CRP and intercultural education in Irish secondary schools, utilising two participant groups: migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds in Ireland and student and beginning teachers in Irish secondary schools. The selection of student and beginning teachers from minority cultural backgrounds was a deliberate choice to obtain data that can contribute to answering the research questions (see Miles & Huberman, 1994). The sampling approach adopted is purposive, consistent with Patton's (2002, p. 30) recommendation for qualitative inquiry to focus on purposefully selected relative samples.

To recruit parents as participants for this research project, I collaborated with Non-governmental Organizations (NGOs) that specialise in working with marginalised and minority communities in Ireland. I requested these NGOs to disseminate leaflets that provided details about the project, an invitation to participate in parent focus groups, and my contact information. As I had already established trusting relationships with many of these participants through my volunteer work with

several of these NGOs, it was easier to approach them and seek their participation. To recruit student and beginning teachers, I first contacted two ITE providers. I then emailed entire cohorts of student-teachers, introducing myself in a short video, providing details about the research project and invitation to participate in a one-off interview. I also sent multiple follow-up emails, but responses were slow, possibly due to the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic. I utilised social media to reach out to teacher bodies such as the Irish National Teachers' Organisation in Ireland. I successfully recruited eight student and beginning teachers from minority cultural backgrounds.

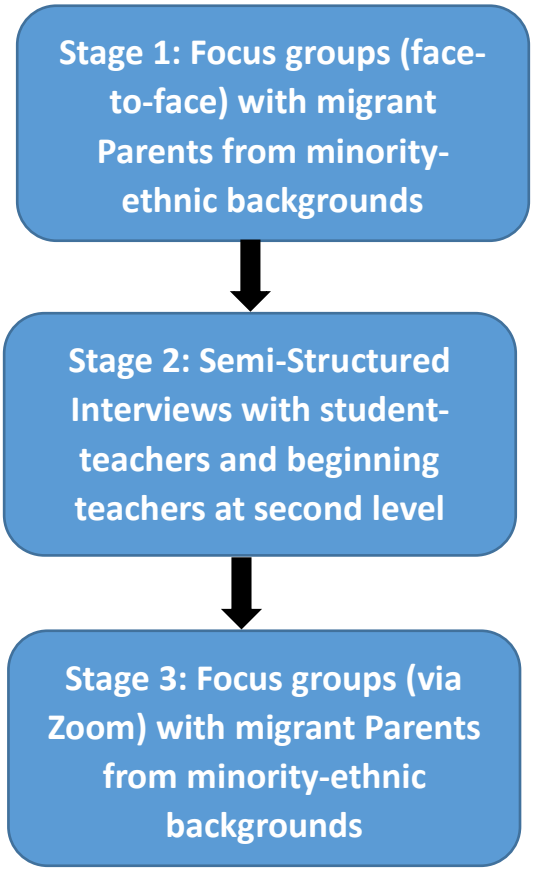
Additionally, my supervisor helped to recruit minority participants for this study by contacting students she knew directly. Despite efforts to recruit primary-level student-teachers, the recruitment efforts were unsuccessful, even after obtaining a research ethics review and approval from only one primary teacher education provider who supported the study in principle. I received only one response from a student-teacher interested in being a part of the research study after sending the invitation emails.

6.6 Data collection methods

The methods used for data collection for this research study include focus group discussions and semi-structured interviews. Prior to the commencement of my fieldwork, desk research was conducted to inform the fieldwork design. At this stage, I reviewed relevant literature on multiculturalism and intercultural education, culturally responsive and relevant pedagogies, teacher education, parental involvement in educational research and the Irish education system. The knowledge from the desk research provided insights that were helpful in developing the research guides (see Appendices 13 and 16) used for data collection.

The focus groups with the parent participants provided a conducive environment for the participants to express their opinions and perspectives with the support of their peers (Maher, 2007). This approach allowed for "greater depth of insight due to the synergy generated within the group" (Maher, 2007, p. 122). The parents in this study were all migrants with minority-ethnic backgrounds, enabling them to relate to one another's experiences during the focus groups. Additionally, semi-structured interviews with student and beginning teachers were conducted to prioritise individual beliefs and perspectives, providing a more nuanced understanding of the research topic.

Figure 3: Fieldwork plan



The fieldwork for my research consisted of three stages, as shown in the above Figure 3. The first stage involved conducting face-to-face focus groups (n=5) with migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds. The second stage involved conducting semi-structured interviews (n=16) with student and beginning teachers at the secondary level, utilising Zoom video conferencing due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing restrictions in Ireland. The final stage involved conducting focus groups (n=3) via Zoom with migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds. I made the decision to conduct additional focus groups with parents. This decision was prompted by the initial focus of the study on primary-level education and the subsequent challenges encountered in accessing schools, teachers, and primary-level student-teachers. Recognising the need to align the parent data with the student and beginning teacher data, I determined that it was crucial to gather more specific insights into parents' experiences with second-level schooling.

Although the first set of focus groups included parents with children in both primary and second-level schools, the primary selection criterion was based on having children in primary schools. Considering that many of the parents (n=13) also had children in second-level schools, I deemed it necessary to conduct additional focus groups specifically targeting parents' experiences with

second-level schooling. Furthermore, conducting the second round of focus groups allowed for a deeper exploration of overlapping themes that emerged from the initial focus groups. It also provided an opportunity for new themes to surface, enhancing the richness and depth of the data collected.

Initially, I planned to use a Participatory Action Research approach with a Learning Study approach and explore the voices of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds to develop CRP with teachers in Irish primary schools. However, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, I had to adapt my research methods and instead use a more traditional qualitative approach with the guidance of my supervisor. My original research plan was to discuss the data and findings with teachers as part of my action research and consider the findings in the collaborative design of CRP, but that was not possible due to the pandemic. However, in the analysis process, the parents' data still provided valuable insight and connected well with the student and beginning teachers' findings, shedding light on the experiences of culturally diverse students in the classrooms from the parents' perspectives.

6.6.1 Focus group discussion with parents

Patton (1990, p. 173) defines focus groups as "open-ended interviews with groups of five to eight people on specially targeted or focus issues." Thomas and Brubaker (2000, p. 154) suggest that focus groups have an interesting benefit for researchers because they allow research participants to "amplify their answers or to digress from the central topic in ways that prove useful to the investigator." Additionally, when research participants share similar backgrounds, focus groups can provide a safe space where they can voice their perspectives with peers (Patton, 1990; Wellington, 2000). This was the case with the migrant parents from minority-ethnic backgrounds who participated in the focus groups in this research study.

With these advantages in mind, focus groups were conducted with parents in the study in the hope that they would feel less threatened and that fruitful conversations would develop where participants could share their experiences and support each other in expressing their perspectives and ideas. It should be noted that focus groups provide an avenue for participants to share their perspectives and experiences, as well as collectively with the views of other participants in response to the questions being raised by a researcher (Bogdan & Biklen, 2003; Patton, 2002). In a similar vein, Wellington (2000, p. 125) posits that "members of the group together in a suitable environment, can stimulate or 'spark each other off.'" This study observed instances of parents

'sparking each other off' during the focus group discussions. A specific example involved parents sharing personal views about the need for a culturally diverse teaching population. One parent mentioned never having "seen a Black teacher" in Irish schools, which sparked a conversation about the representation of minorities within the school system and the potential benefits of having teachers who could relate to their children's experiences. This exchange demonstrates how focus groups can create a supportive environment where participants can stimulate each other's thinking and deepen the discussion of important topics.

In planning and conducting the focus groups, I was also aware of the potential challenges associated with this approach. As argued by Bogdan and Biklen (2003), participants may, for example, not be willing to share perceived sensitive and vital information within a group setting. Group conversations may also easily be moved away from the subject of discussion to other irrelevant matters, and some individual participants may dominate conversations, thus overshadowing the voices of others. This is why Fontana and Frey (2003, p. 73) opine that in focus groups, a researcher should strive to guarantee that all participants are given the platform to voice their perspectives "to ensure the fullest coverage of the topic." This is, however, not always easy as researchers must also be cautious not to forcefully coerce participants to share their experiences. Therefore, Anderson and Arsenault (1998, p. 208) caution that focus groups "are effective only if used properly," highlighting the importance of appropriate preparation and execution in using this method of data collection. In this study, five focus in-person groups took place in open and public spaces, and the remaining three focus groups were conducted via Zoom. Prior to the commencement of each focus group, as the researcher, I provided a clear explanation of the study's objectives and expectations. I also clarified my role as a PhD researcher. I introduced myself and provided some relevant background information:

> I am from Nigeria, and I am very interested in education, particularly inclusive and quality education for all. I have had the opportunity to study, work and live across different countries in Europe. I have experienced cultural diversity in my travels in Europe and with the changing socio-composition in Ireland due to the influx of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. I believe that it would be good for teachers in Ireland to be well-supported and well-prepared in culturally inclusive teaching and learning approaches to ensure that all students within their classrooms, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds, have access to quality education. Furthermore, I strongly believe that participants (parents or student and beginning teachers) can contribute to ensuring culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Irish schools by sharing their experiences, ideas and vision for the Irish education sector (Adebayo, 2020, personal fieldwork diary).

Despite the challenges inherent in engaging focus groups, the data collected in this study using this method proved useful in addressing the research question: What are the experiences, perspectives, and recommendations of parents from minority-ethnic backgrounds with regard to teaching and learning in culturally diverse classrooms?

For this research study, eight focus groups were conducted face-to-face and via Zoom between January and February 2020 with 30 parents from minority ethnic backgrounds, 23 mothers and seven fathers who were residents in Ireland between one and 20 years. Their children were enrolled in primary and/or secondary schools as required for participation in this research study. Parents' occupations included Medical Doctor, Engineer, IT professional, Nurse, Student, and full-time homemakers. Participants in the study were from minority (non-White) ethnic backgrounds. Twenty-four were from African countries, and six were from Asian countries.

The focus groups lasted between 60 to 120 minutes, with each group consisting of a minimum of 3 members and a maximum of 6 members. Each focus group was recorded with a smart device after participants gave consent. Table 11 provides a summary of the demographic characteristics of the parent participants involved in the focus groups conducted for this study. The first round of focus groups included parents identified as P1 to P20, while the second round of focus groups consisted of parents labelled as P21 to P30.

Table 11: Parent participants' backgrounds

P. No	Nationality	No Child/ren	Gender	Country of Origin	Years Living in Ireland	Highest Educational Qualification	Occupation
P1	Irish	4	Female	Nigeria	17	Secondary school	Unemployed
P2	Nigerian	2	Female	Nigeria	9 Months	Studying for a qualification	House Wife
P3	Nigerian	3	Female	Nigeria	18	Diploma	Sterile Technician
P4	Ghanian	4	Male	Ghana	12	Bachelor's Degree	IT Engineer
P5	Kenyan	2	Female	Kenya	5	High School	Hair Dresser

P6	Irish	4	Female	South Africa	20	Diploma	Medical Device Factory Worker
P7	South African	4	Female	South Africa	17	FETAC Level 5	Health Care Assistant
P8	South African	1	Female	South Africa	10	Diploma	Student
P9	Indian	2	Male	India	1	B. Tech	Engineer
P10	Nigerian and Irish	5	Female	Nigeria	17	Master's Degree	School Warden
P11	Irish and Nigerian	5	Female	Nigeria		Diploma	Social Worker
P12	Pakistani	3	Female	Pakistan	13	None	Housewife
P13	Filipino	1	Female	Philippines	4 Months	Bachelor's Degree	Architect
P14	Nigerian	3	Male	Nigeria	13	Cert. in Polymer Process	Process Technician
P15	Nigerian and Irish	3	Female	Nigeria	15	Bachelor's Degree	Nurse
P16	Nigerian and Irish	4	Male	Nigeria	15	MBBS/DCD	Medical Doctor
P17	Irish	3	Female	Nigeria	16	Bachelor's Degree	Quality Technician
P18	Irish and Congolese	3	Female	DR Congo	14	FETAC Level 5	Product Builder
P19	Cameroonian	3	Male	Cameroon	11	Advance Level	Nurse Assistant
P20	Irish	3	Male	Nigeria	15	Master's Degree	Structural Engineer

P21	Irish	3	Female	Nigeria	20	University Degree	Nurse
P22	Irish	3	Female	Nigeria	19	Master's Degree	Physiotherapist
P23	Irish	2	Male	India	16	Bachelor's Degree	Senior Physiotherapist
P24	Filipino and Irish	4	Female	Philippines	21	Master's Degree	Nurse
P25	Irish	3	Female	Philippines	21	Bachelor's Degree	Nurse
P26	Irish	3	Female	Nigeria	21	Diploma	Health Care Worker
P27	Zimbabwean	2	Female	Zimbabwe	6	Bachelor's Degree	Student
P28	Irish	1	Female	Nigeria	19	Master's Degree	Health Promoter
P29	Nigerian	2	Female	Nigeria	8	FETAC Level 6	Health Care Assistant
P30	Nigerian and Irish	1	Female	Nigeria	17	FETAC Level 6	Health Care Assistant

6.6.2 Semi-structured interviews with student and beginning teachers

Interviews are a standard instrument for data collection in qualitative research studies. Using interviews in qualitative research allows researchers "to ascertain participants' views, thoughts, values, beliefs, attitudes, feelings and deductions" (Maher, 2007, p. 123). The central goal of this research study is to explore the development of culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Irish secondary schools. Therefore, semi-structured interviews were used to collect in-depth data on the experiences of student and beginning teachers with cultural diversity and pedagogies in Irish secondary schools.

In the initial stage of interviews conducted with student and beginning teachers for this study, I clarified my position as a researcher and explained my interest in the research topic. Each conversation began with a discussion of the study's aims and objectives, as well as the expectations

of the participants. Similar to the focus groups with parents, I provided an explicit introduction of myself within the research field, using the following lines:

> I am from Nigeria, and I am very interested in education, particularly inclusive and quality education for all. I have had the opportunity to study, work and live across different countries in Europe. I have experienced cultural diversity in my travels in Europe and with the changing socio-composition in Ireland due to the influx of migrants, refugees and asylum seekers. I believe that it would be good for teachers in Ireland to be well-supported and well-prepared in culturally inclusive teaching and learning approaches to ensure that all students within their classrooms, irrespective of their cultural backgrounds, have access to quality education. Furthermore, I strongly believe that participants (parents or student and beginning teachers) can contribute to ensuring culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Irish schools by sharing their experiences, ideas and vision for the Irish education sector (Adebayo, 2020, personal fieldwork diary).

A major criticism against using interviews as a data collection method is that power relations between researchers and participants may not be fully recognised and acknowledged (Maher, 2007; Scott & Usher, 1999). Hence, it is crucial that interviewees are allowed "the freedom to identify their own priorities" (Maher, 2007, p. 124). Researchers must be aware of multiple factors that can affect interviewees' responses, including social classification, gender, race and ethnicity, which can function like lenses through which participants interpret and respond to questions (Scott & Usher, 1999). Another criticism against interviews in qualitative research is that some research participants may intentionally leave out or provide certain information based on their perception of the researcher (Maher, 2007). In the interviews conducted with student and beginning teachers, my 'outsider' positionality had a positive impact to some extent. It prompted interviewees, particularly those from minority backgrounds, to share more details about their experiences within the education context. However, student and beginning teachers from majority backgrounds (White Settled Irish) expressed anxiety about discussing their experiences with cultural diversity.

To mitigate potential discomfort or apprehension, I shared the interview guide with all participants before the interviews. This was done with an understanding of the sensitivity of the research topic and to ensure that participants were aware of what to expect during the interview. For example, one participant shared her initial anxiety about the interview but ultimately realised the importance of culturally inclusive teaching and learning in light of the increasing diversity in Irish society. She felt that researchers 'like' me would advocate for such practices in Irish schools, which made her more open to sharing necessary information:

> But to be honest, when I got your questions, I was like, how am I going to answer these questions […] And it is a huge topic, and people like yourself are gonna push for more of this to happen (White Settled Irish T6)

Another participant expressed appreciation for the importance of the research study and its sensitivity, noting that some Irish researchers and teachers may be interested in the topic but may not know where to begin. She was also willing to share her experiences with me:

> […] like your project that you are doing is very, very important, because sometimes people want to, but they don't even know where to start […] (Nigerian Irish T12)

During the fieldwork for my research study, the world experienced a global pandemic in the form of COVID-19, and social distancing regulations were introduced by governments around the world, including the Irish government. Consequently, I could not continue conducting face-to-face meetings with research participants for data collection. With the support of my supervisor and approval from the University of Galway Research Ethics Committee, I had to change my data collection approach to using online platforms such as emails and Zoom video conferencing to contact and collect data from research participants. Scholars have described this data collection medium as internet-mediated research and argue that it generates as rich data as traditional research methods (Bowker & Tuffin, 2004; Gray et al., 2020; Lobe, Morgan & Hoffman, 2020).

Undoubtedly, internet-mediated research has proven helpful for the continuity of research during the COVID-19 pandemic and for accessing research participants that may be difficult to reach even during a 'normal' season without a pandemic (Bybee et al., 2021). Hine (2004) suggests that conducting interviews through online platforms such as Zoom video conferencing can provide greater autonomy for participants to engage critically than face-to-face meetings. With video conferencing, participants have greater control over their environment and can engage in the interview from a more comfortable and familiar setting. This can lead to more open and honest communication, as participants may feel less intimidated or anxious in their own space. Moreover, video conferencing allows more flexibility in scheduling interviews, as participants can join from any location with an internet connection (Bybee et al., 2021). On the other hand, a significant criticism or limitation of internet-mediated research is that researchers might miss important body movements and cues from research participants that might be useful in providing nuances to the data collected (MacNamara et al., 2020).

A total of 16 interviews were conducted with student and beginning teachers at the second level. Each interview, lasting between 45 and 90 minutes, was recorded via the Zoom platform after the research participants gave consent. It should be mentioned that the rationale for including a small number of beginning teachers in this study is that there were not many student-teachers from minority backgrounds in a single cohort of student-teachers in a teacher education programme. Therefore, in order to include the perspectives of student-teachers (or very recently graduated teachers) from non-Irish backgrounds, I had to recruit some recently qualified teachers (1-2 years, post-qualification) from several past student-teacher cohorts. The inclusion of these beginning teachers added rich insights into the experiences of minority teachers working in culturally diverse Irish second-level classrooms. Table 12 provides an overview of the student and beginning teacher participants.

Table 12: Student and beginning teachers' demography as at the interview

P. NO	Nationality/Ethnicity	Subjects Taught	Ethos of School	Gender (M/F)	Classes Taught
T1	Irish	Accounting and Business	Catholic	F	1st, 2nd, 5th, LCs and TYs
T2	New Zealand	History, English, Religion and CSPE	Catholic	M	1st and 2nd
T3	Irish	Business and CSPE	Catholic	M	1st and 2nd
T4	Irish	Science and Biology	Multidenominational	F	1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th and TYs
T5	Irish	Business, Enterprise and Maths	Multidenominational	F	3rd, 4th, 5th, TYs
T6	Irish	History and CSPE	Catholic	F	1st, 2nd and TYs
T7	Irish	History	Catholic	F	5th
T8	Irish	Spanish and English	Multidenominational	F	1st, 2nd, 5th and TYs
T9	Irish	Geography and English	Catholic	F	1st, 2nd, 5th and TYs

T10	Spanish	English, History and Spanish	Catholic	M	1st, 2nd and TYs
T11	Irish/Nigerian	Physical Education and CSPE	Multidenominational	F	1st, 2nd, 3rd and 4th
T12	Nigerian Irish	Religious Education and Music	Catholic	F	All classes/years
T13	Nigerian Irish	Accounting and Business	Catholic	M	1st, 2nd, 4th, 5th and 6th
T14	Zimbabwean Irish	Geography, History and Sociology	Catholic	M	1st, 2nd, 3rd, 4th and TYs
T15	Irish Traveller	History	Catholic	M	All classes/years
T16	Yemeni/Serbian/Hungarian	French and Spanish	Catholic	F	All classes/years

6.7 Data analysis

According to McCracken (1988, p. 12), "every qualitative interview is, potentially, a pandora's box generating various and abundant data." For Bazeley (1999, p. 279), a researcher conducting data analysis strives to "gather whatever data is at hand, experimenting and exploring to find answers to the questions he or she has set." As large amounts of data were collected for this study, analyses processes needed to be carefully planned and implemented. The data analysis strategies adopted for this research study aimed to explore the following research questions listed below:

Central Research Question:

What are the experiences and perspectives of student and beginning teachers and of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with regard to teaching and learning in culturally diverse classrooms in the Republic of Ireland?

Sub-questions:

A. What are the experiences of student and beginning teachers with teaching in culturally diverse classrooms in Ireland?

B. What are student and beginning teachers' understandings of and experiences with culturally responsive pedagogies?

C. In how far, and in what ways, are the understandings, perspectives and pedagogical practices of student and beginning teachers from cultural majority and minority backgrounds similar or different?

D. What are Irish student and beginning teachers' perspectives regarding their preparation for culturally diverse classrooms, and what recommendations do they have for teacher education?

E. What are the perspectives and recommendations of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with regard to culturally responsive teaching and learning?

In addition to keeping a journal during the fieldwork, I wrote memos during the data analysis process. These reflective notes served as a valuable tool in enabling the extraction of meaning from the data and mapping research activities. This approach is aligned with the perspective of Birk, Chapman, and Francis (2008), who posit that memos play a crucial role in the research process by providing a means to make sense of the data and support the researcher in their research activities.

In this research study, I employed the reflexive Thematic Analysis (TA) approach as outlined by Braun and Clarke (2006, 2020) for data analysis. TA is a qualitative research method that involves identifying, analysing, and reporting themes within data (Boyatzis, 1998; Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2020; Tuckett, 2005). This approach aligns with the CR perspective (Sayer, 1992, 2000), which emphasises the need for researchers to approach social issues with a critical lens. Through the use of TA, researchers are able to comprehend and communicate the meaning of the data to the reader (Braun & Clarke, 2006). This analytical method enables researchers to explore, identify and analyse emerging patterns from data collected in a qualitative research study. Furthermore, using TA as an analytical framework offers researchers flexibility in applying theoretical approaches (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2020). In line with TA approach, I kept reflective notes to record initial thoughts about the data which helped me to contextualise, interrogate and make sense of the data. The notes also aided me in drafting, testing and explaining themes and ideas emerging from the data. Memoing was particularly useful in the initial stages of data analysis, where it was necessary to gain a comprehensive understanding of the data. Through the use of memos, I was able to "maintain momentum" throughout the data analysis process (Birk, Chapman, & Francis, 2008, p. 74).

The data analysis approach employed in this research study reflected Richards' (2005, p. x) observation that even though "methodologists may decry it, and experienced researchers may deny it, researchers approaching qualitative research are likely to meet data before they meet method." Prior to commencing the research study, I engaged in attending conferences and lectures on the Irish education system and actively interacted with migrant communities in Ireland. Furthermore, a critical source of insight into the current state of culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Irish schools has been through reviewing the outputs of the Diversity in Initial Teacher Education and Access to Post-primary Teaching research projects led by my supervisor and colleagues at the School of Education, University of Galway. I, therefore, met data and findings related to my study before beginning my own data collection.

6.7.1 Process of coding and developing themes

According to Maher (2007, p. 126), "coding is a complex process by which the researcher labels units of meaning within text according to a system likened to indexing a manuscript." Through coding, researchers can actively interact with data while systematically developing categories and themes that facilitate the interpretation and understanding of the data (Miles & Huberman, 1994).

To ensure rigour and dependability in my research, I maintained a transparent documentation of the coding and theme development process. Initially, I familiarised myself with the data by thoroughly reading the transcripts multiple times. The coding process commenced even before the entire dataset was available, and preliminary codes were refined and expanded as more data became accessible.

Subsequently, I imported the transcriptions of the interviews and focus groups into NVivo qualitative software, utilising identified preliminary codes. I then engaged in line-by-line 'open coding,' drawing from a grounded theory technique (Strauss & Corbin, 1990). This process involved "breaking down, examining, comparing, conceptualising and categorising data," as described by Strauss and Corbin (1990) cited in O'Donoghue (2007, p. 61). I carefully re-read areas with sparse coding to ensure that no important information was overlooked. The use of NVivo qualitative software for data coding and analysis facilitated efficient planning and identification of "precious elements in a text" akin to uncovering "specks of gold" in the data, as highlighted by Tesch (1987, p. 235).

Figures 4 and 5 depict excerpts of the coding process utilised for the data collected from parents and student and beginning teachers, respectively. Meanwhile, Table 13 and Table 14 illustrate the codes generated in NVivo for the data collected from the parents and student and beginning teacher participants, respectively. These visual aids serve to provide a detailed overview of the coding procedures.

Figure 4: Excerpt of the coding process from the parents' data

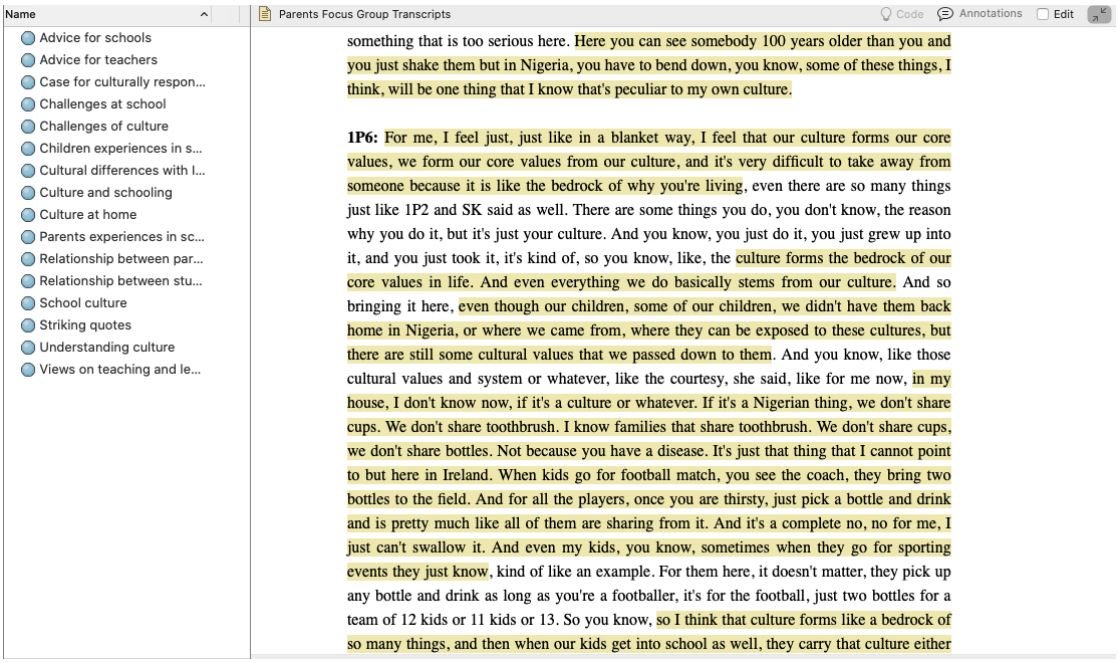


Figure 5: Excerpt of the coding process from the student and beginning teachers' data

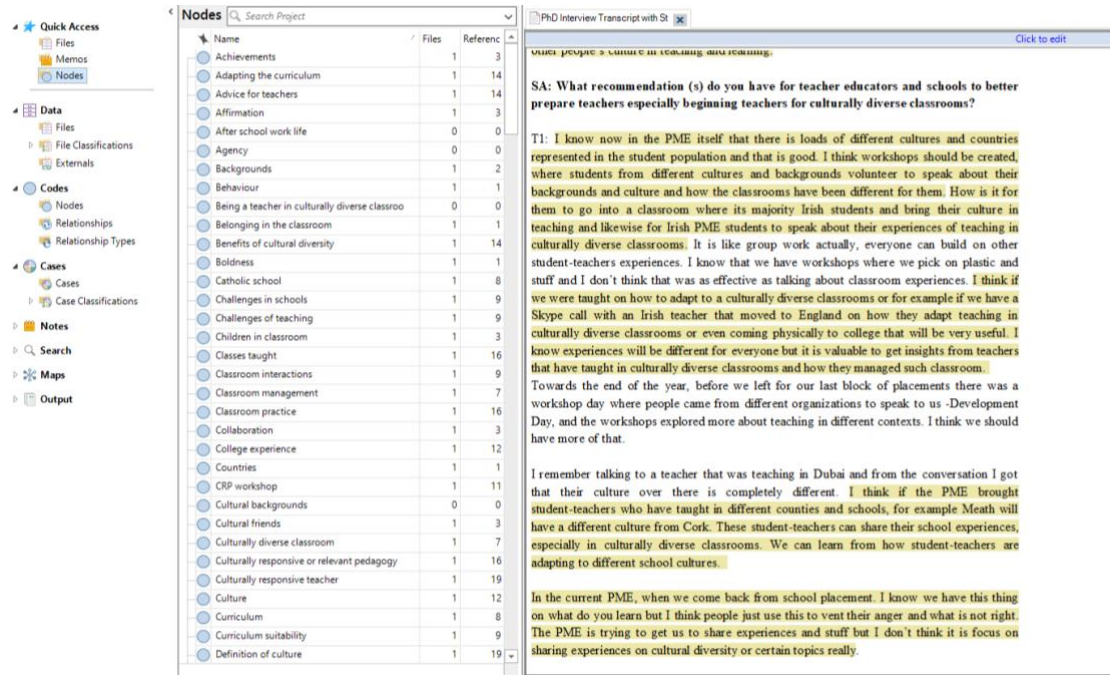


Table 13: Sample of codes generated from the parents' data

Name	Files	References
Advice for schools	1	15
Advice for teachers	1	29
Case for culturally responsive pedagogies	1	16
Challenges at school	1	10
Challenges of culture	1	6
Children's experiences in school	1	20
Cultural differences with Ireland	1	17
Culture and schooling	1	7
Culture at home	1	15
Parents' experiences in school	1	16
Relationship between parents and teachers/ schools	1	7
Relationship between students and teachers	1	11
School culture	1	5
Striking quotes	1	4
Understanding culture	1	23
Views on teaching and learning	1	4

Table 14: Sample of codes generated from the student and beginning teachers' data

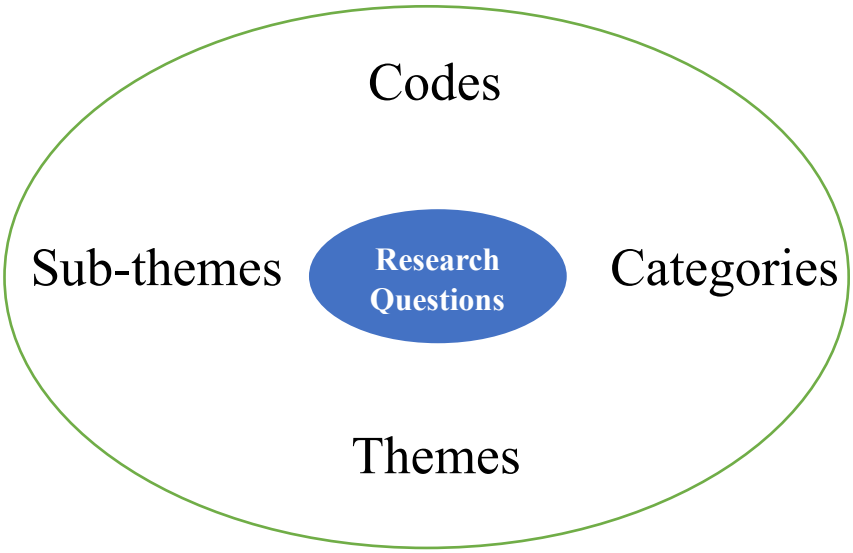
Name	Files	References
Achievements	1	3
Adapting the curriculum	1	14
Advice for teachers	1	14
Affirmation	1	3
Backgrounds	1	2
Behaviour	1	1
Belonging in the classroom	1	1
Benefits of cultural diversity	1	14
Boldness	1	1
Catholic school	1	8
Challenges in schools	1	9
Challenges of teaching	1	9
Children in classroom	1	3
Classes taught	1	16
Classroom interactions	1	9
Classroom management	1	7
Classroom practice	1	16
Collaboration	1	3
College experience	1	12
Countries	1	1
CRP workshop	1	11
Cultural friends	1	3
Culturally diverse classroom	1	7

A selection of transcripts and codes were independently reviewed by and critically reviewed with my supervisor to ensure validity and reflexivity in the analysis process. The codes were then grouped into themes by identifying larger patterns across the dataset, and a directory of themes and

sub-themes was created. Participant quotations were filed under each heading to maintain the fidelity of themes to the data. In developing the themes, my approach to coding and theme development aimed to incorporate both descriptive and interpretive elements. The interpretive element drew on my theoretical lenses to consider patterns that may not be directly evident in the data. Following guidance from Braun and Clarke (2006, 2020), questions such as 'what story does this theme tell?' and 'how does this theme fit into the overall story of the data?' were used to generate themes.

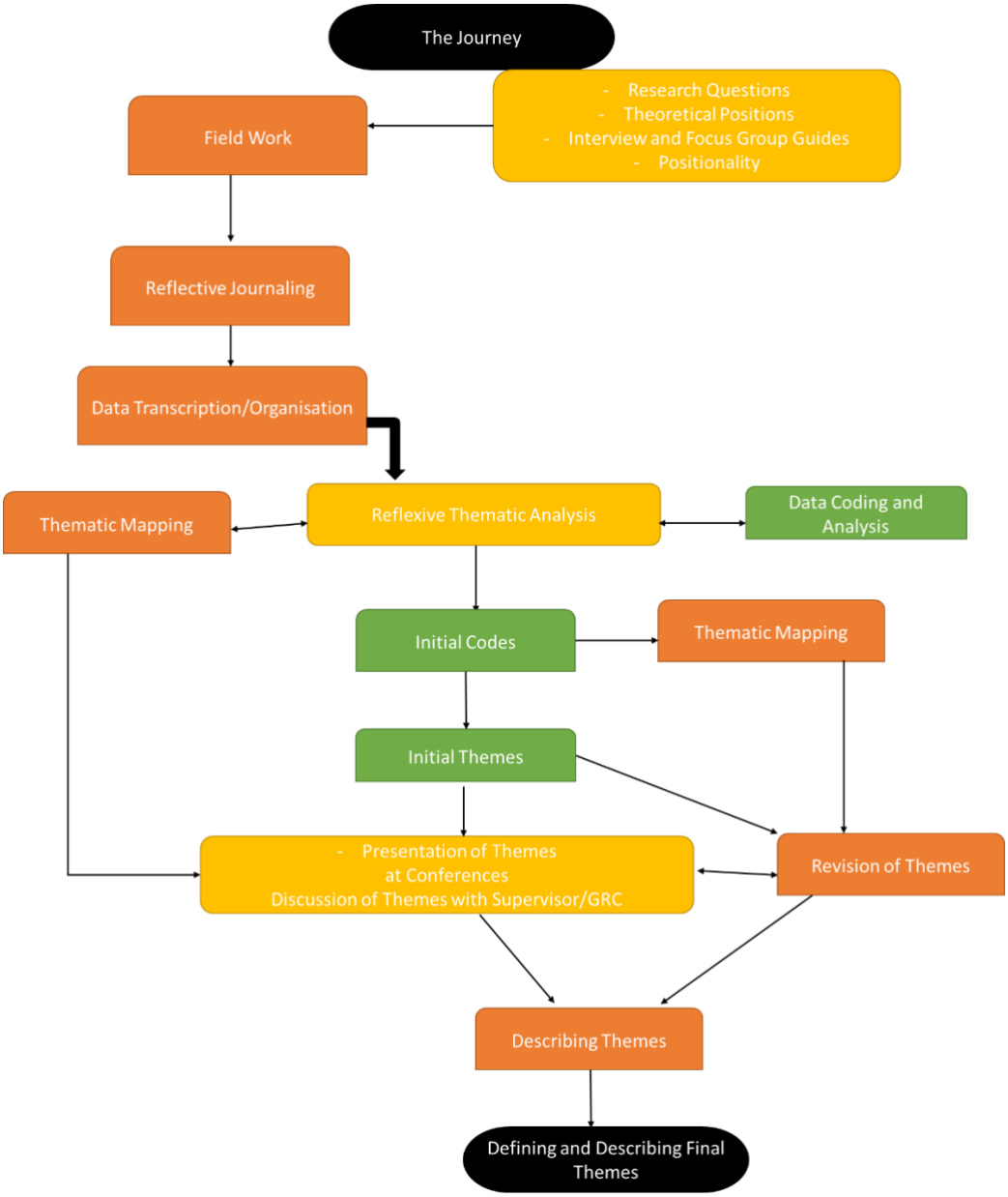
Writing was considered an integral part of the analysis process, as it helped to refine the boundaries of themes and to establish the relationships between themes and their content. To ensure balance in the final analysis, I actively sought participant experiences that diverged from the emerging themes. Quotations were re-read in their original context to ensure their credible reflection. Figure 6 shows the process from data coding to generating themes and sub-themes.

Figure 6: The analytical process – from codes to themes



6.7.2 The 'messy' process of data analysis

Figure 7: The journey to developing themes



Prior to going into the fieldwork, I had some research questions and a sense of a theoretical framework – CRP and CRT of education - underpinning my research study. I developed interview and focus group guides for the field work and was conscious of my positionality. I reflected on my experience as a migrant researching the Irish education system and how I will be received by Irish student and beginning teachers and parents of migrant minority ethnic backgrounds. After each interview and focus group, I noted entries in my fieldwork diary.

Moreover, I shared the preliminary findings from my data analysis at various national and international conferences. I received constructive feedback from experts in the field, which further deepened my thinking and enriched my data analysis. The conferences where I presented the preliminary findings of my research included the School of Education, University of Galway's Post-graduate Research Seminar (2021, 2022), the Educational Studies Association of Ireland's Annual Conference (2022), the Comparative and International Education Society's Annual Conference (2021, 2022), and the European Conference on Educational Research (2021, 2022). Additionally, I regularly shared and discussed these findings with my supervisor and presented them at my review meetings with my Graduate Research Committee (GRC) at my university. The feedback received from these meetings was instrumental in refining the initial and establishing the final themes.

6.8 Validity and reliability in the current research

In academic research, regardless of the methodological framework employed, ensuring trustworthiness, research accuracy, and data validation is important (Angen, 2000; Creswell, 2007). As Stake (2005, p. 455) notes, data collected during the research process "faces hazardous passage from writing to reading," and researchers must take measures to safeguard this transition. In this study, I presented evidence to establish the credibility of the data, demonstrating that the findings are "reasonably likely to be accurate and appropriate" (Denscombe, 2007, p. 297). To ensure rigour, external checks were employed during the data analysis process through the involvement of my GRC and supervisor. Following Creswell's (2007, p. 207) concept of a "peer debriefer," my GRC and supervisor played a critical role in keeping me accountable by asking challenging questions about my methods, meanings, and interpretations, and providing a supportive space for reflection and discussion. The annual review meetings with my GRC and regular supervision sessions with my supervisor were invaluable opportunities for obtaining critical feedback, gaining clarity, and refining my research ideas and processes.

In terms of the confirmability of this research study, I have critically acknowledged my positionality in the previous chapter, aligning with the belief of Smith and Deemer (2002) that researchers must recognise themselves "as practical and moral beings" and acknowledge the influence of their "historical, cultural, and gendered ways of being" in their research (as cited in Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 205). In other words, I acknowledge that my personal experiences, beliefs, and values are not separate from the process of conducting this research study. However,

to achieve validity, it is crucial that the research results "accurately reflect the phenomenon [being] studied" (Morse & Richards, 2002, p. 168). Similarly, research reliability can be established by demonstrating that "if it were to be carried out on a smaller group of respondents in a similar context [however defined], then similar results would be found" (Cohen, Manion, & Morrison, 2000, p. 17).

Given the qualitative nature of this research study and the recognition that research is "situated in both context and time" (Maher, 2007, p. 128), it is acknowledged that what is considered fact and truth is significantly influenced by my positionality and viewpoint as a researcher (Nelson & Gould, 2005). However, following the recommendations of Morse and Richards (2002), as cited by Maher (2007, p. 129), validity and reliability can be achieved in qualitative research through three stages: rigour during the design phase, rigour during data collection, data analysis and rigour during the write-up. In this study, interview and focus group protocols were developed in collaboration with my supervisor, and revisions were made accordingly. Subsequently, the protocols were reviewed and approved by the University of Galway Research Ethics Committee, ensuring adherence to ethical standards.

As previously mentioned, desk research was conducted before the commencement of fieldwork. A rigorous review of relevant literature and meaningful interactions with key educational stakeholders, including teachers, student-teachers, teacher educators, parents, students, and school administrators, informed the development of the research questions and provided a solid background for the study. Under the guidance and support of my supervisor and GRC, a meticulous approach was taken in designing the research. For instance, pilot focus group/interview sessions were conducted, and transcripts were reviewed and discussed with my supervisor, leading to slight revisions in the focus group/interview guides and strategies for engaging participants in conversation and eliciting detailed responses. Furthermore, due to the COVID-19 pandemic and social distancing policies, data collection with student and beginning teachers and some parents had to be transitioned to an internet-supported platform. This shift to online fieldwork was made possible with the invaluable support and assistance of my supervisor and GRC.

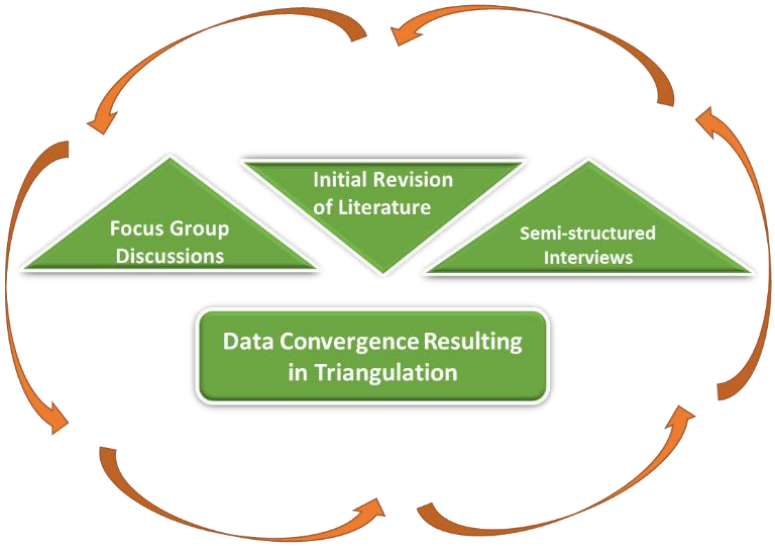
Thorough planning was undertaken to ensure the successful execution of the fieldwork phase. Moreover, this research study considered the importance of incorporating diverse voices and including participants with relevant knowledge and experiences who could contribute valuable information towards addressing the research questions.

6.8.1 Achieving triangulation

The preliminary desk research conducted before the fieldwork, coupled with the deliberate inclusion of diverse voices in this study, serves as a robust foundation for data triangulation in accordance with research standards. Specifically, by incorporating the perspectives of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds, this study aligns with Ladson-Billing's (1995, p. 237) assertion that "the field of multicultural education is complex, and no one measure alone can sufficiently capture (its) complexity." Emphasising the importance of considering multiple viewpoints as an approach to investigating the intricacies of multiculturalism or culturally diverse education, this study adheres to the principles of data triangulation as advocated by Guyton and Wesche (2005).

The findings derived from the data collected from student and beginning teachers, as well as from parents, will be presented separately in the forthcoming findings section. Subsequently, a critical analysis will be conducted in the discussion section, comparing, and contrasting the findings from these two distinct participant groups. This allows for a comprehensive examination of the data and facilitates a deeper understanding of the complex dynamics and interplay between student and beginning teachers' perspectives and parental experiences within the research context. See Figure 8 below for the process of triangulation adopted for this research study.

Figure 8: Process of triangulation for research study



6.9 Ethical issues considered

The research study exhibits a low risk of ethical concerns, as appropriate measures were taken to ensure informed consent from all research participants prior to conducting focus groups and semi-structured interviews. Information letters, interview guides, and consent forms were provided to participants during the recruitment process (see Appendices). Sufficient time (2-3 weeks) was given to participants to review the research protocols and seek clarifications or ask questions from the researcher. Participants were also explicitly informed of their right to withdraw their interview/focus group data from the study at any time without consequence. Additionally, participants were informed that transcripts would be shared upon request to confirm their perspectives.

6.9.1 Anonymity and confidentiality

The privacy and confidentiality of all research participants in this study were of utmost importance and were rigorously upheld. To ensure confidentiality, the following measures were implemented by the researcher:

- Secure Devices for Audio Recordings: Only secured devices were used for audio recordings to prevent unauthorised access. Hard copies of data were stored on campus in a locked cabinet at the Hardiman Research Building, University of Galway, ensuring physical security.
- Secure Storage of Electronic Data: Electronic data containing personal information were stored exclusively in the University of Galway One Drive, which is password-protected and encrypted during data transfer or transportation. Access to this data was limited to the researcher and the project supervisor, ensuring strict control over data access.
- Use of Pseudonyms: Pseudonyms were used to protect the identity of schools, parents, teachers, and pupils, ensuring that their real names were not used in any research materials or publications.
- Avoidance of Email for Sensitive Information: Research data containing sensitive information were not collected or disseminated via email, as email communication may pose potential security risks.

These measures were meticulously implemented to safeguard the confidentiality of research participants and to adhere to ethical standards for data privacy.

6.9.2 Steps to make participants feel safe

Given the sensitive nature of this research study and the potential for participants to reflect on painful experiences with the education system in Ireland, appropriate measures were taken to ensure the safety and support of participants throughout the research process. These measures are elaborated below:

- Provision of Support Services Information: An information pack detailing support services available for teachers, pupils, and parents was prepared for participants. This included resources such as Mental Health Ireland, Aware (support for depression), Grow Community Mental Health Movement, National Parents Council, Children's Rights Alliance, Enable Ireland, Childline (24-hour helpline), and Samaritans (24/7 text message support service for anyone in emotional distress), among others.
- Creation of a Stress-Free Environment: Focus group and interview sessions were conducted in a relaxed and stress-free environment, with participants being given the option to withdraw at any time if they felt uncomfortable or distressed.
- Reflexivity in the Research Process: Reflexivity was maintained throughout the research process, ensuring that the researcher remained mindful of the potential impact of the study on participants and took appropriate actions to mitigate any potential distress.

Ethical considerations for this study primarily revolved around the concerns of student and beginning teachers and parents, particularly newly arrived migrants in Ireland.

Student and beginning teachers' Concerns: To address concerns of student and beginning teachers feeling threatened by external evaluation of their professional competencies, the research study solely focused on exploring their lived education experiences without evaluating their competencies. Also, I was not involved in the assessment of any of the participants.

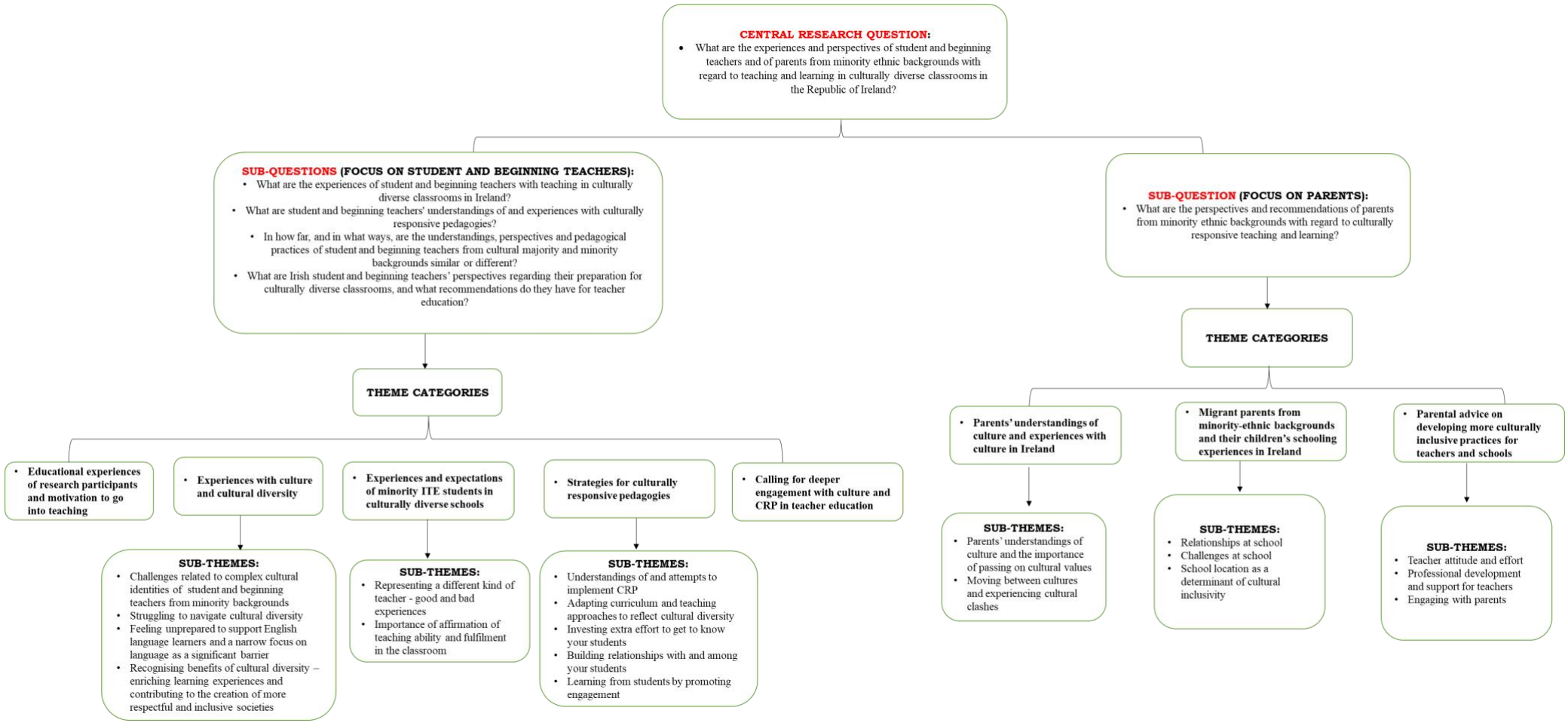
Parental Consent: To address parents' concerns, especially newly arrived migrants in Ireland, about participating in the research study, the information letter clearly outlined the importance of their contributions to the study and assured them of their right to withdraw at any time without consequence.

These measures were taken to ensure ethical integrity in the research study and prioritise the well-being and confidentiality of all participants involved.

6.10 Conclusion

This chapter has provided a comprehensive overview of this study's research paradigm and methods. The chapter has highlighted the importance of acknowledging the influence of values and beliefs on research and knowledge production processes. The ontological and epistemological approaches of critical interpretivism and critical realism were also discussed. The chapter has also addressed issues of research validity, reliability, and ethical considerations. Overall, this chapter has set the groundwork for the subsequent analysis and interpretation of the research data and contributes to a better understanding of the development of CRP and intercultural education in Irish secondary schools. The first part of the findings of this research study is presented in the next chapter. See Figure 9 below for an overview of the themes that will be discussed in the findings' chapters.

Figure 9: Overview of themes for the research study



SECTION 4 – RESEARCH FINDINGS

Chapter Seven - Findings: Student and beginning teachers' Experiences with and Perspectives about Cultural Diversity and Culturally Responsive Pedagogies in Irish Second-level Schools

7.1 Introduction

In this findings chapter, I present the results from the analysis of data collected with student and beginning teachers. A total of 16 in-depth semi-structured interviews were conducted. This chapter examines the experiences, understanding, and attitudes of student and beginning teachers towards culture and cultural diversity, pedagogies they employ in the classrooms in response to student cultural diversity, and suggestions for further developing CRP and intercultural education in Irish second-level schools.

The chapter begins with an examination of the participants' educational experiences and their motivations for pursuing a career in teaching. Subsequently, the present chapter delves into an examination of participants' experiences pertaining to culture and cultural diversity. Additionally, it proceeds to explore the experiences and expectations of minority ITE students within the context of culturally diverse schools. Lastly, the chapter concludes by presenting the perspectives of participants regarding strategies for CRP and emphasising the critical importance of incorporating culturally responsive approaches within teacher education programmes.

7.2 Educational experiences of research participants and motivation to go into teaching

A significant number of participants (n=10) in the present study reported positive experiences during their early years of schooling, primarily in Ireland, with many achieving high academic success. Participants in the study provided accounts of their experiences with teachers who had a profound impact on their career aspirations. One participant recounted the positive experience she had with a specific teacher who went above and beyond her expected responsibilities to support and motivate students. This teacher's commitment to their students left a lasting impression on the participant, inspiring her to pursue a career in education. Another participant expressed admiration

for her former teachers, describing them as intriguing individuals who brought a wealth of experience and inspiration into the classroom:

> *I saw my female teacher in a male dominated role […] she inspired me to become a teacher as well […] she went the extra mile for her students […]* - White Settled Irish T4

> *I had some very interesting teachers, and I think it just brought a richness, richness of experience and of how it can be done, and how you can be inspired […].* - White Settled Irish T9

However, several participants (n=5) from minority (other than White Settled Irish) backgrounds who had attended school in Ireland shared some difficult experiences particularly in relation to being the only individual of colour in their class/school and experiencing feelings of being marginalised. The participants' accounts of their school years shed light on the insufficient support they received from their schools. Their experiences were characterised by feelings of isolation and discrimination, stemming from a lack of representation and negative perceptions related to their complexion. Additionally, one participant, who was among a small number of Black students in their school, recounted instances of exclusion from the school choir based on stereotypes about their voice:

> *I had my primary and secondary school education all in [town], my primary school was mixed up till first class, and then the boys left, and it was run by a Nun, the principal was a Nun. And I was the only person of colour in the whole school. And yeah, I would have felt extremely ostracized as a child. And like I can fundamentally remember, like kids not wanting to hold my hand in like, the playground and games, they would want to move away from me […] Okay, so my complexion was like a disease in the sense. […] And I did constantly kind of feel the brunt of, of kind of racism within the school, and not any inclusion in the sense that, like, my ethnic background was never represented in the school, like ever.* – Irish Nigerian T11

> *[…] in secondary school, I went to an all-girls secondary school. Again, there was about six of us in the year, I was the only black girl in my class from first to third year. And then in fifth and sixth year, I was able to kind of mix between the subjects because we all had different subject choices for the Leaving Cert. So I had at least one Black person in every class except higher level Irish. And I did notice that sometimes we would be kind of discriminated against in terms of like, even school choir, there wasn't any black students in the school choir at a point. And later on, I found that it's because the teacher thought that my voice was too strong, or our voices were too strong, and we wouldn't be able to control them.* – Nigerian Irish T12

> *Looking back now in the cultural sense, there wasn't enough diversity. I was in a DEIS school. But I was still the only Black guy within the next two years and then the next one would have been my brother [...] And so if there's any, like, nasty racist comments, it's going to be affecting my family because we literally probably the only two, African Irish people there. And then we've always been taught, that education is big, so don't let people bring you down. So we were ticked skins very quickly.* – Nigerian Irish T13

Another participant with an Irish Traveller background recalled attending a 'segregated' school with limited staff resources:

> *And my first educational experience was in a segregated setting. So it was for Traveller children only. It was a preschool. So there was a group of us about 20 of us, and there was no mixing with other children, just Traveller children. And we'd be collected from school. And we had one staff member who was a Traveller, and there was 2-3 that were non-Travellers.* – Irish Traveller T15

Participants in this study generally reported having had a 'great' college experience in Ireland, with only two of the participants completing their first degrees outside of Ireland. The college experience provided 'opportunities for volunteering, mentoring and peer learning.' Several participants shared their experiences of a non-linear journey towards becoming a teacher. For some, the path was not straightforward, after their initial bachelor's degree, they subsequently pursued the PME at the university to fulfil their aspiration of becoming a teacher. Furthermore, the participants' experiences highlighted the effectiveness of targeted academic support for second-level students facing challenges in facilitating their access to higher education. This was exemplified by the case of an Irish Traveller participant who, due to feeling 'mentally exhausted,' deemed leaving school as the 'best solution.' However, after a couple of years, the participant successfully enrolled in a university through an Access programme, demonstrating the positive impact of such support in facilitating access to higher education.

The presence of positive relationships with former teachers emerged as a significant factor inspiring many participants to pursue a career in teaching. Participants highlighted the influence of highly committed former teachers who went beyond the call of duty to support their students. These teachers served as role models, and their friendly and supportive engagement within the classroom left a lasting impact on the participants, motivating them to choose a teaching profession:

> *There were a number of teachers who obviously influenced my decision to pursue teaching as a career. My history teacher in secondary school was fantastic […] he was much more open minded individual, I was probably aligned to his political worldview and I love his style of teaching. He allowed students to study in their own ways and he wasn't an autocrat, his view on teaching was something I really wanted and I thought I would like to model myself on his approach [...]* - White Settled Irish T3

> *So I kind of want to give back to teaching because without the teachers, I would have been really uncomfortable, but they really helped me enjoy what school is about* – Nigerian Irish T13

> *I had a good relationship with some of my teachers so much that it actually influenced me to go on and look at Agricultural Science, as teaching subject […]* - White Settled Irish T4

Despite many positive descriptions of teachers, two participants from minority backgrounds explained how negative experiences with former teachers inspired them to strive to 'be a better teacher;' that 'type of teacher that is inclusive.' These participants aspired to embody inclusivity in their teaching approach, particularly for culturally diverse students. The negative experiences they encountered with their former teachers highlighted a lack of effort in truly getting to know students from minority backgrounds. Simple acts such as learning students' names and paying attention to details were not given priority by their former teachers.

Participants' motivations for entering the teaching profession varied. Some had a long-standing desire to teach since childhood, while others pursued teaching due to the perceived benefits of flexibility, lifestyle, and job security. Additionally, a group of participants expressed a strong drive to support and empower students with the necessary assistance. In other words, having a defined sense of purpose for teaching was the inspiration behind the participants' decision to become teachers. For participants, teaching 'feels like it had a purpose rather than just making money' and provides the 'kindest tools to allow people to become whom they intend to be.'

7.3 Experiences with culture and cultural diversity

Upon analysing the data, participants' experiences with culture and cultural diversity in schools can be classified into the following sub-themes: challenges related to complex cultural identities of student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds; struggling to navigate cultural diversity; feeling unprepared to support English language learners and a narrow focus on language as a significant barrier; recognising benefits of cultural diversity – enriching learning experiences and contributing to the creation of more respectful and inclusive societies.

During the study, participants were requested to contemplate the significance of culture in relation to teaching. Their reflections revealed a shared understanding that culture encompasses a way of life and constitutes an individual's background. Participants expressed that culture involves various aspects, such as language, accepted behaviours, beliefs, religion, ethnicity, nationality, and even culinary practices. One participant aptly summarised the sentiment by stating that culture is easy to identify visually but challenging to articulate verbally. These findings highlight the participants' collective perception of culture as a multifaceted construct that shapes individuals' identities and influences their experiences in educational settings:

Well, culture is almost everything, is the language you speak to your commonly accepted behaviours and beliefs. Religion could be part of culture – Yemeni/Serbian/Hungarian T16

Culture is everything […] it's everything about the person, it's everything about their family […] about how they see the world, its language, its religion, its ethnicity, it's the way they live their daily lives – White Settled Irish T9

When I think of culture, what comes to my mind will be backgrounds, country of origin, nationality, religion, race, food, and ethnic groups – White Settled Irish T1

Culture is like to me. It's just like, the way you live your life and sees life and the perspective of life, and the way that you practice things and ideas and customs and things like that […] – Nigerian Irish T12

It [culture] is very easy to identify culture when you see it, whereas it can be very difficult to explain it – White Settled Irish T3

7.3.1 Challenges related to complex cultural identities of student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds

Participants from minority backgrounds in the study shared their personal experiences of struggling to explain their cultural identity to others. They expressed the challenges they faced in being understood and accepted when sharing their unique cultural backgrounds. One participant, who identified as Irish Nigerian, described the complexities of having a 'double identity' and navigating both Nigerian and Irish cultures. She spoke about her upbringing, including Nigerian traditions, food, and social interactions, while also acknowledging her Irish influences and experiences growing up in Ireland. This participant's story highlights the intricacies of balancing multiple cultural identities:

My culture, […] I am Nigerian. My parents are both Nigerians, I've grown up in a Nigerian home. I eat Nigerian food. And I have Nigerian friends. I enjoy going to Nigerian parties. […] Like that's all part of me. […] I am also Irish, and I've grown up here. And I have only been to Nigeria once in my life. And I was like 10 years old […] I think I have all the nice parts of our culture and stuff like that, kind of have a double identity in that way. For my Irish cultural part. And so for example, like the way, I grew up in Ireland, there are things that my White friends might joke about maybe like about schooling and just the culture, like the way they talk and the things that they find funny, like I can relate to sometimes, not everything that I say is a double thing […] – Nigerian Irish T12

Another participant, with a mixed heritage of Yemeni, Serbian, and Hungarian backgrounds, discussed the difficulties she encountered in different countries due to her diverse heritage. She described the labels and stereotypes she encountered, such as being called a 'totobob' (a term for a White person) in Gambia during her missionary work and being perceived as a Gypsy or terrorist

in Hungary. These experiences shed light on the challenges individuals from diverse backgrounds face in finding acceptance and understanding in different cultural contexts:

> *There is no guidebook to my culture. It's so random. Within culture, you have a set of values, that is developed by actual culture and your home culture and those values are the driving force of thinking, decisions and motivation. And that is why I believe it's so important to widen our perception of culture and as for me, what identifies me and to what I put all my values that drive who I am, is the fact that I'm a child of God. And only within that I was able to find peace and strength, because of my extremely mixed cultural background, and because nobody ever accepts me. If I decide to become for example, Hungarian. I went to the Gambia as a missionary/volunteer, and they called me totobob, which means a White person. And in Hungary, they call me Gypsy, and a terrorist, anything, but a White person. In Ireland, they positively discriminate me as a Spanish person, which I am not either […]*– Yemeni/Serbian/Hungarian T16

Furthermore, an Irish Nigerian participant shared his blended cultural upbringing, influenced by Nigerian Christianity and Irish influences. He explained how his cultural identity was shaped by being raised by Nigerian and Irish parents, incorporating elements from both backgrounds into his identity. This participant's narrative showcases the complexities and fusion of cultures experienced by individuals from diverse backgrounds:

> *And describing my own culture, I've been raised by Nigerian parents, and I've been bred by Irish parents [foster parents] […] to describe my culture will be I have a blended culture of Nigerian Christianity particularly Pentecostal. I've got Nigerian parents on one side, and I've got Irish parents on the other side, teaching me their type of culture. So by contrast, kinda like blend together.* – Irish Nigerian T13

An Irish Nigerian participant, for example, mentioned the hesitation she felt in sharing her cultural identity due to the perplexing reactions she often received. The struggle to explain cultural identity stemmed from the disconnect between her personal experiences and the limited perspectives of others:

> *Well, to be honest, I would tend to not share it [cultural identity], you know, it would only be if I got the weird look of, like, you keep saying you are Irish, but you are black. Then I would finally say, Oh, well, my dad's Nigerian, and then I would explain it and how my mom met my dad […]* – Irish Nigerian T11

The above personal stories collectively demonstrate the intricacies, struggles, and nuances associated with cultural identity for individuals from minority backgrounds. They highlight the importance of fostering understanding, acceptance, and cultural appreciation to create inclusive and supportive environments for all individuals.

7.3.2 Struggling to navigate cultural diversity

This sub-theme explores the experiences and challenges faced by some participants in teaching and learning in culturally diverse classrooms. The findings underscore the significance of adopting a culturally sensitive approach, implementing targeted support measures to address academic disparities, employing proactive strategies within schools, and addressing the fears and bolstering the confidence of student and beginning teachers as they navigate the complexities of cultural diversity.

Participants (n=4) expressed that students belonging to the Travellers community, an indigenous minority ethnic group in Ireland, presented particular challenges in their teaching experiences. Participants discussed the impact of cultural differences on the teaching and learning process. They highlighted the need for a culturally sensitive approach to accommodate the distinctive customs, traditions, and values of the Travellers community. Understanding and respecting their cultural background was seen as essential for fostering meaningful connections and promoting inclusive education. Additionally, participants addressed the academic disparities faced by Traveller students. They noted that these students often faced educational disadvantages, including lower academic achievement and higher rates of early school leaving. The participants emphasised the importance of providing targeted support and tailored educational strategies to address these disparities effectively.

Participants further noted that schools generally lacked proactive strategies to support teachers in effectively addressing the needs of culturally diverse student populations. Instead, there appeared to be a tendency 'to criticise' students from culturally diverse backgrounds without actively pursuing initiatives to facilitate their integration and academic success. This observation underscores a potential gap in providing adequate support and resources for teachers in culturally diverse settings.

Interestingly, one participant attributed the difficulties faced by teachers and schools in working with cultural diversity to the perceived failure of minority ethnic students to assimilate. According to this viewpoint, the lack of assimilation, particularly in terms of students' ability to meet the expected English language competency, created challenges for teachers. This perspective suggests that the participants viewed assimilation as a prerequisite for successful engagement and learning in culturally diverse classrooms:

> *A lot of the problems is with assimilation really on the part of the students […] You have got a lot of African students, Nigerians, Kenyans, Syrians, Iranians, Egyptians, and there is a whole strain of students from Eastern Europe, from Latvia, Lithuania. There are*

> *German and Spanish students there. Hugely diverse, and a lot of those students will not have English as their first language […] I don't mean to sound bad, but the greatest challenges to the teachers and school are students from the Travellers community.* - White Settled Irish T3

The data reveals that a prevailing factor hindering authentic dialogue and encounters in culturally diverse schools is the presence of 'fear' among student and beginning teachers. This fear acts as a barrier, preventing open and genuine communication with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. The participants' experiences indicate that this fear may stem from concerns about unintentionally being inappropriate or saying something culturally insensitive. The fear described by participants has a notable impact on the teaching process. Participants worry about potential confrontations and the risk of being perceived as inappropriate. This fear often stems from a lack of experience in effectively navigating culturally diverse classrooms and understanding the cultural nuances of different student groups:

> *So teaching culture no problem. But teaching culturally diverse classes is still a challenge for me […] I don't like confrontation. I don't like being inappropriate or maybe saying something that's inappropriate. I am always kind of over careful with things. So I think I need a bit more experience with that. And I have no problem, I think, with kids from different maybe linguistic backgrounds, but I think when it comes to even Ireland, that's where I would probably have the biggest challenge and maybe being able to relate and understand […] the Traveling community for me is a problem.* - White Settled Irish T8

Additionally, a participant expresses her fear of asking certain personal questions, as it may inadvertently expose students' financial situations or family dynamics. The fear of being misunderstood or causing discomfort further contributes to the cautious approach taken by participants in addressing personal matters in the classroom:

> *[…] I am also afraid of asking some students certain personal questions, like what are you doing this weekend, and you might know their current financial standing and if they are able to afford going out or if their parents are even with them or not. So I am being careful to bring up personal questions in the classroom because some students may pick up on that […]* - White Settled Irish T1

Furthermore, participants acknowledge instances where students try to provoke a reaction by accusing teachers of racial bias or discrimination. This creates an additional layer of fear and challenge for teachers who must navigate such situations with confidence and address these accusations appropriately:

> *More recently, one of the students [culturally diverse background] there, he was jumping up and down and trying to touch one of the steel structures holding the room up put there*

by the engineers, he missed it, and I said to him casually that the school is not meant for dangerous activity like that and then he approached me and said 'if you speak to me like that again I will stitch you with a head butt.' That was grand, you know. I let go and went to sit. - White Settled Irish T3

[…] I've got responses like, oh, you just don't like us because we are Black, you just don't like us […] I'm like I know they are just trying to rise me. But you know, it's this constant thing that they will constantly throw back at you as if I'm afraid to talk about these things and I'm like, absolutely not. Why is that? Do you think that's a problem? […] there are times when the students do try and turn it on the teacher as well and it can be challenging and you have to be confident in yourself […] - White Settled Irish T5

7.3.3 Feeling unprepared to support English language learners and a narrow focus on language as a significant barrier

Multilingualism is a prevalent characteristic of culturally diverse classrooms, wherein students come from various linguistic backgrounds, and their first language or mother tongue may differ from the language of instruction in schools. Within the context of Irish second-level schools, the language barrier has emerged as a significant challenge in teaching within culturally diverse classrooms. This challenge is exemplified by the experiences shared by three participants who spoke about encountering students with no 'word of English,' the language of instruction.

One participant mentions one student from India who arrived at the beginning of the year with 'no knowledge of English.' The participant acknowledges that the language barrier becomes a significant obstacle for both the students and the teacher. This barrier hinders effective communication and understanding, making the teaching and learning experience more difficult for everyone involved:

I have one student he's from India, he came here at the start of the year, and he happened to not have one word of English […] I suppose a language barrier just stops them at the beginning and make it more for difficult for everyone. - White Settled Irish T4

Another participant recounts an incident where she questioned a student named Jen about her lack of progress, only to discover that she did not speak 'any English.' The participant reflects on feeling like 'a failure' as a teacher for not realising this earlier, especially since it was her first week in the school. This incident highlights the unexpected presence of students with no English language skills in the classroom, which can create a sense of unpreparedness and inadequacy for teachers who are not equipped to effectively address the needs of these students:

[…] And she didn't have anything done, I was like, Oh, Jen, why didn't you attempt anything. She kind of looked at me and I was like, all right […] but it was the girl beside her said 'oh sorry miss she doesn't speak any English'. So number one, I felt like such a

> *failure. As a teacher, I didn't realise this as it was only my first week there […] So this poor students spoke no English and was set in my class.* - White Settled Irish T5

Furthermore, another participant recalls a specific case of a girl from Bulgaria who joined the school halfway through the year without knowing any English. The student was placed in the third year, further emphasising the challenge posed by language barriers at different stages of education with teachers lacking training to address the challenge:

> *There was a girl I remember from Bulgaria that came into the school halfway through the year, and she didn't have a word of English, and she was in third year […]* -White Settled Irish T8

The above experiences provide insights into student and beginning teachers' struggles in relation to teaching students whose first language is not English, the language of instruction. Critical reading also uncovers some implicit biases and attitudes towards teaching multilingual and culturally diverse learners. Clearly, it is highly 'unlikely' for students who are attending and navigating school not to 'have one word of English.' The use of such absolute statements, which student-teachers have likely heard in the school environment, reflects a deficit view of students from non-English speaking backgrounds that may prevent teachers from recognising these students' competences in other languages and, indeed, their level of subject expertise in a range of school subjects which they have studied previously.

The findings further revealed that participants felt that the ITE programmes did not adequately prepare them to work with students who had little to no English language proficiency. One participant, mentioned that she did not receive sufficient training in dealing with students who had 'no word of English.' Instead, she relied on her own experiences of having lived abroad to address the challenge. This participant's comment highlights the lack of formal training provided to teachers in effectively addressing language barriers in culturally diverse classrooms:

> *Another girl that was from Brazil in fifth year that I would have tutored [no word of English]. So I would have done a bit of that in first year but wouldn't have received any training. I think the experience I have having lived abroad kind of opened your eyes, and I was able to apply what I knew. And being a foreigner in another country as well. You get that perspective. But training? No, nothing.* - White Settled Irish T8

7.3.4 Recognising benefits of cultural diversity – enriching learning experiences and contributing to the creation of more respectful and inclusive societies

Participants stressed the significance of cultural diversity within educational schools, highlighting the consequential prospects it presents for teachers to leverage a plethora of illustrative instances directly from the classroom environment:

> *I think for students learning. Cultural diversity is useful not because it is the right thing to say […] So any kind of exposure to any sort of diversity will help, and I think a diverse classroom can only get the ball rolling earlier.* – New Zealander T2

> *I think it [cultural diversity] just improves the student's learning experience overall. I think it's important that every students that comes out of school knowing that okay, that school, genuinely cared about my success and things that had to do with me and the students feel seen.* – Nigerian Irish T12

Given the diverse cultural, social, and political nature of the world, participants highlighted the educational benefits of a culturally diverse classroom. One participant highlighted the impact of embracing cultural diversity to promote a sense of belonging among students from various cultural backgrounds, thereby recognising and validating the worth of their identities and cultures. Furthermore, it was noted that exposing all students to a broad spectrum of cultures not only nurtures open-mindedness but also broadens their horizons by expanding their range of experiences:

> *[…] it helps the students who do have a different cultural background from the majority to feel a sense of belonging and feel that their background and culture is valued. But then it's also like for everyone to be exposed to a wider variety of cultures is beneficial to opening up their minds and their experiences. So I think it's just good for the whole school and the whole classroom to see different experiences, different backgrounds to get to know people, and then just for the students with the non-Irish backgrounds just by showing that they are valued and that their experiences matter […]* – White Settled Irish T7

Another participant emphasised the personal benefits experienced by individuals, including teachers, who engage in a multicultural classroom. This perspective suggests that cultural diversity enriches one's own understanding, perspective, and personal growth, highlighting the profound impact of diverse interactions on an individual's cognitive and emotional development:

> *So it [cultural diversity] adds value to our class. So being multicultural adds value to myself.* - White Settled Irish T5

In addition, participants stressed the importance of integrating cultural diversity into the educational curriculum. They underscored that such inclusion is imperative due to the foreseeable reality that students will inevitably encounter professional environments where interacting with individuals from diverse cultural backgrounds is the norm. By immersing students in a culturally

diverse educational setting, they are equipped with the necessary skills and knowledge to seamlessly engage with individuals from diverse backgrounds in their future careers:

> *And it is important for the people of Ireland to be learning about it [cultural diversity], even if there is nobody of colour or minority or any diversity in their classroom, why not still learn.* – Irish Nigerian T11

> *[…] I think that's exactly why teaching and incorporating cultural diversity is so essential because once the students grow up in the workplace, they have to be accustomed to work with people from different cultural backgrounds. And it shouldn't be second nature, it shouldn't be something new or surprising.* – Yemeni/Serbian/Hungarian T16

Furthermore, it was emphasised that cultural integration within the classroom is crucial, even when the majority of students share an Irish heritage. The argument put forth was that exposing students to different cultures is indispensable for their growth and success in an interconnected global society. Without such exposure, students may encounter difficulties in effectively communicating and collaborating with individuals from diverse backgrounds, particularly in the context of international business ventures or when residing and working abroad:

> *So, I think we do them a service by actually teaching them [students] how to accept one another and how to even reach out to one another and try to understand who we are.* – Yemeni/Serbian/Hungarian T16

> *You need to understand that cultural integration needs to be happening in the classroom, even if there's nobody in the classroom that isn't pure Irish, through and through, you get what I am saying […] I think it is a disservice to the students to not be getting that when we expect them to possibly go on and do great things in international business and, you know, are moving abroad and working abroad and not knowing how to communicate with somebody that's different to them, because they have lived in this little bubble their whole time in education in Ireland* - White Settled Irish T11

7.4 Experiences and expectations of minority ITE students in culturally diverse schools

In this section, the findings pertaining to the experiences and expectations of minority ITE students in culturally diverse schools are presented. The primary objective is to gain a comprehensive understanding of the perspectives of ITE students from minority backgrounds who have completed their teacher training and subsequently taught in classrooms characterised by cultural diversity. Through data analysis, several sub-themes have emerged, encompassing topics such as representing a different kind of teacher - good and bad experiences; importance of affirmation of teaching ability and fulfilment in the classroom.

7.4.1 Representing a different kind of teacher - good and bad experiences

The majority of the participants described their school placement experience as 'great,' 'really gratifying,' and a 'useful learning' in their journey to becoming a teacher:

> *I really enjoyed my experience as a student-teacher. It was really gratifying.* – New Zealander T2
>
> *It has been great actually. The first placement I did was in my old secondary school […]* - White Settled Irish T1
>
> *Most of the useful learning for teaching took place during placement blocks rather than in lectures. We got to learn and reflect on our practice, not due to portfolio but by personal reflection, in order to improve for future lessons.* – Spanish T10

Furthermore, there were instances wherein participants from minority backgrounds perceived their school placement as valuable. Specifically, students in second-level schools, particularly those from culturally diverse backgrounds, reported feeling inspired and represented due to the actual presence of teachers belonging to minority groups within their school:

> *I have had students that have come to me, and […] they are delighted. You are actually here now, sir. I have never seen one of us.* – Zimbabwean Irish T14
>
> *My first placement […] was in a school in Dublin, in, like, a disadvantaged area. And I was teaching this class, and I only had one Black girl in my class. Now, as the weeks went on, oh my god, miss, […] she [Black student] loves you. She loves your eyebrows, etc. And I just found it really, like, exciting for them that they can have someone that looks like them teaching, seeing someone that looks like them in a position of authority, seeing like, okay, I can be a teacher, if I want to be a teacher I can aim for any aspect of life I want to be […]* – Nigerian Irish T13

The findings derived from the aforementioned quotes indicate the importance of representation in the teaching profession. The data reveals that minority student-teachers were excited for culturally diverse students by their presence at school due to shared ethnic or cultural identities. The presence of student-teachers who looked 'like them' was seen as inspiring and had a positive impact on the students' educational experience.

However, one participant, who identified as Nigerian Irish, shared a distressing incident involving a student in her classroom who used a racial slur, specifically the N-word. The participant felt compelled to involve the school principal, resulting in the student being suspended for one day. However, the participant expressed dissatisfaction with the response, as the student justified their use of the slur by claiming it was not directed at her personally. The participant expressed her disappointment with the lack of appropriate action taken by the school, as she felt the incident was

significant and required more substantial consequences. The participant also described feeling emotionally affected by the incident, highlighting the impact it had on her well-being:

> *[…] one of the students in my class said the N-word. And I had to go get the principal, and he was suspended for a day, for saying the N-word in my class and also telling me that because when he said it, he did not say it to me, he was saying it in a conversation. And I said, seeing him like, excuse me, we are not using that kind of language in this classroom[...] one of his friends was reprimanding him for saying the N-word, obviously, when there is a Black woman in the classroom, and he said, I don't give an 'F', if she is here or not […] And it was a whole big thing that whole day, I was just so out of it […] Now nothing was really done about it besides the principal saying he was suspended for one day.* – Nigerian Irish T13

One participant with an Irish Traveller background expressed dissatisfaction with his own cultural identity not being acknowledged or celebrated within the education system. This experience of lack of representation and inclusion inspired him to become a teacher in order to 'bridge the gap' and provide support to students who may share similar backgrounds. Although the decision to become a teacher was challenging due to his negative post-primary school experience, the participant recognised the need for individuals like himself to make a positive impact in the education system. Through an Access Programme, he was able to acquire the education necessary to become a teacher. He acknowledged the initial challenges he encountered during his teaching practice, specifically concerning his own cultural identity, and experiencing feelings of imposter syndrome. He highlighted the significance of embracing and honouring diverse cultural identities and expressed his surprise at the level of diversity he encountered within classrooms:

> *I think it also goes back to knowing that my identity, my cultural identity, wasn't celebrated or wasn't part of the curriculum, you know what I mean, wasn't part of the education system […] And I do believe because of my past experience that I will be able to bridge that gap. That's why I decided that I wanted to be a teacher. And it was a tough decision, for me because the education system I was going back in a while, I loved education but I really didn't like the post primary school experience, you know what I mean? And I didn't want to experience that again. So therefore, when I came through the Access Programme, for me to help and support people in education, the way that I want to, as a teacher, I had to go back, I had to go back into the system, you know, and I'm not going to lie, the first few months of teacher practice was very difficult for me, I had to go on, like, I went on my own journey, because I was worried about my own cultural identity again, I had a lot of concerns that, really, and truly, like, I have to say both schools has been very supportive of me. And the staff have been very supportive of me, so I think it goes back to imposter syndrome as well. You know, and I think it also goes back to knowing that my identity, my cultural identity wasn't celebrated or wasn't part of the curriculum, you know what I mean, wasn't part of the education system. And what I've noticed since I went back, is that what shocked me the most was how diverse the classrooms are.* – Irish Traveller T15

7.4.2 Importance of affirmation of teaching ability and fulfilment in the classroom

It was a highly fulfilling moment for participants of minority backgrounds when their students were responsive during teaching and gave feedback that affirmed their 'ability' and 'strength' in classrooms. For example, the participant of an Irish Traveller background shared that it was encouraging when his students did not see his minority background from a deficit point of view but as a source of knowledge for their learning:

> *[…] when I realized that my students saw my background as a strength rather than a weakness. And that was wow. Like, I mean, that moved me beyond words. I mean, I was like, Oh, my God there's hope. You know, these are the future. And I'm really like, they saw it as a strength. You know, in one sense, it doesn't matter. Do you know what I mean? It's just like, in their version of okay and it's normal. For me personally, from my own upbringing, what I have gone through and what I've witnessed myself across society. For me, it was like, whoa, this is what it's about. And that was one moment. I think, when I look at my students as they discuss issues out and I step back. And you see that aha moment from a student who wasn't aware of something, and they go, Oh, my God, I didn't know that and their opinions genuinely change, and they get a different perspective on something. That's another moment.* – Irish Traveller T15

Further, two participants of Nigerian and Irish backgrounds shared that it was inspiring for them when their students gave feedback affirming their teaching abilities even when working under pressure:

> *[…] I was thrown into the deep end with Leaving Cert. teaching […] After the class, three students waited behind and said they really enjoyed the class. They asked if I give grinds to students, but I said no because of my commitment at campus*. – Nigerian Irish T13

> *[…] so that was a huge achievement, I found for me to get some positive feedback from teenagers that are in fourth year.* – Irish Nigerian T11

The finding that some minority student and beginning teachers feel affirmed in their role as teachers carries significant implications for the development of teacher education programmes and the establishment of culturally responsive work environments in schools. The affirmation experienced by minority student and beginning teachers serves as a powerful catalyst for their professional growth and self-confidence. When students recognise and value their teachers' diverse backgrounds as strengths rather than weaknesses, it positively impacts the teachers' sense of belonging and efficacy in the classroom. This finding highlights the importance of nurturing a supportive and empowering environment that celebrates and respects the cultural identities and experiences of minority teachers.

7.5 Strategies for culturally responsive pedagogies

To delve deeper into the theme of strategies for CRP, the following sub-themes are examined: understandings of and attempts to implement CRP; adapting curriculum and teaching approaches to reflect cultural diversity; investing extra effort to get to know your students; building relationships with and among your students; learning from students by promoting engagement.

7.5.1 Understandings of and attempts to implement CRP

Participants expressed the difficulty of implementing teaching strategies in their culturally diverse classrooms due to a lack of sufficient knowledge and training on CRP:

> *On culturally responsive teaching, even as diverse as the school, I don't really make huge provision for it, to be honest […] I don't really place huge emphasis on cultural diversity.* - White Settled Irish T3

> *It's [CRP] challenging at times. It is because I suppose you have so many different cultures, and you are learning yourself as a teacher.* - White Settled Irish T4

> *[…] there is no way to deliver it [CRP]. I think knowing how to deliver it is very crucial. –* New Zealander T2

Participants painted various perceptions of CRP. A common thread in their views on CRP is that CRP is about understanding the interests, needs and backgrounds of all students in the classroom and 'adopting' teaching styles that accommodate all students:

> *From my […] understanding, culturally responsive pedagogy is about everybody learning in their own way, identifying everyone teaching styles, which is really hard to do. Adopting your style of teaching to the needs of your students […]* - White Settled Irish T1

> *[…] culturally responsive pedagogy is getting students interested in learning. This will lead to autonomous learners and, subsequently, students able to perform at the highest tiers of Bloom's Taxonomy.* - Spanish T10

> *[CRP is] an understanding of where the students are coming from.* - White Settled Irish T3

Moreover, a participant contended that she believes it is the responsibility of a teacher to create a learning environment for all students that reflects the 'modern society.' In other words, culturally responsive teaching is a 'modern way of teaching':

> *I believe it's my responsibility to create a learning environment for my kids. And I suppose if you don't do that, you don't fit into modern society. […] Talking about modernise way of teaching, I suppose, celebrating every child in the classroom, all their interests as a classroom […]* - White Settled Irish T4

Therefore, a participant posited that a teacher needs to take responsibility to be culturally responsive, which means 'thinking about what actions can I take as a teacher to be more culturally responsive and that it doesn't happen overnight.'

Participants shared various examples of pedagogical choices that were considered culturally inclusive in the classrooms. These examples encompassed teachers taking the initiative to learn about students' domestic situations to better understand how to support them, conducting surveys to gauge students' interests and integrating the results into their teaching, as well as incorporating knowledge and cultures from outside the Irish context into their instructional approach:

> *In the classroom, I tried to look more deeper and know what is the domestic situation [of students]* - White Settled Irish T3
>
> *Steps I have taken in making my classroom culturally inclusive include me surveying my students, and I implemented the result in PowerPoints.* - Spanish T10
>
> *I think I do a good job of it [culturally inclusive teaching] in the sense that I use different sports from all over the world*. – Irish Nigerian T11
>
> *[…] to throw in a bit of a cultural diversity, the best way to show some things can be through video. Some better way to show some things can be a newspaper article, it could be real life examples.* – Nigerian Irish T13

Other examples shared by participants include developing a lesson plan that 'appeals to the interests of students' and giving 'unconditional positive regards for students' work.' Another participant shared that she has been culturally inclusive in her teaching approach by learning how to pronounce the names of all her students, which is important because names are often 'tied into identity':

> *[…] you've got to spend the time to get the names down because it means so much to so many. […] the name is tied into identity. So I really took that on board and thought, Oh, my God, I have got to nail this […] it is very challenging.* - White Settled Irish T9

Coming from a minority background, a Zimbabwean Irish participant shared how he intentionally ensured that his teaching approaches were culturally inclusive because his former teachers never did 'the same' for him as a student. According to him, he adapted the content of the curriculum of his subject to be culturally inclusive by bringing examples from outside of Ireland:

> *I changed the picture of the four Irish cartoon students to maybe a UNICEF diverse group of kids and just call them the different names. And now a little Yasmin sees that there's a Yasmin in their PowerPoint, and they are like, oh, okay, so people know this name like they are happy and it's something small, but for me, I wish teachers had done that in school for me […] it brings up the inclusion levels as well […]* – Zimbabwean Irish T14

Similarly, a participant of Nigerian Irish descent expressed that due to his background, he strives to incorporate 'a little pocket of something from a different culture' into his teaching. Moreover, he emphasised that his presence as a Black teacher adds a notable 'wow factor' to the learning environment:

> *So like teaching, I have tried to always make sure that I brought in a little pocket of something from a different culture, even my presence of being a teacher. In a world where it's normally just White teachers. I always get a straightaway wow factor […]* – Nigerian Irish T13

Furthermore, participants emphasised that exemplary teaching in culturally diverse classrooms involves incorporating students' cultural values into instruction. As an illustration, one participant shared an instance where a Peruvian student made a substantial contribution to a history lesson on the 'Age of Exploration' by highlighting the roles of Spanish and Portuguese explorers in the 'discovery of the New World':

> *A specific example in History was talking about the age of exploration with Spanish and Portuguese, these explorations and […] the discovery of the New World […] I had a Peruvian student, and he was able to kind of give an input there […] talking about how, you know, there were many people in Peru or in America before they [the Spanish and Portuguese] arrived.* - White Settled Irish T7

7.5.2 Adapting curriculum and teaching approaches to reflect cultural diversity

The right application of the ideals of CRP is hinged on teachers' effectiveness in adapting the curriculum to acknowledge students' socio-cultural diversity in the delivery of teaching within the classroom. Before delving into how participants adapt the curriculum in their classrooms, I asked participants if they think the curriculum, they use in teaching is suitable for all their students. It was a mixed response, as some participants responded that they 'don't think it is' and that 'the way the curriculum and assessment is designed' does not make 'room for it to be relevant' for all students. Similarly, in the words of a participant who teaches Science and Biology:

> *I don't feel like the Irish curriculum has pretty much caught up with modern society either, in that sense, and there's so much more that could be done there for students. Like even looking back on previous tests the grammar on some of the questions was, like, is very disappointing to see, first of all, because students that have come from, say different countries are still acquiring the language and learning the language. Some of the texts they use sometimes to describe questions could really been drawn from students learning experiences. And so I think there is more improvement that could be done.* - White Settled Irish T4

Participants emphasised that teachers need to adapt the curriculum to make it suitable for all students in culturally diverse classrooms. They explained that what a teacher 'brings into the classroom makes it [curriculum] more inclusive rather than what is in the textbook.' Some participants that believed their curriculum is relevant for all students in a culturally diverse classroom posited that the focus should not be on whether the curriculum is relevant but on the approach to the delivery and implementation of the curriculum. According to this participant who teaches History, English, Religion and CSPE:

> *[…] I think the curriculum is relevant, and I will not go about changing any subject. Maybe delivery perhaps is an issue. A lot of things are actually changing in the Irish education system.* – New Zealander T2

Another participant who teaches History, English and Spanish opined:

> *I think the curriculum's factual points don't need to change, it is impossible to cover every culture, but the way the curriculum is implemented can be changed.* - Spanish T10

From the data, participants as beginning teachers were generally inclined to adapt the curriculum to their students' needs but experienced difficulties in doing this in certain subjects. According to participants, subjects such as Business, History, and English were easier to adapt to the curriculum, while Mathematics and Geography were more challenging for cultural adaptation:

> *I suppose with cultural diversity, there are some subjects you cannot bring in culture. However, certain books in English can be adapted to represent certain ethnic groups and races.* - White Settled Irish T1 (teaches Accounting and Business)

> *History is very easy because History is full of human culture anyway. For example, by talking about different revolutions across the world, you cover many countries, and this is something you cannot do with a subject like Mathematics.* – New Zealander T2 (teaches History, English, Religion and CSPE)

Surprisingly, a participant who teaches Geography and English shared that it is 'difficult' to adapt the Geography subject to reflect the diverse cultural values of students in the classroom. This is a surprising sentiment given that the Geography curriculum covers the physical and social world including topics like populations, diverse values and cultures.

> *I don't think there's enough opportunity for that (cultural adaptation). I have quite a visual difficult subject to teach, which is Geography.* - White Settled Irish T9 (teaches Geography and English)

Participants shared instances of adapting the curriculum in their subjects. These include using 'traditional methods' and knowledge from their students' countries of origin in their teaching. For example, a lesson on 'urban farming,' how business is done across different contexts, and 'taxation' had case studies from the 'countries of origin' represented in the classrooms:

> *You plan ahead, and you are able to be culturally inclusive while you teach some sections of the subject. For example, how taxation may differ in Ireland and Dubai, that is how I include students from different countries. It is really hard because some subjects are particularly set in Ireland, and even though you feel you are leaving some students out, you just have to get through this. In a Business subject, you can definitely bring in examples from different countries […] It could be something as simple as you talking about what approach is being used in the students various countries of origin. For example, in Germany there is a method of recycling plastic bottles, so I actually had a German student in my class and I asked if he could tell me more about this and it was good he could talk to the class on what is happening in his home country.* - White Settled Irish T1 (teaches Accounting and Business)

> *So I would usually try and include maybe some traditional methods in my teaching. We were looking at urban farming, might look at urban farming in their (students) country.* - White Settled Irish T4 (teaches Science and Biology)

A participant who teaches the History subject, described how she deviated from the curriculum to delve into topics beyond the prescribed content. She found it fulfilling to discuss the movement and dispersion of people, providing students with additional material and insights beyond what is strictly required by the curriculum. As someone who has studied history and possesses a broader understanding of the subject, the participant feels compelled to share her knowledge with the students. She aimed to offer a more comprehensive perspective by discussing various aspects, such as the explorers, Aztec and Mayan civilisations, and the Inca Empire. By doing so, the participant believed she can equip students with a more expansive and well-rounded understanding of history than what is covered in the prescribed curriculum:

> *[…] very satisfying to be able to leave the curriculum, and talk about the spread of people, […] to be able to give them that extra bit of knowledge […] I have studied history, obviously, and have kind of a broader knowledge […] So I try to give a bit more or even talking about […] the explorers […] you know, the Aztecs and the Mayans and the Inca Empires so that they [students] just have that little bit more of a broader knowledge than they will get from the curriculum.* - White Settled Irish T7

Another participant also shared that bringing 'relics' from a country outside of Ireland in which she lived for some years benefited students learning as well as making it 'easy' for her to adapt the lesson culturally:

> *I always like to bring in videos or songs, or relics that I might have at home. So I remember in first year, we were doing IDs. So I have my ID when I lived in Mexico, my residency card, I brought that in and they [students] had a look. And I had my driving license and all these things that exist in that culture, photos, documentaries, we looked at as well […] So for me, it's been really, really easy to do that.* - White Settled Irish T8 (teaches Spanish and English)

7.5.3 Investing extra effort to get to know your students

Participants highlighted that it is vital for teachers to ensure that all their students access quality teaching and learning irrespective of their backgrounds and experiences:

> *As teachers, we can be sympathetic, but we don't need to know why someone is poor, we just need to know that we teach a poor kid the same way we teach a rich kid.* - New Zealander T2

> *[…] have your [teachers] opinion […] but […] don't take out your thoughts on kids, you can negate someone's opportunity to learn […]* – Zimbabwean Irish T14

It is essential for teachers to not only understand their students' cultural backgrounds but also actively seek to learn from them. This process of developing cultural competence involves valuing and incorporating the 'student voice' in curriculum implementation and adaptation. Ultimately, the data emphasises the importance of teachers' active interest in their students:

> *[…] I try my best to always get on with all of my students. So that means have more conversations with them, and learn about their backgrounds, learn about their interests*. - White Settled Irish T8

> *And so for me, as I said to you, the student voice is very important in all aspects of my teaching*. – Irish Traveller T15

All participants emphasised the importance of teachers making extra efforts to get to know their students, particularly those from culturally diverse backgrounds in their classrooms.

> *Teachers should be naturally curious about these type of people, that is, foreign nationals who come to Ireland and will be dealing with in the classrooms […] Maybe just educate themselves [teachers] one way and know where people are coming from*. - White Settled Irish T4

These extra efforts in knowing more about students in the classrooms entail teachers 'researching' and reading up about current events and students' countries of origin for better engagement in the classroom. Other examples will include making an 'effort' to 'learn how to pronounce students' name,' as well as providing specific support for struggling students, for example, students with limited ability in the English language:

> *It's a case where even something small, just researching news, that will really help [...] So you might have read something about […] Adam […] from Iran? Oh, yeah, I was reading about Iran, it's something small that will strike a student to go, Oh, this teacher […]* – Zimbabwean Irish T14

> *I have to make an effort to actually learn how to pronounce the students' name. Because it's their name, it's really important.* – Nigerian Irish T12

> *[…] some English word […] might be confusing because they [students] are learning a second language, so explaining a little bit more breaking material down a little bit further for them [students]* - White Settled Irish T4

A participant shared that learning about the living condition of one of her students helped her to understand better where the student was coming from and how best to support the student:

> *[…] the other day, […] I saw one of my students stepping out of his house, and his house was a caravan on the side of the road. And I did not know that. I knew he was a Traveller, but I did not know that he was a Traveller in a caravan […] You know, so that was like, wow […]* – Irish Nigerian T11

Similarly, another participant posited that teachers need 'empathy' to 'understand where all the students are coming from.' He shared how one of his students' 'dysfunctional' domestic situations has led to his poor attitude towards learning:

> *You need to have empathy and understand where all the students are coming from. Thinking about one particular student, just his domestic situation is so dysfunctional […] He is from the Traveller community, there is so much going in his personal life that when he comes into my class he just consistently misses it […] telling […] how is two sisters with their babies living in the house that he is. His mother is expecting a baby with another guy, and she has moved in with this guy who is not his father. So the student lives with his stepfather, who treats him badly. This affects his learning in the classroom […]* - White Settled Irish T3

Further, some practical tips were suggested by participants on helping teachers to get to know their students, especially those from culturally diverse backgrounds. The tips include 'building a profile of students' that contains relevant information about their backgrounds that can be adapted for effective teaching and learning:

> *[…] if you are building a profile of students varying what type of students they are and what their background is, and different names, different appearances, so just bring that in and whenever it comes up in trying to encourage students to share their culture with me and with the class.* - White Settled Irish T7

Secondly, teachers, particularly beginning teachers, need to engage school management by 'asking questions' about students in their classrooms:

> *I think being in contact with management or with your heads is very important […] So I think asking these questions at the start of the year […] you really have a good sense of who is in your classroom from an educational perspective. And I guess then, on a personal level, you just need to get to know them a little bit better.* - White Settled Irish T8

Thirdly, teachers can go the 'extra mile' by getting involved in extracurricular activities with their students, as this creates an opportunity to better know the students beyond the classroom wall:

> *So the extracurricular stuff is huge […] engaging with them [students] in your time, that shows that you care really about them, you are putting in a lot of time with them, and then you are getting to know them, and you are spending time outside of the classroom in a different situation. And so that has been helpful.* – Irish Nigerian T11

[…] like getting involved in extracurricular activities, and what I found is they were really, really a great way for me to get to know the kids. – Nigerian Irish T13

7.5.4 Building relationships with and among your students

This sub-theme delves into the significance of building positive relationships between teachers and students in culturally diverse classrooms. The findings highlight the role of affirmation, engagement beyond the classroom, and the incorporation of students' cultural traditions in promoting a sense of belonging, trust, and inclusive learning environments.

Teachers building positive relationships, especially with students from culturally diverse backgrounds, will offer an opportunity to ensure better teaching and learning outcomes for students:

It's building that relationship, to transfer that knowledge [...] They [students] need us to be able to teach that knowledge or open their eyes to that knowledge in a way that interests them. And I think relationships then form a huge part of things like that. - White Settled Irish T7

Definitely having a good student-to-teacher relationship with your kids. I suppose if the kids aren't on board with you, they won't learn. - White Settled Irish T4

Connecting with the students. Building a good rapport with the students is very important. - White Settled Irish T6

So I think relationship building is crucial for teachers to be good at what they do […] – Irish Nigerian T11

From the examples shared by participants about building relationships with students in culturally diverse classrooms, the data revealed that affirmation is one of the ways teachers can build positive relationships with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. A participant shared her experience with relationship building:

[…] I worked so hard to build a relationship with these guys [students]. Like one of them had a basketball game, so I went to the basketball game, and he was outstanding at basketball, absolutely outstanding. I was so shocked because he is so difficult in the class. And if he just doesn't want to work, he won't work, and he falls asleep […] it's challenging. Afterwards, he was man of the match at this game. Absolutely brilliant. So a day later, I met him at our door. And I said, 'Well, apparently can I talk to you for a second?' So, of course, he was like getting ready to give out because I think that's what always happens when he is asked to speak to a teacher. I said to him […] I just want to say you are outstanding at yesterday's match, and I am so proud […] and you did really well […] he [student] just talked to me and said, Oh, thanks miss. - White Settled Irish T7

As per the aforementioned participant, teachers' additional efforts to validate their students' experiences contribute to the establishment of fruitful relationships. Engaging with students beyond the confines of the classroom, such as through extracurricular activities, emerges to foster these relationships effectively. Similarly, another participant, in sharing his experience of affirming his students, argued that acknowledging students will not only lead to positive relationships but will contribute to increased interest in learning for students:

> *I'd somebody [student] from South America, who said what does my country bring, and I said your country is the biggest producer in coffee. And I told her I have had about six today. So thanks to your country for bringing in the coffee. And she was happy about it, and she looked more into it.* – Nigerian Irish T13

A participant emphasised the importance of building strong relationships with students as a key factor in their learning. The participant believed that incorporating students' cultural traditions into the teaching process helps them feel a sense of belonging in the classroom. By acknowledging and incorporating cultural practices, the participant created an inclusive learning environment where students feel valued and understood. The participant recognised that not all students may be comfortable immediately sharing their cultural traditions or experiences. However, she believed that trust is essential in promoting an environment where students feel safe to open up and share. By establishing herself as an approachable and trustworthy figure, the participant aimed to create an atmosphere where students are willing to engage and connect. To further promote a positive classroom environment, the participant shared an example of providing a dedicated day for students to relax and unwind. This allowed students to enjoy their favourite music and share personal items with their friends, fostering a sense of community and camaraderie. By creating such opportunities, the participant aimed to enhance the learning experience by promoting a more relaxed and enjoyable atmosphere:

> *And I think having a good relationship with your kids is key to their learning. So, if you can incorporate their cultural traditions into your teaching, I feel like they get a sense of belonging in your classroom […] And some kids also they don't want to share, but they will […] they have to learn to trust you first, and I suppose being a teacher that they can approach is number one as well in teaching […] I give the kids a day where I just left them to relax and unwind in my classroom. Just even if it's half an hour after a test, put on a bit of their favourite music, and let them bring in things to show their friends. It just creates a whole different learning environment for them […]*- White Settled Irish T7

Other practical ways teachers can build relationships with students in culturally diverse classrooms include being 'very kind' and supportive of students. For example, teachers giving students experiencing any difficulty a 'smile' and saying 'hello' and engaging them in a conversation go a long way in assuring and acknowledging their presence in school:

> *[…] students that are more difficult to build a relationship or that are kind of withdrawn. I have noticed […] one student who has Autism Spectrum Disorder (ASD). I was able to be very kind to her and support her. And I used to say hello to her and just building that relationship with her. I could really see how she responded better to me towards the end of the year. I believe that is the same with all students. If you are kind to them, they will respond more in class.* - White Settled Irish T7

> *I talk to students on the corridors […] to further establish relationships […]* - Yemeni/Serbian/Hungarian T16

Moreover, participants have highlighted the significance of intercultural relationships and the acceptance of diverse cultural values among students within the classroom. An illustrative example provided by a participant portrays a situation where the actions of a migrant student and a native Irish student demonstrated that both individuals have embraced and respected each other's cultural backgrounds:

> *I have had so many […] moments in my classrooms that I thought, Ah, look, this is specifically what you're looking for, there were times I introduced a small video on a topic before, and an ad may pop up beforehand, or it is something pre-emptive to the video, and it could be the background music of Afro beats or something. And it's so exhilarating to see Matthew, who is from Carlow in Ireland, and you know, Noah, who is a Nigerian migrant, they look at each other, and they are both miming the songs together, which means that they have already built this integration, or they culturally accepted each other like that this is the music I listen to, this is where I come from […]* - Zimbabwean Irish T14

7.5.5 Learning from students by promoting engagement

A participant shared that teachers should not be 'afraid' of engaging students in their classrooms as this provides an avenue to learn how best to teach them:

> *Students will […] throw any words at you. Don't be afraid of it. And welcome it into your classroom. But again, don't ever make the students feel like oh, you're the child that we're going to ask everything about whatever country it is, that's not fair either, you know, and it's to not bring that into your class.* - White Settled Irish T5

Two participants cautioned against 'singling' out students based on their cultural backgrounds in culturally diverse classrooms. They emphasised the importance of avoiding the perception that certain students are being constantly targeted or expected to represent their entire cultural group. One participant suggested a general approach of addressing the whole class when seeking information or knowledge, rather than singling out specific individuals:

> *[…] don't single them out. Just ask the class in general, does anybody know? […]* - White Settled Irish T7

Another participant echoed this sentiment, stressing the need to treat all students fairly and not make any particular student feel like they are constantly being asked about their cultural background:

> *[…] don't ever make the students feel like oh, you are the child that we are going to ask everything about whatever country it is, that's not fair […]* - White Settled Irish T5

A participant explained that learning from students will help teachers avoid assumptions, particularly on the culturally diverse values of students:

> *One is that never assume anything […] thinking you know the answers to everything […] Give a platform for everybody [students] to share something about themselves.* - White Settled Irish T9

A participant posited that teachers acting as a 'facilitator' of learning is one way of promoting student engagement in a culturally diverse classroom. Also, valuing and respecting students' opinions and ensuring their 'cultural backgrounds' are recognised and acknowledged within the classroom are other ways of promoting student engagement:

> *[…] I think the best way to do that is when you act as a facilitator, and let the backgrounds come out and let them have their own discussions and make sure that everybody's opinions is valued and respected. […] when I look at my classroom, it's […] like a mini global village for me, and if I can facilitate an environment where everybody in that global village feel safe and secure, and can reach their full potential, where not only their educational attainment is important, but also their cultural background is important too. And I believe that if that comes together, if we get that right. That is the recipe for success for students.* – Irish Traveller T15

The advantages of promoting student engagement in culturally diverse classrooms include teachers' not being the only source of knowledge within the classroom. For example, according to a participant, a student of German background, given the platform, was able to share knowledge about how recycling works in Germany with the class:

> *[…] in Germany, there is a method of recycling plastic bottles, so I actually had a German student in my class, and I asked if he could tell me more about this, and it was good he could talk to the class on what is happening in his home country.* - White Settled Irish T1

Furthermore, getting students to contribute during teaching sessions helps teachers understand what is relevant and interesting to students. For example, a participant during his class discussion on the American Revolution with his students, shared how from the students 'load of nonsense' contributions to the conversation, he was able to understand better how best to teach them:

> *Some of the kids last year, when we were talking about the American revolutionaries, they pointed out the fancy hairdos and the brothers and sisters the revolutionaries had growing up. None of these were historically relevant […] and as I would say to the students, that is*

> *a load of nonsense, and that is really good […] get a sense of what is relevant for them*. – New Zealander T2

Similarly, another advantage of student engagement in a culturally diverse classroom is that students naturally share and bring their culture into the classroom, which benefits the learning of the whole classroom:

> *[…] so I was talking with first-year students about celebrations. So St. Nicholas day is on the sixth of December […] And then one of the students who I think her family is Polish, she was able to raise her hand and say, Oh, we do that at home. And then a Romanian girl could say the same. So they were able to kind of show off their culture to the rest of the class who didn't know what we were talking about. And they said […] my dad leaves me chocolate in my shoes on the sixth of December, and the rest of the class didn't know what that was. So that was them bringing in their culture.* -White Settled Irish T7

Interestingly, when talking about bringing culture into the classroom, an Irish Traveller participant explained how Traveller students wanted him to speak the Traveller native language – Cant – in the classroom. It is clear from the quote below that these students were interested in having their culture reflected and acknowledged within the school:

> *[…] with regards to Traveller children, they were interested in stuff on Traveller rights or Traveller history and […] we have our own language, they wanted me […] to speak Cant in the class, so that is how far we are progressing.* – Irish Traveller T15

A participant discussing her approach to teaching history, specifically the progression from ancient history to the 20th century, including World War One and World War Two, acknowledged the importance of being aware that students from Polish backgrounds may have different perspectives and interpretations of the historical events being discussed. The participant emphasised the need to move away from a one-sided approach where she simply lectures the students without considering their unique backgrounds and perspectives. Instead, the participant aimed to create a classroom environment that encourages open dialogue and respects the students' comfort levels. She expressed a willingness to listen and learn from her students, recognising that individuals with different cultural backgrounds may have diverse insights and interpretations of historical events. By acknowledging the diverse perspectives within the classroom, the participant demonstrated an inclusive teaching approach. She does not want to impose a specific viewpoint or force students to speak about their backgrounds if they are not comfortable doing so:

> *[…] we move through the ancient history and then up to the 20th century […] World War One, World War Two, but even that, just being aware that […] Polish students may have different perceptions of what we are talking about, and not just to kind of always talk at them. So I am not going to be […] force students to talk with their different background if they are not comfortable […]* -White Settled Irish T7

Participants in this study provided examples of intercultural learning occurring among students in their classrooms. It was observed that students' willingness to learn about different cultures, both within and outside the classroom, was highly regarded by participants. Specifically, a participant highlighted students' receptiveness and acceptance of learning about diverse foods and family traditions, indicating an active engagement and appreciation of cultural diversity within the learning environment:

> *So, one highlight would have been the Mexican day, we had the food tasting. And other one was, we were talking about food with fifth years, and it was a great opportunity to bring in different cultures. So, um, comfort foods at home and things like that. My 5th-year group is totally culturally diverse. I think there's two Irish born with Irish family in the class, and all the rest are either, I think, African, French, Indian, they are from all over the world. So that was a really nice class because it gave us the opportunity to learn more about different foods in different parts of the world, different family traditions from homemade meals but also using the language to discuss these different meals.* - White Settled Irish T8

7.6 Calling for deeper engagement with culture and CRP in teacher education

During the interviews, participants were questioned about their exposure to training on culturally responsive teaching and learning during their teacher education. The majority of participants (n=14) expressed a lack of recollection or awareness of receiving any such training, particularly in relation to culturally inclusive pedagogies.

Furthermore, some participants indicated that although there might have been mentions or hints of inclusivity, the training did not delve into the specifics of being culturally responsive. This further underscores the need for teacher education programmes to address this gap and provide more explicit and comprehensive training on culturally responsive teaching:

> *[…] well, that's inclusion of students with disabilities, never to do with cultural inclusion […] I have never seen it. I have never seen a course come up that has offered that.* - Irish Nigerian T11

> *It was hinted across on how to be inclusive but does not unfold really how to be like culturally responsive.* – Nigerian Irish T13

> *So as regards culturally responsive pedagogy, and perhaps not specifically, culturally, but definitely support for all students of all abilities.* - White Settled Irish T9

One participant did mention attending one or two optional workshops on culturally responsive teaching. Similarly, another participant acknowledged that diversity was covered in a module but expressed that it was not emphasised enough. These instances suggest that while some limited

efforts were made to address cultural inclusion, they were insufficient in providing the depth of training required to develop culturally responsive teaching competencies:

> *I can't say I did. I can definitely say we did a session on diversity. We did have like a module on diversity, where every now and again, we tapped into it [CRP], for me, it wasn't that emphasised.* – Zimbabwean Irish T14

In addition to the participants' personal experiences, the researcher's involvement in organising workshops on CRP for PME students at the university was also mentioned. Participants who had attended these workshops found them valuable in enhancing their understanding of culturally responsive teaching practices. This highlights the potential benefits of incorporating more thorough training opportunities within teacher education programmes:

> *A small amount. However, considering how the curriculum is designed and how exams are drawn, there is no real room for this area [implementing CRP]* – Spanish T10

> *Your workshop is another good example, where you drew a whole lot of examples out of us and sneakily, you weren't kind of just asking questions, but you created a platform that prompted us to tell you all sorts of things. That is also related to what I say of a good teacher, you had so many information, and there was no point for our contribution... We didn't need to know about Nigeria, but it was important for us to know Nigeria is different from Spain, Brazil and New Zealand, and we contributed to the discussion about 75% of it, and you did 25%.* – New Zealander T2

In examining participants' perspectives on addressing the challenges and opportunities in culturally diverse classrooms, the findings revealed several key recommendations. Firstly, participants highlighted the importance of teacher training in adapting to the needs of culturally diverse classrooms. Participants emphasised the value of incorporating experiences and insights from Irish teachers who have successfully taught in such settings. The suggestion to facilitate this learning through Skype calls or in-person visits to college reflects a desire to learn from real-life experiences and apply them effectively in navigating culturally diverse classrooms:

> *I think if we were taught on how to adapt to a culturally diverse classroom or, for example, if we have a Skype call with an Irish teacher that moved to England on how they adapt teaching in culturally diverse classrooms or even coming physically to college, that will be very useful. I know experiences will be different for everyone, but it is valuable to get insights from teachers that have taught in culturally diverse classrooms and how they managed such classroom.* - White Settled Irish T4

Participants also emphasised the creation of workshops focused on CRP. They also suggested that student-teachers from diverse cultures and backgrounds could volunteer to share their personal experiences and shed light on the unique dynamics within culturally diverse classrooms. Similarly, an implementation of workshops that encompass a range of countries, with a specific focus on those that contribute significantly to the population in Ireland was recommended. The findings

highlight participants' desire for culturally specific pedagogies. They emphasised the importance of tailoring teaching approaches to the specific cultural backgrounds of students. By incorporating pedagogical strategies that resonate with students' cultural identities, participants believe that the teaching and learning experiences in culturally diverse classrooms would be greatly enhanced:

> *I think workshops [on CRP] should be created, where students from different cultures and backgrounds volunteer to speak about their backgrounds and culture and how the classrooms have been different for them.* - White Settled Irish T1

> *I think your type of workshop can be introduced to cover 5 or 6 different countries, and I believe that is equipping us as teachers to cause massive awareness. And really, since we are in Ireland, we can decide to focus on countries that are major suppliers of population here, the likes of Poland, Czech Republic, Australia, India and Brazil. I believe this will make the teachers more culturally aware.* – New Zealander T2

> *I would love more. I suppose culturally specific pedagogies. I think that would be fantastic.* - White Settled Irish T9

Further, participants posited that preparing teachers for CRP in ITE should be 'a core module, not an optional module because students [student-teachers] won't attend if it's an optional module' because they 'don't have the time…'

> *For the PME, I think there should be a compulsory module on culturally responsive pedagogy.* - White Settled Irish T3

One participant reasoned that developing competency in CRP for beginning teachers will require considerable time and effort. This participant posited that newly qualified teachers often prioritise developing mastery in classroom management and sound knowledge of their curriculum. According to this participant, newly qualified teachers rarely prioritise developing competency in CRP:

> *So when you start teaching, your first concern is classroom management and your syllabus as well. I think you will still be focused on trying to get through all the materials, getting to know your students and building a relationship with them. I don't think you will be able to focus on pedagogy [CRP] for the first few years.* - White Settled Irish T1

Many participants explained that entering a culturally diverse classroom can be a 'frightening moment' for beginning teachers 'because they do not know how to 'relate' with 'culturally diverse students [sitting] in front of [them] all the time.' Consequently, participants stressed the significance of equipping student and beginning teachers with the support and competencies required to effectively engage with culturally diverse classrooms.

Participants felt that cultural diversity in classrooms presents unique challenges that require informed instructional practices. They highlighted the importance of prioritising academic research 'on the concept of culture' in informing teachers about effective approaches to foster inclusivity and address the diverse needs of students. By incorporating research-based strategies into their teaching practice, beginning teachers can feel more confident and competent in meeting the needs of culturally diverse students. The integration of research and practice within teacher education programmes can help beginning teachers develop a deeper understanding of diverse cultures, improve their ability to establish meaningful connections with students, and create inclusive learning environments:

> *I'd like to see a bit of academic research [on CRP] behind what's been going on as well in other parts of the world. Maybe more examples of activities you can do in the classroom […], a few ways to integrate it, but also a few activities […] to put into my teaching.* - White Settled Irish T4

> *[…] the PME could better equip teachers going into all these different classrooms because it's a frightening moment when you come into these classrooms [culturally diverse]. And it's just learning from experience, which isn't really good enough […] I think we should have the research done first. We should have an assignment done where we have to sit down and research the concept of culture.* - White Settled Irish T6

The consensus among all participants was that teachers, especially those new to the profession, should actively pursue professional development and remain receptive to ongoing training in culturally responsive teaching and learning. They stressed that it is essential for teachers in culturally diverse classrooms to be cognisant of the various cultures present in their environment:

> *Maybe to have more about awareness of all the different students that could be in your classroom and how we can bring their culture and their traditions into our classroom without a tokenistic feel to it.* - White Settled Irish T5

> *Just the awareness more that there is different cultures going on around us. And there's been a lot to be embraced. For obviously, there's like a lot of restrictions on teachers, like, time is one of our worst enemies, they have a curriculum to cover at a certain amount of time* – Nigerian Irish T13

Continuous professional development initiatives focusing on culturally responsive teaching can play a crucial role in enhancing teachers' cultural awareness. To promote this, one participant proposed the idea of organising a 'culture week' in schools, providing both students and teachers with a platform to share aspects of their own culture.

7.7 Conclusion

This chapter has delved into the challenges and prospects associated with advancing cultural responsiveness and intercultural learning within culturally diverse Irish second-level schools. The insights gained from participants have provided valuable illumination on crucial aspects necessary for the creation of inclusive and engaging learning environments. The significance of teachers assuming the role of facilitators, valuing students' opinions and cultural backgrounds, and cultivating collaborative learning environments that encourage intercultural dialogue has been emphasised throughout this chapter. Notably, it has been underscored by several participants that singling out students based on their cultural backgrounds should be avoided, and instead, a deeper understanding of individual perspectives should be sought to circumvent assumptions and stereotypes. Participants have emphasised the vital importance of establishing positive relationships with students, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, for effective teaching and learning. According to their accounts, affirming and acknowledging students' achievements and cultural contributions play a significant role in nurturing successful relationships with students. The findings indicate that teachers can enhance trust and personalise learning experiences by engaging with students beyond the confines of the classroom, such as by attending extracurricular activities. Moreover, the incorporation of students' cultural traditions into teaching practices fosters an inclusive classroom where students experience a sense of belonging, ultimately enhancing engagement and cultivating comprehension and appreciation of diverse cultures. Teachers are encouraged to integrate cultural traditions into lessons, thereby providing opportunities for students to share and celebrate their heritage. The next chapter will present the findings from migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds, focusing on their experiences with schooling in Ireland and their advice for developing intercultural education in Irish schools.

Acknowledgement of previously published work: Parts of Chapter Eight were previously published in an academic article in the International Journal of Inclusive Education and in a chapter in the book Perspectives on Transitions in Refugee Education: Ruptures, Passages, and Re-Orientations [Adebayo, S. B., & Heinz, M. (2023). 'Teachers should put themselves in their students' shoes': Perspectives of Parents from Minority-ethnic Backgrounds on Schooling in Ireland. International Journal of Inclusive Education, 1-19. / Adebayo, S. B., & Heinz, M. (2023). Migrant students' schooling experiences in Ireland: Perspectives from parents. In Seyda Subasi Singh, Olja Jovanovic and Michelle Proyer (Eds.) Perspectives on Transitions in Refugee Education: Ruptures, Passages, and Re-Orientations, 225-238].

Chapter Eight – Findings: Migrant Parents' Experiences with and Perspectives about Schooling and Culturally Responsive Pedagogies in Irish Second-level Schools

8.1 Introduction

In this chapter, I present the findings from the analysis of the data collected through focus groups with migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds. The chapter begins with migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds' understandings of and experiences with culture in Ireland. After that, I present participants' and their children's schooling experiences in Ireland. The chapter concludes with parental advice on developing more culturally inclusive practices for teachers and schools in Ireland.

8.2 Parents' understandings of culture and experiences with culture in Ireland

In this section, I present the findings derived from data analysis regarding parents' understandings of culture and their experiences with culture in Ireland. The findings are organised into the

following sub-themes: parents' understandings of culture and the importance of passing on cultural values; moving between cultures and experiencing cultural clashes.

8.2.1 Parents' understandings of culture and the importance of passing on cultural values

Since culture is a key concept in this research study, I began each parents focus group with an invitation to reflect on and share their understandings of culture and cultural values. Parents' responses demonstrated their strong awareness of culture as an important and complex concept which influences our way of life and human interactions. Parents discussed how 'culture is all about our makeup […] about everything, about who we are':

> *Culture is an attitude that is identifiable with a particular group of people*. – Focus group 1P3

> *I will say culture is the way we do things, the way we live our lives.* – Focus group 1P2

> *I think culture is like where we live. It is our lifestyle, eating, dressing, and our religions, you know and other things.* – Focus group 2P2

As shown in the quotes above, parents also understood culture as an attitude and social behaviour influencing people's relationships. One participant reflected on the role of culture in shaping people's humanity and the way in which our cultural interactions and our treatment of each other influences children's experiences as they grow up:

> *[Culture] is a very good foundation for humanity. Because if we were to treat each other as if we were related, even if we are not, it makes it easier for the children to grow up, you know, acknowledging or treating other people better. – Focus group 4P1*

For many participants, culture was central to our value system; 'when we think of culture, we are thinking value.' I further probed the participants to reflect on and describe their own culture. In response to this prompt, a parent from a Congolese background explained how she felt that a shared culture can be easily recognisable for members of a cultural group as they can decipher certain cultural symbols and behaviours:

> *Congolese usually like dressing, anything shiny, like you know bright colours, showing off, that is what we Congolese usually do, and you can see it from the way they carry themselves in their houses when I enter a house I can guess if it is a Congolese family residing there*. – Focus group 1P4

Similarly, a parent from Western Nigeria described the recognisability of the value of respect and its cultural translation into certain behaviours:

> *For me, I will say for Yoruba culture. One thing I can take away is that we value respect a lot, you know, so even from the way we address each other and in greetings, you will see two old people are greeting each other, and two of them are bending down for each other and one way or the other it passes on to the kids*. – Focus group 1P2

Indeed, the centrality of respect as a cultural value was discussed in all focus groups. According to another parent from Nigeria, it is expected for children to address adults with a certain level of formality and respect. For example, instead of using adults' first names, children are encouraged to address their friends' parents as 'Sean's mom' or 'Emory's mother' to show acknowledgement and respect for the parental role and to maintain a level of formality in their interactions. Another parent expressed her preference for her own children to adhere to these cultural norms even in the context of living in Ireland, where it may be more common for children to address adults by their first names. Parents expressed their strong intention of instilling the value of respect and, thus, uphold their cultural traditions, which they believed were important for maintaining harmonious relationships within the community:

> *You know, you see all these Irish kids. I mean, all their friends in the neighbourhood, you know, they call me Manny, and my kids as well wanted to be calling their parents by their name. I said, 'No, we don't do that in Nigeria. You have to respect, so it's either you call them Sean's mom and Emory's mother or something like that. It won't sit well with me to just be calling them by their name.* – Focus group 6P1

> *I kind of you know, if I take my kids back home, I would want my kids to respect my family, you know, the people back home, you know, I would want them to take what I have taught them in terms of respect in my culture, you know, to take it with them.* - Focus group 7P1

Reflecting on the role of respect and adult-child relationships and interactions, a parent of Pakistani background even went further by arguing that children in her culture are more 'obedient' compared to children in Ireland:

> *[…] I live in Pakistan, and in our culture, children is very obedient to parents and even parents in the neighbourhoods that are older* – Focus group 2P2

Many participants expressed a strong desire to bring their cultures with them and to protect and pass their cultural values on to their children irrespective of where they are born – either here in Ireland or in the parents' country of origin:

> *[…] And we bring our culture to here in Ireland, you know from the way we are behaving back home. We bring it here, this kind of affects also our children, you know, we teach them from a very young age that this is how we do things.* – Focus group 1P4

> *Even though our children, some of our children, we did not have them back home in Nigeria, or where we came from, where they can be exposed to these cultures, but there are still some cultural values that we passed down to them.* – Focus group 1P6

To preserve their cultural heritage and pass it on to their children many parents made an effort to speak in their native language with them:

> *So in the house, I always encourage that we speak in our own language because like my daughter goes to school where they learn Irish. So sometimes she would come home with these new words and I am like, okay, that's for school. At home, we're gonna speak our own language […]* – Focus group 7P4

> *[…] they [children] need to understand our own language as well. They're not being forced to speak the language. But they have to at least understand what we are actually saying. And saying that, here in the house, we actually speak both English language and we speak our own native language as well.* – Focus group 7P2

8.2.2 Moving between cultures and experiencing cultural clashes

Participants reflected on their children's experiences of navigating different cultural values and expectations which could, at times, clash and pose challenges in their daily lives in Ireland. Parents discussed situations in which their children encounter cultural differences. For example, one parent explained that her child is being raised following her cultural values, which requires her to use respectful titles for elders. She was aware of the confusion and difficulty this approach could cause for her daughter when they followed these cultural norms, and possibly needed to explain them to others who may not understand the cultural context:

> *[…] maybe another child has come for a playdate, and my daughter is there, a male African walks in, and the child says, 'hello uncle,' and the other one will ask, is that your uncle? Sometimes it is confusing because these are children as well. It's very confusing for my child, who I am trying to raise in my culture or values, for her to explain to the other child because she doesn't really understand.* - Focus group 4P1

According to another parent, difficulties related to cultural differences can arise in various situations, and children often struggle to understand or navigate them effectively:

> *Sometimes they [children] kind of get a bit confused. They get a bit confused when they kind of go into these things [cultural differences]* - Focus group 6P2

Differences in childrearing practices were highlighted as a significant challenge for both parents and children in five of the focus groups. One parent felt that Irish culture tends to give children 'too many rights' considering their young age and limited understanding. Another parent suggested that in situations where a child commits an offense, parents and adult more generally are limited in their ability to enforce disciplinary actions:

> *When kids go to school, they learn their own way, this is how things are done there, and then as a parent you do not really know how to talk to your child because you are kind of thinking if I cross the boundary, say, the Department of Social Protection may be knocking*

on my door, you know, so that does not really give you that full confidence of being a parent.. – Focus group 4P2

But within the Irish culture, they give too many rights to children because children are young and have limited understanding […] But in a situation where children commit an offence, you do not have rights to punish to teach a child, and I feel this is something with the Irish culture. – Focus group 2P2

Similarly, another parent, while acknowledging that Irish people are generally polite, criticised the way children were often handled, stating that 'too many rights' are given to them:

I will say that the Irish are very polite. They are very good, but their way of handling children is not good. They give up too many rights. – Focus group 3P2

A parent with an African background emphasised the contrast between the rights children have today and the limited rights she had while growing up. She highlighted that this issue is particularly significant for African communities in Ireland, suggesting that they may have different cultural expectations and perspectives on disciplining children:

Because now, the fact that they [children] have so many rights and we [parents] did not have much rights when we were growing up, it is becoming really an issue, particularly for the African communities in Ireland. – Focus group 4P2

The analysis of parents' discussions regarding their limited understanding of childrearing practices in Irish society and of 'how things are done' in schools, clearly demonstrated that cultural clashes posed significant challenges for them on a daily basis. More than that, they resulted, for some, in feelings of insecurity, perhaps even a fear of being judged as inadequate as parents:

When kids go to school, they learn their own way, this is how things are done in there, and then you are as a parent you do not really know how to talk to your child here because you are kind of thinking, if I cross the boundary, say, the department of social protection may be knocking on my door, you know, so that does not really give you that full confidence of being a parent because somebody is like if you do not do your job well, we are ready to help you. – Focus group 4P2

Participants from African background (n= 24), posited that back in their countries of origin, raising children was mostly a communal responsibility which they perceived to contrast starkly with childrearing cultures in Ireland:

From our own culture, we were taught that it takes a community to raise a child, meaning if I see another child who is not even mine, I have a right to reprimand to correct but here in Irish culture, we cannot, even if I see my neighbour's child who is Irish doing something wrong, I have no voice because he or she is not my child, so it is kind of hard. – Focus group 4P1

In Africa as a child, they teach you how to respect adults. They tell you when you see adults that, you have to greet them. But here it is different. Like even your neighbour, you can just

look at each other. You do not even know the names, and they do not care about greeting and greeting for us is very important as Africans. – Focus group 4P4

8.3 Migrant parents from minority-ethnic backgrounds and their children's schooling experiences in Ireland

After conducting an analysis of the data, it is evident that the schooling experiences of parent participants and their children in Ireland can be categorised into the following sub-themes: relationships at school, challenges at school, and school location as a determinant of cultural inclusivity.

8.3.1 Relationships at school

Parents emphasised the importance of their children's relationships and connections at school. Parents highlighted the utmost significance of their children cultivating positive relationships with both fellow students and teachers, as these were deemed fundamental to their children's overall positive schooling experience. Parents shared that for their children, building relationships and friendships with students from other backgrounds led to them being 'happy at school':

My son loves to go to school, he has friends from different backgrounds. Some of them are Irish, Polish, and some of them are from other countries as well. This allows him to interact with people, and he is adjusting well, similar to his experience in the US, where there are people from different cultural backgrounds. - Focus group 3P3

My 13-year-old son likes to be in school. Now he is mixed with students of all different backgrounds… happy at school. - Focus group 3P4

For my kids that go to school in [location], they are happy, and when they are on holiday, they just get bored at home and say I want to go back to see my friends, I miss them, and all that, they get along with their friends from different backgrounds. - Focus group 3P1

Unfortunately, such positive experiences did not apply to all children. Some parents shared experiences of their children having trouble developing 'friendships with classmates from different backgrounds' as well as with teachers:

For Jane, while she was in primary school, the relationship [between her and teacher] was non-existence. – Focus group 1P6

For me, my daughter actually sometimes she feels isolated from the classroom because they have group of friends already, and this is still a challenge for her. – Focus group 2P3

A Filipino mother further reflected on the differences in how schools supported the development of relationships among students of diverse cultural backgrounds in Ireland and the Philippines:

> *In the Philippines, we have, for example, in schools, students develop friendships with classmates from different backgrounds, and schools provide platforms for this to happen. In my daughter's current school, [location], when students begin schooling, their classmates remain the same, and ultimately no new friendships are formed. And I think the school promotes this situation.* - Focus group 2P4

Indeed, many parents believed that because of the importance of connections and good relationships for students' sense of belonging, schools and teachers should use targeted strategies to facilitate the 'mixing' of students to promote the formation of friendships among children from different cultural backgrounds.

> *The school is supposed to be mixing up the students and to encourage new friendships. So that new students will not feel isolated*. – Focus group 2P1

> *Teachers should ensure that students mix and try to develop new friendships with students from different backgrounds. Teachers can maybe work on seating arrangements, they can mix the seating arrangement* – Focus group 2P4

8.3.2 Challenges at school

Parents shared a wide range of challenges that their children faced in Irish primary and secondary schools. Most prominent among the challenges that were discussed were children's sense of isolation, the impact of stereotypes on them and, in the worst cases experiences of discrimination and bullying.

One parent shared how their daughter, who was one of a small number of students from an ethnic minority in her primary school, felt isolated and bullied, and as a result, 'lost interest in nearly everything,' including learning at school:

> *The girl felt so isolated. She didn't get on well with, you know, with the other girls. She felt so isolated. It affected her academics. And I felt that she did not get the support she needed because she kept going back even to the principal. She felt bullied, she was actually bullied, and her grades dropped. She lost interest in school, she lost interest in nearly everything. Because both of them were the only African children in the school.* - Focus group 1P6

Another parent, whose daughter also faced bullying at school, described how other kids made fun of her hair's 'odd' texture and style:

> *My kids attended Catholic schools. I think in the beginning, this issue of bullying, she still keeps experiencing even now. I will say so when her mum makes her a new hair style, children, even from sixth class, will try to pull it off just because of her style. They try to make fun out of it.* - Focus group 1P5

In some cases, schooling experiences were so persistently negative that children did not want to attend school anymore:

> *My daughter did not start school from the beginning she joined in third year. So it was very, very hard for her because, you know, when you come from Africa, then you can hear the English is different. Everything was different for her. It was very hard so she has to take even extra classes too. Sometimes she was not even talking because she felt different in the class. Sometimes when my daughter comes back from school, she will be crying because she will just say this person did this to me and that. Even till now, it is still hard for us sometimes. She says she doesn't want to go to school. There was a period where on Fridays she never wanted to go to school, and I ask why? It was because there's a girl bullying her, and she doesn't even say it.* Focus group 4P3

> *She was in secondary school when she was bullied. So she ended up stopping, you know, not going to school. So yeah, it was really tough.* -Focus group 4P4

One parent described how their child felt so excluded and rejected by his peers who, despite his attempts to join in during playtime, purposefully ignored him or sent him away. This continuous exclusion took an emotional toll on the child. The parent detailed that at one point another child was physically aggressive towards her son. When the child reported these experiences to his mother and the mother communicated with the teacher, the teacher failed to take any action to address the bullying:

> *The child is feeling being left out. It's like most of these children can pull themselves together and play, but once the child [of migrant background] wants to come join in the play, the other kids stylishly ignore and send him away. And this child has been feeling bad, and another time a kid hits him. The child goes back home and reports to his mom, and when the mom reports to the teacher about her child's experiences, the teacher will not do anything about it.* - Focus group 3P2

Other parents also highlighted the issue of some teachers ignoring or downplaying incidents of bullying when they were reported by immigrant families. Despite the action taken by parents, the lack of intervention by teachers allowed the bullying to persist. Some parents expressed serious concerns about these incidents emphasising that their children were very perceptive and recognised when they are being discriminated against. As demonstrated in the earlier quote as well as in the quotes below, failure by teachers to address bullying and discrimination can have a significant negative impact on the well-being and sense of belonging of students from immigrant backgrounds:

> *My kid was really bullied in the school, it got to a stage that this child was already now been affected psychologically, that he was been bullied in the [school] garden.* -Focus group 3P3

> *[…] some teachers will pretend like it [bullying] never happened, you know, and that thing [bullying] will continue when you have gone, you know, so it is not a good thing like for immigrant families. Because kids are very sensitive, they will know when they are being discriminated against.* - Focus group 3P4

According to a parent and from her children's experiences, 'bullying is worse in secondary than in primary' schools in Ireland. In the classrooms, parents posited that their children often suffer from negative stereotypes and 'discrimination' from students of majority background. Sharing an example of an incident in school, a Nigerian father highlighted that 'Black' students in his son's school are often viewed through the lens of negative stereotypes which lead to judgment and labelling of them as troublesome students:

> *So my son recently told me about an incident that happened in school. I think somebody brought a knife to the school and there was a search in the bags. So they check bags, but they only checked a few, and they were all Black students' bags, so he was not happy. He told me straight away that he never liked this situation because the knife was not found in any of the Black students' bags. The students actually know who brought the knife, and the eventual guilty student was White.* - Focus group 2P1

Parents felt that negative stereotypes and discrimination against children from minority ethnic backgrounds in Irish schools were perpetuated by inaccurate information and incorrect teaching by teachers:

> *[…] the stuff that the children have been taught about Africa is not accurate and more like promoting stereotypes.* - Focus group 4P4

> *[…] for me I find that it is more like ignorance. Even with the technology that we have. You can find out about Africa and countries in Africa. The point is put interest as an educator to know your students' backgrounds.* - Focus group 4P2

> *And it should be incorporated into the curriculum that we are different. Our hair is different. The teacher has to understand that. We are different and there's nothing wrong with being different.* - Focus group 4P1

A participant shared a hurtful experience of verbal abuse directed towards his child as demonstrated below:

> *My 12-year-old son was able to feel discrimination due to their differences, and he wasn't happy. Also, there was a time when one of the kids called him names as well as the N-word, and they called me to school [...]*- Focus group 2P1

8.3.3 School location as a determinant of cultural inclusivity

Parents in three focus groups identified that school location – in terms of rural, urban or city schools - significantly determined their children's experiences with schooling. According to one parent,

schools in the cities seem to recognise socio-cultural diversity within society and, therefore, try to provide support for students from culturally diverse families in their schools:

> *So that's another area where I think it's a big difference, depending on where you are actually living and where the school is. I supposed a school in the city will be different from the school in the outskirts. In my own case, I think, for the schools there, they kind of recognise that those children are from a different background. And they give that support to be fair to them, they would give them support.* - Focus group 1P2

> *I think it's a good school, I say it's in a nice urban area, so the people are kinda nicer.* – Focus group 4P1

Other parents also highlighted that multicultural activities organised by their children's schools made them feel that the schools recognised and valued their cultural values. Activities such as asking students to bring 'dishes from their country of origin' and engaging all students 'to participate in one thing or the other' contributed to cultural inclusivity of schools, according to participants:

> *Like where [city] my kids go to school, they celebrate diversity, they have one day in a year, when every culture come together, people from different backgrounds, the Africans and French, depending on where you come from, they bring their country flags, everybody bring dishes from their country of origin.* – Focus group 3P1

> *My son goes to [location] school. And I find them pretty okay the teachers and you know, even when they did their Christmas shows and stuff, it was different, you could see different skin colours and all the kids were allowed to participate in one thing or the other. I was really, really proud of the school. And, like you will see, the staff at the school is quite culturally diverse.* – Focus group 5P1

While parents generally agreed that culture exists in schools and acknowledged some schools' efforts to be inclusive, one parent stated that despite the diverse cultural values represented by students, many Irish schools have yet to recognise cultural differences, let alone embrace them in an inclusive way.

> *Schools have not fully put into consideration other people's culture, which I think they should, even talking about the Halloween, that culture, we don't have it. And they try to force it in our children like during Halloween our children always have to stay home and we never send them to school. Because that's not our culture. And even when it is a Catholic School that they portray to believe in God and they belief at the same time in darkness, so we have to explain at home to our children. If you ask our children, they will tell you that Christmas day is a celebration of Jesus birthday while Halloween is celebration of Satan*. – Focus group 1P5

8.4 Parental advice on developing more culturally inclusive practices for teachers and schools

Parents in this study were asked to share ideas about how teachers and schools could create more culturally inclusive practices. The sub-themes that emerged from the data analysis include teacher attitude and effort, professional development and support for teachers, and engaging with parents.

8.4.1 Teacher attitude and effort

All parents acknowledged that teachers played a key role and therefore their attitudes and effort matter in the development of culturally inclusive learning environments and society in Ireland:

> *Teachers have a crucial role in creating an inclusive society because kids say what they see and do what they see.* – Focus group 3P4

Participants suggested that teachers working in culturally diverse classrooms should exhibit a high degree of patience and empathy towards their students in order to avoid making assumptions, such as labelling a student with a learning challenge based on their cultural background. Parent participants highlighted the importance of teachers demonstrating empathy and patience towards students from diverse cultural backgrounds. They emphasised that such displays of understanding and patience can have a positive impact on students, motivating and challenging them in the classroom. For students who may be closed off or hesitant to participate due to their cultural background, teachers who show empathy create a safe and supportive environment where these students feel comfortable expressing themselves. By taking the time to understand and appreciate the unique experiences and perspectives of these students, teachers can foster a sense of belonging and inclusion:

> *Teachers need to be more patient, understand where they [children] are coming from, and... Teachers do not really need to know about the countries fully but need to understand that this child is from a foreign background. So you [teachers] need extra patience with children from diverse backgrounds.* – Focus group 1P5

> *One word, I will say is empathy, teachers should put themselves in their students' shoes […] find yourself in the midst of people, all of them completely different from you. How would you feel? How would you know how to interact, it will take you a while, you know, so they [students] might be a bit laid back because they just want that extra love, compassion, just for you to pull them out of their shell […] - Focus group 1P4*

Further, teacher attitude was identified as vital to developing CRP and intercultural education in Irish schools. Most parents in this study do not have English as their first language or the language spoken at home. Parents shared that their children growing up in a multilingual environment has led to linguistic challenges teachers are often unaware of. The consequence of this is that some teachers set low cognitive expectations for students of culturally diverse backgrounds as a result of their limited ability in the English language:

> *[…] initially, when I came in, I was asking myself, is it that she doesn't want this little boy in her classroom or what? […] He speaks Dutch. You don't expect for this little boy to start speaking English in one month.* - Focus group 5P2

Parents felt that teachers need to be aware and able to apply different approaches to teaching, as 'one size fits all' approaches when teaching students in culturally diverse classrooms disadvantages students from various backgrounds. In particular, parents expressed concerns about situations where the 'one size fits all' approach does not work for some students, often misleading teachers to label such students as having a learning disability. Instead of quick judgments, parents called for additional support and resources for students when teachers perceived them to be lagging in their studies:

> *I think for teachers, even though their education is in Ireland, they need to… I suppose they need to learn how to deal with kids of different backgrounds.* – Focus group 3P4

> *If they look like they are lagging behind before you label that child, as this one doesn't respond, first offer the support. So I would say if there is enough learning supports more and ongoing training on diversity for teachers, it will help.* – Focus group 2P2

Participants strongly posited that there is a need for the Irish education system to be 'open' in line with the increasing cultural diversity of the student population. One way to be more 'open' that was discussed on several focus groups related to the need to diversify the teaching profession which has remained homogenous despite the significant cultural diversification of student cohorts:

> *If you [Irish education system] want a diverse culture [teaching profession], you need to be open to people and not make the condition so stiff because the point is because they don't want the people, and it is wrong.* - Focus group 6P3

> *Who is teaching them is White, who is taking them on break is White, who is giving them canteen food is White […] So we should ensure that these young guys who are attending universities should choose the teaching profession as a priority […] For me, the solution is to diversify the teaching profession and have representations from a different culture.* - Focus group 5P3

Additionally, parents argued that when it comes to developing CRP and intercultural education in Ireland, both teachers and schools need to be open-minded about cultural diversity and promote the right values among students:

> *I will say that they should show interest in their differences… I mean, teachers need to show interests in the students' cultural differences. Look, this child is different for a purpose, even the way they talk and do things.* – Focus group 1P1

> *Ireland has become so diverse. Teachers should put effort and try to motivate the child when they see the child need it. They should try to encourage the child to become better. They are doing a fantastic job in fairness from primary to secondary school. It is just that those who are close-minded are many in the system, and they need to be open-minded.* – Focus group 4P2

> *Treat (teachers) the kids the same. You know, the same equal rights. Do not take your racism into the kids. These kids are innocent. You know, the kids look up to us, and it is unfair to pass across bad negative values to them.* – Focus group 5P1

In all eight focus groups, participants stressed the value of promoting cultural diversity understanding in the Irish educational system. Parents opined that teachers, school leadership, teacher educators and the government should promote the benefits of culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Ireland in more practical ways. According to parents in the study, failure to do this will result in many students missing out on equitable and quality education. For many research participants, diversity should be celebrated in Ireland and not considered problematic. Some parents highlighted their feelings of discouragement regarding how diversity and differences are being treated in Irish schools. The experience shared by a parent below illustrates some of the many invisible layers of culturally diverse classrooms which, despite their significant impact on children from minority-ethnic backgrounds, gain little to no attention in teacher education programmes or school curricula. This parent calls for more honest engagement with and learning about our differences. Her frustration about the silence regarding everyday small differences which are noted by children and which can, as a result of a culture of avoidance and political correctness, diminish their confidence, is palpable in the quote below:

> *They need to be open about teaching children that we are different. There is no way you can say we are the same. We aren't. We are different colours. We are different nationalities. We are different backgrounds. But we need to learn more about our differences. Just the other day […] my daughter was playing on the yard with other children, but because they don't understand her hair, she got her natural hair, they told her she needs to go to a hairdresser, they think something is wrong with her hair. They don't understand. You can't blame them because, in school, that is what they learn. And it should be incorporated into the curriculum that we are different. Our hair is different. The teacher has to understand that. We are different, and there is nothing wrong with being different. But they want to be politically correct. They don't want to say certain things... And this is taking the confidence*

> *off our children, that for example now at a young age, they prefer to hide their natural beauty by putting on wigs to school to fit in this society.* - Focus group 4P1

Other parents also felt that diversity and differences should be approached more openly and positively. Differences were viewed as something to show an interest in rather than something we should ignore. As demonstrated in the second quote below, parents advocated for a simultaneous acknowledgment of differences and a shared sense of humanity:

> *Teachers need to show interest in their students' cultural differences. Look, this child is different for a purpose.* - Focus group 1P1

> *We may come from different backgrounds of life, but at the same time, we are all human beings.* - Focus group 4P2

8.4.2 Professional development and support for teachers

During the focus groups, parents discussed the need and the nature of professional development in relation to cultural diversity and culturally relevant pedagogies for teachers. Indeed, they felt that 'it should be compulsory for teachers to attend trainings or seminars… because Ireland is changing.' There was a strong sense of a need for teachers to be better educated about cultural diversity as this was seen as a prerequisite for quality teaching in culturally diverse classrooms:

> *I think for teachers, even though their education is in Ireland, they need to… I suppose they need to learn how to deal with kids of different backgrounds. Because not every person, just because they have an education, are able to be a people person. I suppose they need to further learn all the different cultures, so like it is probably a bit more professional development workshops or more courses.* – Focus group 3P4

Additionally, a participant strongly highlighted that developing cultural inclusion within the Irish education system would require school leadership supporting teachers in delivering culturally inclusive teaching. In other words, progressive change is 'usually from the top':

> *And on the school system, sometimes it is usually from the top, the principal and then the teachers and everything. So the support for inclusion must come from the top. I think there is still more to be done, especially in countryside schools, you know, the schools in the outskirts.* – Focus group 1P6

8.4.3 Engaging with parents

Parents in the study emphasised the importance of teachers and schools actively seeking feedback from parents to maximise parental engagement. They argued that teachers and schools who prioritised and valued parental feedback were better able to understand and respond to the needs

and perspectives of their students. In some focus groups parents suggested incorporating parental feedback into teacher-training programmes:

> *I will advise the teacher, and the school authorities should learn to get feedback from parents. And from those feedback, they will be able to see certain things that they can teach the teachers during these teacher-training programmes.* – Focus group 3P2

There was a strong sense of responsibility and commitment to actively contribute to the school community among the parents who participated in the focus groups. They emphasised the need for parents to attend meetings and participate in school activities related to their children. By being present and involved, parents believe they can actively contribute to the inclusive and supportive educational environment. Active involvement of parents from diverse cultural backgrounds was considered an essential aspect of true inclusion:

> *I also think any school with people from diverse cultures, should try to organise meetings where they invite parents, particularly those from migrant backgrounds, to discuss with the parents the difficulties they, as teachers, are having with their wards.* – Focus group 1P5

> *I think we as parents need to do more in contributing to the community. If the school is saying there is a meeting, we need to be there. That is what inclusion is all about.* Focus group 5P3

Overall, the data shows parents' deep awareness of the importance of and their significant commitment to actively getting involved and providing feedback and cultural insights to teachers and schools. Such commitment is promising as it can facilitate the creation of collaborative partnerships that can enhances mutual understanding and better responses to students' needs.

8.5 Conclusion

This chapter has elucidated the significant role of teacher attitudes and efforts in promoting culturally inclusive learning environments in Ireland, as perceived by parents participating in this study. It underscores the significance of exhibiting patience, empathy, and understanding towards students from diverse cultural backgrounds, as these qualities contribute to the establishment of a secure and supportive environment that greatly enriches students' educational experiences. Additionally, parents emphasised the necessity of addressing linguistic obstacles encountered by non-English-speaking students through appropriate support. Moreover, many parents advocated for the diversification of the teaching profession by recruiting more teachers from culturally diverse backgrounds. They felt that this would not only provide students with valuable role models but also brings varied perspectives into the classroom. The involvement of parents and the integration of

their feedback in teaching and learning processes are emphasised as critical factors in establishing collaborative partnerships that enhance student support and success. The findings demonstrate that to cultivate cultural responsiveness and ensure equitable and quality education in Ireland, parents highlighted the importance of investing in teacher professional development and intercultural knowledge. The next chapter will discuss the findings from the research study, focusing on the perspectives of both student and beginning teachers and parents.

SECTION 5 – DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

Chapter Nine: Discussion of the Findings

9.1 Introduction

This research study was designed and conducted to respond to the growing need to develop CRP and promote intercultural education in Irish schools. This study aims to inform and support the development and practice of student and beginning teachers in culturally diverse Irish second-level schools. Therefore, this qualitative study explored the experiences of student and beginning teachers with cultural diversity and practices within culturally diverse classrooms. Also, the study examined the experiences of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with schooling in Ireland. Parental perspectives are crucial for educational research on inclusion and social justice, as highlighted by Hanafin and Lynch (2002).

This chapter discusses the findings from student and beginning teachers and parents, using the theoretical frameworks of CRP and CRT in education. CRP highlights the crucial role of culture in teaching and learning, emphasising the cognitive development of all students, regardless of their socio-cultural background, and the need for cultural awareness and competence among teachers and students (Brown, 2007, Gay, 2002a, 2002b; Hammond, 2014; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 2004). It also values students' cultural diversity and the importance of teachers gaining knowledge about students' cultural experiences to teach effectively. Additionally, it promotes teachers' building of cross-cultural communication and relationships with students and parents. On the other hand, CRT in education considers racism and racial inequities as prevalent problems in societies which must be considered when addressing social issues. It allows for a critical examination and understanding of race-based inequities in education systems, emphasising that race is a reflection of social structures and cultural representations within societies (Brayboy, 2005; Dixon & Rousseau, 2005; Ladson-billings & Tate, 1995; Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2009).

This chapter is structured as follows: first, a discussion of the backgrounds of the students and beginning teachers involved in this study is provided. Subsequently, attention is directed towards the experiences of these individuals within culturally diverse Irish second-level schools, incorporating the perspectives of student and beginning teachers and parents. This is followed by

an analysis of the experiences of minority-background student and beginning teachers in relation to ITE and their subsequent experiences in culturally diverse school settings. Additionally, the chapter delves into an exploration of the need for teacher education to better prepare student-teachers for culturally diverse backgrounds. The chapter concludes with recommendations for developing CRP and intercultural education in Irish schools based on perspectives from parents and student and beginning teachers.

9.2 Backgrounds of student and beginning teachers in this study

Sixteen student and beginning teachers participated in this study - 8 from majority backgrounds and 8 from minority cultural backgrounds recruited from multiple cohorts, some of whom were already in their first or second year of post-qualification. It is worth noting that there is a significant underrepresentation of minority student-teachers in ITE programmes, as these programmes are predominantly attended by individuals from White Irish and Catholic backgrounds, as highlighted in previous studies (Heinz, Keane & Davison, 2017; Heinz & Keane, 2018; Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023b).

Among the student and beginning teachers included in this study, five participants, particularly those from minority backgrounds, expressed that their experiences within Irish schools served as a motivation for pursuing a career in teaching. These individuals encountered a lack of representation and cultural inclusivity during their own education, which instilled in them a desire to become "better teachers" (Irish Nigerian T11). This finding aligns with the research conducted by Keane, Heinz, and McDaid (2023a, 2023b), emphasising the significance of having teachers from diverse cultural backgrounds in order to effectively cater to the diverse student population in Irish schools.

Furthermore, one participant from a minority background shared that her decision to pursue teaching was motivated by the experience with her former teachers, who were predominantly White Irish, failed to understand her cultural values and displayed minimal effort in getting to know her. Previous studies have highlighted that in culturally diverse Irish schools, a majority of teachers struggle "to make connections with students' lives or prior learning" (Heinz, Davison & Keane, 2018, p. 4).

Similarly, in Scotland, recent findings show that teachers of ethnic backgrounds make up "1.2 per cent of the teaching workforce in Scottish primary schools and 1.9 per cent in secondary schools" (Arshad, 2023, p. 54). According to Arshad (2023), this significant underrepresentation has affected equitable and quality education delivery for all learners in Scottish schools. Recognising the existing disparity, the Scottish Government took proactive steps in 2018 by establishing a working group to examine the challenges faced by teachers in addressing cultural diversity in schools. The recommendations put forth by the working group include enhancing the cultural literacy and awareness of school leaders, ITE programmes to better equip teachers for culturally diverse classrooms, and nurturing collaborative partnerships with local authorities to support the career advancement of minority teachers (Arshad, 2023). These recommendations reflect a concerted effort to bridge the gap and provide targeted support for teachers in navigating the complexities of cultural diversity in education.

Additionally, Sleeter (2004) asserts that a culturally diverse teaching body contributes to improved learning for students who may be at least partially motivated by cultural similarities with their teachers. Ladson-Billings (1995a) and Gay (2000) also argue that students' learning is enhanced when teachers establish meaningful cultural connections with them. The presence of teachers from ethnic minority backgrounds can be deemed essential for the successful education of students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The parents participating in this study also expressed their observation that they have yet to witness the presence of minority teachers in their children's schools. Consequently, they strongly advocate for diversifying the teaching profession and creating an environment that is more welcoming to teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds. Heinz, Keane, and McDaid (2023, p. 230) highlight the persistent challenge of diversifying the teaching profession, which is attributed to the prevailing normative and dominant institutional culture within schools and teacher education. This culture often perpetuates inequitable school environments characterised by "covert discrimination and microaggressions," posing significant barriers for individuals from underrepresented groups. To cultivate a more diverse, equitable, and inclusive teaching profession, they emphasise the critical need to address and transform this dominant culture (Heinz, Keane, & McDaid, 2023, p. 230).

The call made by parents in this research study to create a welcoming environment for teachers from minority backgrounds to join the Irish teaching profession is deemed critical in ensuring that culturally diverse students receive equitable and quality education. This perspective aligns with the stance put forth by Keane, Heinz, and McDaid (2023b), who argue that true diversification of the Irish teaching profession necessitates the implementation of a 'teacher diversity policy' that

prioritises the inclusion of minority groups, including members of the Travellers community and migrant teachers, within the profession. The topic of diversifying the teaching profession will be further explored and discussed later in this chapter.

9.3 Experiences with cultural diversity in Irish second-level schools

9.3.1 Challenges and complexities of culture and cultural diversity: Perspectives of student and beginning teachers

The experiences shared by student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds in this study provide valuable insights into the complexities and challenges associated with cultural identity. These personal stories align with existing academic literature, highlighting common themes, and shedding light on the unique experiences of individuals from diverse backgrounds (Cotter & Kolawole, 2015; Ní Dhuinn, 2017; Ngo, 2008). Some participants' (student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds) experiences of struggling to explain their cultural identity and the challenges they face in being understood and accepted resonate with the concept of 'double identity' discussed in previous research (Hall, 1990; Phinney, 1992). The notion of balancing multiple cultural influences and navigating between different cultural contexts is a recurring theme in the literature on multiculturalism and identity (Seeberg & Minick, 2012; Sleeter, 2004). This aligns with the narratives of participants who described their Nigerian-Irish and Yemeni-Serbian-Hungarian backgrounds, reflecting the intricacies of cultural fusion and negotiation. Furthermore, these participants' encounters with labels, stereotypes, and misconceptions echo the broader discussions on cultural stereotypes and the challenges faced by persons from diverse backgrounds in various contexts (Ngo, 2008; Schneider & Arnot, 2018). The accounts of being called names such as 'totobob' or being perceived as a 'Gypsy or terrorist' reflect the impact of cultural stereotypes and highlight the need to challenge and overcome these biases.

The above experiences of student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds emphasise the importance of fostering cultural understanding, acceptance, and appreciation in schools, teacher education and wider society, aligning with the literature on intercultural competence and cultural sensitivity (Bryan, 2010; Byram, 2003). The participants' stories underscore the significance of creating inclusive environments that validate and value diverse cultural identities, as discussed in the literature on intercultural education and inclusive practices (Kavanagh, 2013; Gay, 2010). For example, Yuan, Liu, and Lee (2019) highlight the role of emotions, including fear, in shaping

teachers' identity transformation. They note that student-teachers' identities can experience consolidation and expansion during the process of learning to teach, with significant impacts on their professional experiences. The study emphasises the importance of teacher educators helping student-teachers explore their core identities and understand their relationship with the surrounding context. By addressing these core identities and providing opportunities for reflective practice, teacher education programmes can contribute to the development of competent teachers with strong professional identities. The findings of this research study indicate that student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds face complex challenges when reflecting on their culture and identities. Therefore, it is necessary to offer specific support systems for teachers with multi/intercultural identities or other minority backgrounds. Heinz, Keane, and McDaid (2023) propose principles towards achieving a diverse, equitable, and inclusive teaching profession, which includes policy initiatives to provide ongoing support for teachers from underrepresented groups at all stages of their career, including beyond ITE. Furthermore, it is suggested by Heinz, Keane, and McDaid (2023, p. 232) that the support for teachers from underrepresented groups should encompass "mentoring and/or peer support" mechanisms. These forms of support aim to advance resilience in the face of pressures to conform and assist teachers in strategically navigating "the system in order to be better positioned to change it" (Marom 2019, p. 332).

Moreover, the study by Yuan, Liu, and Lee (2019) stresses the significance of confrontation in shaping teacher identity during teaching practicum. As pre-service teachers confront various learning opportunities and challenges, they develop new forms of identities that may contradict their previously established ones. Confronting these identity conflicts can lead to a breakdown and modification of their identity. Teacher education programmes should recognise the complex and fluid nature of teacher identities and provide opportunities for student-teachers to update and enrich their identities through practicum experiences. Additionally, addressing and supporting student-teachers' feared identities is crucial to prevent resistance and non-participation in the learning process.

The findings from this study shed light on the challenges and dynamics that arise in culturally diverse Irish second-level classrooms, with a particular focus on the experiences of participants (student and beginning teachers from minority and majority backgrounds) in relation to students from culturally diverse backgrounds. Participants highlighted the importance of adopting a culturally sensitive approach that respects and accommodates the unique customs, traditions, and values of culturally diverse backgrounds. This resonates with previous research emphasising the significance of cultural responsiveness in promoting inclusive education (Gay, 2010; Villegas &

Lucas, 2002). Some participants' recognition of the academic disparities faced by Traveller students aligns with existing academic literature documenting the educational disadvantages and achievement gaps experienced by marginalised and minority ethnic groups in Ireland (Darmody, McGinnity, & Kingston, 2016; McGinley & Keane, 2021). The emphasis on providing targeted support and tailored educational strategies to address these disparities reflects the need for proactive interventions to promote equitable outcomes for all students (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Sleeter, 2012).

A noteworthy observation from the participants is their perceived lack of proactive strategies in schools to support teachers in culturally diverse settings. Many student and beginning teachers felt that there were insufficient or no initiatives to facilitate the integration and academic success of students from culturally diverse backgrounds. This reflects a potential gap in providing adequate support and resources within the Irish education system. This finding aligns with previous research highlighting the need for teacher education programmes and school policies to prioritise cultural diversity training and provide ongoing support to teachers in culturally diverse schools (Boyle, Flynn, & Hanafin, 2018; Devine, Kenny, & Macneela, 2008; McGinley & Keane, 2021; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021; Sleeter, 2012). Participants' accounts emphasise the importance of creating a supportive environment that encourages open critical dialogue, understanding, and inclusivity.

The presence of fear among student and beginning teachers when engaging with students from diverse cultural backgrounds is a significant barrier, which can be analysed through the lens of CRT. This barrier hinders authentic communication and encounters, as revealed in the present study. This finding is consistent with previous research on the challenges faced by teachers in addressing cultural diversity, which emphasises the need for professional development opportunities that enhance intercultural competence and provide strategies for navigating diverse classroom dynamics (Mayfield & Garrisson-Wade, 2015; Nieto 2004; Olson & Rao, 2016). It is crucial for teacher education programmes to address these challenges and equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to navigate culturally diverse classrooms effectively.

The experiences of participants in this study shed light on the complexities of addressing personal matters in the classroom, particularly the fear of causing discomfort or being misunderstood, which often leads teachers to avoid certain personal questions or topics. This finding highlights the importance of teachers developing cultural sensitivity and awareness of appropriate boundaries when engaging with students from diverse backgrounds (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Hramiak, 2015). Wagner (2005) suggests that fear is likely to arise when discussing racism and engaging in

anti-racist pedagogy. Rather than denying or avoiding these strong emotions, Wagner (2005) proposes that educators should anticipate and affirm them, creating a space for deep and transformative learning. Openly addressing fear and acknowledging the potentially unsettling nature of the classroom experience can promote a supportive environment where students' emotions and resistance are validated. Engaging in meaningful critical dialogue, instead of resorting to aggressive attacks, can encourage students to overcome their socialised racism and participate in productive discussions (Athanases & de Oliveira, 2007; Wagner, 2005; Yuan, Liu, & Lee, 2019).

Furthermore, Modica (2015) explores the fear of accusations of racism in classroom discussions about race, particularly among White students in greater detail. According to Modica (2015), White students may experience anxiety and fear of being labelled as racist. This fear can shift the focus from oppressed people to themselves, positioning themselves as victims and seeking sympathy from others. The fear of being accused of racism can also lead to a reluctance to engage in discussions about race and hesitation to use racial descriptors correctly and respectfully. Additionally, the fear of being called racist can create anxiety and resentment among White students or teachers, impeding their understanding of the larger impact of structural racism. Modica (2015) argues against the colour-blind approach, which involves ignoring race and treating everyone as equal, as it is an ineffective strategy to address racial inequity in schools and society. She suggests that attempts to be colour-blind can actually perpetuate racism by disregarding the reality of structural racism and the experiences of marginalised groups. Therefore, Modica (2015) advocates for providing support and training to teachers, administrators, and students on how to engage in necessary conversations about race. More specifically, Modica (2015) proposes that engaging in sustained and reflective conversations about race can facilitate individuals in developing a more nuanced and comprehensive understanding of the subject.

Multilingualism is a key characteristic of culturally diverse classrooms, wherein students come from various linguistic backgrounds, and their first language or mother tongue may differ from the language of instruction in schools (Rodriguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019; UNESCO, 2019; Valentin, 2006). Within the context of Irish schools, the 'language barrier' has previously emerged as a significant challenge for teachers and students in culturally diverse classrooms (Condon, 2017; Röder et al., 2014; Rodriguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019). The language challenge was also raised in this study by both student and beginning teachers and parents. As discussed in the findings chapter, three participants spoke about encountering students who they described as having 'no word of English', the language of instruction (White Settled Irish T4, T5, T8). While the

participants' descriptions may have come from a place of concern and struggle, their use of language also reflects hidden assumptions and implicit biases towards students who are learners of the language of instruction (English) which they may have picked up and likely share with many other teachers. This interpretation is consistent with previous research, which suggests that teachers may hold deficit views of students from non-English speaking backgrounds, leading to a failure to recognise their linguistic competences and subject expertise in various school subjects (Cummins, 2000; Gay, 2002b; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021). When we pause to contemplate the phrase 'no word of English' it is clear that it reflects, intentionally or unintendedly, a very narrow perception of language learners and language competence. The exposure, acceptance and/or use of such statements about language learners requires much more critical attention as it likely reflects and/or promotes simplistic and deficit-based views of language learners which can result in teachers disregarding, and even devaluing, their linguistic resources and diverse backgrounds as well as their language learning efforts and progress (Gay, 2002a, 2002b).

Furthermore, the findings reveal that some participants felt inadequately prepared by their ITE programmes to address the needs of students with limited English proficiency. This resonates with the existing academic literature, which highlights the insufficiency of teacher training programmes in equipping teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to effectively support multilingual learners (Brown, 2007; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022; Horgan et al., 2022). A participant's reliance on personal experiences, such as living abroad, to navigate the language barriers in her classroom mirrors previous research on the role of experiential knowledge in addressing the needs of culturally diverse students (Marx & Moss, 2011; Rychly & Graves, 2012; Santoro, 2014).

9.3.2 Challenges and complexities of culture and cultural diversity: Perspectives of parents

Parent participants demonstrated a deep understanding of culture as a multifaceted concept that influences individuals' attitudes, behaviours, and values. Consistent with previous research (Gabrielli & Impicciatore, 2021; Mayfield & Garrison-Wade, 2015) parents in the focus groups recognised culture as a vital aspect of their identity and emphasised its role in shaping their way of life and human interactions. They described culture as an attitude that distinguishes specific groups of people and encompasses various aspects, including lifestyle, language, dress, and religious practices. These findings support the notion that culture encompasses a broad range of characteristics and behaviours (Barton & Yang, 2000; Erickson, 2005). Participants' reflections on the role of culture in shaping humanity and promoting positive relationships resonate with the

literature on cultural values and socialisation (Erickson, 2005; Hall, 1990; Hoffman, 1996). Parents in this study acknowledged that cultural values, such as respect, are deeply ingrained in their upbringing and believed that instilling these values in their children would contribute to their overall development. This aligns with previous studies that have highlighted the intergenerational transmission of cultural values and the importance of cultural socialisation in shaping children's behaviours (Dimmock & Walker, 2005; Valentin, 2006).

The challenges highlighted by participants regarding cultural clashes and differences in child-rearing practices corroborate previous research on acculturation stress and parenting in multicultural contexts (Bornstein & Cote, 2006; Ngo, 2008). Parents expressed concerns about their children's ability to navigate cultural differences and the impact of these differences on their daily lives within Irish society. This resonates with studies emphasising the importance of cultural sensitivity and understanding in promoting positive outcomes for children from diverse cultural backgrounds (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Schneider & Arnot, 2018).

Some parents' descriptions of communal responsibility in raising children within their own cultural contexts and the contrast with individualistic child-rearing practices in Ireland are consistent with research on cultural variations in parenting styles (Cotter & Kolawole, 2015; Jackson, 2015). Participants expressed frustration at the perceived lack of community support and limited ability to intervene in other children's behaviour. These findings corroborate studies highlighting the impact of cultural variations in parenting norms and the challenges faced by immigrant parents in adapting to new cultural contexts (Feliciano, 2006; Ngo, 2008; Ramirez, 2003; Theodorou, 2008).

The findings from the study highlight the significance of children's relationships and connections at school, as emphasised by parents. Positive relationships with both fellow students and teachers were seen as crucial for a positive schooling experience. These findings align with existing research on the importance of positive relationships in education (Baysu et al., 2021; Santoro, 2014; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021) and the role of teachers in promoting supportive classroom environments (Biggart, O'Hare, & Connolly, 2013). The idea that building friendships with students from culturally diverse backgrounds contributes to children's happiness at school resonates with research on the benefits of cross-cultural friendships (Al Ramiah et al., 2013; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014). Such friendships promote social integration, cultural understanding, and the development of empathy and tolerance (Al Ramiah et al., 2013; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014; Van Ewijk & Sleegers, 2010). However, the findings also reveal that not all children have positive experiences with developing relationships at school. A number of parents shared their concerns about their children

struggling to form friendships with classmates from different backgrounds and even facing challenges in their relationships with teachers. These findings align with research on the difficulties of forming cross-cultural friendships, particularly for minority students who may face barriers such as language differences, cultural misunderstandings, and stereotypes (Horgan et al., 2022; Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014). Additionally, the negative experiences shared by some parents regarding their children's lack of support from teachers align with studies that highlight the detrimental effects of unsupportive teacher-student relationships on students' well-being and academic outcomes (Stylianou, 2017; Theodorou, 2008).

The comparison made by one parent between schools in Ireland and the Philippines underscores the role of school context in shaping students' experiences. Current academic literature supports the idea that school context, such as location and demographic composition, influences students' social interactions and experiences of diversity (Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014; Gillborn, 2006). Urban schools often have greater exposure to diversity and resources to support students from culturally diverse backgrounds (Gorski, 2006). In contrast, rural schools may face challenges in providing culturally inclusive environments due to limited exposure to diversity and resources (MacBeath et al., 2006). These findings echo with parents' observations regarding the varying levels of support and recognition of cultural diversity in different Irish school settings.

The findings also highlight the negative experiences of children from minority ethnic backgrounds, including bullying, discrimination, and the perpetuation of stereotypes. This aligns with extensive research documenting the challenges faced by minority students in schools (Bhowmik et al., 2017; Condon, 2021; Glock & Klapproth, 2017; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Stylianou, 2017). Studies have shown that minority students are more likely to experience bullying and discrimination based on their ethnicity or cultural background (Horgan et al., 2022; Stylianou, 2017).

Parents' concerns about inaccurate information and stereotypes perpetuated by some teachers reflect the need for culturally responsive education that addresses the biases and misconceptions that can contribute to discriminatory attitudes (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c). Studies have shown that culturally inclusive practices, such as incorporating diverse cultural perspectives into the curriculum, celebrating cultural diversity, and nurturing positive intergroup relationships, contribute to students' sense of belonging and academic engagement (Au & Kawakami, 1994; Banks, 2015; Biggart, O'Hare & Connolly, 2013; Nieto, 2004; Sleeter, 2013).

Finally, the concerns raised by some parents regarding the lack of recognition and understanding of different cultures in Irish schools reflect the broader literature on cultural responsiveness in education. Culturally responsive schooling entails recognising, respecting, and valuing the diverse cultural backgrounds of students (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c). Research has emphasised the need for schools to move beyond a 'one-size-fits-all' approach and instead acknowledge and accommodate the diverse cultural practices, traditions, and beliefs of students (Gay, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

9.4 Experiences of student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds with ITE and in culturally diverse schools

In the pursuit of inclusive and equitable classrooms, it has become increasingly crucial to prepare teachers adequately through ITE programmes. One theoretical lens that has gained prominence in this context is CRT. Drawing attention to the intersections of race, power, and oppression, CRT offers a lens through which the voices and experiences of minority groups can be centred, challenging the prevailing systems of privilege and discrimination (Brayboy, 2005; Dixon & Rousseau, 2005; Ladson-billings & Tate, 1995; Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2009). This section delves into the significance of utilising CRT lens in exploring the experiences of student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds with ITE and in culturally diverse schools.

Collaboration during ITE emerges as a vital factor in the development of teachers, as emphasised by various studies (Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022; Mensah, 2011; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021; Vass, 2017). The research participants (from both majority and minority backgrounds) in this study recognised the value of collaborating with colleagues, particularly in preparing for diverse classrooms. Furthermore, school placements were found to be instrumental in their learning journey, reinforcing the importance of practical experiences in shaping teachers' skills and perspectives (Hanly & Heinz, 2022; Menter, 1989). This hands-on approach enables student-teachers to apply theoretical knowledge, refine classroom management skills, and engage in reflective practices (Foncha, Abongdia, & Adu, 2015; Pomerantz & Pierce, 2004; Thomas, 2006).

However, amidst positive experiences, one participant from minority background shared a distressing incident involving racism during a school placement. The participant's dissatisfaction with the school management's response to the incident, where the student who used a racial slur was only suspended for one day, raises concerns about the effectiveness of addressing acts of

racism within the educational setting. This incident highlights the need for a more comprehensive and dialogue-based approach, rather than solely relying on punitive measures such as suspension, in order to encourage understanding, promote accountability, and address the underlying issues. By solely suspending the student without involving the affected teacher in the decision-making process, it appears that the school management missed an opportunity for meaningful dialogue and restorative actions. Suspending the student without engaging in a conversation about the consequences of their actions and the impact it had on the teacher and the classroom environment may not effectively address the root causes of racism or prevent future incidents.

The above finding aligns with existing research that highlights the persistence of racism in schools and the need for educational institutions to address and prevent discriminatory behaviours (Howard, 2010; Wilkins & Lall, 2011). It underscores the importance of creating inclusive and supportive environments that promote cultural sensitivity, equity, and social justice. Research not focusing on the need to develop a more culturally inclusive work environment is a limitation in studies that are overly focused on learners' access to culturally inclusive teaching and learning (see Gay, 2002a; Ladson-Billings, 1995a,1995b, 1995c; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Therefore, it is important for schools to establish clear policies and protocols to address incidents of discrimination effectively and provide support systems for both students and teachers, particularly those of culturally diverse backgrounds (Heinz, Keane & McDaid, 2023).

Furthermore, the findings of this study shed light on the challenges faced by individuals from marginalised backgrounds within the Irish education system. One participant with an Irish Traveller background expressed his disappointment in the lack of acknowledgment and celebration of his cultural identity within the curriculum. This experience served as a motivation for the participant to become a teacher and bridge the gap by supporting students who share similar backgrounds. The participant's journey highlights the urgent need for inclusive education that embraces diverse cultural identities, promotes cultural responsiveness, and provides targeted support for students from marginalised communities (Banks, 2015; May, 1994). The participant's surprise at encountering diverse classrooms also underscores the increasing cultural diversity within and outside the Irish educational setting and the necessity of CRP (Gay, 2002a, 2002b; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022; Horgan et al., 2022; Stylianou, 2017; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

The significance of representation in the teaching profession is another important theme highlighted in the findings. Student-teachers from minority backgrounds shared experiences where their students from minority backgrounds expressed excitement and a sense of inspiration when

they saw them, a teacher who shared their ethnic or cultural identities. They felt that for their students seeing them as 'role models' demonstrated that individuals from culturally diverse backgrounds can succeed as teachers and pursue any desired career. Representation in education has been widely recognised as a means to promote a sense of belonging, cultural validation, and academic achievement among underrepresented groups (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). When students see themselves reflected in their teachers, it can not only affirms their identities but also open up possibilities and aspirations for their own future endeavours.

Moreover, the findings illustrate the fulfilling moments experienced by minority student and beginning teachers when their students responded positively to their teaching and recognised their abilities. This affirmation had a profound impact on their professional growth and self-confidence. Existing research has emphasised the significance of positive student-teacher relationships, effective feedback, and supportive environments in shaping teachers' efficacy, job satisfaction, and overall well-being (Howe & Lisi, 2013; Pianta, Hamre, & Allen, 2012; Siwatu, 2007). The participants' experiences underscore the importance of creating work environments that value and celebrate the diverse backgrounds and strengths of teachers. Schools should promote a culture of appreciation, respect, and support, where teachers' unique perspectives and experiences are recognised and affirmed. This is an important aspect that has been somewhat overlooked in previous studies, which primarily focused on teachers affirming and valuing the cultural values of ethnic minority students (Gay, 2002a; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

9.5 Student and beginning teachers call for a greater emphasis on cultural diversity and CRP in teacher education

Student and beginning teachers who participated in this study strongly asserted the need for comprehensive integration of training on CRP within ITE programmes. The findings revealed that many participants (n=14) had either never received any training on CRP, or it was not a mandatory component of their ITE programmes. Instead, CRP modules were often offered as optional, voluntary sessions when available. Consequently, participants felt ill-prepared and unequipped to effectively teach in culturally diverse classrooms. The findings from the participants align with existing literature that emphasises the limited attention given to culturally responsive teaching in

teacher education programmes (Brown, 2007; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Sleeter, 2013; Young, 2010; Yuan, 2019). Studies have shown that many pre-service teachers feel unprepared to work with culturally diverse student populations and lack the necessary knowledge and skills to implement culturally responsive teaching practices (Brown-Jeffy & Cooper, 2011; Morrison, Thompson & Glazier, 2022; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Sleeter, 2013; Young, 2010; Yuan, 2019). Participants' lack of recollection or awareness of receiving CRP training is indicative of a broader gap in teacher education programmes in Ireland, where the focus on cultural inclusion and responsive pedagogies is often insufficient.

Moreover, the participants' experiences of optional workshops or modules on diversity, which they perceived as insufficient, resonate with research that highlights the need for more comprehensive and explicit training on CRP (Brown, 2007; Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022). These studies argue that brief mentions or surface-level discussions of cultural diversity and inclusivity are not enough to develop teachers' cultural competence and pedagogical skills. Instead, teacher education programmes should provide in-depth training that delves into the specifics of being culturally responsive, such as understanding cultural identities, addressing biases, and developing pedagogical strategies that promote inclusive practices (Brown, 2007; Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022). For example, Young (2010, p. 258) found that teachers in a US elementary school received "woefully inadequate" pre-service training in culturally responsive teaching. Within the Irish context, recent studies have also highlighted that teachers entering schools with culturally diverse student populations lack adequate preparation from their ITE programmes. Therefore, these studies emphasised the imperative for ITE programmes to equip teachers with the necessary cultural competence to deliver equitable and quality education for all students (Brown et al., 2022; Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022; McGinley & Keane, 2021).

Two participants' positive references to the CRP workshops organised by the researcher of this PhD study align with research that emphasises the benefits of incorporating thorough training opportunities in teacher education programmes (Acquah & Commins, 2015; Howe & Lisi, 2013; Rychly & Graves, 2002; Villegas & Lucas, 2002; Yost, Sentner & Forlenza-Bailey, 2000). These studies highlight the value of experiential learning and interactive workshops that engage pre-service teachers in critical reflections on their own cultural identities and provide them with practical strategies for implementing CRP in the classroom. Participants' recognition of the value of such workshops highlights the importance of integrating similar and more comprehensive CRP-related input in teacher education programmes. Research emphasises the need for teacher education

programmes to incorporate culturally specific pedagogies (Gay, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2007) and to facilitate opportunities for learning from the experiences of teachers who have successfully taught in culturally diverse settings (Athanases & de Oliveira, 2007; Cochran-Smith et al., 2015). Some participants' suggestions for Skype calls, in-person visits, and student-teachers sharing their experiences reflect the literature's emphasis on learning from real-life examples and diverse perspectives (see Foncha, Abongidia & Adu, 2015; Pomerantz & Pierce, 2004; Thomas, 2006).

Some participants' recognition of the challenges faced by beginning teachers in culturally diverse classrooms aligns with existing research that acknowledges struggles and concerns of new teachers in this context (Bhowmik, Kennedy, & Hue, 2017; Chou, Su, & Wang, 2018; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Yuan, 2019). Participants' emphasis on providing support and competencies for beginning teachers is consistent with the academic literature that emphasises the need for ongoing professional development and mentoring programmes to help new teachers navigate the complexities of culturally diverse classrooms (Civitillo et al., 2019; Durden & Truscott, 2013; Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022). Furthermore, the suggestion of two participants to integrate academic research on culture and cultural diversity in teacher education programmes resonates with the academic literature that emphasises the importance of grounding CRP practices in theoretical frameworks and empirical evidence (Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c, 2009; Gay, 2000; Hammond, 2014). The incorporation of research-based instructional practices can help teachers develop a deeper understanding of diverse cultures and of the relevance of culture in education and guide them in creating inclusive learning environments.

In sum, the findings emphasise the critical need for ITE programmes to incorporate comprehensive and mandatory training on CRP to ensure that future teachers are adequately prepared to engage with and address the needs of culturally diverse students. Rather than being offered as an optional or additional course, preparation for culturally responsive teaching should be an integral component of teacher education programmes. This approach aims to cultivate culturally inclusive teaching practices and promote equitable education for all students in Irish schools. Herzog-Punzenberger et al. (2022), drawing on the results of their research, further support this perspective and recommend the inclusion of a mandatory module within teacher education that combines theoretical and practical elements of teaching and learning in multicultural contexts. This module would provide student-teachers with the essential knowledge and skills required for effective teaching in diverse cultural and linguistic settings.

9.6 Developing CRP and intercultural education in Irish schools

The findings from this study highlight the challenges teacher participants faced in implementing culturally responsive teaching strategies in Irish schools. Participants including student and beginning teachers and parents repeatedly emphasised some teachers' insufficient knowledge and lack of adequate training on CRP. This finding demonstrates that teachers in Ireland continue to feel unprepared for responding to the challenges and opportunities of culturally diverse classrooms despite the well-established argument for CRP-related training evident in academic and policy literature in Ireland and internationally (Connaughton, 2019; Gay, 2010; Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Smyth et al., 2009). Data collected in this study illustrated that some teachers' struggles with understanding and adjusting their teaching to the diverse needs and backgrounds of their students. This highlights the need for comprehensive training programmes that equip teachers with the necessary knowledge and skills to implement CRP effectively.

Interestingly, some participants linked the culturally diverse school context to changes in society more broadly, emphasising the responsibility of teachers to create a learning environment that reflects the 'modern society' and celebrates the interests and backgrounds of all students. They recognised that culturally responsive teaching, which promotes inclusivity by acknowledging the diverse cultural identities of students, supports the broader goals of education in preparing students for active participation in a culturally diverse society (Agirdag, Merry, & Van Houtte, 2014; Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Sleeter, 2004). The understanding of CRP as a 'modern way of teaching' reflects participants' recognition of the evolving and interlinked nature of education and society and the contribution that teachers and schools can make in the creation of more inclusive societies. The following subsections delve into the experiences and perspectives of student and beginning teachers, as well as parents, regarding cultural inclusive practices in Irish schools.

9.6.1 Student and beginning teachers' insights on cultural inclusive practices

The findings of the study indicate that teachers play a crucial role in adapting the curriculum to meet the needs of culturally diverse students. This aligns with existing research that emphasises the importance of teacher effectiveness in addressing student diversity (Gay, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). The study's findings highlight that teachers' approaches and engagement are key factors in creating an inclusive learning environment. Furthermore, participants (student and

beginning teachers) shared that certain subjects present greater challenges in adapting the curriculum for cultural diversity. This finding is consistent with previous research, which suggests that some subjects lend themselves better to cultural adaptation due to their content (Alhanachi, de Meijer, & Severiens, 2021; Banks, 2009). Humanities subjects, such as Business, History, and English, were reported as relatively easier to adapt, whereas subjects like Mathematics and Geography posed challenges. It is quite interesting that a participant who teaches Geography and English shared that it is 'difficult' to adapt the Geography subject to reflect the diverse cultural values of students in the classroom. The Geography subject is expected to cover the world, populations, diverse values and cultures (Alhanachi, de Meijer, & Severiens, 2021). This insight underscores the need for specific strategies and support to effectively adapt the curriculum across all subjects.

One significant finding that emerged from this study is the importance of incorporating students' cultural backgrounds and experiences into the curriculum for culturally inclusive teaching. Participants highlighted the value of using case studies, traditional teaching methods, and knowledge from students' countries of origin to make the curriculum more relevant and inclusive. This finding aligns with existing research on CRP, which emphasises the significance of recognising, valuing, and integrating students' diverse backgrounds and experiences into the teaching and learning process (Gay, 2010; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Incorporating students' cultural backgrounds and experiences into the curriculum is a fundamental aspect of CRP. It involves creating learning experiences that reflect and build upon the knowledge, traditions, and lived experiences of students from diverse cultural backgrounds. By incorporating relevant cultural content and examples, teachers can make the curriculum more engaging, meaningful, and relatable for students. This approach not only promotes inclusivity but also enhances students' motivation, self-esteem, and academic achievement (Brown, 2007; Gay, 2002a, 2002b). Examples provided by participants in this study include the use of case studies that reflect the experiences and perspectives of students from various cultural backgrounds. Case studies allow students to analyse and apply their knowledge in real-world contexts that are relevant to their own cultural identities and experiences. Additionally, incorporating traditional teaching methods, such as storytelling, music, or art forms, can provide opportunities for students to share and celebrate their cultural heritage within the classroom. Furthermore, drawing upon knowledge and resources from students' countries of origin can enrich the curriculum by providing diverse perspectives and alternative ways of understanding and approaching the subject matter.

A number of teacher participants emphasised the importance of teachers' understanding and empathy towards their students' backgrounds and experiences. Participants highlighted the need for teachers to actively seek knowledge about their students' cultures, learn from their students, and make efforts to pronounce their names correctly. This finding is consistent with previous research that underscores the importance of cultural competence and fostering positive teacher-student relationships in classrooms with cultural diversity (Howard, 2010; Gay, 2010). Scholarly literature has highlighted the need for teachers to develop a deep understanding of diverse cultures and backgrounds, enabling them to effectively engage and support students from various cultural backgrounds (Brown & Ritter, 2017; Gay, 2002a; Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Nieto, 2004; Siwatu, 2007). Culturally competent teachers are equipped with the knowledge, skills, and attitudes necessary to create inclusive learning environments that promote the academic and socio-emotional development of all students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds.

Findings also highlighted the significance of building positive relationships with students and parents in culturally diverse schools. Many of the teacher participants recognised that a culturally responsive teacher actively strives to know and comprehend their students' backgrounds to better understand and support them. This aligns with the principles of CRP, which emphasise the importance of building strong teacher-student relationships and developing cultural knowledge as a foundation for culturally inclusive teaching (Gay, 2013; Ladson-Billings, 2009). When teachers demonstrate empathy, patience, and understanding towards students from different cultures, it establishes a foundation of trust and respect. This, in turn, creates an environment where students feel valued, supported, and motivated to actively engage in their learning. Positive teacher-student relationships contribute to a sense of belonging and promote academic achievement among culturally diverse students (Brown & Ritter, 2017; Howe & Lisi, 2013; Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020; Siwatu, 2007).

Many participants appreciated the importance of student-centred instruction and of tailoring teaching approaches to meet individual student needs (Howe & Lisi, 2013). They also understood that CRP is about getting students interested in learning and creating autonomous learners who can perform at higher levels of cognitive engagement. Many of their reflections align well with the notion that culturally responsive classrooms foster student engagement and promote higher-order thinking skills (Gay, 2010, 2013; Hammond, 2014). However, despite their general appreciation of the broad goals of CRP they seemed to lack the necessary intercultural competence and

confidence as well as specific knowledge and skills about appropriate teaching strategies to successfully work towards these goals which left many of them dissatisfied.

Another noteworthy finding is the caution expressed by some participants regarding cultural references in the classroom and the importance of avoiding approaches that could single students out or label them based on their cultural backgrounds. The participants discussing this practical tension demonstrated their awareness of the existence of assumptions and stereotypes which they recognised as significant barriers to the creation of real cultural inclusivity. This finding conforms with existing research on culturally responsive teaching, which underscores the significance of creating an inclusive environment where students are valued for their individual contributions rather than being reduced to stereotypes (Gay, 2002a, 2010; Nieto, 2004). The cautionary perspective shared by participants highlights the need to approach cultural diversity in a sensitive and respectful manner. While it is crucial to acknowledge and appreciate students' cultural backgrounds, it is equally important to avoid making generalisations or assumptions about individuals based on their cultural identities. Stereotypes can perpetuate biases, limit students' potential, and hinder their sense of belonging in the classroom (Banks & Banks, 2010; Schneider & Arnot, 2018). Culturally responsive teaching and CRT of education emphasise the creation of an inclusive learning environment that values students' diverse experiences, perspectives, and contributions (Ladson-Billings, 1995a,1995b, 1995c; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). It encourages teachers to promote an atmosphere of respect, curiosity, and openness, where students feel safe to express their unique identities without fear of judgment or stereotype reinforcement. The participants' reflection on the delicate balance and tension between acknowledging diverse cultures and avoiding uncomfortable situations for students from minority backgrounds or even the reinforcement of stereotypes and/or biases demonstrates the complex situations and contexts which teachers need to navigate in their everyday practice and the urgent need for much more critical engagement and deeper exploration of the dynamics in culturally diverse classrooms.

9.6.2 Parents' perspectives on culturally inclusive practices

The role of teachers in developing culturally inclusive learning environments was highlighted as crucial by parents, who emphasised the significance of teachers' attitudes and efforts in promoting inclusion. This finding is consistent with previous research on the role of teachers in culturally responsive teaching and learning, as discussed by Gay (2002a, 2002b, 2010) and Ladson-Billings

(1995a, 1995b, 1995c). Teachers who demonstrate empathy, respect, and a willingness to adapt their teaching approaches to accommodate students' diverse backgrounds and needs promote an inclusive learning environment that values and validates all students' identities and experiences (Brown, 2007; Gay, 2002b; Rychly & Graves, 2012; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021; Yuan, 2019).

Parents in this study expressed the need for teachers to receive professional development and support pertaining to cultural diversity and culturally relevant pedagogies. This finding aligns with existing academic literature that highlights the significance of teacher training in culturally responsive practices (Brown, 2007; Gay, 2010; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). It is crucial for teachers to acquire the knowledge and skills necessary to effectively teach students from diverse backgrounds and to comprehend the linguistic, cultural, and educational challenges they may encounter, as emphasised by Banks (2009) and Villegas and Lucas (2002). Ongoing professional development initiatives and the incorporation of diversity-related topics in teacher education programmes can enhance teachers' abilities to create culturally inclusive classrooms.

The importance of parental engagement and the active involvement of parents from diverse cultural backgrounds were underscored by the study's findings. This finding conforms with scholarly literature that recognises the significance of collaborative partnerships between schools and parents in promoting student success and cultural inclusion (Denessen, Bakker, & Gierveld, 2007; Domina, 2005; Öztürk, 2013; Tett, 2004). Recent data in Ireland shows that parental involvement in education has decreased over time (Brown et al., 2020; Connaughton, 2019; Horgan et al., 2022; Rodríguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019). Therefore, schools should actively seek feedback from parents, value their perspectives, and create opportunities for meaningful parent-teacher communication. Involving parents in decision-making processes and integrating their cultural insights can contribute to a more inclusive educational environment.

Additionally, parents emphasised the necessity of diversifying the teaching profession to better represent the cultural diversity found within student cohorts. This finding supports existing research that underlines the significance of teacher diversity and the role of culturally responsive educators within and outside the Irish educational context (Arshad, 2023; Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023a, 2023b; Ladson-Billings, 1995a, 1995b, 1995c). The presence of teachers from diverse backgrounds offers numerous benefits, including serving as positive role models for students, fostering greater cultural understanding, and promoting inclusive education (Heinz, Keane & Davison, 2017; Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023a, 2023b). Consequently, it is imperative to actively pursue strategies to recruit and retain teachers from a wide range of cultural backgrounds. This can

be accomplished through targeted recruitment strategies, scholarships, mentorship programmes, and professional development opportunities that encourage individuals from underrepresented groups to pursue careers in teaching. Schools and teacher training institutions should also create supportive environments that value and celebrate diversity, providing ongoing training and support to ensure that teachers from diverse backgrounds feel included, supported, and empowered to contribute to students' educational experiences (see Brown et al., 2019; Faas, Smith, & Darmody, 2018a; Madhlangobe & Gordon, 2012).

The observations shared by parents in this study shed light on several key aspects regarding the handling of diversity and differences in Irish schools. Parents expressed their dissatisfaction with the current approach, highlighting the need for teachers and students to view diversity in a positive light. They believe that differences should not be ignored or brushed aside but rather recognised and embraced as essential aspects of our shared humanity. This perspective stresses the importance of moving beyond mere tolerance or 'political correctness' and instead promote open critical dialogue, a genuine appreciation and understanding of cultural diversity. While recognising and celebrating differences is crucial, there are tensions that need to be navigated. One such tension is the potential for 'othering' or inadvertently marginalising certain groups based on their differences. The challenge lies in striking a balance between recognising and appreciating cultural diversity while avoiding essentialising or stereotyping individuals or communities. It is essential to create an inclusive environment where all students feel valued for their unique contributions and are not reduced to cultural stereotypes. Aligned with the research findings on student and beginning teachers' perspectives, it is evident that creating inclusive environments that validate and value the diverse cultural identities of teachers with multi/intercultural identities or from other minority backgrounds is crucial for promoting an inclusive educational setting.

The dissatisfaction expressed by parents in this study suggests that the current approach to diversity in many Irish schools may be problematic. Merely designating a specific cultural day or engaging in occasional multicultural activities might not be sufficient to fully embrace and celebrate cultural diversity. Instead, the findings indicate the need for a more holistic and integrated approach. This includes prioritising the celebration of differences and cultural diversity across all school activities and ensuring that the curriculum reflects the diverse cultural values and experiences of the students. Research by Devine (2013), McGinley and Keane (2021), and Parker-Jenkins and Masterson (2013) supports the idea of prioritising the celebration of cultural diversity and incorporating it into the fabric of daily school life. This entails going beyond surface-level tokenism and embracing a more comprehensive approach that recognises, respects, and values the diverse cultural

backgrounds of students. By doing so, Irish schools can create a more inclusive and enriching educational environment where all students feel a sense of belonging and have their cultural identities affirmed.

9.7 Conclusion

This chapter has presented a discussion of the research study's findings from both the perspectives of parents and student and beginning teachers, using both CRP and CRT theoretical lenses. CRT of education emphasises the importance of including the voices of marginalised or affected groups in education research and analysis, as articulated by Ladson-Billings and Tete (1995). The chapter has also addressed the study's primary objective, which is to explore and develop the professional practices of student and beginning teachers for culturally responsive teaching and intercultural education in Irish secondary schools. The experiences of student and beginning teachers, especially from minority backgrounds, emphasise the importance of fostering cultural understanding and acceptance in schools, aligning with the literature on intercultural competence (Byerly, 2016; Byram, 2003; Nieto, 2004; Santoro, 2014). The identification of fear among teachers when engaging with students from culturally diverse backgrounds as a significant barrier to CRP, emphasises the need for more dialogue about culture and cultural diversity as well as authentic engagement with a range of equity challenges including stereotypes and prejudism, discrimination and racism. Additionally, findings highlight the importance of further exploring tensions between the identification, and adaptation of teaching approaches to, students' cultural backgrounds and the dangers of 'othering' students at a developmentally sensitive life stage and/or the reinforcement of stereotypes and their negative implications for individuals as well as the wider learning environment, including relationships between students.

This research study makes a significant contribution to knowledge by providing the first in-depth analysis of the experiences of migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds with schooling and culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Ireland. The next chapter, providing the conclusion of this thesis, highlights the key findings, revisits the research questions, discusses the implications for policy and practice, addresses the limitations of the study, offers recommendations for further research, and provides closing remarks.

Chapter Ten: Conclusions

10.1 Introduction

This qualitative research study has presented an in-depth investigation into the experiences of student and beginning teachers in relation to cultural diversity within Irish secondary schools. Additionally, the study examined the experiences of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with schooling in Ireland. The motivation behind this study stems from the increasing need for culturally responsive teaching in Irish schools, driven by the growing influx of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers into the country. The impact of immigration on the education system has resulted in a culturally diverse student population, while the teaching profession remains predominantly homogeneous. The study's findings aim to contribute to the development of CRP in Irish second-level schools, with the overarching goal of ensuring equitable and quality education for all students in culturally diverse schools and societies.

This chapter begins with a reflection of key findings from this research study. It then revisits the research questions, emphasises the significant contributions made by the study to the existing body of knowledge and discusses the implications of the study's findings for both policy and practice. Furthermore, the chapter acknowledges the limitations inherent in the study and proposes potential avenues for future research.

10.2 Key findings from this research study

This qualitative study demonstrates that student and beginning teachers in Ireland recognise the significance and value the goal of cultural inclusivity. They engage with concepts of diversity and equity during their teacher education and are aware that being culturally responsive involves acknowledging and responding to the cultural backgrounds and values of all students in the teaching and learning process. However, despite these apparent positive attitudinal dispositions, this study also provides clear evidence regarding the insufficient preparation and resultant

significant challenges encountered by student and beginning teachers as they seek to understand, navigate and respond to cultural diversity in their professional practice.

The critical analysis of data collected from student-teachers, beginning teachers and migrant parents from minority-ethnic backgrounds allows the researcher of this study to dive underneath the 'top layer' of student and beginning teachers' expressions of recognition, commitment to and understanding of the broad tenets of cultural inclusivity and CRP. Exploring teacher participants' real-life experiences in culturally diverse classrooms, including their understandings of CRP, their approaches to supporting their students from culturally diverse backgrounds and their desires, struggles and perceived successes, and comparing and contrasting them with the experiences and perspectives of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds, reveals a complex and dynamic net of factors which significantly impact conceptualisations and implementations of CRP in practice. The identification and detailed exploration of some of these factors in the Irish context support and notably extend previous international research focusing on CRP and teacher professional learning (Brown et al., 2022; Morrison, Thompson, & Glazier, 2022; Nguyen & Huynh, 2021; Subasi Singh & Akar, 2021; Yuan, 2019).

One significant influencing factor explored in this study is the feeling of fear among teacher participants when engaging with students from diverse cultural backgrounds. Student and beginning teachers' fear can relate to a wide range of challenges which they either imagine or have experienced themselves, including confrontations with students, their own limited understanding of different cultural values and practices, the possibility of causing offence and/or not being able to respond appropriately to prejudice-related incidents. A key contribution of this study is the evidence it provides regarding how teachers' fear acts as a very significant barrier to authentic communication and interactions in the classroom despite their desire to be culturally-responsive. Illustrating how fear can perpetuate silence and 'culture-blind' teaching approaches, this study calls forcefully for more dialogue- and practice-based professional learning opportunities to enhance teachers' authentic intercultural competence and confidence and to help them to develop strategies to navigate complex, and often unexpected, classroom situations and dynamics (Byerly, 2016; Byram, 2003; Nieto, 2004; Santoro, 2014).

This study also importantly highlights that levels of interest, comfort, and openness regarding the implementation of culturally responsive practices may be impacted by teachers' own cultural identities and positionings. It is the first qualitative study in Ireland, where teaching cohorts remain culturally homogenous, to explore the perspectives and experiences regarding CRP of student and

beginning teachers from minority cultural backgrounds. The findings relating to the understandings, attitudes and practical experiences of student and beginning teachers from majority (White Settled Irish) compared to minority cultural backgrounds illustrate how cultural identity, personal experiences and (conscious or unconscious) positioning(s) in (or between) different cultural spaces are intertwined and significantly impact teaching experiences and approaches to CRP.

The analysis of data from student and beginning teachers from minority cultural backgrounds demonstrates their strong commitment to CRP and their somewhat greater confidence in addressing culture in the classroom and in building relationships with students from minority-cultural backgrounds. Student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds also recognise the positive influence they can have on students from similar backgrounds. Nevertheless, their experiences also show that they struggle to explain their own complex cultural identity/ies and face challenges themselves in being understood and accepted throughout their educational and professional journeys in educational institutions dominated by majority cultural norms (Marom, 2019; McDaid, Keane & Heinz, 2023).

In this study, the experiences of parents from minority-ethnic backgrounds with their children's schooling in Ireland demonstrate the need for teachers and schools to improve parental engagement and the opportunities for deepening intercultural competence among others. In particular, teachers need to gain a deeper understanding, and parents can share their experiences of, the complex experiences and challenges involved in transitioning between and navigating multiple cultural values, norms and practices. A deeper treatment and more nuanced understanding of the real-life experiences of individuals with bi- or multicultural identities, and in particular of children and young people who navigate complex cultural landscapes during a time of momentous physical and psychological change, will make an important contribution to the further development of CRP.

Parent participants of this study expressed dissatisfaction with current teaching and learning approaches. They shared painful experiences related to their children's difficulties in establishing friendships with peers from diverse backgrounds, feelings of isolation, instances of stereotyping and bullying as well as encounters with teachers who appeared complacent. Interestingly, many parents called for more positive views on diversity with some parents adding that differences needed to be recognised more in school rather than silenced by teachers wishing to be 'politically correct.' The clear connection between parents' criticism of 'culture (or difference) blind' teaching and the narratives of student and beginning teachers' fear resulting in inaction emphasise the

critical importance for teacher preparation courses to engage more proactively with the complex interaction of multiple factors, including identities, beliefs, competencies and broader societal structures, impacting teachers' professional practice and students' experiences in culturally diverse schools .

In line with the argument made by Strom and Viesca (2021), this research, thus, illustrates the need for the development of more complex conceptualisations of teacher professional learning and practice. The exploration of some of the 'real-life' experiences, challenges, beliefs and emotions of teachers as they navigate increasingly more culturally diverse classrooms provides avenues for "(re)thinking the processes of, and connections between, teachers' learning and practice in ways that better account for the dynamic, multiplicitous, ever-shifting nature of conceptualisations and implementations of culturally responsive pedagogies" (Strom & Viesca, 2021, p. 209). In particular, the stark contrast between student and beginning teachers' apparent positive attitudes, on the one hand, and their significant struggles in realising their culturally-responsive intentions in their professional practice, on the other hand, lends support to Strom and Viesca's (2019) call for a 'complex turn' in teacher education. This is a crucial step for challenging the inequitable educational status quo and creating transformative opportunities for the development of more equitable education futures.

10.3 Revisiting the research questions

What are the experiences and perspectives of student and beginning teachers and of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with regard to teaching and learning in culturally diverse classrooms in the Republic of Ireland?

The central research question guiding this study explored the experiences of student and beginning teachers and parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with culturally responsive teaching and learning in Irish educational system. As noted in preceding chapters, the entry of migrants, refugees, and asylum seekers into Irish society has led to an increasingly diverse student population in the Irish education system (Bryan, 2010; Bryne et al., 2010; Condon, 2017; Devine, 2005; Röder et al., 2014). However, the teaching profession in Ireland remains predominantly homogeneous, with minimal representation of teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds (Keane, Heinz, McDaid, 2023a, 2023b). Many Irish teachers encounter difficulties in instructing culturally diverse students within Irish classrooms (Connaughton, 2019; Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022; Smyth et al.,

2009). A number of research studies have pointed out that teachers lack the necessary training and resources to effectively educate students from diverse cultural backgrounds (Connaughton, 2019; Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022; Smyth et al., 2009). The limited training in CRP for teachers and the homogeneity within the teaching profession in Ireland serves as the impetus for this research study, which examined the experiences of minority ethnic migrant parents regarding schooling in Ireland, as well as the experiences of student and beginning teachers regarding cultural diversity in Irish secondary schools. The findings of this study yield significant insights for the advancement of CRP and intercultural education in Irish schools.

This study employed CRP and CRT as theoretical frameworks to conduct a comprehensive analysis of participants' experiences related to culturally responsive teaching and learning in schools, with the ultimate goal of ensuring equitable and quality education for all students. By incorporating CRT, particular attention was given to the perspectives of marginalised or disadvantaged groups, aiming to address the challenges of teaching and learning within the Irish education system. Specifically, the study explored the experiences of minority ethnic migrant parents as well as student and beginning teachers from minority backgrounds to gain valuable insights into their experiences and views regarding the implementation of CRP in Irish schools. The utilisation of CRT as an analytical tool in this research enabled a deeper understanding of how race and racism intersect with other forms of oppression and discrimination, thereby shaping the experiences of marginalised communities and groups (Brayboy, 2005; Dixon & Rousseau, 2005; Ladson-Billings & Tate, 1995; Taylor, Gillborn & Ladson-Billings, 2009). On the other hand, CRP served as a theoretical lens to critically evaluate the experiences of student and beginning teachers in relation to culturally inclusive teaching and learning practices in Irish secondary schools. Furthermore, CRP was employed to examine how student and beginning teachers adapt their curriculum and teaching approaches to provide equitable and quality education for all students within culturally diverse classrooms.

The findings of this study unveiled strategies identified by parents and student and beginning teachers for implementing CRP and intercultural education in culturally diverse schools in Ireland. The findings highlight the significance of teachers, including student and beginning teachers, refraining from making assumptions or employing labels based on students' cultural backgrounds, as this can result in inequitable education experiences. Parents participating in the study emphasised the crucial role of teachers exhibiting patience, empathy, and understanding towards all students, thereby fostering a positive and inclusive learning environment. In essence, teachers' positive attitudes towards cultural diversity are instrumental in eliminating feelings of exclusion

among culturally diverse students (Acquah & Commins, 2015; Gay, 2002b; Glock & Klapproth, 2017; Yuan, 2019). Moreover, establishing positive relationships, a fundamental aspect of culturally responsive teaching and learning (see Gay, 2002a; Howe & Lisi, 2013; Keane, Heinz, & Lynch, 2020; Nieto, 2004), assumes particular importance when working with students from diverse backgrounds. This can be achieved through acts of kindness, affirmation, and advancing trust, thus playing a critical role in the development of culturally inclusive practices in Irish schools.

The findings of this research study underscore the critical importance of teacher professional development in CRP and the prioritisation of cultural awareness training in ITE programmes to enhance CRP in Irish schools. Participants emphasised the need for teachers to possess a robust cultural knowledge base and an understanding of intercultural education to thrive within the Irish education system. One effective approach for teachers to expand their cultural knowledge base is through seeking feedback from parents of students in their classrooms. Actively involving parents in their children's education is vital for teachers to deliver equitable and quality education to students. Research has consistently demonstrated that increased parental engagement and involvement in the educational process can lead to improved academic outcomes for students (Antony-Newman, 2018; Domina, 2005; Laureau, 1989; Öztürk, 2013; Tett, 2004).

Furthermore, the study's findings highlight the crucial role of teachers having a strong understanding of culture for effective implementation of culturally responsive practices (Civitillo et al., 2019; Shevlin, Winter & Flynn, 2013; Siwatu et al., 2016). The findings suggest that teachers have a desire to enhance their cultural understanding and would like to learn more about their students' backgrounds, cultural values, and beliefs. This approach can help teachers improve student engagement and learning by providing opportunities for students to share their knowledge and perspectives. Additionally, promoting the values of intercultural education requires teachers to employ various teaching methods, recognising that no single approach is suitable for all students, particularly in culturally diverse classrooms (Nieto, 2004; Villegas & Lucas, 2002).

Moreover, the findings indicate that enhancing CRP in Irish secondary schools necessitates teachers to capitalise on the knowledge and experiences of their colleagues who have successfully taught in culturally diverse settings. This collaborative learning approach can enhance teachers' understanding of diverse strategies to cater to the learning needs of students in culturally diverse classrooms. The development of CRP in Irish secondary schools requires proactive engagement from the GoI, the Teaching Council, and school administrators. They must actively acknowledge and embrace the increasing ethnic diversity among students by integrating cultural diversity into

school activities and fostering a more culturally diverse teaching profession. It is crucial for educational stakeholders to advocate for the advantages of cultural diversity within the Irish education sector, raising awareness and promoting strategies to better address the needs of students in culturally diverse schools. The subsequent sections will delve deeper into the sub-research questions, providing additional insights into the main research question addressed in this section.

What are student and beginning teachers' understandings of and experiences with culturally responsive pedagogies?

A considerable number of research participants (n=14), comprising student and beginning teachers, expressed a limited understanding of CRP due to inadequate training received during their ITE programmes. Consequently, these participants faced challenges when attempting to implement CRP in their culturally diverse classrooms. However, participants emphasised the significance of inclusivity in their teaching approaches, recognising that failing to do so would be unjust to their students. They articulated that CRP involves comprehending the interests, needs, and backgrounds of all students in the classroom and adapting teaching styles accordingly. Several pedagogical approaches were identified by participants as culturally responsive, including adapting the curriculum to encompass the cultures represented in the classroom. This entails teachers, including student and beginning teachers, being aware of their students' cultural backgrounds and making necessary adjustments to the curriculum to ensure its accessibility and relevance for all students. Other pedagogical approaches mentioned by participants encompassed developing lesson plans that align with students' interests, demonstrating positive regard for their work, and intentionally learning students' names to acknowledge their identities. Notably, a minority participant discussed his deliberate efforts to create a culturally inclusive classroom by drawing examples from cultures beyond Ireland. Another minority participant emphasised the significance of incorporating elements of diverse cultures in their teaching and highlighted how his presence as a Black teacher contributes to a positive learning environment within the school. Additionally, the findings of this study revealed that integrating diverse music and art into the classroom can establish a relaxed and unique learning atmosphere for students.

Moreover, employing reflective techniques to address behavioural issues can empower students to take responsibility for their actions, thus fostering a positive classroom environment. Participants underscored the significance of initiating each class with empathetic statements to establish a positive atmosphere and provide reassurance to all students. They also emphasised the value of

incorporating colours in class decorations, including diverse music, and individually greeting students as they enter the classroom to contribute to a joyful classroom atmosphere. In terms of setting class rules and seating arrangements, some participants highlighted the importance of involving students in the creation of these rules and plans. By giving students a voice in establishing rules and determining seating arrangements, they are more likely to take ownership and responsibility for maintaining a positive classroom environment. Furthermore, building positive relationships with students, being responsive to their needs, and providing opportunities for self-directed learning can nurture the development of culturally responsive practices and intercultural education in schools.

In how far, and in what ways, are the understandings, perspectives and pedagogical practices of student and beginning teachers from cultural majority and minority backgrounds similar or different?

Several participants (student-teachers and beginning teachers from White Settled Irish and minority backgrounds), expressed that cultural diversity is not extensively addressed or actively pursued in many Irish secondary schools. Consequently, participants observed that navigating cultural diversity in the classroom can be challenging, particularly when working with students from the Traveller community. Overall, participants underscored the significance of specific expected behaviours from their students, such as demonstrating respect for teachers and peers, exerting effort in their learning, and actively engaging in classroom activities.

The findings of this study reveal that many Irish second-level schools lack effective strategies to support teachers in classrooms with culturally diverse student populations. Consequently, teachers, including student and beginning teachers, perceive teaching in such classrooms as challenging. The study identifies that participants from White Settled Irish background tend to perceive cultural diversity in the classroom as challenging and lack adequate preparation to effectively address the needs of students from diverse backgrounds. For instance, a number of participants from White Settled Irish background shared their experiences of encountering discomfort and hesitancy when it came to asking personal questions of culturally diverse students. They explained that this fear or reluctance to explore culture or cultural differences made it difficult for them to engage with and/or learn more about their students' background. As a consequence, they felt that their lack of knowledge and skills together with their discomfort impeded their ability to effectively teach and engage with some students. Additionally, some participants from White Settled Irish and English

speaking background found it extremely challenging to work with students who speak English as a second language. They believed that the limited English proficiency of some students was nearly impossible to overcome posing a significant barrier for teachers and schools to effectively respond to and engage with cultural diversity in the classroom.

These and other experiences shared by the teacher participants of this study highlight the importance of providing comprehensive training and support for teachers to develop an understanding and appreciation for the cultural values and experiences of their students. Rather than perceiving their students purely from a deficit perspective, it is crucial for teachers to recognise their own responsibility in adapting their teaching approaches to meet the diverse needs of culturally diverse students. By promoting a more culturally responsive mindset and acquiring the necessary skills, teachers can create an inclusive and supportive learning environment that acknowledges and celebrates the cultural diversity and wide range of experiences and abilities of their students.

Furthermore, the study's findings suggest that the lack of understanding of some participants from White Settled Irish and English speaking background may result in them having lower academic expectations for students from culturally diverse backgrounds, especially those who do not have English as their first language. This discrepancy in expectations suggests a potential bias that may negatively impact the educational experiences and opportunities available to these students. To ensure equitable outcomes, it is vital for teachers to recognise and address their own biases and provide appropriate support and resources that acknowledge and accommodate the cultural and linguistic diversity of their students. By setting high expectations and providing the necessary support, teachers can help all students, regardless of their cultural backgrounds, thrive academically and achieve their full potential

Many participants from both White Settled Irish and minority backgrounds hold a positive perspective on cultural diversity in schools, considering it advantageous in multiple aspects. These participants believe that cultural diversity in the classroom offers valuable opportunities for teachers to incorporate diverse examples, materials, and perspectives, thereby enhancing the overall learning experience for students. By exposing students to a variety of cultural backgrounds, they can develop a deeper understanding of the world around them, fostering a global mindset and promoting cultural competence. Several participants from all backgrounds emphasise that cultural diversity adds significant value to the school system by making students from diverse backgrounds feel valued and recognised. They perceive cultural integration in the classroom as essential for

promoting inclusivity and equity in education. Excluding cultural diversity from the classroom would not only overlook the unique contributions of students from diverse backgrounds but also hinder their sense of belonging within the school community.

Furthermore, these participants argue that broadening students' knowledge of the world through cultural diversity has long-term benefits, particularly in the workplace. They assert that exposure to diverse cultures enhances students' intercultural communication skills, critical thinking abilities, and adaptability, all of which are essential for success in an increasingly interconnected and diverse society. Therefore, they emphasise the necessity of incorporating cultural diversity into the curriculum to prepare students for the diverse and globalised workforce.

The findings of this study also indicate that participants from minority backgrounds believe that cultural diversity in the classroom plays a crucial role in promoting a sense of belonging for students from diverse backgrounds. They contend that when students see their culture and experiences affirmed and respected in the classroom, they develop a stronger sense of identity and connectedness. Moreover, many participants from both White Settled Irish and minority backgrounds argue that exposure to different cultures benefits all students, as it broadens their perspectives, enhances their understanding of social issues, and cultivates empathy and acceptance. Consequently, cultural diversity contributes to the creation of inclusive and accepting classroom environments that celebrate and appreciate the diverse backgrounds and experiences of all students.

To conclude, the findings of this study highlight the consensus among all participants regarding the pressing need to incorporate CRP into teacher education programmes. Participants recognise that teachers require specific knowledge and skills to effectively navigate culturally diverse school environments. They emphasise the importance of preparing teachers to embrace cultural diversity and adopt inclusive teaching practices that cater to the needs of all students. Moreover, participants agree on the significance of a whole-school approach to promote culturally inclusive teaching and learning. They stress that achieving cultural inclusivity requires the involvement and commitment of the entire school community, including students, teachers, administrators, parents, and society at large. A whole-school approach entails creating an environment where cultural diversity is valued, intercultural relationships are encouraged, and equitable opportunities for learning and success are provided to all students. Such an approach is considered crucial for the development and implementation of CRP and intercultural education in schools. Participants' collective voice highlights the need for systemic change and collaboration among educational stakeholders to create culturally inclusive educational environments. It calls for the integration of cultural diversity and

intercultural competence into the policies, practices, and curriculum of schools. By embracing a whole-school approach, schools can cultivate an inclusive and supportive atmosphere that celebrates diversity, promotes cultural understanding, and enhances the educational experiences and outcomes for all students.

What are Irish student and beginning teachers' perspectives regarding their preparation for culturally diverse classrooms, and what recommendations do they have for teacher education?

Participants in this study, consisting of student and beginning teachers, provided valuable insights into their experiences during their ITE programmes, including both their coursework and school placements. Collaboration emerged as a significant aspect of their ITE journey, as participants highlighted the importance of working together with their peers, utilising platforms like WhatsApp groups, to enhance their professional development. This collaborative environment offered them a supportive network where they could exchange ideas, share resources, and learn from each other's experiences.

Overall, participants expressed positive sentiments about their school placements, describing them as valuable, rewarding, and instrumental in their development as teachers. They emphasised the practical nature of their placements, allowing them to apply their theoretical knowledge in real classroom settings. The opportunities for direct engagement with students and the guidance received from experienced teachers were particularly highlighted as beneficial aspects of their school placements.

However, it is important to note that a minority participant shared a challenging incident during her school placement. This participant reported an occurrence where a student used racist language in the classroom, expressing dissatisfaction with how the school administration handled the situation. From the perspective of the affected participant, a better and more effective response would involve a thorough and proactive approach by the school administration. This could include immediate intervention to address the incident, such as engaging in a restorative justice process that involves all parties affected by the incident. This incident further highlights the need for schools to effectively address racist cases that occur within their premises. It also emphasises the importance of providing appropriate support and guidance to student-teachers, particularly those who may encounter bias and discrimination in their work. ITE providers should ensure that student-teachers are equipped with the necessary knowledge and resources to address such incidents, including awareness of counselling services and support systems available to them.

On a more positive note, other minority participants in the study found their school placements to be beneficial experiences. They observed that their presence as minority teachers had a positive impact on students from diverse backgrounds, who felt motivated and engaged by having teachers who shared their cultural identities. This finding underscores the importance of diversifying the teaching profession and the positive influence it can have on students' sense of belonging and academic engagement.

The findings of this study highlight the need for teacher education programmes to allocate increased resources and support to effectively address the needs of students in culturally diverse classrooms. It is crucial to equip teachers with the necessary skills and knowledge to implement culturally responsive practices. Participants emphasised the importance of providing comprehensive training in this area and recommended that teacher education programmes offer opportunities for teachers to learn from experienced teachers who have worked in diverse settings.

To enhance teacher preparation, it is recommended that teacher education programmes create structured opportunities for student-teachers to engage with diverse student populations during their training. This hands-on experience would enable them to develop the necessary skills, cultural competence, and pedagogical strategies required for teaching in culturally diverse schools. Participants emphasised the value of immersive experiences that expose student-teachers to different cultural contexts, encouraging a deeper understanding and appreciation of cultural diversity. In addition to practical experiences, participants highlighted the importance of continuous professional development for teachers, emphasising the need for ongoing workshops on culturally responsive practices. These workshops should be integrated into the teacher education curriculum and provide in-depth knowledge and practical strategies for teachers to create inclusive and equitable learning environments. Participants suggested that these workshops should be interactive and incorporate real-life examples and case studies, making the materials relatable and applicable to the participants' future classrooms.

Furthermore, participants stressed that training on culturally responsive teaching and learning should be mandatory in teacher education programmes. They advocated for the inclusion of comprehensive coursework and dedicated modules focused on cultural diversity and equity. By integrating these topics into the core curriculum, teacher education programmes can ensure that all teachers receive a solid foundation in culturally responsive practices.

What are the perspectives and recommendations of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds with regard to culturally responsive teaching and learning?

This section expands on the experiences of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds and their children within the Irish education system, offering additional insights into their perspectives and recommendations concerning culturally responsive teaching and learning. The recommendations provided by parents in this study have already been addressed in relation to the central research question. Through in-depth focus groups with parents, the study revealed a range of challenges faced by culturally diverse students in Irish schools. These challenges include feelings of isolation, bullying, discrimination, stereotypes, and a lack of acceptance. Parents in the study described their children experiencing isolation and bullying, which, in some cases, resulted in a loss of interest in learning and disengagement from school.

A noteworthy finding of this study is that bullying in Irish schools has led students from culturally diverse backgrounds to drop out of school. This highlights the serious consequences of such negative experiences and emphasises the urgent need for effective interventions to address the issue. The experiences reported by migrant parents and their children within the Irish education system also point to a lack of proactive measures from school stakeholders, including teachers and administrators, in addressing these challenges. This suggests a systemic issue that needs to be addressed to ensure an inclusive and supportive educational environment for all students.

The challenges faced by migrant families in the Irish education system are not unique to Ireland but are prevalent in many countries worldwide. International reports by organisations such as UNESCO (2016) and UNHCR (2016) have highlighted the significance of addressing the educational experiences and integration of migrant children in different contexts. Thus, the findings from this study contribute to the broader understanding of the global challenges faced by migrant families in accessing equitable and quality education in host countries.

Moreover, the negative impacts of bullying, discrimination, and isolation on students from culturally diverse backgrounds have been well-documented in the literature. Research by Horgan et al. (2022) and Stylianou (2017) supports the notion that these experiences can lead to poor academic performance, low self-esteem, and psychological distress among culturally diverse students. It is crucial to acknowledge the detrimental effects of such experiences and prioritise the creation of inclusive and supportive educational environments that promote positive social and academic outcomes for all students.

Given Ireland's history as a country of emigration, it is noteworthy that the experiences of migrant families with schooling in Ireland raise intriguing questions. As a nation with a strong history of emigration, one might expect Ireland to demonstrate a heightened responsiveness and proactivity in addressing the challenges faced by migrant families and their children, particularly in terms of ensuring their access to equitable and quality education. These findings call for a critical examination of the existing policies and practices in the Irish education system to better support the integration and educational experiences of culturally diverse students and their families.

Furthermore, the findings of this study indicate that the location of schools plays a significant role in determining their level of cultural inclusivity. Parents interviewed in the study reported that schools situated in urban areas tended to be more welcoming and understanding of their children's diverse backgrounds. In contrast, parents whose children attended schools in less diverse areas, such as rural parts of Ireland, felt that these schools were less accepting of cultural diversity. This highlights the importance of considering the local context and demographic makeup of schools in understanding the experiences of culturally diverse students and their families.

The findings also underscore the importance of addressing issues related to bullying and isolation among culturally diverse students. Parents reported instances of their children experiencing bullying and feeling isolated, which can have a detrimental impact on students' academic success and well-being. To create a more inclusive and supportive educational environment, it is crucial to implement strategies that promote a culturally inclusive curriculum, provide training and professional development opportunities for teachers and administrators to better understand and meet the needs of students from culturally diverse backgrounds. The development of an inclusive school culture, one that values and respects the diverse backgrounds of all students, is essential for promoting their academic success and well-being (Janta & Harte, 2016; Rodriguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019).

10.4 Implications of research findings

10.4.1 Implications for policy

This research study has revealed the significant role that parents, particularly those from minority ethnic backgrounds, can play in the development of culturally responsive practices in Irish schools. While the Irish Education Act (1998) recognises the rights of parental involvement in their children's education, this study found that migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds felt

excluded from decision-making and inadequately informed about their children's progress and any issues they faced in school. This lack of communication and participation made parents feel powerless with limited control over their children's education. These findings suggest improved policies and implementation processes for home-school partnerships are needed. It is crucial for schools to make an active effort to involve parents and families from minority ethnic backgrounds in the education process. This includes providing regular updates on their children's progress, giving them a voice in decision-making, and creating opportunities for them to participate in school events and activities. By engaging parents and families in the education process, schools can better understand and address the specific needs of children from culturally diverse backgrounds.

The findings of this study on the schooling experiences of students from culturally diverse backgrounds from the perspectives of participants (parents and student and beginning teachers) indicate the need for increased resources and support for schools. To ensure that schools can provide the necessary support for children from minority ethnic backgrounds, such as language support classes, cultural clubs, and counselling services. This support and resources can help children overcome language barriers, build self-esteem, and feel a sense of belonging in their school community. Additionally, this study's findings suggest a need for more support for families who have recently immigrated to Ireland. As previously confirmed in other studies (Condon, 2017; Rodríguez-Izquierdo & Darmody, 2019), the 'new Irish families' in this study struggled to navigate the Irish education system and, in some cases, had difficulty understanding the expectations and requirements of schools. This made it challenging for parents to advocate for their children and ensure they received the necessary support. To address this, schools need to provide resources for families that are new to the Irish education system. This can include providing translated information and resources, offering parent-teacher meetings in different languages, and promoting activities that can help new families better integrate and settle within Irish society.

The underrepresentation of teachers from diverse backgrounds in Irish schools is seen as a significant factor in hindering the creation of inclusive learning environments, as expressed by parents and echoed by minority student and beginning teacher participants. This perspective aligns with existing national and international research highlighting the importance of diversifying the teaching profession to promote inclusivity and culturally responsive education (Arshad, 2023; Gay, 2000; Heinz, Keane, & McDaid, 2023; Keane, Heinz & McDaid, 2023a, 2023b; Ladson-Billings, 1995a; Sleeter, 2004). Participants shared that children of minority ethnic groups had very few, if any, teachers who looked like them or shared their cultural background within the Irish school system. Parents in the study perceive that the lack of diversity among the teaching staff likely

results in a disconnection for many culturally diverse students, as they felt their teachers could not relate to their experiences or understand their cultural values. Therefore, as recommended by Heinz and Keane (2018) and Keane, Heinz and McDaid (2023a, 2023b), there is a need for more specific policies that target the training and recruitment of teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds into the Irish teaching profession. In other words, relevant stakeholders such as the Teaching Council and schools need to make a concerted effort to recruit and register a diverse teaching staff that reflects the cultural make-up of the student body in Ireland. Heinz, Keane, and McDaid (2023) highlight the inclusion of diversifying the teaching profession as a specific objective in the Teaching Council's latest strategic plan (2022-2027) and commend recent efforts by the Irish DES to promote the teaching profession as welcoming and supportive of diverse individuals. However, they note that teachers are often treated as a homogeneous group in policy and professional standards documents, with limited attention given to the working environments of teachers, aside from a recent focus on teacher well-being.

Findings point to the importance of having a culturally responsive curriculum. Participants in this study reported that the curriculum used in schools did not reflect children's diverse cultural values and that culturally diverse children were not able to see themselves or their culture represented in the materials they were learning. This lack of representation made it difficult for culturally diverse students to engage with learning materials for equitable and quality education. Therefore, there is a need for the national curriculum to be reviewed and revised to incorporate a more culturally responsive approach, which includes the representation of minority ethnic cultures and histories.

As the findings suggest, the school community has a role in prioritising inclusivity and intercultural education. While parents shared their children's positive friendships in schools, a few parents reported that their children were not accepted by their peers and were often excluded from social activities or made to feel unwelcome in the school community. This led to feelings of isolation and alienation for many children, negatively impacting their mental health and overall well-being. Therefore, there is a need for policies that require schools to promote inclusivity and acceptance among students. This can include a rigorous implementation of anti-bullying programmes and opportunities for students from different cultural backgrounds to interact and learn from each other. By fostering a sense of community and acceptance among students, schools can create a more inclusive and supportive environment for students, particularly those from culturally diverse backgrounds.

10.4.2 Implications for practice

Findings from this present study suggest the crucial role of teacher education in preparing and supporting teachers (including student and beginning teachers) in CRP in Irish schools. The findings also reveal a current limitation in Ireland's ITE programmes in adequately training student-teachers to be culturally responsive in their teaching approaches and addressing the changing needs of students in culturally diverse classrooms. Other studies in Ireland have confirmed this limitation in ITE (Brown et al., 2022; Connaughton, 2019; Hannigan, Faas & Darmody, 2022; Herzog-Punzenberger et al., 2022; Smyth et al., 2009). Therefore, there is a need to improve teacher education and professional development in cultural competency, cultural diversity, and inclusive education. More specifically, ITE providers should focus on providing student-teachers with the knowledge and skills to effectively work with students from a wide range of socio-economic backgrounds and those with different abilities, including multilingual learners. With better training, teachers will be better equipped to support the needs of students from minority ethnic backgrounds and promote intercultural education in Irish schools. In addition, school placement can be designed to provide opportunities for student-teachers to learn, be mentored and be supervised by experienced and culturally responsive teachers. Also, more attention needs to be given to addressing issues of racism and discrimination in the workplace that student-teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds may experience during school placement.

This study emphasises the significance of CRP for inclusive teaching and learning in Irish secondary schools. However, the findings also indicate that teachers often prioritise other areas, such as classroom management and curriculum knowledge with students. This highlights the need for teacher education programmes to provide student-teachers with a solid foundation in CRP, so they can effectively implement CRP in their classrooms from the start of their teaching career. Participants (student and beginning teachers) offered a wealth of advice for teachers working in culturally diverse Irish schools. They emphasised the benefits of treating all students equitably, investing in knowing students, building positive relationships, using peer learning and support, and continuous professional development in CRP. By following this advice, teachers can create inclusive and culturally sensitive classrooms that allow all students to succeed. Additionally, the findings of this study reveal that promoting student engagement in culturally diverse classrooms is an essential aspect of developing CRP and intercultural education in schools. By valuing and respecting all students' experiences and perspectives, teachers can learn more about their students, promote intercultural education, and empower them to succeed. This requires ongoing efforts and commitments and the right attitude from teachers to create opportunities for students to share their

perspectives, value all students' opinions, and provide support for students who may struggle with language or cultural barriers.

10.5 Limitations of the study

Declaring limitations of the study is expected for all research studies. This research study was conducted at a time when the world was challenged by the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the researcher's reflexivity required constant adaptation of the research study to the current social realities of the context of the study. For example, with social distancing regulations, data collection was only feasible via internet-mediated platforms. Thus, the sampling size for this research study is not a comprehensive reflection of the Irish context. While this research study only included student and beginning teachers working in secondary education in the study, efforts were made by the researcher to recruit student and beginning teachers at the primary level from a teacher education programme. These recruitment efforts proved abortive even after the researcher underwent another research ethics review from the institution preparing teachers for the primary level. The researcher sent invitation emails to the student-teachers after getting the ethics approval. Unfortunately, only one student-teacher signed up for the research study, which led to the limitation of not including student and beginning teachers at the primary level in this study.

The experiences of research participants – migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds and student and beginning teachers might be different from the experiences of others in similar cohorts. Therefore, caution should be taken in generalising the findings of this research study. However, the findings of this research study have provided in-depth insights into the experiences of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds on schooling in Ireland. In addition, the knowledge produced from the research with student and beginning teachers can help improve teacher education and support teachers in developing culturally inclusive practices and intercultural education in Irish schools.

10.6 Recommendations for further research

The current research study highlights several areas that warrant further investigation. Firstly, in light of the limitations identified in this study, future research could examine conducting a

comparable study using a larger and more diverse sample of student and beginning teachers from both secondary and primary education settings. This would allow for a more comprehensive understanding of these groups' experiences with cultural diversity in Irish schools. Also, a similar study can be conducted with a more diverse sample of migrant parents from minority ethnic backgrounds to explore how their schooling experiences in Ireland may differ based on their specific ethnic background or other socio-economic factors. The evidence produced in this type of study will contribute to the development of better support for the integration of 'new Irish families' and greater parental engagement in their children's education. Additionally, an investigation into the pedagogical approaches used in Irish primary schools serving culturally diverse student populations would add to the existing knowledge and aid in developing culturally responsive teaching competency among teachers at the primary level.

Further research is required to explore the experiences of teachers who have been working in Irish schools for longer than just the beginning stages of their careers to understanding how their perspectives and practices in culturally responsive teaching may have changed over time. Since teacher education is key to preparing and training teachers for culturally responsive teaching, future research could investigate the effectiveness of teacher education programmes in developing CRP and intercultural education in Irish schools. Lastly, a comprehensive study on the experiences of teachers from minority ethnic backgrounds in Ireland would provide insights valuable in identifying strategies for recruitment and diversifying the teaching profession and providing support for these minority teachers.

10.7 Closing remarks

One important lesson to be learned from this research study is the significance of taking into account the particular needs and viewpoints of various stakeholders in Irish schools, particularly on the subject of cultural diversity. This includes not only student and beginning teachers but also families of minority ethnic backgrounds. By understanding the experiences and needs of these groups, teacher education programmes and education policies can be tailored to better meet their needs and support their success. Furthermore, this research highlights the value of the researcher's unique perspective as both an 'insider' and 'outsider.' This approach allows for a more holistic understanding of the experiences and perspectives of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds in Irish schools. It also allows for the identification of areas

for improvement in teacher education programmes and support systems, as well as in school policies and practices.

Overall, this research study makes a significant contribution to the field of education by providing valuable insights into the experiences of student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds in relation to culturally inclusive teaching and learning in Irish schools. It has the potential to inform the development of more effective teacher education programmes and policies that will ensure that all students access equitable and quality education in culturally diverse schools. Additionally, the findings can also inform the development of policies and practices that support the inclusion and success of students and families from migrant backgrounds in Irish schools.

References

Acquah, E. O., & Commins, N. L. (2015). Critical reflection as a key component in promoting pre-service teachers' awareness of cultural diversity. *Reflective Practice, 16*(6), 790-805.

Adebayo, S. B. (2014). *How to excel in the pursuit of admission into a higher institution.* Bayelsa State, Nigeria: Gesi Publications.

Adebayo, S. B. (2019). Emerging perspectives of teacher agency in a post-conflict setting: the case of Liberia. *Teaching and Teacher Education. 86*:102928. 10.1016/j.tate.2019.102928.

Adebayo, S. B. (2020). *Personal field work diary*.

Adebayo, S. B. (2021, April). *Culture and education in Ireland: Exploring the experiences of parents from minority ethnic backgrounds.* Presented at the School of Education, University of Galway, 9th Annual Postgraduate Research Seminar, April 20.

Adebayo, S. B. (2022). Towards Sustainable Development Goal 4 in a post-conflict setting: Teachers' challenges. *Teachers and Teaching: Theory and Practice*. *28*(7), 859-874.

Adebayo, S. B. (2022, April). *Beginning teachers 'good moments' in culturally diverse Irish second-level classrooms.* Presented at the School of Education, University of Galway, 10th Annual Postgraduate Research Seminar, April 05.

Adebayo, S. B. (2022, April). *The experiences of students of migrant backgrounds with schooling in Ireland: Perspectives from parents.* Presented at the 66th Annual Meeting (hybrid) of Comparative and International Education Society (CIES), April 18 -22.

Adebayo, S. B. (2022, April). *What does "good teaching" look like in a culturally diverse classroom? Perspectives of beginning teachers in second-level Irish schools.* Presented at the Annual Educational Studies Association of Ireland (ESAI) conference, April 07 -09.

Adebayo, S. B. (2022, September). *Experiences of second-level student-teachers/beginning teachers in culturally diverse classrooms in Ireland*. Presented at the EERA-European Conference on Educational Research (online), September 01-10.

Adebayo, S. B. (2022, September). *The 'Black African' researching Irish education system: Assumptions and values*. Presented at the EERA-European Conference on Educational Research (online), September 01-10.

Adebayo, S. B**.,** & Adebayo, G. T. (2017). Teachers, curriculum reform for entrepreneurship education in Nigeria: Issues and consequences. *Current Studies in Comparative Education, Science and Technology*, *4*(2), Available at: http://www.journal.iscest.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/Adebayo-Adebayo.pdf

Adebayo, S. B., & Heinz, M. (2021, September). *Perspectives of Minority Parents from non-Irish Backgrounds on Developing Culturally Responsive Competencies among Irish Teachers*. Presented at the EERA-European Conference on Educational Research (online), September 06-10.

Adebayo, S. B., & Heinz, M. (2023a). The experiences of students of migrants' backgrounds in Ireland: Perspectives from parents. In Singh, S., Jovanovic, O., & Proyer, M. (Eds.) *Transitional processes in the context of refugee education: Ruptures, passages, and re/orientations*. Verlag Barbara Budrich.

Adebayo, S. B., & Heinz, M. (2023b). 'Teachers should put themselves in their students' shoes': Perspectives of parents from minority-ethnic backgrounds on schooling in Ireland. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1-19.

Adisa, T. A., Gbadamosi, G., & Osabutey, E. L. (2016). Work-family balance: a case analysis of coping strategies adopted by Nigerian and British working mothers. *Gender in Management: An International Journal*, *31*(7), 414-433.

Adu-Ampong, E. A., & Adams, E. A. (2019). 'But you are also Ghanaian, you should know': Negotiating the insider-outsider research positionality in the fieldwork encounter. *Qualitative Inquiry*. DOI: 1077800419846532.

Agirdag, O., Merry, M. S., & Van Houtte, M. (2014). Teachers' understanding of multicultural education and the correlates of multicultural content integration in Flanders. *Education and Urban Society*, 1-27.

Al Ramiah, A., Hewstone, M., Voci, A., Cairns, E., & Hughes, J. (2013). It's never too late for 'us' to meet 'them': Prior intergroup friendships moderate the impact of later intergroup friendships in educational settings. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *83*(1), 57-75.

Alarcón, A., Parella, S., & Yiu, J. (2014). Educational and occupational ambitions among the Spanish 'second generation': The case of Barcelona. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, *40*(10), 1614-1636.

Alhanachi, S., de Meijer, L. A., & Severiens, S. E. (2021). Improving culturally responsive teaching through professional learning communities: A qualitative study in Dutch pre-vocational schools. *International Journal of Educational Research*, 105, 101698.

Anderson, G. L., & Arsenault, N. (1998). *Fundamentals of educational research* (2nd ed.). London: Falmer Press.

Angen, M. J. (2000). Evaluating interpretive inquiry: Reviewing the validity debate and opening the dialogue. *Qualitative Health Research*, *10*(3), 378–395. https://doi.org/10.1177/104973230001000308

Antony-Newman, M. (2019). Parental involvement of immigrant parents: A meta-synthesis. *Educational Review*, *71*(3), 362-381.

Archer, M., Bhaskar, R., Collier, A., Lawson, T., & Norrie, A. (2013). *Critical realism: Essential readings*. Routledge.

Arshad, R. (2023). Diversifying the teaching profession in Scotland - The work of the Scottish government's working group on diversifying the teaching profession. In Keane, E., Heinz, M. & McDaid, R. (eds.) *Diversifying the teaching profession – dimensions, dilemmas and directions for the future*. Routledge.

Artinian, B. A. (1988). Qualitative modes of inquiry. *Western Journal of Nursing Research, 10*(2), 138-149.

Ary, D., Jacobs, C. J., & Razavieh, A. (2002). *Introduction to research in education* (6th ed.). Belmont, CA: Wadsworth Thomson Learning.

Athanases, S. Z., & de Oliveira, L. C. (2007). Conviction, confrontation, and risk in new teachers' advocating for equity. *Teaching Education, 18*(2), 123-136.

Au, K., & Kawakami, A. (1994). Cultural congruence in instruction, In *Teaching diverse populations: Formulating a knowledge base*, edited by Hollins, E., King, J., & Hayman, W., 5–24. Albany: State University of New York Press.

Bandura, A. (1997). *Self-efficacy: The exercise of control.* New York, NY: W.H. Freeman and Company.

Banks, J. A. (1993). Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice. *Review of research in education, 19*, 3-49.

Banks, J. A. (2015). Multicultural education, school reform and educational equality. In *opening the doors to opportunity for all. Setting a research agenda for the future* (pp. 54-60). Select series essays from the American Institute for research. Retrieved from http://www.air.org.

Banks, J. A. (Ed.). (2009). *The Routledge international companion to multicultural education* (p. 9). New York: Routledge.

Banks, J. A., & Banks, C. A. (2010). *Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives*, Hoboken NJ: Wiley.

Banks, J., & McCoy, S. (2017). An Irish solution…? Questioning the expansion of special classes in an era of inclusive education. *The Economic and Social Review*, *48*(4, Winter), 441-461.

Barrett, A., & McCarthy, Y. (2006) 'Immigrants in a booming economy: analysing their earnings and welfare dependence', *IZA Discussion Papers, 2457, IZA (Institute for the Study of Labour*), November, Available at: http://ftp.iza.org/dp2457.pdf

Barton, A. C., & Yang, K. (2000). The culture of power and science education: Learning from Miguel. *Journal of Research in Science Teaching: The Official Journal of the National Association for Research in Science Teaching*, *37*(8), 871-889.

Batardière, M. T., Berthaud, S., Ćatibušić, B., & Flynn, C. J. (2022). Language teaching and learning in Ireland: 2012–2021. *Language Teaching*, 1-32.

Baumeister, R., & Leary, M. (1995). The need to belong: Desire for interpersonal attachments as a fundamental human motivation. *Psychological Bulletin*, 497-529.

Baysu, G., Hillekens, J., Phalet, K., & Deaux, K. (2021). How diversity approaches affect ethnic minority and majority adolescents: Teacher–student relationship trajectories and school outcomes. *Child development*, *92*(1), 367-387.

Bazeley, P. (1999). The bricoleur with a computer: Piecing together qualitative and quantitative data. *Qualitative Health Research*, *9*(2), 279-287.

Bennet, C. (2001). Genres of research in multicultural education. *Review of Educational Research*, *71*(2), 171-217.

Benson, C. (2005). The importance of mother tongue-based schooling for educational quality. Paper commissioned for the EFA Global Monitoring Report 2005, *The Quality Imperative*. Retrieved from www.unesco.org/en/efareport/reports/2005-quality/

Best, J. W., & Kahn, J. V. (2006). *Research in education.* (10th ed.) Boston: A & B/Pearson.

Bhaskar, R. (1994). *Plato etc: the problems of philosophy and their resolution*. New York: Verso.

Bhowmik, M. K., Kennedy, K. J., & Hue, M. T. (2017). Education for all – but not Hong Kong's ethnic minority students. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *21*(5), 661–679. https://doi.org/10.1080/ 13613324.2017.1294573

Biggart, A., O'Hare, L., & Connolly, P. (2013). A need to belong? The prevalence of experiences of belonging and exclusion in school among minority ethnic children living in the 'White hinterlands'. *Irish Educational Studies*, *32*(2), 179-195.

Bigler, E. (2002). White teachers, race matters: Preparing teachers for the new millennium. *Electronic Magazine of Multicultural Education*, *4*(1), 1-12.

Birks M, Chapman Y., & Francis K. (2008). Memoing in qualitative research: Probing data and processes. *Journal of Research in Nursing. 13*(1): 68-75. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/1744987107081254

Boeren, E. (2019). Understanding sustainable development goal (SDG) 4 on "quality education" from micro, meso and macro perspectives. *International Review of Education, 65*(2), 277–294.

Bogdan, R. C., & Biklen, S. K. (2003). *Qualitative research for education: An introduction to theories and methods* (4th ed.). Boston: Pearson Education Group.

Bornstein, M. H., & Cote, L. R. (2006). *Acculturation and parent-child relationships: Measurement and development.* Lawrence Erlbaum Associates Publishers.

Bowker, N., & Tuffin, K. (2004). Using the online medium for discursive research about people with disabilities. *Social Science Computer Review, 22*(2), 228– 241.

Boyatzis, R. E. (1998). *Transforming qualitative information: Thematic analysis and code development*. Thousand Oaks: Sage.

Boyle, A., Flynn, M., & Hanafin, J. (2018). Optimism despite disappointment: Irish traveller parents' reports of their own school experiences and their views on education. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *24*(13), 1389-1409.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2006). Using thematic analysis in psychology. *Qualitative Research in Psychology*, *3*(2), 77-101.

Braun, V., & Clarke, V. (2020). One size fits all? What counts as quality practice in (reflexive) thematic analysis?. *Qualitative research in psychology*, *18*(3), 328-352.

Brayboy, B. (2005). Toward a tribal critical race theory in education. *The Urban Review*, *37*(5): 425–446.

Breen, C. (2008). The policy of Direct Provision in Ireland: A violation of asylum seekers' right to an adequate standard of housing, *International Journal of Refugee Law*, *20*(4), pp. 611-636.

Brown, A. (2010). Qualitative method and compromise in applied social research. *Qualitative Research, 10*(2): 229–48.

Brown, B., & Ritter, G. (2017). 'Should we care about teacher diversity? Student perceptions of teachers of the same race', in *International Conference of Education, Research, and Innovation (ICERI) 2017 Proceedings*, 5773–5782, available at: https://library.iated.org/ view/BROWN2017SHO

Brown, M. R. (2007). Educating all students: Creating culturally responsive teachers, classrooms, and schools. *Intervention in school and clinic*, *43*(1), 57-62.

Brown, M., Altrichter, H., Shiyan, I., Rodríguez Conde, M. J., McNamara, G., Herzog-Punzenberger, B., ..., & Sánchez, L. (2022). Challenges and opportunities for culturally responsive leadership in schools: Evidence from four European countries. *Policy Futures in Education*, *20*(5), 580-607.

Brown, M., McNamara, G., O'Brien, S., Skerritt, C., O'Hara, J., Faddar, J., ..., & Kurum, G. (2020). Parent and student voice in evaluation and planning in schools. *Improving Schools*, *23*(1), 85-102.

Brown, M., McNamara, G., O'Hara, J., Hood, S., Burns, D., & Kurum, G. (2019). Evaluating the impact of distributed culturally responsive leadership in a disadvantaged rural primary school in Ireland. *Educational Management Administration & Leadership*, *47*(3), 457-474.

Brownell, M. T., Bishop, A. G., Gersten, R., Klingner, J. K., Penfield, R. D., Dimino, J., ..., & Sindelar, P. T. (2009). The role of domain expertise in beginning special education teacher quality. *Exceptional Children*, *75*(4), 391-411.

Brown-Jeffy, S., & Cooper, J. E. (2011). Toward a conceptual framework of culturally relevant pedagogy: An overview of the conceptual and theoretical literature. *Teacher education quarterly*, *38*(1), 65-84.

Bryan, A. (2010). Corporate multiculturalism, diversity management, and positive interculturalism in Irish schools and society, *Irish Educational Studies*, *29*(3), 253-269, doi: 10.1080/03323315.2010.498566.

Buachalla, S. (1985). Church and state in Irish education in this century. *European Journal of Education*, *20*(4), 351-359. doi:10.2307/1503339

Bybee, S., Cloyes, K., Baucom, B., Supiano, K., Mooney, K., & Ellington, L. (2021). Bots and nots: safeguarding online survey research with underrepresented and diverse populations. *Psychology & Sexuality*, 1-11. doi: 10.1080/19419899.2021.1936617.

Byerly, A. K. (2016). *Scottish primary school teachers' perspectives on multicultural and antiracist education* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Edinburgh).

Byram, M. (2003). On being 'bicultural' and 'intercultural'. In: G. Alred, M. Byram, and M. Fleming, (eds.) *Intercultural experience and education*, Clevedon: Multilingual Matters.

Byrne, D., McGinnity, F., Smyth, E., & Darmody, M. (2010). Immigration and school composition in Ireland. *Irish Educational Studies*, *29*(3), 271-288.

Carter Andrews, D. J., Castro, E., Cho, C. L., Petchauer, E., Richmond, G., & Floden, R. (2019). Changing the narrative on diversifying the teaching workforce: A look at historical and contemporary factors that inform recruitment and retention of teachers of colour. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *70*(1), 6-12.

Carter, B., & New, C. (2004). Introduction: Realist social theory and empirical research. In B. Carter & C. New (Eds.), *Making realism work: Realist social theory and empirical research* (pp. 1–20). London: Routledge.

Castro, A. J. (2010). Themes in the research on preservice teachers' views of cultural diversity: Implications for researching millennial preservice teachers. *Educational Researcher*, *39*(3), 198-210.

Central Statistics Office (2017). *Census 2016 summary results*, Dublin: Central Statistics Office, Ireland, Available at: https://www.cso.ie/en/media/csoie/newsevents/documents/census2016summaryresultspart1/Census2016SummaryPart1.pdf

Central Statistics Office (2023). *Census 2022 summary results*, Dublin: Central Statistics Office, Ireland, Available at: https://www.cso.ie/en/releasesandpublications/ep/p-cpsr/censusofpopulation2022-summaryresults/

Chapman, T. K., & Bhopal, K. (2019). The perils of integration: exploring the experiences of African American and black Caribbean students in predominately white secondary schools. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *42*(7), 1110-1129.

Childs, R. A., Broad, K., Gallagher-Mackay, K., Sher, Y., Escayg, K. A., & McGrath, C. (2011). Pursuing equity in and through teacher education program admissions. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *19*, 1-22.

Chou, P. I., Su, M. H., & Wang, Y. T. (2018). Transforming teacher preparation for culturally responsive teaching in Taiwan. *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *75*, 116–127. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate. 2018.06.013

Civitillo, S., Juang, L. P., Badra, M., & Schachner, M. K. (2019). The interplay between culturally responsive teaching, cultural diversity beliefs, and self-reflection: A multiple case study. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 77,* 341-351.

Cochran-Smith, M., Villegas, A.M., Abrams, L., Chavez-Moreno, L., Mills, T., & Stern, B. (2015). Critiquing teacher preparation research: An overview of the field, Part II. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *16*(2), 109-121.

Cohen, J. A., & Kassan, A. (2018). Being in-between: A model of cultural identity negotiation for emerging adult immigrants. *Journal of Counseling Psychology*, *65*(2), 133.

Cohen, L., & Manion, L. (1994). *Research methods in education* (4th ed.). London: Routledge.

Cohen, L., Manion, L., & Morrison, K. (2000). *Research methods in education* (5th ed.). London: Routledge Falmer.

Condon, J. (2017). *The experience of migrant students in an Irish second level school,* (Doctoral dissertation, National University of Ireland, Maynooth (Ireland).

Connaughton, C. (2019). *"I want them to have a good education": The" New Irish" parents and the primary school system* (Master's thesis).

Cook, D. A. (2013). The engaged dialogue: Reflections on preparing African American teachers for diverse classrooms. *Multicultural Perspectives*, *15*(1), 46-51.

Coolahan, J. (1981). *Irish education: Its history and structure*. Dublin: Institute of Public Administration.

Cotter, G., & Kolawole, O. (2015). Parenting in a multi-cultural society: migrants and their experiences of parenting in Ireland, in O'Doherty, C. & Jackson, A., eds., *Learning on the job: Parenting in modern Ireland*, Cork: Oak Tree Press, 310-330.

Coulby, D. (2006). Intercultural education: theory and practice. *Intercultural Education*, *17*(3), 245-257.

Council of Europe (2016). *Living together as equals in culturally diverse democratic societies.* Competences for Democratic Europe Council of Europe Publishing, 1:1–78.

Creswell, J. W. (2007). *Qualitative inquiry & research design choosing among five approaches* (2nd ed.). London: Sage Publications.

Crozier, G. (2001). Excluded Parents: the deracialisation of parental involvement. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *4*(4), 329-341.

Cummins, J. (2000). *Language, power and pedagogy: bilingual children in the crossfire*, Bristol: Channel View Publications/Multilingual Matters.

Curtis, P., Thompson, J., & Fairbrother, H. (2018). Migrant children within Europe: a systematic review of children's perspectives on their health experiences. *Public Health*, *158*, 71-85.

Cushner, K., McClelland, A., & Safford, P. (2003). *Human diversity in education: An integrative approach,* New York: MC Grow Hall.

Daniel, S. M. (2016). Grappling with culturally responsive pedagogy: A study of elementary-level teacher candidates' learning across practicum and diversity coursework experiences. *The Urban Review*, *48*(4), 579-600.

Darling-Hammond, L., & Bransford, J. (Eds.). (2007). *Preparing teachers for a changing world: What teachers should learn and be able to do*, John Wiley & Sons.

Darmody, M., McGinnity, F., & Kingston, G. (2016). 'The experiences of migrant children in Ireland'. In J. Williams, E. Nixon, E. Smyth, & D. Watson. Eds., *Cherishing All the Children Equally? Ireland 100 Years on from the Easter Rising.* 175–191. Cork: Oak Tree Press.

Darmody, M., Smyth, E., & McCoy, S. (2012). *School sector variation among primary schools in Ireland.* ESRI Research Series. Dublin: ESRI.

Darmody, M., & Smyth, E. (2016). *Education about Religions and Beliefs (ERB) and Ethics: Views of teachers, parents and the general public regarding the proposed curriculum for primary schools*. Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment. Retrieved from https://www.esri.ie/publications/education-about-religions-and-beliefs-erb-and-ethics-views-of-teachers-parents-and-the-general-public-regarding-the-proposed-curriculum-for-primary-schools/.

DeCuir, J. T., & Dixson, A. D. (2004). "So when it comes out, they aren't that surprised that it is there": Using critical race theory as a tool of analysis of race and racism in education. *Educational Researcher*, *33*(5), 26-31.

Delpit, L. (1988). The silenced dialogue: Power and pedagogy in educating other people's children. *Harvard Educational Review*, *58*(3), 280-298.

Denessen, E., Bakker, J., & Gierveld, M. (2007). Multi-Ethnic schools' parental involvement policies and practices. *School Community Journal*, *17*(2), 27-44.

Denscombe, M. (2007). *The good research guide for small-scale social research projects,* (3rd ed.). Buckingham: Open University Press.

Department of Education and Skills (2013). *Action plan on bullying – Report of the anti-bullying working group to the Minister for Education and Skills*, Retrieved from https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Education-Reports/Action-Plan-On-Bullying 2013.pdf

Department of Education and Skills (2016). *Action plan for education 2016-2019*, Retrieved from https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Corporate-Reports/Strategy-Statement/Department-of-Education-and-Skills-Strategy-Statement-2016-2019.pdf

Department of Education and Skills (2018). *Annual statistical reports, 2017-2018*, Dublin: Stationery Office, Retrieved from https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Statistics/ Statistical-Reports/Annual-Statistical-Reports.html

Department of Education and Skills., & the Office of the Minister for Integration. (2010). *Intercultural Education Strategy*, 2010-2015, Retrieved from http://www.pdst.ie/sites/default/files/Intercultural_education_strategy.pdf

Department of Health and Children (2000). *The national children's strategy: Our children: their lives*, Dublin: Department of Health and Children, Retrieved from https://www.cypsc.ie/_fileupload/Documents/Resources/National%20Children's%20Strategy%20-%20our%20children,%20their%20lives.pdf

Department of Justice and Equality (2005). *Planning for diversity – national action plan against racism 2005–2008*, Retrieved from http://www.justice.ie/en/JELR/Pages/Planning-for-Diversity.

Devine, D. (2005). Welcome to the Celtic Tiger? Teacher responses to immigration and increasing ethnic diversity in Irish schools. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *15*(1), 49-70, doi: 10.1080/09620210500200131.

Devine, D. (2011). *Immigration and schooling in the Republic of Ireland*, Manchester: Manchester University Press.

Devine, D. (2013). 'Value'ing children differently? Migrant children in education, *Children & Society*, *27*(4), 282-294.

Devine, D., Fahie, D., & Mcgillicuddy, D. (2013). What is 'good' teaching? Teacher beliefs and practices about their teaching. *Irish Educational Studies*, *32*(1), 83-108.

Devine, D., Kenny, M., & Macneela, E. (2008). Naming the 'other': Children's construction and experience of racisms in Irish primary schools, *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *11*(4), 369-385.

Dimmock, C., & Walker, A. (2005). *Educational leadership: Culture and diversity*. London: Sage.

Dixson, A., & Rousseau, C. (2005). And we are still not saved: critical race theory in education ten years later, *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *8*(1), 7-27.

Domina, T. (2005), Levelling the home advantage: assessing the effectiveness of parental involvement in elementary school. *Sociology of Education*, *78*(3), 233–249.

Doyle, G., & Keane, E. (2019). 'Education comes second to surviving': parental perspectives on their child/ren's early school leaving in an area challenged by marginalisation, *Irish Educational Studies*, *38*(1), 71-88.

Durden, T. R., & Truscott, D. M. (2013). Critical reflectivity and the development of new culturally relevant teachers, *Multicultural Perspectives*, *15*(2), 73-80.

Durisic, M., & Bunijevac, M. (2017). 'Parental involvement as an important factor for successful education', *Centre for Educational Policy Studies Journal*, *7*(3), 137-153.

East, M. (2014). Mediating pedagogical innovation via reflective practice: a comparison of pre-service and in-service teachers' experiences, *Reflective Practice: International and Multidisciplinary Perspectives, 15*, 686–699.

Easton, G. (2010). Critical realism in case study research, *Industrial Marketing Management, 39*(1), 118–128.

Ellerbrock, C. R., Cruz, B. C., Vásquez, A., & Howes, E. V. (2016). Preparing culturally responsive teachers: Effective practices in teacher education. *Action in Teacher Education*, *38*(3), 226-239.

ENAR (2013). *ENAR Ireland's submission on integration, multiculturalism and combating racism to the Oireachtas joint committee on justice, defence and equality*. Dublin: ENAR Ireland.

Equal Status Act (2000). *No. 8/2000*, Dublin: Stationery Office.

Equality Act (2004) *No. 24/2004,* Dublin: Stationery Office.

Erickson, F. (2005). *Culture in society and in educational practices,* In J.A. Banks & C.A.M Banks (Eds.), Multicultural education: Issues and perspectives, (pp. 31-60), Hoboken, N J: John Wiley & Sons, Inc.

Esposito, P. P. (2011). *A mixed methods inquiry into the multicultural efficacy of preservice and beginning teachers*, Doctoral dissertation, University of Kansas.

Faas, D., Darmody, M., & Sokolowska, B. (2016). Religious diversity in primary schools: reflections from the Republic of Ireland, *British Journal of Religious Education, 38*(1), 83-98.

Faas, D., Smith, A., & Darmody, M. (2018a). The role of principals in creating inclusive school environments: insights from community national schools in Ireland. *School Leadership & Management, 38*(4), 457-473.

Faas, D., Smith, A., & Darmody, M. (2018b). Between ethos and practice: are Ireland's new multi-denominational primary schools equal and inclusive?. *Compare: A Journal of Comparative and International Education*, *49*(4), 602-618.

Falola, T. O., Ajayi., J.F., Udo, R. K., & Kirk-Greene, A. H. (2020, December 8). *Nigeria. Encyclopedia Britannica*. https://www.britannica.com/place/Nigeria.

Feliciano, C. (2006). Beyond the family: The influence of premigration group status on the educational expectations of immigrants' children. *Sociology of Education*, *79*(4), 281-303.

Fiedler, M., Gill, B., O 'Neill, C., & Pérez Piñán, A. (2008). *Global dimensions: A guide to good practice in development education and intercultural education for teacher educators.* Dublin: DICE.

Fletcher, A. J. (2017). Applying critical realism in qualitative research: methodology meets method. *International journal of social research methodology*, *20*(2), 181-194.

Florian, L. (2019). Preparing teachers for inclusive education. In *Encyclopedia of Teacher Education* (pp. 1-6). Springer Singapore.

Flynn, N., Keane, E., Davitt, E., McCauley, V., Heinz, M., & Mac Ruairc, G. (2021). 'Schooling at Home' in Ireland during COVID-19': Parents' and students' perspectives on overall impact, continuity of interest, and impact on learning. *Irish Educational Studies*, *40*(2), 217-226.

Foncha, J. W., Abongdia, J. F. A., & Adu, E. O. (2015). Challenges encountered by student teachers in teaching English language during teaching practice in East London, South Africa. *International Journal of Educational Sciences*, *9*(2), 127-134.

Fontana, A., & Frey, J. H. (2003). The interview: from structured questions to negotiated text. In N. K. Denzin & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *Collecting and interpreting qualitative research* (2nd ed.). Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Forghani-Arani, N., Cerna, L., & Bannon, M. (2019). "The lives of teachers in diverse classrooms", *OECD Education Working Papers*, No. 198, OECD Publishing, Paris, https://doi.org/10.1787/8c26fee5-en.

Freire, P. (1970). *Pedagogy of the oppressed*. New York: The Seabury Press.

Freire, P. (1973). *Education for critical consciousness*. New York: Continuum Publishing Company.

Furman, J. S. (2008). Tensions in multicultural teacher education research: Demographics and the need to demonstrate effectiveness. *Education and Urban Society , 41*, 55-79.

Gabrielli, G., & Impicciatore, R. (2021). Breaking down the barriers: educational paths, labour market outcomes and wellbeing of children of immigrants. *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies*, 1-19.

Ganga, D., & Scott, S. (2006). *Cultural' Insiders' and the issue of positionality in qualitative migration research: Moving "Across" and moving "Along" researcher-participant divides*, Forum Qualitative Sozialforschung/Forum: Qualitative Social Research 7.

Gay, G. (2000). *Culturally responsive teaching theory research and practice*. New York, NY: Teachers College Press.

Gay, G. (2002a). Preparing for culturally responsive teaching. *Journal of Teacher Education, 53,* 106-116.

Gay, G. (2002b). Culturally responsive teaching in special education for ethnically diverse students: Setting the stage, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *15*(6), 613-629.

Gay, G. (2010). Acting on beliefs in teacher education for cultural diversity. *Journal of Teacher Education, 61,* 143–152. http://dx.doi.org/10.1177/0022487109347320

Gay, G. (2013). Teaching to and through cultural diversity. *Curriculum Inquiry, 43*(1), 48-70.

Gbajumo-Sheriff, M. (2016). *Does work-life balance have a cultural face?: understanding the work-life interface of Nigerian working mothers* (Doctoral dissertation, University of Warwick).

Gibson, M. A. (1984). Approaches to multicultural education in the United States: Some concepts and assumptions, *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *15*(1), 94-120.

Gillborn, D. (2006). Critical Race Theory and education: Racism and antiracism in educational theory and praxis, *Discourse: Studies in the Cultural Politics of Education*, *27*(1), 11-32.

Gilmartin, M., & Mugge, B. (2013). European migrants in Ireland: Pathways to integration EU migrants to Ireland, *European Urban and Regional Studies 2015*, *22*(3), 285–299.

Giroux, H. (2004). Teachers as transformative intellectuals. In *Educational foundations: An anthology of critical readings*, Canestrari, A. S., & Marlowe, B. A.(Ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Glock, S., & Klapproth, F. (2017). 'Bad boys, good girls? Implicit and explicit attitudes toward ethnic minority students among elementary and secondary school teachers', *Studies in Educational Evaluation, 53*(1), 77-86, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.stueduc.2017.04.002.

Goldberg, D. T. (1994). *Multiculturalism: a critical reader*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell Limited.

Goodall, J. (2017). *Narrowing the achievement gap: parental engagement with children's learning*, London: Routledge.

Goodenow, C. (1993). The psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: scale development and educational correlates. *Psychology in the Schools*, *30*(1), 79-90.

Goodwin, D., & Keane, E. (2023). The rationale for diversifying the teaching profession - Social justice, ethnic-matching and recent trends. In Keane, E., Heinz, M and McDaid, R. (eds.) *Diversifying the teaching profession – dimensions, dilemmas and directions for the future*. Routledge.

Gorski, P. C. (2006). Complicity with conservatism: the de-politicizing of multicultural and intercultural education, *Intercultural Education*, *17*(2), 163-177.

Government of Ireland (1937). *Bunreacht na hÉireann* (Irish Constitution), Dublin: Government Publications, Retrieved from http://constitution.org/cons/ireland/constitution_ireland-en.htm

Grant, (2006). *The evolution of multicultural education in the United States: A journey for human rights and social justice*. Retrieved from http://bonner.pbworks.com/w/file/fetch/106038786/Evolution%20of%20multicultural%20Education%20in%20the%20United%20States.pdf

Gray, L. M., Wong, G., Rempel, G. R., & Cook, K. (2020). Expanding qualitative research interviewing strategies: Zoom video communications. *The Qualitative Report, 25*(5). Retrieved from https://nsuworks.nova.edu/tqr/vol25/iss5/5

Growing Up in Ireland Study Team (2009). *Key findings: 9-year olds, The families of 9-year-olds.* (No.2). Dublin: ESRI/TCD/OMCYA.

Growing Up in Ireland Study Team (2011). *Qualitative key findings: Nine-year-olds and their families.* (No.1). Dublin: ESRI/TCD/DCYA.

Growing Up in Ireland Study Team (2018). *Key findings: Cohort '08 at 9 years old: 9-year-olds and their families*. (No. 1). Dublin: ESRI/TCD/DCYA.

Gunaratnam, Y. (2003). *Researching 'race' and 'ethnicity.' Methods, knowledge and power*. London: SAGE Publications.

Gutiérrez, R. (2002). Enabling the practice of mathematics teachers in context: towards a new equity research agenda. *Mathematical Thinking and Learning, 4*(2), 45-187.

Guyton, E. M., Wesche, M. V. (2005). The multicultural efficacy scale: Development, item selection and reliability. *Multicultural Perspectives, 7*(4), 21–29.

Hall, S. (1990). Cultural identity and diaspora. In J. Rutherford (Ed.), *Identity: Community, culture, difference* (pp. 222-237). London: Lawrence & Wisbart.

Hallett, D., Chandler, M., & Lalonde, C. (2007). Aboriginal language knowledge and youth suicide, *Cognitive Development, 22*(3), 392-399, doi: 10.1016/j.cogdev.2007.02.001

Hammersley, M. (2013). *What is qualitative research?* London/New York: Bloomsbury Academic.

Hammond, Z. (2014). *Culturally responsive teaching and the brain: Promoting authentic engagement and rigor among culturally and linguistically diverse students*. Corwin Press.

Hammond, Z. (2020). *Distinctions of equity*, CRT and the Brain, Retrieved from https://crtandthebrain.com/wp-content/uploads/Hammond_Full-Distinctions-of-Equity-Chart.pdf

Hanafin, J., & Lynch, A. (2002). Peripheral voices: parental involvement, social class, and educational disadvantage, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *23*, 35-49.

Hanly, C., & Heinz, M. (2022). Extended school placement in initial teacher education: factors impacting professional learning, agency and sense of belonging. *European Journal of Educational Research*, *11*(4), 2373-2386.

Hannigan, A., Faas, D., & Darmody, M. (2022). Ethno-cultural diversity in initial teacher education courses: the case of Ireland, *Irish Educational Studies*, 1-16.

Harper, S. R. (2009). Race, interest convergence, and transfer outcomes for Black male student-athletes, In Hagedorn, L. S., & Horton, D. (eds.), *Student athletes and athletics. New Directions for Community Colleges*, San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Hayes, A., Turnbull, A., & Moran, N. (2018). *Universal design for learning to help all children read: Promoting literacy for learners with disabilities.* Washington, DC: United States Agency for International Development.

Hefflin, B. R. (2002). Learning to develop culturally relevant pedagogy: a lesson about cornrowed lives, *The Urban Review, 34*(3), 231-250.

Heinz, M. (2011). *The next generation of teachers: selection, backgrounds and motivations of second-level student teachers in the Republic of Ireland.* PhD Thesis, National University of Ireland, Galway.

Heinz, M., & Fleming, M. (2019). Leading change in teacher education: Balancing on the wobbly bridge of school- university partnership. *European Journal of Educational Research*, *8*(4), 1295-1306. https://doi.org/jdv3

Heinz, M., & Keane, E. (2018). Socio-demographic composition of primary initial teacher education entrants in Ireland, *Irish Educational Studies*, *37*(4), 523–543.

Heinz, M., Davison, K., & Keane, E. (2018). 'I will do it but religion is a very personal thing': teacher education applicants' attitudes towards teaching religion in Ireland. *European Journal of Teacher Education, 41*(2), 232-245.

Heinz, M., Keane, E., & Davison, K. (2017). Sexualities of initial teacher education applicants in the Republic of Ireland: Addressing the hidden dimension of diversity in teaching. *Journal of Education for Teaching, 43*, 99–116.

Heinz, M., Keane, E., & Foley, C. (2017). Career motivations of student teachers in the Republic of Ireland: continuity and change during educational reform and 'Boom to Bust' economic times. In *Global Perspectives on Teacher Motivation*. Cambridge University Press.

Heinz, M., Keane, E., & McDaid, R. (2023). Charting pathways towards a more diverse, equitable and inclusive teaching profession, In Keane, E., Heinz, M and McDaid, R. (eds.) *Diversifying the teaching profession – dimensions, dilemmas and directions for the future*, Routledge.

Heinz, M. (2008). The composition of applicants and entrants to teacher education programmes in Ireland: Trends and patterns. *Irish Educational Studies, 27*, 223–240. doi: 10.1080/03323310802242153.

Henkin, R., & Steinmetz, L. (2008). The need for diversity education as perceived by teacher candidates, *Journal of the Scholarship of Teaching and Learning*, *8*(1), 101-109.

Herzog-Punzenberger, B. (2022). Initial teacher training for secondary schools–a new curriculum for the age of migration?, *Teachers and Teaching*, 1-15.

Herzog-Punzenberger, B., Brown, M., Altrichter, H., & Gardezi, S. (2022). Preparing teachers for diversity: How are teacher education systems responding to cultural diversity–the case of Austria and Ireland, *Teachers and Teaching*, 1-18.

Higher Education Authority (2015). National plan for equity of access to higher education 2015–2019. Dublin: HEA. Retrieved from https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2017/06/National-Plan-for-Equity-of-Access-to-Higher-Education-2015-2019.pdf

Higher Education Authority (2022). National access plan: a strategic action plan for equity of access, participation and success in higher education 2022-2028. Dublin: HEA. Retrieved from https://hea.ie/assets/uploads/2022/12/National-Access-Plan-2022-2028-FINAL.pdf

Hine, C. (2004). Social research methods and the internet: a thematic review. *Sociological Research Online*, *9*(2), 110–116, https://doi.org/10.5153/sro.924

Hoffman, D. M. (1996). Culture and self in multicultural education: Reflections on discourse, text, and practice, *American Educational Research Journal*, *33*(3), 545- 569.

Horgan, D., Martin, S., O'Riordan, J., & Maier, R. (2022). Supporting languages: the socio-educational integration of migrant and refugee children and young people. *Children & Society*.

Hornby, G., & Lafaele, R. (2011). Barriers to parental involvement in education: an explanatory model. *Educational review*, *63*(1), 37-52.

Houston, S. (2010). Prising open the black box: Critical realism, action research and social work. *Qualitative Social Work*, *9*(1), 73-91.

Howard, T. C. (2010). Culturally relevant pedagogy: ingredients for critical teacher reflection. *Theory into Practice, 42*, 195–202.

Howe, B., & Lisi, P. L. (2013). *Becoming a multicultural educator: Developing awareness, gaining skills, taking action*, New York: Sage.

Hramiak, A. (2015). Applying the framework for culturally responsive teaching to explore the adaptations that teach first beginning teachers use to meet the needs of their pupils in school, *Cogent Education, 2*(1), 1108950.

Irgil, E. (2020). Broadening the positionality in migration studies: assigned insider category. *Migration Studies*, *9*(3), 1215-1229, https://doi.org/10.1093/migration/mnaa016.

Irish Refugee Council (2015). *Protection, resettlement and integration: Ireland's response to the refugee and migration 'crisis*, Dublin: Irish Refugee Council.

Isaac, S., & Michael, W. B. (1995). *Handbook in research and evaluation: for education and the behavioural sciences* (3rd ed.). San Diego, CA: EdITS.

Jackson, A. (2015). A quiet revolution: modernity, social change and new parenting opportunities,' In O'Doherty, C., & Jackson, A. eds., *Learning on the job: parenting in modern Ireland*, Cork: Oak Tree Press, 10-22.

James, K., & Vinnicombe, S. (2002). Acknowledging the individual in the researcher. In D. Partington (Ed.), *Essential skills for management research* (pp. 84-98). SAGE Publications Ltd, https://www.doi.org/10.4135/9781848605305.n5.

Janta, B., & Harte, E. (2016). *Education of migrant children. Education policy responses for the inclusion of migrant children in Europe.* Cambridge: Rand Europe.

Jordan, C. (1985). Translating culture: from ethnographic information to educational program. *Anthropology & Education Quarterly*, *16*(2), 105-123.

Kavanagh, A. M. (2013). *Emerging models of intercultural education in Irish primary schools: a critical case study analysis,* (Doctoral dissertation, Dublin City University).

Keane, E., & Heinz, M. (2015). Diversity in initial teacher education in Ireland: the socio-demographic backgrounds of postgraduate post-primary entrants in 2013 and 2014. *Irish Educational Studies*, *34*(3), 281-301.

Keane, E., & Heinz, M. (2016). Excavating an injustice?: nationality/ies, ethnicity/ies and experiences with diversity of initial teacher education applicants and entrants in Ireland in 2014, *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *39*(4): 507–527.10.1080/02619768.2016.1194392.

Keane, E., Heinz, M., & Lynch, A. (2020). Identity matters? 'Working class' student teachers in Ireland, the desire to be a relatable and inclusive teacher, and sharing the classed self. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, 1-17.

Keane, E., Heinz, M., & McDaid, R. (2023a). *Diversifying the teaching profession – dimensions, dilemmas and directions for the future*. Routledge.

Keane, E., Heinz, M., & McDaid, R. (2023b). Diversity in the teaching profession in Ireland tracing research and policy development, In Keane, E., Heinz, M and McDaid, R. (eds.) *Diversifying the teaching profession – dimensions, dilemmas and directions for the future*, Routledge.

Kennedy, L. A. (2014). *Exploring the acculturation experiences of African adolescent refugees and asylum seekers in Ireland using interpretative phenomenological analysis*, unpublished thesis (Ph.D.), National University of Ireland: Galway, Retrieved from

https://aran.library.nuigalway.ie/bitstream/handle/10379/4644/LisaAnnKennedyPhD.pdf?sequence=1andisAllowed=y

Kitching, K. (2010). An excavation of the racialised politics of viability underpinning education policy in Ireland, *Irish Educational Studies*, *29*(3), 213-229, doi: 10.1080/03323315.2010.498278.

Kozleski, E. B., & Proffitt, W. A. (2020). A journey towards equity and diversity in the educator workforce. *Teacher Education and Special Education*, *43*(1), 63-84.

Kyereko, D., & Faas, D. (2021). Children, language and access to schools in the global South: the case of migrants in Ghana. *Children & Society*.

Lac, V. T. (2021). "Now I know that meritocracy and the American dream are myths": employing critical hope in a teacher pipeline program serving minoritized high school students. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *34*(5), 447-463.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995a). But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy, *Theory into Practice*, *34*(3), 159-165.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995b). Towards a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy, *American Educational Research Journal*, *32*(3), 465-491.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1995c). Making mathematics meaningful in multicultural contexts, In W.G. Secada, E. Fennema, & L.B. Adajian (Eds.), *New directions for equity in mathematics education* (pp. 126-145). New York: Cambridge University Press.

Ladson-Billings, G. (1998). Just what is critical race theory and what's it doing in a nice field like education?, *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *11*(1), 7-24.

Ladson-Billings, G. (2009). *The dreamkeepers: Successful teachers of African American children*, 2nd Edition, San Francisco, CA: John Wiley & Sons.

Ladson-Billings, G., & Tate, W. F. (1995). Toward a critical race theory of education, *Teachers College Record*, *97*(1), 47–68.

Lareau, A. (1989), *Home advantage: social class and parental intervention in elementary education*. London: Falmer.

Le Roux, J. (2001). *Effective schooling in being culturally responsive.* Intercultural Education, *12*(1), 41-50.

Leeman, Y., & Reid, C. (2006). Multi/intercultural education in Australia and the Netherlands. Compare, *36*(1), 57-72.

Lobe, B., Morgan, D., & Hoffman, K. A. (2020). Qualitative data collection in an era of social distancing, *International Journal of Qualitative Methods.* https://doi.org/10.1177/1609406920937875

Löfgren, H. & Aman, R. (2020). A double pressure to perform? Pupils talk about grades and parents in a multicultural school setting in Sweden. *Education Inquiry*, *13*(1), 86-103.

Mac Éinrí, P., & White, A. (2008). Immigration into the Republic of Ireland: a bibliography of recent research, *Irish Geography*, *41*(2), 151-179.

Mac Gearailt, B., Mac Ruairc, G., & Murray, C. (2023). Actualising Content and Language Integrated Learning (CLIL) in Irish-medium education; why, how and why now?. *Irish Educational Studies*, *42*(1), 39-57.

MacBeath, J., Galton, M., Steward, S., MacBeath, A., & Page, C. (2006). The costs of inclusion. *London: University of Cambridge, National Union of Teachers*.

MacNamara, N., Mackle, D., Trew, J., Pierson, C., & Bloomer, F. (2020). Reflecting on asynchronous internet mediated focus groups for researching culturally sensitive issues. *International Journal Of Social Research Methodology*, *24*(5), 553-565. doi: 10.1080/13645579.2020.1857969.

MacPhail, A., Halbert, J., & O'Neill, H. (2018). The development of assessment policy in Ireland: A story of junior cycle reform. *Assessment in Education: Principles, Policy & Practice*, *25*(3), 310-326.

Madhlangobe, L., & Gordon, S. P. (2012). Culturally responsive leadership in a diverse school: a case study of a high school leader. *NASSP Bulletin*, *96*(3), 177-202.

Maher, M. (2007). *Inclusive education a decade after democratization-the educational needs of children with disabilities in KwaZulu Natal*, Unpublished Thesis PhD, Auckland University of Technology, Auckland, New Zealand.

Mannion, K. (2016). *Child migration matters: children and young people's experiences of migration*, The European Migration Network, Retrieved from http://emn.ie/cat_publication_detail.jsp?clog=1a andite,ID=3131anditem_name=andt=8

Mansouri, F., & Modood, T. (2021). The complementarity of multiculturalism and interculturalism: theory backed by Australian evidence. *Ethnic and Racial Studies*, *44*(16), 1-20.

Marom, L. (2019). Under the cloak of professionalism: Covert racism in teacher education. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *22*(3), 319-337.

Marshall, C., & Rossman, G. B. (2006). *Designing qualitative research* (4th ed.), London: Sage Publications.

Martin, M. Y. (2015). *Performing social justice in South Africa: how teachers negotiate the complexity of teaching in an unequal world*, Unpublished PhD dissertation, Pietermaritzburg: University of KwaZulu-Natal.

Marx, H., & Moss, D. M. (2011). Please mind the culture gap: intercultural development during a teacher education study abroad program, *Journal of teacher education*, *62*(1), 35-47.

May, S. (1994). *Making multicultural education work*, United Kingdom: Multilingual Matters Ltd.

May, S., & Sleeter, C. E. (2010). *Critical multiculturalism: theory and praxis*. New York/London: Routledge.

Mayfield, V. M., & Garrison-Wade, D. (2015). Culturally responsive practices as whole school reform. *Journal of Instructional Pedagogies*, *16*.

Mayorga-Gallo, S., & Hordge-Freeman, E. (2017). Between marginality and privilege: gaining access and navigating the field in multi-ethnic settings, *Qualitative Research*, *17*, 377-394.

McCormack, O., Gleeson, J., & O'Donoghue, T. (2020). An analysis of national newspaper coverage relating to the Leaving Certificate programme in two newspapers in the Republic of Ireland. *Irish Educational Studies*, *39*(1), 1-18.

McCoy, S., Byrne, D., O'Sullivan, J., & Smyth, E. (2019). *The early impact of the revised Leaving Certificate grading scheme on student perceptions and behaviour*. Research Series (No. 85), the Economic and Social Research Institute (ESRI), Dublin.

McCracken, G. (1988). *The long interview*. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

McGillicuddy, D., & Devine, D. (2018). '"Turned off" or "ready to fly" – Ability grouping as an act of symbolic violence in primary school', *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *70*(1), 88-99, https://doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2017.11.008.

McGinley, H., & Keane, E. (2021). "The school for the Travellers and the Blacks": student and teacher perspectives on "Choosing" a post-primary school with a high concentration of disadvantage. *Education Sciences*, *11*(12), 777.

McGinnity, F., Darmody, M., & Murray, A. (2015). *Academic achievement among immigrant children in Irish primary schools*. ESRI WP512. September 2015.

McGinnity, F., Fahey, E., Quinn, E., Arnold, S., Maître, B., & O'Connell, P. J. (2018). *Monitoring report on integration 2018,* Dublin: Economic and Social Research Institute, Retrieved from https://www.esri.ie/system/files/media/file-uploads/2018-11/BKMN EXT364.pdf

McGregor, G., Mills, M., te Riel, K., & Hayes, D. (2015). Excluded from school: getting a second chance at a 'meaningful' education, *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *19*(6), 608-625.

Meegan, S., & MacPhail, A. (2006). Inclusive education: Ireland's education provision for children with special educational needs. *Irish Educational Studies*, *25*(01), 53-62.

Mensah, F. M. (2011). A case for culturally relevant teaching in science education and lessons learned for teacher education, *Journal of Negro Education*, *80*(3), 296-309.

Menter, I. (1989). Teaching practice stasis: racism, sexism and school experience in initial teacher education, *British Journal of Sociology of Education*, *10*(4), 459-473.

Merriam, S. B. (1998). *Qualitative research and case study applications in education*, San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Miles, M., & Huberman, A. (1994). *Qualitative data analysis: an expanded sourcebook*. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Milner IV, R. (2007). Race, culture and researcher positionality: working through dangers seen, unseen, and unforeseen, *Educational Researcher*, *36*(7), 388-400.

Minami, M., & Ovando, C. (2004). Language issues in multicultural contexts, In *Handbook of Research on Multicultural Education*, edited by James A. Banks and Cherry A. McGee Banks, 567–588. San Francisco, CA: Jossey-Bass.

Modica, M. (2015). Unpacking the 'colourblind approach': accusations of racism at a friendly, mixed-race school. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *18*(3), 396-418.

Moll, L.C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N. (1992). Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classroom. *Theory into Practice*, *31*(2), 132-141.

Molla, T., & Nolan, A. (2019). Researching professional recognition in a pre-school setting: a critical realist approach. *International Journal of Research & Method in Education*, *43*(3), 271-282.

Monaghan, P. (1993, June 23). 'Critical race theory' questions the role of legal doctrine in racial inequity. *Chronicle of Higher Education*, A7, A9.

Montecinos, C. (2004). Paradoxes in multicultural teacher education research: Students of colour positioned as objects while ignored as subjects. *International Journal of Qualitative Studies in Education*, *17*(2), 167-181.

Morrison, S. A., Thompson, C., & Glazier, J. (2021). Culturally responsive teacher education: do we practice what we preach?. *Teachers and Teaching, 28*(1), 26-50.

Morse, J. M., & Richards, L. (2002). *Readme first for a user's guide to qualitative methods*, Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Murray, C., Lynch, A., Flynn, N., & Davitt, E. (2021). Articulating minority language value in diverse communities: The case of compulsory Irish language education, *Journal Of Language, Identity & Education*, 1-15. doi: 10.1080/15348458.2020.1871354

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2005). *Intercultural education in the primary school: guidelines for schools*, Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), Retrieved from https://www.developmenteducation.ie/media/documents/Intercultural%20education%20in%20the%20primary%20school.pdf

National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (2006). *Intercultural education in the post-primary school: Guidelines for schools,* Dublin: National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA), Retrieved from https://ncca.ie/media/1976/intercultural_education_in_the_post-primary_school.pdf

Nelson, J., & Gould, J. (2005). Hidden in the mirror: a reflective conversation about research with marginalised communities, *Reflective Practice*, *6*(3), 327–39.

Ngo, B. (2008). Beyond "culture clash" understandings of immigrant experiences. *Theory into Practice, 47*(1), 4-11.

Nguyen, C. D., & Huynh, T. N. (2021). Teacher agency in culturally responsive teaching: learning to teach ethnic minority students in the Central Highlands of Vietnam, *Educational Review*, 1-25.

Ní Dhuinn, M. (2017). *In their own words. Factors impacting on the higher education (HE) experiences of black and minority ethnic (BME) students in Ireland*. PhD Thesis, Galway: NUI Galway.

Ní Dhuinn, M., & Keane, E. (2021). 'But you don't look Irish': identity constructions of minority ethnic students as 'non-Irish' and deficient learners at school in Ireland, *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, 1-30.

Nieto, S. (2004). *Affirming diversity. The sociopolitical context of multicultural education*, (4th ed.), London: Pearson Education Inc.

Nieuwenhuis, J. (2008). Qualitative research designs and data gathering techniques, In K. Maree (Ed.), *First Steps in Research* (pp. 47-66), Pretoria: Van Schaik.

Nixon, E. (2012). *Growing up in Ireland: how families matter for social and emotional outcomes of 9 year-old children,* (Child Cohort Research Report No. 4), Dublin: Government Publications.

O'Brien, B. (2014). The experiences of parents who choose to homeschool their children in Ireland: a qualitative study. *Master's in arts in teaching and learning.* Hibernia College. Dublin.

O'Doherty, T., & Harford, J. (2018). Teacher recruitment: reflections from Ireland on the current crisis in teacher supply. *European Journal of Teacher Education*, *41*(5), 654-669.

O'Donoghue, T. (2007). *Planning your qualitative research project. An introduction to interpretivist research in education,* Abingdon: Routledge.

O'Reilly, B. (2012). Education policy in Ireland since the 1940s. *Italian Journal of Sociology of Education*, *1,* 238-273.

Office of the Minister for Integration (2008). *Migration nation statement on integration strategy and diversity management,* Retrieved from https://www.education.ie/en/Publications/Policy-Reports/horwath_final_report.pdf

Ogbu, J. U. (1992). Understanding cultural diversity and learning, *Educational Researcher, 21*(8), 5-14.

Olson, J. D., & Rao, A. B. (2016). Becoming a culturally responsive teacher: the impact of clinical experiences in urban schools, *Journal of Urban Learning, Teaching, and Research*, *12*, 133-141.

Omi, M., & Winant, H. (1994). On the theoretical status of the concept of race. *Race, identity and representation in education*, 3-10.

Ontario Ministry of Education. (2013). Culturally responsive pedagogy towards equity and inclusivity in Ontario schools, Retrieved from Culturally Responsive Pedagogy- Towards Equity and Inclusivity in Ontario Schools.pdf - Google Drive (accessed 21 October 2022).

Onwuegbuzie, A. J., & Collins, K. M. T. (2007). A typology of mixed methods sampling designs in social science research, *Qualitative Report, 12*, 281–316.

O'Sullivan, D. (2005). *Cultural politics and Irish education since the 1950s: policy paradigms and power*. Institute of Public Administration.

Öztürk, M. (2013). Barriers to parental involvement for diverse families in early childhood education. *Journal of Educational and Social Research, 3*(7), 13-13.

Parekh, B. (2000). *Rethinking multiculturalism: cultural diversity and political theory,* Basingstoke: Macmillan Press Ltd.

Paris, D. (2012). Culturally sustaining pedagogy: a needed change in stance, terminology, and practice. *Educational researcher*, *41*(3), 93-97.

Parker, L., & Lynn, M. (2002). What's race got to do with it? Critical Race Theory's conflicts with and connections to qualitative research methodology and epistemology, *Qualitative Inquiry*, *8*(1), 7-22.

Parker-Jenkins, M., & Masterson, M. (2013). No longer 'Catholic, White and Gaelic': schools in Ireland coming to terms with cultural diversity, *Irish Educational Studies*, *32*(4), 477-492.

Patton, M. Q. (1990). *Qualitative evaluation and research methods* (2nd ed.), Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Patton, M. Q. (2002). *Qualitative research and evaluation methods* (3rd ed.), Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Peček, M., Macura-Milovanović, S., & Vujisić-Živković, N. (2014). The cultural responsiveness of teacher candidates towards Roma pupils in Serbia and Slovenia–case studies, *Journal of Education for Teaching*, *40*(4), 359-376.

Phinney, J. S. (1992). The multigroup ethnic identity measure: a new scale for use with diverse groups. *Journal of Adolescent Research*, *7*(2), 156-176.

Pianta, R. C., Hamre, B. K., & Allen, J. P. (2012). Teacher-student relationships and engagement: Conceptualizing, measuring, and improving the capacity of classroom interactions. In *Handbook of research on student engagement* (pp. 365-386). Boston, MA: Springer US.

Pizarro, M., & Kohli, R. (2020). "I stopped sleeping": teachers of colour and the impact of racial battle fatigue, *Urban Education*, *55*(7), 967-991.

Pomerantz, F., & Pierce, M. (2004). From literacy methods classes to the real world: experiences of preservice teachers, *New England Reading Association Journal*, *40*(2), 55.

Printer, L. (2020). A critical analysis of the rationales underpinning the introduction of Ireland's Framework for Junior Cycle. *Irish Educational Studies*, *39*(3), 319-335.

Public Policy and Management Institute (PPMI). (2017). *Preparing teachers for diversity: the role of initial teacher education*, Final report. Luxembourg: Publications Office of the European Union. doi: 10.2766/637002. Retrieved from https://op.europa.eu/en/publication-detail/-/publication/b347bf7d-1db1-11e7-aeb3-01aa75ed71a1/language-en

Pushor, D., & Ruitenberg, C. (2005). *Parent engagement and leadership*, Saskatoon, Canada: Dr. Stirling McDowell Foundation for Research into Teaching, Retrieved from http://www.mcdowellfoundation.ca/main_mcdowell/projects/research_rep/134_parent_engagement.pdf

Quillian, L., & Campbell, M. E. (2003). Beyond black and white: the present and future of multiracial friendship segregation. *American Sociological Review*, 540-566.

Ramirez, A. Y. (2003). Dismay and disappointment: parental involvement of Latino immigrant parents. *The Urban Review*, *35*(2), 93-110.

Reilly, K., Basu, R., & Ledwith, V. (2019). Geographies of education: context and case, In: Skelton, T., Aitken, S. (eds) *Establishing geographies of children and young people*, vol 1. Springer, Singapore. https://doi.org/10.1007/978-981-4585-88-0_10-1

Richards, L. (2005). Handling qualitative data: A practical guide, *Qualitative Social Research*, *7*(2), Art. 24.

Richardson, R. (2002). Education and community cohesion, In Runnymede Conference Paper, *Developing community cohesion. Understanding the issues, delivering solutions*, based on the proceedings from a Runnymede Conference of October 2002 held at the Barbican Conference Centre, London, pp. 46-48.

Riehl, C. J. (2009). The principal's role in creating inclusive schools for diverse students: a review of normative, empirical, and critical literature on the practice of educational administration. *Journal of education*, *189*(1-2), 183-197.

Röder, A., Ward, M., Frese, C., & Sánchez, E. (2014). *New Irish families: a profile of second generation children and their families*, Dublin: Trinity College Dublin. Retrieved from http://www.tara.tcd.ie/bitstream/handle/2262/70577/New%20Irish%20Families%20-%20Report%20July%202014.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y

Rodríguez-Izquierdo, R. M., & Darmody, M. (2019). Policy and practice in language support for newly arrived migrant children in Ireland and Spain, *British Journal of Educational Studies*, *67*(1), 41-57.

Rychly, L., & Graves, E. (2012). Teacher characteristics for culturally responsive pedagogy. *Multicultural perspectives*, *14*(1), 44-49.

Samuels, A. J., Samuels, G. L., & Cook, T. M. (2017). Examining perceptions of culturally responsive pedagogy in teacher preparation and teacher leadership candidates, *SRATE Journal*, *26*(2), 50-60.

Santoro, N. (2014). 'If I'm going to teach about the world, I need to know the world': Developing Australian pre-service teachers' intercultural competence through international trips, *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *17*(3), 429-444.

Sayer, A. (1992). *Method in social science: A realistic approach* (2nd Ed.), London, UK: Routledge.

Sayer, A. (2000). *Realism and social science*, Thousand Oaks, Calif., London, UK: Sage.

Schleicher, A. (2019). *Teaching and learning international survey TALIS 2018: Insights and interpretations.* Paris, Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development.

Schneider, C., & Arnot, M. (2018). An exploration of school communication approaches for newly arrived EAL students: applying three dimensions of organisational communication theory. *Cambridge Journal of Education*, *48*(2), 245-262.

Scott, D., & Usher, R. (1999). *Researching education: data, methods and theory in educational enquiry*. London: Cassell.

Seeberg, V., & Minick, T. (2012). Enhancing cross-cultural competence in multicultural teacher education: transformation in global learning. *International journal of multicultural education*, *14*(3).

Sheikh, M., & Anderson, J. R. (2018). Acculturation patterns and education of refugees and asylum seekers: A systematic literature review, *Learning and Individual Differences*, *67*, 22-32.

Sheridan, A. (2018) *Annual report on migration and asylum 2017: Ireland*, Dublin, Economic and Social Research Institute, Retrieved from https://www.esri.ie/publications/annual-report-on-migration-and-asylum-2017-ireland/

Shevlin, M., Kearns, H., Ranaghan, M., Twomey, M., Smith, R., & Winter, E. (2009). *Creating inclusive learning environments in Irish schools: teacher perspectives,* Trim: National Council for Special Education.

Shevlin, M., Winter, E., & Flynn, P. (2013). Developing inclusive practice: teacher perceptions of opportunities and constraints in the Republic of Ireland. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *17*(10), 1119-1133.

Siope, A. (2013). A culturally responsive pedagogy of relations: coming to understand, *Waikato Journal of Education*, *18*(2).

Siwatu, K. O. (2007). Preservice teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy and outcome expectancy beliefs, *Teaching and Teacher Education*, *23*(7), 1086-1101.

Siwatu, K. O., Chesnut, S. R., Alejandro, A. Y., & Young, H. A. (2016). Examining preservice teachers' culturally responsive teaching self-efficacy doubts, *The Teacher Educator*, *51*(4), 277-296.

Sleeter, C. (1996). *Multicultural education as social activism*, (Albany, NY, State University of New York Press).

Sleeter, C. (2013). Teaching for social justice in multicultural classroom, *Multicultural Education Review*, *5*(2), 1-19.

Sleeter, C. E. (2004). How white teachers construct race, In G. Ladson-Billings & D. Gillborn (Eds.), *The Routledge Falmer reader in multicultural education* (pp. 163-178), London: Routledge Falmer.

Sleeter, C. E. (2012). Confronting the marginalisation of culturally responsive pedagogy, *Urban Education*, *47*, 562-584.

Smith, J. K., & Deemer, D. K. (2002). The problem of criteria in the age of relativism, In Denzin, N. K & Lincoln, Y. S. (Eds.), *Handbook of qualitative research*, 2nd ed., pp. 37-38. Thousand Oaks, CA: Sage.

Smyth, E. (2008). The Irish educational system: a note on classification. *The international standard classification of education (ISCED-97): An evaluation of content and criterion validity for, 15*.

Smyth, E., Darmody, M., McGinnity, F., & Byrne, D. (2009). *Adapting to diversity: Irish schools and newcomer students*. Dublin: ESRI Research Series 8.

Stake, R. E. (2005). Qualitative case studies, In N. K. Denzin, & Y. S. Lincoln (Eds.), *The Sage handbook of qualitative research* (3rd ed.) (pp. 443-466). London: Sage Publications.

Strauss, A., & Corbin, J. M. (1990). *Basics of qualitative research: Grounded theory procedures and techniques,* Sage Publications, Inc.

Strom, K. J., & Viesca, K. M. (2021). Towards a complex framework of teacher learning-practice. *Professional development in education*, *47*(2-3), 209-224.

Stylianou, A. (2017). Absenting the absence (s) in the education of poor minority ethnic students: a critical realist framework. *International Journal of Inclusive Education*, *21*(10), 975-990.

Subasi Singh, S., & Akar, H. (2021). Culturally responsive teaching: beliefs of pre-service teachers in the Viennese context, *Intercultural Education*, *32*(1), 46-61.

Swartz, E. (1992). Emancipatory narratives: rewriting the master script in the school curriculum, *Journal of Negro Education, 61*, 341-355

Tarasawa, B., & Waggoner, J. (2015). Increasing parental involvement of English Language Learner families: what the research says. *Journal of Children and Poverty*, *21*(2), 129-134.

Taylor, E., Gillborn, D., & Ladson-Billings, G. (eds.) (2009). *Foundations of Critical Race Theory in education*, New York and London: Routledge.

Tesch, R. (1987). Emerging themes: the researcher's experience, *Phenomenology and Pedagogy, 5*(3), 230-241.

Tett, L. (2004). Parents and school communities in Japan and Scotland: Contrasts in policy and practice in primary schools. *International Journal of Lifelong Education*, *23*(3), 259-273.

The Teaching Council (2020). *Céim: Standards for Initial Teacher Education*. Accessed 08 June 2023. https://www.teachingcouncil.ie/en/publications/ite-professional-accreditation/ceim-standards-for-initial-teacher-education.pdf

Theodorou, E. (2008). Just how involved is 'involved'? Re-thinking parental involvement through exploring teachers' perceptions of immigrant families' school involvement in Cyprus. *Ethnography and Education*, *3*(3), 253-269.

Thijs, J., & Verkuyten, M. (2014). School ethnic diversity and students' interethnic relations. *British Journal of Educational Psychology*, *84*(1), 1-21.

Thomas, P. G. (2006). Preservice practicum teaching in Central Asia: a positive experience for both worlds, *Journal of Social Studies Research*, *30*(1), 21.

Thomas, R. M., & Brubaker, D. L. (2000). *Theses and dissertations: a guide to planning, research, and writing*, Westport, CT: Bergin & Garvey.

Trainor, A. A. (2010). Diverse approaches to parent advocacy during special education home—school interactions: identification and use of cultural and social capital. *Remedial and Special education*, *31*(1), 34-47.

Tuckett, A. G. (2005). Applying thematic analysis theory to practice: a researcher's experience, *Contemporary nurse*, *19*(1-2), 75-87.

Tuckman, B. W. (1999). *Conducting educational research* (5th ed.), Orlando: Harcourt Brace College Publishers.

UN CRPD. (2016). *Initial report* submitted by Singapore under Article 35 of the Convention, Due in 2015 – Singapore, Geneva, United Nations Committee on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities.

UNESCO. (2016). *Implementing the right to education*. Retrieved from http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002451/245196E.pdf.

UNESCO. (2019). Migr*ation, displacement and education: building bridges, not walls*. Global Education Monitoring Report. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2020). *Inclusion and education: all means all,* Global Education Monitoring Report. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (1994). *Final report: world conference on special needs education: access and quality*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNESCO. (2000). *Dakar framework for action: Education for all*. Paris: UNESCO.

UNHCR. (2016). *Missing out: Refugee education in crisis*. Retrieved from https://www.unhcr.org/uk/publications/education/57d9d01d0/missing-refugee-education-crisis.html

Valentín, S. (2006). Addressing diversity in teacher education programs, *Education*, *127*(2).

Van Ewijk, R., & Sleegers, P. (2010). The effect of peer socioeconomic status on student achievement: A meta-analysis. *Educational research review*, *5*(2), 134-150.

Vass, G. (2017). Preparing for culturally responsive schooling: initial teacher educators into the fray, *Journal of teacher education*, *68*(5), 451-462.

Vermeij, L., Van Duijn, M. A., & Baerveldt, C. (2009). Ethnic segregation in context: social discrimination among native Dutch pupils and their ethnic minority classmates. *Social networks*, *31*(4), 230-239.

Vialpando, J., Yedlin, J., Linse, C., Harrington, M., & Cannon, G. (2005). *Educating English language learners: implementing instructional practices*, Washington, DC; National Council of La Raza; Providence, RI, Education Alliance at Brown University.

Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, Ť. (2002). Preparing culturally responsive teachers: rethinking the curriculum, *Journal of Teacher Education, 53,* 20-32.

Vincent, C., Rollock, N., Ball, S., & Gillborn, D. (2012). Intersectional work and precarious positionings: Black middle-class parents and their encounters with schools in England. *International Studies in Sociology of Education*, *22*(3), 259-276.

Wagner, A. E. (2005). Unsettling the academy: working through the challenges of anti-racist pedagogy. *Race Ethnicity and Education, 8*(3), 261-275.

Wallace, T., & Brand, B. R. (2012). Using critical race theory to analyse science teachers' culturally responsive practices, *Cultural Studies of Science Education, 7*, 341-374.

Wellington, J. (2000). *Educational research: Contemporary issues and practical approaches*, London: Continuum.

Whitaker, M. C., & Valtierra, K. M. (2018). Enhancing preservice teachers' motivation to teach diverse learners, *Teaching and Teacher Education, 73*, 171-182.

White, T. C. (2016). Teach For America's paradoxical diversity initiative: race, policy, and Black teacher displacement in urban schools. *Education Policy Analysis Archives*, *24*, 16-16.

Wilkins, C., & Lall, R. (2011). 'You've got to be tough and I'm trying': Black and minority ethnic student teachers' experiences of initial teacher education. *Race Ethnicity and Education*, *14*(3), 365-386.

Williams, J., Greene, S., McNally, S., Murray, A., & Quail, A. (2010). *Growing Up in Ireland: the infants and their families.* (Infant Cohort Research Report No.1) Dublin: The Stationery Office.

Yost, D. S., Sentner, S. M., & Forlenza-Bailey, A. (2000). An examination of the construct of critical reflection: implications for teacher education programming in the 21st century. *Journal of Teacher Education*, *51*, 39–49.

Young, E. (2010). Challenges to conceptualizing and actualizing culturally relevant pedagogy: How viable is the theory in classroom practice? *Journal of Teacher Education, 61,* 248–260.

Yuan, H. (2019). Teaching across cultures: navigating teacher candidates' perceptions of multicultural education in China. *Journal of Comparative & International Higher Education*, *11*, 11-21.

Yuan, R., Liu, W., & Lee, I. (2019). Confrontation, negotiation and agency: exploring the inner dynamics of student teacher identity transformation during teaching practicum. *Teachers and Teaching, 25*(8), 972-993.

Zachariadis, M., Scott, S., & Barrett, M. (2013). Methodological implications of critical realism for mixed-methods research. *MIS Quarterly, 37*(3): 855-879.

Appendices

Appendix 1: Key texts reviewed in this chapter two

Author	Year	Title	Type of Publication	Context	Methodology	Sample Size	Findings or Key Ideas
Arshad, R.	2023	Diversifying the teaching profession in Scotland - The work of the Scottish government's working group on diversifying the teaching profession.	Book Chapter	Scotland	Review	-	Key stakeholders in Scottish education need to deepen their understanding of how racial microaggressions affect minority ethnic teachers and recognise the benefits of having diverse teachers for all students.
Bryan, A.	2010	Corporate multiculturalism, diversity management, and positive interculturalism in Irish schools and society	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Critical Discourse Analysis	-	The study argues that the Irish state's approach to interculturalism is informed by broader discourses and policies which bestow conditional acceptance on minority groups, whose "welcome" is contingent on what they can offer to Irish society and is linked to a broader discourse which suggests that they are welcome so long as they benefit Irish society.
Byram, M.	2003	On being 'bicultural' and 'intercultural'.	Book Chapter	Global	Review	-	The article discusses whether an analysis of being bicultural can help understand what teaching intercultural competence means. It argues that becoming bicultural can be difficult and depends on the degree of acceptance by others and that more research on successful cases of biculturalism is needed. It concludes that changing attitudes is more important than changing learners' cultural/ethnic/national identity and that it is important for the teacher to make learners aware of their basis for approval/disapproval rather than imposing their views.
Chapman, T. K., & Bhopal, K.	2019	The perils of integration: exploring the experiences of African American and black Caribbean students	Journal	United States and United Kingdom	Qualitative Research	6 Schools in 4 districts in the US Midwestern region and 2	The article presents deficit frameworks that position black and brown students as unmotivated and hostile. It also notes that without investigating how schools perpetuate racist practices, teachers are likely to re-inscribe racial deficit explanations that allow schools to avoid accountability for racially stratified student outcomes.

		in predominately white secondary				rural secondary schools in the UK	
Condon, J.	2017	The experience of migrant students in an Irish second-level school	PhD Thesis	Republic of Ireland	Qualitative Mixed-Methods Approach,	7 migrant students in a secondary school	It is recommended that an inclusive curriculum be implemented, that the diversity of the intercultural classroom is celebrated as a valuable resource, and that both students and teachers use a pedagogy of cooperative learning, peer education, and action research.
Connaughton, C.	2019	"I want them to have a good education": The" New Irish" parents and the primary school system	Master Thesis	Republic of Ireland	Qualitative Research	26 migrant parents and 32 key advocates of migration	Migrant parents value education and have high aspirations for their children, but they also identify obstacles to their involvement. Obstacles include low socioeconomic status of parents, lack of competency in English and Irish, and lack of knowledge of the Irish education system.
Cotter, G., & Kolawole, O.	2015	Parenting in a multicultural society: migrants and their experiences of parenting in Ireland	Book Chapter	Republic of Ireland	Qualitative Research	20 parents	The study found that immigrant parenting requires discussing coping skills to help deal with discrimination based on ethnicity and that parents worry that their children, even if born in Ireland, will not feel a sense of belonging. Some concerns were raised about a lack of emphasis on assertiveness, critical thinking and problem-solving skills within the Irish education system, which is accentuated for those living in Direct Provision centres. The study also highlighted that being a migrant parent is affected by legal and economic factors, such as struggling financially and uncertainty about legal issues relating to residency status.
Darmody, M., McGinnity, F., & Kingston, G.	2016	The experiences of migrant children in Ireland	Book Chapter	Republic of Ireland	Mixed Methods Research	Growing Up in Ireland data	Children from migrant backgrounds tend to be disadvantaged within the Irish education system, with some groups experiencing more significant disadvantages regarding income, resources, and access to facilities, including schools. This disadvantage is in part due to the devaluation of the human, cultural and linguistic capital of the new arrivals, and belonging to certain national groups can constitute a new form of inequality in Ireland.
Devine, D.	2013	Value'ing children differently? Migrant children in education	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Review	-	Schools are a vital backdrop in the construction of migrant childhoods and identities, and being differently valued can imply both recognition and misrecognition. This requires working with children in a sustained, respectful manner that recognises and fully includes the grain of ethnic

							influences and requires fundamental pedagogical change that is radical and strategic, careful and nurturing.
Faas, D., Darmody, M., & Sokolowska, B.	2016	Religious diversity in primary schools: reflections from the Republic of Ireland	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Review	-	Ireland is a society undergoing significant social change and is working to strengthen a non-discriminatory perspective in education and promote religious pluralism. Schools can collaborate with churches and parents to provide religious instruction outside of school hours, and religious education in schools has the potential to promote tolerance and challenge discrimination.
Faas, D., Smith, A., & Darmody, M.	2018a	The role of principals in creating inclusive school environments: insights from community national schools in Ireland	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Mixed Methods Research	11 Community National Schools (CNS) with 11 principals, 17 students and 22 teachers	The extent to which principals practice culturally responsive leadership differs across schools, but an equal and inclusive ethos drives schools. The study also highlighted challenges and opportunities for the CNS model going forward, such as the obligation to provide sacramental preparation, which challenges the ethos of equality and inclusivity by privileging Catholic children.
Faas, D., Smith, A., & Darmody, M.	2018b	Between ethos and practice: are Ireland's new multi-denominational primary schools equal and inclusive?	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Mixed Methods Research	11 CNS with 11 principals, 17 students and 21 teachers	The authors argue that an official ethos, such as the CNS model, can help promote a school identity and guide school staff in their everyday practice. The study found that while all the CNS promote an inclusive and equal ethos, there were some differences in the approach to delivering the curriculum, particularly between urban and rural schools, and in sacramental preparation for Catholic children.
Howe, B., & Lisi, P.	2013	Becoming a multicultural educator: Developing awareness, gaining skills, and taking action	Book	Global	Review	-	Provides research-based guides that will prepare student-teachers to teach in culturally responsive ways, develop a critical understanding of culture and its influence on teaching and learning, and feel empowered to address current issues in multicultural education.
Kavanagh, A.	2013	Emerging models of intercultural education in Irish primary schools: A critical case study analysis	PhD Thesis	Republic of Ireland	Qualitative Case Study Research	3 Irish primary schools	The study suggests that a re-conceptualisation of intercultural education is necessary for the Irish context and proposes a framework of critical intercultural education based on democracy, critical consciousness, and equity to transform the power relations, organisational structures, policies, and practices in the school.

Keane, E., Heinz, M., & McDaid, R.	2023 a	Diversifying the teaching profession – dimensions, dilemmas and directions for the future	Book	Global (with a specific focus on the Republic of Ireland)	Qualitative Research	-	Specific policies are required to target the recruitment of teachers from non-represented minority groups to diversify the teaching profession. This will ensure that all students have access to equitable and quality education
McGinley, H. & Keane, E.	2021	"The School for the Travellers and the Blacks": Student and Teacher Perspectives on "Choosing" a Post-Primary School with a High Concentration of Disadvantage	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Qualitative Case Study Research	1 post-primary urban school with 9 staff participants, 7 teachers, 9 Traveller student participants and 6 non-Traveller minority student participants	The study found that Traveller students were perceived as a risk to the school's reputation by all participant groups except the Traveller participants themselves. Academic expectations were also found to be low, with some student participants internalising negative and deficit perceptions of their academic ability.
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	2005	Intercultural education in the primary school: guidelines for schools	Policy Document	Republic of Ireland	Review	-	The guidelines stress that intercultural education should be an integral part of the school curriculum and culture and should be implemented in an inclusive, responsive, and respectful way for all students in Irish primary schools.
National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA)	2006	Intercultural education in the post-primary school: Guidelines for schools	Policy Document	Republic of Ireland	Review	-	The guidelines stress that intercultural education should be an integral part of the school curriculum and culture and should be implemented in a way that is inclusive, responsive, and respectful of all students in Irish post-primary schools.

Ní Dhuinn, M.	2017	In their own words. Factors impacting on the higher education (HE) experiences of black and minority ethnic (BME) students in Ireland.	PhD Thesis	Republic of Ireland	Qualitative Research	25 students in higher education institutes in Ireland	The findings indicate that the participants, who were from Black and Minority Ethnic (BME) groups, faced discrimination and the lingering effects of colonialism in the Irish education system, both at school and in higher education. To address these issues, the study recommends several actions, such as providing ongoing training for teachers and staff in higher education, recognising and valuing bilingualism, revising the curriculum to be more inclusive, diversifying the teaching population, explicitly targeting BME groups in national policies and giving priority to the perspectives of BME groups in future research.
Parker-Jenkins, M., & Masterson, M.	2013	No longer 'Catholic, White and Gaelic': schools in Ireland coming to terms with cultural diversity	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Qualitative Research	12 post-primary schools with 34 school leaders interviews	The research suggests that practitioners should have a better understanding of how a lack of recognition from schools, such as in terms of school uniforms, shapes the lived experience of children from culturally diverse backgrounds and how a predominantly ethnocentric/Eurocentric curriculum fails to provide knowledge about other countries and to value the contributions of other cultures.
Röder, A., Ward, M., Frese, C., & Sánchez, E.	2014	New Irish families: A profile of second generation children and their families	Report	Republic of Ireland	Mixed Methods Research	Growing Up in Ireland data	The report highlights a greater diversity among "New Irish Families" and that some groups may require additional support to ensure all children have equal life chances. It also notes that childcare and return to work are issues that arise for even more advantaged migrant families. The report suggests that to attract and retain highly skilled migrants, the progress of families needs to be continuously monitored, and policies should consider a greater variety of backgrounds.
Rodríguez-Izquierdo, R. M., & Darmody, M.	2019	Policy and practice in language support for newly arrived migrant children in Ireland and Spain	Journal	Ireland and Spain	Review	-	Findings show that insufficient resources and staff competencies, negative perceptions of the abilities of migrant children, and lack of opportunities to develop their mother tongue competencies prevent migrant children from reaching their potential. The article discusses the specific situation in Ireland and Spain, where both countries are currently developing measures to support migrant students who do not speak the language of the receiving country and may know little of its history, culture and present circumstances. The main targeted policy measure in both countries is the provision of additional tuition in the language of instruction, with little or no provision for learning heritage languages.

Smyth, E., Darmody, M., McGinnity, F., & Byrne, D.	2009	Adapting to diversity: Irish schools and newcomer students	Report	Republic of Ireland	Mixed Methods Research	733 second-level principals and a sample of 1,200 primary principals. 6 primary and 6 second-level schools case studies	The study emphasises the value of an all-school strategy for intercultural education that includes all teachers. Findings show that students from other countries are frequently observed socialising among themselves, and some have complained that it is hard to make friends in Ireland. Additionally, several recent immigrants have encountered racism or ethnic intimidation. Findings point to the necessity of providing teachers with the training and assistance they need to implement diversified and culturally inclusive teaching strategies that will benefit Irish and newcomer students

Appendix 2: Key texts reviewed in chapter three

Author	Year	Title	Type of Publication	Context	Methodology	Sample Size	Findings or Key Ideas
Acquah, E. O., & Commins, N. L	2015	Critical reflection as a key component in promoting pre-service teachers' awareness of cultural diversity	Journal	Finland	Mixed Methods Research	45 pre-service teachers	The research indicates that pre-service teachers can benefit from critically reflecting on cultural, privilege, and equity issues, as it can help them confront their biases and beliefs about diverse student groups. As a result, the study recommends incorporating critical reflection into multicultural coursework for pre-service teachers.
Banks, J.	1993	Multicultural education: Historical development, dimensions, and practice.	Journal	US	Review	-	Multicultural education responds to the learning gaps of students from marginalised and minority ethnic groups.

Brown, M.	2007	Educating all students: Creating culturally responsive teachers, classrooms, and schools.	Journal	US	Review	-	It is crucial for school administrators to acknowledge the advantages of culturally responsive teaching methods and assist teachers in creating a more inclusive teaching environment, classrooms and schools that cater to the needs of diverse students.

Brown, M., Altrichter, H., Shiyan, I., Rodríguez Conde, M. J., McNamara, G., Herzog-Punzenberger, B., ... & Sánchez, L	2022	Challenges and opportunities for culturally responsive leadership in schools: Evidence from four European countries	Journal	Austria, Ireland, Russia, Spain	Review	-	Culturally responsive school leaders can understand the perspectives of marginalised groups and implement strategies to address the inequalities experienced by these students. They also employ both instructional and distributed leadership, actively involve all members of the community, incorporate the cultural norms and values of the diverse student population, and aid teachers in adapting their teaching methods to meet the needs of students from various backgrounds.

Brown-Jeffy, S., & Cooper, J. E.	2011	Toward a conceptual framework of culturally relevant pedagogy: An overview of the conceptual and theoretical literature	Journal	US	Review	-	Educational research aims to discover methods for instructing all students, including the ones from culturally diverse backgrounds. CRP is a promising field of research for addressing this issue. This article synthesises the literature on CRP, identifies common themes across major works, acknowledges the sensitivity of race and social relations in the US, and applies the principles of Critical Race Theory to examine the importance of race and racism in the discussion of culture.

Civitillo, S., Juang, L. P., Badra, M., & Schachner, M. K.	2019	The interplay between culturally responsive teaching, cultural diversity beliefs, and self-reflection: A multiple case study	Journal	Germany	Case Study Research Design	1 school with 4 teachers	Teachers should examine the connection between their classroom methods and personal beliefs, as they have a mutual and two-way impact. The study confirms that Culturally Responsive Teaching necessitates teachers to believe that cultural diversity is a valuable asset in education. This implies that teachers should be made aware of these beliefs during teacher training programs and that teacher educators should promote the integration of culturally responsive techniques in the curriculum.

Cook, D.	2013	The engaged dialogue: Reflections on preparing African American teachers for diverse classrooms.	Journal	US	Review	-	Integrating culturally responsive teaching into multicultural education courses is challenging for American teacher educators. The author also worries about how emphasising teaching a diverse group of students would impact the career of teacher educators and the balance between their research in urban schools and their work with student teachers.

Daniel, S.	2016	Grappling with culturally responsive pedagogy: A study of elementary-level teacher candidates' learning across practicum and diversity coursework experiences	Journal	US	Case Study Research Design	16 teacher candidates	The research discovered that teacher candidates had knowledge of and questioned issues related to instruction and learning opportunities for culturally and linguistically diverse students but struggled to implement CRP in their practical settings. The study recommends that by teaching responsively and encouraging teacher candidates to share examples of what they observe in their practical experiences regarding CRP-related topics, teacher educators could assist them in applying theoretical concepts in practical ways. Teacher candidates should be urged to pay attention to school-wide and classroom practices that deviate or align with CRP. Teacher educators should respond and participate in discussions to help teacher candidates integrate and reconcile the values they observe and hear.

Foncha, J. W., Abongdia, J. F., & Adu, E. O.	2015	Challenges encountered by student teachers in teaching English language during teaching practice in East London, South Africa	Journal	East London and South Africa	Qualitative Research	8 pre-service teachers	The study proposes that by recognising the difficulties and methods student-teachers employ during their teaching practice, teacher educators can mentor them more efficiently. The results indicate that teaching practice offers student-teachers the chance to apply their theoretical knowledge in a real-world setting and determine if teaching is the appropriate career choice for them.
Gay, G.	2013	Teaching to and through cultural diversity	Journal	US	Review	-	Culturally responsive teaching aims to enhance the performance of underperforming students from diverse ethnic and racial backgrounds, specifically those of Asian, African, Native, and Latino American descent who live in poverty and attend schools in urban and rural areas. The main goal of this approach is to shift the perception and methods of teaching cultural, racial, and ethnic diversity from focusing on limitations and challenges to highlighting strengths, opportunities, and potential.
Gay, G.	2002a	Preparing for culturally responsive teaching.	Journal	US	Review	-	Culture plays a significant role in shaping the attitudes, values, and behaviours of both students and teachers in the classroom and must be considered when addressing the issues of underachievement among students.
Gay, G.	2002b	Culturally responsive teaching in special education for ethnically diverse students: Setting the stage	Journal	US	Review	-	Culturally responsive teaching has been linked to improved academic performance, better social adjustment, increased school satisfaction, higher self-esteem and increased self-efficacy among students of colour. This method is crucial as it helps alleviate the extra stress that ethnically diverse students often experience when navigating the academic landscape while also adapting to an unfamiliar cultural environment.

Hannigan, A., Faas, D., & Darmody, M.	2022	Ethno-cultural diversity in initial teacher education courses: the case of Ireland	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Case Study Research Design	Pre-service teachers and teacher educators	Higher education institutions in Ireland are developing ITE programmes to prepare pre-service teachers to work in multicultural classrooms. However, the limited focus on ethnocultural diversity in these programmes may make pre-service teachers unprepared to teach in diverse classrooms. To address this issue, it is important to standardise guidelines and delve deeper into ethnocultural diversity in teacher education programs to ensure pre-service teachers have the necessary skills and knowledge to teach students from diverse backgrounds with confidence and competence.
Hefflin, B.	2002	Learning to develop culturally relevant pedagogy: A lesson about cornrowed lives	Journal	US	Qualitative Research	2 teachers	Teacher knowledge and reflection are crucial in designing and implementing culturally responsive lessons. Teachers in this study tailored their instruction to fit the students' cultural and personal backgrounds to achieve curricular goals. Their method was successful, as seen by their students' improved engagement and performance.
Herzog-Punzenberger, B., Brown, M., Altrichter, H., & Gardezi, S.	2022	Preparing teachers for diversity: How are teacher education systems responding to cultural diversity– the case of Austria and Ireland	Journal	Austria and Ireland	Qualitative Research	Review of 3 secondary Teacher Education programmes in each country	The education of migrant students in Austria and Ireland presents challenges regarding the necessary support and multicultural competencies of practising teachers and school leaders. The analysis of higher education institutions (HEIs) in both countries showed that while diversity is a core component in the curricula, there is a lack of specific focus on migration-related diversity compared to other aspects of diversity.
Hramiak, A.	2015	Applying the framework for culturally responsive teaching to explore the adaptations that teach first beginning teachers use to meet the needs of their pupils in school	Journal	the UK	Multi-method Qualitative Approach	6 schools with 12 beginning teachers	The study introduced the idea of culturally adaptive teaching, which suggests that as teachers gain experience and improve their skills, they also adapt and evolve their cultural sensitivity. The study's findings have implications for other fields, such as other professional learning programs, and suggest that incorporating multiculturalism into teacher training programmes is crucial.

Ladson-Billings, G.	1995b	Towards a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy	Journal	US	Review	-	The author presents the idea that a theory of culturally relevant pedagogy is necessary to address the gap in academic development, cultural competence and critical consciousness. The author also proposes that this theory should expand the understanding of pedagogy beyond just psychological models and address the increasing discrepancy between the racial, ethnic and cultural makeup of teachers and students.
Ladson-Billings, G.	1995a	But that's just good teaching! The case for culturally relevant pedagogy	Journal	US	Review	-	This study supports the idea that the best way to understand classroom practices is by observing them in real-life settings and learning from teachers' experiences. Teachers should not hesitate to research their practices, as their unique perspectives and dedication to good teaching are valuable assets that should not be overlooked.
Martin, M.	2015	Performing social justice in South Africa: How teachers negotiate the complexity of teaching in an unequal world	PhD Thesis	South Africa	Qualitative Research	7 teachers	The study employed a combination of grounded theory and narrative inquiry to investigate the difficulties and intricacies encountered by teachers working in underprivileged schools primarily serving black African students. It posits that the conventional understanding of social justice and equity is inadequate to fully comprehend the experiences of these teachers and calls for a revised perspective that recognises the complexity of their reality.
Mayfield, V. M., & Garrison-Wade, D.	2015	Culturally Responsive Practices as Whole School Reform	Journal	US	Case Study Research Design	1 school with 27 staff members, including administrators, parents, and teaching staff	The research revealed that leadership is vital in implementing culturally responsive practices and providing opportunities for students of colour. Teachers were held accountable for including culturally relevant content in their instruction and providing opportunities for ongoing learning in cultural competency. Furthermore, parents were actively involved and empowered as leaders, embracing responsibilities traditionally assigned to school administrators with enthusiasm.

Moll, L.C., Amanti, C., Neff, D., & Gonzalez, N.	1992	Funds of knowledge for teaching: Using a qualitative approach to connect homes and classroom	Journal	US	Qualitative Research	Ethnography study with households	This study examined how the total experiences, cultural upbringing, and structure of households contribute to the formation of knowledge for children before they enter school. These experiences, whether related to work or leisure activities, whether taken individually with peers or under the supervision of adults, play a crucial role in shaping the foundations of knowledge for children before they attend school.
Nguyen, C. D., & Huynh, T. N.	2021	Teacher agency in culturally responsive teaching: learning to teach ethnic minority students in the Central Highlands of Vietnam	Journal	Vietnam	Qualitative Research	2 secondary schools with 2 teachers	The study's results reveal that the teachers who participated in the study possess knowledge and practices that align with the concepts of culturally responsive teaching. The teachers were aware of the issues in minority communities and created teaching methods suitable for minority students and their cultures. The study recommends incorporating culturally responsive teaching into the policies and practices of teacher education in Vietnam, particularly for pre-service teachers and in-service teachers working in areas with large ethnic minority populations.
Nieto, S.	2004	Affirming diversity. The sociopolitical context of multicultural education	Book	US	Qualitative Research	-	To truly be effective, multicultural education must consider what happens in the classroom and the broader societal, economic and political factors that impact student achievement. The book provides a deep understanding of these pervasive influences by presenting extensive research and data on the sociopolitical aspect of schools and society, information about diverse sociocultural groups, and a framework for analysing multicultural education.
Olson, J. D. & Rao, A. B.	2016	Becoming a culturally responsive teacher: The impact of clinical experiences in urban schools	Journal	US	Mixed Methods Research	80 teacher candidates	The study recommends that teacher preparation programmes equip teachers with the knowledge and skills required to teach in urban settings before placing them in schools. This includes integrating CRP throughout the university coursework and providing opportunities for teacher candidates to reflect on their attitudes, beliefs, histories, and biases. The study also highlights the need for early career teachers to continue learning by working with effective mentors, observing experienced teachers, and participating in professional development promoting inclusive and empowering teaching practices.

Peček, M., Macura-Milovanović, S., & Vujisić-Živković, N.	2014	The cultural responsiveness of teacher candidates towards Roma pupils in Serbia and Slovenia–case studies	Journal	Serbia and Slovenia		113 student-teachers in Ljubljana and 144 student-teachers in Belgrade	The study examined the initial beliefs of student teachers about Roma parents and pupils in Slovenia and Serbia. It argued that understanding these beliefs is crucial for creating teacher education programs that effectively challenge them. The study finds that these beliefs cannot be separated from the larger social and educational context in which they arise and that student-teachers often enter their training with deeply ingrained attitudes that are difficult to change.
Rychly, L., & Graves, E.	2012	Teacher characteristics for culturally responsive pedagogy	Journal	Global	Review	-	The study emphasised the significance of culturally responsive teaching methods and proposed methods for enhancing proficiency in two key areas: experienced classroom teachers and students in teacher training programs. The authors recommend mandatory study abroad and community-based experiences for students in teacher education to foster empathy and cultural understanding.
Sleeter, C.	1996	Multicultural education as social activism	Book	Global	Review	-	The book explores the connection between multicultural education and the political issues of power and struggle, specifically how it relates to white people in light of unequal racial power relations in the US and globally. It delves into the connections between race, gender, and social class, focusing on the experiences of white women. Multicultural education is rooted in political struggle and cannot be separated from politics. Ultimately, the goal of achieving schooling for social justice is a political pursuit, not a technical one.
Sleeter, C.	2004	How white teachers construct race	Book Chapter	US	Review	-	The way teachers view and interact with students and their communities is heavily influenced by their assumptions about race and ethnicity, which can significantly impact how they teach and the experiences of their students. This is why race is an important consideration in education.

Sleeter, C.	2012	Confronting the marginalisation of culturally responsive pedagogy	Journal	Global	Review	-	Three recommendations are offered regarding the connection between politics, research, and culturally responsive pedagogy. 1) There is a need for research that establishes a link between culturally responsive pedagogy and student outcomes, including academic achievement. 2) Parents, teachers, and education leaders must know what culturally responsive pedagogy looks like in the classroom, including video resources. 3) The public debate on teaching in diverse communities needs to be reframed to emphasise the importance of investing in quality professional teaching that is culturally responsive to today's students.
Subasi Singh, S., & Akar, H.	2021	Culturally responsive teaching: beliefs of pre-service teachers in the Viennese context	Journal	Austria	Quantitative Research	453 pre-service teachers	The findings indicate that teacher education programs in Vienna do not adequately prepare pre-service teachers for teaching in a multicultural society. There is also a lack of variation in the readiness levels of pre-service teachers from different teacher education institutions. Pre-service teachers believe in their abilities and attitudes towards other cultures as strengths but lack a critical understanding of social justice issues. They also fear managing diverse languages and cultural conflicts in schools.
Vass, G.	2017	Preparing for culturally responsive schooling: Initial teacher educators into the fray	Journal	Australia	Qualitative Research	3 pre-service teachers	The study examined the challenges faced by pre-service teachers as they strive to implement culturally responsive teaching methods in their classrooms. These obstacles stem from a socialisation process that encourages conformity to dominant, White-centric practices. However, the pre-service teachers are inspired by shared experiences and understanding that meaningful connections with culture in education can be positive and protective. The article also stresses the significance of teacher mindset, the involvement of supervising teachers and mentoring for pre-service teachers and the wider educational context in fostering culturally responsive environments

Villegas, A. M., & Lucas, Ť.	2002	Preparing culturally responsive teachers: Rethinking the curriculum	Journal	US	Review	-	The article suggests that to equip teachers to work in a multicultural society properly, those responsible for their training must establish a clear understanding of what teaching and learning in a diverse environment entails. This understanding is crucial to create a cohesive approach to preparing teachers to work with diverse populations.
Whitaker, M. C. & Valtierra, K. M	2018	Enhancing pre-service teachers' motivation to teach diverse learners	Journal	US	Mixed-Methods Case Study	11 pre-service teachers	The article describes a teacher preparation programme to equip teachers with the skills to work with diverse student populations. The programme included academic courses, reflective opportunities, and student teaching experiences. It emphasised reflective learning as a way for teacher candidates to evaluate their readiness to teach diverse students and understand the context-dependent nature of the teaching role. The programme resulted in teacher candidates having a positive view of multicultural education and CRP and an increased interest in teaching culturally and linguistically diverse learners.
Wilkins, C., & Lall, R.	2011	'You've got to be tough and I'm trying': Black and minority ethnic student teachers' experiences of initial teacher education	Journal	England	Qualitative Research	24 BME student-teachers	Student-teachers from minority cultural backgrounds need to be well supported, and a culturally sensitive workplace is required for teachers of minority backgrounds
Yuan, H.	2019	Teaching Across Cultures: Navigating Teacher Candidates' Perceptions of Multicultural Education in China	Journal	China	Qualitative Research	5 teacher candidates	The article discusses the results of research on multicultural education in China, highlighting the concerns raised by the study. These concerns include the challenge of putting multicultural theory into practice within the Chinese education system, teachers' lack of understanding of how culture affects teaching and learning, and a lack of multicultural awareness among those preparing to become teachers in China.

Appendix 3: Key texts reviewed in chapter 4

Author	Year	Title	Type of Publication	Context	Methodology	Sample Size	Findings or Key Ideas
Baysu, G., Hillekens, J., Phalet, K., & Deaux, K.	2021	How diversity approaches affect ethnic minority and majority adolescents: Teacher–student relationship trajectories and school outcomes	Journal	Belgium	Mixed-Methods Research	70 schools with teachers, students and parents	The study found positive relationships with teachers help protect students, but minority adolescents are disproportionately less likely to have such support. The research implies that schools can take action to safeguard vulnerable minority adolescents from negative consequences and that positive relationships between teachers and students are vital for long-term positive outcomes.
Feliciano, C.	2006	Beyond the family: The influence of premigration group status on the educational expectations of immigrants' children	Journal	US	Mixed-Methods Research	Children of Immigrants Longitudinal Study Data source	The study found that the expectation of children graduating from school is affected by the parents' socioeconomic status and the premigration educational status of their immigrant group. The study concludes that group-level characteristics, such as the structural characteristics of the immigrant group, play a crucial role in understanding the adaptation process of the second generation and that more attention should be paid to the effects of ethnic communities and group identities.
Gabrielli, G. & Impicciatore, R.	2021	Breaking down the barriers: educational paths, labour market outcomes and wellbeing of children of immigrants	Journal	Europe	Review	-	This article discusses the challenges of incorporating ethnic minorities in modern societies, specifically focusing on the negative effects of migratory background on the life trajectories of migrants' descendants. Findings suggest that the academic performance of immigrant descendants can be improved through various programs and parental involvement and that educational opportunities should be provided to support school-to-work transitions and better utilise the human capital of migrants' descendants.

Goodenow, C.	1993	The psychological sense of school membership among adolescents: Scale development and educational correlates	Journal	US	Quantitative Research	2 middle schools with 755 students	This article suggests that interventions to increase adolescent students' sense of belonging in school can be targeted at individual and organisational levels. On an individual level, training in social skills may be beneficial for students who struggle to interact with others or participate in school activities. Additionally, providing individual students with more support from staff and faculty and increasing their participation in school activities may increase feelings of inclusion.
Horgan, D., Martin, S., O'Riordan, J., & Maier, R.	2022	Supporting languages: The socio-educational integration of migrant and refugee children and young people	Journal	Republic of Ireland	Qualitative Research	35 refugee and migrant children. 25 migrant parents. 14 education and migrant organisation professionals. 9 key representatives of the Irish Education sector, NGO and community sector	The research indicates that schools are crucial for the integration and overall wellbeing of migrant children. Support for the host language, the child's native language, and linguistic diversity is critical in helping these children integrate. The study found that children and parents valued additional support for learning the host language, as it was essential for achieving academic success and making friends.
Hornby, G., & Lafaele, R.	2011	Barriers to parental involvement in education: An explanatory model	Journal	Global	Review	-	This article addressed the discrepancy between the widespread support for parental involvement in education and the reality of its implementation. A proposed model highlights the obstacles to effective parental involvement at the levels of the parent and family, the child, parent-teacher interactions, and societal factors. This model is intended to aid education professionals in understanding these barriers and creating more successful strategies for parental involvement in education

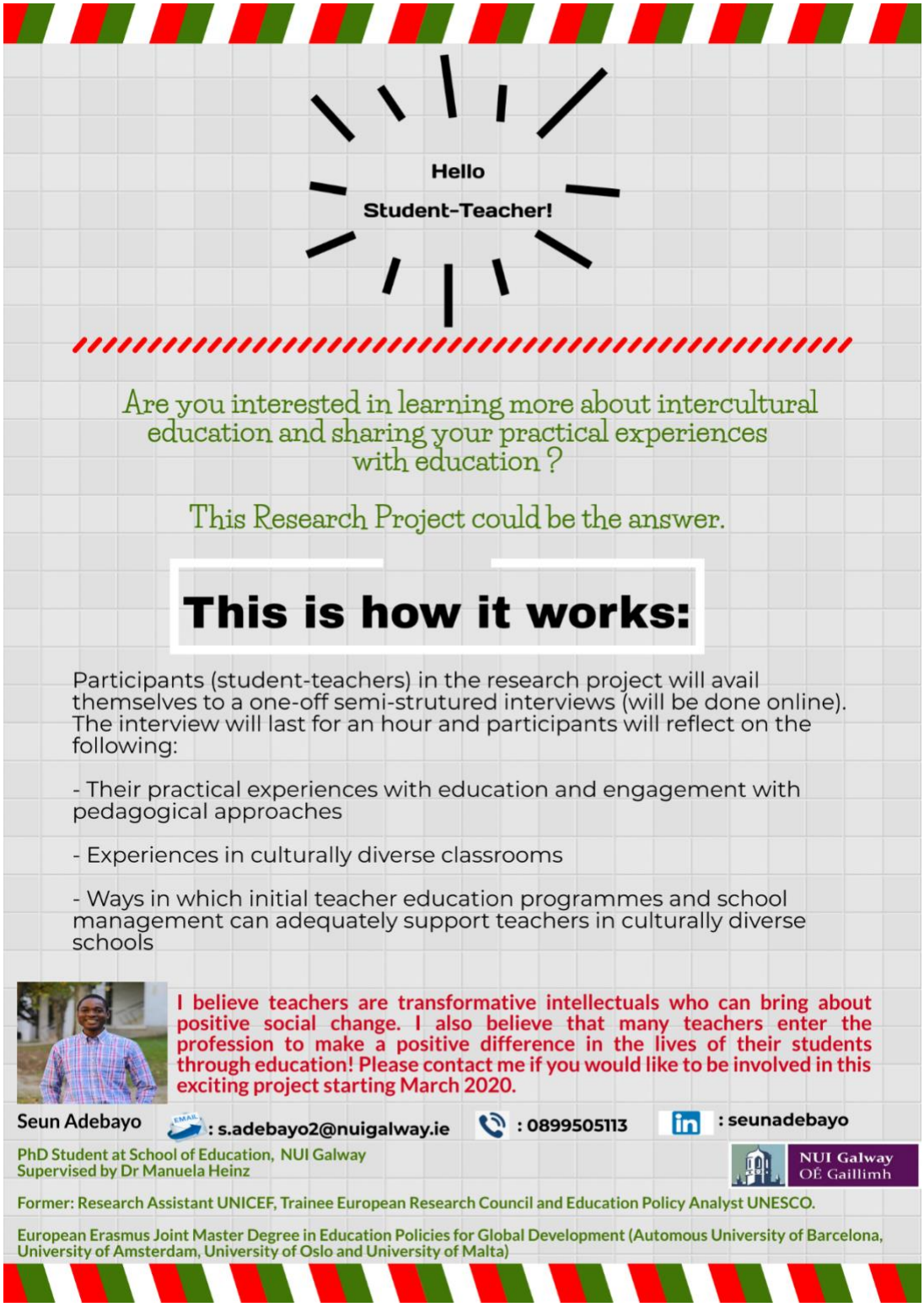
Löfgren, H. & Aman, R	2020	A double pressure to perform? Pupils talk about grades and parents in a multicultural school setting in Sweden	Journal	Sweden	Qualitative Research	11 schools with 298 pupils	The study found that students from multicultural backgrounds feel that their parents, due to their migrant backgrounds, cannot support them in the ways they would like, particularly in terms of understanding the grading practices of their host country. This lack of understanding leads to high expectations and demands for grades, which can create stress for the students. The study also suggests a significant gap between the rhetoric of parental involvement and the reality of its practice. Students feel this gap is problematic and negatively affects their performance and relationship with their parents.
Ngo, B	2008	Beyond "culture clash" understandings of immigrant experiences	Journal	US	Review	-	The article examined the social construction of identity among Lao American students in the United States. The concept of a "double movement" of identity highlights the dynamic nature of identity formation and the negotiation and change that occur as individuals assert their own identity versus how others perceive them. The culture and identity of immigrant students and families are not fixed but rather constantly evolving. The article suggests that educators should educate themselves on the dominant stereotypes and representations of immigrants, understand the historical and political contexts surrounding these representations, and actively address how culture and identity are changing in the daily lives of immigrant youth and families.
Öztürk, M.	2013	Barriers to parental involvement for diverse families in early childhood education	Journal	Global	Review	-	This article highlights the challenges that immigrant parents face with limited English proficiency and cultural differences and the role of educators in working collaboratively with these families to overcome these barriers. It suggests that teachers and school administrators should engage culturally and linguistically diverse families and advocate for them by creating a welcoming and inclusive school environment that provides support, guidance, and advocacy for all parents, regardless of their culture or background.

Schneider, C., & Arnot, M.	2018	An exploration of school communication approaches for newly arrived EAL students: applying three dimensions of organisational communication theory	Journal	England	Qualitative Research	2 schools with school staff responsible for EAL (4), teachers (8), headteachers (2), parent and school governors (2), parents (1), local authority EAL advisors (3) and newly arrived English as an additional language (EAL) students from Eastern Europe (12)	The study highlights the need for teachers and schools to be aware of and sensitive to the unique needs and barriers of EAL students and their families and to involve them in decision-making processes. It also suggests that partnerships between higher education institutions, schools, and migrant communities can support training and expertise in this area. Overall, the article emphasises the importance of communication systems that are inclusive, adaptable and facilitate dialogue and understanding to remove stereotypes and barriers to achievement for these students.
Stylianou, A.	2017	Absenting the absence (s) in the education of poor minority ethnic students: a critical realist framework	Journal	Cyprus	Qualitative Research	1 school with 10 teachers	The article suggests interventions to improve the education of minority students, which include providing tailored resources, integrating curriculum that reflects their background, and challenging oppressive societal norms. These interventions aim to address the unique needs of minority students at the individual, micro, and meso levels.
Theodorou, E.	2008	Just how involved is 'involved'? Rethinking parental involvement through exploring teachers' perceptions of immigrant families' school	Journal	Cyprus	Qualitative Research	1 school with 10 teachers and household visits	The article argues that a narrow understanding of parental involvement and lack of support from educational authorities can result in a cultural-deficit perspective, which leads to lower expectations for immigrant students. It suggests that instead of focusing on specific actions parents take, parental involvement should be reframed as engagement, including consideration of parents' cultural backgrounds and experiences. This can be achieved through ongoing dialogue and reflective teaching practices.

		involvement in Cyprus					
Thijs, J., & Verkuyten, M.	2014	School ethnic diversity and students' interethnic relations	Journal	The Netherlands	Review	-	The article explored the issue of ethnic segregation in schools and its potentially detrimental effects on academic success and interethnic relations. It mentions different proposals and policies aimed at promoting desegregation. However, it also highlights that these can have unintended negative effects. It also states that the research on desegregation is inconclusive and that there are many methodological challenges that make it hard to draw general conclusions.
UNHCR.	2016	Missing out: Refugee education in crisis	Report	Global	Review	-	Refugees' educational needs and achievements are often not visible due to a lack of tracking through national monitoring systems. Investing in education for refugees has many positive effects, such as providing a safe environment, decreasing child marriage and labour, increasing job opportunities, and raising self-esteem. Not providing education for 6 million school-aged refugees can have negative consequences for the individuals and their families and communities, leading to continued cycles of conflict and displacement. Education is crucial for promoting peace and development and allowing refugee children to reach their full potential.

Appendix 4: Initial Research Plan Participant Advert Material

Appendix 5: Participant Advert Material with New Research Direction



Appendix 6: Research Ethics Committee Approval Letter from University of Galway

NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

NUIG RESEARCH ETHICS COMMITTEE DECISION LETTER

REC Application Reference Number: 19-Oct-01
Title: Irish Primary School Teachers' Professional Development in Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: A Learning Study Approach
Principle Applicant: Mr Seun Adebayo
School: School of Education
Application Type: New
Meeting Date: 18 October 2019
Decision: APPROVAL

09 December 2019

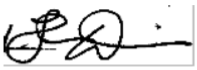
Dear Mr Adebayo,

I write to you regarding the above proposal, which was submitted for Ethical review. Having reviewed your response to my letter, I am pleased to inform you that your proposal has been granted full **APPROVAL.** The application is approved without further revision, and you may begin the research as outlined in the revised proposal submitted to the REC.

Please note the following:

1. Any significant alterations to an approved proposal must receive prior approval from the REC prior to implementation. Please request an Amendment Form;
2. You are responsible for notifying the REC in the event of serious or unexpected adverse effects, unforseen circumstances, the termination of the study, and any significant decisions by other Ethics Committees. Section 7 of the REC's Standard Operating Procedures gives further details on instances requiring follow-up reviews, and reporting obligations.
3. All NUI Galway Research Ethic Committee approval is given subject to the Principal Investigator submitting annual and final statements of compliance. See annual and final statement of compliance forms attached. The first statement is due on or before 9 December 2020.

Yours sincerely



Dr Kevin Davison
Chair, NUIG Research Ethics Committee

Appendix 7: Research Amendment Approval from University of Galway

NUI Galway
OÉ Gaillimh

NUIG Research Ethics Committee

AMENDMENT APPROVAL

Any significant alteration to a previously approved proposal must receive prior approval from the REC before implementation.

SECTION A: GENERAL INFORMATION

1.	**Date of Request:**	30/03/2020
2.	**REC Reference Number:**	19-Oct-01
3.	**Title of Study:**	Irish Primary School Teachers' Professional Development in Culturally Responsive Pedagogy: A Learning Study Approach
4.	**Name of Applicant / PI:** ***(Surname / First Name)***	Adebayo/Seun
5.	**Name of Supervisor / Head of School:**	Dr Manuela Heinz/ Professor Gerry Mac Ruairc
6.	**NUIG School and College:**	School of Education and College of Arts, Social Sciences, and Celtic Studies
7.	**Date of Request:**	14/02/20

SECTION D: APPROVAL *(NUIG REC office use only)*

1.	**Approval Reference Number:**	19-Oct-01; Amend 2003	
2.	**Date of Approval:**	09/04/2020	
3.	**Signature of Approver:**	[redacted]	Dr Veronica McCauley REC Vice Chair
4.	**Terms of Approval:**	Nil.	

Appendix 8: Research Ethics Committee Approval Letter from Marino Institute of Education

ADEBAYO, SEUN

From: [redacted]@mie.ie>
Sent: 06 May 2021 09:31
To: ADEBAYO, SEUN
Cc: Heinz, Manuela; [redacted]
Subject: FW: MERC Application 210010eAT
Attachments: Cover Letter_ MERC Application.docx; Revised_Ethics-in-research-application-form_Seun Adebayo.docx

Dear Seun,

Many thanks for your email and the amendments made on MERC application No. 210010eAT
The MERC Committee is happy to give approval to your application and we wish you all the best with the research.

Le dea-mhéin,
Bríd

From: ADEBAYO, SEUN [mailto:S.ADEBAYO2@nuigalway.ie]
Sent: Wednesday 28 April 2021 15:55
To: [redacted]>
Cc: Heinz, Manuela <manuela.heinz@nuigalway.ie>; [redacted]>
Subject: RE: MERC Application 210010eAT

Dear Brid,

I hope you are doing well.

Please find attached my revised MERC application with amendments and a cover letter.

Thank you.

Best regards,
Seun

From: [redacted]>
Sent: Monday, April 26, 2021 11:46 AM
To: ADEBAYO, SEUN <S.ADEBAYO2@nuigalway.ie>
Cc: Heinz, Manuela <manuela.heinz@nuigalway.ie>; [redacted]@mie.ie>
Subject: Re: MERC Application 210010eAT

Appendix 9: Information Letter for Parents (In-Person Focus Group)

Seun Adebayo
Irish Research Council Scholar/Galway Doctoral Scholarship
School of Education
College of Arts, Social Sciences, & Celtic Studies
s.adebayo2@nuigalway.ie
0899505113

Dear Parent,

Background and Purpose

My name is Seun Adebayo and I am currently a PhD student at the School of Education, National University of Ireland Galway. I am conducting a research study to explore and enhance the pedagogy of Irish teachers in culturally diverse classrooms.

I am looking for parents from different backgrounds to participate in a focus group discussion (with 5 parents) that will explore parental experiences of primary schools in Ireland. The focus groups will be held from December 2020 and the venue will be public libraries or community centers. A focus group schedule will be provided to parents to inform them a little more about the nature of the focus group. The purpose of the focus groups is to gain a deeper insight into the experiences of pupils and families currently in Irish schools.

What does participation in the project imply?

The data collection for the research project that requires active participation will be focus group discussion. Data will be collected through notes and audio recordings. The researcher will provide an information pack of support services available and the following helplines, should parents become distressed during the focus group, weather in relation to their child/ren's school situation, or their own:

- Childline: 1800 66 66 66 (available 24 hrs.)
- Samaritans: 087 260 9090 (24/7 text message support service to anyone in emotional distress)
- Parentline: 1890 927 277

What will happen to the information about you?

All personal data will be treated confidentially. Only the researcher (Seun Adebayo) and supervisor (Dr. Manuela Heinz) will have access to personal data. Furthermore, to ensure the confidentiality of personal data /recordings in storage, the list of names of participants will be stored separately from other data.

Confidentiality:

Your confidentiality will be protected in this study. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms for the purposes of field notes and any journal articles I write that emerge from the findings of this project. A key to these pseudonyms will be kept private and locked in a drawer and destroyed as soon as the names are assigned.

Anonymity:

As part of the study, audio recording of the focus group will be done. The recording will be used for research purposes only. The real names of the parents will not be used to describe any of the recording.

Voluntary participation

It is voluntary to participate in the project, and you can at any time choose to withdraw your consent without stating any reason. If you decide to withdraw, all your personal data will be deleted.

My supervisor Dr. Manuela Heinz can be contacted at manuela.heinz@nuigalway.ie. If you have an ethical concern you can contact the research ethics committee ethics@nuigalway.ie or (091) 495312 if you have any other queries you would like addressed by someone other than by myself.

Kind Regards,

Seun Adebayo.

Appendix 10: Information Letter for Parents (Zoom Focus Group)

Seun Adebayo
Irish Research Council Scholar/Galway Doctoral Scholarship
School of Education
College of Arts, Social Sciences, & Celtic Studies
s.adebayo2@nuigalway.ie
0899505113

Dear Parent,

Background and Purpose

My name is Seun Adebayo and I am currently a PhD student at the School of Education, National University of Ireland Galway. I am conducting a research study to explore and enhance the pedagogy of Irish teachers in culturally diverse classrooms.

I am looking for parents from different backgrounds to participate in a focus group discussion (with 3 -5 parents) that will explore parental experiences of primary schools in Ireland. The focus group will be about 60 minutes via Zoom. The purpose of the focus groups is to gain a deeper insight into the experiences of pupils and families currently in Irish classrooms.

What does participation in the project imply?

The data collection for the research project that requires active participation will be focus group discussion. Data will be collected through notes and audio recordings. The researcher will provide an information pack of support services available and the following helplines, should parents become distressed during the focus group, weather in relation to their child/ren's school situation, or their own:

- Childline: 1800 66 66 66 (available 24 hrs.)
- Samaritans: 087 260 9090 (24/7 text message support service to anyone in emotional distress)
- Parentline: 1890 927 277

What will happen to the information about you?

All personal data will be treated confidentially. Only the researcher (Seun Adebayo) and supervisor (Dr. Manuela Heinz) will have access to personal data. Furthermore,

to ensure the confidentiality of personal data /recordings in storage, the list of names of participants will be stored separately from other data.

Confidentiality:

Your confidentiality will be protected in this study. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms for the purposes of field notes and any journal articles I write that emerge from the findings of this project. A key to these pseudonyms will be kept private and locked in a drawer and destroyed as soon as the names are assigned.

Anonymity:

As part of the study, audio recording of the focus group will be done. The recording will be used for research purposes only. The real names of the parents will not be used to describe any of the recording.

Voluntary participation

It is voluntary to participate in the project, and you can at any time choose to withdraw your consent without stating any reason. If you decide to withdraw, all your personal data will be deleted.

My supervisor Dr. Manuela Heinz can be contacted at manuela.heinz@nuigalway.ie. If you have an ethical concern you can contact the research ethics committee ethics@nuigalway.ie or (091) 495312 if you have any other queries you would like addressed by someone other than by myself.

Kind Regards,

Seun Adebayo.

Appendix 11: Participant Informed Consent Form for Parents

Title of Project: Developing culturally responsive pedagogies and intercultural education in Irish second-level schools: Perspectives from student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds

Name of Researcher: Seun Adebayo

Declaration:

I---------- (participant's name) agree that the following is true.

Please tick as appropriate:

1. I have read through the information sheet [YES] [NO]

2. I understand the information contained in these documents and I have had enough time to consider my participation in this study [YES] [NO]

3. I confirm that I was provided with contact details of the primary researcher of this study and the NUI Galway Ethics Committee and was encouraged to ask any questions I may have [YES] [NO]

4. I confirm that my participation in this study is completely voluntary [YES] [NO]

5. I consent to participating in the focus group and for a voice recording to be made [YES] [NO]

6. I understand that the data from this study will only be used for the stated purpose and that the findings of this research may be published in a scholarly publication [YES] [NO]

7. I am aware that absolute anonymity will be attempted, but not guaranteed and that my data will be protected by GDPR [YES] [NO]

Name of Participant Date Signature

Researcher Date Signature

Appendix 12: Demographic Questionnaire for Parents

1. Nationality:_____

2. How many child/ren: _____

3. Relationship with child/ren

Guardian ☐ Parent ☐

4. Gender of child/ren:_____

5. Age of child/ren:_____

6. Gender of Parent/Guardian:_____

7. Country of Origin (if different from nationality):_____

8. How many years living in Ireland:_____

9. Highest educational qualification:_____

10. Occupation:_____

*** All data will be treated with strict confidentiality. Data will be anonymised and the identity of the participants will not be disclosed at any stage of the project.

Appendix 13: Focus Group Guide for Parents

Title of Project: Developing culturally responsive pedagogies and intercultural education in Irish second-level schools: Perspectives from student and beginning teachers and migrant parents of minority ethnic backgrounds

Name of Researcher: Seun Adebayo

Background

1. What does culture mean to you?
2. Can you tell me about your culture?
3. Tell me about your children?
4. How are they getting on with school?
5. What class are they in?
6. Can you tell me about your child's friends? Does your child have many friends?

School Context

1. How would you describe your child's school? Who are the students in the school?

3. In this school, are there children from other backgrounds? If yes, where are they from? Do you think it matters? And how does it matter?

4. Does your child feel part of the school?

5. How is your child getting on with friends in school? Do you think they are happy? Do they feel comfortable?

6. What is your child's favourite thing about school?

7. Is there anything that your child tells you that they don't like about school?

Views on Pedagogy and Curriculum

1. How is the learning in the classroom here different from your experience?

2. Tell me about your educational experience in your country of origin and how is it different from your child(ren) educational experiences in Ireland?

3. Do you think culture is part of your child's school life?

4. What is your child's experience with writing exams at school?

5. What do you think about the curriculum? Do you think the curriculum is suitable for all students?

6. What do you understand by culturally responsive teaching and intercultural education?

Relationships with Teacher(s) and School

1. Do you have much contact with the school and what does that contact look like? Are you getting involved in the school? How does the school involve parents?

2. How does your child talk about the teacher(s)? What do you think is the relationship like between your child and teacher(s)?

3. How do you think your child in one word will describe his/her teacher(s)?

Advice for School and Teacher(s)

1. Being a parent from a different cultural background in Ireland, what advice do you have for teachers?

2. What changes do you think schools need to make to ensure better learning for all students?

3. What questions would like to ask the teachers?

4. Do you have questions for me?

***** All data will be treated with strict confidentiality. Data will be anonymised and the identity of the participants will not be disclosed at any stage of the project.**

Appendix 14: Information Letter for Student-Teacher/Beginning Teacher

Seun Adebayo
Irish Research Council Scholar/Galway Doctoral Scholarship
School of Education
College of Arts, Social Sciences, & Celtic Studies
s.adebayo2@nuigalway.ie
0899505113

Dear Student-teacher/beginning teacher,

Background and Purpose

My name is Seun Adebayo and I am currently a PhD student at the School of Education, National University of Ireland Galway. I am conducting a research study to explore the experiences of teachers in culturally diverse classrooms.

What does participation in the project imply?

Participation in this study will involve a one-off interview (will be done online via Zoom) that will take approximately an hour and you will reflect on the following:

- Your practical experiences with education and engagement with pedagogical approaches
- Your experiences in culturally diverse classrooms
- Ways in which initial teacher education programmes and school management can adequately support teachers in culturally diverse schools.

Data will be collected for this research project through notes and audio recording.

What will happen to the information about you?

All personal data will be treated confidentially. Only the researcher (Seun Adebayo) will have access to personal data. Furthermore, to ensure the confidentiality of personal data /recordings in storage, the list of names of participants will be stored separately from other data.

Confidentiality:

Your confidentiality will be protected in this study. All participants will be assigned pseudonyms for the purposes of field notes and any journal articles I write that emerge from the findings of this project. A key to these pseudonyms will be kept private and locked in a drawer and destroyed as soon as the names are assigned.

Voluntary participation

It is voluntary to participate in the project, and you can at any time choose to withdraw your consent without stating any reason. If you decide to withdraw, all your personal data will be deleted.

My supervisor Dr. Manuela Heinz can be contacted at manuela.heinz@nuigalway.ie. If you have an ethical concern you can contact the research ethics committee ethics@nuigalway.ie or (091) 495312 if you have any other queries you would like addressed by someone other than by myself.

Kind Regards,

Seun Adebayo.

Appendix 15: Consent Form for Student-Teacher/Beginning Teacher

Name of Researcher: Seun Adebayo

Declaration: I---------- (participant's name) agree that the following is true.

Please tick as appropriate

1. I confirm that I have read the information sheet for the above study [YES] [NO]

2. I am satisfied that I understand the information provided and have had enough time to consider the information [YES] [NO]

3. I confirm that I was provided with contact details of the primary researcher of this study and the NUI Galway Ethics Committee and was encouraged to ask any questions I may have [YES] [NO]

4. I consent to participating in an interview, group meetings [YES] [NO]

5. I understand that the data from this study will only be used for the stated purpose and that the findings of this research may be published in a scholarly publication [YES] [NO]

6. I am aware that absolute anonymity will be attempted, but not guaranteed and that my data will be protected by GDPR [YES] [NO]

7. I understand that my participation is voluntary and that I am free to withdraw at any time, without giving any reason, without my legal rights being affected [YES] [NO]

8. I agree to take part in the above study [YES] [NO]

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Researcher	Date	Signature

7. I am aware that absolute anonymity will be attempted, but not guaranteed and that my data will be protected by GDPR [YES] [NO]

Name of Participant	Date	Signature
Researcher	Date	Signature

Appendix 16: Interview Guide for Student-Teacher/Beginning Teacher

Background – personal educational background and prior experiences with diversity, journey into and motivation for teaching

1. Can you tell me about your own education experience, perhaps starting with your primary school exp, secondary, third level – what are things that stand out for you? How would you describe your schools, teacher, what influenced you?
    - Probing for school type, student body composition, experiences with diversity – any people from cultural backgrounds different to your own in your class/school/friends/other?
2. Can you tell me about your journey into teaching (some personal info – did they go into PME straight from UG degree, any other prior experience, etc.?, any prior teaching experience, other relevant personal info, motivation to become a teacher

PME experiences - general

3. Tell me about your experience as a student teacher? How have you found the PME?
4. Focus on diversity – specifically cultural diversity? – experience of learning on the PME?

PME school placement experiences

5. Can you tell me about your school placement experience? What was it like?
6. Have you been teaching in different schools? Can you tell me about the schools you taught in (school type, student and teacher body composition, cultural identities, school policies relating to diversity, equity, etc, Is cultural diversity a topic that teachers discuss/share experiences about?.,. etc.?) – what do you want/need to know about the schools?

Pedagogy in the classroom

1. What do you think makes a good teacher?
2. What classes have you been teaching?
3. Tell me about your classroom and the children in your classroom?
4. What teaching strategies do you use?
5. What strategies do you feel work well?
6. Can you talk to me about your experience with teaching students from different cultural backgrounds – what does it mean for you as a teacher? What has it meant for your practice? What does it mean for students' learning?
    - Relationships
    - Pedagogical approaches
    - Benefits – for students/for teacher
    - Challenges – how have you tried to meet/overcome the challenges
    - Can you tell me about a class that you fell worked particularly well?

- How is culture relevant to your teaching?

7. Reflecting back on our discussion about classroom practice, what do you feel is the teachers' role in a culturally diverse classroom?

Professional practice inside and outside classrooms

1. What experiences do you have working or studying in culturally diverse environments?
2. What is your own experience with diversity within and outside school?
3. What is it like to be a teacher in a culturally diverse classroom?
4. What do you find the hardest about being a teacher in a culturally diverse classroom?
5. Do you think current curriculum is suitable for all children, why/why not?
6. Can you tell me about good moments in the classrooms?
7. What do you expect from your students? Do you have different expectations for students?
8. How culturally inclusive is your school?

Knowledge about culturally responsive pedagogy

Intro: Can we take a step back now and look at culture as a concept and experience more broadly …

1. What comes to your mind when you think about culture? How would you define culture? How would you describe your own culture to people from other backgrounds?

2. What do you think culture means to students from different cultural backgrounds in your classroom?
3. What knowledge do you have about the concepts of culturally responsive pedagogy and intercultural education?
4. ? Have you received any training relating to culturally responsive pedagogy?
5. What recommendation for teacher educators and schools to better prepare students teachers for culturally diverse classrooms?
6. What sort of support would you require to implement culturally responsive pedagogy?

   Do you have questions for me?