An Appreciative Inquiry

into the

Preparation of Undergraduate

Education Studies Students

to

Value and Embrace Diversity

Submitted by Margaret Keane, BSc. Ed

in fulfilment of the requirements of a

Master of Arts at Dublin City University

Supervisor: Dr. Carmel Mulcahy, DCU

April 2010

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF APPENDICES

A   Student Lecture – Observer Evaluation Sheet

B   Programme Themes

C   DICE Review Themes

D   Module Aims/Objectives/Outcomes extracted from module descriptors

E   Data for Review of Modules for *Knowledge*, *Skills* and *Values*

F   Student Lecture Slides

G   Student Questionnaire

H   Student Data: *Discovery*, *Dream and Design*

I   Memorandum to Academic Staff

J   Academic Staff Workshop Slides

K   Lecturer Workshop Exercise Sheet

L   Lecturer Workshop Evaluation Form

M   Lecturer Data: *Discovery, Dream and Design*

N   Student Three Wishes Questionnaire

O   Participants' Wishes from Three Wishes Question

P   Lecturer Evaluation Data

Q   Preparation Questions – Alumni Interviews

R   Alumni Interview Consent Form

S   Sample Alumni Interview Transcript

T   Summary of Alumni Three Wishes

FIGURES AND TABLES

Figures:

Tables:

ABSTRACT

This study is a qualitative, appreciative, inquiry into how students of an undergraduate Education and Training programme are prepared for diversity post graduation. The setting for the study is the School of Education Studies at Dublin City University and the research involves a review of programme and module intentions and qualitative data collected from final year students, academic staff and alumni of the programme.

The study begins with a review of literature that examines the conceptualisation of diversity and looks at diversity as a consequence of a changing world. It then examines current policy and practice in relation to diversity and education in the EU and in Ireland.

The philosophical basis for the study is constructivism and aspects of an Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach are used as to give structure and focus to the gathering and analysis of data. The study further suggests how AI can bee used as a model for course evaluation.

Findings arise directly from the suggestions made by participants in the study and centre on the need for the programme to offer students greater opportunity to: experience diversity while on the programme; learn in more practical ways; engage with those dealing with diversity in the field; enhance their skills in dealing with behavioural and pastoral care issues. Findings also suggest a need for diversity to become more explicit as a theme across the three years of the programme.

The findings have implications for further research into how diversity training and other topics are delivered on the programme and in the School. Beyond this context, it has implications for how diversity learning happens in other educational contexts and the use of Appreciative Inquiry as tool for course evaluation and educational research.

CHHAPTER 1 – INTRODUCTION

1.1.   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the background, context, and purpose of the study and

includes the author's personal interest and motivation for undertaking the research.

1.2.   Background

> 'Within a relatively short space of time, Ireland has become a richly diverse
> society, with a new mix of languages, cultures and perspectives. …The
> changes we have experienced in society generally over the last number of
> years provide the backdrop for the challenges now facing the education system
> in providing solutions for an increasing variety of needs.'

<div align="right">Batt O'Keefe TD, Minister for Education, Ireland (2008).</div>

Preparing education studies students for diversity has never been more important than

in current times. In recent decades sociological, political, economic and legislative

changes at global, EU, National and local level have impacted on how teaching and

learning takes place. In respect of Irish education, such changes have led to revisions

to education legislation, the integration of special needs students into mainstream

schools as well as the accommodation of students from other cultures with a variety of

educational and life experiences. The need to cater for student groups with a myriad

of differences is currently a major focus for educational researchers and practitioners.

Policy changes, as well as the need to approach learning in new ways, now requires

that education studies students are prepared for teaching in these new contexts.

While it is important for education studies departments in third level institutions to be

abreast of new approaches to teaching and learning, and to prepare students for the

contexts in which they will apply their trade, it is important also that their approach to

preparing students for such ideals as diversity, citizenship and globalisation, remain grounded in relevant education studies texts and that programmes of education do not lose sight of the fundamental purpose of their teaching and training to give way to new ideals. The Archbishop of Canterbury, in an address to Wuhan University in China (Williams, 2006) suggested '[t]he most difficult challenge in the Western university world today, is how the university avoids being completely dominated by … external pressure to produce and to offer functional training.'

> The student who is … discovering what it is to be a 'political agent' is discovering what it is to exercise thoughtful responsibility in the life of a society … and this is where a narrow definition of what the social and the political might mean has to be balanced by some historical perspective: it is in fact where … the 'classics' of a society are relevant, so that a good university allows space for students to test their ideals and concepts against a historical tradition expressed no only in opportunities for discussion but also in the university's public ceremony and its standards and protocols for intellectual exchange'.

This sentiment echoes that of Cardinal Newman who in 1854 saw the university as '…a place for the communication and circulation of thought, by means of personal intercourse, through a wide extent of country… a school of knowledge of every kind, consisting of teachers and learners from every quarter" and who suggested that "Mutual education…is one of the great and incessant occupations of human society, carried on partly with set purpose, and partly not" (Newman, 1854).

This study finds that education studies students need to be given opportunities to conceptualise and embrace diversity by relating it to the core elements of education studies programmes, which gives them the knowledge, skills and competencies not only to be able to teach and work in whatever contexts are relevant to the aims of their particular programme but to be able to continue to discover through questioning both

themselves and others in order to be capable of adapting to constant change. The knowledge, skills and values relevant to preparing students for diversity are often transferable skills relevant to other aspects of teacher/trainer education and preparing students for diversity is as much about competencies and skills as knowledge of differences, cultural or other.

1.3. Context

The focus of this study is a full time undergraduate programme of the School of Education Studies at Dublin City University (DCU). The programme is the BSc. in Education and Training from which its first graduates were conferred in 2007. It is a three-year degree that has its origins in a part time programme for the same qualification. It recruits pre-dominantly through the CAO process and the majority of its students to date have been Irish students coming onto the course directly from second level education. Exceptions are a percentage of mature students recruited through a mature application process and a small percentage of access students.

In the second year of the programme, students spend a minimum of 20 hours in unsupervised work based practice (WBP) in educational settings of their choice. In the data, students refer colloquially to this experience as teaching practice.

Participants in the study were the final year students in academic year 2008/9, current and past lecturers of the full time programme including the Head of School and a professor involved in the initiation of the School itself and alumni of the programme.

1.4. Diversity and the School of Education Studies at DCU

'Since the foundation of the School in 1995 the related themes of interculturalism and diversity have been central to all our activities particularly in our teaching and learning and in our research.' (Mulcahy, et al 2008 p2). The School's commitment to interculturalism and diversity is evident in a variety of large and small-scale research projects conducted by the School. It has hosted conferences on pluralism, diversity and related themes, and is the centre for collaborations such as the *Centre for Evaluation in Education* and the *Spirituality and Wellbeing in Education Research Group (SWERG).*

1.5. The researcher's position in the study

As a graduate of the programme in 2007, the researcher has first hand experience of the programme as a student. She also has experience as a staff member having acted as a tutor for the programme post graduation as well as delivering two of the programme's modules at foundation level for an international foundation programme and aspects of ICT modules. She was also involved in a EU research project *Include-ed*[1] with the School and organised a conference on diversity in 2007. The author is currently working as Learning Innovation Officer for the Learning Innovation Unit of the University.

1.6. Aims and objectives of the study

The purpose of the study arose from the author's interest in diversity and the particular degree programme. Based on personal experience and informal feedback

---

[1] The INCLUD-ED Project is an Integrated Project of the priority 7, 6th Framework Programme of the European Commission. It analyses educational strategies that contribute to overcome inequalities and promote social cohesion, and educational strategies that generate social exclusion, particularly focusing on vulnerable and marginalised groups' see www.ub.edu/includ-ed/about.htm

from students, the author observed that although the programme offered a very good grounding in understanding diversity, there was a sense that students could be better prepared to deal with the issues of diversity they may face in real life contexts.

The study begins by comparing programme and module intentions with what the literature suggests as elements of good practice in relation to diversity education, to affirm what is working and to highlight any gaps. It then moves through the stages of the AI model asking participants to express what is working, what they 'dream' of and 'wish' for the programme and what would be realisable actions for improvement. Criticisms of AI focusing only on the positive are dealt with in the design, analysis and discussion of the study.

1.7. Outline of following chapters

This report is divided into 6 further chapters that describe the process and findings of the study. The review of literature explores what the literature is saying about diversity as a concept and how it is addressed in education. The methodology chapter describes the AI approach and gives the study its philosophical grounding. The data analysis chapter describes the collection and analysis of the data. The chapter on findings summarises the overall findings of the study across the various stages of the AI process and the recommendations chapter draws conclusions from those findings and puts forward recommendations for programme improvement. Finally, the conclusion chapter summarises the outcomes of the entire study and states its relevance to the School of Education Studies at DCU and beyond the context of the study itself to other areas of possible interest.

CHAPTER 2 - LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1.   Introduction

The overriding focus of the review of literature in this study is to explore the consequences of diversity, from a variety of paradigms, in order to reach an understanding of it in the context of Irish education and the programme that is the subject of this study. It gives a background to why diversity has become a strong focus in education in the EU and Ireland and looks to current approaches and methodologies being employed to overcome new challenges in education and the preparation of education studies students for diversity.

The chapter begins by defining diversity for the context of the study then goes on to discuss the following themes:

- Background and context: global changes
- Impact of Multiculturalism on education
- Legislative and policy responses to diversity in Ireland
- Approaches and concepts dealing with diversity in education
- Acknowledging the challenges of diversity for educators
- Some examples of practice

2.1.1. Defining diversity

As a word, 'diversity' simply means 'the state of being varied' as defined by the *Oxford English Dictionary*.

The *Dictionary of Sociology* (2006) suggests that diversity is the mixture of different social groups 'distinguished by such factors as ethnicity, religion, customs or language … produced by a variety of factors, including immigration, invasion and conquest, and religious schism' (Abercrombie et al. 2006).

Banks, who writes extensively on diversity and democracy in education, with particular focus on the US, suggests that diversity 'describes the wide range of racial, cultural, ethnic, linguistic, and religious variation that exists within and across groups that live in multicultural nation-states.' (Banks et al. 2005).

2.2. Background and context – global changes

There is no shortage of texts across all disciplines on the effects of globalisation on all aspects of human life, notably from writers such as Habermas (2001) Beck, Giddens and Lash (1995), Bauman (2000, 2005) and Hargreaves (1994). Abercrombie et al. (2006) define globalisation simply as '… the process by which the world is said to become a single space.' Bauman (2000) refers to a world state of constant evolution or 'liquid modernity' where constant change results from advances in media, communication, technology, travel and biotechnology.

Hargreaves (1994) highlights the propensity for the impact of post-modern change in the world:

> Extensive changes in economic and organizational life are being accompanied by and also interrelated with equally profound changes in the organization and impact of knowledge and information, in the global spread of ecological danger along with the growing public awareness of that danger, in the geopolitical reconstruction of the global map, in the restitution and reconstitution of national and cultural identities, and even in the redefinition and restructuring of human selves (Hargreaves 1994 pp 22-23)

The consequences of such changes in the world act as catalysts to rethinking legislation, policy and practice at national, EU, and global levels and in all aspects of society, including education.

One of the most obvious signs of the world becoming a single space is the new state

of multiculturalism in nations, particularly nations such as Ireland that were

historically deemed monocultural.

> The World has some 6000 communities and as many distinct languages. Such
> difference naturally leads to diversity of vision, values, beliefs, practice and
> expression, which all deserve equal respect and dignity. (UNESCO online a.)

We now live in a world that is constantly changing and in which we need the capacity

to deal with that constant change. We live in a world in which we increasingly interact

with people from different cultures, backgrounds and experiences than ourselves.

Such changes require shifts in the way education is designed and delivered.

2.2.1. Impact of multiculturalism on Irish education

The 2006 Census in Ireland confirmed that non-Irish nationals account for ten per cent

of the total population (Central Statistics Office 2006) and although there are no

figures available for the numbers of non-Irish nationals in schools from the Census,

we can estimate from the school going age of non-Irish Nationals, that there are

potentially over 76,000 non-Irish students in the Irish formal education system

(primary and post primary) (Central Statistics Office 2006a).

> There has been growing cultural and ethnic diversity in the Republic of Ireland
> in recent years. There are growing Asian and African communities and more
> recently there has been a significant increase in people migrating to Ireland
> from the ten new EU States. These communities have added a further
> dimension to other existing minority ethnic and religious communities
> including Travellers and the Jewish and Muslim communities (NCCRI and
> Equality Commission for Northern Ireland, 2006 p6).

Multiculturalism is now a key focus of all aspects of society, including education, as it

brings with it new challenges of difference that need to be addressed. Such challenges

centre on differences of religion, race, language, communication, educational

experience and expectations, specific learning needs, as well as well as differences in cultural norms and behaviour.

However, we are also reminded that Ireland has had a longstanding history of ethnic and cultural diversity:

> Ireland today mirrors Ireland at various times in her past. Ireland has been forged from diversity, from successive waves of immigration including Celtic, Viking, Norman, English, Scots and Huguenot, something which can be seen in the diversity of origins of names which are typical in Ireland (NCCA 2006, xi).

Although we cannot compare the recent demographic changes in Ireland with a long established multicultural state such as the US, there are no doubt lessons to be learned in dealing with problematic areas that are already arising as a consequence of our own emerging multicultural situation. Much work has already taken place in Ireland through Government and other agencies set up as a result of the introduction of new equality legislation.

2.2.2. Legislation and policy responses to diversity

Revisions and additions to equality legislation in Ireland are responses to the need for compliance with a series of EU directives dealing with issues of discrimination and equality in the EU community.

In Ireland, the Equality Status Acts 2000 and 2004 deal with discrimination on the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and membership of the Traveller community, for the provision and receipt of goods and services. The Acts aim to:

- Promote Equality
- Prohibit certain kinds of discrimination (with some exemptions) across nine grounds
- Prohibit sexual harassment and harassment
- Prohibit victimisation
- Require reasonable accommodation of people with disabilities
- Allow a broad range of positive action measures.

(Equality Authority 2008)

The Employment Equality Acts 1998 and 2004 deal with discrimination on the same nine grounds within private and public sector employment.

Legislation reform in Ireland has also seen the introduction of the *Education Act 1998*, *Education and Welfare Act, 2000*, the *Teaching Council Act, 1999* and the *Education for Persons with Special Educational Needs Act, 2004*, all of which lend to the upholding of the individual's rights in education. Section 15 (2)(e) of the Education Act 1998 for example stipulates that one of the functions of the school board is to 'have regard to the principles and requirements of a democratic society and have respect and promote respect for the diversity of values, beliefs, traditions, languages and ways of life in society' (Irish Government 1998).

These legislative changes have also led to the introduction of policy changes. Tovey and Share suggest that the 'changing roles of education and the demands placed on it by other societal institutions are reflected both in Irish government policies and in the broader approach of the EU to education' (Tovey and Share 2003 p204).

The European Council of Ministers and member states designated 1997 as European Year Against Racism. To coordinate the year in Ireland, and to continue work arising as a result of initiatives and outcomes, the National Consultative Committee on

Racism and Interculturalism (NCCRI) was established as an independent expert body

that brought together government and non-government agencies with a focus on

combating racism and promoting interculturalism (NCCRI online). However, ten

years on, as a consequence of an economic downturn, and a cessation of funding, at

the end of 2008 this agency was disbanded with what appears to be no clear future for

building on the grounding work for which it was established, as expressed in an online

briefing on the NCCRI website:

> The decision to axe funding to the NCCRI happens at a time of an economic
> downturn when more, not less attention and resources should be invested in anti
> racism and integration. Unless reversed the decision will result in:
>
> - The loss of the collective expertise of the NCCRI built up over the past decade
>   which has played key role in shaping government policy in anti racism and
>   integration
> - The loss of the bridge/space between Government and broader civil society
>   provided by the NCCRI and the consensus building sought in such approaches
> - Closure of the NCCRI offices and laying off of all staff (who will not be
>   subsumed into the Office for Integration)
> - The potential loss of a €4m EU funding programme which is at an advanced
>   stage of development
>
> (NCCRI 2008, online)

As part of equality legislation, the Equality Authority was also set up as an

independent body under the Employment Equality Act 1998 with an aim to oversee

and promote equality legislation in Ireland and to influence policy and practice:

> The Equality Authority seeks to achieve positive change in the situation and
> experience of those groups and individuals experiencing inequality by stimulating
> and supporting a commitment to equality.
>
> - Within the systems and practices of key organisations and institutions.
> - As part of the cultural values espoused by society.
> - As a dimension to individual attitudes and actions. (Equality Authority. 2008)

Like the NCCRI, the Equality Authority has also been affected by economic downturn and reduced funding resulting in controversial changes in its managerial structure, reduced functionality and limited independence from Government. Such consequences of the economic downturn will no doubt be replicated in other policy areas of education and positive changes in dealing with diversity in Irish educational context may be led more by the learning from research and practice in the field.

Changes in legislation and policy inevitably require changes in practice and Irish education has had to respond to such changes by looking to new approaches to educational design and practice.

2.3. Approaches and concepts dealing with diversity in education

2.3.1. Introduction

Current approaches in education that address diversity put focus on the place of the individual in relation to his/her own experiences and in relation to his/her involvement with other individuals and other groups in their community and the world. Discussion in this section focuses on how the following concepts and approaches address challenges of diversity in education:

- Lifelong learning
- Citizenship education
- Pluralism and interculturalism
- Focus on identity
- Values education

2.3.2. Lifelong learning and diversity

EU directives on lifelong learning and on citizenship education require education departments in the member states to put education, teaching and learning in the context of the real world and put a greater focus on the preparation of students for life.

These approaches to education promote opportunity and equality in education for people of all backgrounds and difference to progress in education in Europe. They also put emphasis on the preparation of students for the workplace and life beyond formal education.

The Commission of the European Communities (2000) gives two main reasons for the European Union making lifelong learning a priority. Firstly, it recognises the benefits of moving toward a lifelong learning community in strengthening competitiveness for its member states through a more adaptable and employable workforce. Secondly, it states that '[e]ducation, in its broadest sense, is the key to learning and understanding how to meet the challenges of social, ethnic, cultural and linguistic diversity'. (ibid p5).

The Commission further puts focus on the non-formal and informal categories of learning, as well as the formal and encourages educators and members to consider a widening of education to encompass all categories with equal emphasis. 'The 'lifewide' dimension brings the complementarity of formal, non-formal and informal learning into sharper focus.' (ibid p9).

At a macro level the focus of lifelong learning policy is to ensure that all individuals have adequate opportunity at every point in their lives to education that serves their needs in specific societal contexts. At the micro level, Longworth and Davies (1996) have written extensively on the need for change in educational practices to a more democratic approach involving all stakeholders and put forward a definition that takes an individual perspective:

…the development of human potential through a continuously supportive process which stimulates and empowers individuals to acquire all the knowledge, values, skills and understanding they will require throughout their lifetimes and to apply them with confidence, creativity and enjoyment in all roles, circumstances and environments. (p22)

In Ireland, the *Taskforce on Lifelong Learning* endorsed the definition laid down by the European Commission but set out a definition for the Irish context that also put emphasis on the individual:

>…all learning activity undertaken through-out life, with the aim of improving knowledge, skills and competences within a personal, civic, social and/or employment-related perspective [in the context of] individual development, active citizenship, social inclusion and the economic well being of society as a whole. (Taskforce on Lifelong Learning 2002 p6)

The lifelong learning approach to education requires that formal education becomes part of a life-long continuum and a life-wide arena. This opening up of formal educational settings has implications for the teacher who must now look beyond the school walls and his/her own experiences to the students' own interpretations of life and community.

>Only by respecting the language, culture and knowledge of the learner can we together build literate, schooled and educated societies, where lifelong learning is the Norm' (UNESCO online b.)

2.3.3. Citizenship education and diversity

Citizenship, like lifelong learning, has become a strong focus of education in Europe and its member states particularly since 2005, the *European year of Citizenship through Education*. Citizenship education places the individual in the context of their community and the world. In a research project, conducted to determine organisational understanding of the concept of citizenship education in Ireland and Northern Ireland Niens and McIlrath (2005) maintain that citizenship education is

conceptualised with reference to a number of comparable key concepts, which include human rights and responsibilities, human dignity or equality, interdependence or diversity, laws or social justice and democracy' and that '…citizenship education is seen as aiming to educate young people for life, including work, voluntary engagement, social inclusion, political involvement, responsible public behaviors, and, in the context of Northern Ireland, peace' (p8). Findings in respect of Ireland suggest that teachers in some cases are not confident in teaching in the area of citizenship and are not motivated and/or not skilled enough to do so.

Another report in the Irish context, part of a comparative study on citizenship education across Europe, may shed some light on these findings by highlighting that Civic, Social, and Political Education (CSPE) is not always a compulsory subject for post-primary initial teachers:

> All teacher training colleges for second level teachers provide an option for, or integrate CSPE in the teaching qualification. The current focus in developing further teacher competence is in the area of active methodologies for a learner-centred approach to active and participative citizenship. (Eurydice 2005 p9)

Both lifelong learning and citizenship education are key features in the ideals of Banks (2004, 2005) who suggests that the crux of education is in teaching children and young people for life. He suggests that a major goal of multicultural citizenship education should be to help students acquire a delicate balance of cultural, national and global identifications' as outlined in Figure 1.

Figure 1: Cultural, national and global identifications
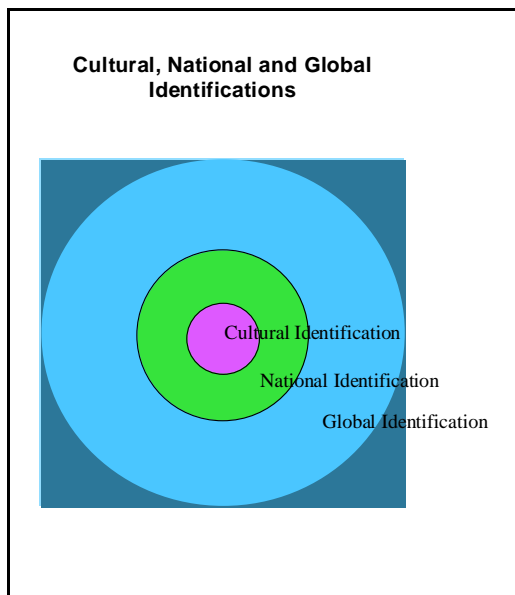
Source: Banks, J.A. (2004) cited in Banks et al (2005 p25) with permission.

This approach puts emphasis on the individual as central and encourages the learner to understand his or her own identity in the context of his or her own culture and other cultures in the world.

Banks et al (2007), in a collaboration between the University of Washington and Stanford University, have set out four principles on which to focus education in the post-modern world to account for diversity. These principles are broadly based on the lifelong learning assumption that 'if educators make use of the informal learning that occurs in the homes and communities of students, the achievement gap between marginalised students and mainstream students can be reduced' (Banks 2007, p5):

1. Learning is situated in broad socio-economic and historical contexts and is mediated by local cultural practise and perspectives.
2. Learning takes place not only in school but also in the multiple contexts and valued practices of everyday lives across the life span.
3. All learners need multiple sources of support from a variety of institutions to promote their personal and intellectual development.

4. Learning is facilitated when learners are encouraged to use their home and community language resources as a basis for expanding their linguistic repertoires (ibid).

These four principles arise from the research of *the Life Diversity Census Panel* established in 2004-2005 with a view to reducing the gap between formal and informal learning. The idea also is that teachers and educators can take guidance from how students learn in informal settings and apply that learning to the academic context. This idea concurs with Ornstein (1993 p186) who suggests that '[e]ffective teachers have the capacity to accept, understand, and appreciate students on their terms and through their world.'

Banks et al (2007) also highlights the fact that '[m]any of today's learners come from social ecologies in which cultural, ethnic, or economic factors differ from those of most educators in fundamental ways' (Banks et al 2007 p11). This is similar to the ideas of Zeichner (1992) who refers to the 'growing disparity between teachers, teacher educators and students' alluding to the fact that most teachers in the US are white, female and middle class with inadequate knowledge skills or attitudes to address the diversity of their classrooms. Similarly, Merryfield (2000) poses the question 'Do today's teacher educators have the knowledge, skills and commitment to teach for equity and diversity either locally or globally?' Merrifield's study 'challenges the assumption that all of today's teacher educators can develop the knowledge, lived experiences and perspective consciousness needed to prepare teachers in multicultural and global education and suggests that 'experiential knowledge of diversity and equity is a quality needed in teacher educators' (p441).

2.3.4. Pluralism and interculturalism

Similar to lifelong learning and citizenship education, the ideals and approaches associated with pluralism and interculturalism accept and celebrate individual differences, values and experiences.

Pluralism

England (1992 p2) states that the 'philosophy and ideology of pluralism is not new but one whose time has come for actualization' and puts forward a definition of a pluralistic society as one

> … in which members of diverse ethnic, racial, religious and social groups maintain participation in and development of their traditions and special interests while cooperatively working toward the interdependence needed for a nation's unity. The focus of most definitions evolves around the elements of interdependence, development and cooperation among diverse peoples of the world. (England 1992 p2)

Pluralism in respect of education is further explained by the *The Pluralism Project: At Harvard University* (online):

- First, pluralism is not diversity alone, but *the energetic engagement with diversity*.
- Second, pluralism is not just tolerance, but *the active seeking of understanding across lines of difference*.
- Third, pluralism is not relativism, but *the encounter of commitments*. The new paradigm of pluralism does not require us to leave our identities and our commitments behind, for pluralism is the encounter of commitments.
- Fourth, pluralism is *based on dialogue*. The language of pluralism is that of dialogue and encounter, give and take, criticism and self-criticism. Dialogue means both speaking and listening, and that process reveals both common understandings and real differences. (Eck, Online).

In the Irish context, the notion of pluralism in education was discussed at an academic conference entitled *Pluralism in Education* hosted by Dublin City University and the University of Ulster in 1996. The conference culminated in a series of papers that discussed pluralism in the Irish and Northern Irish context from a variety of

dispositions, as summarised by Coolahan (1996). From the presentations given he suggested that 'the issues involved were not just Irish concerns, but concerns of humankind, and were closely interlinked with civilisational and humane values'. He highlighted the universality of fundamental issues arising from the conference and referred to 'basic intolerance and prejudice' as having 'recognisable symptoms of a social cancer' (Coolahan 1996 p286). Arising from the conference, Coolahan listed the following issues as being both important to, and central to, the education process, a process that 'seeks to promote the realisation of the best potential of individuals through a mediated encounter with the cherished traditions, values, knowledge, attitude and skills of society' (ibid p287).

Personal Identity	Empathy
Self Image	Understanding
Self Realisation	Celebration of Difference
Tolerance	Community Renewal
Co-operation	

Suggestions for pragmatic approaches to pluralism arising from the conference include; a focus on the hidden curriculum, involvement of students in school exchanges, cross cultural involvement in youth orchestras, drama, and art activities, some of which, it was suggested, could involve parents and community.

Interculturalism

More current literature moves beyond the acceptance of different cultures understood by multiculturalism and the notion of 'tolerance' of different cultures or backgrounds suggested by pluralism and to an intercultural perspective where we not only accept and tolerate difference but celebrate and learn from it.

> While the term 'multiculturalism' is sometimes used to describe a society in which different cultures live side by side without much interaction, the term 'interculturalism' expresses a belief that we all become personally enriched by coming in contact with and experiencing other cultures, and that people of different cultures can and should be able to engage with each other and learn from each other. (NCCA 2006 p1).

In the post-primary school guidelines on intercultural education, the National Council for Curriculum and Assessment (NCCA 2005) in Ireland define intercultural education as follows:

- It is education which respects, celebrates and recognises the normality of diversity in all parts 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 all of us.
- It is education which promotes equality and human rights, challenges unfair discrimination and promotes the values upon which equality is built. Intercultural education is a synthesis of the
- Learning from multicultural education approaches and anti-racist education approaches which were commonly used internationally from the 1960s to the 1990s. (NCCA 2006 i)

In examining these definitions of pluralism and interculturalism one can see that the concept of interculturalism is pluralistic in its approach. However, it goes beyond the notion of simply tolerating difference to promoting the benefits of interacting with people from different cultures and backgrounds. Interculturalism has become recognised as an approach that enforces positive action and cohesion between emerging diverse cultures in all social aspects.

All the concepts and approaches discussed in this section advocate a student centred approaches to education which puts focus on the individual.

2.3.5. Focusing on the individual and identity in diversity education

The introduction of equality legislation in Ireland across the nine grounds of gender, marital status, family status, age, race, religion, disability, sexual orientation and membership of the Traveller community, offered a means by which individuals can identify themselves and be identified by others in the eyes of the law. It also offered a framework on which policy and practice in education could be based. Lodge and Lynch (2004), for example, on reviewing the way schools deal with equality, suggest that '[a]ccommodating diversity is about taking account of the practical implications of difference among students and staff across the nine grounds covered by the equality legislation' and that '[t]he curriculum should be assessed for what it communicates and teaches about groups across all of the nine grounds.' (Lodge and Lynch 2004, p108).

However, Abdallah-Pretceille (2006), warns that

> If educational effectiveness becomes defined in terms of focusing on learning
> profiles according to cultural membership, there is a risk that education and
> training will become culturalized by highlighting inter-group differences to the
> detriment of intra-group and inter-individual differences (p476).

She further poses fundamental questions on whether cultural diversity as a concept any longer has relevance and suggests in its stead a focus on 'an acceptance of otherness'. She maintains that by focusing training on an understanding or knowledge of cultures we are in fact reinforcing stereotypes:

> The educator no longer meets Yves, Antonio, Mohamed …,but the stereotype,
> established and reinforced precisely on the basis of factual, limited, partial or
> even biased cultural knowledge, about the French, the Portuguese, the Arabs
> … .The abstract and globalizing knowledge of cultures obstructs the
> recognition of the singular individual, the subject of education, and it
> overshadows the training dynamics by acting as a filter or even a screen. (ibid
> p 477).

Abdallah-Pretceille thus calls for 'a rethinking of cultural knowledge beyond the form of a knowledge of cultures…for us to learn to think of cultural knowledge in a heterogeneous, and no longer homogenous, context (ibid).

In a qualitative study commissioned by the Joint Equality and Human Rights Forum, Zappone (2003 p2) highlights the growing awareness of the complexities of identity within the individual and maintains that 'an individual's identity is made up of several factors such as gender, ethnicity and sexual orientation.' The report highlights the '…importance of self-recognition, social identity, resistance of stereotypes and labels, and alternative strategies…' (ibid p143) as a means to approach diversity. She further suggests that there are four domains for understanding diversity:

- The individual – assume difference within
- Social groups – examine differences within
- Social relations – analyse intersections between
- Institutions – apply an integrated approach (ibid)

Zappone also calls for a paradigm shift in which an approach to diversity and diversity training also puts focus on multiple identities and '…calls for ongoing analysis of how patterns of social relations intersect to exclude and discriminate against members of society' (ibid p150). The research further advises on the inclusion of a multiple identities paradigm when examining diversity policy and planning.

2.3.6. Values education

The focus on individuality and identity in diversity education in turn puts focus on the place of values education when teaching education studies students about diversity. It is important here to distinguish between values education and values in education.

The former relates to teaching about values and involves the student learning about their own values and how to consider the values of others which relates to this study. The latter focuses on the greater debate around the relevance and impact of values in education, teaching and learning and is not a focus in this study.

Ling and Stephenson (1998a pp13-15) list four paradigms from which an approach to values education can be considered:

- *Religious monopolism* – Teaching and development of moral values is viewed as occurring legitimately within the framework of religious beliefs. May be deemed unsuitable for a secular setting but 'hold currency' in countries like Ireland where religion holds dominance in education.

- *Moral universalism* – Religious disagreement is an undesirable and unnecessary complication in moral education. The way ahead is to identify and teach universal moral principles expected to command common agreement.

- *Consensus pluralism* – Processes of educational settings required to model the processes of a democracy. Curriculum reflects values obtained through community negotiation and consensus regarding the values and principles which are necessary in order to maintain a secular, democratic and pluralist society.

- *Moral vacuum* – An eclectic and unstructured approach to the teaching of values. An approach to values education based on a loose collection of ideas which is not based in any clear structure or framework.

Robb (2008) suggests a definition of values education that fits with consensus pluralism and suggests that values education is

> ... an activity during which people are assisted by appropriately qualified adults … to make explicit those values underlying their own attitudes; to assess the effectiveness of these values for their and others' long term well-being and to reflect on and acquire other values which are more effective for short term and long term well-being.

Superka, Ahrens, and Hedstrom (1976) suggest five basic approaches to values education as summarised by Huitt (2004) in Table 1:

Table 1: Approaches to Values Education, Huitt.

Inculcation	Most educators viewing values education from the perspective of inculcation see values as socially or culturally accepted standards or rules of behaviour. Valuing is therefore considered a process of the student identifying with and accepting the standards or norms of the important individuals and institutions within his society.
Moral Development	Based on the work of Lawrence Kohlberg, this approach focuses primarily on moral values, such as fairness, justice, equity, and human dignity; other types of values (social, personal, and aesthetic) are usually not considered.
Analysis	The approach emphasizes rational thinking and reasoning. It helps students use logical thinking and the procedures of scientific investigation in dealing with values issues.
Values Clarification	The central focus is on helping students use both rational thinking and emotional awareness to examine personal behavior patterns and to clarify and actualize their values.
Action Learning	The action learning approach is derived from a perspective that valuing includes a process of implementation as well as development. That is, it is important to move beyond thinking and feeling to acting.

Source: Summarised from the findings of Huitt, W. (2004) [Online].

The UNESCO website defines *Values Clarification* as 'a technique for encouraging students to relate their thoughts and their feelings and thus enrich their awareness of their own values' and offer a *Values Clarification Grid* as a strategy to 'help students clarify the degree of commitment they feel to different issues'(UNESCO online b.).

Although the Values Clarification approach (Raths, Harmin and Simons, 1966) is an accepted and approved method for values education, some, like Sommer (1984), are against the use of values clarification, particularly when educating young children. While accepting that values clarification stresses that teachers do not 'moralize',

Sommer (1984) warns of the dangers of specific values clarification strategies such as survival games and student diaries (ibid p210) and he cites Morris (1983 p24) to highlight specific dangers:

> The values you have passed on to your child – the values he comes to school with, must be clarified. They are not acceptable "as is" because you did the unforgivable – you decided for your child, because it is your God-given responsibility and right – what values you want him to hold. Those imposed values which he did not choose freely must be clarified. He must decide, immature and unwise though he may be, whether or not he wishes to keep, modify or discard what you have taught him.

Although the red flags raised by Sommer, Morris and others above point to the dangers of specific values clarification strategies in relation to the age context of children, it also puts focus on the importance of context when deciding on approaches to any values laden area in education. This will be particularly true when dealing with emotive subjects such as the nine grounds highlighted in the legislation and more so if dealing with those subjects in a diverse environment when training education studies students.

Hidalgo (1993) maintains that '…school festivals highlighting ethnic foods, flag displays from different countries, performance of ethnic music, and playing international games tend to result in a superficial and exotic impression of multiculturalism'(ibid p101) and that in order for teachers and trainers to understand how culture impacts events in the classroom, they must first take an 'introspective' approach to culture through a series of self directed questions about ethnic background, religion, family values etc.

> Meaningful insight comes from having to think about our backgrounds and then sharing this information with others. From sharing, we gain an awareness of the similarities and differences between the various definitions. (ibid p101).

Mulcahy (2003) refers to the relevance of introducing a module[2] on values education in the part time degree programme of the undergraduate programme in education and training at DCU which fits with a values clarification approach. She emphasises reflection as an important approach to dealing with values education and the ability to reflect as an important skill for students in relation to values education:

> the students for the first time in their adult lives, took time to consider their values, the values of their organisations and the sometimes deep chasm between the two and also began to reflect on the concept of identity, particularly Irish identity and whether it was possible to possess multiple identities (p461).

Where Mulcahy (2003) emphasises the importance of reflection in values education, seen earlier, Ling and Stephenson, advocate a Socratic approach suggesting the '…ancient Greeks, and Socrates in particular, seem to be an accepted starting point for considering theoretical perspectives on values' and that '…values teaching may involve such strategies as values clarification, critical thinking exercises and conversation in which values positions are articulated and critically appraised.' (Ling and Stephenson 1998b p5).

A Socratic approach was also suggested by Hogan (2003) who maintains that teaching should be seen as a 'way of life':

> What is involved is not merely a fluency in skills and strategies of communication but also something qualitatively different: a commitment to teaching and learning as a distinctive way of being human in a world that is now one with an unprecedented plurality of lifestyles, value orientations and careers. (Hogan 2003 p209)

---

[2] This module is now part of the full time degree in education and training, which is the subject of this study.

Addressing diversity through putting focus on the students themselves and facilitating them to consider the world from their own perspective are features of the approaches discussed so far and are strong elements of a global approach to education that has become a strong focus in more recent discourse in relation to diversity and education.

2.3.7. Global Education

More recent approaches see diversity education as one piece of the jigsaw on learning to live in a post-modern world. Terms such as: development education; sustainable education; global education; a global dimension; and intercultural education are becoming linked to educational approaches advocated particularly by non-government organisations (NGOs). NGOs, in collaboration with various Government departments, are leading the way in devising new approaches to teaching and learning relevant in formal learning curricula that incorporate the global perspective. Such NGOs tend to be advocates of human rights and include organisations such as *Amnesty International*, *Trócaire*, *Concern*, *Irish Aid* and *80:20 Education and Action for a Better World*, *Ubuntu* and others.

In the United Kingdom the Department for International Development (2005 p1) define the global dimension in a publication aimed at teachers, trainers and curriculum planners:

> The global dimension incorporates [eight] key concepts of global citizenship, conflict resolution, diversity, human rights, interdependence, social justice, sustainable development and values and perceptions. It explores the interconnections between the local and the global. It builds knowledge and understanding, as well as developing skills and attitudes. (ibid p5)

They also suggest these key concepts could be 'used as "lenses" to look at issues in a range of ways' in order to understand the global dimension. They also refer to the benefits of global education in teaching:

> Including the global dimension in teaching means that links can be made between local and global issues. It also means that young people are given opportunities to: critically examine their own values and attitudes; appreciate the similarities between peoples everywhere, and value diversity; understand the global context of their local lives; and develop skills that will enable them to combat injustice, prejudice and discrimination. Such knowledge, skills and understanding enables young people to make informed decisions about playing an active role in the global community. (ibid p2).

Definitions of development education and intercultural education fit in to a concept of global education and are similar in approach:

> Development education is an educational process aimed at increasing awareness and understanding of the rapidly changing, interdependent and unequal world in which we live. It seeks to engage people in analysis, reflection and action for local and global citizenship and participation. It is about supporting people in understanding, and in acting to transform the social, cultural, political and economic structures which affect their lives and the lives of others at personal, community, national and international levels. (Irish Aid online).

2.3.8. Conclusion

The global dimension acknowledges lifelong learning, citizenship, values and identity, the key areas discussed so far in this review of literature, and bring them together as an educational approach. Those involved in global education are concerned with the preparation of teachers and educators for diversity and with the challenges that teachers and educators now face as a consequence of global changes.

2.4. Acknowledging the challenges of diversity for educators

The need for improved approaches to preparing teachers for diversity is recognised worldwide. The *Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the*

Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel (CEART), summarising the analysis of major issues affecting the current status of teaching personnel worldwide, highlight the following findings:

> All countries reported concerns about the need for teachers to have the appropriate knowledge and skills to meet the new needs of school and society, most particularly as a result of increasing globalization and the use of information and communication technologies.
>
> … where initial training was in place there was often a disjuncture between the training provided and the realities of the schools, their communities, and the world of work. (ILO and UNESCO 2007 p10)

The effects of increases in cultural diversity in the Irish educational context is documented in the recently published findings of a Europe-wide research project, *European Intercultural Workplace: Ireland Republic* (2007). This report finds that the cultural diversity represented by 'newcomer' students and their parents means that teachers often face new challenges in the classroom for which, in terms of skills and professional training, they have not been prepared (p110). The report highlights the complexities of diversity faced by schools and concludes that teachers are not only lacking the skills and ability to teach students from diverse cultures, religions and life experience but also to deal with their parents due to barriers such as language. They refer also to a lack of skills to deal with issues arising from bullying, discrimination and emotional consequences of prior negative experiences of students.

Similar evidence is reported in other European countries; Chehlova (2003) in Latvia, Spinthourakis and Katsillis (2003) in Greece, Berg (2005) in Germany, Leeman (2006) in the Netherlands, Ross (2003) in the UK, Kjaerulff (2002) in Denmark and Dooly and Villanueva (2006) in Spain. These reports also highlight the need for new approaches and skills for teaching for the diversity of modern classrooms and in the

main they point to citizenship education and values education as important elements of any solutions.

A survey by the Association of Secondary Teachers of Ireland (ASTI) (2006), pointed to a lack of resources and skills to deal with a variety of special learning needs and other disabilities within schools and a survey of conducted by Smyth et al (2009) found that both primary and post-primary principals and teachers 'were critical of the extent to which current teacher education prepares staff for teaching in a diverse setting' (p174) and that '..only a third of principals feel that pre-service and in-service education prepares teachers for working in a multicultural setting' (p171).

Calls for educational resources to tackle diversity are also made in an article in *Equality News*, the publication of the Equality Authority, in which the Assistant General Secretary of the Teachers Union of Ireland (TUI) suggests that the situation is even worse in vocational schools and post leaving certificate colleges (Dolan. 2006 p16).

In a recent study by Drudy and Clarke's (2006) findings from a group of post graduate students on an initial teacher education programme suggested that:

> …preferred teaching strategies were largely conservative and traditional in orientation, which suggests that they would not be in a position to adequately meet the needs of students in diverse classrooms (p383).

2.5.   Addressing diversity learning in education studies programmes

Drudy and Clarke (2006) suggest, based on international research, that 'the preparation of teachers should not just focus on approaches and methodologies but also in establishing how teachers' beliefs, attitudes, and dispositions are interwoven with their knowledge, skills and behaviours in the classroom context' (p383). They suggest also that 'teacher educators need to acknowledge that student teachers tend to rely on 'tried and tested' strategies' and that 'the classroom strategies generally considered most appropriate to teaching about diversity and managing diverse classrooms are active and experiential ones'. Drudy and Clarke's study found that '[o]lder students and those teaching subjects with a high diversity, social justice and global awareness content, were more positively orientated to diversity' (p383).

One report of particular relevance to this study, that focuses on the global aspect of diversity education, is a review of international and Irish literature on development and intercultural education produced by DICE (2005)[3] The DICE report brings all of the approaches of global education together in respect of teacher education and in the context of knowledge, skills and values:

> While it can be argued that development/global, intercultural, and citizenship education each have their own distinctive features, concepts and ideology, it can also be argued that each share a common outlook and aspiration – i.e. to enable people to acquire the knowledge, values, and skills to participate in society so that they can address issues of global and local injustice and inequality in order to create a more just, fair and sustainable society. In other words, it can be argued that each is underpinned by a global and justice perspective (p11)[4].

---

[3] The DICE Project, funded by Irish Aid, has as a central objective to support the inclusion of development education and intercultural education perspectives as essential elements of initial teacher education http://www.diceproject.org/context_and_aims.aspx.
[4] It should be noted that in its findings DICE suggest further research to examine if terminology for citizenship education, global education and development education are alternative terminology or alternative frameworks.

The report goes on to explore common themes across Irish and international writers and '…bring(s) them together under the common focus of global and justice perspectives' (ibid p12). The findings are reviewed in relation to the preparation of teachers across three areas of:

1. Cognitive Knowledge
2. Values, Attitudes and Perceptions
3. Skills and Capacities

In terms of cognitive knowledge DICE highlight ten common themes (ibid p16) of which, in the context of this research, five could be seen as being directly related to diversity[5]:

- Interdependence
- Cultural identity and diversity
- Human rights and responsibilities
- Discrimination, racism, prejudice
- Equality and social justice

In relation to *cultural identity* and diversity, DICE suggest that '…it involves understanding that diversity is a normal part of everyday life for everyone, and that a failure to see diversity as normal can lead to racism, discrimination and prejudice' (p17). This echoes the 'acceptance of otherness' referred to by Abdallah-Pretceille (2006) mentioned earlier[6].

The DICE report points to Regan (2003), Hicks (2001), Sedano (2002) and Ehrenreich (2003) as advocating the notion that '….development and intercultural education entails developing a knowledge of different cultural values, practices and norms as well as the similarities and differences between and within them.' and that

---

[5] For comparative reasons the full list of themes identified by DICE from the Irish literature is attached to this report as Appendix 1 and the full list of themes identified by DICE from the International literature is attached as Appendix 3.
[6] See 2.3.5.

'…a knowledge of diversity should include an understanding of the relationship between cultural identity and values and perspectives.'(ibid). They also cite Murray and O'Doherty (2001), Gannon (2002), Tormey (2003) and the NCCA (2005) as suggesting that '…knowledge of cultural identity and diversity involves understanding one's own personal and cultural identity and heritage as well as that of others' (ibid).

In relation to *values, attitudes and perceptions* DICE also list the values, beliefs and attitudes '...considered to be core to global/development and intercultural education… as identified in the literature'(DICE 2005, p19) and these could be deemed relevant to all forms of diversity education as well as cultural.

In relation to *skills and capacities* DICE (p20) list specific skills required alongside knowledge, values, attitudes and perception and take Regan's (2003) suggestion of dividing these skills into four categories: communication skills; intellectual skills; social skills; and action skills. Again, all of the skills listed could be seen as relevant to diversity education generally.

In viewing the literature examined by the DICE project, and other writers mentioned in relation to emerging concepts in this review of literature, there would appear to be considerable consensus as to what learning is required and how it might be achieved when it comes to diversity education and that there is a particular orientation to student centred, practical and reflective approaches that allow students to value and embrace diversity.

Trumbull and Pacheco (2005, pp3-4) cite definitions of 'cultural competence' required by teachers dealing with diversity that reflect these approaches:

> Cultural competence entails recognizing the differences among students and families from different cultural groups, responding to those differences positively, and being able to interact effectively in a range of cultural environments (Lindsey, Robins and Terrell 2003).

> …a set of congruent behaviours, attitudes, structures, and policies that come together to work effectively in intercultural situations. The term refers to culture in the very broadest sense. The first step for teachers in developing cultural competencies is recognizing how their own perspectives and knowledge of the world are rooted in a particular cultural, racial, and ethnic identity and history (Lindsey et al., 2003).

Similarly, Ladson-Billings (2001 p98) suggests that cultural competence exists in classrooms where:

- The teacher understands culture and its role in education.
- The teacher takes responsibility for learning about students' culture and community.
- The teacher uses student culture as a basis for learning.
- The teacher promotes a flexible use of students' local and global culture.

The challenges faced by teachers and education students in the workplace are well documented and there is an acceptance that new approaches to preparing students for diversity are required. Some of the approaches mentioned in this review of literature, particularly through global education perspective, are beginning to emerge through practice in education programmes and teacher preparation.

2.6.   Some practical approaches

The suggestions put forward by the literature suggest a need for education studies students broadly to:

- Explore their own values in the context of others and of education

- Become culturally competent through knowledge and understanding of the culture and perspectives of others.

- Have opportunity to experience diversity in order to apply knowledge.

- Have an understanding of knowledge, skills and behaviours in the context of the classroom or work context.

Examples of practice commonly engage students in practical experiences both in and out of the university classroom and put focus on methodologies that engage students in reflection and dialogue that connects learning around diversity with the exploration of values and observations of practice.

Mitchel (2009) puts forward findings from the development and delivery of a workshop (*Cultural Identity and Culturally Responsive Teaching Practices workshop)* in which participant trainee teachers explored their beliefs about teaching culturally diverse students. Participants 'discussed their own identity, explored their perspectives about culture, and identified culturally responsive teaching strategies that would be helpful to them' (p2). This study makes recommendations for those who conduct workshops on diversity to:

- Engage teachers in cultural conversations
- Provide time for the application of learning
- Use reflective and open formats in the workshop

The use of reflection and the exploration of values are also used in a study of initial teachers in Northern Ireland by Nelson (2008) who finds that:

> ..introducing student teachers to ethos in diverse school contexts creates conditions in which they can reassess their existing knowledge and views of education and, with a more informed and critically aware perspective, begin to locate their own teaching within existing visions of education.

Also in Northern Ireland, (Purdy and Gibson (2008) introduced a programme of 'short alternative placements' for final year B.Ed. students aimed at broadening students' experience and develop their transferrable skills. This study emphasis the importance of employability and allowing students to understand the wide range of career opportunities available to them by introducing a variety of workplace experiences.

Keane and Boland (online) of the School of Education in the National University of Ireland, Galway (NUIG) use service learning to engage students in learning about diversity.

> Providing students with experiential learning opportunities in a real world context which enable them to critically reflect on issues of diversity, Interculturalism and educational disadvantage is crucially important in order to assist [students] in learning to teach for social justice.

Students here attend the Postgraduate Diploma in Education and are involved in service learning with the Galway Traveller Community and the Galway Refugee Support Group.

Finally, an innovative project using video examples for diversity learning was launched in Dublin City University entitled *Managing Workplace Diversity*

> This unique video-based training programme has been organised into a series of self-contained modules. Using this approach the material is tailored for different end users. The courses can be delivered as a traditional DVD or as a web-based application for delivery to your computer at home or work, or your mobile device when on the go (DCU 2009)[7].

---

[7] Details available from: http://www.dcu.ie/invent/diversity.shtml

This approach can be used as an element of a course or as a resource and is relevant to all disciplines of learning and in both teaching and training contexts.

These are just a few examples of how practice in relation to preparing education studies students and teachers is moving to more practical, collaborative and reflective approaches to learning about diversity.

2.4.   Conclusion

When dealing with diversity in educational settings, and in the context of the preparation of DCU education studies students for the workplace, there is a need to look beyond the constraints of a definition that only considers cultural difference but to consider the differences associated with it and to allow diversity to reflect all of the differences that challenge students in an educational context or require specific knowledge, skills and attitudes in order for them to be accommodated. This means considering diversity in the context of its simplest definition and focusing on diversity as simply meaning difference as suggested by the Oxford English Dictionary.

The literature shows consensus that we live in a radically changed and changing world and that educators must now look to sustainable policies and practices in relation to teaching and learning in order to accommodate the myriad of differences that pose new challenges in education.

The literature shows that worldwide, similar challenges are occurring in educational contexts as a consequence of globalisation and new states of multiculturalism in nations. It also shows that current educational approaches to deal with these

challenges are similar in their ideals. The global perspective, in relation to diversity education, in fact incorporates much of the ideals of lifelong learning, citizenship education and values education in this respect such as the need for student centred learning, preparation for work and life, the skills to continue to learn and develop.

The importance of values and identity are strong features of diversity education and cultural education and the link between the learning and the individual's conceptualising of the learning by linking to their own lives and experiences is also a highlighted feature. Emerging concepts and approaches see diversity education as one part of a 'global dimension' where understanding, appreciating and respecting difference in ourselves and others is part of the learning required to understand, appreciate and respect life, our environment and our world.

There is much focus on the need for in-service and training teachers to acquire the knowledge, skills, attitudes and competencies required to teach in a diverse classroom and to have opportunities to apply their theoretical learning in real life classroom situations where they engage with diversity. Teaching surveys highlight the need for cultural competencies in teachers beginning with internalisation and a move to more facilitative and Socratic approaches to teaching in a 'global dimension'.

There is a move towards addressing diversity in teacher education and education studies from a global perspective and this is beginning to show in new approaches to practice in teacher education programmes in Ireland that allow students to learn about diversity both in the university lecture hall and through real life experiences and through methodologies that engage them in reflection and conversation.

Based on knowledge and findings from the review of literature, this study explores how the full time undergraduate education and training programme in the School of Education Studies prepares students for the diversity they will face in the workplace. The next chapter discusses the design of the study and demonstrates how specific findings from the literature were used to examine programme and module intentions and the approach taken to gather data from current and past students and lecturers on their views in relation to knowledge, skills and values

CHAPTER 3 – METHODOLOGY

3.1.   Introduction

This chapter begins by discussing the purpose of the study based on findings of the review of literature. It then offers a philosophical background to the study by placing it in a constructivist paradigm. It then goes on to justify and explain the use of selective aspects of the Appreciative Inquiry (AI) approach to allow the research to begin from a particular stance and to overcome the limitations brought about by the subjectivity of the researcher. It also explains the use of the AI model to give structure to the collection and analysis of data along specific themes arising from the literature review.

3.2.   Purpose of the study

The review of literature highlighted particular elements and approaches deemed relevant to diversity education and in particular elements of good practice in teacher education in relation to diversity. Specifically, the review of literature around diversity and teacher education conducted by the DICE project[8] highlighted elements deemed appropriate in the domains of knowledge, skills and values. When considering these elements of knowledge, skills and values in respect of the degree programme at DCU, it could be said that, at a glance, the programme was covering most of what it should and was in fact contemporary in its approach to diversity education.

---

[8] Global and Justice Perspectives in Education (Fitzgerald 2005). DICE works to integrate development education within initial primary teacher education and operates against five colleges of education in the Republic of Ireland. DICE website: www.diceproject.org

This raised questions as to the purpose of the study. Rather than solve the perceived problem that the programme may not adequately be preparing students for diversity, the study now needed to begin by establishing if the programme was in reality doing everything deemed relevant by the literature findings and, further, to highlight any deficits. The study required an approach that would allow it to begin by establishing what was already working well in order to discover what gaps existed.

3.3. Philosophy

Guba defines paradigms as 'a basic set of beliefs that guides action, whether of the everyday garden variety or action taken in connection with disciplined inquiry' (1990, p17). A philosophical understanding of the world is essential to the researcher as it has implications for the choices made at all stages of a research project. How one understands knowledge, and how it is achieved or arrived at, can determine one's choice of methods and research quality (Easterby-Smith et al 2002; Mertens 1998; Creswell 2007). '[B]ehind each study lies assumptions the researcher makes about reality, how knowledge is obtained, and the methods of gaining knowledge.' (Creswell 2007 p21).

For centuries, the main research paradigm was that of logical positivism based on philosophical principles of ontology, epistemology, logic and teleology (Maykut and Morehouse, 1994 p4). The positivist belief is that knowledge is something that has been quantitatively tested and verified by independent observers in an objective reality where data can be logically verified in response to preconceived hypotheses.

In recent decades, a competing post-positivist paradigm has emerged within the social sciences that moves beyond perceived restrictions of quantitative research. This

paradigm has been referred to in many ways: the *alternative* paradigm; as it offers an

alternative to the traditional positivist approach; the *interpretive* paradigm, as it

focuses on the meaning of language and words; or the *qualitative* approach as it seeks

to qualify meaning from data rather than quantify instances of data. Regardless of the

label used, researchers who work from this paradigm believe that knowledge is

constructed by the participants and the researcher who validates his/her subjectivity in

the research. They see reality as subjective and influenced by cultural and contextual

instances.

Postpositivists or qualitative researchers accept that we can never truly know but that

by examining information from a variety of angles we can reach certain

understandings. The more angles the researcher takes the more rigorous and valid the

research will be. Postpositivists take account of differences between individuals and

groups and accept that information may be different in varying contexts. Qualitative

researchers study things in their natural setting, attempting to make

sense of, or to interpret, phenomena in terms of the meanings people bring to

them. (Denzin & Lincoln, 2000, p.3)

3.3.1. Constructivism

Guba (1990) suggests constructivism as a new paradigm. Ontologically Guba (1990

p25) suggests 'realities exist in the form of multiple mental constructions, socially and

experientially based, local and specific, dependent for their form and content on the

persons who hold them.' Epistemologically, 'the inquirer and inquired into are fused

into a single …entity [and] findings are literally the creation of the process of

interaction between the two'. Methodologically, 'individual constructions are elicited

and refined hermeneutically[9], and compared and contrasted dialectically[10], with the aim of generating one (or a few) constructions on which there is substantial consensus' (Guba, 1990 p27).

The use of constructivism in this study is to allow for the meanings ascribed by a variety of participants (Easterby-Smith et al. 2002, Mertens 1998). It allows the different perspectives of current and past students and lecturing staff of the degree programme to have relevance and explains 'the feelings of individuals as they experience a phenomenon or process' (Creswell 2005 p402).

In this study, therefore, the need to understand and learn from the experiences and suggestions of a variety of stakeholders would require a qualitative approach. The knowledge constructed by the study would arise from the collective accounts of a variety of individuals' own understandings of the research topic, their personal experiences of the degree programme and their suggestions for improvement. Analysis would seek to determine a consensus of findings across themes arising from all data gathered in the study.

3.4. Methodological Approach

3.4.1. Choosing an approach

Initial inquiry into a methodological approach centred on the context of the study and the researcher's personal involvement with the programme. Initial intentions were to use an Action Research approach as 'when the product of a study is both knowledge and change you have what is broadly known as action research' (O'Leary, 2004

---

[9] Hermeneutics is the study of interpretation.
[10] A way of investigating the truth of opinions by discussion and logical argument (Oxford English Dictionary)

p138). Action Research involves the researcher at the heart of the investigation; reflecting and acting while instigating change. The inclusive and democratic nature of the approach would ensure that the views of a variety of stakeholders could be accounted for and the intention would be that findings would lead to actionable change.

However, two issues were factors in dismissing AR as an approach. Firstly, as it appeared that the programme was particularly innovative in its approach to diversity, an approach that began by establishing what was working already working was required. Secondly, although the researcher was familiar with both the programme being researched and the participants involved, she was no longer actively involved in the programme and thus maintained a stance that was more objective than is common with action research projects. The focus of the research was on the practice of others rather than the practice of the researcher herself.

Appreciative Inquiry was hence chosen as a similar approach to action research that would allow the research to begin by looking at what was already working. It sits within a constructive paradigm and by focusing on the positive would celebrate the achievements of the programme rather than point out its deficits whilst gathering data. This positive aspect of the approach would be particularly useful in gathering data from those involved in the design and delivery of the programme and its modules.

A thematic and comparable analysis approach was used to analyse data across the study. This allowed for themes to emerge across the stages of the questionnaires, exercise sheets and interviews and for common themes to arise within the specific

elements of knowledge, skills and values in relation to the programme and diversity.

This approach also fits with a constructivist paradigm as it allows for the ideas of all

participants to emerge and to be represented as one voice, offering consensus across a

variety of themes. Denscombe (2007) explains that 'the validity of findings can be

checked by using different sources of information. This can mean comparing data

from different informants…or using data collected at different times' (p136)

3.4.2. Background to Appreciative Inquiry (AI)

AI was initially developed in the early 1980s by David Cooperrider and his colleagues

at Case Western Reserve University as an organisational development approach that

focuses on establishing positive affirmations as a basis for facilitating change.

> Appreciative Inquiry is the cooperative co-evolutionary search for the best in
> people, their organizations, and the world around them. … AI involves the art
> and practice of asking questions that strengthen a system's capacity to
> apprehend, anticipate, and heighten positive potential. (Cooperrider et al 2003
> p3).

Grant and Humphries (2006) put AI into its philosophical context:

> Appreciative inquiry has its foundations in the conceptual/ontological
> positions of social constructionists, who work from the premise that language,
> knowledge and action are inextricably linked. Organizations are considered as
> the outcomes of their members' interactions with historical, cultural, social,
> economic and political occurrences (p403).

Cooperrider based his work in AI on five basic principles: Constructionist;

Simultaneity; Poetic; Anticipatory and Positive explained by the author as follows:

- The *Constructionist* principle holds that our knowledge of the world is reached
  through interaction and construction rather than observation of phenomena.
- The *Simultaneity* principle relates to the notion that inquiry and change are not
  separate but parallel and interconnected.

- The *Poetic* principle relates to the idea that people are authors of their own realities and worlds.
- The *Anticipatory* principle has its roots in psychology and is based on the idea that people move towards a future they envision; their future is dependent on their positive or negative outlook for the future.
- The *Positive* principle suggests that positing positive questions engages participants more deeply and for longer as they are naturally drawn to ideas that provide energy.

The model is based on a positive, cyclical approach to change and

…builds upon the organization's track record of success and inspires positive possibilities for the future to be expressed and realized…

All Appreciative Inquiry activities, practices, and processes focus on the organization at its best – past, present and future. (Whitney and Trosten-Bloom 2003 pp10-11).

The cyclical nature of the AI model is demonstrated in Figure 2 which shows the four stages of the process around a central affirmative topic.

Figure 2: 4-D Cycle of Appreciative Inquiry
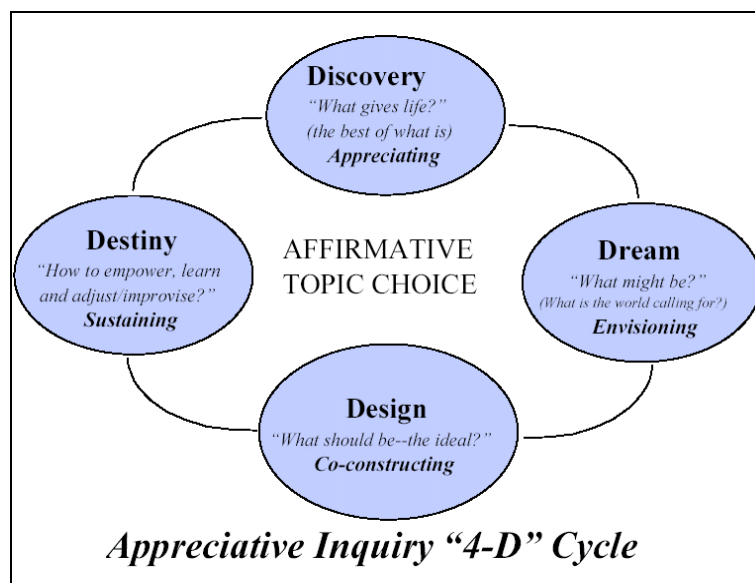
Source: Cooperrider et al. The Appreciative Inquiry Handbook.

- The Discovery stage explores and acknowledges what elements have worked well in the past and are currently working well.
- The Dream stage builds on the discovery outcomes and is about envisioning what could be; participants work together to envisage what the future could hold – involves creative thinking.
- The Design stage explores the ideal where participants work together to arrive at what Cooperrider calls 'provocative propositions' (statements of desired achievements) that use assertive language and move the organisation toward positive challenging goals.
- The Destiny stage is where action planning occurs as well as commitment to process and task.

Reed (2007 *ix*) puts AI in the context of action research and states that

> AI is a form of "social construction in action." Within a constructionist orientation, emphasis is placed on language practices. This means that knowledge, what we "discover" as researchers, has less to do with any sense of matching observations with the "factual evidence" and has more to do with what questions we ask, how we ask them, and who is involved.

Reed (2007 p64) further suggests similarities between action research and AI and

suggests that both approaches:

- Acknowledge a rejection of traditional research approaches where the researcher is disengaged from the world being researched.
- Build on the 'potential synthesis of research and change' and are transformational in nature.
- Put emphasis on collaboration, participation and inclusion of stakeholders.
- Are cyclical in nature and the 'cycle of data collection, analysis, feedback and change may be carried out several times and …become an integral part of the practice environment.
- Have concerns with organisational dynamics and power – an 'open' and 'supportive' relationship is required between the researcher and the participants.
- Require an understanding on the part of the researcher of issues of 'power, responsibility, and communication' and 'negotiation'.

3.4.3. AI Assumptions

AI begins by finding out about, and acknowledging, the achievements of an organisation (Reed 2007 p64) with a view to improvement rather than focusing on a specific or perceived problem. Cooperrider *et al* (2003) offers the following assumptions to give a more practical basis on which to focus an AI approach:

- In every society, organization, or group, something works
- What we focus on becomes our reality
- Reality is created in the moment, and there are multiple realities
- The act of asking questions of an organization or group influences the group in some way
- People have more confidence and comfort to journey to the future (the unknown) when they carry forward parts of the past (the known)
- If we carry parts of the past forward, they should be what is best about the past
- It is important to value difference[11]
- The language we use creates our reality.

(Cooperrider *et al*, 2003 pp8-9)

3.5. The use of AI in this study

The AI model was adapted for the specific use of this study as a means to course evaluation as demonstrated in Figure 3. The adapted approach takes from AI specific elements required by the study and leaves behind other aspects more relevant to its origins in organisational development. It uses the AI model as a design structure with which to gather and analyse data and uses its positive focus to allow the study to begin by discovering what works well in relation to knowledge, skills and values in order to compare them to elements deemed relevant to diversity education by the DICE review arising from the literature.

---

[11] Note: This relates to valuing the different realities of individuals as opposed to difference in relation to the subject nature of the research topic.

Figure 3: Adapted AI Model
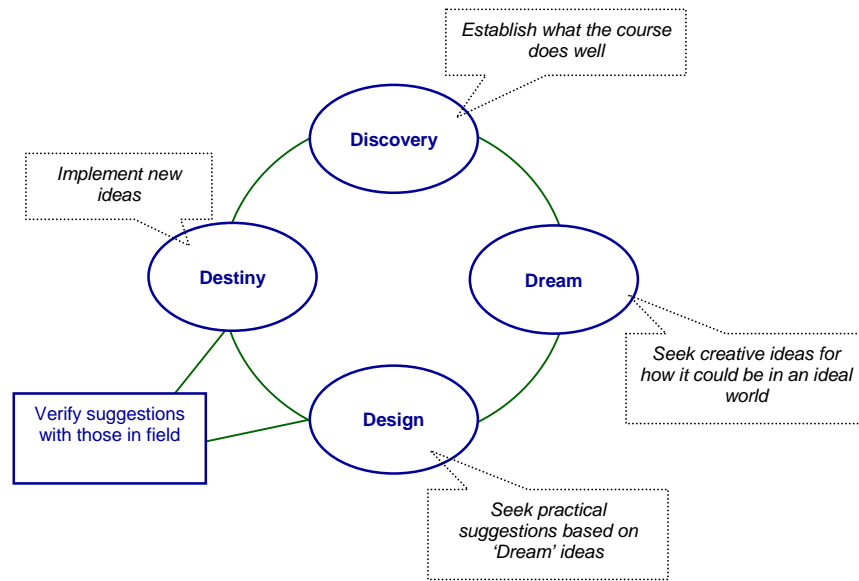
The positive nature of the approach is also adopted in the approach to questions in the various data collection tools to encourage the creative thinking that leads to positive suggestions for change within the programme. Due to the nature and size of this study, the design does not involve participants in conducting AI interviews with each other which is a common method of data collection associated with the AI approach as this requires training of participants in specific interview approaches and would not be feasible with final year students in particular. Instead the researcher adopts the structure of the AI Model, as shown in Figure 3 above, to create a design relevant to the context of the study (Figure 4). This new design includes the use of the 3 wishes question commonly used in AI projects and alumni interviews to give validity to findings and to compensate for the perceived over-positive nature of the AI approach.

Figure 4: Design of study
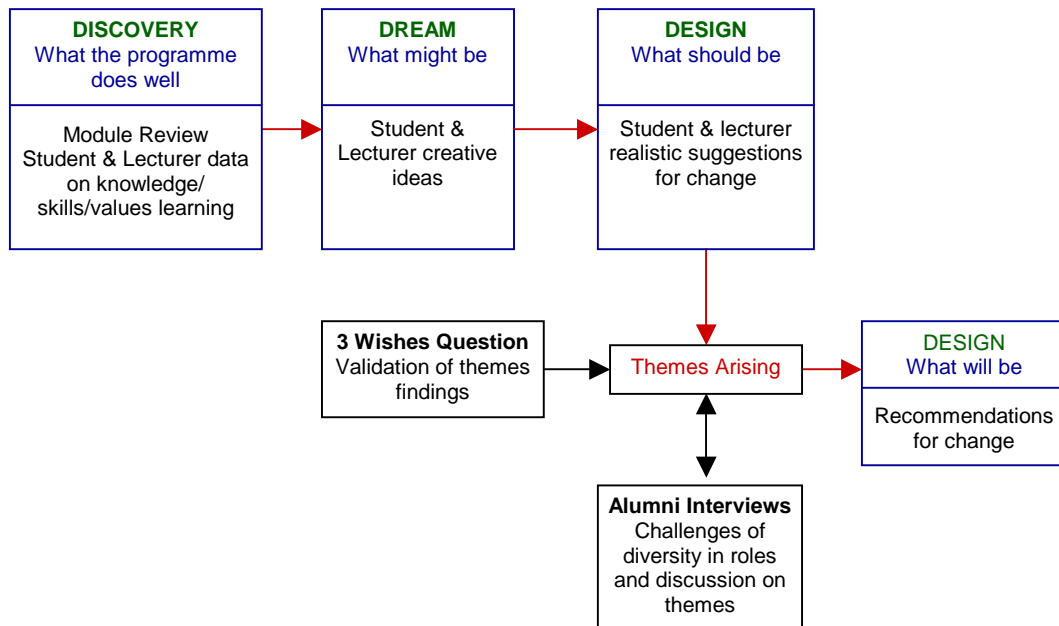
3.6. Limitations of the study

Limitations of the study relate to AI as an approach and the constraints of time in relation to the participants of the study. Similar limitations apply an AI as in action research. O'Leary (2004 p140) warns of 'the difficulty in controlling the pace of the research when involving a number of stakeholders, ….the politics involved in facilitating collaboration and the burden of ethical responsibility on the researcher (ibid pp 140-141).

Additional to these, although the focus on the positive in AI is its driving principle, it is also its greatest point of criticism. Grant and Humphries (2006) conducted a critical evaluation of the approach and cite Rogers and Fraser (2003), Gergen and Gergen (2003) and Dick (2004) among those raising concerns and cite Rogers and Fraser's analogy to explain:

> … ask whether appreciative inquiry focused entirely on the positive risks distortion by its emphasis of the positive, in the way a plant may grow lopsided as it reaches for the light. (cited by Grant and Humphries 2006, p402).

Grant and Humphries suggest that '…the focus on what is 'good' be extended, through consideration of a further definition of appreciation. Appreciation may also mean to know, to be conscious of, to take full or sufficient account of…' (2006 p403). By way of solving the issue of imbalance on the positive side they discuss a variety of solutions from other writers before proffering their own suggestions. They cite Van der Haar (2002) as suggesting that:

> … focusing on discourses of evaluation that incorporate the performative nature of language and dialogue, reflection and opening up towards multiple possibilities, the co-existence of multiple social realities, ethics and power. (op cit pp 404-405).

and Rogers and Fraser (2003) as suggesting that researchers:

> … focus primarily on Ai as a means of evaluation, acknowledging that the approach is better suited to certain situations; such as long standing programmes which may require an infusion of positive energy, or when the purpose of the evaluation is not to identify unknown problems but to identify strengths and build courage (cited by Grant and Humphries 2006, pp 405).

Finally, on this point, they cite Alvesson and Deetz (2000) as highlighting the importance of reflection in the action research process as a means to evaluation (*op cit* p406). Grant and Humphries suggest that solutions tend to focus evaluation on outcomes of a project rather than on the appreciative inquiry itself and '…suggest adoption of a critical, reflexive approach to the evaluation of appreciative inquiry' (ibid p406).

To account for any imbalance in the study as a result of focusing on the positive, an evaluation of the process itself was built in to the structure for data collection and participants were given opportunities to express themselves from a negative perspective as discussed later in chapter 6.

Consideration of timing in respect of the academic year in relation to recruitment of participants was also important, as was being conscious of examination times, class timetables and respecting the workload of both students and lecturers. Consideration of time was also required when choosing and designing methodologies, data collection tools and methods of analysis based on the amount of time students and lecturers were likely to give up in order to participate in the research.

3.7.   Ethics

All Dublin City University conducted research is subjected to an ethics process through which it is checked for risk to the participants, the researcher and the University. This research project was passed through this process and deemed to be low risk. Throughout the study, ethics was a consideration of the researcher who was continuously guided by the advice of her supervisor, the processes of the School of Educations Studies and the University. All participants were given an opportunity to opt out of their involvement in the research at any point and permission for use of recording devices and their responses in the data was also sought. Alumni interviewees were given an opportunity to review their interview transcripts prior to analysis and offered an opportunity to change or omit text.

3.8. Design of study

Reed (2007 p94) suggests an AI study '…will involve a reflective and responsive approach, on the basis of emerging ideas, rather than being carefully planned in detail before the study begins.' However, she also highlights this as a point of contention for postgraduate students who may need to show elements of planning as an academic requirement. For the purposes of this study, research questions of the study were worked into the 4-D framework of the AI model and guiding affirmative AI questions were used to give a positive focus to the research as an AI project:

Discovery – Appreciating what is
What does the course do well in relation to diversity?

Dream – Envisioning what might be
Building on findings from the discovery stage, what would participants envisage as the ideal in terms of how the course prepares students for diversity?

Design – Constructing what should be
What could the course do to incorporate the ideals envisaged in the Dream stage?

Destiny - Empowering what will be
What actions are suggested to ensure the implementation of ideas founded in the design stage?

3.8.1. Choosing an Affirmative Topic for the research

Central to the 4-D Cycle of an AI project is the *Affirmative Topic*, which acts as a positive focus for the inquiry. Cooperrider *et al*. (2003) suggest affirmative topics have the following characteristics:

- They are affirmative or stated in the positive
- They are desirable; that is, they identify the objectives that people want
- They are topics that the group is genuinely curious and wants to learn more about
- They move in the direction that the group wants to go in.

For the purposes of this study *Valuing and Embracing Diversity* was used as an affirmative topic to give focus to the inquiry. The use of the words 'valuing' and 'embracing' would allow the inquiry to focus on both the current and envisioned practice of the programme in relation to diversity and the affirmative nature of the words encourage a positive approach to thinking about diversity. The affirmative topic hence became the focus of the data collection elements of both the student questionnaire and the lecturer exercise.

3.9. Approach to data collection

An eclectic approach to data collection was employed to ensure that a diversity of contexts was explored and to add rigour to the overall findings of the study. This is commonly referred to as triangulation and is 'the use of two or more methods of data collection in the study of some aspect of human behaviour' (Cohen et al. 2000 p112).

An outline of data collection methodologies is discussed under the headings:

- Review of Course Content
- Student Lecture
- Lecturer Workshop
- Using the 'Three Wishes' question for rigour
- Interviewing Alumni for rigour

3.9.1. Review of course content

This involved a review of the programme intentions and the aims and objectives/outcomes of all modules for the programme in relation to the knowledge, skills and values deemed by the literature to be relevant to diversity education.

3.9.2. Student lecture

Final year students of the course are required to take two research modules in Semester 1 of their final academic year; *ES313 Developing a Research Perspective* and *ES314 Project 1* which is an action research project. Through discussions with the Year Head, who delivers both these modules, it was agreed that a two-hour lecture slot could be used for the researcher to introduce AI as a qualitative research approach similar to AR. This would serve the learning needs of the students as well as creating an opportunity for data collection for the researcher.

As students are undergraduates, and in most cases learning about how to conduct research for the first time, their learning of the research modules had focused predominantly on Action Research as an approach. It was important, therefore, to set objectives that created a learning opportunity for students but not to cause confusion for them with respect to their own module learning. Confusion as to the purpose of the lecture or how the AI approach worked could also affect the gathering of usable data for the study. The following objectives for the student lecture were set to guide the researcher, to ensure ethical considerations, and to aide communication with the Year Head.

- To deliver a teaching session that focused on AI as an approach and to compare AI to AR
- To use an AI questionnaire as a practical opportunity for students to understand how the model works and how affirmative questions are used
- To use the questionnaire to gather usable data for the researcher by using student understanding and experience of diversity on the course as the topic to be explored

- To take account of ethical considerations in delivery of the session and the gathering of data; informing students of the purpose of the purpose of the research, the right for students to participate and the intentions of the researcher in relation to confidentiality and use of data gathered from them.

Taking account of the limitations of the AI approach (see 3.5.) the Year Head was invited to attend the lecture as an observer and to complete an evaluation sheet at the end (Appendix A.)

3.9.3. Lecturer workshop

The Lecturer Workshop would follow the same approach. It would begin by explaining AI as an approach and use the exercise sheets to take participants through the stages of the AI model with a view to gathering data relevant to the research. As AI is a new approach to research in educational contexts, most lecturers would be unfamiliar with it and the model and the use of affirmative questions/responses to gather data would require explanation. As with the student lecture, it was therefore important to plan with a view to clarity around the dual purpose of the workshop, the basic tenets of the approach and the relevance to this study.

To allow for a more relaxed environment, an independent observer was not used in the lecturer workshop. Participants instead would complete an evaluation sheet that focused on the delivery of the workshop and their opinions on the use of AI as a methodology. This would be used to evaluate the use of AI in the study, taking account of the valued opinion of the lecturers and their knowledge and experience of educational research.

3.9.4. Using the 'Three Wishes' question of AI for rigour

A common question used in AI studies is to ask participants if they were given three wishes in relation to a situation or topic what would they be? This question is commonly used as a *Dream* question and can be less constraining than other positive-only questions used in AI. For the purpose of this study the *Three Wishes* question was used to get comparative data in relation to themes arising across the other stages of the study.

In the case of students this would be requested at a later date to the completion of the questionnaires so that they would not be led by the responses they had just given in the questionnaire. For lecturers, it would be an additional question on the exercise sheet after the Four-D stages were completed.

3.9.5. Using alumni interviews for rigour

Once the findings of the Four-D stages of the research were established, six alumni who are, or have been, working in educational contexts would be interviewed with a view to establishing what they believe are relevant changes or improvements to make in relation the programme preparing future students for diversity. Interviews would address the themes arising from findings of the study and would ask interviewees to consider the implications of the findings based on their experience of diversity in their own educational roles and contexts.

One-to-one, semi-structured interview would be used to gather data from the alumni.

> 'With semi-structured interviews, the interviewer…has a clear list of issues to be addressed and questions to be answered. However…the interviewer is prepared to be flexible in terms of the order in which the topics are considered, and, perhaps more significantly, to let the interview develop ideas and speak

more widely on the issues raised by the researcher. The answers are open-ended, and there is more emphasis on the interviewee elaborating points of interest' (Denscombe, 2007 p176).

3.10. Conclusion

This chapter placed the study in its philosophical grounding and described AI as an approach similar to AR that would act as a structure and focus to the gathering and analysis of data. An AI approach is grounded in social constructivism but limitations of the study required that the study be more constructivist than social constructivist in its approach which is more fitting with the context of the study.

The design of the study involved a review of programme and module intentions, and the gathering of data through student and lecturer questionnaires and exercise sheets structured using the AI model. Thee 'Three Wishes' question of AI would be used to add rigour and validity to the overall findings and themes arising from the study would be further compared to the ideas and suggestions of alumni based on their experience of the programme and their real life experiences of diversity in educational contexts.

The next chapter looks at how the data was collected and analysed and identifies emerging themes.

CHAPTER 4 – DATA COLLECTION AND ANALYSIS

4.1.   Introduction

This chapter focuses on the collection and analysis of data across the study. It begins

by discussing collection and analysis through the first three stages of the 4-D

structure; *Discovery, Dream*, and *Design* (The fourth stage, *Destiny*, represents the

recommendations of the study and is discussed in Chapter 6). The findings here are

compared to findings from the *Three Wishes question* to add validity. This chapter

then goes on to analyse data from the five alumni interviews and to compare what

alumni say about their preparation for work in relation to diversity and in particular

relating to knowledge, skills and values and the themes arising from the 4-D stages.

Analysis of the 4-D stage begins with the *Discovery* stage and the affirmation of what

the programme does well. This is demonstrated through the review of the programme

and module intentions coupled with what lecturers and final year students say in the

Discovery stage of the questionnaires and workshop exercise sheets. It then looks at

the findings from the *Dream* and *Destiny* stages of the lecturer and final year student

data and what themes arise in relation to suggested programme change or

improvement in relation to diversity.

4.2.   Data analysis approach

The study uses a mix of content analysis and thematic analysis.

> Content Analysis involves establishing categories and then counting the
> number of instances in which they are used in a text… it is a partially
> quantitative method, which determines the frequencies of the occurrence of
> particular categories (Juffe and Yardley 2004 p56).

Content analysis influenced the approach to analysis of the module intentions and the data arising from the 'three wishes' questions in the participant data.

Thematic analysis was used to analyse participant data and to analyse findings across the study through themes. Boyatzis (1998) suggests a theme is

> … a pattern found in the information that at minimum describes and organizes the possible observations and at maximum interprets aspects of the phenomenon. A theme may be identified at the manifest level (directly observable in the information) or at the latent level (underlying the phenomenon). The themes may be initially generated inductively from the raw information or generated deductively from theory and prior research. (p4)

He further suggests that thematic analysis

> … enables scholars, observers, or practitioners to use a wide variety of types of information in a systematic manner that increases their accuracy or sensitivity in understanding and interpreting observations about people, events, situation and organizations (p5).

A further advantage of thematic analysis pointed out by Boyatzis is that it '… offers a vehicle for increasing communication in ways that researchers use various methods can appreciate' (ibid p5).

From a practical point of view, Crabtree and Miller (1999) suggest a template approach to analysing data which influenced the use of Microsoft Excel spreadsheets to create templates for storing data and noting themes emerging through the data.

4.3.   The Discovery Stage - What the programme does well

This stage begins with discussions on specific findings from the review of literature which offer a basis on which to compare programme and module intentions in relation

to elements of good practice in preparing education studies students for diversity. It discusses how the programme intentions relate to the elements deemed as good practice and highlights any gaps.

4.3.1. Findings from the review of literature

The literature on diversity focuses mainly on cultural diversity. However, as the subject of this study is a degree that aims to prepare students as future educators, it was important not to narrow a definition of diversity to one of culture at the risk of negating other elements of diversity relevant to the teaching and learning context of the programme. It was important, therefore, to allow participants to see diversity as encompassing the notion of difference in all of its forms and in doing so to allow for cultural, geographical, physical, intellectual, learning, and other differences to be included in the data.

In order to address this, the review of literature led to the formulation of the following definition of diversity that was explained to both students and lecturers as a definition relevant to the context of the study:

> Diversity is the multiple differences that occur within and between individuals
> and communities of individuals.

One document of practical use to the study arising from the review of literature was Global and Justice Perspectives in Education (Fitzgerald 2005) which is a review of literature conducted by The DICE Project (Development & Intercultural Education)[12.] It reviewed '…the existing body of international and Irish literature pertaining to

---

[12] DICE works to integrate development education within initial primary teacher education and operates against five colleges of education in the Republic of Ireland. DICE website: www.diceproject.org

development and intercultural education" (ibid p5). For ease of reading this will hereafter be referred to as the 'DICE Review'.

The DICE Review offered a comprehensive list of elements deemed relevant in the preparation of teachers in global and intercultural education. It categorises these elements under three themes: C*ognitive*; V*alues and Attitudes*; and S*kills and Competencies* (ibid pp13-23). For the purposes of this study, the lists were used as a checklist for good practice in terms of preparing students for diversity. Although the focus of the DICE Review was on preparing future teachers for the global and intercultural dimension of teaching, it includes knowledge, skills and values relevant to the preparation of students for diversity in other contexts relevant to educators.

4.3.2. Review of programme intentions

The Online Prospectus 2009 for the BSc in Education and Training programme gives the following as a programme description: 'This course develops trainers and educators who can design, deliver and evaluate a broad range of courses in a wide range of settings.' [13] It further suggests that the programme will prepare graduates for employment in education and training contexts in the public and private sectors from '…pre-school, through community and adult education.' This demonstrates the mix of educational environments intended for graduates of the programme.

A *Careers Service DCU* survey conducted in 2008 found that 35 of the 50 graduates who completed the programme in 2007, 22 were employed, 8 were engaged in further study, 1 was seeking employment and 4 were not available for employment.[14] Of the

---

[13] Availabe from www.dcu.ie/prospective/deginfo.php?classname=ET&mode=full
[14] Available from www.dcu.ie/students/careers/fdr/fdr.php3?programme=et

22 employed all were employed in Ireland and the majority who gave details of their role or company were working in educational contexts in the private, community and public sectors. This demonstrates the mix of educational environments in which graduates have gained employment or further study.

The *Online Prospectus* also states that the programme focuses on the development of specialist knowledge and skills in the areas of:

- Social and personal development
- Interpersonal communications and education for multicultural and diverse settings
- Learning styles and group development
- Learning difficulties

However, these are not explicit themes of the programme. Explicit themes running across the three years of the programme are outlined in a printed brochure for the programme (Appendix B) as follows and do not include a diversity theme:

- History, Philosophy and Sociology
- Psychology of Learning
- Curriculum
- Civil and Social Education
- Information & Communications Technology (ICT)
- Applied Teaching Strategies
- Applied Theory

4.3.3. Review of module intentions

The DICE Review proposed themes considered relevant to teacher education in global, development and intercultural education in the domains of: cognitive knowledge; values; believes and attitudes; and skills and capacities (Appendix C). In order to compare data with these listings, the themes of knowledge, skills and values were used to gather data in the study. The categories under each of the DICE Review themes were entered onto three separate Microsoft Excel spreadsheets named as

Knowledge, *Skills*, and *Values* and three columns were added to each entitled *Module,*

Year and *Aims/outcomes* in preparation for cross-checking against aims and outcomes

from the programme modules as shown in the extract from Appendix C below:

Figure 5: Sample of Appendix C layout – DICE Themes and Module Data

Taking account of the definition of diversity central to the study, and based on the

author's personal knowledge and experience of the programme, two additional

categories for *Special Needs* and *Learning Differences* not relevant to, or included in,

the DICE Review categories, were added to each of the spreadsheets to allow for their

inclusion in the gathering of data and analysis relevant to this study.

All module descriptors for the programme were downloaded from the University website and the aims, objectives and/or learning outcomes were compiled in a single document for ease of use and reporting (Appendix D). Each module was checked against the categories listed under knowledge, skills and values on the prepared spreadsheets and module names, aims and outcomes were entered into the spreadsheet against any relevant category (Appendix E). During this process it became evident that some module outcomes, although not explicitly related to learning in relation to diversity, did contribute to some categories listed on the prepared *Knowledge, Skills and Values* spreadsheets. As a result, a further column was added to note if outcomes were explicit or implied in relation to categories. This was intended to aid deeper analysis and reporting of findings.

For information, module codes are made up of the letters ES, which refers to the School of Education Studies and three numbers: the first relating to the year of study and the last two relating to the number of the module. For example ES125 is a first year module in the School of Education Studies. Aims relate to the broad aim of the module and have been used where relevant in the data to indicate intended learning. Module outcomes outline intended teaching/learning outcomes of the module and predominantly make up the data. In the cases of two *modules ES218 Policy & Structures in Education and Training* and *ES219 Sociology of Education and Training,* information was not displayed on the online module descriptors and at the time of writing this information was still unavailable to the researcher. Analysis of module intentions in relation to diversity are discussed in respect of knowledge, skills and values.

<u>Knowledge</u>

It is evident from the *Knowledge* spreadsheet that most categories of knowledge, deemed to be important in relation to preparing students for diversity, are catered for in some way by one or more module outcomes across the programme, and in most cases in an explicit way. It is clear also that the spread of categories are met predominantly in first year through *ES116 Civics, Social and Political Education (CSPE)* and in the third year through *ES310 Values, Identity and Intercultural Learning* and *ES311 Equality, Access and Inclusion*. These third year modules dominate the data created in the *Knowledge*, *Skills* and *Values* spreadsheets and appear to deliver the majority of learning in relation to diversity in the programme. Aims of each of these key modules explain the learning involved:

ES310 Values, Identity and Intercultural Learning aims to:

> …enquire into the nature of values and their relevance in education and training settings. The module will address the area of values from the perspective of individual identity, interculturalism and the reflective practitioner.

ES311 Equality, Access and Inclusion aims to:

> … enable students to identify and analyse key issues in the areas of equality, access and inclusion of minority, ethnic and disadvantaged groups in society.

Of note also from the *Knowledge* spreadsheet is that there is little or no intended learning in relation to diversity in year two beyond that relating to learning differences, where it features strongly. However, it is likely that some learning in relation to diversity does occur in year two through missing module *ES219 Sociology of Education and Training*.

Finally, two knowledge categories were not matched with any learning outcomes from the programme. These were *Sustainable Development* and *Migration* both of which relate more to development education and are therefore not relevant to this study.[15]

Skills

The *Skills* categories were matched by a mix of first, second and third year module aims and outcomes and in most cases in an explicit way. Again, the predominant modules were *ES310* and *ES311* delivered in the final year of the programme. Skills categories from the DICE Review relate to *Communication Skills* and *Intellectual Skills* which were both strongly matched by outcomes from first and second year modules such as *ES125 Personal Development and Communication Skills* and *ES114 Microteaching and Teaching Preparation, ES203 Classroom Mediation Skills* and *ES210 Work Based Teaching/Training Practice*. Categories relating to *Social Skills* and *Action Skills* were also met by modules from each of the programme years.

As the skills deemed relevant to diversity education focus on generic skills such as personal development and the skills required for other elements of teaching, these tended to be met in a more balanced way across modules and programme years than the knowledge categories.

Skills categories not met by any module outcome were: *Visualise a probable and preferable future; Develop relationships with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds* and *Identify opportunity for future action.* The only one of these

---

[15] Since conducting this research Education for Sustainable Development has been introduced as an element in year 2 of the programme.

elements not met by the intended outcomes relevant to this study was *Develop relationships with people from diverse cultures and backgrounds* and this will be referred to later as a strong theme arising in the overall findings of the study.[16]

Values

Values listed in the DICE Review were grouped as themes usable for this element of the study and given the following category names on the *Values* spreadsheet:

- Values relating to rights, equality and freedom
- Values relating to dealing with others
- Values relating to diversity
- Values relating to communicating with others
- Values relating to taking action
- Values relevant to development education

Relating module aims, objectives or outcomes were listed against each values category. As with the *Knowledge* and *Skills* themes, most categories were met by one or more modules. However, no outcomes from year two were matched against any categories in the *Values* theme and as with *Knowledge*, the spreadsheet was dominated by modules ES310 and ES311. As such, any learning in relation to values and diversity would appear from this evidence to take place in years one and three with no intended learning in relation to this element of preparation for diversity in year two. However, it should again be noted that outcomes for the missing second year module *ES219 Sociology of Education and Training* and recently introduced elements relating to sustainable development are also likely to meet some categories in relation to values.

There were two values categories not matched by module outcomes. The first, *A willingness to learn, in particular about other cultures and backgrounds of all pupils in the class*, is similar to that missing from the *Skills* theme and relates to the need to experience diversity which again is a strong theme across the overall findings of the study. The second, *A healthy scepticism towards sources of information and media representations* relates to development education and was not deemed relevant in the context of this study.

Conclusion of Review of Modules

It is evident from the review of modules that the programme intentions largely match what is deemed to be elements of good practice in relation to knowledge, skills and values. Outcomes from third year modules *ES310 Values, Identity and Intercultural Learning* and *ES311 Equality, Access and Inclusion* explicitly deal with diversity and as such matched the majority of categories, particularly in the Knowledge and Values themes. Learning outcomes in relation to personal development, communication and ICT also met skills and competencies relevant to diversity, although not always intended. However, it is also evident that the spread of intended learning in relation to diversity may be weak in year two which is the year in which the WBP opportunity takes place.

4.3.4. Analysis of student data from the Discovery stage

Students attended a two-hour lecture on AI which took them through the learning outlined in the lecture slides (Appendix F). In keeping with standards of ethics the research purpose and intentions of the researcher in relation to the data gathered from

them was explained and they were given an option not to participate in the research. They then completed a questionnaire (Appendix G) which was structured using the 4-D structure of the AI model. Data from each of the completed questionnaires was typed into Microsoft Excel spreadsheets (Appendix H). Data from the *Discovery* stage of the student questionnaire was entered into three columns: *Knowledge*, *Skills*, and *Values* and each respondent allocated a number on the left hand side of the spreadsheet as depicted in Figure 6 below:

Figure 6: Sample of Appendix H layout – Discovery Stage: Knowledge, Skills, Values

Students were asked to give three examples of knowledge, skills, and values, where they believe the programme helped them in valuing and embracing diversity to determine what they believed was worked well in relation to preparing them for diversity. Data was analyzed for common themes, discussed under the following headings:

- Knowledge students deemed as helpful
- Skills students deemed as helpful
- Values students deemed as helpful

Knowledge students deemed as helpful

Several themes arose in relation to knowledge and preparing students for diversity:

- Traveller Community
- Cultural knowledge
- Special Needs
- Linking learning to the concept of Diversity
- Guest speakers
- Reference to modules explicitly dealing with diversity
- Reference to other modules demonstrating implied learning

Traveller community

Over fifty per cent of students (14) made reference to the Traveller Community in relation to knowledge of diversity. Of these, six referred to learning through the first year module *ES116 – CSPE* and five referred to the third year module *ES311 – Equality, Access and Inclusion*. Specific reference in relation to the Traveller Community focused on knowledge of the Community as a culture, their rights and the need for acceptance as shown in the extracts from the following data:

3	1st year the module on CSPE really gave me a more in-depth understanding in the area of the travelling community.

5	CSPE also widened my knowledge of diversity e.g. the Travelling Community, special needs lectures.

13	Equality, Access & Inclusion - I had previously no knowledge about the Travelling community.

14	Equality, Access & Inclusion - learning about values travelling community have

18	Learned about the Travelling Community and their diverse culture to ours

20	We have learned about the Travelling Community in the Equality, Access, Inclusion module. The knowledge I gained about the Travelling community has helped me to embrace their diversity in the outside world as I have a better understanding of their way of life.

Cultural knowledge

Aside from specific references to learning in respect of the Travelling Community other direct references to cultural knowledge were also made and relate to understanding cultures and the impact of having different cultures in the classroom:

3	At the moment (3rd year) Values, identity and interculturalism is helping me to learn not only about myself but different cultures as well.

4	Learnt the different ways in which cultures impact on a classroom …

7	How to interact with different cultural backgrounds.

Special needs

Six students referred to knowledge in relation to special needs as being helpful in preparing them for diversity. References related mainly to knowing and understanding the difficulties faced by special needs students and one student referred to knowledge specifically in relation to catering for students at third level:

6	The difficulties learners that have a specific learning difficulty face in educational setting

8	Know and understand learning difficulties facing students with specific learning needs.
25	Accommodation of disabled students within the university environment.

26	Brief amounts of knowledge of special educational needs in Psychology module (year 2)

Linking learning to the concept of Diversity

Some students made links between theory and their learning in relation to diversity as well as the importance of factual learning and reading in relation to expanding their knowledge in the area. This demonstrates student ability to apply knowledge across a range of subjects in relation to the concept of diversity.

10	Theorists such as Howard Gardner had an impact on how I thought about diversity

24	Reading

16	Discovering factual percentages of differing individuals involved in education i.e. bigger picture

1	(Curriculum Design) - Learning about how other education systems work.

16	Ethical implications of teaching a diverse range of students

23	Greater understanding of race theory

25	Creating lesson Plans (LPs)

26	Writing Aims & Objectives for learning plans
26	Bloom - Edgar Dale
26	Brief amounts of knowledge of special educational needs in Psychology module (year 2)

4	Peer grouping and group work can be used to teach more about tolerance for and appreciation of diversity.

Reference to the concept of diversity was made in relation to inclusion, students' own values, and teaching strategies.

3	2nd year Teaching & Learning strategies help me understand that we are all different and should embrace this.

7	What makes a good teacher.

8	Know and understand learning difficulties facing students with specific learning needs.
8	Importance of inclusion in the classroom.

14	Equality, Access & Inclusion - didn't fully understand about refugees and asylum seekers' rights, ethics and values before this.

Guest speakers

Another theme relates to the knowledge gained through guest speakers. Reference was made to three guest speakers as having helped them in preparing for diversity in relation to knowledge and one student further suggested that more guest speakers would be helpful.

15	Talk by visiting lecturer from Australian University on experiences of difference in Australia school system.
15	Talks by Irish educators currently working in schools dealing with diversity would be helpful

24	Guest speakers i.e. AHEAD, Council for the Blind of Ireland

Reference to modules explicitly dealing with diversity

Specific reference to third year module *ES311 – Equality, Access and Inclusion* was the most prominent in the data with 15 students referring directly to the module regarding knowledge gained and two making further reference to knowledge of laws, which implies learning through this module. Reference to the module was made in relation to a range of cognitive learning such as: law and policy; knowledge of the Traveller Community; understanding of others; human rights; difference and

acceptance of others and learning through the assessment as exampled in the following extracts.

1	(Equality, Access, Inclusion) - Travellers - discrimination, acceptance of others

6	Module ES311 learned what is diversity under the 9 grounds. Acts relating to these 9 grounds.

5	Equality, Access & Inclusion has given me a much better understanding of knowledge around the area of diversity.

14	Equality, Access & Inclusion - didn't fully understand about refugees and asylum seekers' rights, ethics and values before this.

19	Learning about age, sexuality, travelling community in Equality, Access & Inclusion

12	Completing an assignment on socio-economically disadvantaged areas.

Seven of the 26 respondents also made specific reference to the CSPE module (ES116) delivered in first year as lending to knowledge in relation to diversity. Six of these referred to knowledge in relation to the Traveller Community and others in relation to awareness, culture and human rights as in the examples:

9	CSPE also widened our knowledge and made us more aware of things around us.

21	CSPE - about human rights etc. - Travellers

Reference to other modules demonstrating implied learning

Other modules were mentioned in fewer instances but demonstrate implied learning in relation to diversity. The second year module *ES217 – Learning & Psychology of Motivation* was mentioned by several students in relation to offering brief knowledge on diversity and what diversity is. Learning about curriculum design was mentioned by one student as offering knowledge of diversity through learning of other

educational systems and the second year sociology module was mentioned in relation to learning around the nine grounds of discrimination in equality legislation implying diversity learning in year 2. Finally, in relation to direct reference to specific modules, the second year module on teaching strategies was also mentioned as helping one student to understand diversity.

References to these modules are shown below:

3	At the moment (3rd year) Values, identity and interculturalism is helping me to learn not only about myself but different cultures as well.

1	(Curriculum Design) - Learning about how other education systems work.

12	Learning about the 9 grounds in Sociology and again in Equality Access & Inclusion

26	Brief amounts of knowledge of special educational needs in Psychology module (year 2)

3	2nd year Teaching & Learning strategies help me understand that we are all different and should embrace this.

Conclusion

In terms of knowledge gained through the programme, the data concurs with the findings of the module review in that learning in relation to diversity arises from specific modules and in particular Module *ES311 – Equality, Access and Inclusion*. The student data demonstrated that learning was both intended and unintended, was arising through modules across the thee years, but was more prominent in first and final year modules. The following themes represent the areas of knowledge learning in relation to diversity that students referred to on the course as being useful to them in relation to preparing them for diversity:

- The Traveller Community
- Cultures
- Special Needs
- Diversity as a concept
- Learning from guest speakers

Skills students deemed as helpful

Themes arising in relation to skills learning students acknowledged in relation to diversity centred on those relevant for practical teaching and WBP, reflection, group work and communication and these reflect the skills suggested by the DICE Review.

Work based practice

There were many references to 'teaching practice' (WBP) in relation to skills for dealing with diversity. Many simply noted 'teaching practice' without further comment while others linked it specifically with dealing with diversity as shown in the following extracts:

1	Teaching Experience - Implementing skills in the work environment

2	Communication with children from different cultural backgrounds (teaching practice)

5	Skills and knowledge learned over the two years helped me deal with situations in teaching practice

14	Teaching Practice - encouraging non-racial abuse in class through my role modelling.

16	Gained competencies in dealing with a wide range of students learned from teaching practice.

Reflection

Although not frequently referred to, some students recognised reflection as a skill, as well as the opportunity to learn new skills through the learning derived from reflection on and highlight the emphasis Mulcahy (2003) puts on the importance of reflective practice in diversity education[17].

4	Reflective practice enhanced me to think about their specific needs for inclusion - more aware of my prejudices and values in relation to others.

24	Critical thinking
24	Reflective practice

Group work

Group work was also referred to under *skills* where one student recognised group work as an approach for their students.

4	Learnt the different ways in which cultures impact on a classroom - socio-economic class - need for group work. [Knowledge section]

Under skills this student further recognised the value of group work as a skill. Others recognised it as a means to enhance communication skills and cooperation.

1	Microteaching - getting to work with peers and make class/lesson plan

4	Teaching methodology/strategies needed more in class to accommodate diversity - learnt the value of the group work

7	Communications class - group work and different opinions

---

[17] See Chapter 4, page 31.

Communication skills

Communication is highlighted in the review of modules as an important skill in relation to diversity. Communication skills were recognised in relation to diversity by students who noted the skill in relation to their experiences of communicating in real life situations in the teaching practice element of the programme.

2	Communication with children from different cultural backgrounds (teaching practice)

25	Year 2 - I learned the skill of 'Listening properly' Learning to actually hear what others are trying to say in reading between the lines when dealing with others.

7	Communications class - group work and different opinions Adapt material to suit different students' needs. Put role play into use

23	Ability to debate topics concerning Diversity, race, creed etc.

18	Taught me to value each person in the classroom. They are all here to do the same thing - <u>learn</u>.

Values Students Deemed as Helpful

In the values section of the questionnaire, students were asked to give examples of values that would indicate how the course has specifically helped them in valuing and embracing diversity. Values, for some, are not as easy to articulate as knowledge or skills and, in hindsight, this question could have been phrased with more clarity for example: *Suggest values you have gained through your learning on the programme that might help you in dealing with diversity*. As an instruction to students this question might have gleaned more specific and clear responses. During the student lecture, although cognizant of not leading students in their responses, particular care was taken in explaining what this instruction was asking of students. As such, responses from students on values focused in some cases on the concept of values and

in other cases on specific values gained by the individual as a result of learning on the programme.

What was most evident from this element of data was the acknowledgment that understanding ones own values and respecting the values of others is relative to dealing with diversity and both are areas deemed by the DICE Review as important to preparing students for diversity. In relation to values learning students deemed as useful from the programme, several themes arose through this element of the student data and are discussed under the headings: Acceptance and inclusion; Appreciation of self and others; and Ethos of programme and cross-modular learning.

Acceptance and inclusion

This theme is prominent in diversity education and features also in the student data demonstrating student understanding of the link between values and diversity. Most students refer explicitly to their own learned values which is the intention of the module *ES310 - Values, Identity and Intercultural Learning* referred to in the review of module aims and outcomes. Evidence of student learning in relation to values and inclusion are shown in the following extracts:

4	How we need to be fluid in our values and values are about perception
4	Thought that bringing in a person who was disabled to teach one of the modules really helped make me think about prejudice more.

7	Make all students welcome into your class.

8	To consider the whole class and ensure inclusion

20	From my Teaching Practice I also learned a set of values to use in the classroom. I then used these values I learned as a guide to my teaching in the classroom. I learned how to include everybody/all diversities in relation to nationality/disabilities etc.

17	Everybody learns differently. I know to take this on board now. Different cultures

18	Taught me to value each person in the classroom. They are all here to do the same thing - <u>learn</u>.

Appreciation of self and others

This is also a value suggested as important to diversity education by the DICE review and referred to by many students in the data. Again learning from module *ES310 - Values, Identity and Intercultural Learning* is strongly referred to in relation to understanding their own and others' values. Other modules across the programme also feature as demonstrated in the following extracts:

1	Values & Identity module and Lifelong Learning - what values are and how they affect others - my value system

2	Equality Act - all have same rights.

4	How value systems exist within all of us.

7	Value yourself first so that you can understand others. Respect each student.

12	Through class discussions - learning other students values

13	I am more aware of my own personal values which I feel is important to have for life.

14	I appreciate (and am more aware) of my own values after Values, Identity & Intercultural learning

15	Module on values and Identity & Intercultural is v.good making you reflect on your own and others values

18	Taught me to value each person in the classroom. They are all here to do the same thing - <u>learn</u>.

19	Values, Identity and Intercultural learning - value our identity e.g. I'm Irish Guest [Australian] speaker - value of identity, spirituality

21	Each of the above [CSPE, Psychology, Equality Access Inclusion] has taught me how my value system works and has taught me to value people who are diverse.

24	Awareness

26	In Values, Identity & Multicultural learning - much to do with values in diverse contexts

Ethos of programme and cross modular Learning

Observation of how lecturers and staff conduct themselves and how the programme in general has impacted on students' own values was also evident:

1	Evaluation module - ethics of working with others CSPE - To value all people and customs. Understand before judgement.

4	Thought that bringing in a person who was disabled to teach one of the modules really helped make me think about prejudice more.

8	Understand the laws around diversity.

9	Equality in education. A lot more about values in education

10	The ed and training course as a whole has an emphasis on the value of treating every diverse individual student (as a future teacher) equally.

12	I think values has run through all modules so far

16	Insight into the holistic learning that's done by students, which may not always be clearly evident.

20	From my Teaching Practice I also learned a set of values to use in the classroom. I then used these values I learned as a guide to my teaching in the classroom. I learned how to include everybody/all diversities in relation to nationality/disabilities etc.

21	Each of the above [CSPE, Psychology, Equality Access Inclusion] has taught me how my value system works and has taught me to value people who are diverse.

22	Each module highlighted the importance of respecting everyone's values

23	Equal treatment of student(s) on teaching practice with special needs.

Conclusion

Greater clarity in what was required of the student might have gleaned more explicit data in relation to values students attribute to their learning on the programme. However, the data did demonstrate students' ability to relate the importance of values in relation to diversity in education and in particular how understanding of one's own values can help in appreciating others. Through the *Values* data, students also acknowledge the development of their own values through learning across the programme.

In terms of individual values attributable to learning on the programme, instances in the data explicitly related to the valuing of oneself, the valuing of others, the valuing of difference, the acknowledgement and appreciation of other cultures, an appreciation of peoples' rights and legislation, the valuing of identity and individualism, respect of others and a valuing of the need for inclusion in educational contexts. Most of these values are included in the values set outlined in the DICE Review. The values element of student data highlighted an acknowledgement and appreciation of diversity learning in relation to values across the following areas of learning:

Learning about:

- Acceptance and inclusion
- Appreciation of self and others
- Learning from the ethos of programme
- Learning about values through applying learning across modules.

4.3.5. Analysis of lecturer data from the Discovery stage

Similar to the student lecture, a workshop on AI was used as a means to introduce lecturers to AI as an approach, to demonstrate the process of the exercise, and to gather data. On agreement with the Head of School, a staff memorandum (Appendix I) was distributed at a staff meeting inviting academic staff involved in the programme to attend a workshop on AI. The memorandum explained the dual purpose of the workshop. Initial interest was high but, due to a variety of commitments, attendance on the day was low with only six lecturers attending. A further workshop date was offered to those who expressed interest initially and four more attended.

Participating lecturers were taken through the information shown on the lecturer slides (Appendix J) before completing an exercise sheet (Appendix K) and a short evaluation sheet (Appendix L). Both workshops were delivered in the same way using the same resources to ensure consistency in the gathering of data.

As with the students, lecturers were asked to highlight instances under knowledge, skills, and values, where they assist(ed) in preparing students to value and embrace diversity. As with the student data, lecturer responses were entered into spreadsheets (Appendix M) and data from the *Discovery* stage of the lecturer exercise sheets was entered into three columns: *Knowledge*, *Skills*, and *Values* and each respondent was allocated a number. Data was analysed across the themes knowledge, skills and values.

<u>Knowledge</u>

Responses in relation to knowledge were limited, which was expected given that there are few modules that explicitly prepare students in relation to diversity. However, reflecting on their own practice, lecturers did refer to ways that their approach could lend to student learning in respect of diversity in an indirect way as evidenced in the following extracts:

9	There are no specific elements in my modules which deal explicitly with diversity as a concept. However, I would bring students attention to the fact that we are living in and will increasingly experience diversity in educational environments and that we have a responsibility to be sensitive to and acknowledge such diversity.

10	Facilitating students in their learning and understanding of the need to avoid labelling others because of our prejudice.

Others referred to the explicit knowledge in relation to diversity taught through their entire modules:

8	Introduce students to concept of equality and how it relates to diversity Outline legal framework for equality, diversity in schooling Consider 9 grounds for equality legislation Reflect on research into issues of equality and diversity

4	Designed a module to introduce students to concept of diversity - module aims to prepare students for working in a diverse society.

There was evidence also that some lecturers see diversity as a natural theme of teaching and refer to how they bring the theme into modules that have no direct requirement to deal with knowledge in relation to diversity:

10	The modules are designed to include all, provide access and empower all students regardless of background.

3	Within ICT, [I] introduce Gardner's theory of MI [Multiple Intelligiences] to enable students to better understand how to facilitate individual learner needs and preferences (learner diversity).

1	Mircroteaching - to use various teaching approaches and appeal to different stimulus as every student learning in their own way.

Skills

Lecturer references to skills relating to preparing students for diversity were also limited. References that explicitly referred to developing skills centred around methodologies, the ability to reflect and the ability to plan or design courses with respect to diversity, as shown in the following examples:

1	Skill of varying the stimulus and using AV aids to teach effectively to different types of learners

3	Students were asked to apply knowledge by producing website/printed materials that reflect recognition of learner diversity (in terms of learning needs or preference (learner diversity).

4	Through reflection on readings around diversity, prepared students to put theories into practice. Skill to design course on diversity.

7	… offering practical, problem based learning approach to the topic.

One lecturer further observed a need to change his/her method of assessment to allow the application of knowledge and values:

8	Students facilitated in reflecting on diversity in own personal context. Could do more here - terminal exam undermines application of knowledge and values in specific contexts.

Although acknowledgement of skills explicitly related to diversity learning was limited, as with knowledge lecturers referred to skills that might lend to the preparation of students for diversity in an unintended way:

9	Students are encouraged to develop skills in self critical reflection. Groupwork can also help to develop student awareness of difference and diversity. This can be useful in dealing with diversity and particularly any difficulties that may arise in diverse settings.

2	perhaps the areas where this does occur is when teaching about issues such as 'learning styles' where student teachers need to appreciate that they are teaching 'individuals' and that teaching methodologies must be adapted appropriately.. In this siatuation the skills would relate to the different teaching methodologies employed reflecting the various learning styles or needs.

Values

In the data arising from the *Values* element of the lecturer exercise, lecturers referred to specific values they either demonstrated to students through intended teaching relating to diversity or through values they modelled or supported.

Specific values referred to in the data were; democracy, consensus, respect, tolerance, appreciation of others, learning from others, self-awareness, empathy, understanding, objectivity and neutrality of research, pastoral care, encouragement, and the valuing of diversity itself. All of these values are deemed important in respect of diversity and education as outlined in the review of module aims and outcomes. Examples of lecturer responses in relation to values are shown in the following data extracts:

4	Specifically designed module to allow students to critically reflect on espoused values and the reality of holding such values and living through them in a diverse setting.

7	Showing students how diversity can enhance the learning experience.

8	Use case studies to help students develop empathy and understand diversity in people's lives.

9	There is a range of values that the course implicitly and explicitly promotes and encourages and these are linked to ideas of professional competence. Those skills would be tolerance, understanding, empathy, pastoral care, respect and encouragement.

6	Ultimately the purpose is to awaken students to the notion that some may not be as objective or neutral as they think - key questions are who funds it? Who controls it? Whose questions get asked? Who gets to decide?

It should be noted that one lecturer highlighted their disagreement with focusing on values and alluded to a values free teaching environment:

5	I attempt at all times to present academic content in a value free environment. If I make a value judgement, I explain beforehand that it is a personal value.

This comment demonstrates an awareness of the need for caution around the transmission of personal values in education and strengthens the importance of a values-clarification approach (Raths, Harmin and Simons, 1966) to diversity education discussed earlier in the literature[18] and the importance of education studies students having an understanding of values in education generally.

Overall, lecturer data on values demonstrates the importance lecturers put on both intended and unintended learning and the recognition that values are being transmitted through the manner in which the programme itself is structured and delivered. It implies that lecturers are conscious of values building and the impact of values on diversity and other aspects of teaching and learning.

---

[18] See Chapter 2, page 29

4.3.6. Conclusions to Discovery Stage analysis

In the *Discovery* stage the review of module outcomes affirmed that the programme learning intentions were strongly related to the knowledge, skills and values deemed important in relation to preparing students for diversity. However, it also highlighted the fact that learning occurred mainly in years one and three and through specific modules. This suggested a possible deficit in learning opportunity in year two that when accounting for the learning likely to happen through module *ES219 Sociology of Education and Training* may not be as significant as it appears. Also evident from the review of modules was that the programme did not appear to offer opportunity for students to experience diversity or to learn about diversity in practical ways.

Participant responses also affirmed in the case of students that learning in relation to diversity through knowledge, skills and values was evident and could be related to the type of learning deemed relevant in the DICE Review. Similarly, although some lecturers are not involved in modules explicitly aimed at preparing students for diversity, it was evident that implied learning was taking place and that indirectly students were learning in relation to knowledge, skills, and values, at varying levels across modules in the programme.

4.4. The Dream Stage - Envisioning What Might Be

For the purpose of this study, the *Dream* stage acts as a means to engage participants in positive creative thinking in relation to the possibilities for preparing students for diversity. In doing so, the *Dream* stage aims to lead them to creative, realisable, suggestions for programme improvement in the *Destiny* stage. In the *Dream* stage,

participants were asked to think 'big' and think creatively to express what they would like the programme to do in an ideal world in preparing students for diversity.

Judging from the data, not all participants were able to express themselves in the creative way required of the *Dream* stage and some data was more akin to the pragmatic suggestions expected in the *Destiny* stage. This meant that some individual's responses in the *Dream* stage were not dissimilar to their responses in the *Design* stage. However, as the purpose of the *Dream* stage was to lead participants to the *Design* stage and practical ideas for improvement this was not an issue for the research.

As a consequence, the data from the *Dream* stage of both student and lecturer data was checked for any practical suggestions made by participants that were not built upon or appearing in the *Design* stage of their responses. This was to ensure no relevant data was omitted in the analysis.

4.4.1. Analysis of student data from the Dream stage

Overall, students demonstrated they were able to use the *Dream* stage to focus positively on what they believe the programme 'should' offer students in relation to diversity and to translate their ideas into practical solutions in the *Destiny* stage as shown in the following extracts:

	Dream	**Destiny**
1	Travelling to another country and learning in a different university for 1 academic year. As teachers we would gain more experience of different education systems. As students travelling is a very valid life experience.	Have shared lectures through video imaging with students in another country.
3	Culture: learn more about culture diversity from an early stage – help you value and appreciate it more.	Develop within modules so they incorporate culture diversity in a more holistic manner e.g. in web design.
6	How to cope with people with specific learning difficulties in education today.	Get speakers in.
10	Possibly more knowledge on different cultures, special needs and what can be the range of diversity, which could exist in students in our future classes.	Incorporate modules on special needs and culture into the degree.
	Because of lack of teaching experience, I would find it daunting to be facing the 'unknown'. Meet a more diverse range of people.	Organise social events where one could meet a more diverse range of people. Guest speakers
19	Diversity - differences between people, cultures, we don't have to leave the country to see cultural differences or diversity in our community. It would be great to see more individuals from the travelling community involved in college courses, though I understand it is not part of their culture.	Members of the Travelling Community are involved in Youth Reach projects and I think if given the opportunity would guest lecture in DCU to inform and teach us about their way of life.
19	We were discussing this issue in Equality, Access, Inclusion, what we had heard about this particular community and what we actually knew about them. Had any of us ever had any interactions with members of the travelling community? it would be very educational if they were to guest lecture and inform us of their way of life.	Set up a committee to meet with members of the Travelling Community to mediate between them and lecturers etc. in the school of education.

Although the 'dreams' at first glance are not elaborate dreams, there were distinctions between what the student deemed as the ideal and what they believe the programme could do to realise some or all of what they 'dreamed' of. For example, student number 10 above dreamed of seeing more members of the Travelling Community in education and having first hand experience of the Travelling Community in order to understand their culture and educational needs. He/she goes on to suggest the

Programme develop links with those in the Travelling Community who are involved in Traveller Education and YouthReach programmes to mutual benefit.

4.4.2. Analysis of lecturer data from the Dream stage

Some lecturers also only used the *Dream* section for practical suggestions for programme improvement in relation to diversity while others were more creative in their 'dreaming' leading to practical solutions in the *Design* stage as shown in the following extracts:

	Dream	**Design**
4	Experience diversity in real-time through working in a range of settings e.g. Erasmus year where students travelled outside of Ireland to experience diverse cultures.	Build in a work experience element into the programme

7	Amalgamation of classes (some of the internationals students could join some classes to discuss how their experience of learning in their cultures differs from Irish models).	Easily allow some amalgamation of classes - I teach two separate groups that I feel would benefit from each other's experiences.

8	Would like to get students to engage in direct contact with people in specific diversity, either through guest speakers and/or placements.	Better links with project module.
	Would like students to work on an equality project.	Better use of tutorial time and other members of staff with specific skills i.e. drama.
	Would like tutorials in which we used role play etc. to promote skills and empathy.	Have a number of speakers to be part of input.

9	That the students could spend a semester working in a diverse environment.	Develop links to schools/colleges in order to allow some degree of practical engagement with such environments
	That they [students] could have guest lectures from experts/participants in/from internationally based diversity backgrounds	Develop a specific module/or series of modules which would teach people about working in these environments.

10	Greater exchange with other students of different nationalities.	Develop a student exchange programme.

4.5.   The Design stage - Constructing what should be

The *Design* stage builds on the *Dream* stage and seeks participants' practical ideas for programme improvement. This element of the data is the most important in the study as it allows for the collective creative and practical suggestions for improvement to come through and gives voice to the participants.

Any practical suggestions arising in the *Dream* stage of the data were carried forward to the *Design* stage for inclusion in the analysis. In the student questionnaire students were asked to complete a section entitled *Destiny Stage* as the final stage of the questionnaire. However, this section was removed from the analysis sheet as it became more apparent that the *Destiny* stage would represent the recommendations arising from the overall findings of the study. In order to ensure that no relevant data arising through this element of student data was lost, individual responses were checked against responses given in the *Design* stage and any additional suggestions were included in the *Design* analysis. Once these adjustments were made, the resulting data was analysed for common themes.

4.5.1. Analysing student data – Design stage

Several common themes were evident in the responses given by students in the *Design* stage. These themes are listed in Table 2 along with the number of students who made reference to them. Themes are then discussed with extracts from the data to explain. Some extracts also include student responses or part responses from the *Dream* stage in order to add clarity in some instances or relevant data in others. Where data is used from the *Dream* stage it is followed by [DREAM] to denote that

the reference can be found under the *Dream* column of the analysis sheet (see

Appendix H: Student data Dream/Design).

Table 2: Themes arising from the Design stage of student data

Theme	Number of Students
Experiencing Diversity	20
Practical Experience & Teaching Practice	17
Guest Speakers	11
Diversity as a Module or Theme	11
Special Needs	9
Practicalities of Course Time	7
Research and Evaluation	4
Planning and Design	3
Students as stakeholders	2

Experiencing Diversity

Of the 26 student respondents, 20 referred in some way to the need to experience

diversity during the programme. Some referred to specific aspects of diversity such as

special needs or culture, although the majority referred to diversity in general.

Suggestions offered by students for experiencing diversity through the programme are

summarised as follows:

- Student trips to diverse settings
- Work experience in diverse settings
- Voluntary work with organisations dealing with diversity
- Extended 'teaching practice' (WBP) time
- Guest speakers with experience of diversity in education
- Guest speakers with experience of specific forms of diversity
- Forming partnerships with organisations dealing with diversity
- Opportunities to learn from other students from diverse backgrounds
- Opportunities to teach students from diverse backgrounds
- Inclusion of diverse students and staff in the programme
- Organise social events where students could meet people

The following extracts from the data give a cross sample of some of the these:

1	Teach students from different backgrounds to have diversity experience in our teaching.

15	Trip out to see other cultures in their environment e.g. Pavee Point, Polish Community Group - Work experience in this area i.e. must do work practice in CRC, Nat. Rehab Centre or area similar.[DREAM]

16	Addition of weekly lecture time, with a focus on more teaching practice. This would allow for students to experience as much diversity in education as possible.

26	Include a "voluntary work" assignment and reflective log based on an area of diversity (e.g. spend X hours per week in the Irish Wheelchair Association and write a reflective log on it).
	Organise to visit or become members of different organisations such as Dyslexic Assoc. of Ireland or Pavee Point.

7	More guest speakers who have topic knowledge and have proper resources before going to class. Bring in experts in selected fields.

20	A day for all people to get to know each other. This would include a lecture/class on Embracing Diversity. [DREAM]
20	Set up an "Introduction Day" to embrace diversity.

Practical Experience and Work Based Practice

While there were some suggestions put forward in relation to the need for additional knowledge or theory it was evident through the suggestions made in the *Design* stage that students are calling for more opportunities to put the knowledge/theory gained into practice. Some students expressed explicitly that they felt unprepared to deal with diversity or they needed more 'hands on' experience as demonstrated in the following extracts. These students went on to give positive suggestions for improvement in the programme:

4	More practical strategies needed to help deal with issues in relation to special needs. A field trip or immersion into a special needs school to see what works and the reality rather than just theory as we learn in DCU. I feel I am unprepared on a practical level to deal with children and special needs and diverse culture backgrounds. [DREAM]
4	In the Advanced Teaching Strategies module could incorporate more about diversity to help link them together and be more useful to us practitioners in the real world.

12	Hands-on experience with various groups. While a lot has been covered in class I feel that only so much can be explained from a theory perspective. I think that the best way to fully comprehend something is by actually experiencing it or teaching it i.e. microteaching. [DREAM]
12	If practical hands on experience was not an option, which ideally it should be, I believe microteaching would be a viable solution for sourcing courses dealing with diversity in further ed situations which deliver courses similar to the 9 grounds e.g. Fetac Multiculturalism.

21	From completing this course I would have liked to actually practically be taught how to teach people from different backgrounds and people with diverse styles of learning needs etc. (special educational needs). [DREAM]
21	Set up a module specifically related to diversity - "embracing and teaching diversity"

The following list summarises suggestions made by students in relation to the need for more practical experience which is followed by examples from the data:

- More time allocated to teaching practice
- Teaching practice in diverse settings
- Visits to diverse settings for assessment of needs
- Diversity as a topic within teaching practice module
- A practical or skills module
- Tutorial time dedicated to practical skills
- Practical skills/ideas in how to teach students from specific diverse backgrounds
- Use of case studies of good practice
- Student research and projects in diversity
- Planning and designing for diversity (discussed separately as a theme)

1	Teach students from different backgrounds to have diversity experience in our teaching.

5	Instead of or as well as having a tutorial on Wednesday, an hour long session on special needs each week for 12 weeks could work well.

6	How to cope with people with specific learning difficulties in education today.[DREAM]
	Have a longer time allocated to the module on Teaching Practices.

7	To show how diversity can impact your classroom more, give ideas about how you include these students into the classroom situation. They should also explain how to deal with these students if behavioural problems arise. It should define the topic more and give full text support.

8	To speak to parents and students who encounter problems around diversity. To speak to guest students with diversity issues Practical examples in class situation where diversity has been "embraced" [DREAM]
8	Give case studies and discuss options or perhaps visit students with diverse needs in a school situation and make an assessment.

9	Longer time on Teaching Practice.

12	Student placements held in FECs [further education colleges] delivering SLOs [special learning outcomes] in FETAC "cultural" courses would also add to their abilities and attractiveness to future employers.

14	Some sort of anti-racial campaigns in classrooms through our teaching practice or in another module all together. [DREAM]
14	Could incorporate the topic/task into the teaching practice Encourage fundraising to fund the campaign.

22	Show how to get curriculum that values diversity [DREAM]
	Set up a module that shows you practically how to teach and embrace diversity

26	Going out on visits to schools, which are multicultural - multi-diverse so as to see first hand what's needed in terms of their education and how education students can be trained better to cater for these learners.

Guest Speakers

There was a strong calling from students for the introduction of, or increase in, the use

of guest speakers in modules to allow them to:

- experience diversity
- learn from those from specific diverse backgrounds, such as people with special needs or from varying cultural backgrounds, in relation to their own personal and educational experiences
- learn from those who are dealing with the issues that arise in relation to diversity in educational settings
- learn from those working in non-profit organisations and agencies dealing directly with issues relating to diversity.

Samples of such suggestions are outlined below:

4	Bring in people to talk about their issues living in a different culture. People with spec. needs to talk about their needs and what strategies would work for you.

7	More guest speakers who have topic knowledge and have proper resources before going to class. Bring in experts in selected fields.

15	Bring people in from outside orgs who are dealing with diversity - show them what course is about. This will encourage them to accept students from this course on work experience

16	Increase in funding for guest lectures and additional modules

18	It [programme] could also get a range of people from different cultures to come in and talk about their cultures and traditions.

19	Members of the Travelling Community are involved in Youth Reach projects and I think if given the opportunity would guest lecture in DCU to inform and teach us about their way of life.

25	Maybe just guest speakers with experience and withdraw from actually being invited into the diverse environment i.e. YouthReach or One Family or Age Action.

Diversity as a Module

There was much reference to the need for a module specifically for diversity in the student data, in some cases based in the *Dream* stage as a desire for more knowledge, and in other cases for more practical experience or learning. In most cases these suggestions for a specific module related to special needs. There were also calls for a general diversity module and a module on multiculturalism as well as additional lectures in specific areas of diversity.

3	Develop within modules so they incorporate culture diversity in a more holistic manner e.g. in web design.

10	Possibly more knowledge on different cultures, special needs and what can be the range of diversity, which could exist in students in our future classes.
	Because of lack of teaching experience, I would find it daunting to be facing the 'unknown'. Meet a more diverse range of people. [DREAM]
10	Incorporate modules on special needs and culture into the degree.

13	More classes relating to the issue of multiculturalism and interculturalism diversity [DREAM]
13	More classes on multiculturalism could be implemented so we know and are aware of different issues.

16	Addition of weekly lecture time, with a focus on more teaching practice. This would allow for students to experience as much diversity in education as possible.
16	More diversity based modules e.g. special needs teaching module.

21	Set up a module specifically related to diversity - "embracing and teaching diversity"

22	Set up a module that shows you practically how to teach and embrace diversity

However, in relation to the need for more lectures/modules on diversity, one student expressed that the area of culture was adequate and that more was required only in special needs education while another expressed satisfaction in all areas and required nothing additional in relation to diversity.

11	Multiculturalism was a big area that got covered but specific areas of diversity were not covered enough - SEN. There is a lot of time taken up with reflective logs that could be used for more productive areas of ed. [DREAM]
11	The introduction of a module that is specifically aimed at SEN. This module to cover areas of special ed needs:

23	I feel the course content is sufficient for my needs.

Special Needs

Special needs was also a strong theme in the student data with much of the reference to special needs centring on the suggested need for a module or more lectures to focus on knowledge of specific needs, as well as how to deal with special needs students in educational settings. Suggestions were also made in relation to adjustments to modules such as WBP (work based practice) and teaching strategies modules in order to accommodate greater learning of special needs.

4	More practical strategies needed to help deal with issues in relation to special needs. A field trip or immersion into a special needs school to see what works and the reality rather than just theory as we learn in DCU.

5	Bring in a module on special needs instead of having a module on Lifelong Learning/professional development. I really think it would have been more beneficial.
5	Instead of or as well as having a tutorial on Wednesday, an hour long session on special needs each week for 12 weeks could work well.

6	Bring in a module on special needs outlining what special needs are and ways to embrace and help them in education.

9	More facilities, more work experience relating to the area you want to go into - special needs and culture [DREAM]
9	Bring in a module on special needs instead of life long learning - A workshop for 3 hours would cover everything on life long learning.

10	Possibly more knowledge on different cultures, special needs and what can be the range of diversity, which could exist in students in our future classes. [DREAM]
10	Incorporate modules on special needs and culture into the degree.

11	Although learning styles - Teaching Strat/methods were taught, and did help, they were all aimed at "normal" learners/students. We were not given any knowledge or direction on adapting them for special education needs (SEN) students/learners i.e. lesson plans. [DREAM]
11	It could do more to enable us to embrace/include/integrate in designing lesson plans for SEN.

21	From completing this course I would have liked to actually practically be taught how to teach people from different backgrounds and people with diverse styles of learning needs etc. (special educational needs). [DREAM]

Practicalities of course time

There were suggestions by students for an increase in course time, and more effective

use of course time, in relation to diversity as shown in the following data extracts:

5	Instead of or as well as having a tutorial on Wednesday, an hour long session on special needs each week for 12 weeks could work well.

6	Have a longer time allocated to the module on Teaching Practices.

13	More classes on multiculturalism could be implemented so we know and are aware of different issues.

16	Addition of weekly lecture time, with a focus on more teaching practice. This would allow for students to experience as much diversity in education as possible.

21	Realistically our degree could be done in two years. New modules could be added then to bulk up 3rd year.

22	Get rid of some modules or just add an extra one or two. As it is there is very little hours per week - a few extra hours would not kill us!!

26	Acceptance/ recognition by school of education that such ideals are not impracticable

Some students suggested that there is room for more contact time in the programme.

4.5.2. Analysing lecturer data – Design stage

The data from the *Design* stage of lecturer responses was analysed for common

themes. As with the student data, any practical suggestions arising in the *Dream* stage

were included in the *Design* stage analysis and themes arising noted in an adjoining

column (see Appendix M: Dream/Design).

In the data, lecturers made similar suggestions as the students for improvement of the programme. Table 3 notes the number of lecturers (out of 10) that made reference to each and these themes are subsequently discussed using data extracts as examples.

Table 3: Themes arising from the Design stage of lecturer data

Theme	Number of lecturers
Experiencing Diversity	7
Diversity as a Module or Theme	4
Practicalities of Time	3
Guest Speakers	3
Practical Experience	2
Special Needs	2
Students as stakeholders	2
Planning and Design	2

Experiencing diversity

As with the student data, the theme most referred to by lecturers was also the need for students to be exposed in some way to diversity. Practical suggestions made by lecturers were: work experience in diverse settings; cross modular practice; and linking the programme with other schools, colleges and/or organisations. These are themes also arising from the student data.

4	Experience diversity in real-time through working in a range of settings e.g. Erasmus[19] year where students travelled outside of Ireland to experience diverse cultures. [DREAM]
4	Build in a work experience element into the programme

---

[19] Erasmus refers to a EU educational project that allows students to spend part of their programme of study in another country.

7	Amalgamation of classes (some of the internationals students could join some classes to discuss how their experience of learning in their cultures differs from Irish models). [DREAM]
7	Easily allow some amalgamation of classes - I teach two separate groups that I feel would benefit from each other's experiences.

8	Would like to get students to engage in direct contact with people in specific diversity, either through guest speakers and/or placements. Would like students to work on an equality project. [DREAM]
8	Better links with project module.

9	That the students could spend a semester working in a diverse environment. [DREAM]
9	Develop links to schools/colleges in order to allow some degree of practical engagement with such environments.

10	Greater exchange with other students of different nationalities. [DREAM]
10	Develop a student exchange programme.

Diversity as a module or theme

Some lecturers also suggested a possible need for a dedicated module or theme for diversity and made suggestions for a practical module that focuses on practical skills of teaching in relation to diversity, the need for cultural and special needs knowledge, or the linking of modules through diversity as a theme:

| 2 | I think this workshop has highlighted the need for a module to be introduced that includes students learning about different religious, cultures, ethnic backgrounds etc as teachers need to be open to diverse cultures in the classroom (and are becoming increasingly exposed too). They need to have training and experience of these diversities whether this is a specific module I'm undecided but is definitely an area that should be address.

Further, I think modules could be introduced that deal with special needs, learning disabilities etc - the present scope of these are limited. |
|---|---|
| 2 | Unfortunately, there are time limitations and module credits to be considered so the introduction of a new module on say diversity of religions, culture etc. would be difficult to introduce. However, I do believe there is scope to include some (improved additional) aspects of the special needs, learning disabilities into present module structures. Unfortunately, in the present 'framework' I'm unsure where issues of diversity based on 'ethnic origins would fit. |

3	Diversity as a theme could be introduced into syllabus.
3	Send out a questionnaire to allow students to submit ideas on how diversity could be embedded as a theme within modules

8	Better links with project module.

9	Develop a specific module/or series of modules, which would teach people about working in these environments.

Practicalities of time

With respect to time as a theme, two lecturers referred to the limitation of time and resources impacting on the realisation of 'dreams' and another suggested the use of tutorial time as a practical way to build skills in the area of diversity.

2	Unfortunately, there are time limitations and module credits to be considered so the introduction of a new module on say diversity of religions, culture etc. would be difficult to introduce. …

6	Also time to introduce and work with new ideas such as culturally sensitive evaluation and research and to engage the outcomes of research …. [DREAM]
6	Probably all of the above with more time and other resources.

8	Better use of tutorial time and other members of staff with specific skills i.e. drama.

Guest speakers

Similar to student suggestions, use of guest lecturers was suggested as a way of bringing diversity specific knowledge, exposure and experience to students. Suggestions to use guest speakers in non-traditional ways such as role-play or on-line discussions and seminars were also suggested as outlined in the following extracts:

4	Invite key experts to address the students
4	Access key speakers online.

8	Would like tutorials in which we used role play etc. to promote skills and empathy. [DREAM]
8	Have a number of speakers to be part of input.

9	That they [students] could have guest lectures from experts/participants in/from internationally based diversity backgrounds.
9	Invite local representatives from diverse backgrounds for seminars or guest lectureships.

Practical experience

As well as the practical suggestions outlined under the *Experiencing Diversity* theme, lecturers made suggestions as to how the programme could provide practical learning opportunities in relation to diversity, specifically through: linking with the part time student group who are working in educational settings; fieldwork in diverse settings; and practical work in tutorials. This is shown through the following data extracts:

4	Create space for student based research [DREAM]
4	Twin some of the full time students with students on the part-time programmes in order to realise.

6	Ideally… involve field work and research experience in diverse settings.

7	Taking classes to locations outside of DCU - work with students with disabilities.

8	Would like tutorials in which we used role play etc. to promote skills and empathy.
8	Have a number of speakers to be part of input.

Special needs

Only two lecturers referred to special needs. The first referred to the need for special needs to be more explicit in the programme as a module or theme and the second to the need for students to have more practical experience of working with people with special needs. Although limited, these are similar to the callings of students in relation to this topic.

2	…I think modules could be introduced that deal with special needs, learning disabilities etc - the present scope of these are limited.

7	Taking classes to locations outside of DCU - work with students with disabilities.

Students as stakeholders

Two lecturers suggested further research on students related to their understanding and needs in the area of diversity and the programme generally.

3	Ideally it would be great to be able to negotiate the curriculum with the students. In terms of my modules an opportunity to facilitate more peer review and staff review of student work may enable better understanding of diversity of students needs.[DREAM]
3	Send out a questionnaire to allow students to submit ideas on how diversity could be embedded as a theme within modules Questionnaire on undergraduate students focussing on "what they value" and "what their interpretation of diversity is"

4	Create space for student based research
4	Encourage students to engage in post-graduate research

Planning and design

There was one reference to the inclusion of diversity at a planning stage of module

descriptors and as a theme for students when planning in the microteaching module:

1	Microteaching - teach students to plan classes that cater for learners with different needs and abilities. Students should consider issues when designing a lesson plan, issues like physical capabilities, mental capabilities, learning abilities, learning type, attention span etc. [DREAM]
1	Redesign module descriptors to implement diversity awareness in teaching modules.

Suggestions arising from the lecturer data for improvement in the programme in

relation to diversity are summarised as follows:

- Increased opportunities for students to experience diversity
- Increase opportunities for work experience relating to diversity
- Organise field trips to diverse settings
- Greater use of guest speakers working in diverse settings.
- Greater practical involvement of experts in field through practical work and online discussions.
- Create links with schools, colleges and organisations for mutual benefit.
- Link students with other student groups on campus.
- Greater use of tutorial time.
- More project work or greater links to existing project work in relation to diversity.
- Increased curriculum through a dedicated module or workshops on diversity and specifically on special needs.
- More student based research to understand student needs in relation to diversity.
- Cross module linking and collaboration in relation to diversity.
- Inclusion of diversity as a theme and making learning in the area more explicit in module descriptors.

4.5.3. Conclusions to Design stage

Practical suggestions for change in the programme in relation to diversity arising from

the *Design* stage emerged through a variety of themes but was particularly strong in

relation to the following four themes referred to most by students and lecturers:

- Experiencing Diversity
- Practical Experience and Teaching Practice
- Guest speakers
- Diversity as a module or theme

and could be summarised by the following comment made by a lecturer in the comments box:

9	There simply is not enough targeted, direct specific teacher training for those who will go to work in diverse educational contexts and we have a responsibility to develop such training courses/modules.

Although data for lecturers is not quantitatively strong, it is evident that the most common themes referred to are similar to those most commonly referred to by students. This concurring evidence is again demonstrated in the findings from the *Three Wishes* question.

4.6. Analysis of data from the Three Wishes question

Having completed the Four-D process, all participants were asked to give three wishes as to how they would like the programme to prepare students for diversity. Students were asked to complete a *Three Wishes* question sheet (Appendix N) on a separate day to the lecture and only if they had attended and submitted a questionnaire in the previous AI lecture delivered by the author. This was to ensure the same cohort of participants was used in both. With regard to gathering data for the Three Wishes question from lecturers, the Three Wishes questionnaire was completed at the end of the lecturer workshop to respect the time constraints of lecturers.

Both student and lecturer 'wishes' were collated into separate lists in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet (Appendix O.) An adjoining column for each list was added and the

theme of each wish was noted here. Table 4 below gives a summary of the themes

arising and demonstrates that similar themes emerged from the 'wishes' of both

students and lecturers, with the exception of *resources* and *methodologies* as noted

with an asterisk which only appeared in the lecturers' wish list.

Table 4: Explanation of themes arising from Three Wishes question

Theme	Explanation
Diversity as norm	Wishes relating to student understanding/acceptance of diversity.
Practical work	Wishes relating to the need for more practical opportunities in the programme in relation to diversity.
Extended Curriculum	Combines wishes relating to a module for diversity, a diversity theme and additional knowledge or workshops on diversity.
Exposure to Diversity	Wishes relating to the need for students to have opportunities to experience diversity.
Guest speakers	Wishes relating to the need for students to learn from guest speakers working or experienced in specific settings/organisations relevant to diversity.
Resources*	Theme only in the lecturer wish list that combines wishes relating to time, funding and resources.
Methodologies*	Theme only in the student wish list relating to a need for students to learn more about teaching methodologies in relation to diversity.

When shown as percentages as in Figure 3 and Figure 4, it is evident that both

students and lecturers concur in relation to the areas they most seek improvement in.

This is predominantly in relation to the need for greater student exposure to diversity,

an extended curriculum in relation to diversity and greater opportunity for practical

work in relation to diversity.

These findings concur with the findings arising from the *Design* stage of the study

which also highlighted the need for: an extended curriculum; more practical work;

exposure to diversity and guest speakers. An additional theme of *Diversity as norm*

also emerged through the *Three Wishes* question, which relates to a more general wish that people were more tolerant and accepting of diversity. Student wishes also highlighted a need for more methodologies in relation to teaching in diverse settings and lecturer wishes highlighted a wish for more time, flexibility and resources.

Table 5: Breakdown of lecturer and student wishes by theme

Lecturer Themes	Wishes	Student Themes	Wishes
Diversity as norm	6	Diversity as norm	5
Practical work	6	Practical work	23
Extended Curriculum	8	Extended Curriculum	29
Exposure to diversity	3	Exposure to diversity	5
Guest speakers	2	Guest speakers	6
Resources	4	*Methodologies*	10
Total wishes	**29**	**Total wishes**	**78**

Figure 7: Summary of lecturers' wishes by theme
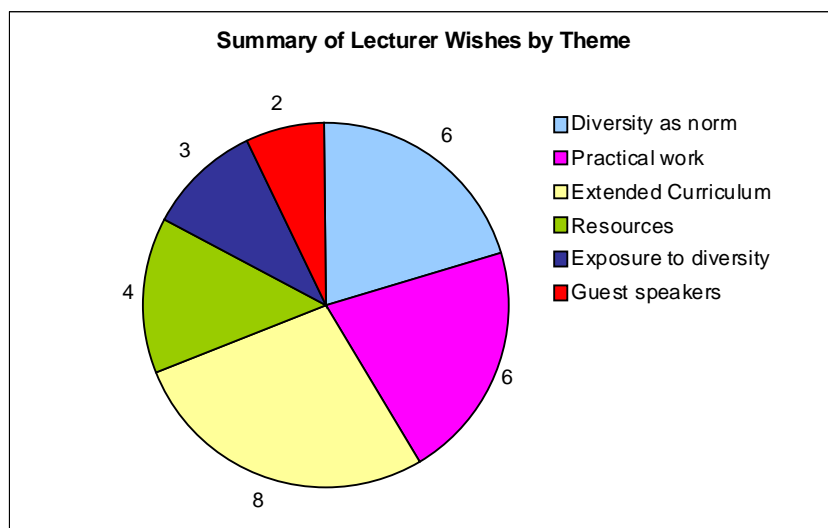
Figure 8: Summary of students' wishes by theme

Summary of Student Wishes by Theme

- Diversity as norm: 5
- Practical work: 23
- Extended Curriculum: 29
- Methodologies: 10
- Exposure to diversity: 5
- Guest speakers: 6
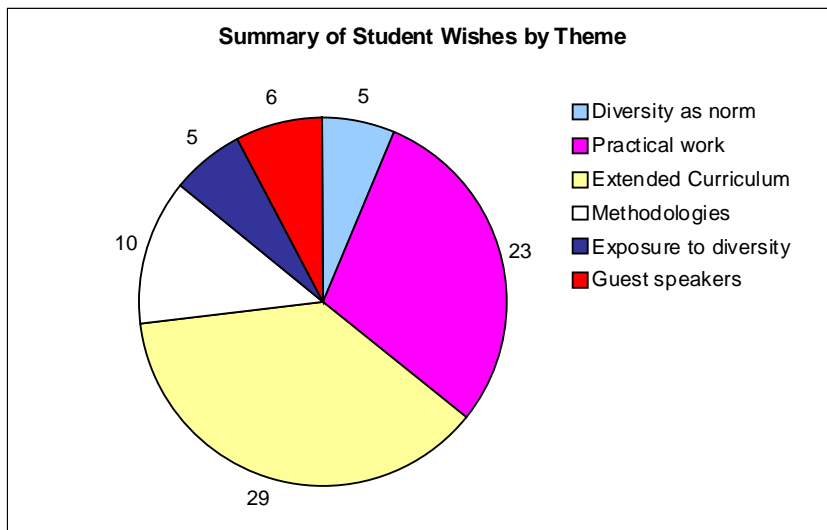
4.7. Analysis of data from alumni interviews

The data collected and analysed at this point in the study gave rise to recurring themes across the various elements of data collection: through comparison of programme and module intentions and the data collected from final year students and lecturers in relation to what the programme does well and suggestions for how it could do better. The interviews with alumni explored these themes further and sought feedback on the challenges they face in dealing with diversity in their working contexts.

4.7.1. Introduction

The themes arising from the 4-D stages of the study denote possible gaps in the programme in the preparation of students for dealing with diversity. The interview stage of data collection involved semi-structured interviews with alumni working in educational contexts to explore if alumni concurred with these findings and to invite their suggestions for programme improvement in retrospect and based on their own experience of diversity in the field.

4.7.2. Selection of interviewees

As it is difficult to obtain contact details for students once they have graduated, interviewees were selected based on school knowledge of where graduate students were working. Schutt (2006) refers to this as availability sampling, where the researcher seeks volunteers from those available at the time. A selection of individuals were contacted by email with an invitation to participate. A sample was sought based on gender, workplace context, age and availability/access. Interviews were secured with five working graduates of the programme; three female, two male, working in a variety of educational contexts as outlined later under Alumni profiles (4.7.4.).

4.7.3. Purpose, structure and preparation of interviews

Some interview questions (Appendix Q) were pre-determined with a view to guide the interviews to elicit the following information from interviewees:

- Their profile and working context.
- What type of diversity they are exposed to in their current role.
- The challenges, relating to diversity, they face in their role.
- Their opinions relating to the main themes arising from the research.
- Their suggestions for programme improvement in relation to preparing future students for diversity, having now had experience in a working context.

All interviews were recorded on a voice-recording device and participants were briefed on the context and findings to date of the research, the interview structure and intentions of the researcher for the use of data. All interviewees signed their agreement on a consent form prior to the interview-taking place (Appendix R) and were given the opportunity to make changes/additions to their own interview transcripts.

4.7.4. Alumni profiles

For the purpose of identification in the data, each alumni was assigned a number from

A1 to A5 and a brief profile of each alumni interviewed is given below:

A1:   Female. Working full time as a project worker for a school completion programme in a primary school in a lower socio economic area. Previous experience working in pre-school. Graduated in 2007.

A2:   Female. Mature student. Working as a part time Teacher and Key Worker in a Youthreach Centre. Graduated in 2007.

A3:   Male. Currently working as an English language teacher for non-nationals and delivering computer training for elderly. Also taught English to young children abroad. Graduated in 2007.

A4:   Male. Currently working as a full time co-ordinator and teacher for English language classes in a Vocational Educational Committee (VEC) centre. Previously taught adult education classes for adult and special needs learners. Graduated 2008.

A5:   Female. Currently teaching part time in a Youthreach Centre. Graduated in 2009.

For ease of navigation each line of text in the transcripts was given a number. Quotes

from the transcripts are denoted in this report by the number of the Alumni followed

by the line of reference in the transcript for example A2:15 refers to line 15 of the

transcript for alumni 2. A Sample transcript is given as Appendix S and all transcripts

were presented for examination of the thesis.

4.7.5. Aspects of diversity alumni exposed to in their roles

All interview participants demonstrated an exposure to, and experience of, a wide

range of diversity as outlined in Table 6 below which demonstrates the aspects of

diversity a graduate can be exposed to in the work context.

Table 6: Alumni experiences of types of diversity since graduation

Type of diversity referred to:	Alumni participant number:
Culture	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Race	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Age	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Special Needs	1, 2, 4, 5
Traveller	1, 2, 4, 5
Socio economic	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Life experiences	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Behaviour	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Language	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Gender	1, 2, 3, 4, 5
Sexual orientation	2

4.7.6. Challenges of diversity faced by alumni

In order to give an insight into the way graduates of the programme may be required to apply their learning on diversity in the workplace, alumni were asked what challenges they face in their day to day educational roles as a result of the diversity they are exposed to. Their responses refer to the practical challenges they face in relation to the aspects of diversity they are exposed to and themes arising are summarised as follows:

- Negative behaviour of students
- Dealing with many aspects of diversity at the same time
- Addressing student personal and social issues relating to diversity
- Dealing with and teaching special needs students
- Dealing with pastoral care issues
- Addressing and acknowledging cultural differences
- Dealing with language and literacy issues

Each of the above challenges is discussed briefly and interviewee responses are given to demonstrate individual challenges, their opinion in relation to how the degree programme prepared them for those challenges and/or their suggestions for improvement in the degree programme in relation to the challenges they face:

Dealing with negative behaviour

Although not directly asked about behaviour, or issues relating to student behaviour, all five of the alumni interviewed made reference to the challenges of dealing with negative behaviour as a result of aspects of diversity within the classroom. Such aspects include mixed ages, mixed gender and special needs:

> [A1: 10] behaviour wasn't something we actually spent a lot of time on you know during our course. I learnt great things there you know but I think to come out and deal with the behaviours that we were dealing with I probably felt a bit swamped in that I didn't have skills. A lot of what I learnt I learnt through work, I mean my job are very good for in-house support. [A1: 11] I found you needed a lot of negotiating…you need to learn how to challenge behaviour in a positive view if that makes sense? You need to have a lot of interpersonal skills.
>
> [A2: 11] You would have behaviour problems and a difference of some students who are more mature so you would have conflict in the classroom between the students and you would have to control the conflict. [A2: 28] [When asked about the degree preparing them to deal with conflict management] To be honest with you No. I don't think it did.
>
> [A3:13] You have students who are dyslexic; you have students who might be mildly autistic. I mean they might have a touch of Aspergers…There are lots of issues that come to the fore that I realise now or recognise now from doing the degree that these are issues that people have, especially from the behaviour point of view. … Whereas, if you have a particular sensitivity you know the behaviour aspect is related to something else.

In terms of the degree programme, there was clear evidence of the need for more study of behavioural psychology, conflict management and facilitation of diverse groups and the behavioural issues that can arise in diverse groups:

> [A3:94] [when asked for3 wishes] Yeah, basically behaviour psychology.

Alumni at this early stage in the interviews were beginning to make reference to the need for more practical approaches and skills on the programme to address the challenges they face in their working roles, a theme that prevails throughout even prior to being directly questioned about it as a theme arising from other areas of the research.

Dealing with many aspects of diversity at the same time

Four of the alumni made reference to the challenge of dealing with different types or

aspects of diversity at the same time while teaching one group or class and again

reference is made to the issues of behaviour that arises as a result:

> [A1:7] …it's about being able to respond to their needs but also being able to do this by taking into account the diversity that is within the group at the same time.
>
> [A2: 7]   Some of them would have the reading age of about six or seven year old and then in the same class you would have someone with a reading age of a 12 or 14 year old so that's a huge gap..[A2:9] So it's kind of diverse within one class. You could have ten students and have three different needs in that one class at any one time. [A2: 11] You would have behaviour problems and a difference of some students who are more mature so you would have conflict in the classroom between the students and you would have to control the conflict.
>
> [A2: 42] In my centre and each class it goes from different cultures and even different ages like the age gap in the class could go from sixteen to nineteen in the one classroom. It is a lot to deal with because of the maturity levels and the different outcomes.
>
> [A4: 12] Well currently in my group I have an age group of about 22 years of age to 59 and within that you would have a diverse range of learning abilities…and a diverse range of learning styles.
>
> [A5: 11] Trying to teach a class that reaches every single student…That is my biggest challenge.

Dealing with personal, social and economic issues of students

The need to be aware of and accommodate for the personal and social issues of

students, particularly in the specific educational contexts in which they were working,

was referred to as challenging:

> [A1: 8] ...we would have children whose parents would have addiction issues and other children may be aware of that or they come from socio-economic or a foster care system or their clothing wouldn't be as good as somebody else's clothing….if a child's self esteem is so low for other issues as well it is obviously going to come out in their behaviour on a daily basis.
>
> [A1: 9] …[Children] are coming from a background where they are getting themselves up, there is chaos in the household, there's no food there and when they come in they can't cope as well as other children.
>
> [A3:13] Just because somebody is learning a language you have no background, you don't have any insight into their social background, their personal background,

anything from where they come from as to why they are studying a language and they bring those issues with them.

This element of their roles was referred to across the various stages of the interviews.

Special needs and mixed abilities

All of the alumni also referred in some way to special needs in relation to challenges of diversity, specifically in having to deal with a variety of different special needs within one group or class:

> [A2: 9] You would have special needs ranging from ADHD, HADD and you would have one or two would have come from a background where they would have had an SNA but once they have entered the centre we don't have those facilities so we would have students who should have an SNA and we have to cater for them as best we can within the same class as others who don't need and SNA.

> [A4: 11] So like you could have someone who might be dyslexic, another one who is totally introverted, we had Aspergers syndrome. So you had people with very clear sets of difficulties….it was quite challenging from a diversity perspective.

> [A5: 6] …we have special needs in most classes …there would be some sort of dyslexia or dyspraxia or ADHD, they would be the main ones.

Pastoral Care

When asked about the challenges of diversity, three also referred to the pastoral care element of their role in dealing with the challenges they face and the aspects of diversity they are dealing with.

> [A1: 11] There is an awful lot of counselling… pastoral area of my role that I also feel I wasn't prepared for through my degree but have got support for in the work place.

> [A2: 5] …looking after a specific group looking after their social needs, linking with the probation officers…linking with outside agencies if they are homeless trying to get them into shelter and linking with parents…also training and getting them ready for the world of work.

> [A3: 12] ..You discover very quickly that you are dealing with other issues in there. You just have to be quite sensitive to it …

Reference to greater preparation of students for dealing with this aspect of their roles occurs throughout the interview data and is referred to later.

Language and Literacy

Challenges in relation to language and literacy were referred to mainly in respect of

dealing with different levels of language and literacy within the same teaching event.

> [A2: 7]   Some of them would have the reading age of about six or seven year old and then in the same class you would have someone with a reading age of a 12 or 14 year old so that's a huge gap..
>
> [A3: 11] And in relation to older people as well there is a lot of literacy problems a lot of issues around that as well.
>
> [A3: 12] …you have to be careful not to show up somebody in class 'cause not everyone was aware of another person's inability to write.
>
> [A5: 17] …everybody that comes here can speak English … but they still wouldn't be as fluent as the Irish ones in the class so trying to break down words for them and stuff and trying without hindering the rest of the class.

Although language and literacy were referred to as challenging, this theme does not

feature greatly in the rest of the interviews, except where an individual is directly

dealing with language and literacy as a main focus of their role.

Cultural challenges

Although cultural diversity is generally a strong focus of literature in relation to

diversity, cultural diversity or the need to learn about cultural differences did not

feature in any significant way through the alumni interviews, which was a similar

finding from the data from other participants in the research.

However, two alumni referred to a lack of awareness in specific contexts of cultural

differences as creating a challenge.

> [A3: 11] Especially with teaching English and working with people of the Islamic faith and how women especially in class… it doesn't function the same way as it would with people from a western European background in terms of physically positioning people next to males or males not wanting to sit next to women.
>
> [A5: 20] I try and give myself the knowledge of everything I need for teaching a class. But like that some of the traditions and things like that or their cultural things you mightn't be really aware of.

Conclusion

When asked about the challenges they face in relation to diversity in their educational roles, alumni referred mainly to the challenges of dealing with situations arising as a consequence of different aspects of diversity and in particular with dealing with student behaviour, not just in a conflict management context but also as a result of their individual personal, social and economic backgrounds. There were also suggestions at this early stage of the interviews of the need for greater personal development and pastoral care skills in dealing with these challenges.

4.7.7. How alumni were prepared for diversity: knowledge, skills and values

Having outlined the challenges diversity posed for them in their roles, alumni were asked if and how the degree programme at DCU prepared them to deal with those challenges, specifically in relation to knowledge, skills and values.

Knowledge

From a knowledge perspective, the general consensus was that there was adequate learning in respect of knowledge and theory relating to diversity and different aspects of diversity, which relates to the findings from the final year student and lecturer data. There were specific references to being made aware of differences in learning styles and special learning needs. However, it was also suggested that opportunities to apply that knowledge did not manifest until they were in a working context after graduation and that by that time knowledge was often forgotten and needed to be refreshed. Despite this, there was also a valuing of the resources provided on the course and how these could be referred back to in order to make the link between the theory gained on the programme and the practical experience of their roles.

[A1: 11] We did learn interpersonal skills and that on the BSc Education and Training course in DCU and we learnt conflict resolution but I felt all of that that I learnt there was very adult based.. it was based on dealing with staff or based on dealing with adult learners while I am doing all of that work now with under 12 year olds.."

[A1: 13] I suppose the programme was good in preparing…the learner to ascertain who they would be teaching to and like for preparing them on knowing there is people that have different learning styles. It was very theoretical you know so I was getting the knowledge around these issues and to be able to go out into the workplace in the future and be aware of these issues.

[A2:16. Well to be honest with you we did do a module in college which included the fact there was visual, kinaesthetic and auditory and the multiple intelligences. A2:17 It would be through one of the modules in college that I would have learned a little bit about the visual, kinaesthetic, auditory learning and the multiple intelligences.

[A2:23] …there would be staff days to deal with sexual orientation and how to deal with it. Yes we did cover it in theory in college but it wouldn't have meant anything to me until I actually started in the workplace and did the in-services through work as well. A2:25. We were given the knowledge in college but by the time we got to apply it was kind of forgotten knowledge.

[A2:30.] Yeah, I went back through the notes that I had from the lectures and went through them and some of the stuff then would have arose from what I was doing practically you know. Like over the first few months I would have gone over the module notes that I had and it was then that it kind of sunk in that they made sense so I was able to apply them then. To apply them to my skills and enable me to teach better and give my students better opportunities in learning.

[A3:15] Well ok lets say my own life experience and teaching experience prepared me more for the degree than the other way around. A3:16 Intuitively and through experience I was able to apply and take on board when I was learning and studying there [DCU].. that some areas I felt well that doesn't hold true for me. A3:18…well how would you say…between theory and practice. That too much of the theory is theoretical.

[A3: 23] I think it focused very much on special needs and I think that's just one aspect of diversity. But beyond that how to deal with sexism which is diversity, and racism. They are very rarely touched on and they are very live issues in any kind of classroom. So I think it goes beyond just simply how to work as an assistant in a classroom with a child with special needs. There was a lot of emphasis and it's important and it's fine but they are not the only issues. I can't say that I walked away and thought great I can deal with diversity.

[A3:6/7] [when asked about a dedicated module for diversity] I mean we don't' have enough knowledge in relation to the real structures behind education in this country..ok historically we learned that the Catholic Church evolved blah blah. …Why we are teaching, how we are teaching and why we teach the way we teach as men or women. I mean in our class there were gender issues as well you know.

[A4:25] I think I got a lot out of what they were teaching within the modules about diversity.

[A5:48] Yeah …we started looking at special needs as an organisation and I started looking back at my notes and went 'oh yeah'. I did relate back to all my stuff in college and I printed out some of the copies of stuff for people here to give them an idea.

[A5: 47] [Asked if the course did enough to prepare them for the realities of special needs?] Not the realities of it but it did give me a good awareness of the different special needs that I would face.

While some called for more knowledge in specific areas relating to their own experience of their roles, the general consensus was that there was adequate knowledge or theoretical learning in relation to diversity on the programme but again at this point in the interviews, suggestions were arising as to a greater need for opportunities to apply that knowledge whilst on the programme.

Skills

When asked how the programme prepared them for diversity in relation to skills, unlike with knowledge all alluded in some way to the fact that greater preparation in terms of skills would have helped them face the challenges of diversity and teaching. Acknowledgement of the programme adequately preparing them theoretically was made again at this point but the main theme here was that the programme was falling short in providing opportunities to apply that theory to real life contexts or situations. In some cases this was explicit in the response as in the examples from A1:15 "You know we did get the theory on this…but to actually practically deliver any of this .." and A4:31 "…I got very few opportunities to really practice...".

Again here, specific reference was made to not having the skills to deal with negative student behaviour and conflict, personal and social issues and pastoral care issues. There was also reference to not having the confidence to deal with the challenges they face as a consequence of not having skills in these areas with comments such as " "..like being thrown into the deep end" (A2:29), "I felt completely at sea…I felt completely lost" (A3:93).

It should be noted also that alumni, like the final year students, highlighted the value of the skills they gained in planning and course design with one alumni suggesting that applying skills in relation to planning was easy to transfer but more difficult in relation to skills relating to diversity (A2:26). The following extracts relate to skills as discussed above:

[A1: 11] There's an awful lot of counselling pastoral area of my role that I also feel I wasn't prepared for through my degree but have got support from in the work place.

[A1: 15] Well I think it was more the knowledge rather than the skills. It gave us an awful lot of knowledge on conflict resolution, on interpersonal skills, using that as a term. But did they actually give us the practical skills? No, I don't think so. You know we did get the theory on this …but to actually practically deliver any of this or to be able to actually sit down in a scenario where you are given a case study that says so and so and so is having this you know how can you sit and resolve this or how can you deal with this conflict.

[A2:26] Well .. it would have to a certain extent. Like you would have covered like different needs in the college and the learning outcomes and specific learning outcomes through aims and objectives of a module and curriculum development and everything like that but when you went to the workplace you apply those skills when you are trying to do different levels for the one group. In the diversity you have to look at their social economic background and especially for social where you would cover subjects like racism and culture and all that and you have to respect and control a situation when there is a debate in the classroom. You have to use the skills of how to end the session if it is going badly or how to divert the students on to something else or deal with the conflict that comes up in the classroom.

[A2: 29] [Asked where they got their skills] Through work. Through the practical experience – like when I started it was kind of like just thrown into the deep end and it was kind of like apply like whatever…I might have gone over the modules in relation to values and skills but it was like being thrown into the deep end and left there and try and feel your way around and work it out yourself.

[A3:20] …And depending on what you are teaching and the kind of social economic group as well. If you are dealing with people who never finished school and have worked all their lives and then come in to use the computer because they want to try and help their kids with their homework and go on the internet and stuff. It's a different set of skills that both of you use then.

[A3: 21] Well I found…Well to be honest I have to say that in terms of organising your teaching structure for example, skills on specific learning outcomes and all that kind of thing. They certainly helped to structure what you teach and that it can't just be an ad hoc, ad lib as you go along and that sort of thing, which is suitable in some cases. But having a structure is definitely much easier to work through. And I had experience of that before. I worked in the VEC before and had to plan curriculum over two or three years.

[A3:84] The social aspect I find is sidelined really you know. And as teachers and trainers, because that's what the degree course is for education and training and we don't know where we are going to end up using these skills and applying these skills.

[A3:93] When asked for three wishes for programme improvement] For example being in a classroom full of kids I would be lost completely and it's not an experience I would like to go through again. But I didn't have that necessary training and the skills in how to deal with children and in terms of approaching it I felt completely at sea in all that you know. I felt completely lost.

[A4: 17] But I think the good thing.. what really helped me on the programme was that I was able to identify that these learners learn differently. And that equipped me with the skills that I needed to actually recognise what were these differences between the learners and actually adapt the programme to encapsulate all these learners within one class. A4:23 I would say that the practical knowledge came from the school of life. The theoretical knowledge to put a label on what actually the learning styles are and the way I approached comes from the theory from DCU.

[A4: 24]…. I think through the different modules they kind of brushed on different elements of diversity. But because I am a mature student I think I was able to identify what those.. for example equality – if something came up about diversity I was able to think about it and I was able to conceptualise it and have my own view at the end of it all – whether I agreed with the lecturer or not is all a different thing. But I think it helped me to have my mind expanded but I think if I was 18 and doing the degree I am not sure that I would have the same outcome at the end of it.

A4:31. I think I came equipped with a lot of skills already. The knowledge part of it helped identify the skills I already had. I think in practice I got very few opportunities to really practice. A4:32. I mean from a practical end of things I didn't have practice going in… I didn't have an opportunity to go in and really teach in a diverse classroom for example during the B.Ed.

Values

In terms of values, there was a strong acknowledgement that the programme did prepare alumni for values in relation to diversity and their roles. Again this was mainly in relation to knowledge and concepts of values and here again there was reference to the need for opportunities to apply learning about values to real life contexts [A1:16].

Although A3 and A4 refer to their values as having been formed prior to the programme, they also acknowledge that values learning on the programme helped them to conceptualisation values in education and in their roles.

[A1: 16] I definitely think they did actually prepare us for valuing. You know we did a lot on kind of identify, our values, our beliefs. I definitely think it prepared us for being open for valuing and even through our learning differences and the module on learning differences and styles. It definitely did prepare us for valuing that. …As regard to embracing diversity, I am not sure whether people felt confident enough to actually go out and embrace diversity in the workplace….So I would definitely say that you were prepared, but you were prepared in a theoretical way, for valuing

diversity but as regards actually practically putting it in to place or maybe experiencing diversity.

[A2: 31] Well certainly when we did do the values it did teach you like.. you were actually instilling your own life values and reflecting on them and actually looking into them. You're kind of analysing your own values and what you had. You know my area it is kind of like a vocational job so there are certain values that you have that you will practice anyway. …If someone came to me and said there was bullying going on in the classroom I would have to respect each side's values and then I would have to look at their values coming from the backgrounds they are coming from – their values would be a lot different. [A2:33] The learning about values in DCU was very helpful because it helped me to reflect on my own life values and to analyse them and then to apply them to individual different backgrounds and cultures and that as well.

[A3: 32] Well for me my values would have been formed a long time ago. [A3:33] I would never have regarded myself as being a teacher before… I found that I was very capable as a teacher and that was something that surprised me. [A3:34]Well it made me feel that what I feel is valid and what I have experienced is valid and what I value is certainly valid.

[A4: 41] I think I was quite aware before I went in. I mightn't have been able to verbalise exactly what was going on but I knew it existed so I was able to deal with a situation. But I think the programme helped me to actually conceptualise it and really put words to what I was thinking. ..[A4:42] Values and diversity and you know the difference of learners and that.

Alumni findings in relation to values reinforces the findings suggested by the final year students in that learning in relation to values and diversity is adequate but that greater opportunities to experience diversity would strengthen students' ability to apply that learning.

4.7.8. Addressing emergent research themes through alumni interviews

Having been asked to consider the challenges they face in relation to diversity and how the programme had prepared them for those challenges in relation to knowledge, skills and values, alumni were then asked for their opinion on each of the four main themes that had arisen to date in the research; that there was a perceived need for students of the programme to:

- Experience diversity while on the programme,
- Apply learning about diversity in practical ways,
- Have additional learning opportunities in relation to diversity,
- Have the opportunity to learn about diversity from guest/expert speakers.

The purpose of this element of the interview was to establish the opinions of graduates in working contexts on each theme and to probe for any additional themes that might arise. Alumni were asked to offer solutions or suggestions for improvement in keeping with the AI approach employed in the study.

On theme 1: The need for students to experience diversity on the programme
Alumni were asked if they think there is a need for students to experience diversity while on the programme. All alumni suggested there was a need with one (A1: 19) suggesting that the full time students were at a disadvantage compared to the part time programme for the same qualification as the part time group were working in educational contexts. Alumni were further asked to suggest ways students might experience diversity while on the programme and all suggested that the WBP element of the programme could be an opportunity for students to experience diversity or to spend time in an educational setting to observe how to deal with different aspects of diversity. Other suggestions centred on having specific criteria for students to look at diversity in their assessment for WBP; to focus on and discuss their students' profiles and to share their experiences of diversity with their peers.

Other suggestions in relation to students experiencing diversity while on the programme centred on the use of guest speakers, external visits and observations and/or attending workshops outside of the programme timetable. These are all suggestions that arose in other participant data in the study.

Alumni A5 raised the question of how it would be possible to fit it in to the

programme but that it should feature across the three years of the programme as it

benefited not only a person's skill for the workplace but also for other aspects of life.

[A1:18] I mean even to just be in an environment that experiences diversity you know, definitely adds. [A1:19] …where we were at a disadvantage was that the part timers actually worked and I am sure wherever they were working there was an experience of some diversity.

[A1:19] I think you know maybe the work placement or the work experience it could be encouraged… or should be part maybe of you know the criteria for your degree that a certain amount of it dealt with diversity or that you are making allowances in everything you do for diversity.

[A2:36] Going back to the work placement again. While at college, which I keep harping on about, but I do think it's vitally important, is to get the students to do maybe five consecutive days in different education settings at different stages.

[A2:36] Maybe get guest speakers in from those areas and then actually get them to pick one or two and go on different work placements rather than just focus on the one, to get them to pick different ones to encourage students to get a varied experience in relation to diversity. Maybe voluntary work as well.

[A2:38] Getting them to go to more workshops in the areas and not necessarily within the college but to link with outside agencies. And maybe get the students to go on day trips to the different outside agencies and go to workshops in different work environments. Maybe go to a special needs centre for a day, get a tour and get to meet some of the clients and even go to a Youthreach centre and maybe meet the students and getting speakers in from those outside areas.

[A4:46] Well as I mentioned earlier on I think in the teaching practice element of the programme I think they could introduce it. And I think one way they could introduce it is by making learners speak about learner profiles.

[A5:61] Yeah I think it would be a really good idea. I know a couple of the lads did their project in one of the schools in [place name] that was teaching English to foreign nationals and they benefited greatly from that. Maybe if everyone did a stint of work experience there for diversity.

[A5:65] It would be a benefit I just don't see how they would fit it in? [A5:66] I think that on any of the grounds that we talked about on diversity if all the students could experience it over the three years it would benefit them greatly in their working life – in their everyday life and not just for teaching.

On theme 2: The need to apply learning about diversity in practical ways

This was the strongest theme in the findings from the alumni interviews, not just

where alumni were asked directly for their opinion on the theme itself but prior to this

element in the interview process. When asked directly about it at this point in the

interview, points previously raised were reiterated. Suggestions were made from all

alumni that there was a need for greater preparation of students for the practical

realities of the workplace which is strongly demonstrated by the quote from the data

> … if I had more practical experience in dealing with diversity throughout the college years I would have been more equipped to deal with some of the situations I had come upon in my first year of work (A2:34).

Alumni were asked for their opinion on this theme and for their suggestions for course

improvement in relation to learning about diversity in practical ways. Once again,

there was reference to learning alumni had gained through in-service training and

suggestions for the programme were based on those experiences. There were

correlations between the suggestions made here and in theme 1 (p127) in that

opportunities to experience diversity also create opportunities to practically apply

learning on the programme. Again the suggestion that alumni would be more

confident in their roles if they had more practical experience during the degree was

made.

A2 suggests that the learning in in-service sinks in better because they have practical

experience to base their learning on (A2:17) which relates to the previous suggestion

made by A1 that students of the full time programme are at a disadvantage because

they do not have regular practical opportunities to apply their learning.

> [A1: 15] You know, in our training… we often come together at the table now and have our own case study of a child, a target child, that we are working with... we are all trained in different areas; some are social care backgrounds, some are psychology, there's education. To be able to throw it out there is great experiential learning, you know from each other. But it is definitely very practical.

> [A1:18] Yeah, I actually think it would be really beneficial for students to actually have that kind of practical experience, you know, to be able to actually…. I mean theory is great but to actually go out and do the actual practical. I mean even to just be in an environment that experiences diversity you know, definitely adds.

[A2:17] And because I have been doing it practically, when I go to the in-service it actually sinks in more and you get more practical methods of how to teach the different needs in the class. I wouldn't have really learnt that in college because it would have been all theory.

[A2: 34] I was confident but I think I would have been more confident if I had more practical experience of working with different types of educational backgrounds and more diversity on a practical basis while I was in college… if I had more practical experience in dealing with diversity throughout the college years I would have been more equipped to deal with some of the situations I had come upon in my first year of work.

[A3:50] I think from the very first week there should be placement in colleges. They should be speaking with teachers who actually work in and on an everyday level you know…Even just sitting in and observing and actually seeing how real people teach and seeing real issues in classrooms. [A3:53] Well I mean they should be free to engage with the people with diversity and talk with the people who are learning…

[A3:68] [Referring to ICT as a practical approach] Well different schools, different organisations, all over Europe, all over the world. I mean there is actually no reason why we can't be talking to people about the same issues…in a live context and remove it from just the theoretical perspectives. Well like you read about this then talk to people about it and see what are the issues they have.

[A4:51] I think that learners could be exposed to case studies and you could have workshops around case studies and ask them to make case studies as an explorative way to learn about diversity. [A4:52] … the case studies could be created or learners could create case studies maybe of their own context and hand them out anonymously in their group and see how other people would deal with those situations.

[A5: 68-70] I think role plays… Observation, seeing things first hand. I think they are the main elements…Less lecture structured.

[A5: 73] Seeing first hand what, say for special needs you are seeing first hand the characteristics with say ADHD . You could have somebody out there being the teacher and going about a class and showing what way to deal with people with it. That's just an example – it's first hand experience rather than just reading about it… I mean chalk and talk.

Alumni findings in relation to whether the programme needs to be more practical in its approach can be summarised as follows:

- There is a need for greater preparation of students for the practical realities of diversity.
- Much of the learning alumni had gained practically was through in-service training in the workplace as opposed to during the programme.
- Alumni highlight that opportunities to experience diversity also create opportunities to practically apply learning on the programme.

- Alumni suggested that they would have been more confident in their roles if they had more practical experience while on the programme.
- Alumni suggested that students of the full time programme are at a disadvantage because they do not have regular practical opportunities to apply their learning.

Alumni suggestions for improving the course in relation to this theme include;

- the use of case studies and group discussion in relation to diversity
- the inclusion of some element of WBP across the three years of the programme
- opportunities to observe and talk with people working with various contexts of diversity
- the use of ICT to communicate with those experiencing different aspects of diversity beyond the lecture room.

On theme 3: The need for additional learning about diversity

Here alumni were asked if they thought there was a need for additional learning opportunities on the programme in relation to diversity and further probed where required on the opinions on the introduction of a theme or dedicated module for diversity in the programme. All five suggested that there was a need for additional learning. There was consensus on the need for learning about diversity to happen across the three years of the programme and not just in one module with suggestion for diversity being a theme that relates to all areas of learning on the programme.

Again there was suggestion that additional learning should be in the form of practical opportunities to learn and apply learning. Suggestions were again made for this to happen through WBP, workshops, guest speakers, practical elements of a diversity module and part of assessment criteria. A3 suggested there is a need to broaden the

curriculum in relation to diversity beyond what they believed is a narrow view that

only focuses on special needs.

[A1: 22] I think there is a need – I mean you could learn as much theoretically about diversity – there is definitely a need for more practical ways of working around diversity or for actually taking your theoretical knowledge and putting it into practice. And I definitely think a theme would help to encourage you for everything you plan – to start thinking of planning for diversity and it became second nature to you so that when you do go out into the workplace it is not a big shock.

[A2: 41] I definitely feel there's a need for a module on diversity… there was a bit on diversity but when you were doing your other modules you didn't really dwell too much on diversity. Whereas there was parts like the values and Interculturalism and other modules that we did that were very interesting but it would have been nicer to go more in-depth into them…

[A2:42] I think it is important to have one module and link it in to the learning on the other module as well. I do think there is a need for a module and even for reinforcement of the learning on diversity from first year to third year.

[A2:42] …mainly I would keep it practical - I would get guest speakers in as I said and maybe participants on their programmes…

[A3:66] In regards to diversity I think there is [a need for additional learning opportunities]... I think a dedicated diversity element. [A3:72] I think the focus was on special needs assistance and that was it. It just seemed to focus on one area and that that was what diversity was. It never came down to.. it wasn't gender based, it wasn't culturally based it was to do with specifically training people to deal with people with special needs in class. And I think it was a very narrow focus I never got a sense that it was broader than that or that there were other issues.

[A4:58] I think learners just need to be made aware of it. The stand alone module might be overkill on diversity; it might actually do more harm than good. But if learners are made aware of it …and have to deal with different scenarios then… [A4:59] I think there were a lot of modules there where you could have a chapter on diversity or the implications of diversity. [A4:60] In the first year of the programme we have a module on methodology. Yeah, there's an opportunity to bring in diversity within that because the learner's part of the rubric within that was to create a scenario.

[A5:82] I honestly think that diversity is one of the main things a teacher needs to look at in her planning or his planning for teaching, and teaching every day. .. a diversity module should be in for second and third year. [A5:83] You could have practical elements; you could have the theory behind it. Then you could do a module where everyone has to find somewhere to work like that – in something out of their comfort zone they wouldn't know anything about like working with foreign nationals, working with the traveller community, working with people with special needs and let people actually witness it throughout the three years instead of just one module for what.. 12 weeks ?

Findings here again reinforce the previous findings in the study in that there is a need for a more thematic approach to learning about diversity across the three years of the programme that includes opportunities to apply learning practically and to real life contexts.

On theme 4: The need for and use of Expert Speakers

Again, alumni were asked for their opinion on the need for and use of guest speakers in the programme in relation to learning on diversity. Here, there was also consensus that there is benefit in the use of guest or expert speakers in the programme. However, there was also discussion around the quality of the speakers and the need for them to be more closely linked to knowledge or theory gained in lectures; '..he may have been an expert in what he was talking about…not in teaching us' (A3:80). Alumni 4 and 5 both highlighted the low attendance at guest speaker sessions during their own term on the programme and suggest this might be due to their being no perceived value in what the speaker was bringing to the learning.

Alumni were further asked for their suggestions as to how expert speakers should be used and the majority again suggested that this was an opportunity for applying learning on the programme in a practical way and to gain real life examples of how that knowledge plays out in varying educational contexts, explained by those who are experiencing those contexts every day.

A2 suggests that guest speaker sessions could also include those experiencing or learning in different educational contexts as well as those delivering in them and A3 suggests that guest or expert speaker sessions may be a way of broadening view

points on diversity and that these sessions do not necessarily have to be practical but can also bring expert knowledge. Other suggestions as to how guest speaker sessions could be used include: workshops on themes such as dealing with behaviour, observation sessions in educational settings with discussion afterwards with the expert; and opportunities to see methodologies at play in specific contexts.

[A1:23] Definitely…. So that not only are we learning the theory side of it in college but that the guest speaker could come in on the day and give us tips to put what we learnt in theory into practice and give us that opportunity. And also give us an insight into their work. … an area that would benefit greatly from it would be the area of like behaviour ... maybe have a workshop on behaviour and dealing with challenging behaviour and have someone in who has great experience in that area and can deliver workshops. And same in special needs and intellectual disabilities and different minorities you know. [A1:24] I mean it would be fabulous … if a college class could go out maybe and observe them in their role or experience their job that they do or walk around their centre and come back and have a chat with the expert and maybe get some practical tips.

[A2:39] Just for example say if you had a guest speaker coming from my area, which is a Youthreach transition centre, and that whole organisation of youth work, maybe bring a speaker that's teaching and working with the students every day. [A2:40] … so you get a first hand view of how the learning is done and how they are learning and it gives you better methodologies as well. I just think keep the questions practical and real and practical answers back for the students.

[A3:80] I just thought I don't know how they find these people as experts and it added nothing to what we were learning at all. [A3:81] He may have been an expert in what he was talking about but he certainly wasn't in terms of relating to people in the classroom and teaching us and learning something from him. [A3:84] But I think there is room there for people with alternative views as to what should be going on. ... Someone like Peter McVerry, someone like that or John Lonergan someone from the Prison service. I mean these people are part of society as well and they deal with the results or lack of education.

[A3:85] I just think there is a lack of awareness about different parts of Irish society. And people are brought in on special needs and Youthreach. There is a singular view of what diversity is and that there is a far broader canvass than that.

[A3:87] [On how guest speakers should deliver] Well I think it is a practical thing to have them come in and talk anyway. I suppose questions arise as you listen to a speaker and if their role is to sort of show that this is how you deal with a particular aspect of education or diversity well yes I suppose there should be interaction. But if that person is an expert in a particular area of knowledge, as opposed to training, then how is a workshop going to work if they are not exactly trained or have a background in how to train, interact or engage with a class as opposed to just speaking and showing slides etc.?

[A4:64] I am not sure … in the year that I was in when someone came in as a guest speaker I know half the class didn't turn up. [A4: 65] Well I don't know they just thought it was a soft topic on the day and I think they didn't realise the value in it. I mean I realised it. I learned a lot from the guest speakers.

[A4:68] [asked how one could use guest speakers] I mean they would expose elements they didn't realise happened before and create a forum where they are free to ask questions and discover this. In a lecture situation I don't think …I would have a question mark beside that. I think it would have to be skilfully done. I think in smaller groups and maybe in a workshop situation it would lend itself really well for that. So you are back to workshops.

[A5:86] I never went to the guest speakers.[A5: 87] I went to some that I thought were going to interest me. But like there was some guy from one of the Crystal places or somewhere but there I was like '…I'm never going to need that' I would rather go to the library and get stuck in to something than that.

[A5:88] and If they are relevant. A5: 91 Teachers from all different learners to come in and talk to you about how they find their classes and how they teach their classes. How, like.. an everyday account of what life is like in education.

[A5:95] [When asked what approach a guest speaker should take] it's not going to benefit the student if they just come in and talk to them. There needs to be interaction with the class. So whether it is workshop based or if there is a question and answer session with the students where they get what they want to ask.

Again, the findings in relation to this theme concur with those of other participants in the programme and strengthen the need for a more strategic approach to the use of expert speakers across the programme.

Additional themes arising in alumni interviews

Throughout the interviews and outside of the discussion on the existing themes that had arisen in the research the following areas were additionally prevalent in the interview data: The need for students of the programme to:

- Gain skills in dealing with challenging behaviour as a consequence of a variety of issues including aspects of diversity
- Gain knowledge and skills in pastoral care
- Experience diversity through the use of ICT tools while on the programme.

Dealing with challenging behaviour

Reference to the challenges alumni face in dealing with behaviour was made early in the interviews and this theme was referred to throughout, particularly in relation to the need for students of the programme to gain relevant skills in this area. Suggestions for

programme improvement here centred again on the need for more practical

approaches to the programme and in the use of expert speakers who could offer real

life examples and suggestions from the field.

Knowledge and skills in pastoral care

Again, this featured mainly at the beginning of the interview in relation to the

challenges of the roles alumni are involved in and there were suggestions throughout

the interviews of the need for skills and greater confidence to deal with and

understand the personal and social issues related to the types of students graduates are

dealing with on a day to day basis.

Use of ICT in the learning process

Although suggested only by one alumni and not a strong theme in the rest of the data,

the particular alumni has experience of ICT in education and alluded to its benefits in

relation to enhancing learning on diversity and other areas of education. The alumni

here draws attention to the use of ICT in other countries in the learning process.

> [A3:66] But one of the things I found really frustrating was the aspect of ICT. I think it is totally under utilised here and in schools. And actually the rest of the world seems to be steaming ahead with this. And in Denmark and other countries in Europe ICT it's the backbone of everything they do whereas here it is just an add-on. And I found that really it is a huge asset. I mean outside of whiteboards. To communicate with diverse communities of education everywhere anywhere 24 hours a day.

> [A3:69] I think it is seen as too specialised where I think the opposite is true when you see other communities using it. I think it is very general. Irish people don't use it in the same way as Polish students or polish people use it, or Koreans. They just use it as a perfectly normal way of socialising and accessing not just the internet but to talk to people face to face. And we don't seem to do that and there is something wrong there I think. It's you know an add-on. Like I feel it's like saying 'well books, there a good idea and maybe some day we will get around to using them but just not today. ICT

4.7.9. Alumni – 3 wishes question

As with the students and lecturers, alumni interviews ended with the 3 wishes question of AI. Each was asked if they had 3 wishes in relation to changing the degree programme in relation to preparing them for diversity what would they be.

Responses in relation to the alumni 3 wishes question are extracted from the interview transcripts and collated as Appendix T. The wishes made by alumni are summarise in Table 7.

Table 7: Summary of alumni 3 wishes question

A1	More work placement in blocks Diversity as a theme across the programme More practical application of learning
A2	More work placement – across the three years A module on diversity in first year More guest speakers – across the three years
A3	Practical approach to psychology of behaviour and learning More teaching practice – across the three years Broader philosophical basis
A4	More preparation on dealing with non progressive learners More work experience – observation opportunities Bring diversity into assessment criteria – final year project
A5	Lecturers as models of teaching practice Modules on how to teach people with different backgrounds More hands on approach – being prepared for work

Alumni wishes are similar to the wishes of the final year students and reinforce the findings there and from other stages of the study. Alumni here explicitly suggest the need for more learning in relation to diversity, for that learning to happen across the three years and to happen in practical ways that allow them to apply their learning. More specifically, they call for an extension of the WBP element of the programme as a means to do this.

4.7.10. Conclusion to alumni interviews

Interviews with alumni provided insights into the challenges and experiences graduates of the programme might face in future work roles post graduation. These challenges related mainly to their confidence and ability to deal with social, personal, behavioural and pastoral care issues relating to their varying roles.

In exploring how the programme prepared them for those challenges in relation to knowledge, skills and values, it was evident that although they were prepared well in relation to knowledge about diversity and aspects of diversity and knowledge and concepts of values they did not feel they had adequate skills to deal with the day to day issues that arise as a consequence of diversity. These findings reinforce the findings of previous stages of the study.

The previous stages of the study took a futuristic view on the programme and sought improvements based on participants' experience of the programme only. Interviews with the alumni took a retrospective view and alumni based their responses on their experience of the programme and how those experiences related to their work context. Discussions with alumni around the four themes previously arising from the study, again reinforced findings from previous stages of the study, which was one of the aims of this stage.

Based on their experiences in the field alumni called for similar improvements to the programme across the four themes and alumni data highlighted additional themes suggesting a need for the programme to:

1. prepare students to deal with the challenges of behaviour

2. gain skills in pastoral care

3. learn about diversity through the use of ICT.

Chapter 5 discusses the overall findings of the study across all stages of the AI approach.

CHAPTER 5 – OVERALL FINDINGS OF STUDY

5.1. Introduction

This chapter summarises the overall findings of the study across the first three of the

4-D stages of the AI structure used to gather and analyse student and lecturer data and

how data from alumni interviews relate to those findings. It leads to the

recommendations (the *Destiny* stage) discussed in Chapter 6. There is also discussion

around observations on the use of AI in the study and reference and response to

comments and questions made by lecturers through the evaluation sheets completed at

the end of the lecturer workshop (Appendix P). Although these findings do not form

part of the findings of the study, the discussion adds justification to the use of AI in

the study and how the focus on the positive was dealt with and perceived at the local

level. This discussion relates to discussion in the literature around the uncertainty of

using AI as a research approach outlined earlier in 3.6.

Key themes arising from the data in each stage of the study are discussed under the

headings:

- **Discovery** - What the programme does well
- **Dream** - What participants saw as the ideal
- **Design** - Participants' practical suggestions for change

5.2. Discovery - What the programme does well

The *Discovery* stage looked to discover the intentions of the programme in preparing

students for diversity as well as what was happening in practice. It involved a review

of the programme prospectus and a comparison of module aims, outcomes and

objectives to what the literature deemed to be relevant in relation to preparing students

for diversity in the areas of knowledge, skills, and values. It also sought to discover what students and lecturers valued through their own experiences of the programme, also in relation to knowledge, skills and values. Findings are discussed in relation to the programme and module review and findings from participant data.

5.2.1. Programme and module review

A review of the programme intentions highlighted that education for multicultural and diverse societies is an explicit ideal of the programme, although diversity is not an established theme across modules and years in the programme.

Through cross referencing module intentions with the elements of teaching and learning deemed by the DICE Review to be relevant to diversity learning, it was evident that most of these elements were covered in either an intended or unintended way across the programme. The only notable element not met related to students having the opportunity to experience diversity. It was evident also that the list of elements for the themes, knowledge, skills and values, were mainly matched by outcomes from particular modules and that these modules occurred mainly in years 1 and 3 of the programme. Where aims, outcomes or objectives from second year modules did feature, it was mostly in relation to knowledge of special needs and learning differences. However, considering the nature of second year module *ES219 Sociology of Education and Training*, for which information was not available, it is assumed that outcomes for this module would also contribute across the categories leading to intended and unintended learning in year two.

Third year modules, *ES310 Values, Identity and Intercultural Learning* and *ES311 Equality, Access and Inclusion*, between them offer most of the required knowledge and values elements relevant to preparing students for diversity. Skills elements were met mainly by first year modules *ES116 Civic, Social, Political Education (CSPE), ES126 - Human Development Power & Politics* and *ES125 - Personal Development & Communication Skills.*

5.2.2. Summary of participant findings: knowledge, skills, values

Students and lecturers were asked what learning about diversity was happening in relation to knowledge skills and values on the programme and alumni were asked, based on their working experience, how the programme prepared them in relation to knowledge, skills and values.

Knowledge

Both student and lecturer data demonstrated that knowledge about diversity and aspects of diversity on the programme was happening mainly in the first and third years and through specific modules. Student learning was evident across a variety of themes including knowledge of cultures, special needs, the concept of diversity and policy and law. This data also suggested unintended learning in relation to diversity was also happening based on the references made to preparing class plans, writing aims and learning outcomes or linking learning from guest speakers. In relation to knowledge, alumni all felt they were adequately prepared by the programme but that greater opportunities for the application of that knowledge while on the programme was needed.

Skills

Both students and lecturers acknowledged that skills in relation to diversity centred on practical teaching skills, group work, communication skills and reflection which are all skills suggested by the DICE Review and the data arising through the review of modules.

It was evident also that there was no explicit linking of diversity learning to the second year WBP opportunity and that learning opportunities relating to diversity were weaker in year two than in other years. This highlighted a possible need for making diversity a programme theme in order to create a structure by which explicit learning opportunities might exist in year two and to give more focus and coherence to diversity related learning. Alumni findings again reinforced the findings of the other participants in relation to skills and alumni called for greater skills in preparing students to deal with student behaviour not just in relation to diversity but generally. They suggested a need for more practical opportunities to develop skills in dealing with the issues that arise in every day situations.

Values

Participant data also acknowledged that understanding ones own values and respecting the values of others is relative to dealing with diversity, both being areas important in preparing students for diversity highlighted in the literature.

Participants referred to the importance of acceptance and inclusion, an appreciation of self and others, the modelling of lecturers in relation to values and the ethos of programme and school as important in relation to values and diversity.

Specific values referred to in the lecturer data were; democracy, consensus, respect, tolerance, appreciation of others, learning from others, self-awareness, empathy, understanding, objectivity and neutrality of research, pastoral care, encouragement, and the valuing of diversity itself. All of these values are deemed to be important in respect of diversity and education and demonstrate that, although some lecturers are not involved directly with preparing students for diversity, they do contribute to learning in relation to diversity through the way that they teach and model themselves.

Again, alumni acknowledged satisfaction with how the programme prepared them in relation to the concept of values and understanding how values play out in education. As with knowledge, they also called for the programme to create more opportunities for students to experience their learning about values in relation to real life scenarios.

5.3.   Dream - What participants saw as the ideal

The *Dream* stage asked students and lecturers to state in an ideal world what they would dream for the programme in relation to preparing students for diversity. They were asked to be creative in this stage as it would lead to their creative but practical suggestions in the *Design* stage that followed. The purpose of getting students and lecturers to 'dream' of the ideal was to raise the bar in relation to what is currently happening by injecting a positive and creative element to inspire change.

There was much evidence that the creative element of the *Dream* stage led to creative practical suggestions for programme improvement in the design stage. Although not all participants used this stage to 'dream big', suggestions still prompted positive suggestions for change in the *Design* stage.

Use of the three wishes question gave rise to similar suggestions arising from the *Dream* stage which implies that the participants understood the purpose of the dream element in the process and that data arising from the study was reliable.

5.4. Design – Participants' practical suggestions for change

The *Design* stage was the most important stage of the study as it is here that all other data was moving towards. Participants, having acknowledged what was working in the programme and 'dreamed' of the ideal then made more realistic, practical suggestions for programme improvement.

Several common themes arose through the various stages of the data collected and culminated in the following combined student and lecturer themes arrived at in the *Design* stage. These themes are listed in order of those with the most suggestions for improvement made by participants, *Experiencing Diversity* being the highest. The top four are discussed in relation to practical solutions for improvement. The other themes do not feature strongly in the data but are referred to across the discussions:

1. Experiencing Diversity
2. Practical Experience
3. Diversity as a Module or Theme
4. Guest Speakers
5. Special Needs
6. Practicalities of Course Time
7. Research and Evaluation
8. Planning and Design
9. Students as stakeholders

The top four themes were a focus of discussions in the alumni interviews also to establish if they agreed with the findings of previous participants and if they had anything additional to add. The interviews gave greater depth to the findings and more

qualitative and detailed responses. Reference to interview findings is given at the end of the discussion on each theme.

5.4.1. Experiencing diversity

This was the theme most referred to in relation to suggestions for improvement and references in the student and lecturer data suggested a need for students to experience diversity first hand while on the programme. This is mainly due to the fact that there is limited cultural or other diversity amongst staff or students and that as students are not working they are not exposed to the diversity they are learning about or bringing accounts of experiences of diversity into the lecture room. Suggestions made by participants to allow students to experience diversity are summarised as follows:

- Student trips to diverse settings
- Work experience in diverse settings
- Student Exchanges
- Linking diversity to project work
- Amalgamation of classes
- Voluntary work with organisations dealing with diversity
- Extended teaching practice time
- Guest speakers with experience of diversity in education
- Guest speakers with experience of specific forms of diversity
- Forming partnerships with organisations dealing with diversity
- Opportunities to learn from other students from diverse backgrounds
- Opportunities to teach students from diverse backgrounds
- Inclusion of diverse students and staff in the programme
- Social events where students could meet people

Alumni suggestions were similar to these and alumni data highlighted the challenges graduates face in the day-to-day dealings with different aspects of diversity. Alumni pointed out the disadvantage full time students of the undergraduate programme have in not having a work context on which to apply their learning. Their suggestions for improving the programme in relation to this theme centred mainly on increasing

opportunities to connect with people from diverse context through WBP, workshops, guest speakers and the use of ICT to communicate beyond the lecture room.

5.4.2. Practical experience

Students strongly called for practical opportunities to apply knowledge and enhance learning in relation to diversity and some expressed how they felt 'unprepared for diversity' or the 'unknown' or needed a more 'hands on' approach. This was particularly the case for special needs and cultural aspects of diversity. This may again be due to the fact that students are not working and have limited opportunity to apply learning in practical situations. Also there were suggestions that the WBP time is limited and much of the learning on the programme in relation to diversity happens after WBP takes place. The lecturer data also called for more practical opportunities for learning. The following list summarises student and lecturer suggestions for more practical opportunities for learning in relation to diversity:

- More time allocated to work based practice (WBP)
- Teaching practice in diverse settings
- Visits to diverse settings for assessment of needs
- Diversity as a topic within WBP module
- A practical or skills module
- Tutorial time dedicated to practical skills
- Practical skills/ideas in how to teach students from specific diverse backgrounds
- Use of case studies of good practice
- Student research and projects in diversity
- Planning and designing for diversity

Once again, the above suggestions are similar to those put forward by alumni. This was the strongest theme in the alumni data and there was strong suggestion also for a need to focus practical learning on the everyday scenarios of education through the

use of case studies, peer learning, observation and expert speakers who meet the specific needs of students.

5.4.3. Diversity as a module or theme

There were callings from both students and lecturers for a dedicated module in relation to diversity. In some cases there were suggestions for a module specifically for special needs and in other cases a module for diversity generally that incorporates special needs. Some suggested that an additional module should focus on practical opportunities for student learning and experience. Some students suggested there is a need for more coursework and that there is too much free time in the programme. However, lecturer comments suggested there was limited flexibility in the programme to introduce another module. Some lecturers wished for more time and funding to do more in relation to diversity and to research student needs in relation to the topic.

There were also suggestions for diversity to feature as a theme across the three years of the programme and a calling by some for additional workshops or lectures and greater use of tutorial time and guest speakers to meet learning needs.

In relation to additional learning in the programme for diversity, alumni suggested there was need for additional learning but that that it should be a more focused approach to how learning about diversity happens across the three years and in particular that additional to the knowledge and values learning already happening, opportunities to apply that learning to real life contexts is required across the three years. A diversity theme rather than a dedicated module was the preferred approach

and a linking of learning about diversity into other non-related modules was also suggested.

5.4.4. Guest Speakers

Throughout the study there was much reference to the value of guest speakers and the need for greater use of guest speakers in relation to diversity learning. Use of guest speakers was seen as a means for students to experience diversity and to learn from experts working in diverse settings and dealing with issues arising in relation to differences. There were suggestions also to use guest speakers in non-traditional ways such as for elements of project work, online discussions, role-play and other practical learning approaches through tutorial sessions. Some of these suggestions could provide opportunities to incorporate practical learning within the existing programme structure and to experience diversity through the accounts of practitioners in the field.

These were also strong suggestions of the alumni when discussing guest speakers. Some suggested that there was an issue with attendance at guest speaker sessions as speakers were not always relevant. Data from alumni suggests use of guest speakers is an opportunity to apply learning and that the choice of speaker, how they deliver and how what they speak about relates to the theoretical learning on the course is important.

5.4.5. Conclusion – Summary of participant suggestions for change

There were four main areas suggested by the data, and in particular the students and lecturers themselves that need to be addressed in relation to preparing students for

diversity and findings in these areas were affirmed by the findings from the alumni interviews:

1. The need for students to experience diversity in various forms

2. The need for students to learn about diversity and apply learning in practical ways.

3. The need for greater learning opportunities through a dedicated module, a programme theme or additional course time.

4. The use of experts in specific areas relating to diversity in the learning process

Three additional needs arising from the alumni interviews were added:

5. The need for students to learn skills for dealing with negative behaviour and behaviour arising as a consequence of diversity.

6. The need for students to gain skills in pastoral care.

7. The need for greater use of ICT to enhance learning about diversity.

The following list represents the practical solutions made by participants across the study that could meet these needs and are the basis for the recommendations made and discussed in Chapter 6:

- Student trips to diverse settings
- Field trips to diverse settings
- Work experience in diverse settings
- Voluntary work with organisations dealing with diversity
- Create opportunities for student exchanges
- Create opportunities to learn with other students from diverse backgrounds
- Create opportunities to learn from other students from diverse backgrounds
- Social events where students could meet people from different backgrounds

- Inclusion of diverse students and staff in the programme/school
- Form partnerships with organisations dealing with diversity
- Create links with schools, colleges and organisations for mutual benefit.
- Amalgamation of classes across programmes.
- Guest speakers with experience of diversity in education
- Guest speakers with experience of specific forms of diversity
- Greater practical involvement of experts in the field through practical work and online discussions.
- Link students with other student groups on campus.
- Link diversity to project work
- Link diversity to teaching practice modules
- Extend teaching practice time
- Create more opportunities to teach students from diverse backgrounds
- More project work or greater links to existing project work in relation to diversity.
- Increased curriculum on diversity, specifically in the areas of special needs and culture.
- Greater use of tutorial time in relation to diversity.
- More student based research to understand student needs in relation to diversity.
- Cross module linking and collaboration in relation to diversity.
- Inclusion of diversity as a theme and making learning in the area more explicit in module descriptors.

5.5.   Findings on the use of AI as a research method in the study

Although not forming part of the data for the study, lecturers were asked to complete an evaluation form at the end of the AI workshop. The purpose of the evaluation was to determine firstly if participants understood the AI process, in particular the focus on the positive, and the purpose of the *Dream* stage. Secondly, it aimed to obtain lecturers' opinions on the use of AI in order to validate its use, and thirdly to use the opportunity to highlight any issues or questions in relation to its use that may impact the study. The following discussion in relation to the use of AI in the study makes reference to lecturer observations to add weight to those of the author.

During both the student and lecturer sessions there was genuine interest in AI as an approach although, as expected, concerns were raised in relation to an over-emphasis

on the positive and any impact of this on the resulting data of any research study in which it was used. Most of the comments from lecturers' were positive in relation to its use as demonstrated in the extracts from the evaluations data (see Appendix P):

2	Though from an 'evaluative' process I think it is always good to start positive and is essential in an 'organisational system' and for self-evaluation to increase motivation.

4	As a module designer it made me feel less threatened. Also easier to begin to question the negatives.

5	It's very interesting, it adds to the existing models and thus contributes to research discourse.

7	Like that it's positive - more models in teaching & learning need to be looked at from a positive approach.

8	Think this approach can contribute to cultural change in an organisation and will be less threatening than AR. I felt it was a positive experience which helped me identify specific gaps to improve my practice.

9	An interesting approach. I like its emphasis on devising positive solutions/taking a positive approach. Interesting similarities to AR. I haven't heard of it before and could imagine many applications for our students, particularly on the part time degree.

10	Good new method which can complement AR and other forms of research.

There was also caution and opposition around the use of AI in research as shown in the following extracts, some of which raised valid questions in relation to this study:

3	I wonder why it matters - do the participants offer information that otherwise wouldn't have been gathered?

2	Though it has a positive slant, after completing the exercise I found myself writing negative answers anyway so I'm not sure whether there is a distinct difference between this and other approaches since I think I would answer the questions in the same manner.

5.5.1. Valuing the negative in the study

Although there was strong emphasis in the data collection focusing on the positive there is much evidence, particularly in student responses, that participants were not precluded from expressing their ideas in a non-positive way. The deliberate inclusion of the 'any other comments' section of the student questionnaire and lecturer exercise sheets, although they did not expressly seek it, allowed for expression in this way.

The *Three Wishes* question also demonstrated a list of wishes participants had in relation to how the programme should prepare students for diversity and this list implied areas in need of improvement in the programme that concurred with the other data arising through affirmative questions or seeking positive responses.

There were many explicit examples of both students and lecturers expressing themselves in a 'non-positive' way and these examples were not excluded from the analysis but rather brought value to it:

4	Teaching methodology/strategies needed more in class to accommodate diversity - learnt the value of the group work

15	Talk by visiting lecturer from Australian University on experiences of difference in Australia school system.
15	Talks by Irish educators currently working in schools dealing with diversity would be helpful

	I feel I am unprepared on a practical level to deal with children and special needs and diverse culture backgrounds.
4	More practical strategies needed to help deal with issues in relation to special needs. A field trip or immersion into a special needs school to see what works and the reality rather than just theory as we learn in DCU.

10	Greater exchange with other students of different nationalities.
10	Develop a student exchange programme.

These and other examples demonstrated that participants were able to highlight areas of the programme in need of improvement. By focusing on the positive they were also able to suggest creative and positive solutions for attaining that improvement.

The semi-structured approach to the interviews allowed alumni to feel free about their opinions of the programme and how it prepared them for the workplace and this data again focused on constructive suggestions for course improvement based on both negative and positive experiences of the programme and work experience.

CHAPTER 6 – DISCUSSION & RECOMMENDATIONS

6.1.   Introduction

This chapter represents the *Destiny* stage of the AI process in the study in that it puts

forward recommendations for action for programme improvement in relation to

preparing students for diversity. The recommendations are based on the overall

findings outlined in Chapter 5 and are discussed under the following main themes:

- The need for students to experience diversity.
- The need for students to learn and apply learning about diversity in practical ways.
- The need for additional and more explicit learning opportunities.
- The use of experts in specific areas relating to diversity in the learning process.
- The need for students to learn skills for dealing with behaviour arising from diversity
- A suggestion for greater use of ICT to enhance learning about diversity.

6.2.   Creating opportunities to experience diversity

The only area not met by one or more module aims, objectives, or outcomes in the

review of modules was the need for students to experience diversity. This was also the

most frequently suggested area for improvement put forward by participants in the

study. Lindsey, Robins and Terrell (2003) suggest that 'cultural competence' goes

beyond recognition of cultural difference but is the ability also to respond to and

interact effectively with people from diverse groups. The Commission of the

European Communities (2005), Longworth (1996), Barth (1990) and Banks (2007) [20]

all highlight that students need more than knowledge and skills to deal with diversity,

but the capacity and opportunity to apply their learning in real life contexts and

through formal and informal learning. The School values a pluralistic approach to

---

[20] See Chapter Two 1.4.2.

education, having hosted an educational conference on pluralism,[21] and Coolahan (1996) talked then of an education process '…through a mediated encounter with the cherished traditions, values, knowledge, attitude and skills of society'.

As students get little opportunity to experience diversity across the programme, this study recommends that the School create working partnerships with external institutions such as schools, support organisations, non-profit organisations and other relevant bodies to build a database of partnership organisations who could be of benefit in relation to various forms of diversity. These partnerships could also create opportunities for students who wish to gain experience in specific educational contexts through work experience placements for the WBP module, for voluntary opportunities, or for action research projects for final year students who are interested in a specific area such as Special Education or Traveller Education. Such partnerships could also give access to expert speakers as discussed later in the chapter.

Similarly, it is recommended that links are developed internally with support units within the University such as the Access Office, the Disability Office, the International Office, Student Support, the Interfaith Centre, the Centre for Talented Youth of Ireland (CTYI) and DCU in the Community with a view to students and staff sharing their experiences of diversity in education, students conducting projects and students getting involved in practical learning opportunities.

In relation to the programme structure, it is recommended that the School explore the benefits of bringing student groups together in the learning process. For example

---

[21] See Chapter Two 1.6.2.

Module *ES125 - Personal Development & Communication Skills* is a module also delivered by the School to international students on the *International Foundation Programme*. This could provide intended and unintended learning opportunities for students through sharing their experiences of each other's cultures as well as the experience of learning a subject together. Similarly, to explore linking the full-time students with the part-time students in some way so that the full time students might learn from discussions relating to the part-time students' experiences of diversity and other aspects of teaching and learning gained through their working practice. It may also be worth exploring the possibilities for full time students to spend a day shadowing through the links established through partnerships, with a specific focus on experiencing diversity or specific elements of diversity.

6.3.   Effective use of expert speakers

Participants acknowledged the use of guest speakers in the programme but called for a greater use of 'expert' speakers. It is recommended that speakers bring more than just knowledge of a subject area or topic but personal experience of practice and issues relating to practice also. Banks (2007), Ornstein (1993) and Zeichner (1992) [22] suggest that educators should make use of the informal learning that occurs in the lives and communities of students and the '..multiple contexts and valued practices of everyday life..' (Banks 2007, p5). Creating partnerships with organisations could also create links to 'expert' speakers across the various areas of diversity and could create both formal and informal opportunities for learning about diversity in civic, personal and pastoral care contexts. These could include representatives of special education, the Traveller Community, adult education, parents and other relevant persons bringing

---

[22] See Chapter Two 2.3.3.

their experiences to the student where students may be unable to experience it for themselves.

6.4.   Incorporating practical experience on the programme

Although there was strong evidence of the programme tending to learning across knowledge and values in relation to diversity, there was also a strong calling, from students and alumni in particular, for the need for opportunities to apply that learning in practical ways while on the programme. Drudy and Clarke (2006) suggest 'the classroom strategies generally considered most appropriate to teaching about diversity and managing diverse classrooms are active and experiential ones' (p383).

It is recommended that the programme consider a more pragmatic approach to diversity and other learning on the programme to allow students to conceptualise learning in relation to their own real life experiences and/or the experiences of those working and living with diversity.

Hogan (1996, 2003), suggests a practice where '…the overt and hidden curricula are pursued in harmony…' Ling and Stephenson (1991) and Hogan (1996, 2003) suggest a Socratic approach to values education and Longworth and Davies advocate a facilitative approach[23]. These approaches would allow students to consider their own values systems and to conceptualise learning in relation to diversity through discussion and practical work. It is recommended that speakers with experience in teaching to diverse groups or specific student differences deliver practical workshops

---

[23] See Chapter Two 2.3.6.

rather than lectures or presentations using a facilitative or Socratic approach. This could enable students to engage with case studies or real life situations.

It is also recommended that students attend skills building workshops or tutorials that relate to the intellectual, social and action skills referred to in the DICE Review (see Appendix C). Such workshops could focus on generic skills building and include diversity related skills and examples. Existing tutorial time could be used for discussion and practical learning in relation to the main themes of the programme, including diversity.

It is also suggested, in relation to creating practical opportunities to apply learning, that there is a stronger consideration of diversity in existing practical elements of the programme such as microteaching, curriculum design, ICT, project work, teaching practice and action research projects (discussed further in 6.1.4.).

Further, it is suggested that the programme source or create practical resources in relation to diversity that could be used across modules. For example case studies, facilitation games, role-play opportunities, action projects such as on-campus and off-campus campaigns. Perhaps ideas for methodologies, materials and opportunities could be explored and created through action research projects by students.

6.5. Creating additional learning opportunities

Suggestions from participants in relation to additional learning focused mainly on the introduction of a dedicated module in relation to diversity but also on the need for a more focused approach to learning about diversity as a theme across the three years of

the programme. However, Zappone (2003) and Abdallah-Pretceille (2006)[24] highlight the importance of dealing with difference as the norm and question the relevance of diversity as a concept and Ladson-Billings (2001) suggests that teachers should take responsibility to learn about their students' culture. It is recommended that a needs analysis be conducted in relation to any additional learning requirements of the programme in respect of diversity and in particular to special needs and whether or not a dedicated module is relevant or required. Given the constraints of time and resources in current times, it is recommended that the programme include *Diversity* as a programme theme in the short term and seek ways to introduce practical learning opportunities to planning and teaching to diverse groups and in diverse settings across the programme rather than introduce a dedicated module (discussed further in 6.6.). It may be more beneficial to use any available time in the timetable for students to apply learning in real life contexts or through interaction with those dealing with diversity in practice.

Students in the study referred to the need for greater opportunities for application of learning in relation to diversity and referred to the need for the WBP module to be extended. It is recommended that the programme explore the possibilities of extending the teaching practice element or to introduce additional or alternative opportunities for WBP through linking with established partnership organisations as recommended earlier. Obviously this consideration would benefit the application of all elements of teaching and learning and not just learning in relation to diversity.

---

[24] See Chapter Two 2.3.5.

6.6. Making diversity explicit in the programme

Aside from investigation into the need for a dedicated module, it is suggested that the programme includes diversity as a theme across the programme and that it creates explicit opportunities for learning in relation to diversity in a focused and progressive way across the programme. Creating a theme for diversity in the programme would allow for a more structured approach to diversity learning throughout the programme and could address the possible need for a stronger emphasis in relation to diversity in year two of the programme. A diversity theme in the programme may also create opportunity for links across modules in relation to the topic of diversity and create opportunities for cross modular learning, particularly in relation to the WBP experience in year two.

Finally, it is recommended that the findings of this study and the topic of diversity is considered in the rewriting of programme and module learning outcomes in line with the Bologna Process planned for academic year 2010/11. The rewriting of learning outcomes is a good opportunity to review individual modules in relation to diversity and for making learning in relation to diversity explicit where relevant.

6.7. Summary of recommendations

In summary, the recommendations discussed in this chapter are based on the findings of the study and in particular on the suggestions put forward by students and lecturers involved in the programme. These recommendations are summarised as follows:

- Establish a database of organisations that could be linked with across themes relevant to diversity.
- Establish internal and external relationships/partnerships with organisations/bodies/individuals in relation to involvement in practical workshops, tutorials, project work and work-based practice.

- Extend the work based practice element of the programme or introduce additional opportunities to experience diversity in educational contexts.
- Review the programme in relation to the introduction of diversity as a theme and how it relates to specific modules. Also consider the theme of diversity when addressing the writing of module learning outcomes.
- Review the programme in relation to opportunities for students to experience diversity and to apply learning in relation to diversity (and other aspects) in practical ways.
- Review the way the programme uses guest speakers.
- Introduce a practical learning element that gives students the skills to deal with behaviour problems, personal and pastoral care issues.

6.8. Benefit of AI as an evaluation tool

The decision to use AI as a research method in place of AR was a successful one. It was acknowledged early in the study that the programme appeared to be quite contemporary in its approach to diversity. The AI approach allowed the study to begin by affirming what was already working and also allowed a structured way to compare what was happening in the programme with known aspects of good practice highlighted through the literature. Getting participants to begin by establishing what was working created in them a positive attitude that allowed them to move through the Dream stage to highlight aspects of the programme could be better thus highlighting possible weaknesses in the programme. The acknowledgement of these weaknesses through the research and the collective practical suggestions of participants in how to make improvements allowed the voice of the participants to directly influence the recommendations arising from the study.

The location of the researcher as close to, but not involved, in the day-to-day running of the programme meant that an alternative method to AR would be appropriate. As

AI has many similarities to AR it was ideal in this context. It allowed the study to remain grounded in the ideals of AR as an approach but to take on AI as a structure.

It is true that similar results may have been arrived at in approaching the study in a more traditional way but the learning for the author and the participants in the study was greater as a result. The experience of using AI as an research method in the context of course improvement has highlighted a possible place for AI as structure for course evaluation in educational and other contexts, particularly those that may want to begin with a positive look at what works well and derive data in a more positive atmosphere.

CHAPTER 7 – CONCLUSIONS OF STUDY

This study was concerned with the preparation of education studies students to work in educational environments that present many challenges relating to all forms of diversity. As shown in the literature, diversity education and training in the past has focused mainly on knowledge of diversity and differences, particularly cultural differences. However, there is growing consensus that although knowledge of difference is important, over emphasis on people's differences can in fact be an impediment to the acceptance of difference as norm. Additional to a knowledge of the concept of diversity and the various elements of diversity there is growing acceptance of the need for educators to be equipped also with the ability to accept, and encourage acceptance of, difference as norm and to have the confidence, skills and competencies to deal with issues and challenges that arise as a consequence of difference.

Through the review of literature, this study found that the knowledge, skills and values required for educators to be prepared for the diversity of modern teaching contexts were often those not directly related to diversity itself but to do with personal development and the ability to conduct oneself confidently and professionally in varying contexts. It is through: effective communication skills; an ability to acknowledge and accept one's own values and difference as well as those of others; a sensitivity around other backgrounds and cultures; the ability to research information; and the experience of doing all these things, that educators gain confidence and competencies in dealing with issues of difference and diversity.

When comparing the full time BSc in Education and Training at DCU against what the literature deemed relevant, it was evident that the programme was contemporary

in its approach to dealing with diversity. It was also clear that learning was happening in both intended and unintended ways and that the unintended ways were something to be valued. However, as students of this programme have limited opportunity to apply their learning in real life contexts, a move to more practical approaches to address diversity as a theme, as well as a focus on practical skills and competencies in relation to that theme, would strengthen the learning in relation to diversity as well as learning in respect of other topics on the programme.

The employment of an AI approach highlighted a new model for course evaluation that begins with acknowledging what is working, gets participants to envisage what would be ideal and to put forward practical suggestions for positive action.

Beyond its obvious uses for education studies and initial teacher education, this research may be of interest to anyone involved in the subject of diversity or diversity training. It may be of use in particular in the public services sector for those involved in diversity training for nursing, An Garda Siochanna, or prison services staff or anywhere where a positive focus might be relevant. It will be of use also to those conducting research through the use AI and those interested in course evaluation.

Finally, it is the hoped that the findings of this study will enhance the valued learning already taking place in the programme on which it was focused so that future graduates will, through their knowledge, skills, confidence and professionalism, be able to manage difference as a consequence of humanity whilst focusing their learning on the art of education.

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Abdallah-Pretceille, M. (2006). Interculturalism as a Paradigm for thinking about Diversity. *Intercultural Education*, Vol. 17, No. 5. London: Routledge.

Abercrombie, N., Hill, S., Turner. B.S. (2006). *Dictionary of Sociology: Fifth Edition*. London: Penguin Reference.

ASTI (2006). *ASTI Policy and Campaigns: Special Needs Education.* Available from: http://www.asti.ie/pol_main.htm [Accessed 2nd February, 2008]. Available from http://www.asti.ie/pol_main.htm

ASTI (2007a). *Survey on Class Size in Second Level Schools: Management Summary*. Dublin: ASTI. Available from http://www.asti.ie/pol_main.htm

ASTI (2007b). *Survey on Stress in Teaching.* Dublin: ASTI. Available from http://www.asti.ie/pol_main.htm

Banks, J.A., McGee Banks, C.A., Cortes, C.E., Hahn, C.L., Merryfield, M.M., Moodley, K.A., Murphy-Shigematsu, S., Osler, A. Park, C. Parker, W.C. (2005). *Democracy and Diversity: Principles and Concepts for Educating Citizens in a Global Age*. Seattle: Centre for Multicultural Education, University of Washington.

Banks, J. A., Au, K.H., Ball, A.F., Bell, P., Gordon, E.W., Gutierrez, K.D., Brice Heath, S., Lee, C.D., Lee, Y. Jahiri, J., Nasir, N.S., Valdes, G., and Zhou, M. (2007). *Learning in and out of school in diverse environments*: Life-long, Life-wide, Life-deep. Washington: The LIFE Centre and the Centre for Multicultural Education, University of Washington.

Banks, J.A. (1997). *Educating Citizens in a Multicultural Society*. New York: Teachers College Press.

Barth, R.S. (1990) *Improving Schools From Within*. San Francisco: Jossey Bass.

Bauman, Z. (2000) *Liquid Modernity*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Bauman, Z. (2005) *Education in Liquid Modernity*. IN *The Review of Education, Pedagogy, and Cultural Studies*, 27:303–317, 2005.

Beck, U., Giddens, A., Lash, S. (1995). *Reflexive Modernisation, Politics, Tradition and Aesthetics in the Modern Social Order*. Cambridge: Polity Press.

Berg, W. (2005). Cross Cultural learning and managing diversity. IN Ross, A. (ed) Teaching Citizenship pp 373-380. London: CiCe.

Boyatzis, R.E. (1998) *Transforming qualitative information: thematic analysis and code development.* London: Sage.

Central Statistics Office. (2006). *Principal Demographics Results*. Dublin: Stationery Office.

Central Statistics Office (2006a). Persons, males and females usually resident and present in the State on Census Night, classified by age group and ethnic or cultural background, 2006. Available from: http://beyond2020.cso.ie/Census/TableViewer/tableView.aspx?ReportId=5791 [Accessed: 2nd February, 2008].

Chehlova, Z. (2003) Multicultural education in Latvia as a means of developing a child's openness to cultural differences. IN Ross, A. (ed) A Europe of Many Cultures. London: CiCe pp 19-22.

Cohen, L., Manion, L. and Morrison, K. (2000) *Research Methods in Education*. Fifth Edition. London: Routledge Falmer

Commission of the European Communities (2000), *A Memorandum on Lifelong Learning*. Commission Staff Working Paper. Brussels: SEC (2000)1832.

Coolahan, J. (1996). Emerging Patterns. *Pluralism in Education: Conference Proceedings 1996*. Dublin: Dublin City University: Pluralism Centre.

Cooperrider, D.L., Whitney, D. and Stavros, M. (2003). Appreciative Inquiry Handbook: The first in a Series of AI Workbooks for Leaders of Change. Premium Edition. Bedford Heights, Ohio: Lakeshore Publishers.

Creswell, J.W. (2005). Educational Research. Planning, conducting and Evaluating Quantitative and Qualitative Research. 2nd edition. New Jersey: Pearson Education Int.

CSPE.ie *About CSPE*: The Structure of the CSPE Course. (Online) Available from: http://www.cspe.ie/teachers/index.tmpl?secid=20021103183953&subid=20021103230850 [Accessed: 23 March 2008].

Department for International Development (2005). *Developing the global dimension in the school curriculum*. Glasgow: The DFID Public Enquiry Point

DICE (2005). Global and Justice perspectives in Education: A Literature Review. Dublin: The DICE Project, The Church of Ireland College of Education.

Dolan, A. (2006). *The Inclusive School*. IN *Equality News*: *Autumn 2006* pp 15/16. Dublin: The Equality Authority.

Dooly, M. and Villanueva, M. (2006) *Internationalisation as a key dimension to teacher education.* IN European Journal of Teacher Education 29:2, 223 – 240. London: Routledge.

Drudy, S. and Clarke, M. (2006). Teaching for diversity, social justice and global awareness. European Journal of Teacher Education, 29:3. 371-386. London: Routledge

Easterby-Smith, M., Thorpe, R. and Lowe, A. (2002). *Management Research: An Introduction*. 2nd edition. London: Sage.
Eck, D.L. [Online]. What is Pluralism? *The Pluralism Project: At Harvard University*. Available form: http://www.pluralism.org/pluralism/what_is_pluralism.php [Accessed: 4 March 2009].

England, J.T., (1992). *Pluralism and Education: Its Meaning and Method.* Ann Arbor Michigan: ERIC Digest. ERIC Identifier: ED347494

Equality Authority (Equal Status Acts 2000 and 2004: Information Booklet [Online]. Available from: http://www.equality.ie/index.asp?locID=106&docID=226 [Accessed 21st November 2008].

Euridyce 2005. Citizenship Education at School in Europe: Country Reports. Ireland: National Description 2004/05. European Commission.

European Intercultural Workplace (2007). *European Intercultural Workplace: Ireland Republic.* Dublin: Dublin City University.

Grant, S. and Humphries, M. (2006). Critical Evaluation of Appreciative Inquiry: Bridging an apparent paradox. *Action Research* Volume 4(4): 401–418 London: Sage.

Guba, E.G. (Editor) (1990). *The Paradigm Dialogue*. London: Sage Publications.

Habermas (2001). *The Postnational Constellation*. London: Polity Press.

Hargreaves, A. (1994). *Changing Teachers, Changing Times: teachers' work and culture in the postmodern age.* London: Cassell.

Hidalgo, N. (1993). Multicultural teacher introspection. In Perry, T. and Fraser, J. (Eds*.) Freedom's Plow: Teaching in the Multicultural Classroom*. New York: Routledge.

Hogan, P. (1996). Pluralism in Perspective: Some Lessons from Western Educational History. *Pluralism in Education: Conference Proceedings 1996*. Dublin: Dublin City University: Pluralism Centre.

Hogan, P. (2003). Teaching and Learning as a Way of Life. Journal of Philosophy of Education. 37(2) (pp207-223). Oxford: Blackwell Publishing.

Huitt, W. (2004). Values. *Educational Psychology Interactive*. Valdosta, GA: Valdosta State University. Available from: http://www.edpsycinteractive.org/topics/affsys/values.html

International Labour Organization and United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organization (2007) *Report of the Joint ILO/UNESCO Committee of Experts on the Application of the Recommendations concerning Teaching Personnel:* Ninth Session*.* Geneva 30 October – 3 November 2006. CEART/9/2006/10. ILO/UNESCO: Geneva/Paris

Irish Aid (online). Development Education Funding Scheme [Online] Available from: http://www.irishaid.gov.ie/Uploads/Funding%20Guidelines%20.pdf [Accessed 21 April 2008]. Dublin: Irish Aid, Department of Foreign Affairs.

Irish Government (1998). Education Act 1998. Dublin: Stationery Office.

Juffe, H., and Yardley, L. (2004). Content and thematic analysis. *IN* D. Marks and L. Yardley (Eds.) *Research methods for clinical and health psychology* (pp56-69). London: Sage

Keane, E. and Boland, J. (online). Learning to teach for social justice through civic engagement: a collaborative Galway Traveller Movement, Galway Refugee Support Group and NUIG School of Education project. Available from: http://www.nuigalway.ie/education/research/research.html [Accessed 3 November 2009]

Kjaerulff, H. (2002). Meeting the other culture. IN Ross, A. (ed) Future Citizens in Europe pp 125-129. London: CiCe.

Ladson-Billings, G. 2001. *Crossing Over to Canaan: The Journey of New Teachers in Diverse Classrooms.* San Francisco: Jossey-Bass.

Leeman, Y. (2006) *Teaching in ethnically diverse schools:teachers' professionalism.* European Journal of Teacher Education 29:3, 341 – 356. London: Routledge.

Ling, L. and Stephenson, J. (1998a). Introduction and Theoretical Perspectives *IN*: Stephenson, J., Ling, L., Burman, E. and Cooper, M. (eds). *Values in Education.* London: Routledge.

Ling, L. and Stephenson, J. (1998b) Preface *IN*: Stephenson, J., Ling, L., Burman, E. and Cooper, M. (eds). *Values in Education.* London: Routledge.

Lodge, A. and Lynch, K. (eds.) (2004) *Diversity at School.* Dublin: IPA / Equality Authority.

Longworth, N (1996) Lifelong Learning and Learning Communities: A vision for the future. Lecture Notes Available from DCU: Moodle ES314 [accessed 12th November, 2006].

Longworth, N., Davies, W.K. (1996). *Lifelong Learning*. London: Kogan Page.

Maykut, P. and Morehouse, R. (1994). *Beginning Qualitative Research: A Philosophic and Practical Guide.* London: Falmer Press.

Merryfield, M. (2000). Why aren't teachers being prepared to teach for diversity, equity, and global interconnectedness? A study of lived experiences in the making of multicultural and global educators. IN *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 16: 429-443.

Mitchel, L.A., (2009) *Becoming Culturally Responsive Teachers in Today's Diverse Classroom.* Available online from:
http://www.eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/44/d5/ec.pdf

Mertens, D.M, (1998). *Research Methods in Education and Psychology*. London: Sage.

Morris, B. M. (1983). *Why Are You Losing Your Children? The Barbara M. Morris Report,* P.O. Box 412, Ellicott City, MD 21043. N.D.

Mulcahy, C., (2003). Values, identity and intercultural learning: adult educators reflect on the meaning of inclusive citizenship, in Ross, A. (ed) A Europe of Many Cultures, pp461-467. London: CiCe.

Mulcahy, C., O'Higgins-Norman, J., and Harrison, K. (2008). School of Education Studies: *Submission to the Department of Education & Science Office for Integration on the development of the Intercultural Education Strategy for Second-Level Education.* Dublin: DCU. Available from:
http://www.dcu.ie/education_studies/downloads/Submission%20to%20DES%20interculturalismn.pdf

Nelson, J. (2008). Exploring diversity through ethos in initial teacher education. *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 24: 1729-1738.

Newman, J.H. (1854). The Idea of a University. Available online from:
http://www.fordham.edu/halsall/mod/newman/newman-university.html [Last accessed 28 June 2009].

NCCA (2005). *Intercultural Education in the Primary School: Guidelines for Schools.* Dublin: NCCA.

NCCA (2006). *Intercultural Education in the Post Primary School: Guidelines for Schools.* Dublin: NCCA.

NCCRI and Equality Commission for Northern Ireland. Available from:
http://www.nccri.ie/publications-other.html [Accessed on 10th November 2007].

Niens, U. and McIlrath, L. (2005). *Understandings of Citizenship Education North & South.* University of Ulster and National University of Ireland, Galway.

O'Keefe, B. (2008) Opening Address. *NCCRI Intercultural Education Conference.* October 2008. Available from: http://www.nccri.ie/news/IES-conf.html

O'Leary, Z (2004). *The Essential Guide To Doing Research*. London: Sage

Ornstein, A.C. (1993). Discipline with dignity in the classroom: Seven principles. IN *Education* 94-95. F. Schulz (ed) pp 110-112. Guildford, Connecticut: Dushkin.

Purdy, N. and Gibson, K. (2008). Alternative placements in initial teacher education: An evaluation. IN *Teaching and Teacher Education*. 24: 2076-2086.

Raths, L., Harmin, M. and Simons, S.B., (1966). *Values and Teaching: Working with Values in the Classroom*. Columbus, Ohio: Charles E. Merrill.

Reed, J. (2007). *Appreciative Inquiry: Research for Change*. London: Sage.

Ross, A. (2003). Teachers as symbols of societal power: what cultural icon are we? A Europe of Many Cultures. London: CiCe pp 217-213.

Robb, W. (2008). What is values education – and so what? Available online from The Centre for Alleviating Social Problems through Values Education (CAVE): http://www.valueseducation.co.uk/e-reports.html [Accessed 18 November, 2009].

Schutt, R.K., (2006). Investigating the Social Worls: The Process and Practice of Research. 5th ed. California: Sage Publications.

Smyth, E., Darmody, M., McGinnity, F. and Byrne, D. (2009). *Adapting to Diversity: Irish Schools and Newcomer Students*. Dublin: ESRI

Sommer, C. (1984). *Schools in Crisis: Training for Success or Failure?*
Houston TX: Advance Publishing. Available online from:
http://www.advancepublishing.com/schoolsincrisis/sicinto.pdf [Accessed 2 March 2008].

Spinthourakis, J.A. and Katsillis, *J.M*. (2003). *Multiculturalism and teacher preparedness to deal with the new reality: The view from Greece.* IN Ross, A. (ed) A Europe of Many Cultures. London: CiCe pp 93-98.

Stephenson, J., Ling, L., Burman, E. and Cooper, M. (1998) (eds). *Values in Education.* London: Routledge.

Superka, D., Ahrens, C., & Hedstrom, J. (1976). *Values education sourcebook*. Boulder, CO: Social Science Education Consortium

Task Force on Lifelong Learning (2002). *Report of the Taskforce on Lifelong Learning.* Dublin: Government Publications.

Tovey, H. and Share, P. 2003. *A Sociology of Ireland*: Second Edition. Dublin: Gill & Macmillan.

Trumbull, E. and Pacheco, M. *(2005). Leading with Diversity: Cultural competencies for teacher preparation and professional development*. Providence and Honolulu: Brown University and Pacific Resources for Education and Learning.

UNESCO (Online a.) Culture Sector. Available from
http://portal.unesco.org/culture/en/ev.php-URL_ID=13031&URL_DO=DO_TOPIC&URL_SECTION=201.html [Last accessed 28 June 2009].

UNESCO (Online b.). *Values Clarification.* Available from: http://www.unesco.org/education/tlsf/TLSF/theme_d/mod20/uncom20t03s01.htm [Last accessed 28 June 2009].

Whitney, D., & Trosten-Bloom, A. (2003). *The power of appreciative inquiry: A practical guide to positive change*. San Francisco, CA: Berrett-Koehler

Williams, R. (2006). China – What is a University – Speech given in Wuhan University 13 October 2006. Available online from: http://www.archbishopofcanterbury.org/698. [Last accessed 28 June 2009].

Zappone, K.E. (2003). Introduction *IN*: Zappone, K.E. (ed.)*Re-thinking Identity: The Challenge of Diversity.* Dublin: Joint Equality and Human Rights Forum.

Zeichner, K. M. (1992). *Educating Teachers for Cultural Diversity*. National Centre For Teacher Learning Special Report. Michigan: Michigan State University.