

**The 78.9%: Contextualizing White Teacher Experiences in Seattle Public Schools through
the Umbrella Framework**

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Abstract

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This study utilizes a grounded analysis approach to explore how Seattle Public Schools (SPS) has supported white teachers through anti-racist professional development (PD). A combination of anti-racist frameworks are employed to ultimately create The Umbrella of White Teacher Professional Development Framework to best analyze teacher interviews and understand their experiences with PD. This study argues that through this framework, it can be seen how SPS is failing to provide white teachers with ample and sufficient trainings and support. This study goes further to provide considerations for SPS and other districts looking to best support teachers through anti-racist PD.

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Introduction

Although Seattle is a place noted by many as a progressive and forward-thinking city, it has been under scrutiny for the historical policies still in play that have led to inequities for students of color within the Seattle Public Schools (Oliver, 2016). These include the historical redlining of 1937, racial restrictive covenants that were in place until 1948, and school bussing of 1972. These policies have laid the foreground for the inequitable outcomes currently being seen between youth of color and white youth who attend Seattle Public Schools (SPS).

According to the Washington Office of Superintendent of Public Instruction (2023), while white students make up 45.3% of the student population pool and Black students are 14.1%, Black students are being disciplined at over a five times rate. As far as assessment scores, Black students are trailing at an average of three times the scores of white students (WA OSPI, 2023).

With these comparisons, it is clear to see the inequities currently occurring in the Seattle Public schools for the students of color, specifically Black students. This can happen for many reasons, including lack of resources for the schools, lack of proper teacher training, lack of representation, and more. Research has shown the potential correlation between teacher behaviors and the racialized education gap (Lorenz, 2021). These theories state that when a teacher perpetuates micro-aggressions, stereotypes, or blatant racial biases, it will impact their students of colors' academic achievements (Lorenz, 2021). Professional development is a key form of ensuring that teachers are knowledgeable and aware of their biases and perpetuation of racism (Matschiner, 2023)..

The purpose of this study is to uncover how Seattle Public Schools train and support their majority white high school teachers to work in a trauma-informed and culturally responsive way

with their students of color, through anti-racist professional development. Anti-racism is defined as “an educational and organizing framework that seeks to confront, eradicate and/or ameliorate racism and privilege” (Came & Griffith, p 182). This study specifically focuses on white teachers, as they make up 78.9% of the teacher pool in Seattle Public Schools (WA OSPI, 2023). Because teachers are the ones interacting daily with students, it is vital that they have the appropriate knowledge around their own identities, privileges, and positionality, and what this means in working with students from diverse racial backgrounds. Kohli, Pizzaro, and Navárez (2006) have found that often white teachers who considered themselves “good” teachers, are the same ones perpetuating racial inequities in their schools. White teachers who are not aware of the historic and systemic implications of racism are disproportionately more likely to “be under-equipped to support students of Color, to carry into work under-examined stereotypes and common beliefs about White ‘normality’ or superiority that often undergird actions deeply harming students of Color, and to normalize systemic limitations to students’ schooling opportunities, while also failing to support White students’ own understanding of opportunity patterns” (Pollock & Matschiner, p3). For these reasons, it is crucial for teachers to expand their knowledge and understanding of race equity.

Unfortunately, there is little known about the pedagogical approaches currently being utilized in anti-racist teacher professional development, and often the programs for white teachers are introductory, “Racism 101” courses (Matschiner, 2023). In addition, while the breadth of research on preservice professional development is wide, the coverage of total professional development (including inservice) is minimal (Matschiner, 2023). The importance of studying teacher interactions in high school specifically is pivotal due to this being the final step for many youth before independence from family as well as the lack of current research

being done on this demographic. This proposal is necessary for not just Seattle Public Schools, but for schools around the nation who experience similar patterns of inequitable education systems. This study is a qualitative study, addressing professional development opportunities through a framework of anti-racist professional development. This study addresses gaps in the research around white high school teachers' interactions with anti-racist professional development in Seattle and posits a framework of key concepts for anti-racist professional development trainings.

Positionality Check

I want to start this paper by assessing my own positionality as the head researcher. Being a white woman, who also identifies as Cuban and Jewish, I have walked through the Seattle Public School system with a veil of privilege, while I watched the students of color being denied the same opportunities that I was granted. I watched teachers center curriculum and climate around white-colonial histories, asking students of color for assimilation over active participation. While the teachers do need to be held accountable in their own right, I put the burden of responsibility on the school district that did not provide their white teachers with the adequate trainings and supports in understanding and working with a diverse student population.

As I began my research journey, I was interested in learning and unpacking the systemic equities that were occurring in SPS. Equity work has always be a passion of mine, as I understand the necessity of having white folks use our privileges to lift up voices of those who may not be afforded these same privileges. I wanted to be very careful to come into a space of equity work at an angle that addresses attitudes of other white people within the education system, as that is the background and history I have experience with and therefore can provide

knowledge and insight from my personal experiences of being a white educator. Professional development, while not perfect, can be a great starting point in understanding how different places decide to combat racism in the workplace through guiding field workers towards values that align with those of the systems. Seeing through my experience in SPS how many white teachers acted in explicitly and implicitly racist ways fueled my desire to unpack how SPS was employing anti-racist professional development through the district.

Background Literature

History of Seattle Public Schools

For this study, it was extremely difficult to find a complete and comprehensive history of the Seattle Public Schools. There were, however, key policies that affected the racial makeup of SPS. I was able to find this information through some first-person historical resources (i.e. Dumas, etc), as well as through the teacher participants from this study who recalled some of these policies which are introduced below.

The inception of our current school system was founded on inequities around race, class, and gender (Billings, 2006). The long history of educational inequities for Black students includes deeming it illegal for their education and, once that was denounced, supplying schools that taught Black students with sparse resources and funding comparatively to their white counterparts (Billings, 2006). Of course, *Brown vs Board of Education* act in 1954 was a pivotal law, stating segregation in schools was no longer legal (Hodge et al., 2008). The Seattle Public School District's responded to combating segregation in their schools through the Volunteer Transfer Program of 1963 (The Johnson Partnership, 2015), and in 1977 launched the Seattle Plan (Hendrie, 1996). This plan involved mandatory bussing of students of color, who were sent

to predominantly white schools with the intention of diversifying those schools. This program was incredibly unpopular, due to the burden of bussing falling on students of color, as well as it failing to close the achievement gap for Black students (Hendrie, 1996). In 1988, mandatory bussing was replaced with what is called “controlled choice”, that allowed parents to choose schools for their children within a cluster of schools, as long as it maintained racial balance (Tate, 2002). A slow erosion of this plan happened between 1997-1999, allowing any student in the district to choose any school in the district. A system of tie-breakers, including race-based tie breakers (where if there was a tie, it would come down to a student’s race and if they were increasing the diversity of the said school) were used to determine who got access to schools with few spots (Tate, 2002). This continued in SPS up until 2007, when *Parents Involved in Community Schools v. Seattle School District No. 1*, was brought to the supreme court. The court struck down the current race-based assignment plans, stating it was race-based discrimination (Wojcik, 2007). Since then, Seattle Public Schools has kept race-explicit terms out of their school choice policies. As it stands, students are assigned to schools based on proximity to their living situations but can choose to attend other schools if there are spaces available. Since then, Seattle Public Schools have seen higher rates of racial segregation than in the 1980’s (Bazzaz, 2023). Schools in North Seattle, in predominantly white areas, are seeing more funding and resources than schools in South Seattle, an area that has much higher diversity (Bazzaz, 2023). Many analysts see this racial divide in Seattle as an outcome of Seattle’s history of redlining (Manzano, 2023; Weinberger, 2022) (Figure 1.0).

The history of redlining in Seattle began in 1917, with racially restrictive covenants, stating it legal for property owners and realtors to refuse to sell properties to specific racial or ethnic groups (Honig, 2021). These covenants barred non-whites, and in some cases Jews, from living in North Seattle, West Seattle, Queen Anne, Capitol Hill, Madison Park, and some sections of South Seattle (Honig, 2021). Around this time, banks and loaners began what is called “redlining” which is defined as “The practice by banks and other lending institutions of refusing home loans or requiring higher interest rates and larger down payments to otherwise credit worthy people because they happen to live in a certain area” (Seattle Municipal Archives, n.d.). Loaners were allowed to refuse home loans to people living in “hazardous” areas, mainly effecting Seattle’s Black and non-white populations. In 1977, a bill prohibiting redlining was passed, however the lasting effects of redlining are seen today (Honig, 2021). As seen above in the redlining map these same areas are similarly racially segregated today. Redlining has caused the majority of the Black population in Seattle to be confined to mainly South Seattle and the central district (Manson et al., 2020). Because of this history, the racially segregated neighborhoods once forced are still present today. This, coupled with Seattle’s end to race-explicit school choice, has led to a high rate of segregation and inequities within Seattle Public Schools.

This short history frames the racial divide between the schools in Seattle, warranting the question of how to support students of color, who make up around 55% of the student body, while white teachers make up 78.9% of the teacher body (WA OSPI, 2023). This study aims to understand white teacher experiences with professional development, taking into consideration the diversity of the schools they each work in, and the greater context of Seattle’s history in race-based district wide policies.

Why Focus on White, Highschool Teachers?

Laying the context of the racialized history in Seattle Public Schools, one may ask why focus specifically on white high school teachers. This is due to teachers playing a critical role in student achievement and experience. In a study done by Vieluf et. al. (2015), high-achieving students were shown to have a better relationship with their teachers than low-achieving students. Vieluf et al. goes on to say that “teachers appear to provide high-expectation students with more support and caring than their low-expectation schoolmates” (p17). In another study done by Rudasill et. al. (2023), white teachers were shown to have implicit preferences for their white students over their Black students. These preferences can have long term consequences on students of color, including school performance, identity development, and social development (Rudasill, 2023). While these are only two studies, plenty of research has been done showing the lasting effects teachers have on their students. These, and many other studies, call on the importance of a teacher’s ability to address the real socio-emotional needs of their students, specifically their students of color (Tan et. al., 2021).

High school is a time one may remember as pivotal in their formation into adulthood and independence. High school dropouts are shown to be more likely to fall into unemployment, houselessness, and poverty than their graduate peers (Curry, 2006). In a study done by Bendixen, Plachowski, & Olafson (2023), white high school teachers were found to have more negative views on “urban” school climate and personal safety than their elementary school teacher counterparts. This can be due to lack of support and experience, as well as implicit racist ideals around the adulting of youth of color. As seen above, this can have devastating effects on students of color; negative teacher interaction can lead to higher rates of student disengagement and drop-out (Burns, 2020). Because this period is so crucial in identity development into

adulthood, this study aims to analyze the importance of a teacher's understanding of anti-racist teaching, to provide a space of safety and growth for the success of their students of color.

Current Trends in Anti-Racist PD

In 2019, Matschiner came out with a systematic review of anti-racist professional development trainings that are race-explicit, due to not many trainings being race explicit at the time. This review found that racial-equity PD was most often done (and analyzed) through a Critical Race Theory (CRT) lens. There were also four main areas of focus for these trainings: a) to grow teachers awareness to race, racism, and their identities; b) to interrupt specific racialized patterns; c) to develop and retain race-equity oriented teachers; d) to effect shifts or beliefs in teachers (Matschiner, p603). While this review was exceptionally helpful in understanding the race-equity professional development trainings before 2019, there has been a world-wide shift in the discussion of race since 2020, due to Black Lives Matter movement gaining traction after the murder of George Floyd (Sullivan, Eberhardt, & Roberts, 2021). Since 2020, over a thousand articles about equity in teacher professional development have been published, as seen on the University of Washington Libraries website. Unfortunately, as stated above, much of the current research on anti-racist professional development is around preservice teachers. It is crucial, however, for research to dive deeper into the PD opportunities afforded for in-service teachers, as in-service teachers are already shaping student outcomes (Pollock & Matschiner, 2022).

This research proposal aims to understand the current anti-racist professional development opportunities available for white teachers working in Seattle Public Schools. In order to understand the significance of this study, it is important to unpack definitions being utilized in this study, how teachers play a critical role in student experience, why high school is a

significant time for this study, and what anti-racist professional development can look like in action.

Key Definitions

This study has chosen to use the term anti-racist to describe the professional development opportunities, however other names often used are equity-focused and culturally competent. These will sometimes be used interchangeably in this study, although there are key differences. Cultural competency is defined as “a system that acknowledges the importance of and incorporates culture, assessment of cross-cultural relations, vigilance toward the dynamics that result from cultural differences, expansion of cultural knowledge, and adaptation of interventions to meet culturally unique needs at all levels of service” (Whaley & Davis, p 564). Equity in professional development focuses “on questions that emerge from practice and genuine concerns about how to foster learning and life opportunities for youth who have been historically and traditionally marginalized by schools and viewed from deficit perspectives” (Carter Andrews & Richmond, p 408). While these both address key aspects of moving towards equitable schooling opportunities for students of color, the term anti-racism is the most race explicit, and thus was chosen for the descriptor of professional development.

Racism, as defined by Guinier (2004) is “the maintenance of, and acquiescence in, racialized hierarchies governing resource distribution” (p98). This definition of racism demonstrates the structural inequities that define the term. Professional development is defined of as “Structured professional learning that results in changes in teacher practices and improvements in student learning outcomes,’ most often through providing “built-in time for teachers to think about, receive input on, and make changes to their practice by facilitating

reflection and soliciting feedback” (Matschiner, p598). Throughout the literature, professional development was also called teacher education, teacher training, and skill development.

The Umbrella of White Teacher Professional Development Framework

Professional development has shown to play a key role in a teacher’s ability to conduct anti-racist work (Thacker, 2017). While there are many different frameworks for PD, this study chooses to focus on four key components of anti-racist PD, that have combined a variety of theoretical lenses. This framework was created for this study through hours of research, eventually landing on the following four key components of a holistic anti-racist framework for white teacher professional development entitled The Umbrella of White Teacher Professional Development:

1. Increasing a teacher’s counter-hegemonic (Chavez-Moreno, 2022) racial literacy.
2. Prioritizing funds of knowledge from students of color, switching from a deficit mindset to an asset based one, assessing the multiplicity and horizontality of student learning and knowing through onto-epistemological heterogeneity.
3. Developing an understanding of their whiteness as privilege and supremacy, and white racialized trauma, including racialized body schema and white body supremacy (Lewis, 2016; Menakem, 2017).
4. Having consistent and reoccurring professional development opportunities to integrate and further anti-racist knowledge.



Figure 2- The Umbrella of White Teacher Professional Development (the umbrella framework)

Theoretical Framework

A variety of theoretical lenses have been used in the study to develop the Umbrella of White Teacher Professional Development (the umbrella) framework. Below are the key components broken down by the theoretical lenses being used.

Improving a Teacher's Racial Literacy

Racial Literacy, as defined by Guinier (2004), “Requires us to rethink race as an instrument of social, geographic, and economic control of both whites and blacks... Racial literacy reads race in its psychological, interpersonal, and structural dimensions” (p 114). A key component of racial literacy is the understanding that racism is inherently structural and permeates through all systems, including schools.

The umbrella framework utilizes a continuum of racial literacy, a model put forth by Chavez-Moreno (2022). Racial literacy is proposed as a spectrum, from hegemonic racial literacy to counterhegemonic racial literacy. Hegemonic practices are defined as “practices that support making meaning of race and racism through oppressive ideologies and that preserve inequity by maintaining a racial hierarchical structure that advantages Whites symbolically and materially over racialized people” (p 485), while counterhegemonic practices counter the dominant racial practices and actively work to dismantle the systems and structures that are central to these inequities. While this study denies the idea that one can become totally racially literate, it aims to see how far along these teachers are in understanding intrinsic and systemic racism within their own schools and society at large.

Prioritizing funds of knowledge from students of color through Onto-Epistemological Heterogeneity

The ideas being used for the second component of anti-racist PD come from Warren’s Onto-epistemic heterogeneity framework (Warren et. al., 2020). This framework proposes two central components: that knowing and being are inextricably tied; “that liberatory education

ought to be deeply rooted in the pasts, presents, and futures that sustain and imagine multiple values, purposes, and arcs of human learning” (Warren et al., p278).

Within Onto-epistemological heterogeneity, there are three identified sensibilities of learning. For the purpose of this study, the focus will be on two of these sensibilities: multiplicity (multiple ways of knowing, more than just the dominant narrative) and horizontality (learning happens across a variety of spaces and settings). These sensibilities position students as assets and leaders in the classroom, whose voices are not just important, but critical to the learning community. Horizontality is “key to delinking from colonial matrices of power in the way it replaces disciplinary learning within practices of doing life, and re-centers the histories, purposes, and places integral to students’ ways of being” (Warren et. al., p295). This description shows the importance of centering student knowledge to undo harmful oppressive systems. This framework alludes to the importance of switching from a deficit lens (highlighting in what ways students of color are “deficient” in comparison to white students) to an asset-based lens, where students are seen as experts and key advocates in their learning experiences. Literature within the field of Learning Science and Human Development has been growing in the past ten years, showing ways to center students of color’s lived experiences, as opposed to believing that students facing oppression are unable to provide productive inquiry to the classroom (Stromholt & Bell, 2017; Taylor, 2017; Barajas-Lope & Bang, 2018). The interviews in this study will posit questions that tie to the ideas of multiplicity and horizontality within a teacher’s understanding of a classroom culture. Key themes identified here are seeing students through an asset-based lens and seeing students as integral in their own academic success.

Understanding Whiteness

The third component of the umbrella framework comes from a variety of different theoretical frameworks, unpacking specific subsections of whiteness and the privileges that come with it. One of these subsections of whiteness is called whiteness as property, which is a part of the Critical Race Theory (CRT) framework. This framework operates on the assumptions that racism is pervasive, permanent, and must be challenged (Vaught & Costaña, 2008). While there are many different analytical tools in CRT, the one of focus for this study is whiteness as property, which is described by Harris (1993) as “The legal legitimization of expectations of power and control that enshrine the status quo as a neutral baseline, while masking the maintenance of white privilege and domination” (p 1715). Thus, whiteness as property conflates whiteness with privileges and dominance in our current society, a combination of white privilege and white supremacy (white as the dominant/superior race) (Bonds & Inwood, 2016). White privilege and white supremacy, in this context, are discussed mostly in the way whiteness is embedded in the school system. During the “beginnings” of the United States as a settler-colonial state, through reconstruction, civil rights, until now, the US has had a long history of disenfranchising communities of color through limiting their access to education (Dubois, 1910; Deloria, 1969). Part of understanding whiteness as property is to truly internalize the harm and suffering the creation of the US’s education system has caused people of color, and how because of this, part of the “properties” of whiteness include the current education system.

Within the framework of understanding whiteness is the acceptance that to work towards goals of equity, white folks must relinquish some of our systemic and institutionalized power. Often, this can lead to white fragility, or the notion that white folks become “fragile” and defensive while talking about race, often putting the burden of race back onto folks of color

(Menakem, 2019). This can lead to victim blaming, fleeing into statistics, taking offense, and more reactions that Menakem describes as “dirty pain” (p 100). One who experiences white fragility may fall prey to believing the fallacy of the American dream, or that one can succeed if they pick themselves up “by the bootstraps.” In the education system, this can be seen through meritocracy, or the idea that hard work and merit alone will lead to success in education (Fernández et al., 2021), which downplays the historical inequities kids of color face to this day.

Along with the conscious side of understanding whiteness, there are also the subconscious effects whiteness has had on white bodies (although whiteness influences all bodies, for this study specifically the focus is on white bodies). While many well-intentioned white professionals do plenty of conscious work around whiteness, scholars are noting the necessity for understanding the body’s internalization and activation of whiteness. Resma Menakem (2017) discusses how white body supremacy (centrality and assumed superiority of white people) lives not in our thinking brains, but in our bodies. Menakem notes how white folks have retained the trauma that came from years past of their own marginalization and infliction of pain onto folks of color. He argues that in order to address internalized racism living in the body, white folks must address their body’s somatic reactions and interactions with blackness. This is done through reflection and grounding exercises that align people with their “lizard brains” (p. 5). Additionally, Tyson Lewis (2016) posits a similar theory, called the racialized body schema. Lewis’s framework lays out how bodies have physiological reactions beyond what the mind thinks; racism will persist even if one may want to work towards anti-racism, if the somatic symptoms (rapid heartbeat, goose bumps, uncomfortableness) are not addressed. Lewis argues that “unpacking white privilege necessitates a turn toward the body schema (how privilege has its own, self-perpetuating self-preserving motor intelligence)” (p 128).

These different components of whiteness all play a part in how this study understands participant relationships to whiteness. Questions for participants in this study were created to gain a better understanding of the many different ways whiteness can consciously, and subconsciously, effect white teachers. Understanding the effects that whiteness has had on a person's experiences, privilege, and body is pivotal for white teachers to ensure equitable education access for their students of color.

Having Consistent Opportunities

The final component of the umbrella framework is consistency. Exceptional anti-racist professional development for white teachers must not only hit the three components listed above, but also be on-going throughout a teacher's career (Thacker, 2015). Consistent professional development, in this study, is defined as on-going professional development opportunities, aligned with anti-racist and equity focused curriculum, that build upon itself and deepens understanding during each training. Desimone (2009) posits a framework for critical components of PD, with duration (consistency) being one of the five key features. Consistency has been shown to be a crucial part of learning and deepening teacher understanding in professional development (Castillo et al, 2016). Previously, professional development opportunities have often been one-day or few day trainings, with a model called "train-and hope". Woods (2016) states this model provides a few-day training, and then releases educators to implement these trainings into practice with little follow up or support. This study will specifically inquire about the follow-through with professional development opportunities to ensure they are employed and utilized effectively.

Research Question

The research question proposed for this study is how have Seattle Public Schools supported white teachers through holistic, anti-racist professional development, laid out by the umbrella framework, to provide culturally responsive teaching for students of color?

Method

The qualitative design for this study uses a grounded analysis approach (2006) for collecting and analyzing interview data. Grounded theory is defined as a research approach that is used to gain insight or perspective of those who have experienced a phenomenon (Turner & Aston, 2020). The goal of grounded theory is to generate theory that is “grounded” in data and shaped by views of the participants (Turner & Aston, 2020). This study uses a grounded theory method seeing that the point of the study is to understand the phenomenon of anti-racist professional development in Seattle Public Schools through white high school teacher’s perspectives and accounts of their experiences. This study posits an initial framework, and then, through data collection and observation of recurring themes, eventually puts forward a revised framework that better encompasses themes brought up by participants themselves.

One key feature of grounded theory is when coding the data, to break it down into smaller components and then comparing them to each other to seek out variation, which was done in this study. In addition, theoretical saturation, or “when all the concepts that form the theory are well understood and grounded in data” (Turner & Aston, p 287) was a key feature of this study, as the PI wanted to ensure that the umbrella framework encompasses themes from participant’s lived experiences seen during data collection.

Participants

The participants in this study are all white high school teachers in Seattle. These teachers were recruited through a mix of convenience sampling and snowball sampling. Convenience sampling is done through selecting a sample “based on time, money, availability of sites or respondents, and so on” while snowball sampling involves “locating a few key participants who easily meet the criteria for... the study. As you interview these early key participants, you ask each one to refer you to other participants” (Merriam & Tisdell, p98). This study aimed at obtaining a minimum of two participants, and a maximum of six. While there isn’t necessarily a minimum number of participants needed for a study (Merriam & Tisdell, 2016), the reasoning for having few participants is that the researcher deemed it unnecessary to gather more than six participants to get an idea of how Seattle Public Schools facilitates anti-racist training. In addition, because this study needed to be done within a finite amount of time, two participants were deemed as the minimal to gather enough data to draw a claim. Participants had to meet the qualifications for this study, which included identifying as white and currently teaching at one of the Seattle Public High Schools, not including the six option schools of the district (Interagency, Seattle World School, Alan T. Sugiyama, Nova, Middle College, or Skills Center). For the purpose of understanding between-school professional development differences based on the diversity and racial makeup of each school, the participants were chosen from distinct Seattle Public Schools.

There were a total of three participants who were interviewed for this study. Each participant identified as white, male, and had been teaching in SPS for over twenty years. Each participant was given a pseudonym and their schools will be kept private during this analysis.

Name	Identity	Subject Taught	Years of Experience in SPS	School Diversity
Appleford	White, male, atheist	STEM	20+	A racially diverse school, located in a racially diverse area, with a high amount of white teachers
McGregor	Catholic, white, Eastern-European	Economics	20+	Little racial diversity- mainly white students and teachers
Johnson	Straight, white, cis-gendered, privileged	Humanities	20+	Racially diverse, in an area with increasing gentrification

Table 1- Participant chart

The first participant, Appleford, is a STEM teacher at one of the Seattle Public Schools. The school Appleford currently works at is a highly racially diverse school within SPS. This school is known for having an even mix of multiple races and ethnicities. This participant has previous work and school experience with the PI and was recruited through email.

The second participant, McGregor, teaches within the realm of economics. The school he works at currently is one of the least racially diverse schools in the district, with white students making up the vast majority of the student population. This participant is a longtime family friend of the PI and was recruited through email as well.

The third participant, Johnson, teaches humanities. His school is racially diverse as well, although less so than Appleford's, however the number of teachers of color at his school is higher. His school is located in an area of Seattle where gentrification is consistently increasing. This was the only participant that the PI did not know ahead of time and was recruited through snowball sampling.

Data Collection and Analysis

Prior to the study, data were pulled through the Seattle Public Schools website on the demographics, discipline, and math achievement at each school. The purpose was to better understand the current racial diversity happening in the participant's schools. The principal investigator conducted one-hour long interview with each participant.

The interviews themselves were all done individually by the Principal Investigator. Each participant took part in one semi-structured interview that lasted around one hour. Semi-structured interviews are “the preferred data collection method when the researcher's goal is to better understand the participant's unique perspective rather than a generalized understanding of a phenomenon” (Adeoye-Olatunde & Olenik, p 1360).

A total of three interviews were conducted, each in person and in the respective teacher's classrooms. The interviews were recorded and transcribed during data analysis period. Questions included participant racial identity development, experience with professional development in Seattle Public Schools, and experience with anti-racist work (Appendix 2). The questions were configured to align with the frameworks being used, as well as every component under the umbrella framework.

During data analysis, The PI coded for themes related to the theoretical frameworks of the study. The themes for coding aligned with the umbrella framework laid out above, and included other codes as more themes became relevant (Appendix 1).

Findings

Through the interviews conducted, the research team was able to assess findings in relation to the research question. The findings are laid out below in terms of the four elements of the umbrella framework (racial literacy, onto-epistemological heterogeneity, whiteness, and consistency), in addition to alternative themes not addressed in the initial framework.

Racial Literacy

Assessing the racial literacy of the participants was done through identifying how each of the participants talked about race, and whether their interpretations of race more aligned with hegemonic or counterhegemonic racial literacies. Throughout Appleford's interview, he expressed a higher level of counterhegemonic racial literacy, discussing how racism is deeply imbedded in the education system, and even how it affects his teaching. Appleford does, however, claim that his understanding and increased racial literacy stems from the school itself, as opposed to the anti-racist professional development being afforded by the district:

<School name> has always been, uh, way more progressive in their implementation. And so what happens many times is when a plan comes down from the district, <school name> has either already been doing that work because, um, teachers from within the building have brought those issues up, have already read many of the books, are already paying attention.

Appleford discusses how working at a school that priorities anti-racism has aided in his learnings about anti-racism and racial literacy. He goes on to talk about how a very active group of white teachers has created and implemented anti-racist professional development trainings at his school, and how that has been a key source of developing his counter-hegemonic racial literacy. Seeing that his school has a group of teachers committed to anti-racist work, this raises the likelihood of high accountability and consistency for increasing his racial literacy through site-based training.

Similarly to Appleford, Johnson discusses site-based antiracist professional development trainings that have generally increased his counter-hegemonic racial literacies. Johnson states the following example:

Then there's, you know, site-based work that we're doing here at <school name> and at those different schools. And there's like departmental work and there's like individuals who are groups of people. And so there's all those layers that are the reality of schools. And so, you know, I think we sometimes fixate on the central office and what they're doing when I think they have a pretty limited ability to impact what happens on site.

Johnson outlines here how while there is a lot happening at his current school around teacher anti-racist professional development, often it comes from a site-based level as opposed to a district-wide level.

While having site-based anti-racist professional development can be a positive, it can also lead to inconsistencies around the levels of counterhegemonic racial literacies obtained by the teacher pool. This can be seen when looking at McGregor's experience. Out of the participants, McGregor expressed ideas that mostly aligned with hegemonic racial literacies, including ideas around meritocracy and colorblindness:

I think increasing a teacher's racial literacy, is that coming from a place that we are completely oblivious to it or, or that we actually understand it on both an intellectual level and in many cases may actually feel it and understand it. We obviously haven't lived it, but we still understand it. So yeah. You can increase it to, to what degree? I mean it's like adding more Black quote unquote Black history into history. Um, I think one of the things that came out of the, the original stuff was there was this, we are going to focus on everything is gonna be looked through this lens and that lens of African Americans under the assumption that the lens before was just European Americans. And it may have been at one time, I don't think that is true since I was in college, that you could see the change when I was in college then. Mm-Hmm. But having that one focus totally obliterates everything else.

Seen in the quote above is the falsehood that one can "reach" racial literacy. McGregor aligns the ideas of racial literacy with diversifying curriculum, and states above that doing so takes away from other classroom teachings and learnings. McGregor generally expressed

discontent with the anti-racist professional development opportunities at his school, stating few site-based opportunities for anti-racist professional development.

These examples show the inconsistency in teacher's counterhegemonic racial literacies, which ultimately came down to site-based training opportunities. Unfortunately, with this diversity of available anti-racist trainings comes a lack of district wide advances in counterhegemonic racial literacies, leaving key dimensions of these trainings and understandings as the responsibility of schools to implement. These gaps, shown above in McGregor's discussion, show how imperative district wide advances are in achieving goals of increasing white teacher's counterhegemonic racial literacies.

Onto-Epistemological Heterogeneity

Multiplicity and horizontality are key for teachers to bring into their classroom and their work with students, but also in their own understandings of how to work towards cultural competency. McGregor's discussion in the first paragraph shows a static form of disciplinary knowledge, a key component of multiplicity in Warren's framework (Warren et. al., 2020). McGregor equates adding Black history to the curriculum to racial literacy, which flattens the importance of multi-cultural bodies of knowledge in all forms in the classroom. This fallacy, however, was a theme with the other participants as well. Johnson brings up a point that demonstrates the fallacy of depoliticizing STEM education. When discussing how anti-racism work has been seen through the static forms of disciplinary knowledge, Johnson noted how he has seen anti-racist work play out in his school, with his colleagues:

I think it's more like the math teacher who wants to do that anti-racist work has stopped teaching math in the process. Or the Spanish teacher who wants to do the anti-racist work, you know? These are just anecdotal. Yes. This is not at all generalization, but these are some individuals whose students have, um, who it's just disappointing. You get in those classes and you're like,

wait, this is a Spanish, but you could do both those things. Right? But, but sometimes it, it doesn't happen that way.

Johnson's anecdote brings up a key argument of multiplicity: that racial and equity work are tied into everything and should be seen as intrinsic to the work as opposed to something added on. Deepening a teacher's knowledge in onto-epistemological heterogeneity lends itself to the understanding that anti-racist work in teaching is most productive when equity work is seen as pervasive and intrinsic to all types of work, and therefore should be embedded into teaching practices instead of separated. There were many instances during the interviews where doing equity and anti-racist work were noted as something that has often been separated from the general practices of teachers, instead of integrated in, like the examples above show.

In addition to multiplicity in onto-epistemological heterogeneity is the idea of horizontality, or that learning happens across a multitude of spaces, and needs to be connected to student lives to see a true connection to the material. The participants in the study did mention that while SPS has outlined the importance of considering a student's out of school life and funds of knowledge, this framing has unfortunately been from a deficit standpoint: SPS has laid an assumption that students of color cannot hold autonomy in their learning based on their experiences of oppression instead of framing students as experts and key advocates in their own learning. Appleford discusses this exact phenomenon below:

I also think it's hard for our schools like using that word opportunity. I think it's many of us shake our head about there are so many opportunities, why aren't kids taking them? Things like skills center classes, things like, uh, if you online credit retrieval systems that are there and yet don't get utilized. And I know many teachers, including myself, uh, feel fatigue or feel frustration or, or whatever at I've done X, Y, and Z. Why hasn't this fixed this problem. Right. And the real reason is that an hour a day or two hours a day or whatever doesn't stack up against, you know, a lifetime of experience or a lifetime of a parent or parents or lack of parents influence and those influences. And, you know, the idea of generational racism and generational trauma, uh, where despite best intentions, some families don't know how to support their kids 'cause they weren't

supported that way. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative> or they just don't have the same values, uh, that match up with this system. (Appleford)

Warren, and many other authors, argue that framing students of color through a deficit lens, can lead to a misguided perspective on how to support students of color (Paunesku, 2019). This is because seeing students through a deficit lens places the burden of responsibility on students instead of on the systems that are not providing students of color with what they need. While it is incredibly important to factor in a youth's lived experiences, especially when they are entrenched in racism and societal discrimination, it is equally important to understand how their experiences have added to their funds of knowledge and repertoires of learning. Through several policy shifts on a district and school level, participants believe that SPS has not given them the opportunity to explore student assets, causing them to feel as though they are asked to work with students based on their deficits. When discussing a policy shift post-covid that lead to teachers not being able to give their students "bad grades" despite not doing the work on the basis of equitable grading, McGregor explores the ramifications this had on students of color:

Um, and buried into this (policy changes) was a lot of systemic stuff that they put in, in order to make things more equitable. But it actually probably hurt those same students that they're trying to help.

This policy was discussed multiple times throughout the interviews, where participants outlined how it framed students of color through a deficit lens and, instead of holding them to high culturally competent standards. Although it is important to address the structural systems of oppression that have hurt students of color and have policies aligned with this, it is equally important to not lower the standard to fit this, but instead to change the standard, allowing for culturally competent, asset-based teaching and learning for students of color.

While many teachers did allude to policy shifts (grading for equity, attendance policies, etc) that have been created as a way to address structural inequities and work towards ideas of

multiplicity and horizontality, many felt as though these ideas were performative, or a way to move past systemic issues:

And in fact, I've sort of thought, well, I do think it is pushing, I, you know, pushing the ball down the court or whatever you want to, whatever metaphor you want to use, uh, because it doesn't address the problems of what are keeping. The biggest issue itself is attendance. What's keeping African American and black identifying students out of the classroom on a daily basis. Why, why are those students the most commonly seen students in the hallway during class time? Uh, you know, we don't have suspensions. Uh, there's no grading based on attendance. And all of those things seem like a way of erasing data almost. Is it a slow and subconscious shift away from dealing with anti-racist ideas and just saying, brown kids are performing better because look at their grades. (Appleford)

While these policies may be providing exceptional benefits for students of color, it is critically important for the teachers to understand these benefits and why the policies are being enacted to get teacher buy-in. Without this information, teachers are likely to make-sense of these policies in their own ways, harboring resentment for anti-racist and equity focused policies (Irby, 2018).

Whiteness

To understand how whiteness has affected the lens in which the participants spoke through, it was important to break down whiteness into two separate categories during coding: white privilege/supremacy/fragility and the racialized body schema/white superiority embodiment.

Whiteness as property and white fragility

Many of the questions asked during participant interviews were aimed at understanding identity and whiteness. While Johnson and Appleford both seem to have a grasp of how whiteness impacts their identities, privileges, and systems, McGregor brought up how the wording in discussing whiteness is essential in identity work:

And then the terminology started changing around school is like, we are a white supremacist school. That's how they would start their conversations at the meetings. It's like, well, okay, white supremacist somebody who you feels that everyone else is beneath them. And then I will do anything to maintain my position. And that is definitely not the case. You wanna talk about problems with individuals, you wanna talk about problems with the system. That's one thing. But you are now slapping on, and the label's gotten more and more vial in order to, I think, to get more response.

While it is outlined above how the term white supremacy now can mean how whiteness holds power in society, it also has a deep history of discussing individual violence and hatred in the name of white superiority. Without discussing the meanings of terms used to unpack white identities, it can lead to white fragility. In her book entitled *Me and White Supremacy*, Layla Saad (2020) discusses how white supremacy is not just a way of thinking but extends beyond that to how systems and structures are upheld by white dominance. This narrative has certainly not been passed on to McGregor, as seen through how he believes white supremacy is defined. These nuances are essential in identity work, and are shown again as he discusses his relationship to white privilege:

I don't like the term, I'm not comfortable with the term white privilege because, just to go back to that one is that term basically says not only do you have the advantage of being born white, which is a big duh, of course you do. But it's that I expect to have that advantage and I don't, and so I think the terminology, I think the terminology becomes, um, toxic almost immediately.

Seen here is how the definition of white privilege has not been correctly iterated to McGregor, leading to his immediate upset with the discussion. He also is noting here (and on many other occasions) the terminology being used is “problematic” and “toxic”. It is important to note how the terms white privilege and white supremacy have been adapted over time, and how using them in the context of professional development requires the need to deeply unpack these terms in relationship to teachers. Because these terms have been redefined in recent years, moving from individuals who are overtly violent against people of color as white supremacists,

to all systems operating under a white supremacist structure, a redefinition for teachers is especially crucial.

While part of his upset could be due to the misinterpretation of the wording used in these questions, it could also be due to white fragility. White fragility often is coupled with defensiveness, seen here, which shows how he may not have fully internalized his own privileges or the effects his whiteness has on students of color. His inability to engage with ideas of white supremacy or privilege due to the terminology has led to a disengagement with understanding how his whiteness has played a part in his work with students of color.

Part of holding whiteness as property, is what Harris (1993) describes as the right to retain and protect individualism. Here, McGregor identifies his role in the structural systems embodying racism and white supremacy:

We often, I often felt, and I think a lot of my colleagues felt that we were being handled, like going, this is the systemic issues are routed or is rooted in you when in fact we had no control over the systemic stuff. I can only control what I can control. I can only reflect on myself.

This excerpt shows how McGregor has simultaneously maintained the misconception of racism and white privilege as both an individual's issue of racist behavior, and a structural issue which cannot be affected by "non-racist white teachers." Both of these conceptions deny his own privileges and properties with whiteness and maintain ideas of race neutrality meritocracy (Vaught & Costañó, 2008; Fernández et al., 2021).

The other participants, Johnson and Appleford, discussed whiteness from a perspective of understanding their racialized identities and how these have impacted their work:

And I, there were numerous times where I totally was operating out of white, um, you know, from a white perspective or making assumptions and, um, got great feedback from colleagues and changed my practices. (Johnson)

These differences are quite vast and display the great variation between the teachings and learnings of whiteness between the different schools. These teachers both discussed their colleagues' effects on their understanding of whiteness, alluding to the district bringing in ideas of whiteness, but their ultimate understandings being metabolized in their respective schools. If the district hopes to ensure a deep understanding of whiteness as property and help disrupt white fragility, it is imperative to re-structure the current trainings to center white identity formation and understanding (Vaught & Costaña, 2008), stepping away from ideas of guilt vs innocence (Harris, 1993). This looks like taking time to unpack terminologies and providing teachers with an understanding of how white identity work can indeed make a change towards providing equitable and culturally competent classrooms for their students of color (and white students alike).

Racialized Body Schema/White Superiority embodiment

The previous coding discussed understanding whiteness as a conscious choice one makes to unpack their privileges and identities. This section discusses the importance of understanding how our bodies make sense and interact with race and privilege.

Although ideas of assessing what one is feeling in their body during times of racial discussion was not addressed explicitly for all of the questions, participants did bring up feelings aligned with the theories from Menakem (2020) and Lewis (2018). Initially, when asked about anti-racist professional development, participants brought up the internal feelings that happen during these trainings:

Anytime you're dealing with something that's so systemic, it, brings up a lot of, shit. It trudges up a lot of mud and that's gonna make people feel things. (Appleford)

I don't think (cohort development is) happening. Because there's, uh, there's risk involved. I mean, there is like that de privatized, you know, you're kind of putting yourself out there to your colleagues and you gotta be able to take the criticism ... And it, and Yeah. It makes you vulnerable. (Johnson)

These “things” people are feeling, Lewis argues are called bodily breakdowns, where the ease and security of whiteness is put in crisis. Menakem describes these bodily breakdowns as experiences with embodied trauma that white folks have maintained through years of infliction and inflicting of racialized pain. McGregor mentions some of the racialized pain he may have experienced without knowing:

Do you think your race impacts work? Okay. Yeah. So like this one is, we had an entire book on this. And the book was written from the, from the, basically from the assumption that this is like one of your core thoughts. It doesn't even come up as a thought. Now that's, I'm not a fool. I believe that that's probably, 'cause I've never had to really deal with it as an issue. I've had to deal with ethnic issues occasionally when I was younger. My father certainly had too because he of our Eastern European last name. But pretty minor compared to some other stuff that goes on.

Here, McGregor discusses how his family has experienced racialized trauma, which Menakem argues as a subconscious reason white folks have bodily breakdowns. These breakdowns and experiences with embodied trauma are necessary for white educators to unpack their relationship to whiteness and to work towards social justice, however a critical component of these frameworks is the link back to the body through radical reflection, or unpacking how the body feels during these times of racial reckoning (Lewis, 2018). Radical reflection enables hesitation and the ability to build to link subconscious reactions to conscious understandings. One of the questions during the interview brought up a scenario that played with radical reflection, asking participants to check in with their bodies when hearing a group of Black students say the N word:

Well, one, I thought this was the most interesting question. Yeah. And I thought about it when I read it and I was taking a shower and I was still thinking about it. So I came back to it and it honestly was like, oh my gosh, what's Sarina gonna say about me when I tell her these feelings? Because anytime you have feelings, if you share those feelings, you feel vulnerable. Students,

when I hear students say that, I feel anger. I feel almost rageful because I feel like I do have a historical context, context of the word. Nowadays, kids will just say, that's hard. R Mr. Appleford, I'm saying soft, and so I know that language is a living thing, right. In context and people and whatever. And it's never like jealousy of being able to say or not say the word. (Appleford)

Appleford had a particularly insightful response to this, showing how radical reflection can bring up consciousness with one's racialized body schemas and traumas. He discusses feelings of anger, vulnerability, and even jealousy (or lack thereof). Lewis argues that these moments of radical reflection bring in new possibilities of living whiteness differently. Menakem calls this act moving through "clean pain", which is a pain that can "mend and build your capacity for growth" (p 19). Both authors argue the importance of white folks moving through this step in order to break the cycles of white bodies perpetuating harm onto bodies of color. What this can look like in professional development spaces is opening up room for radical reflection and discussion of the racialized body schema, as well as coming back to the five body anchoring tenets from Menakem (p 168):

- Anchor 1: Sooth oneself- quiet the mind, calm the heart, settle the body.
- Anchor 2: Notice sensations, vibrations, and emotions in one's body without reacting to them.
- Anchor 3: Accept discomfort without fleeing from it.
- Anchor 4: Stay present in one's body and respond from the best places of oneself.
- Anchor 5: Safely discharge energy that remains, through movement.

Incorporating these tools for connecting white teachers to their body reactions is a necessary, and often overlooked, component of professional development.

Consistency

Participants in this study gave insight into the consistency of anti-racist and equity focused professional development opportunities in Seattle Public Schools. Because all the participants have had over twenty years of experience in SPS, they were each able to speak on

how the consistency of anti-racist, equity based professional development trainings has changed over time:

I think Seattle Schools has kind of ebbed and flowed in like, it's like, uh, kind of overt commitment and work around racial identity and whiteness and helping teachers work through that. (Johnson)

Teachers brought up hot-spots, or times of specific focus on these trainings, specifically calling out the racial reckonings of 2020 and the Black Lives Matter movement taking national precedent after the murder of George Floyd (Walker et al, 2023). While it was especially important for schools to adopt extended anti-racist practices during this time, this time should have been seen as a catalyst for on-going, in-depth professional development, as opposed to the main event and focus, leading to a gradual “fizzle out”, which many people bucket as performative (Ezell, 2023). A crucial issue facing PD is that often the opportunities are not on-going or imbedded in a teacher’s day-to-day (Castillo et al, 2016). This has become so prominent that every participant touched on this disconnect in some way:

Um, so I mean that's, that's part of the problem with PD is no matter what you teach me at PD, I'm just gonna hold my breath for two years and it'll be out the window and we'll be doing something else. (McGregor)

I think it's just that there's not any, there's not much traction on whatever the focus is that of that year or that, and actually we were just joking at lunch, I popped into another classroom where some teachers eat together and you know, someone pulled out a book that we were like assigned to complete about goal setting and mindset and all, you know, great intention just, it went away. Another one that went away. (Johnson)

It is clear how the lack of consistency has lowered the respectability of anti-racist professional development trainings, making them almost a point of humor. Both teachers allude to the “train-and-hope” model of professional development, seeing that there was little to no follow through after they were given previous professional training opportunities. Johnson

describes the difficulty of not having consistent professional development trainings and what that means for their ability to work through important trainings in full:

We have a factory model of education. Right. If all that stuff's real. And, and so we have these occasional professional developments that vary in, you know, the, the continuity is not there. It's very difficult for the district and buildings to maintain a focus. Like, okay, this year we're gonna focus on restorative justice. We had a new principal here a few years ago. Um, and he came in with this mission to do restorative justice work, With the idea. I think that that would be, uh, that would uplift black and brown students. Mm-Hmm. <affirmative>. And, and, and, which is a correct assumption. And, uh, and then it's like, we did it for like a year with some trainings from outside group. The funds that involved and the energy that involve for staff to actually hold restorative circles to help deal with discipline issues or whatever the issue is that they're trying to resolve is, didn't it just kind of went away like after maybe a year and a half.

Johnson described how an equity initiative, which seemed to be beneficial for Black and Brown students, eventually fizzled out without the consistency from the school or the district. While this initiative may have temporarily made a difference for students of color, it is imperative that there is follow through during implementation to see consistent and lasting change, instead of how professional development is now seen as a temporary, passing fad. For these reasons, it is especially important for the district to provide consistent, sustained, and followed-through trainings. Coburn and Russell (2008) suggest “robust routines of interactions” to ensure that professional development is consistent and being implemented with fidelity. This can look different based on bandwidth and resources of the school, however a routine of these trainings and follow-through should be prioritized to see the lasting effects of PD in classrooms and schools.

Alternate Themes

During the interviews with participants, alternate themes were identified that came up in many of these conversations. Although these themes were not originally identified in the

umbrella framework, they provide important considerations of alternatives and additions to this framework.

Workload Integration

A common theme participants identified during the interviews was their bandwidth, or ability to work in the professional development learnings into their classrooms. Teacher workload has become an increasing problem internationally (Stacey, 2024). In fact, teacher workload stress is so prominent, it is the main reason for teacher attrition (Spicksley, 2022). This increase in workload can be followed back to a few formative aspects of society including neoliberalism, and links between education, politics, and policies asking teachers to increase their time and teaching breadth in their classrooms (Spicksley, 2022). Teacher workload was a prominent theme for participants, who discussed how the high workload being asked of them has affected their ability to center the anti-racist professional development trainings being offered:

And so often I feel like professional development in my mind, I'm so busy and they want me to stop doing what this huge list of things that I want or need to do. (Appleford)

The dumbest thing is we get this really heavily right before school starts. We have a half of one day to get our classrooms ready for school. Now how am I supposed to take three years of lessons and, and figure a way to put 'em into my classroom in a half a day when I'm still trying to get my syllabuses printed out? Right. You know, so it's like there's a disconnect. Like the PD in itself is the solution. (McGregor)

Even though there are moments when it's great and people are trying, you have people planning professional development who are also teaching, who are also doing the other things that they do during the day. And I just don't think we necessarily have the capacity in house to do this in an effective way. (Johnson)

These anecdotes give an idea of the different constraints teachers face when trying to incorporate equity-based PD into their classrooms. Appleford and Johnson both discuss lack of availability due to excess workload. McGregor discusses how time is also a factor in his ability to implement these trainings. These anecdotes give cause to believe that there has been little

effort by the district to weave anti-racist PD into their current classrooms and curriculum. Instead of formatting anti-racist PD as integrative into curriculum and daily classroom activities, it has been positioned as an add-on, for teachers to incorporate on top of their current workload. It is increasingly imperative for the rhetoric to shift in a way that posits professional development as integrative and provides ample time and space for this to happen.

Clear Scaffolding

Within this rhetoric of anti-racist PD needing to be integrative is the notion that currently, there is little scaffolding or support for teachers in implementing the learnings that happen in anti-racist PD:

McGregor: The thing is they push that down on us, but we don't get any instruction. It's like, okay, everyone's reading the same book in English, here are some lessons for you to use in your class. Let's discuss these and how you can incorporate them. It's never like that. It's always like, how are you gonna go talk about it in your class?

PI: There's not like greater scaffolding?

McGregor: No. I mean it's like, here's what we're gonna do. We're gonna discuss this and now incorporate this into your class. Okay. Well gimme some hints. (McGregor)

McGregor's quote gives insight into the gap between professional development and what is being implemented in the classroom. In a framework laid out by Ehlert & Souvignier, (2023), they discuss the effects of professional development regarding the implementation process. In this framework, there are four elements of professional development effects: teacher reactions, teacher learning, teacher behavior, and student results (p 2). Within teacher learning, is the subcomponent of knowledge, which is described as "the acquisition of declarative knowledge about the subject as well as procedural knowledge about the intervention, which is positively related to teaching quality" (Ehlert & Souvignier, p 2). McGregor, in his anecdote above, is alluding to a gap in procedural knowledge during teacher learning. With this gap in how to

implement the teachings, teachers are unable to transfer knowledge into the classroom (Desmone, 2009). In addition, teachers may be skeptical or nervous to implement these PD trainings in absence of this scaffolding:

And I think that's where the, the people that have gotten in trouble with it is that it was heavily handed because they were given a vague instruction and they just felt compelled to do it. And they did it badly. Right. And they got jumped on. (McGregor)

McGregor outlines teacher hesitation in implementing trainings due to vague instructions and fear of retaliation. Wong (2019) discusses the implications of what is referred to as ambiguous unintentional sense giving, which occurs when leaders give vague or partial instructions that leave teachers unsure how to make sense of what is given to them. Wong states that ambiguous sense giving leads teachers to continue their daily practices without focus on implementing new learnings. McGregor backs this idea up in his interview, stating how the vague instructions have led to poor teacher implementation, or no teacher implementation. To combat this, it is incredibly important for leadership to give thorough instructions and follow-through in order to support teachers through the process of implementation.

Trust Building

A common discussion during teacher interviews was their lack of trust in the professional development coming from the district:

And, um, so that I think for a, a bunch of staff, I mean, people are always a little skeptical of whatever central office is kind of pushing. (Johnson)

They want teachers to do stuff. It's like, unless you give me something I am not. 'cause they don't trust the district to not come back and screw them. (McGregor)

These teachers have multiple decades of experience with Seattle Public Schools and have built their opinion on the trustworthiness of district PD through many years of experience. The

importance of trust in a teacher's learning, however, should not be downplayed. Kramer and Cook (2004) stress the importance of organizational trust in ensuring that an organization runs smoothly. Through this lack of trust shown above, there will be a disconnect between teachers and any information coming to them from the district, which will negatively impact the implementation of district-wide PD. While this study will not go in depth in the process of trust building (as that topic is layered and nuanced), it will be extremely important for SPS, and all school districts, to work towards building a trusting relationship between administration and school staff if they hope to create teacher buy-in, and therefore have a greater chance of success during implementation.

Discussion

This study laid out a framework for conducting anti-racist professional development with four key components: counter-hegemonic racial literacy, understanding whiteness as property and the racialized body schema/racial trauma, onto-epistemological heterogeneity, and consistency. Through the process of interviewing three white high school teachers working in Seattle Public Schools, this study was able to pull evidence in support of Seattle Public School's current usage, or lack thereof, of professional development aligned within this framework. Additional themes were also unfolded during this study, including the need for PD to be integrated into a teacher's current workload, clear scaffolding needed during these trainings and the need for trust building between teachers and the district.

Incorporating these alternative themes into the current umbrella framework leads to the expanded umbrella framework (Figure 4). This expanded framework is rooted in in participant experiences and can provide insightful information on how to best structure anti-racist

professional development opportunities for white teachers to ensure the best outcome during implementation: providing more equitable and culturally competent teachings for students of color.



Figure 3- The Expanded Umbrella Framework

Taking these components together will provide a robust foundation in anti-racist professional development structure. It will be imperative to look at this framework as a scaffold of what the professional development trainings should include, and not necessarily how to

implement it. Following research should take into consideration the importance of active learning (Desmone, 2009), and how to ensure the framework is being implemented through theories of active learning.

Limitations

Understanding how to work in an inherently racist and oppressive education system is a difficult journey for all educators. Professional development provides an opportunity to learn about tools and skills that can help teachers work through an anti-racist lens (Thacker, 2015). While this study addresses some critical gaps in the research, some limitations include how this study was situated within the context of Seattle Public Schools, and therefore is difficult to generalize to other school districts. Possibilities for future research include analyzing this study alongside a similar study of other school districts to see potential overlaps and possibilities for federal support in professional teacher development.

Another limitation of this study was the availability of newer white teachers. Because all three of the teacher participants in this study have had over twenty years of experience teaching in Seattle Public Schools, this could lead to similar views and biases of the professional development in Seattle Public Schools. In addition, this study could have benefitted from including female and gender expansive teachers, to broaden and diversify the perspectives of the participants.

Appendix

Appendix 1.0

Coding in which aligned with the four key components of holistic anti-racist professional development

A. Racial literacy- yellow

- Themes: Anti-racism, cultural responsiveness

B. Whiteness as property and relevance- Blue

- Themes: Lack of race explicitness, understanding racialized privileges and properties, understanding how race has impacted their work.

C. Onto-epistemic heterogeneity- Purple

- Themes: Horizontality, multiplicity, students as autonomous and stewards of their education, students through an asset based lens.

D. Racialized body schema and Resma Menakem- Red

- Themes: Pain/discomfort, physical sensations

E. Consistency- Teal

- Themes: Continuous trainings, trainings that build off each other

Added

F. Uncertainty/ mixed messages on implementation- Olive Green

- Themes: Mixed messages from schools/districts on what and how trainings should be implemented/utilized

G. Excess workload- Dark Purple

- Themes: Teachers not having the time/bandwidth to implement or utilize the PD trainings

H. Ample funding-

- Themes: Funding provides higher caliber of PD opportunities, access to funding

Appendix 2.0

Interview questions- included at the end was the key component framework for anti-racist professional development, which was discussed with the participants as well.

1. How do you identify (i.e. racially, religiously, gender, etc.)?
2. Do you think your racial identity impacts your work? Why or why not?
3. Could you describe your knowledge of what anti-racism means?
4. How do you feel anti-racism aligns with your work? What does it look like for you?
5. What is your experience with Seattle Public School's commitment to anti-racism? How about your school, specifically?
6. How often do you receive professional development opportunities? How many of these would you consider to be anti-racist?
7. Can you explain the anti-racist professional development training (both pre-service and in-service) that you have received? What did it look like, what did it focus on, and what did you learn? Was it district wide, or school-implemented?
8. Can you explain how you have worked anti-racism into your curriculum, classroom, and teaching?

9. Knowing that we are all human and have emotional reactions, what do you do when you feel strong emotions or biases when you are teaching or in the classroom?
10. Scenario: A group of your students, who are Black, come to class early one day. You can overhear their conversation. They are joking and laughing a bit loudly, and one of them calls the others the n word. What sorts of sensations do you feel in your body in this moment? Try to push aside anything you are thinking and just describe the feelings in your body i.e. your heart, your stomach, your hands, etc.
11. How do you incorporate student feedback?
12. Are there any other thoughts you would like to share about your experience with anti-racist professional development through Seattle Public Schools?

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