

NSW Education

Diversity and Inclusion in Teacher Workforces: Literature Review

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Executive Summary.

There is recognition in education contexts that student populations are increasingly diverse. While school policy and practice often situate meaningful and effective responses to student difference as key priority areas, that attention is not often extended to consider the inclusion of diverse teachers within traditionally homogenous school workforces. This review is guided by an intention to synthesise existing research literature focused on the inclusion (or exclusion) of educators from diverse backgrounds within school workforces.

The research shows that teachers from diverse socio-cultural groups can have positive impacts for both students and other teachers. The presence of diverse teachers within school workforces has been associated with:

- Improved student outcomes, including academic achievement, reduced exclusions and dropout rates, and higher aspirations for continued study;
- Enhanced understandings of the needs of diverse students; and
- Increased awareness of and attention to inclusivity of diverse peoples.

However, despite policy and research attention globally to attract and retain diverse teachers in the profession and evidence of the benefits of teacher diversity in the workforce, research shows that there are significant barriers to participation for diverse teachers. These include:

- Ongoing instances of discrimination;
- Tensions in identifying openly and being visible in the workplace; and
- The additional inclusion- and emotion-work taken on by diverse teachers.

There are several implications of this literature review. The literature suggests that professional development that allows critical engagement with personal positionality is essential. This applies to both teachers and school leaders – especially to ensure intentional and equitable hiring decisions. School and system leaders are also instrumental in establishing a school culture that welcomes diversity and shares the responsibility for inclusive practice among all educators, not just those who identify as diverse.

This review also highlighted the need for further large-scale quantitative and mixed-methods empirical research which explores connections between detailed data on the diversity of teaching workforces with a broad range of staff and student outcomes at the local and macro levels.

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Section 1:

Background.

Context.

Attention to equity and inclusion of diverse peoples is a priority in education systems globally. Often, these discourses emphasise inclusive and equitable responses to student diversity. This is evident in the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal that prioritises Quality Education to "ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all" (UN, nd). In addition, the recently released report, *Equity and Inclusion in Education: Finding Strength through Diversity* (OECD, 2023), highlights that due to a range of global developments, including demographic shifts, migration and refugee crises, rising inequalities, and climate change, governments and education policy makers are increasingly concerned with equity and inclusion. The understanding that school systems have a responsibility to ensure inclusion and equity of diverse students is common. As Larochelle-Audet et al., (2019) affirms,

"In pluralist societies with a liberal democratic system, the consideration of diversity within the education system is a fundamental issue. This issue goes hand in hand with respect for basic rights, including the right to education. Everyone should have access to quality education in order to promote the equitable distribution of goods and resources as well as dignity in social interactions" (p. 3)

An inclusive school workforce can be seen as one that effectively reflects the diverse identities, languages, cultures, and backgrounds of their students, families, and communities (Ministry of Education, 2017, cited in Griffiths et al, 2022, p. 105). For Nevarez et al (2019), "an inclusive school culture celebrates cultural characteristics, languages, communication styles, attitudes, experiences, and values. An essential component of such inclusion is developing a safe environment full of intergroup contact" (p. 28). Creating inclusive spaces in schools requires the commitment of all educators, not just those perceived as diverse (Sarchet, 2023).

Burke and Whitty (2018) point out that education continues to reproduce persistent patterns of inequity. In this context, there is value in transforming educational structures, processes, and strategies in a way that foregrounds equity. While schools may prioritise dismantling "the complex ways that insidious inequalities are reproduced in and through educational frameworks and practices" (Burke & Whitty, 2018, p. 272), responding to teacher diversity, and assuring the inclusion of diverse teachers in school workforces requires attention (Gould et al, 2023; Hogarth, 2019). This review aims to provide an overview of some of the concerns and practices related to diversity and inclusion of teachers outlined in the literature.

Project Background.

The NSW Department of Education ('NSW Education') commissioned this project to establish an overview of the relevant workforce research and provide a summary of its implications in the K-12 context in NSW. Through our conversations with the NSW Education project team, the following aims, key questions and guiding principles were established to govern this work:

Table 1: Aims and Guiding Principles

Project aims for the literature review	Key questions to explore in the literature	Guiding principles for literature search
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provide leaders across the Department with an independent summary of the key themes identified in the research, alongside independent, informed commentary on the implications of these themes for the current and future supply of teachers across the State • Provide leaders with necessary knowledge and informs their practice regarding the creation of sustainable workforces in NSW Education's schools • Informs constructive discussions about the policy settings, initiatives and culture that are most likely to support staff wellbeing and other positive outcomes for staff and students. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What does existing research tell us about school workforces in relation to the inclusion or exclusion of people from diverse backgrounds? • What aspects of diversity have been explored when it comes to teacher workforces in the research literature and what gaps exist? • What relationships, if any, have been demonstrated between school workforce diversity and staff outcomes (e.g., turnover, job satisfaction, engagement, performance, wellbeing, sense of belonging) and student outcomes (e.g. wellbeing, sense of belonging, academic and other social outcomes)? • Is there research evidence of a connection between diversity, outcomes, and contexts with macro-level workforce outcomes such as teacher supply and staff retention? 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prioritise research conducted in the K-12 Education context • Prioritise recent research (particularly papers published in the past 5 years) • Prioritise research in Australian settings, then expand to other settings with shared context • Source highly cited papers where possible • Prioritise empirical research (where available) over theoretical or conceptual papers • Explore both equality and equity where they were present in the literature.

Literature Search Strategy.

This project primarily used a systematic literature review methodology, where our search parameters were pre-defined to allow us to gather a representative 'cross-section' of recently published papers. This approach can mitigate the potential for bias in a literature review. To improve the number of empirical papers included in our scope, some supplementary searches were conducted; these were focused on exploring specific aspects of diversity in the workforce and the specific connection between diversity, inclusion and employee outcomes in sectors other than education.

Being aware that terminology, definitions and conceptualisations of diversity, equity and diversity in education vary (OECD, 2023), the search strategy was deliberately broad. Terms used included 'diversity', 'inclusion', and 'belonging', "teacher workforce", "teacher diversity" and 'teacher' or 'teachers', and 'school'. With an aim to focus on an

Australian context, searches also included "New South Wales", 'Australia' or 'Australian'. Even with this narrowing, many of the included studies are international in focus, with a small suite localised in New South Wales and Australia more broadly. A date range of 2018 – 2023 allowed the search to prioritise recent literature in the field. Following this broad canvassing of the field, several targeted searches were conducted to identify research in several areas including, "LGBT teachers" and "LGBTIQ* teachers"; "First Nations teachers" and "Indigenous teachers" and "teachers with disabilities".

Figure 1 outlines the steps in our search and their outcomes. After refining the scope of the search using the parameters outlined above, a total of 35 articles were reviewed for inclusion in this paper. A handful of additional papers, sourced from supplementary searches of research outside the education sector, were also reviewed and included.

¹ We acknowledge the contentious nature of many of these terms and the ways they may homogenise the diversity and complexity inherent in any social, racial, or cultural identity group. We use the terms here as they are articulated in the papers, many of which provide their own explicit rationales for their use with acknowledgment of the contested nature of terms.

Identification of Literature: Systematic Search

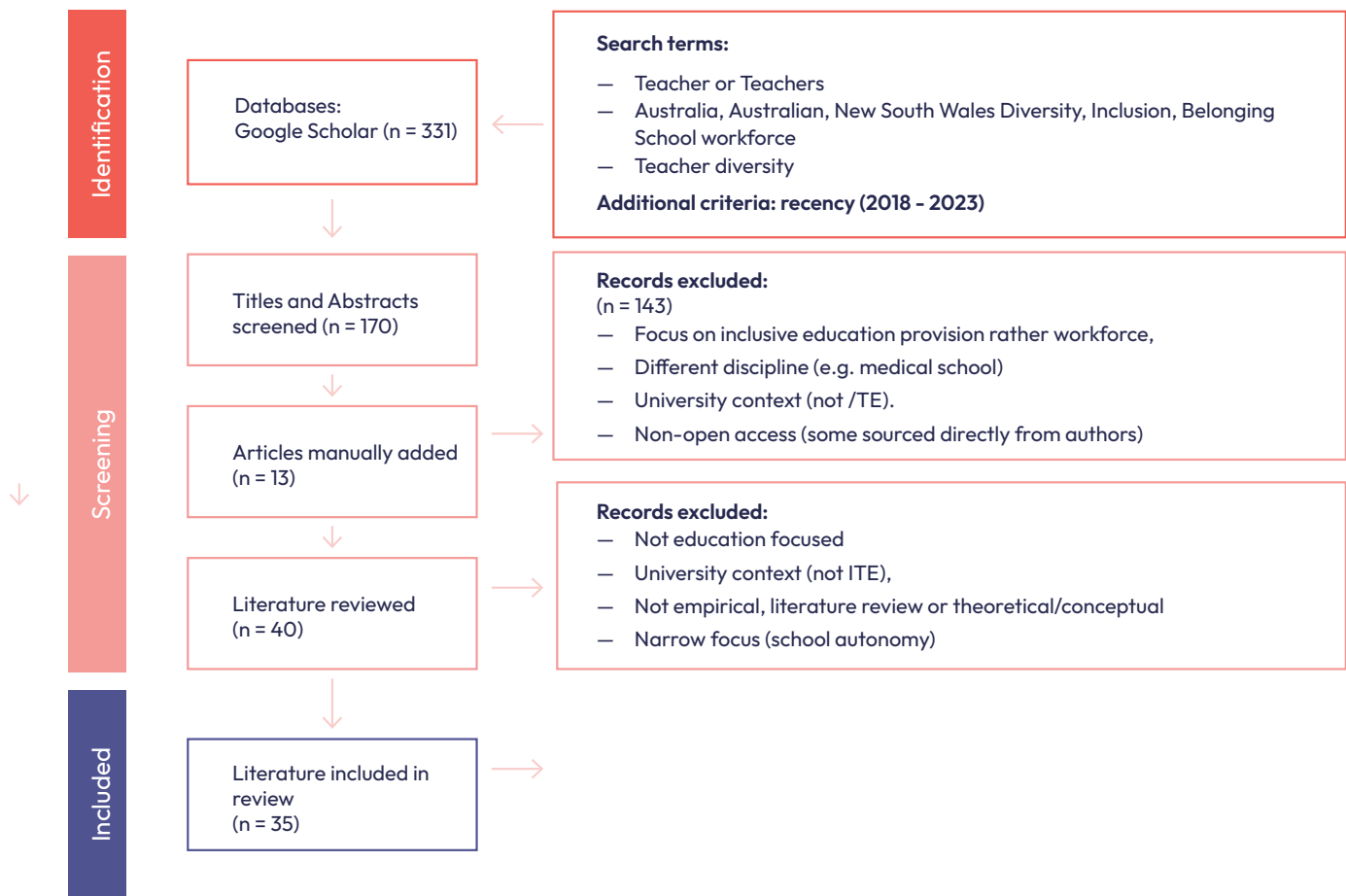


Figure 1: Systematic Literature Search Strategy

The search approach allowed the inclusion and consideration of a broad range of social groups and identities. In this review, we use the key terms for different socio-cultural groups as they are used in the articles. These range from ‘minoritised teachers’, ‘Indigenous teachers’ and ‘Black, Asian and Minority Ethnic (BAME)’ to ‘under-represented groups’, ‘teachers with a disability’, and ‘LGBTIQ+ teachers’. These broad categories can work to hide the plurality that exists within identity groups. As the Diversity Council of Australia/Jumbunna Institute (2020) note, Indigenous workers have diverse experiences in the workplace, while McGrath (2023) offers a reminder that there are many ways to be male.

The table in Appendix A provides an overview of the empirical studies identified in the review.

The formal study of workforce diversity and inclusion is, in many ways, still nascent. While scholars have explored workforce diversity from a range of perspectives and disciplines, there is relatively little consistency across these approaches in terms of their methodology, terminology or the ways they operationalise the concepts of diversity and inclusion; this makes comparison between fields more complicated and can serve to limit the synthesising of findings into consistent patterns.

Finally, it should be noted that because our review encompassed a number of meta-analysis and systematic review papers, some references are made here to papers which were cited by the authors of those reviews; the scope of this project did not allow us to investigate all of these source papers in detail, so any reported findings from these papers should be interpreted with some caution.

Section 2:

Key Themes in the Literature.

The themes here consolidate five areas where scholars inquiring into diversity, equity, and inclusion in school workforces came to aligned conclusions. These consider: (i) the contradiction between superdiverse students and homogenous teachers; (ii) the tensions of identifying openly in school workplaces; (iii) the effects of teacher–student congruence; (iv) the call for diversity training; and (v) leaders and leadership.

Theme 1:

Contrasting Diversity in Teacher and Student Populations.

While there is recognition that student populations are increasingly superdiverse (Gamble et al, 2021; Griffiths et al, 2022), the composition of teacher workforces continues to be uniform. In part due to changing patterns of global migration, contemporary classrooms are increasingly diversified (Forghani-Arani et al, 2019; Gould et al, 2023; OECD, 2023). There is growing awareness of superdiversity as an aspect of contemporary work in schools:

Superdiversity is a relatively new idea that describes the changes in patterns of diversity that have recently taken place in many contemporary societies ... Superdiversity requires considering the vast array of individual differences that make up each student and how aspects of their diversity interact with each other. It also focuses on how patterns of diversity may evolve ... This field is in its infancy, and there is not yet a firm empirical basis for tools and practices that comprehensively encompass superdiversity in a school setting (Gamble et al, 2021, p. 301)

Despite this, “the teaching force has remained predominantly homogeneous” (Forghani-Arani et al, 2019, p. 31). Keane et al (2022) reiterate that “teaching internationally is a homogeneous profession, comprised primarily of majority ethnic and social groups” (p. 2). In Canada, this is referred to as the ‘teacher diversity gap’ (coined by Turner, 2014/2015, cited in Abawi, 2021), which describes “the relationship between overwhelmingly White teachers and predominantly racialized children in Ontario” (p. 81). This homogeneity is additionally evident in the gendered composition of the teaching workforce: female teachers comprise 96% of early childhood teachers, 83% of primary teachers, and 63% of secondary teachers in OECD countries (OECD, 2020a in McGrath, 2023), making teaching “a female-dominated occupation” (McGrath, 2023, p. 74).

The pervasiveness of White, female-identifying people in the teaching workforce often leads teaching and teachers to be ‘monocultural’ in both ideology and practice (Abacioglu et al, 2022; Gould et al, 2023; Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020).

This has effects for students and teachers. When teachers struggle to understand the backgrounds of their students, they can continue to view them and their valued socio-cultural knowledges and ways of being and doing through a deficit lens, even when they have good intentions. In a study by Weuffen and colleagues (2023) that interviewed 22 non-indigenous teachers in schools that had 25% or greater of the student population identify as Aboriginal in New South Wales schools in Australia, teachers’ understandings of Indigeneity were found to reflect contradictory discourses that were simultaneously inclusive, colour-blind, and deficit. Rather than discussing the value of Indigenous methodologies as integral to change, the group of teachers as a collective:

“expressed a faith that Aboriginal students can succeed in school. Yet, these views were held alongside a deficit perspective of Aboriginal students’ educational participation and achievement ... This conflict was evident in how teachers spoke about the value of Aboriginal programmes for improving relationships between school staff and Aboriginal families, increasing rates of students identifying as Aboriginal, and the perceived improvements in students’ engagement with school, while implicating Aboriginal parents as causes of poor engagement and low self-confidence” (Weuffen et al, 2021, p. 95).

In another study of teaching resources available to non-indigenous teachers who work in schools within Indigenous language groups and regions, Funk and

Theme 1:

Contrasting Diversity in Teacher and Student Populations.

Woodroffe (2023) suggest that an extensive database of resources alone is not enough to address the gaps in their knowledge about locally-responsive and culturally-relevant teaching practice. The researchers argue that western, non-Indigenous teachers benefit from “scaffolded practical guidance which is best informed by Indigenous people and their shared knowledge applicable to educational contexts” (Funk & Woodroffe, 2023, p. 17).

This uniformity creates a sense of normativity and standardisation in the workforce – a tacit image of how a teacher ‘should’ look, sound, think, and behave. This can work to exclude people who identify differently. As a participant in Marom’s (2019) study, which interviewed six First Nations teachers who graduated from a Canadian Indigenous Teacher Education Program, stated, “There is an icon out there of what a teacher is supposed to look like, and how a teacher is supposed to behave ... It’s kind of a hidden protocol” (p. 7). These norms have flow-on effects. As Abawi (2021) notes:

“The prevalence of Whiteness as a social and cultural norm is permeated from teacher education programs into school boards and informs gatekeeping mechanisms, specifically, access to permanent teaching employment and leadership positions. Whiteness is normalized throughout educational institutions and informs the culture and norms of the teaching profession” (p. 83)

Kozleski and Proffitt (2020) concur that this normativity in teaching needs examination, and that “Attracting, developing, and retaining TOC [teachers of colour] depend on our ability and capacity to re-examine our understanding of the cultures that underlie the assumptions that we make about what constitutes expertise in teaching and mastery of the development of lasting human relationships that influence and sustain learners during their schooling and their lives as adults” (p. 78).

Scholars agree that teacher diversity needs attention through policy and practice mechanisms that scaffold the inclusion of different teacher identities in the workforce. This, however, does not simply refer to increasing the number of teachers from different backgrounds. As McGrath (2023) notes,

“it is important that teacher gender diversity is not only thought of as the numeric representation of male and female personnel—as reported in workplace data—but also in terms of intersectionality, diversity within genders (including marginalised gender identities) and gender diversity across workplace roles. Indeed ‘male teachers’ are not a single, homogeneous social group, but encompass a broad range of ways of being male” (McGrath, 2023, p. 74).

The sense of sameness in teacher workforces, in contrast to the diversity of students, impacts on students and their learning – and also on diverse teachers. One of the factors at play in acknowledging and valuing diversity within school workforces is the tension in identifying openly as different from the norm.

Theme 2:

To Identify or not to Identify: That is the Tension.

The literature reviewed in this paper frequently reiterated the tensions of identifying as “different” to the archetypal norm in school workplaces. A range of factors contributed to the sense that people often wrestled with the decision of whether (or not) it was safe to be ‘out’ in the workforce. For example, the challenges of identifying as LGBTIQ+ in the workplace were demonstrated in a large-scale survey of 1036 LGBTIQ+ teachers in New South Wales. Participants spoke about the difficulty of “identity management and the daily emotional labour associated with this” (Ullman & Smith, 2018, p. 40). The survey results illustrated that over 30% of respondents were not ‘out’ at school, neither to colleagues nor to students or families. Only 19.4% of teachers were ‘out’ to everyone in the school community (peers, students, and families) while 49.7% were out to adult colleagues. (Ullman & Smith, 2018). While there are positive aspects to take from the data in that almost 70% of LGBTIQ+ teachers were able to identify at work, for many teachers this resulted in additional discrimination and disadvantage. Respondents reported that following discriminatory instances, they experienced impaired relationships with colleagues (12% of item responses), considered leaving the profession (9%), felt a direct impact on their ability to teach (8%) and struggled with the sense that they could not be themselves within the workplace (6%) (Ullman & Smith, 2018, p. 31). As Wells’ (2017) similarly found, there is an ongoing politics to coming out in the classroom – one’s visibility in the school can lead to a ‘backlash’, with personal and professional costs to being ‘out’ in the school workplace.

For teachers from a range of racial and cultural backgrounds, the presence of ongoing racisms in the workplace affected the ways their identities were devalued. A number of studies identified ongoing experiences of racism within schools (Bradbury et al, 2022, p. 7; Griffiths et al, 2022; Hogarth, 2019). The Diversity Council Australia/Jumbunna Institute (2020) specify that to include Australian Indigenous peoples in their workplaces, they need to recognise ‘identity strain’, educating non-indigenous colleagues about how to interact in ways that reduce this for Indigenous staff members. Tensions were exemplified further in a Canadian study, where Indigenous teachers reported experiencing judgement (‘professional microaggressions’) around dress, accent and language, and teaching methods. Indigenous ways of knowing and teaching were often marginalised or tokenised, which reflected a tacit hierarchy of knowledge and method that was policed and reinforced by other teachers, particularly during practicum (Marom, 2019). Despite this, identifying in the workplace was viewed as essential to wellbeing for Indigenous teachers with one study’s participants discussing “the importance of their identities to their well-being, and how the ITEP [Indigenous Teacher Education Program] enabled them to discover or know more about their individual identities” (Oloo & Kiramba, 2019, p. 12).

Theme 2:

To Identify or not to Identify: That is the Tension

Griffiths et al (2022) similarly found that bias, discrimination, and stigma were barriers to attracting and retaining diverse kaiako (teachers) to early childhood education in New Zealand. In a context of 'systemic racism and racist attitudes' some respondents kept their identity silent for fear of judgement (Griffiths et al, 2022). In another New Zealand based study, teachers from minority cultures, particularly those who were new immigrants, were frequently portrayed as less professional, with different priorities, and easily exploited (Gould et al, 2023). Rather than a sense of solidarity or commitment to these groups, they were further marked out as 'other' within the workplace (Gould et al, 2023). The studies illustrate the complexity of being different in schools.

These pressures were also evident for teachers from other social groups. In an Italian study of teachers with disabilities and their colleagues, Guerini & Sorrentino (2022) found that teachers with disability often felt the need to maintain secrecy about their disability, only confiding in 'safe' colleagues. Similarly, Tal-Alon & Shapira-Lishchinsky (2019) found that teachers with disabilities experienced an ethical dilemma in choosing whether or not to 'come out of the disability closet' and reveal their disability to other school staff. Further, teachers from minority and working-class backgrounds in Ireland reported that they experienced a sense of constant judgement and an expectation that they should conform, with one teacher asked to 'tone down' his working class accent (Keane et al, 2022).

Together, the studies imply that identifying as different from the norm in school spaces can be an ongoing kind of 'battle' (Bradbury et al, 2022; Woodfine & Warner, 2022). Bradbury et al (2022), in their study of 24 racially minoritised teachers, found that teachers often felt that their ways of being as a teacher, including defending students of colour were viewed as unacceptable by white leadership teams, and this contributed to a sense of 'racial battle fatigue' (Smith 2004 cited in Bradbury et al, 2022, p. 9). Comparably, Marom (2019) found that Indigenous teachers were strategic in how they navigated the 'regimented' nature of the teaching profession: "In order to succeed, they had to maintain a dialectic position: on the one hand 'fitting' in the school system, and on the other continuing to push against it. The participants were clear in identifying the forces of assimilation" (p. 14). This fight to have identities recognised and valued in the workplace affects teachers' wellbeing: there is an "emotional work of active concealment" of identities (Ullman & Smith, 2018, p. 41).

Whether or not people can identify freely in the workforce has implications for retention. A survey of workforces internationally released earlier this year found that belonging and values alignment influenced workers' intention to stay in the workplace. A sense of belonging in the workplace, within a team or the organisation, often drives people's career decisions: a majority of survey respondents (54%) reported that they would quit their current role if they didn't feel a sense of belonging at their company. "Additionally, many are insistent that their company's values align with their personal ones, with 42% saying they wouldn't take a job if this weren't the case" (Randstad, 2023, p. 13).

Theme 3:

The Effects of Teacher-Student Congruence.

Diverse teachers have positive impacts for diverse students. A foundational part of teaching is to “know your students and their backgrounds” (AITSL, 2021; Funk & Woodroffe, 2022). Effective teachers understand and value the home lives of students. “When teachers share student race identities, learners have opportunities to engage with authority figures who likely share, understand, and value their cultural-historical heritages and lived realities” (Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020, p. 68). For example, improvements have been noted in math outcomes when Black, White, and Asian and Pacific Island students were matched with same-race teachers (see, Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020).

Several studies consider the ways the presence of diverse teachers in the workforce impacts on diverse students. In an OECD report, Schleicher (2021) compiled evidence of the impact of teacher and student congruence in the United States. A “shared belonging to ethnic groups and national minorities” (Schleicher, 2021, p. 53) between teachers and students was found to have a suite of beneficial effects for diverse students, including:

- Teacher-student ethnic congruence was associated with improved academic outcomes in reading and maths performance (Dee, 2004; Clotfelter, Ladd, & Vigdor, 2007; Egalite, Kisida & Winters, 2015);
- Higher academic outcomes and teacher perceptions for students who share similar identities to teachers, including ethnicity and gender (Dee, 2005; Gershenson, Holt & Papageorge, 2016; Grissom & Redding, 2016);
- Teachers’ evaluations of disruptive behaviours improve significantly with Black teacher-student congruence, with a decrease by 28–38% in suspensions rates among Black students (Ouazad, 2014);
- Holt and Gershenson (2019) find a causal relationship between shared teacher-student ethnic backgrounds and lower student absences and suspensions;
- The effects of Black teachers on Black students’ exclusionary discipline (e.g. in-school suspensions, out-of-school suspensions and expulsions) was investigated through a large-scale analysis of administrative data and disciplinary records in North Carolina public schools in the US to find that teacher-student congruence is associated with decreased exclusionary discipline across education levels from elementary to secondary schools, irrespective of gender and socio-economic status (Lindsay & Hart, 2017); and
- Gershenson et al (2017) found that assigning a Black male student to a Black teacher between grades 3 and 5 was associated with reduced likelihood that the student will drop out of school. This is especially pertinent for students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds. With exposure to at least one Black teacher between grades 3 and 5, Black students from disadvantaged socio-economic backgrounds – irrespective of gender – were also more likely to have stronger aspirations to attend higher education.

Theme 3:

The Effects of Teacher-Student Congruence.

This suite of benefits demonstrates the value teacher diversity can create for diverse students, especially those who often experience achievement ‘gaps’ when compared to students who are not marginalised in the classroom.

In the Australian context, the presence of First Nations teachers has also been linked to a range of positive impacts for students, including:

- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators bring valuable community and cultural knowledge to education settings, particularly in remote communities (see, AITSL, 2021)
- Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander educators provide continuity for student learning in schools that may face high teacher turnover (particularly in remote schools) (see, AITSL, 2021)

As an Indigenous teacher in Canada noted, “I see myself in many Indigenous students; the ones who are struggling with their identity, academic success, and family issues, yet are sometimes being ignored or misunderstood.” (Oloo & Kiramba, 2019, p. 13). Participants expressed their commitment to creating supportive educational environments, where classrooms provide a welcoming space for their students.

The benefits of educator diversity in schools can further extend to congruence in other areas. As McGrath (2023) argues, teacher gender diversity can influence students’ sense of belonging within schools through interpersonal relationships and psychological membership. In this way, “greater diversity increases possibilities for students to interact with teachers who are similar to themselves, allowing students to feel understood by those in charge and promoting feelings of belonging and acceptance” (McGrath, 2023, p. 79). A gender-diverse teacher workforce works to counter the hidden curriculum of unofficial lessons students learn about gender and masculinities when there are few male teachers at a school. The presence of men in schools -- especially diverse men who demonstrate different ways of being male -- is a way of countering gender stereotypes and preconceptions and “legitimising the role of men in the lives of children” (McGrath, 2023, p. 81).

The benefits congruence were also noted in relation to teachers with disabilities. Teachers with a disability often perceive this experience as an educational advantage (Tal-Alon & Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2019). Further, Guerini & Sorrentino (2022) report that teachers with disabilities “seem to have greater skills and aptitudes in the field of special education” (p. 113). Both teachers with disabilities and their colleagues reported an improvement in the teaching-learning process through greater openness to diversity, greater empathy with students with disabilities, more accurate screening competences, and more inclusive teaching competences “in the sense that they design teaching activities/units in such a way that each pupil does not feel excluded” (Guerini & Sorrentino, 2022, pp. 110-111). This was reiterated by Sarchet (2023), a neurodiverse teacher who saw disability as an asset in teaching students:

“My experiences as a special education teacher and an instructor in advanced teacher education programs are lived and practiced through the lens of being autistic. I have a unique, detail-oriented perspective and strategic way of thinking about problems ... I am able to share resources with my students, both K-12 and postsecondary or graduate, through first-hand experience ... My experience as a neurodiverse person makes me passionate about inclusion and belonging of individuals with disabilities. As a disabled person, social justice is important to my research and practice to strive toward equity for all individuals and groups of people, especially those traditionally marginalized” (Sarchet, 2023, p. 57)

As Johnson (2002) found in an earlier study, experience as an ‘outsider’ in some way, can support teachers’ perceptions, awareness, and responsiveness to students of diverse backgrounds.

Considerations of diversity of ‘majority’ students were explored in fewer papers (Nevarez et al, 2019; Schwarzenhal et al, 2023). In a survey of 547 teachers, coupled with longitudinal surveys of 1287 Belgium majority students and 696 Turkish- or

Moroccan- origin students, Schwarzenhal et al (2023) found that when teachers practised multiculturalism and anti-discrimination approaches, this resulted in reduced interethnic bias and raised awareness of discrimination among ethnic majority students. Kim and Cooc’s (2020) synthesis of 37 peer-reviewed studies of the effects of Asian American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) teachers concluded that the practices and contributions of AAPI teachers included their ability to engage with diverse youth, value students’ cultures, and draw on a shared background. In addition, AAPI teachers challenged the curriculum and developed students’ critical consciousness of Eurocentrism and made direct changes to the school curriculum by articulating perspectives left out of textbooks (Kim & Cooc, 2020, p. 7).

Diverse teachers can disrupt people’s stereotypes about social groups. This consideration of the ways that diverse teachers affect students from similar backgrounds doesn’t preclude attention to the ways teachers from ‘majority’ backgrounds can also support diverse students. This is evident in the ways many authors consider there to be a pressing need for training that raises awareness of, empathy for, and responsiveness to student (and teacher) superdiversity.

Theme 4:

‘Teaching Diversity’ to Teachers.

With recognition that the homogeneity of teachers raises challenges for responding empathically to the superdiversity of students, many scholars in the suite of articles recommend diversity-focused professional development for teachers. Diversity training was viewed as an key part of teacher education in a context of increasingly complex student populations (Abacioglu et al, 2022; Burke & Whitty, 2018; Crisol-Moya et al, 2023; Forghani-Arani et al, 2019; Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020; Okken et al, 2022; Schwarzenenthal et al, 2023).

In a recent study measuring Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples’ workplace experiences more broadly, the Diversity Council Australia/Jumbunna Institute (2020) found that anti-discrimination compliance training and formal racism complaint procedures are crucial aspects of addressing racism. Their survey found that only a fifth of respondents worked in organisations with both a racism complaint procedure and anti-discrimination compliance training that explicitly included reference to discrimination and harassment of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples. However, these initiatives have important implications for reducing racism at work. Respondents whose workplaces had these initiatives embedded in their practice were:

- Half as likely to experience unfair treatment at work because of their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity (21% with both initiatives, compared to 46% with neither), and
- Far less likely to hear racial or ethnic slurs or jokes at work because of their Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander identity (28% with both initiatives, compared to 51% with neither).

However, while these mechanisms have measurable impacts, they remain uncommon in Australian workplaces – the researchers argue that if people only receive cultural training if they request it or when they do something wrong, then the safety of diverse people in the workplace “is an afterthought” (Diversity Council Australia/Jumbunna Institute, 2020, p. 15).

Several authors advocate for professional learning that specifically enables teachers to critically reflect on their positionality within society and the effects of this positioning on others – both students and other teachers. Many scholars viewed critical reflection regarding one’s positionality and teaching as normative as essential – even for diverse teachers (e.g. Forghani-Arani et al, 2019; Hogarth, 2019; Keddie et al, 2022; Schwarzenenthal et al, 2023). This kind of critical reflection enables teachers to ‘know yourself and what you don’t know’ (Funk & Woodroffe, 2022).

“Supporting diversity and achieving equity require an examination of the White normativity grounding conventional understandings of schooling, teaching, and teacher education ... Educators must be willing and able to engage deeply with race, racism, and other structural factors and value the cultural–historical assets of SOC [Students of Colour] and TOC [Teachers of Colour]” (Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020, p. 78).

As Arndt (2018) argues, it is of ‘critical importance’ that school workforces elevate and pay attention to teachers’ subject formation and identity. It is this that can enable “an increasingly open attitude to difference and diversity, and an energized, critical and thoughtful attitude of questioning and transformation” (Arndt, 2018, p. 401).

Opportunities to think about and experience differences are important for teachers. Schwarzenhal et al (2023) suggest that reflection on how their practices may be perceived by different student populations requires teacher education and training programs that incorporate the perspectives of different ethnic groups, including those in traditionally marginalised groups. One way of achieving this is through a diversified teacher population. However, as a strategy, this can result in unreasonable expectations on ethnic minority teachers, and an assumption that they are able to represent the perspectives of all ethnic minority student populations

(Schwarzenhal et al, 2023). This can be challenged through additional support through targeted training and reflection.

The presence of diverse teachers can make a difference to staff understandings of difference (Guerini & Sorrentino, 2022; Wells, 2017). Engagements with diverse peoples has been shown to make a difference in people’s ability to see beyond stereotypes. In a classic narrative analysis, Johnson (2002) revealed that teachers’ perceptions of racial awareness and responsiveness to students from diverse racial backgrounds were influenced by (a) being perceived as an “outsider” due to class background or sexual orientation; (b) living and working with individuals of other races in relationships that approximated “equal status” and exposed them to “insider” perspectives on race and racism; and (c) personal religious/ philosophical beliefs that emphasised equality and social justice concerns.

However, while diversity trainings for preservice teachers are related to teachers’ self-reported intercultural competence and more positive attitudes, so far there is little evidence whether they are also related to demonstrable changes in student outcomes (Devine & Ash, 2022 in Schwarzenhal et al, 2023). In addition, as findings from Crisol-Moyer et al (2022) highlight, although participants in diversity training agreed there is a need for specific training, many were still dissatisfied with the training received, considered themselves not qualified enough to face diversity in their classrooms, and had an ambivalent attitude toward attention to diversity.

Theme 4:

'Teaching Diversity' to Teachers.

Importantly, shifting the focus of training from responding equitably to student difference towards inclusive and equitable relationships between and among teachers and school staff is seen as beneficial. As Gould et al (2023) posit, the policy expectations that teachers “attend to belonging and inclusion in their practice [with diverse students] have ignored how the same social issues that impact children and families also impact teachers” (p. 8). Similarly, Hogarth, (2019) argues “there is a need for school leaders and teachers to ensure that the school is an inclusive space not just for students but also, Indigenous staff” (p. 54). Abacioglu et al (2022) found that “prolonged exposure to multicultural ideology, which is the case in most professional development in ESL [English as a Second Language] compared to ME [Multicultural Education], seems to have the possibility to be more effective in attitude change compared to a change in teacher beliefs” (p. 11). In addition, the study found that training offered while teachers were in-service was more effective than training during initial teacher education, because it could be readily translated into practice (Abacioglu et al, 2022).

The importance of engaging in professional reflection on social positioning did not end with teachers. Abawi (2021) notes that “equitable hiring practices and representation cannot materialize without administrators engaging in transformative, critical self-reflective practice” (Abawi, 2021, p. 80). In reference to the value of this critical self-reflective practice to the inclusion of gender- and sexuality-diverse staff, Ullman and Smith (2018) note that “School leadership personnel require specific training in the area of gender and sexuality diversity in order to facilitate understanding and support of their staff members. Such training must include transgender and gender-diverse identities. It is essential for leadership staff to regularly communicate their support for LGBTIQ+ staff (and students) as this sets behavioural expectations for the entire school community” (p. 52). This extends also for leadership’s understanding of how to respond equitably to teachers with disability (Tal-Alon & Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2019).

Theme 5:

Leading the Way Forward.

Multiple papers reiterated that the position taken by leaders and school leadership matters to diversity and inclusion in the workplace (Abawi, 2021; Bradbury et al, 2022; Forghani-Arani et al, 2019; Hogarth, 2019; Larochelle-Audet et al, 2019; Towers, 2020; Guerini & Sorrentino, 2022). Australian policy reflects a vision of school leaders' commitment to equity, inclusion, and social justice in education. Larochelle-Audet et al's (2019) policy comparison of the leader competencies articulated in a range of countries' professional standards found that the Australian Institute for Teaching and School Leadership (2014) standards outlined principals' responsibility to:

- Create a climate where human and social diversity is recognised and respected,
- Develop leadership and non-deficit oriented pedagogical practices that are tailored to the realities and needs of people,
- Know, value and engage students' families and communities, especially those who are under-represented, and
- Promote and adopt an honest and critical professional action reflecting principles of equity, inclusion, and social justice

The researchers conclude that: "Australia's standards are also distinct, since they highlight that society's commitment to inclusiveness and social recognition of diversity as constitutive, particularly in relation to Indigenous communities. This dimension is particularly evident in the vision of the school leader" (Larochelle-Audet et al, 2019, p. 19).

Despite policy emphasis on leaders' capabilities in relation to diversity and inclusion, Hogarth (2019), an Indigenous teacher who worked in rural schools in Queensland, experienced various racisms, exclusion, and lack of support when implementing approaches aimed at connecting schools and Indigenous communities. She stresses that leaders are in a unique position to lead initiatives, strategies and actions that recognise and value diversity and enhance inclusion. This requires a consciousness of their positioning with the school, and a commitment to modelling inclusive practice from the top: "It cannot be the responsibility of the staff to act without the support of the leadership. The school leadership needs to lead, to motivate and to share the load" (Hogarth, 2019, p. 50). Further, as Tal-Alon and Shapira-Lishchinsky's (2019) study of 20 teachers with disabilities emphasised, a career in education is complex with disabilities.

Leading the Way Forward.

Their findings indicate that, despite this, the system was more challenging than the disability itself. Since teachers' main dilemmas related to interactions with supervisors and colleagues and not the impairment itself, principals should be encouraged to take professional development that will educate them on the range of accommodations that can be made to positively influence teachers' experiences at work and enable organisation-level changes (Tal-Alon & Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2019).

Reiterating this, Guerini and Sorrentino (2022) found that for some teachers with disability, inclusion depended on the school leaders' leadership skills. As such, teachers and principals should be encouraged to take courses that will expose them to the unique difficulties people with disabilities face" (Tal-Alon & Shapira-Lishchinsky, 2019, p. 9). This critical awareness of leaders' position to institute change in schools depends on a willingness to engage in practices that enhance inclusion of diverse people in school workforces, including hiring decisions.

Leaders influence the composition of a workforce. While the need for qualified diverse teachers is evident, a commitment to teacher diversity must be demonstrated by executive educational leaders (Nevarez et al, 2019). A context of growing student superdiversity has created an opportunity for education leaders to develop and implement system-wide strategic policy plans that can drive teacher diversity recruitment and retention (Nevarez et al, 2019). Because of their centrality in their ability to hire teachers to staff schools, school leaders and administrators need to engage in self-reflective practice and critical consciousness of how "their

positionality impacts their teacher hiring decisions" (Abawi, 2021, p. 86). Scholars argue that attention to this as a top policy priority is important, considering the lack of proportional representation of diverse teachers. Further, Bradbury et al (2022) argue that it is proactive work by school leaders that will have the most impact on reducing the experiences of racism in school workforces. They recommend that leaders are (i) deliberate and proactive in enabling dialogue around race, diversity, and equity in school; (ii) mindful of how teachers are deployed and promoted in your school; and (iii) willing to recognise and tackle 'whiteness' as a cultural norm in schools. Leaders' attitudes and behaviour also have flow-on effects for the culture (sometimes referred to as 'the way things are done' in a workplace) and climate ('how it feels to work here') within organisations. We might consider organisational cultures inclusive when "people of all social identity groups have the opportunity to be presented, to have their voices heard and appreciated, and to engage in core activities on behalf of the collective" (Wasserman, Gallegos, and Ferdman (2008, p. 176). Research from outside the education sector has demonstrated the importance of these factors in contributing to reduced staff turnover (e.g. Kim & Kim, 2021) and other negative outcomes, including for diverse employees. For example, in a meta-analysis of studies from a range of industries, Webster et al. (2018) found that LGBT-supportive organisational climates were associated with lower levels of negative outcomes such as psychological strain and perceived discrimination for LGBT employees. Other studies, however, have demonstrated that connections between inclusive cultures and climates and employee outcomes like intention to leave may rely on mediating factors such as job satisfaction and organisational commitment (e.g. Hwang & Hopkins, 2015).

Section 3:

Conclusion and Considerations.

This review sought to consolidate existing research on the inclusion (or exclusion) of diverse peoples within school workforces. Across five themes, it found that:

- While student populations are increasingly ‘superdiverse’, as a workforce, teachers tend to remain predominantly homogenous and monocultural. This has implications for understanding and responding to diverse students – and also to interpersonal relationships with diverse teachers on staff;
- There is tension in identifying openly as a person from a group that has been traditionally marginalised within education contexts, with many choosing only to disclose to colleagues or leaders who were perceived as ‘safe’. For people who are different, ‘identify management’ can lead to a sense that they are engaged in an ongoing ‘battle’ in the workplace that affects wellbeing;
- Teacher-student congruence (where teachers’ and students’ identities or backgrounds are similar) appears to impact on students’ learning outcomes, their exclusion rates, and their aspirations for continuing education;
- Diversity training and critical self-reflection are recommended for educators (including school leaders), to develop awareness of positionality. This can be part of a strategy that ensures the commitment to and responsibility for inclusion and equity is shared among all staff members, rather than relying on the advocacy of diverse peoples; and
- School leaders are uniquely positioned to lead and model inclusivity of diverse peoples on school workforces. A willingness to engage in critical self-reflection, particularly in relation to hiring practices, equitable staffing decisions, and practices that support belonging and therefore retention of diverse peoples is of benefit.

There are some limits to the conclusions presented here. The search strategy itself, with a broad approach to identification of studies may have been enhanced with further attention to key search terms and areas of difference, and a broadened scope to incorporate more research from outside the education sector. It should be noted, though, that findings observed in other sectors may not translate directly to the education context.

In terms of the empirical works identified, they are generally small-scale, qualitative studies which, while offering rich insight into the experiences of diverse teachers in school workforces, do not speak to broader patterns of impact or effect in the classroom or with and among other educators. Due to this, it is difficult to ascertain how macro-scale supply and retention outcomes are influenced by teacher diversity, student outcomes, and workplace contexts. There is a pressing need for more large-scale quantitative and mixed-methods empirical research which explores these issues in the education workforce context specifically. Research which combines detailed data on the diversity of teaching workforces in the Australian education sector with information about a broad range of staff and student outcomes would be of particular benefit.

In addition, the use of a broad range of terminology to identify peoples from different backgrounds, presents challenges for the consolidation of the studies (also identified as a complexity in the field by the OECD, 2023). While the theme of teacher-student congruence showed the impact diversity can have on similarly diverse students, fewer studies considered broader impacts for students and teachers from 'majority' backgrounds. These gaps offer a distinct opportunity for further at-scale research into school workforce diversity and staff and student outcomes.

The literature reviewed in this project highlights many areas for leaders to consider in their decision-making. These include, but are not limited to:

- Paying particular attention to their influence on organisational culture and climate and the flow-on effects for the inclusion of the whole workforce
- Acknowledging and celebrating the value of diverse staff in school communities, noting that teachers who have parts of their identities that are in some way positioned as 'different' in society can influence diverse students' achievement, sense of belonging, and aspirations
- Acknowledging and taking steps to mitigate the additional 'load' of being a diverse teacher. These employees often do additional educational work, including:

- Teaching students in ways that recognise and value their backgrounds, and needs and also teaching other teachers about inclusive education strategies
- Advocating for difference, inclusion, social justice and understanding beyond stereotypes to students, other teachers.
- Creating spaces for teachers from diverse background to connect with one another to access peer support and share learnings (e.g. via mentoring programs as identified by Kimmel et al, 2021).

A key takeaway of the review is that diverse teachers often do additional educational work. This includes teaching students in ways that recognise and value their backgrounds and needs and also teaching other teachers about inclusive-education strategies. In addition, this extends to pedagogic work that advocates for difference, inclusion, social justice and understanding beyond stereotypes to students, other teachers, and school leaders. As discussed, this openness can lead to discrimination within the working environment. These factors intertwine in authors' calls for attention to diversity training that embeds critical reflection on one's positionality in society and to ensure the responsibility for inclusion is shared among educators. As Arndt (2018) asserts, elevating attention to teachers' identities and background offers hope for more open attitudes to diversity and difference with an energised spirit of thoughtfulness, criticality, and transformation in school workforces.

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Appendix A.

Table 2: Overview of Empirical Papers Reviewed

	Inquiry Area	Paper	Methods	Location
1	Teachers' multicultural attitudes and beliefs	Abacioglu et al, 2022	data from 3006 in-service primary and secondary public-school teachers in New South Wales, Australia from a state-wide survey of public school teachers	NSW, Aust.
2	LGBTIQA+ bias-based workplace discrimination	Ullman, J., & Smith, M. (2018).	a sequential mixed-methods approach combining a state-wide online survey (N=1036). with in-depth, semi-structured interviews (N=16)	NSW, Aust.
3	Perceptions of the value of Aboriginal student-focussed programmes and discourses of Indigeneity	Weuffen et al, 2023	Interviews with n=22 non-indigenous teachers across n=3 secondary school sites in New South Wales schools with a population of 25% or greater students who are Aboriginal	NSW, Aust.
4	Australian and Torres Strait Islander peoples' cultural safety, inclusion, exclusion and racism	Diversity Council Australia/ Jumbunna Institute (2020)	Survey of 1,033 employed Aboriginal and/or Torres Strait Islander people in the workplace	Aust.
5	Indigenous teacher experience and racism	Hogarth (2019)	Storying approach of author's experience as an Aboriginal teacher in rural schools in Queensland	Aust.

	Inquiry Area	Paper	Methods	Location
6	Equity issues in ITE students	Burke & Whitty (2018)	Literature Review considering participation and retention of students in initial teacher education (ITE)	NSW, Aust. with Int.
7	Ethnicity, culture	Gould et al	Individual semi-structured interviews with 17 early childhood centre owners and leaders and focus groups with 8 qualified teachers using critical narrative inquiry.	Aotearoa, NZ
8	Attracting and retaining diverse kaiako (teachers) to ECE	Griffiths et al 2022	233 responses from ECE teachers to a questionnaire containing four open-ended questions and using a qualitative story-telling methodology	Aotearoa, NZ
9	Intersectional racism	Bradbury et al, 2022	Qualitative semi-structured interviews with 24 primary and secondary teachers, (18 women and 6 men), including early career and experienced teachers	UK
10	Under-represented (UR) groups	Woodfine & Warner, 2022	Qualitative video stories from 12 early career primary teachers from UR groups including, teachers with a disability, LGBT teachers, male teachers, and BAME teachers	UK
11	Retention of principals in disadvantaged schools	Towers (2020)	In-depth interviews with six current and retired head teachers from disadvantaged schools	UK
12	Asian American and Pacific Islander Teachers	Kim & Cooc 2020	Synthesis of 37 peer-reviewed research publications on AAPI teachers' experiences and contributions to diversity and social justice.	US

	Inquiry Area	Paper	Methods	Location
13	Ability, race, gender, sexuality, and other identity markers	Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020	Literature review	US
14	Minority group teachers, culture	Nevarez et al, 2019	Literature review	US
15	Race	Marom, 2019	Six one-on-one, semi-structured interviews with Aboriginal graduates of a Canadian Indigenous Teacher Education Program.	Canada
16	Experiences of two Indigenous teachers	Oloo & Kiramba (2019)	interviews as conversations with two Indigenous teachers	Canada
17	LBTQ educators as activists	Wells, 2017	Interviews with four LGBT teachers using critically queer ethnographic research	Canada
18	Teachers with a disability	Guerini & Sorrentino, 2022	Structured online interviews with 20 teachers in kindergarten and primary schools. There were 14 who had a learning, physical or sensory disability and six were colleagues of teachers with a disability.	Italy
19	Interethnic hierarchies: Teachers' diversity approaches & students' attitudes	Schwarzenthal et al 2023	Survey of 547 teachers, coupled with large-scale longitudinal surveys from 1287 Belgium majority students and 696 Turkish- or Moroccan- origin minority students in 64 Belgium schools to consider how teachers' approaches to student diversity impacted student attitudes	Belgium

	Inquiry Area	Paper	Methods	Location
20	Intercultural competence	Okken et al, 2022	cross-sectional survey among 155 Dutch primary school	The Netherlands
21	Inclusion of under-represented groups	Keane et al, 2022	Qualitative study compiling data from interviews, an online questionnaire, and an online focus group with 21 Irish pre-service teachers	Ireland
22	Attitudes towards diversity	Crisol-Moya et al, 2023	73 future mathematics teachers' perceptions of diversity training received during ITE and attitudes towards diversity	Spain
23	Disadvantaged background	Correia et al, 2022	Survey of 1112 vulnerable Year 11 and 12 students for intentions to teach	Chile
24	Equity, inclusion, and social justice	Larochelle-Audet, et al (2019)	Comparative policy analysis of international principal standards' attention to social diversity	Intl.
25	Staff diversity and inclusion culture and climate (multiple industries)	Hwang & Hopkins (2015)	Statistical modelling of relationships to staff outcomes (e.g. intention to leave)	US
26	Inclusion of LGBT employees – workplace support (multiple industries)	Webster et al. (2018)	Meta-analysis	Intl.
27	Predictors of turnover (healthcare setting)	Kim & Kim (2021)	Meta-analysis	South Korea

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