

**PRE-SERVICE TEACHER PERCEPTIONS OF WHITE PRIVILEGE IN A TWO-  
YEAR TEACHER EDUCATION PROGRAM**

By

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## TABLE OF CONTENTS

Declaration.....	3
Acknowledgements.....	4
Abstract.....	5
Chapter 1: Introduction and Rationale.....	6
1.1 Purpose .....	7
1.2 Research Questions.....	7
1.3 Assumptions.....	8
1.4 Definition of Terms.....	8
1.5 Theoretical Framework and Conceptions: Critical Whiteness Studies.....	9
Chapter 2: Review of Empirical and Theoretical Literature.....	12
2.1 Immigration Policies as the Foundation for White Privilege in Canada.....	12
2.2 White Privilege in Educational Settings.....	14
2.3 The Role of Whiteness in Teacher Education Programs.....	16
2.4 Racial Relations amongst Pre-Service Teachers.....	18
2.5 Preparing Pre-Service Teachers for Teaching in Diverse Settings.....	20
2.6 Multicultural Teacher Education.....	23
Conclusion.....	24
Chapter 3:	
Methodology.....	26
3.1 Personal and Cultural Introduction.....	26
3.2 Research Design.....	27
3.3 Participant Selection.....	29
3.4 Data Collection.....	31
3.5 Data Analysis.....	33
3.6 Scope and Limitations.....	35
3.7 Ethical Considerations.....	36
Chapter 4: Findings.....	38
4.1 Pre-service Teachers' Perceptions of White Privilege.....	38
4.2 Teacher Preparation and Understanding of White Privilege.....	43
4.3 Diversity and White Privilege.....	47
4.4 Brief Summary of Findings.....	54
Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion.....	55
Discussion.....	55
Conclusion.....	72
References.....	76
Appendices	
Appendix A Interview Questions.....	81
Appendix B Consent Form.....	82
Appendix C Survey Monkey Questions.....	83
Appendix D Cover Letter.....	84
Appendix E Recruitment Poster .....	85
Appendix F Dean Email.....	86

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### **Abstract**

The purpose of this study was to examine pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege in a two-year teacher education program. This study employed a qualitative approach and interviews were utilized as the primary form of data collection. The participants of this study consisted of four pre-service teachers enrolled in Lakehead University's two-year consecutive Bachelor of Education program at the Orillia campus. The study was examined through the theoretical framework of Critical Whiteness Studies with the purpose of better preparing pre-service teachers for teaching in diverse educational settings. The study ultimately revealed that participants held a thorough understanding of White privilege and acknowledged the existence of their own privileges. It was found, however, that this was largely due to the participant's own lived experiences and not entirely through their experiences in their teacher education program.

*Key Terms: Whiteness, Privilege, Pre-Service Teachers, Diversity, Multiculturalism, Racial Relations, Otherness, Critical Whiteness Studies, Consecutive Bachelor of Education*

## **Chapter 1: Introduction to the Research Problem and Rationale**

While the student population is becoming increasingly diverse, the next generation preparing to teach them is not reflective of such diversity (Marx, 2004). The majority of pre-service teachers are White and possess ideologies that are reflective of those held by the dominant race (Marx, 2004; Solomon, Daniel & Campbell, 2005). These ideologies surrounding notions of race and ethnicity often remain unquestioned, unchallenged and undiscussed and as a result become viewed by pre-service teachers as the norm (Amos, 2010; Buchanan, 2015; Levine-Rasky, 2000; McIntyre, 1997). Such ideologies become highly problematic as they are continually perpetuated within the education system and due to their status as a norm, remain largely invisible (Marx, 2004). One area of particular concern is White privilege. Pre-service teachers often fail to recognize the privileges that are granted to them by their race and thus struggle to understand the powerful role of Self they hold in relation to their racially diverse students (Aveling, 2006; McIntosh, 1997). Furthermore, pre-service teachers are not prepared to face diversity in their schools because they take their privileges for granted (Marx, 2004; Solomon et al., 2005). Pre-service teacher denial, or potential blindness to the existence of their privileges prevents them from implementing culturally responsive pedagogies that are reflective of the diversity of their students. (Santoro & Allard, 2005; Santoro, 2009). Thus it becomes important to better understand the manner in which pre-service teachers perceive White privilege so that these notions can be explored and challenged within teacher education programs. The inclusion of opportunities in teacher education programs for pre-service teachers to critically reflect on their racial identities and to

investigate dominant racial ideologies will better prepare students for the ethnically diverse environments that they will teach in (Milner, 2003).

### **1.1 Purpose**

Studies have focused on pre-service teachers' perspectives of White privilege (Adair, 2008; Hill-Jackson, 2007; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Marx, 2004; Solomon et al., 2005) but none have done so within a two-year teacher education program in Ontario. Furthermore the study is significant as it examines a small rural post-secondary institution whereas the majority of existing studies focused on candidates' enrolled in large urban post-secondary institutions. This study seeks to build onto existing work by examining pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege within a two-year Bachelor of Education program at the Lakehead University Orillia campus. The study investigated how pre-service teacher perceptions of Whiteness and White Privilege influenced their role as prospective teachers. Furthermore, the teacher education program was also examined to greater understand what can be done to ensure that pre-service teachers are better prepared to work in multicultural environments. This work contributes to the field of study by offering suggestions on how the two-year Bachelor of Education program can be revitalized to include more information on teaching in diverse settings and ultimately to better prepare their students for these environments.

### **1.2 Research Questions**

This study explored the following interconnected questions:

- How do pre-service teachers in a two-year teacher education program perceive White privilege?
- How do pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege influence their role as prospective teachers?

- How do teacher pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege influence their preparedness to teach in diverse settings?

### 1.3 Assumptions

This study makes the following assumptions in regards to this topic. These assumptions are based on the analysis of existing literature discussed in the literature review.

- Pre-service teachers are not adequately prepared to teach in racially diverse settings
- White pre-service teachers are privileged by being White
- White pre-service teachers are unaware of the privileges granted to them by their Whiteness
- Pre-service teachers are unable to relate to diverse student populations as a result of the invisibility of their privileges

### 1.4 Definition of Terms

**Whiteness:** a social construction associated with perceived White racial appearance and the resulting privileges

**Privilege:** the benefits granted to an individual that place them at an advantage within society. Privilege in this study refers to the notion of White privilege: privileges granted to an individual based on their perceived Whiteness, often invisible due to their normalcy

**Pre-Service Teachers:** Students enrolled in a professional Bachelor of Education program, have not yet met the requirements to obtain their degree but are in the process of doing so

**Diversity:** the existence of a variety of racial and ethnic populations



**Multiculturalism:** an ideology that embraces and promotes acceptance of a variety of cultures

**Racial Relations:** issues surrounding race, racism and ethnicity and the manner in which they influence relationships amongst individuals and groups. This study focuses specifically on the racial relations amongst pre-service teachers and their students

**Otherness:** the process by which one is subjected to disempowerment by someone with greater authority

**Critical Whiteness Studies:** an academic area of study that aims to recognize and disrupt dominant racial ideologies and seeks to interrogate Whiteness

**Consecutive Bachelor of Education:** a Bachelor of Education degree that is obtained separately from an undergraduate degree

### **1.5 Theoretical Frameworks and Conceptions: Critical Whiteness Studies**

This study utilizes the theoretical framework of Critical Whiteness Studies. This framework was employed as it was the theoretical framework most commonly used throughout the literature examined (Aveling, 2006; Evan-Winters & Hoff, 2011; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Marx, 2004; Mueller & O'Connor, 2007; Pennington, 2007; Solomon et al., 2005). Critical Whiteness Studies, otherwise referred to as Whiteness studies seek to critically investigate issues pertaining to Whiteness within society (Kubota & Lin, 2009). According to Kubota and Lin (2009) Critical Whiteness studies are concerned with “the social construction of Whiteness, White privilege, and the normative yet invisible nature of Whiteness observed in everyday practices and discourse” (pp. 10). Early evidence of

Critical Whiteness Studies is seen within the works of W.E.B. Du Bois who recognized the role skin colour played in the social hierarchy of society (Applebaum, 2016). Other prominent theorists in the field include: Cheryl Harris, whom views whiteness as a materialistic privilege belonging to Whites; Toni Morrison, who recognizes Whiteness as the norm to which all others are compared to; and Richard Dyer whose work stresses the need to make Whiteness visible (Applebaum, 2016). The purpose of studies within this field is to recognize, disrupt and challenge dominant racial discourses surrounding Whiteness (Leonardo, 2002). This theoretical framework is closely connected to Critical Race Theory, from which it first emerged (Delgado & Stefancic, 1997). The main difference between these two frameworks, however, is that Critical Race Theory focuses on race and power through varying perspectives whereas Critical Whiteness Studies examines such topics from and with an emphasis on the perspective of Whiteness. Levine-Rasky (2000) notes that in relation to teacher education programs, “critical Whiteness studies reflect the realization that the failure of equity education initiatives is attributable to a misidentification of change object” (p. 263). Thus, studies in this area are largely concerned with exploring why teacher education programs are failing to prepare pre-service teachers for teaching in diverse settings and also the role the programs play in perpetuating dominant racial ideologies. The ultimate goal of studies in this field utilizing this particular framework is to establish a system of teacher education that supports a multicultural education framework (Levine-Rasky, 2000). It is important nevertheless to recognize the distinction between Anti-Racist Education and Critical Whiteness Studies. According to Kivel (1996) Anti-Racist Education seeks to understand the role racism plays within the education system with the goal of eliminating racism. In comparison, to

Critical Whiteness Studies, Anti-Racist Education shares some similarities in that both seek to challenge and disrupt dominant racial ideologies. Critical Whiteness Studies, however, does not focus explicitly on the elimination of racist ideologies but rather on bringing awareness to dominant discourses of Whiteness.

## **Chapter 2: Review of Empirical and Theoretical Literature**

Through an analysis of literature surrounding the study of White privilege and pre-service teachers, several common themes emerged. As White privilege is closely connected to the topics of race and racism, many of these themes fit under the broad spectrum of educational studies in race and ethnicity. Thus, the literature examined was limited to journals and books focused specifically on pre-service teachers and teacher education programs. This literature review will begin with an overview of White privilege in educational settings, which includes pre-service teachers' experiences, as students in post-secondary and in their role as pre-service teachers. The review will then extend its analysis to explore the role that Whiteness plays in teacher education programs. Furthermore, racial relations amongst pre-service teachers with a focus on privileged positions and otherness will be discussed. The significance of preparing pre-service teachers to teach in diverse settings will then be addressed followed by a discussion on the need to establish a multicultural teacher education framework. Lastly, this review will explore the field of Critical Whiteness Studies and the perspective in which it views this particular area of study.

### **2.1 Immigration Policies as the Foundation for White Privilege in Canada**

Prior to exploring White privilege in educational settings, it is first important to examine the area from which such privileges emerge to understand how dominant racial ideologies are perpetuated in Canadian society. Historically, there has been a tendency within Canada to express favouritism towards those of the White race (Kruger, Korenic, & Mulder, 2004). One such area that this ideology of White favouritism is deeply rooted

is within immigration policies (Kruger et al., 2004). While Canadians are often praised for their ability to embrace multiculturalism, present policies seem to reflect an immigrant population that is far from diverse (Kruger et al., 2004). Indeed, current and past policies are noted as being highly selective (Kruger et al., 2004). While there has been a shift from the discriminatory policies that were in place prior to 1967, that selected immigrants from preferred regions, often comprised of Western European countries or those with a high population of Whites, current policies still display evidence of racial privilege (Kruger et al., 2004). Such privileges are noted by Kruger et al. (2004) whom, in reference to Biles & Ibrahim (2002) observe that “immigrants from many cultural backgrounds, once viewed as contributors to the Canadian ‘mosaic,’ are now portrayed negatively, because of their race or religion or both” (p. 2). The negative attitudes associated with particular immigrant groups are largely a result of a post-9/11 society that portrays these groups as a threat to Canadian society (Kruger et al., 2004). While Canada allows some of these groups to immigrate, the numbers are disproportionate in relation to countries that are viewed as preferred (Kruger et al., 2004). Furthermore, evidence of privilege is apparent through immigration statistics, which highlight the difficulties immigrants face in obtaining quality employment in Canada. Jobs for new immigrants are limited and the jobs that are available are commonly below their skill level (Reitz, 2005). In fact, as a result of such struggles, many live well beneath the poverty line (Kazemipur & Halli, 2000). According to Reitz (2005) “...foreign educated immigrants earned \$2.4 billion less than native-born Canadians with formally comparable skills because they worked in occupations that were below their skill levels” (p. 3). Interestingly, however, poverty is much more prominent amongst minority immigrants. Kazemipur & Halli

(2000) observe that the poverty rate for immigrant families of racialized backgrounds is double that of those from European origins. There also appears to be an apparent favouritism towards the hiring of White workers. While Canadian governments, both federal and provincial, have guidelines in place for inclusive hiring practices, such policies are often overlooked (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2008). Minority immigrants become a desired and vulnerable yet necessary component within the Canadian job market to fill low-skill jobs (Reitz, 2005). Canadian employers seemingly take advantage of already marginalized immigrants in favour of native workers (Reitz, 2005). Thus while Canada may be depicted as a multicultural society, it is clear through immigration policies and employment practices that there is a desire to maintain a society that is reflective of dominant racial ideologies and to perpetuate ideologies that favour Whiteness (Kruger et al., 2004).

## **2.2 White Privilege in Educational Settings**

White privilege is essentially the power and prestige received by Whites within society as a result of their perceived Whiteness. The term is summarized by Delgado and Stefancic (1997) as "...the invisible bundle of expectations and courtesies that go along with membership in the dominant race" (pp. xvii). According to McIntosh (1990) these benefits are comprised of minuscule events often overlooked such as the ability to purchase bandages in the correct skin tone to complex issues that largely remain unchallenged such as the disproportionate number of minorities in positions of power. Solomon et al. (2005) recognize that these privileges are "...unearned and unmeritocratic" (p. 148). Thus, these privileges are granted solely on one's perceived

membership to the dominant racial group. Membership is extremely complex as White, according to Dyer (1993) is viewed as “colourless [and] multicoloured” (p. 143). In relation to education, White privilege enables members of the dominant race to receive particular advantages within the educational system. These discourses of power and privilege are present at the macro- and micro-level. They are embedded into teacher education programs, hiring procedures and even within the curriculum itself (Mackie, 2003; Picower, 2009). The presence of such privilege leads to the establishment of a racial hierarchy that accredits particular prestige to White students while largely excluding racial minorities (Solomon et al., 2005). Indeed, Sleeter (2004) recognizes that “teachers bring to the profession perspectives about what race means, which they construct mainly on the basis of their life experiences and vested interests” (p. 35). When these perspectives are reflective of dominant racial ideologies, teachers play a first-hand role in the reproduction of the racial hierarchy within their schools and the education system (Sleeter, 2004). Pre-service teachers are in an interesting position in that they have the ability to be affected by this system of privilege as students and also to perpetuate it as educators (Marx, 2004). It is often recognized, however, that within both of these positions, those privileged by their race are often blind to the actual existence of their privileges. Such is evidenced in McIntosh (1990), in which she famously coined these privileges as invisible and seeks to make them apparent. The invisibility of White privilege is largely considered a result of the ‘racialized culture’ present within society and its social systems – including education, that views and upholds White as the norm (Kubota & Lin, 2009). Thus, it is not that White pre-service teachers are necessarily in denial of their privileges but rather that they do not have the ability to recognize them as

a result of their normalcy in society (Marx, 2004; Wildman, 1996). In fact, Marx (cited in Kubota & Lin, 2009) acknowledges “educators revealing deficit thinking and White racial supremacy do not necessarily- or even consciously- do this on purpose” (pp. 88). The privileges granted to members of the dominant race have thus become so normalized that it is often only those looking in from an outsider perspective (those who are not privileged by their race) that have the ability to recognize their existence. This becomes extremely problematic in relation to teacher education, as those who are privileged in their own educational environment will continue to enact these dominant ideologies within their future classrooms without often being consciously aware of it (Marx, 2004). When these ideologies and notions of privilege remain unrecognized, they continue to go unchallenged and thus are reproduced within the education system (Marx, 2004; Solomon et al., 2005). This enables a seemingly endless cycle to occur which promotes an education system that condones White privilege through its’ failure to address and challenge it.

### **2.3 The Role of Whiteness in Teacher Education Programs**

Whiteness is not concrete; rather it is a way of thinking. According to Dlamini (2002) Whiteness is a set of “beliefs, policies and practices (often unarticulated) that enable Whites to maintain power” (Dlamini, 2002, p. 58). Whiteness differs from White in that White is a colour of skin while Whiteness is largely considered a social construction (Aveling, 2006; Kivel, 1996). There is no clear distinction of what Whiteness entails. Rather Estable, Meyer and Pon (1996) recognize it as “a dominant cultural space with the purpose to keep others on the margin” (p. 21). Whiteness thus



serves as a way to enact and maintain dominant racial ideologies within society through the process of exclusion (Estable, Meyer & Pon, 1996). In connection to teacher education programs, Whiteness poses numerous issues. For one, teacher education programs serve to perpetuate ideologies of Whiteness. This is done through the overrepresentation of White faculty members and students (Adair, 2008; Solomon et al., 2005). Neither of these groups are reflective of the population they are preparing to teach (Solomon et al., 2005). A 2002 study by the National Centre for Education Statistics revealed that 83.5% of elementary teachers and 85.9% of secondary teachers were White. This is in stark contrast to the 37.5% of students whom identified as racial minorities (Marx, 2004; NCES, 2002). While these statistics reflect in-service educators, Marx (2004) notes, “the characteristics of teacher education students largely mirror the characteristics of practicing teachers” (p. 31). Thus while the student population is becoming increasingly diverse, teacher education programs are failing to represent this population within the next generation of teachers (Marx, 2004). Furthermore, dominant ideologies of Whiteness are perpetuated through the course offerings within teacher education programs. These courses are often founded on the belief that power within the education system lies within discourses of Whiteness (Levine-Rasky, 2000). Secondly, teacher education programs largely enable White pre-service teacher’s notions of Whiteness to remain unchallenged (Levine-Rasky, 2000). McIntyre (1997) observed that pre-service teachers were hesitant to address topics pertaining to Whiteness. Indeed, Mackie (2003) acknowledges that it is “uncomfortable work” (p. 23). Pre-service teachers, however, often sought to distance themselves from these topics, as they were deemed inappropriate and often resulted in controversy (Amos, 2010; Buchanan, 2015;

McIntyre, 1997). Levine-Rasky (2000) discovered that feelings of “resistance, denial, hostility, ignorance, and defensiveness” towards Whiteness were common amongst her analysis of studies conducted on pre-service teachers (p. 265). Despite these common emotions, however, Levine-Rasky (2000) observed two distinct attitudes amongst these pre-service teacher’s perceptions of Whiteness. Some students believed that their Whiteness placed them at a disadvantage in their role as a pre-service teacher, while others perceived it as advantageous (Levine-Rasky, 2000). The perceived advantages were associated with the privileges of being White while the disadvantages were in relation to their ability to interact with racialized students (Levine-Rasky, 2000). Regardless of their attitudes, however, Levine-Rasky (2000) notes that White pre-service teachers are in a difficult position in that they “need to maintain their power yet negotiate their vulnerability’s when they hear criticisms of White educator’s activities” (p. 269). This essentially imposes a double standard on pre-service teachers; they must enact dominant ideologies of Whiteness but also consciously be aware of their own racialized identities.

#### **2.4 Racial Relations Amongst Pre-Service Teachers**

A key issue within teacher education programs is addressing the racial relations that exist amongst pre-service teachers. These relations are often based on the dichotomy of the Self and Other (Aveling, 2006; Santoro, 2009). An emphasis is placed on pre-service teachers’ ability to negotiate their own racial identity and also their identity in the context of their students and peers. Studies within this field aim to enable White pre-service teachers to recognize their role as Self and the powerful role they play in

‘othering.’ Many pre-service teachers, however, fail to recognize their power position or choose to dissociate from racism and ‘othering’ as their problem (Aveling, 2006).

Aveling (2006) recognizes that White pre-service teacher’s “...conceptualize their identity in terms of being non-racialized and at the same time non-racist” (p. 261).

Indeed, Santoro (2009) also observes that pre-service teachers possess limited knowledge about the ‘ethnic other’ and ‘ethnic self’ and thus, have “limited understandings of how their own identities are constituted through, and by, ethnicity” (p. 33). In this sense,

White pre-service teachers often fail to recognize their Whiteness as their race. Rather their Whiteness is normalized to the extent that it does not need to be identified. Aveling (2006) asserts that White pre-service teachers have developed the ability to “racialize the

Other but not (their) White selves” (p. 262). Thus, it is not that they do not have the ability to recognize the overwhelming presence of race but rather that they struggle to

negotiate their identity in a racialized environment. Pennington’s (2007) work offers similar findings noting that the identities held by White pre-service teachers in the study were “designed to maintain [their] position of power” and “mimicked the roles played in the larger society” (p. 99). Thus, pre-service teachers’ racial relations with their students

can be considered reflective of the racial hierarchy in society. Pre-service teachers hold high positions of authority while their students of multicultural backgrounds lack

empowerment and are vulnerable to othering (Pennington, 2007). Further, Pennington

(2007) recognizes many issues resulting from this Self and Other relationship. White pre-service teachers were found to view their ethnically diverse students as in need of

rescuing similar to colonial relations (Pennington, 2007). The pre-service teachers in the study “intervened and tried to repair and replace [the students] lives with what [the pre-

service teachers] perceived they needed” (Pennington, 2007, p. 99). In doing so, the pre-service teachers stripped their students of power by imposing White cultural norms onto them (Pennington, 2007). This only further marginalized the students and placed them deeper in the role of other. Thus it becomes apparent that racial relations amongst pre-service teachers are complex but that White pre-service teachers hold the position of Self and through this, their relations are reflective of society’s larger racial hierarchy (Aveling, 2006; Pennington, 2007; Santoro, 2009).

### **2.5 Preparing Pre-service Teachers for Teaching in Diverse Settings**

While the student population is becoming increasingly diverse, pre-service teachers in teacher education programs are not representative of the students they are preparing to teach (Hill-Jackson, 2007; Marx, 2004; Milner, 2006; Santoro & Allard, 2005). Hill-Jackson (2007) recognizes that the student teacher population is “becoming more homogenous” while pre-service teachers “are simply unconscious and apathetic about matters of diversity” due to limited lived experiences (p. 29). While pre-service teachers are often required to partake in courses on diversity in education, many are resistant to the information as it contradicts their own sense of identity and reality (Hill-Jackson, 2007). There is a seemingly large disconnect between the lives of pre-service teachers and their students (Hill-Jackson, 2007; McFallis & Cobb-Roberts, 2001). In order to bridge this gap, pre-service teachers must learn to think critically about their own racialized identities and the manner in which it affects their teaching pedagogies (Hill-Jackson, 2007; Marx, 2004; Solomon et al., 2005). Hill-Jackson (2007) poses a three-step

framework aimed to address this issue and to develop future educators who are critically conscious of race and ethnic relations.

The first step within the framework is the unconscious stage. During this stage, educators are blind to the existence of their privileges and the experiences faced by those other than their own race (Hill-Jackson, 2007). Hill-Jackson (2007) notes “this is a very stable or static level because the White pre-service teacher’s worldviews remain unwavering” (p. 30). While they may be exposed to beliefs that contradict their own, they are hesitant to believe them and are often in denial (Hill-Jackson, 2007). They also struggle to understand the purpose of learning about issues pertaining to race and ethnicity and the need to establish a multicultural education framework (Hill-Jackson, 2007). Furthermore, the views they hold are narrow-minded and based on “the belief that the world operates a certain way and [that] they can have no real impact on changing the world through their awareness or participation in cultural diversity issues” (Hill-Jackson, 2007, p. 30). In failing to learn and acknowledge the existence of diversity in school environments, pre-service teachers perpetuate dominant ideologies of race founded on the basis of stereotypes (Hill-Jackson, 2007).

The next stage within the framework enables pre-service teachers to become more critically aware of the diversity that exists within school environments (Hill-Jackson, 2007). In this stage, known as the responsive stage, pre-service teachers “are introduced to the cultures of others and become curious not totally accepting as it relates to the new knowledge about other cultures” (Hill-Jackson, 2007, p. 31). This stage differs in relation to the previous in that pre-service teachers shift from a narrow-minded to an open-minded approach to learning about other cultures (Hill-Jackson, 2007). While pre-

service teachers express greater consciousness, this is a particularly difficult stage. It is during this phase that their views towards diversity and their own racial identities become challenged and disrupted (Hill-Jackson, 2007). Some pre-service teachers may express guilt or resentment in regards to their previous denial while others will resort back to their comfort zone where they choose to not further engage with such issues (Hill-Jackson, 2007).

The third and final stage of the framework is the critical consciousness stage (Hill-Jackson, 2007). Due to its complexity, many pre-service teachers fail to ever reach this stage (Hill-Jackson, 2007). During this stage “the pre-service teacher is willing to examine the world and often does so by investigating the world according to his or her own living reality” (Hill-Jackson, 2007, p. 33). They begin to accept their privileges, acknowledge the existence of diversity and express sincere interest in learning about cultures different from their own (Hill-Jackson, 2007). Furthermore, they aim to critically engage with issues pertaining to race and ethnicity and to challenge and disrupt dominant racial ideologies (Hill-Jackson, 2007). The process of reaching this final stage, however, requires a great deal of time for pre-service teachers to achieve and cannot be achieved by simply taking one course within the field of race and ethnic relations. While education plays a role in this stage, pre-service teachers must also accept their personal responsibility to rethink their pedagogical practices in order to become fully and critically conscious in diverse environments (Hill-Jackson, 2007).

## 2.6 Multicultural Teacher Education

Literature on the topics of White privilege and Whiteness within teacher education programs often recommend the implementation of a multicultural teacher education framework to combat issues of privilege and to develop a system founded on equity (Bloom, Peters, Margolin & Fragnoli, 2015; Milner, 2006; Mueller & O'Connor, 2007; Santoro & Allard, 2005). In order to develop educators who are adequately prepared to teach in multicultural settings, teacher education programs must first provide pre-service teachers with opportunities to think critically about their own racial identities (Milner, 2003; Santoro & Allard, 2005). Santoro & Allard (2005) recognize that “being asked to reflect on their own identities was a powerful act and an important starting point for examining difference within educational contexts” (p. 872). Milner (2003) suggests that such topics can be addressed through the implementation of critically engaged dialogue. This approach “allows teachers and students to connect to each other and the lessons by acknowledging their differences [and] discussing individual lived experiences” (Milner, 2003, p. 201). By deepening their understanding of their own racial identity and the associated privileges, pre-service teachers will be able to greater understand how their identities differs in relation to those of their students. This exploration of identity is an essential step in the development of a multicultural teacher education framework. Santoro & Allard (2005), also note, however, that in order to be effective, teacher education programs must also “examine how class discrimination and/or racism operate to privilege some positions and silence others” (p. 872). Such discussions will enable candidates to have a deepened understanding of the issues that affect diverse student populations. While these topics must be discussed, Bloom et al.

(2015) also suggest that pre-service teachers should be provided with opportunities to work in diverse settings. Such opportunities will allow pre-service teachers to develop lived-experiences within diverse settings, on which they will be able to critically reflect (Bloom et al., 2005). These experiences will also allow pre-service teachers to analyze their identity in relation to those of their students (Bloom et al., 2005). By understanding issues of race, ethnicity, racism and privilege through both discussions and lived experiences, pre-service teachers will develop a greater understanding of their students, which will ultimately enable them to develop culturally responsive teaching pedagogies that embrace multiculturalism and diversity (Santoro & Allard, 2005; Santoro, 2009).

Through the literature examined, it becomes apparent that the topics of Whiteness and White privilege within teacher education programs are often examined in relation to one another (Solomon et al., 2005). Through the perspective of Critical Whiteness Studies, research recognizes that teacher education programs are failing to adequately prepare pre-service teachers for the diverse population of students they will teach (Levine-Rasky, 2000). Notions of race and ethnicity often remain undiscussed within these programs (Amos, 2010; Buchanan, 2015; Levine-Rasky, 2000; McIntyre, 1997). Thus, pre-service teachers often struggle to interpret their own racial identity and remain blind to the existence of privileges granted by their Whiteness (Aveling, 2006). As such, dominant ideologies of Whiteness continue to be perpetuated within the education system as they are largely unacknowledged and thus remain unchallenged. In order to prepare pre-service teachers for the diverse settings they will teach in, teacher education programs must offer opportunities for pre-service teachers to critically engaged



with topics surrounding race, Whiteness and privilege (Milner, 2003; Santoro & Allard, 2005). This can be achieved through both in-class discussions and also through lived-experiences within multicultural classrooms (Bloom et al., 2005; Milner, 2003; Santoro & Allard, 2005). To develop an education system founded on equity, educators must be able to use culturally responsive pedagogies and be conscious of how their own identities affect their teaching practices (Santoro & Allard, 2005; Santoro, 2009). Therefore it becomes apparent that teacher education programs must adapt their curriculums to include greater opportunities for the examination of topics that prevent the development of equitable education systems founded on the framework of multiculturalism.

## Chapter 3: Methodology

### 3.1 Personal and Cultural Introduction

As a White woman conducting a study on White privilege I believe that it is important to acknowledge and discuss my race and the granted privileges and ideologies associated with it. I grew up in a rural town with very limited racial diversity. In fact, during my entire elementary and secondary schooling, there was only ever one racial minority in my class and that was the same student throughout all those years. Thus, my understanding of races other than my own was largely based on what I learned from media.

That being the case, I held many stereotypical views. Needless to say, I grew up in an environment that condoned White privilege and I was largely unaware of its' existence. It was not until my second-year of university when a professor assigned McIntosh's (1997) *Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* that I first began to question my Whiteness. At first it was unsettling which quickly turned into feelings of anger and resentment. I felt naïve that I had been privileged all my life and was not even aware of it. The more I read about White privilege, the more I became aware and the more I started to see evidence of privilege in my everyday life. I became intrigued by this phenomenon that was seemingly invisible throughout the vast majority of my life. White privilege continued to have an immense impact on my life but as my awareness grew, a desire to disrupt, challenge and greater understand dominant racial ideologies developed.

In my role as an educator, I have seen the immense impact that White privilege plays in the school environment. I vividly remember assigning a group of students a mystery in which they had to determine which suspect committed the crime. There were

two suspects: a White male and a black male. An overwhelming number of students selected the black male as the criminal even though no evidence was provided. When asked why, many students simply said it was because of his skin colour. It became apparent that despite strides towards equality, discrimination, racism and privilege were still very much present in our education system and in the minds of students. Thus, I believe that it becomes important to ensure that future generations of educators are thoroughly educated about such topics. If it were not for my second-year professor, I would likely not be aware of my privileges and the dominant racial ideologies I possess. I would be unconsciously passing these ideologies onto my students and only further complicating the issues of race that exist in our society. By acknowledging my identity and personal experiences in regards to race and privilege, I hope to eliminate some bias.

It is important to note, however, that Pennington (2007) acknowledges issues that may arise as a result of Whites studying the topic of Whiteness amongst other Whites. Pennington (2007) states, “we can become isolated and validated by the very views we are attempting to disengage” (p. 111). To eliminate bias, Pennington (2007) recommends having the work reviewed by people from various ethnic and cultural backgrounds to ensure that the perspective of the marginalized is not lost within the work. To eliminate this potential bias, I ensured that my study was examined by individuals of diverse backgrounds such as my thesis supervisor whom is of Ghanaian descent.

### **3.2 Research Design**

The research design selected for this study is qualitative. Qualitative research allows for an in-depth analysis of a specific experience within a particular environment

(Springer, 2009). This type of approach emphasizes words as the primary source of analysis (Springer, 2009). It is focused on “how people interpret their experiences, how they construct their worlds, and what meaning they attribute to their experiences” (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015, p. 6). In a general sense, this research is focused on understanding (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015). More specifically, this study utilized a phenomenological approach. According to Creswell (2013) phenomenological research “is a design of inquiry coming from philosophy and psychology in which the researcher describes the lived experiences of individuals about a phenomenon as described by participants” (p. 14). This study focused on the lived experiences of pre-service teachers in relation to their experiences and understanding of White privilege in the environment of their teacher education program. Phenomenology was selected as it allows for a deepened understanding of White privilege by exploring “the essence of the experiences for several individuals who have all experienced the phenomenon” (Creswell, 2013, p. 14). In addition, the research also drew on a Grounded Theory design. According to Creswell (2012) “*Grounded theory designs* are systematic qualitative procedures that researchers use to generate a general explanation (grounded in the views of participants, called a *grounded theory*) that explains a process, action of interaction among people” (p. 21) [Italics his]. Creswell (2012) further states “instead of studying a single group, you might examine a number of individuals who have all experienced an action, interaction or process” (p. 21). Such a sample is reflective of the participants within this study. The procedures involved in developing a grounded theory included the collection of interview data and categorization of information that explains participants’ responses that are grounded in the data (Creswell, 2012). This study therefore utilized interviews as the

primary method of data collection and focused on an in-depth analysis of the participants' responses.

Furthermore, the present study was conducted from the perspective of a transformative paradigm that deals with “issues of power and social justice, discrimination and oppression” (Creswell, 2013, p. 9). According to Creswell (2013) transformative paradigm “contains an action agenda for reform that may change lives of the participants, [and] the institutions in which individuals work or live” (p. 9). As the present study is focused on pre-service teachers' perspectives of White privilege as an issue of power, it is an appropriate fit within the transformative paradigm. Furthermore, one of the core purposes of the research was to revitalize teacher education programs so that pre-service teachers are adequately prepared to teach in diverse settings.

### **3.3 Participant Selection**

The participants for this study comprised pre-service teachers enrolled in the consecutive two-year Bachelor of Education program at the Lakehead University Heritage Place campus in Orillia. The number of participants was based on student availability and willingness to participate. Through the use of grounded theory, however, the small sample that was involved in the present study allowed for an in-depth analysis of participant responses (Creswell, 2012). Participation was open to pre-service teachers in both their first and second years of study. Furthermore, the study aimed to research an equal number of male and female participants with one of the interviewees identifying oneself as a minority and the remaining three as White. While the target sample was reached in regards to ethnicity, only one of the four participants was male. Thus, the

sample was not reflective of the initial target sample in regards to sex.

A purposive sample was utilized through instructor referral. Three instructors were contacted via email and asked to discuss the study and invite their pre-service teachers to participate. The instructors were provided with a PDF poster (Appendix E) that they could share amongst their pre-service teachers that stated the topic of the study and an email address that interested pre-service teachers could contact for further information and/or to participate. Furthermore, an email (Appendix F) was sent to the Dean of the Faculty of Education with a copy of the poster. This email and attached poster were then sent out in a mass email to all pre-service teachers in the program (147) at the Heritage Place campus. Interested participants who expressed interest via email were emailed a link to an online survey (Appendix C) that asked if they were currently enrolled in the two-year consecutive Bachelor of Education program, their gender and ethnic background. Some participants also accessed the survey through the mass email sent by the Dean and emails sent by their instructors. The participants were then selected based on the sample criteria. A stratified sample technique was utilized in which only a particular number of pre-service teachers who were male, female, White and/or a minority were selected. However, out of the ten survey responses, only four participants arranged for an interview. Thus, I was not as selective in my sample criteria due to the limited sample size.

The sample comprised four participants for which the following pseudonyms were assigned:

Linda: 37 year-old White Canadian female in her first-year of the program

Danielle: 25 year-old White Canadian female in her first-year of the program

Thomas: 42-year old Middle-Eastern male in his second-year of the program

Elizabeth: 25-year old White Canadian female in her first-year of the program

As per the Research Ethics Board, and as outlined in the Ethics application, participants were required to read a cover letter (Appendix D) informing them about the nature of the study, and to sign a consent form (Appendix B). The signed copies of these forms were then stored securely in the supervisor's office and will remain there for five years, following which they will be destroyed.

### **3.4 Data Collection**

Interviews were the primary source of data as consistent with phenomenology, grounded theory, and the transformative paradigm (Creswell, 2013; Levine-Rasky, 2000; Santoro & Allard, 2005). The interviews were conducted on site at the Lakehead University Orillia Heritage Place campus in private study rooms. A semi-structured interview approach was employed consisting of six open-ended and guiding questions. This approach enabled the researcher to have some control over the responses to ensure that they stayed on track but also provided opportunities for participants to convey their thoughts and feelings (Creswell, 2013). Questions were adjusted as necessary to allow participants to convey their feelings and thoughts. While the target sample size was 10-15 participants who would each be interviewed individually, a sample size of four was achieved. However, following the grounded theory approach as described by Creswell (2012), the sample size afforded the opportunity of generating “a general explanation grounded in the views of the participants” (Creswell, 2012, p. 21), that explains the

conceptions of White privilege.

Prior to the start of the interview, the participants were asked to consider and sign a consent form and were made aware of their ability to withdraw from the study without penalty. Semi-structured interviews were conducted comprised of open-ended and guiding questions (Appendix A). The participants were provided with a copy of the interview questions prior to the start of the interview. The participants were first asked a series of open-ended questions to express their unique views about White privilege. Sample questions included: How do you perceive White privilege?, how has your teacher education program influenced your understanding of White privilege? and, how has your teacher education program prepared you to teach in diverse settings?

After the participants answered the open-ended questions, the researcher asked a series of guiding questions that built upon the participant's previous responses. These questions served as an extension to dig deeper into participants' understanding of, and perspective on, White privilege. For example, one question included asking participants to discuss their experiences in formal schooling and outside of schooling that have influenced their views towards White privilege. These questions varied and differed amongst participants, as they were dependent upon their initial responses to the open-ended questions. Questions mainly inquired into participants' perceptions of White privilege and their readiness to teach in diverse settings (see Appendix A).

Interviews were audio-recorded via the Voice Memos app on the iPhone. The average interview length was thirty minutes with three to four pages of transcription. The overall purpose of the interviews was to understand whether pre-service teachers were aware of White privilege and also to explore their understanding and perspective on it.



Furthermore, the interviews sought to investigate how pre-service teachers' understanding of White privilege has influenced their ability and preparedness to teach in diverse settings. Lastly, the goal of the interviews was to provide an in-depth understanding of the similarities and differences amongst pre-service teachers' perspectives of White privilege. Following the completion of the interviews, the interviews were labeled with a number which corresponded to the pseudonyms assigned to the participants. They were then uploaded to a secured file and shared only with the supervisor of the thesis. The recorded communications were reviewed and transcribed into Word documents. The documents were coded and categorized for common themes and ideas amongst the responses. The coding was guided by ideas developed in the literature review and through themes derived from the questions. The three main code themes that emerged were: pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege, teacher preparation and understanding of White privilege, and diversity and White privilege. Relationships and conclusions were then drawn from the coded and categorized data based on similarities and differences in participants' responses.

The interviews were conducted face-to-face over the course of the month and were dependent on the availability of participants. Interviews were conducted mid-February to early March, 2017, to ensure that there was adequate time to complete them before the participants' second term teaching practicum began.

### **3.5 Data Analysis**

Following the completion of interviews, participants' responses were transcribed into Microsoft Word documents and reviewed for further analysis. The documents were

renamed and each interview was assigned a number rather than a name to ensure the confidentiality of participants. These numbers corresponded to the pseudonyms of the participants. For example, the document labeled as Interview 1 corresponded to Linda. The interviews were transcribed so that all information spoken by the researcher was stated as Researcher, and all information spoken by the participant was stated as Participant. The documents were then analyzed and categorized for common themes and ideas. These themes were documented as comments on the word documents. Furthermore, a separate word document of themes and quotes was kept. Categories of themes that emerged included:

- Perspective towards White privilege
- Level of preparedness to teach in diverse settings
- Experiences that have influenced understanding of White privilege

Following this, the documents were analyzed for main themes and these themes were then matched to specific responses. These themes were based off the ideas that emerged from the initial analysis of the responses and literature review, and were connected to the research questions. As an example, one theme included perspective towards White privilege which connects to the question ‘how do pre-service teachers in a two-year teacher education program perceive White privilege?’ These main themes were then broken down into sub-themes. Sub-themes for the above question included: acknowledgement of White privilege, limited awareness of White privilege in personal life and acknowledgement of White privilege as a result of lived experiences. The information was then analyzed by reading through the interviews and looking for similarities amongst the responses that connected to the research questions and by

checking the themes across the entire data set. As an example, any text that discussed participants' awareness of White privilege was labeled as perspective towards White privilege and then assigned a sub-theme such as denial of White privilege. Data were then further analyzed by grouping topics that related to one another to reduce the overall number of themes by looking for similarities amongst wording (Creswell, 2013). Finally, the data were interpreted and relationships and conclusions from the data were drawn.

### **3.6 Scope and Limitations**

The scope of this study was to examine the perspective from which pre-service teachers view White privilege within a two-year teacher education program. While this is an area that has been studied in the past in various forms, there is a dearth of literature on teacher candidates' perception of White privilege. Although this particular study poses some limitations with regards to the sample size that comprised pre-service teachers in one teacher education program, the study fulfills its purpose of a grounded theory about teacher candidates' perception of White privilege. The findings cannot be generalized to students attending two-year teacher education programs in Ontario, as the sample is not large enough to be considered representative of that particular population. Furthermore, the study was conducted in an environment with limited diversity, which may to an extent influence the results as pre-service teachers may have limited experience in regards to diversity and White privilege based on previous studies by Aveling (2006) and Santoro (2009). The topic of White privilege is also a sensitive issue that students may not feel comfortable discussing (Mackie, 2003). Thus, it is plausible that there may be some concerns in regards to the validity of participant responses. The present study is

not intended to report the findings with the purpose of ensuring reliability and validity as in dominant research paradigms (Agbo, 2001). However, the study took into consideration the credibility and trustworthiness of the data by utilizing the concept of Lather's (1986) face validity approach. Face validity is ensured by "recycling categories, emerging analysis, back through at least a subsample of respondents" (Lather, 1986, p. 78). After transcribing the interview data, the transcriptions were returned to the participants to review them for accuracy and make any changes that may be necessary (Agbo, 2001).

Furthermore, bias also may have played a role within this study. It is plausible that only those who felt comfortable discussing white privilege agreed to participate. Thus, the perspective of those who were uncomfortable discussing such topics was seemingly absent and a bias towards participants confident in discussing white privilege may be present. Nevertheless, this study was beneficial as it served as an exploratory study into two-year teacher education programs which have not previously been studied in relation to this topic. Furthermore, this study provided recommendations that were of particular value to the Lakehead University teacher education program.

### **3.7 Ethical Considerations**

Prior to the initiation of this study, ethics approval was granted by the institution. The process required the submission of an online application which identified the purpose of the study, any associated risks, documentation such as consent forms and cover letters, and a thorough description of the methodology. Both the author and supervisor were also required to complete an online tutorial for the ethical conduct on research involving

humans. Following the submission of the Research Ethics Board application, the application was reviewed by members at the granting institution and sent back for minor revisions before being given final ethics approval. As per the ethical guidelines, participants of the study were required to read a cover letter outlining the purpose of the study and any harms/risks associated with their participation. Furthermore, they were required to sign a consent form which indicated their willingness to participate and their right to withdraw from the study at any time. These consent forms were stored securely in the office of the supervisor and will be destroyed five years from the completion of the study.

## **Chapter 4: Findings**

There were three main perspectives that emerged from this study: pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege, teacher preparation and understanding of White privilege, and diversity and White privilege. The first, pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege, has to do with how pre-service teachers define and understand the concept of White privilege. The Second, teacher preparation and understanding of White privilege, focuses on how the Bachelor of Education program has influenced pre-service teachers' understanding of White privilege and the manner in which they perceive this privilege affecting their future practice as prospective teachers. Finally, diversity and White privilege describes pre-service teachers' viewpoints on how their program is preparing them to teach in diverse settings and to develop awareness of White privilege within educational settings.

In the next sections I present the findings of pre-service teacher's perspectives of White Privilege within a Two-year Teacher Education Program.

### **4.1 Pre-Service Teachers' Perceptions of White Privilege**

With regards to pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege, all of the participants acknowledged the existence of White privilege. All of the pre-service teachers in this study indicated that they are aware of the invisibility of White privilege and its existence as a societal norm. While many themes emerged, the idea of White privilege as the dominant way of thinking within society was the most prevalent amongst all responses. Thomas stated, when asked about his perception of White privilege that:

*Well, I see White privilege as, like, the predominant culture.*

Elizabeth continued on with the theme of White privilege as a cultural norm noting:

*Basically I see it as something that is essentially a social construct that we do not realize we have. So if you have White privilege it's just the unseen opportunities that you receive in society just based on your skin colour.*

All participants made a clear connection between skin colour and privilege. Furthermore, privilege was viewed as something that was granted to individuals and thus was not something which was earned. In this sense, White privilege was perceived by participants as a societal norm. Linda, a thirty-seven year-old White Canadian female in her first year of the program shared a similar definition to that of Elizabeth's noting:

*I think White privilege is really just skin colour we are born with and because of that it affords us just different privileges*

Linda's perspective differed from that of other participants, however, as she noted an increased awareness of the existence of White privilege and the manner in which it affects her personally. While all participants noted the superiority of Whiteness within society, it was Linda who offered a new perspective by questioning the privileges of her Whiteness in relation to other races:

*And I think now there is things that happen where I can say, oh I am not sure that would have happened if my skin colour were different.*

On the contrary, Danielle, a twenty-five year-old White Canadian female also in her first year of the program, recognized the existence of White privilege but unlike Linda, did not see it as having a personal effect on her. In fact, she suggested that her understanding of White privilege was limited due to her Whiteness. Her comments discussed a 'lens' through which she perceived the world. This lens, reflective of the dominant racial hierarchy, hints at the invisibility of White privilege. Nevertheless, Danielle moved

beyond the concept of White privilege as invisible, by recognizing that while White privilege does not affect her personally, it does affect those of other racial backgrounds.

She noted:

*I feel like, for me, it is probably biased, because I am White, but, um, for me I think it is something that I oversee, because I do not see it affecting me, whereas those around me, who are minority status would see it differently. So I think it is something that is probably heavily prevalent, especially in various parts of the community, such as: in school, and textbooks, and story books even, but, um, yeah. I do not feel that affected by it, but that is only because I have that lens that I see everything in.*

While the participants had varying responses on the manner in which they perceived White privilege as affecting them personally, they all noted that it does have an influence on their role as prospective teachers. Although similar in their perspectives of White privilege, the pre-service teachers in this study acknowledged the influence of White privilege within their role as prospective teachers but to varying degrees. Linda described the powerful role that she perceives White privilege as having on her future practice:

*I think being aware of it is the first step. Yeah, questioning how I respond to certain privileges that I get, and if I need to say things at times, I feel like I am more considering that at this point. And then starting to ask myself would I be willing to give this privilege up if it cost me something and try to understand what that means. And I think the cost is high for us and I think that is why we have been taught, to some degree, to turn a blind eye to White privilege, because if we actually acknowledge it is there, there is somewhat of a moral obligation to start to push back on that a bit.*

Linda described how her role as a prospective teacher makes her question her own racial identity within an educational environment. She acknowledged that it is first important to be aware of one's own privileges and the manner in which they affect one's professional pedagogies. She then questioned whether she can remove herself from the privileges associated with her racial identity for the greater benefit of her professional role. One key



aspect that Linda highlighted within her discussion is the immense impact that issues surrounding race and racial issues have within an educational environment. She suggested that educators are taught that the best way to address these issues is to ignore them with the hope that they will disappear on their own. When educators acknowledge that such issues exist, they are faced with pressure to find a solution to the problem(s). Danielle, on the contrary, discussed how White privilege has the ability to force educators out of their comfort zone and address issues which they may not necessarily be comfortable with. Rather than turning a blind eye to race and racial issues, Danielle offered a different suggestion:

*I think it is (White privilege) going to be very important, because I cannot allow my bias to influence the students, so I am going to have to go out of my way to find things that I may not necessarily relate to. I am going to have to choose things that relate to my students, so it is going to involve me going outside of my realm of what is normal for me.*

For Danielle, White privilege would influence her teaching practice by making her move out of her comfort zone. She will demonstrate critical awareness of White privilege and be conscious of her own racial identity through her selection of educational materials. These materials will not be reflective of her own racial identity but rather that of her students. In doing so, she aims to eliminate cultural bias which has resulted from her identity as a White female teacher.

Furthermore, one key theme which emerged from participant's discussion on how they perceive White privilege affecting their practice was that the majority of educators are White females and thus they must directly deal with their own racial identities to fully understand the impact of White privilege. Such is true for Danielle, Linda and Elizabeth. Elizabeth offered some further insight:

*Well I think first and foremost it kind of is directly relevant because I am a White female and as prospective pre-service teachers 90% of the population is White females so I think that White privilege really does influence that as it is seen more as a White woman's role through social views which could be part of why I grew up thinking that I would want to do something like this and to be a teacher.*

Unlike Danielle, Linda and Elizabeth, Thomas does not fit into the stereotype described above by Elizabeth. Thomas, a recent immigrant to Canada and also a mature student, discussed an experience that varies greatly from that of the other participants:

*Well, I feel like I understand how other students feel, because I am considered a minority, so I would understand if somebody felt shy or they did not really understand the language, because English is my third language. So that is why I feel like I understand how they feel. I can connect with them. And I was helping some immigrant Syrian refugees, because I was able to speak the language. I would say that I understand their frustration, and how sometimes the system is confusing, and how to navigate the system, and how to be successful in a completely different culture.*

Thomas suggested that due to his status as a racial minority, he was able to better understand the issues of students who do not belong to the dominant race. He has personally experienced the predominantly White educational system and thus is familiar with how it is influenced by White privilege. Unlike other participants, Thomas does not see himself having to question his own racial identity to address White privilege in his future professional practice. Rather, he used his experiences with White privilege that have resulted from his identity as a racial minority to assist students who may encounter similar problems. In this sense, White privilege is seen as having an immense impact in his role as a prospective teacher but in a manner that is different from Danielle, Linda and Elizabeth's perspectives.

Through these findings in relation to the pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege it becomes apparent that the participants share a similar understanding of

White privilege. For the pre-service teachers within this study, White privilege is perceived as an invisible, societal norm that benefits members of the White race. Furthermore, it is viewed as the dominant ideology within society. While these themes were common amongst all responses, the pre-service teachers shared varying perspectives on the manner in which they perceived White privilege as affecting their future professional practice as teachers. They all agreed that it will have an effect but the type of effect varied greatly amongst respondents. The commonalities and differences amongst the participants' perspectives will be elaborated on further within the discussion section of this paper.

#### **4.2 Teacher Preparation and Understanding of White Privilege**

In connection to teacher preparation and understanding of White privilege, all of the pre-service teachers acknowledged that their teacher education program at Lakehead University played a role in their knowledge and understanding of White privilege. For Linda, a pre-service teacher, White privilege was something she was not even aware of prior to her enrollment in the program:

*I was not even aware it was a thing. Like, and now I can see the different things that led up to that would just cause me to turn a blind eye to it. And I think part of it was, like, I grew up in Barrie and it is a fairly White city, like I, high school, I think there was like the one black family kind of thing. And as we progressed through high school, there was, you know, a few more coloured families that came into our area, but I was not exposed to a lot, so as I have kind of grown older and had different exposure that has changed, but White privilege as a concept has really just struck me in the last few months really.*

Linda grew up in a predominantly White environment and was seemingly sheltered from interactions with diverse populations. When she entered the Bachelor of Education

program she had the opportunity to take courses that made her start to question her own racial identity and increased her awareness of the existence of White privilege. Linda shared her experiences with these courses noting:

*So, I have taken, we had Social Differences first semester, and um, we started Social Studies, and I had the same instructor for that, who provided us with some of those articles [on White privilege] and I was also taking Global Citizenship Education and then this semester, I am taking the Teaching in a Multicultural Setting course. So, I have had, now, quite a bit of exposure, in four different courses, to this, that it has been, I think, painful for me, in all honesty, at times, to have to unpack a lot of this and go through my own bias.*

While Linda's experiences have been eye-opening, she also noted that they have been painful as she has had to question her own racial identity and the lens through which she sees the world. These experiences, however, have also made her more consciously aware of issues pertaining to race within educational environments. Such is evident in the following statement:

*I will say in that, my instructor has been great for Social Studies and Social Differences and Global Citizenship, but he is a White male, so as open minded, I think, as he is, and he has been so valuable to me, my Multicultural teacher is, is a black man and he just comes from a different perspective and has really challenged my thinking a lot more just because of his perspective being different.*

Her increased critical awareness is evident in her questioning of the racial identities of her instructors and the manner in which their identities influence their perspectives. Thus, her teacher education program has not only increased her awareness of White privilege but has also provided her with unique perspectives that she may not have otherwise been exposed to within her pre-dominantly White environment growing up. Instead of simply accepting knowledge, these particular courses within the program have challenged her way of thinking. Danielle also discussed how the courses, particularly the Social Differences course have

influenced her understanding of race and racial issues within an educational environment.

*We did a Social Difference class this year and I think the professor did an excellent job of opening discussion. Our cohort is very chatty and very opinionated, especially when it comes to racial issues. I feel like I have a very good understanding of it before going out and being a teacher, but I do not know if all the cohorts would have received the same material and enriching conversations. So, I think I am well influenced.*

This required course, a new requirement of the two-year Bachelor of Education program at Lakehead, was also an eye opener for Danielle as it was for Linda.

While it did not have quite as drastic effect on Danielle, it made her become more aware of the impact that White privilege can have within the teaching profession.

Danielle further elaborated on her personal experience with the Social Differences course noting:

*I think before doing the course, I never thought of it affecting the profession, but then after doing the course I realized that it is something that everyone should really take and those types of discussions need to be brought up, not just in the classroom, but expanded, as well, because even going home and talking to people in the community or in my family about the issues, you could tell there was a huge disconnect and it made it hard to have open conversations about things.*

Indeed, without having the opportunity to take these courses, Danielle acknowledged that she would not have developed a critical lens towards issues surrounding White privilege and simply would have accepted them as the norm:

*I would not have thought of it. I would not have been critical about what I was going to be teaching, but now my eyes have been opened. I go out of my way researching different materials like FNMI, you know, thinking outside the box, and even if I do not have students who relate to that directly, I want to expose them to it, because eventually they will meet somebody who has that perspective.*

Social Differences, a required program course, and Teaching in a Multicultural Setting,

an elective course, were common courses discussed amongst participants. It is seemingly through these particular courses where participants learned the vast majority of their knowledge in regards to White privilege. Elizabeth shared her experiences with these courses stating:

*We have a Social Differences course and as an elective I took the Teaching in a Multicultural Settings class so we do talk about White privilege quite a bit and like unpacking the invisible backpack and recognizing your privilege but also kind of how that privilege negatively affects people of minorities or different ethnicities in the program.*

For Elizabeth, however, these courses did not have quite an immense effect on her understanding of White privilege. In fact, she was knowledgeable on the subject matter prior to her participation in these courses:

*I think it has helped my understanding of it but I have also been a student who has lived overseas quite a bit in Australia and South Africa and so I was a little more exposed to my own privilege in those settings than I think I would have normally been. Personally I think I would [still have a good understanding without the course] but that is directly because of my past experiences rather than in general. I do think that it is important that we have these kinds of talks in classes because I think that especially in Western Societies it is not a topic that is commonly discussed.*

Nevertheless, Elizabeth found the information she learned in class in regards to White privilege to still hold value. Similar to Elizabeth, Thomas, a recent immigrant, was also familiar with White privilege prior to the course. His experience, however, was entirely different from that of any other participants:

*We learned a lot about it [White privilege]. We talked about it in so many courses. And I did not notice that, like, um, being a White person, considered, like I would not be seen as a visible minority. But when you start talking and you have an accent and so on, then you start to, you feel the difference, really White privilege. And doing assignments and all that, that also influence, because it takes more time for me to do those assignments than an English speaking [person].*

Thomas experienced the direct effects of White privilege during discussions on the topic.

He was not perceived by his classmates as a minority as his ethnic background is not visibly noticeable. When he talked during discussions, however, he felt as though his accent made him stand out amongst his classmates. He also noted that he struggled with assignments as a non-native English speaker. This aspect of his response, however, will be further addressed within the discussion section of the paper. Nevertheless, Thomas's experiences with learning White privilege within his courses are similar to that of Danielle, Linda and Elizabeth with the exception that the discussions in his courses enabled him to experience the effects of such privileges first hand. Overall, all participants acknowledged that they learned about White privilege through their teacher education. While all participated in the mandatory Social Differences course, some chose to enroll in the Teaching in a Multicultural Setting class which further increased their knowledge and understanding on topics pertaining to race. It appears Lakehead has provided a sufficient amount of information within their courses in the two-year Bachelor of Education program to adequately educate their students on White privilege.

#### **4.3 Diversity and White Privilege**

To build onto the previous question regarding how the program has influenced their understanding of White privilege and to develop a greater understanding of the practical knowledge gained by students, the pre-service teachers were asked to discuss the perceived impact of White privilege within diverse settings and how their program is preparing them for these particular environments. While it is evident that the program is teaching about White privilege, the pre-service teachers held varying opinions towards the practicality of the knowledge they have gained. Furthermore, the pre-service teachers

viewed White privilege as having different impacts on their teaching experiences within diverse settings. Linda wishes to teach overseas and acknowledges that her identity as a White female will have a powerful impact on her experiences teaching diverse populations of students:

*Going back to, like, I need to consider what I am willing to give up, and, like, at what cost do I really implement multicultural teaching into my career and will it cost me my job or a raise or whatever that looks like. But if I put my students first, I need to meet them whether I need to acknowledge, to some degree I think depending on age and appropriateness, I need to acknowledge what my skin colour has afforded me and just different struggles that they might face, and to come alongside them in that while not playing the “White savior” role at the same time.*

Linda noted the struggle of deciding to put her students first by implementing multicultural pedagogies and through this, risking her job as there may be pressure to utilize traditional White-dominant teaching methods. The implementation of multicultural practices that reach a diverse range of students, however, are also met with some risks. As a White female, Linda acknowledged that she must identify her privileges to utilize these practices effectively. Due to her racial identity, however, she also noted that she must be careful to avoid taking on the role of a “White savior” set out to save these students from perceived struggles. When asked about the role she sees White privilege having within a diverse setting, Danielle, also discussed the prevalence of the dominant White perspective:

*Probably a very big role, because, again, you have to choose what material you are giving to the students. So, if most of the material available is based through a White perspective, then that’s what is going to influence the classroom, whether you realize it or not. So, in order to have a diverse setting, you have to find resources that kind of take you out of that realm. I think it is slowly shifting, but when we, for instance, in class, when we talked about story books, it is kind of disgusting how much White privilege is prevalent in all them and how hard it is to find materials that include different minority groups.*



For Danielle, addressing issues of White privilege within diverse educational settings meant being conscious of the materials she selects and being aware of who's voice is present and also what races are absent. Selecting culturally appropriate materials will enable her to foster greater connections with her students.

Thomas, also noted the need to develop connections with students on a personal level. In regards to White privilege, he believed:

*It has a big impact, because if the students cannot relate to you, like I believe that the students will care if they see that you care, but if you really do not connect to them then this personal connection, you will not be able to teach other subjects, even for class management and so on, so. I feel that that has a big influence. And it has to change. We have to be more considerate and more passionate about-, especially it is getting so diverse now and multicultural.*

Thus, Thomas believed that White privilege will have a big impact within diverse settings as teachers need to develop personal connections with students. As classrooms are becoming increasingly diverse, however, these personal connections are becoming more and more important.

Elizabeth shared an opinion that is similar to that of all the pre-service teachers regards to the need to utilize teaching practices that are reflective of the diversity of students and to be consciously aware of whose perspective teachers are teaching from.

She noted:

*Firstly if you are White you have to recognize that you do have that privilege as the teacher in the setting so you have to be able to think that when your teaching content matter that you have to look at it from different perspectives. The big one is Christopher Columbus and was he an explorer and adventurer or was he a mass murderer? And depending on whose perspective you look at that opinion will change. So just taking into account those types of things when you are teaching will definitely help in diverse settings.*

Elizabeth's statement is highly reflective of all participants in that there is a need for educators to address their own racial identities and the manner in which it shapes their teaching pedagogies whether that be through their personal connections with students or the materials they select when teaching in diverse settings.

In regards to their preparedness towards teaching in diverse settings, the pre-service teachers shared varying opinions on their level of preparedness. Linda shared her thoughts in regards to how the program has prepared her to teach in multicultural settings noting:

*I think it has mainly shaped me for the White classes. Um, I think that it is great the courses are offered, like my electives of Global Citizenship Education and Teaching in a Multicultural Setting, but they are electives, so they are ones that I have chosen to put myself through, and I have chosen how much I want to invest myself in that, which is always going to be the case, no matter what, I get to choose how much I put in and get out of it, but I think the fact that they are still elective, and Social Studies and Social Differences, they touched on race and skin colour, but they were not the main focus, I would say. Not that Global Citizenship was, but there was more to it in that one. So I think we are making progress, for sure I would say that and acknowledge that, I just think we probably have a ways to go. Although, I will say, like one of the exercises we had to do for Global Citizenship was to really examine, we had to write a Reflexive Autobiography. So that was really helpful, but that was that instructor's take on an assignment and I chose to come at it from a stance of White privilege to really acknowledge that in my life.*

In this sense, Linda acknowledged that the program has prepared her to teach in diverse settings but she has benefitted from it so greatly as a result of her course selection and desire to investigate White privilege. For Danielle, the program content was useful when teaching in teaching settings but she found the practicum experience to not be reflective of such diversity. In regards to her preparedness she

noted:

*In terms of the course classroom experience with Social Differences, has prepared me very well. I feel like, in terms of placement, I am from the GTA, so I am used to being in a diverse setting at all times, and Simcoe is prevalently White, so for me going into a classroom where there is one minority student was like shock-, like very shocking, and the idea of not necessarily being able to discuss different cultures in the fear that it would upset potentially parents for exposing their children to different things. That, I did not really feel that comfortable with. Yeah, so, it is kind of opposite in terms of the program itself, I am, but in terms of placement, I feel like I am not. Yeah, and even in my first placement, by the end of it, one of my learning goals was to incorporate more First Nations, for instance, because there was none of it in my placement, like I was not exposed to any of it to the students, and when I came back, I said: this is something we have been told we need to include, and yet I did not see any of that, and so I did not implement it myself. So, my goal going forward is to find those things and put in my lessons.*

While the Bachelor of Education program has influenced her understanding of race and racial issues and also contributed to her preparedness, Danielle discussed how the biggest influence has been the urban environment she grew up in:

*It would be interesting to see what it would be like for answering these questions for someone with the opposite, who perhaps did not grow up in a diverse setting, but goes into a diverse classroom. That, I feel like, would be interesting. That would be a different kind of shock. Definitely, [growing up in a diverse setting has positively influenced my ability to teach in diverse settings] because even in those discussions when we had talks about like Disney princesses, and people were talking about their favourite Disney princess, because they related to them, my favourite was Jasmine and I cannot even, like I thought she was beautiful, but I do not look anything like Jasmine. So, but that is probably because I am exposed to different beauty at home. I do not just see myself reflecting back to me, so that was interesting. That is when I felt like I stuck out. And sometimes I would get frustrated, too, when I hear, just different types of stories of how different minority groups are treated when we are exposed to different videos or conversations and it, like, brings out inner rage in me, because that is not what I grew up with, so discrimination and segregation of different groups, I just find completely intolerable. I do not know if just because my area is very different, I do not know. I feel like it depends. Or maybe some people only want to discuss certain things in class, and not dive in deeper. It all depends on how much of an experience they want to have.*

Similar to Linda, Danielle also discussed how one's level of preparedness to teach

in multicultural environments can be dependent on how much of an experience they choose to have during their classes and placements and whether they choose to examine issues of race and privilege. While Danielle and Linda gained their greatest knowledge from their courses, Elizabeth found the practicum experience to be the most valuable for preparing her to teach in diverse environments. Elizabeth shared her placement experiences:

*I think there are aspects of this program that help you teach but I think that it is more of the actual experience that really prepares you to teach because it is one thing hearing about it and talking about it but another thing to actually do it and experience it. So the social differences course was really good I think for exploring diverse settings in a classroom. The multicultural course is more the theory behind everything so it's good to kind of have that background and understanding of why the current social contexts are the way they are. It is not so much practical, it is more like academia rather than practicum. My particular placement I think was very reflective [of diversity]. We had a student who was FNMI and he frequently got into a lot of trouble. So we would have... after there was one incident where he was suspended for three weeks and when we came back we had a smudging ceremony to welcome him back into the classroom. So we had the first nations resource teacher come in and he led the smudging and explained to all the students what the significance of the different items were and I think that really helped the students understand different ways of being able to welcome someone back into a classroom and get them back.*

On the contrary, however, Thomas's experience within the teacher education program were rather different. In regards to his level of preparedness, he noted:

*I think it is more from my personal experience. Like, they teach us now, like second year, we have more of how to be considerate to other cultures and so on, but it is not so much, because if you do not have it, like if you didn't have this experience you cannot teach it, right? So you have to be part of that group or you have to be going through the struggle yourself, so then you can tell other people about it.*

Thomas found the program itself, however, to not be reflective of diversity. He discussed the issues he faced as a minority attending the two-year Bachelor of

Education program at Lakehead University. In regards to the difficulty he faced with courses and the actual program itself he noted:

*Well, I would go for some schools, for example, and the person who's teaching English for second language, they do not know other languages, and you feel like so why they do not take people who speak that language and teach them, especially there is a lot of us in Teacher's College now, so you could use all this potential, so I feel there is, like, I did not get and course or anything that talks about how as a different kind of teacher or a different race teacher. I do not feel there was that emphasis or you know? Well, I do not feel like as a teacher candidate there was that much support. Like, I was there thinking of somebody who could like proofread my papers of something and there was nobody. I checked with the university. They do not offer this service, which is very strange, because all of the other universities – I did two other degrees in Canada – and there was this support for students. So, I don't understand why Lakehead does not have that. It is non-existent, kind of. Through my education, I did not feel I am really supported. That is what frustrates me. It is, I do not know... I do not feel like to have somebody at my age and my experience and all that, I do not feel they are equip to that, and especially now it is a two-year program. That nobody understands what is happening exactly. So, you feel this disconnect.*

His negative experiences were also a part of his placement experience. In regards to these particular experiences, he stated:

*Well, I feel sometimes the placement I was kind of frowned upon because of my background and so on, and I was judged on what I am, which is very sad, because it should not be that way. It should be according to my merits and my work, but, so I do not feel the placements... The placement helped, but sometimes I did not feel the placement was really... I was looked, like, you know, I am different from the rest of the group, so yeah. It was like we will shut you down. And you should not be in teaching and you should not be in that, you know? The other students, I feel the younger generation students, are very more open and accepting than what it used to be. And I think they should have a certain way to vet teachers that are going to be, like supervising you. Do not give them absolute power, because there is nobody who has absolute power, right? Well, the program, I went into the program, I had no problem, so I think the program is accepting. Just I feel like they need to have more support in place for people who does not like twenty-two years old kind of female teacher, you know? You should consider there is male teachers, there is like older people. And even some of my teachers were telling me that some people would feel intimidated that you walked into their class. And, exactly, like I expected twenty-two years old, I see this guy, you*

*know, so, you feel like that is why I need to feel the support of my school that you are standing behind me, you know?*

Through the pre-service teachers' discussions it becomes apparent that the program has prepared them to varying extents to teach within multicultural settings. All the pre-service teachers acknowledged, however, that some improvements are still needed to ensure that pre-service teachers are adequately prepared to teach the increasingly diverse student population.

#### **4.4 Brief Summary of Findings**

The study revealed that participants' all acknowledged the presence and existence of White privilege. Their understanding of White privilege, however, was largely based off their own personal experiences outside of the information they learned through their teacher education courses. In this sense, their teacher education program was seen as having little effect on their understanding of White privilege. While the participants all perceived White privilege as having an effect on their future professional practice, the extent of this effect varied amongst the participants. Nevertheless, the participants of this study felt that the program did prepare them to teach in diverse settings but that there was still more information to be learned.

## Chapter 5: Discussion and Conclusion

### Discussion

Putting it all together, the present study revealed that pre-service teachers demonstrated awareness of White privilege. This, however, was contradictory to the literature review which indicated that many pre-service teachers express limited awareness of White privilege and other issues pertaining to race and ethnicity (Amos, 2010; Buchanan, 2015; Levine-Rasky, 2000; McIntyre, 1997). Indeed, Levine-Rasky (2000) discovered that feelings of “resistance, denial, hostility, ignorance, and defensiveness” towards Whiteness were common amongst her analysis of studies conducted on pre-service teachers (p. 265). This was not true, however, for the pre-service teachers within this study. In fact, participants were eager, open and welcoming to discuss the topic of White privilege. It is important to note, however, that the pre-service teachers were notified that the study would involve the discussion of topics pertaining to race and racial issues as they arise within their teacher education program.

Thus, it is possible that only pre-service teachers who were comfortable discussing such topics expressed their interest in the study. Nevertheless, a shift from the findings of Levine-Rasky (2000), in regards to pre-service teachers’ feelings towards Whiteness and privilege, is evident. It becomes clear through the findings that there has been a change in attitude amongst pre-service teachers towards the discussion of Whiteness and other racial issues. The negative feelings referenced in Levine-Rasky’s (2000) study were not seen in the pre-service teachers of this study. Levine-Rasky’s (2000) study was published in 2000 and thus likely conducted in the late nineties. Thus there is an approximate period of twenty-years between Levine-Rasky and the present

study. Societal views towards race have arguably changed a considerable amount since the initial publication. There tends to be a greater acceptance of diversity within society. While society still has a long way to go in terms of their acceptance of other cultures, advancements have been made such as the inclusive hiring practices referenced in the literature review. Therefore, it is plausible that pre-service teachers' perceptions towards the discussion of racial issues is reflective of the views held within society that express greater acceptance towards minorities.

Furthermore, the two-year teacher education program also plays a role in the pre-service teachers' perceptions. The program offers new courses such as Social Differences and Global Citizenship which directly examine topics of race, ethnicity and social inequality as they arise in education. These are courses that were not previously offered prior to the initiation of the two-year teacher education program. These courses are seemingly an attempt to fill a void in which there was an absence of mandatory courses that educated pre-service teachers on diversity within classrooms. The pre-service teachers' level of comfort and knowledge towards these particular topics may be attributed to these courses which encourage an open discussion of racial issues. The pre-service teachers' willingness and openness to discuss such topics was essential to the findings of this study. Several additional key findings were revealed: challenging dominant discourses of Whiteness; overrepresentation of White faculty members and students; teacher education program as perpetuating Whiteness; stereotype of the ideal teacher candidate, diversity within placement experiences; pre-service teachers' understanding of their own racial identities; pre-service teachers and the role of the "White saviour"; engaging in critical dialogue surrounding topics of race and racial



issues; and lastly, the influence of personal experiences towards understanding of White privilege. Some of these findings will be elaborated on within the following discussion.

In regards to challenging dominant discourses of Whiteness, the literature review revealed that ideologies of Whiteness were continually perpetuated and that these ideologies remained unchallenged within teacher education programs (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Mackie, 2003; McIntyre, 1997). Furthermore, there was the commonly held belief that such ideologies were inappropriate and controversial and thus should not be discussed by pre-service teachers (Amos, 2010; Buchanan, 2015; McIntyre, 1997). Through the pre-service teachers interviews, however, it became evident that Whiteness and White privilege were topics that were welcomed during classroom discussions. Pre-service teachers' willingness to challenge these dominant ideologies, however, was largely dependent on their own individual choices. While these topics were discussed, there was no pressure for the pre-service teachers to critically engage with the topics and question their own ideologies towards Whiteness. For Linda, her ability to challenge dominant discourses of Whiteness was based on her choice to invest a great deal of her time into this. She notes, however, that not every person in the program had the same experience as her. While the pre-service teachers were provided with information on Whiteness and privilege, their engagement with these topics varied on their emotional investments. Danielle, also shared a similar experience observing that discussions amongst cohorts in the program may have varied based on their willingness to critically engage with the topics. The pre-service teachers in cohorts who chose to critically engage with the topics would have enriching experiences as suggested by Danielle. On the contrary, cohorts which accepted notions of White privilege and chose not to delve

deeper into discussions, may not have had as powerful experiences and developed a rich understanding of Whiteness and privilege. Nevertheless, all the pre-service teachers discussed how at least one of their classes discussed these topics. Through this, it becomes evident that the Lakehead teacher education program views Whiteness as an important area of discussion and learning for pre-service teachers. This is contradictory to the literature review that suggested such topics were not acceptable for discussion and as a result were often avoided (Amos, 2010; Buchanan, 2015; McIntyre, 1997). It is important to note, however, that this finding could be a result of the instructors' personal decisions to incorporate such material into their classes and thus may not be reflective of Lakehead's teacher education program as a whole. Furthermore, it becomes clear that notions of Whiteness may not be perpetuated as widely throughout the program as the topics are being openly discussed within particular courses such as Social Differences and Global Citizenship. The findings, however, are not completely inconsistent with the literature review which discussed how dominant ideologies of Whiteness remain unchallenged (Levine-Rasky, 2000; Mackie, 2003; McIntyre, 1997). The extent to which these ideologies were challenged, however, is difficult to assess as pre-service teachers cannot seemingly be forced to challenge their own ideologies of Whiteness. This is something that must be done on an individual basis and through one's own emotional investment. In this sense, the literature review findings are accurate for those to choose not to delve deeper into their understandings of Whiteness and privilege within their classroom discussions. For the pre-service teachers in this study, especially Danielle and Linda, the literature review was not consistent with the findings as both individuals discussed their decision to critically engage with the topics of Whiteness and privilege.

Nevertheless, the shift towards developing critically aware teachers is evident through the programs by the inclusion of courses that discuss topics pertaining to race and also through the pre-service teachers' own individualized experiences of deconstructing dominant ideologies of Whiteness.

Another key finding which emerged was in regards to the overrepresentation of White faculty members within the teacher education program. Adair (2008) and Solomon et al. (2005) as referenced in the literature review, suggested that Whiteness was perpetuated within teacher education through the selection of predominantly White faculty members. This key finding was acknowledged by Linda who shared her experiences with instructors of differing ethnicities. Linda discussed that while the White male instructors she had in her courses which discussed White privilege shared valuable information, their views were largely consistent with that of other instructors. On the contrary, she discussed how the information she learned in a multicultural education course was highly regarded as it was taught by a black male instructor who offered a different perspective. Indeed, there is a sense of irony to White people teaching about White privilege and Whiteness. It is arguable that this practice further contributes to the perpetuation of Whiteness within teacher education programs. Thomas's opinion was highly reflective of this. For Thomas, the practice of having a native English speaker teaching English as a Second Language made no sense. He noted that there was a disconnect between the teacher and their students. He questioned why this practice continued to occur when there are many qualified individuals with backgrounds in ESL and first-hand experience learning English as a second language who would be better suited for this job. This practice is another way in which teacher education programs and

the education system in general, is perpetuating ideologies of Whiteness. Furthermore, it is highly reflective of the “White saviour” concept which will be elaborated on further within this paper. The overrepresentation of Whiteness within teacher education programs, however, is not only seen in the faculty but also within the student population. While statistics were not available on the racial backgrounds of pre-service teachers enrolled in the two-year Bachelor of Education program, a walk through the hallways revealed an overwhelming representation of predominantly White individuals. It is important to note, however, that this is simply based on one’s appearance and not the manner in which they identify their racial background. This was further evident in the pre-interview survey responses. Of the ten completed surveys, seven participants identified themselves as White/Caucasian, one as Asian/Pacific Islander, one as Black/African American and one as mixed ethnicity. While these representations only provide a small sample of the student population at the Lakehead Orillia campus, it can be suggested that the population of White students far exceeds that of minorities. In this sense, the findings are consistent with that of Solomon et al. (2005) who found that there was a lack of diversity amongst students enrolled in teacher education programs. Furthermore, the findings are also reflective of the 2002 study by the National Centre for Education Statistics which revealed that 83.5% of elementary teachers were White. Although the program at Lakehead is reflective of diversity through a small population of minority students and faculty, there continues to be an overrepresentation of White students and faculty. Thus, it can be suggested that through this, the two-year teacher program serves to perpetuate Whiteness by limiting the diversity within the program.

Beyond the student and faculty population, however, the issue of Whiteness exists

at a much larger level within the program. As a whole, the program appears to be perpetuating dominant ideologies of Whiteness. Such ideologies are evident through the experiences of Thomas, a mature student, recent immigrant and non-native English speaker. During his interview, Thomas discussed the struggles he has faced thus far in the program. He noted a particular lack of support and services. One area of concern is the lack of support for non-native English speakers. Thomas sought out support with the writing and editing of his papers but was unsuccessful in his attempts to find assistance. He noted that the previous universities he attended offered support within the area of English as a Second Language but such support was seemingly not available at the Lakehead Orillia campus. This ultimately contributed to his overall feeling of not being supported in his educational endeavors at Lakehead. While he stated the students enrolled within the program were accepting of him, he noted that there was a disconnect between the program and himself. The dominant ideologies and favouritism towards Whiteness throughout the program were further perpetuated outside of the classroom in Thomas's placement experiences. During his placement, Thomas acknowledged that he felt judged based on his background. He further elaborated on the power struggle that existed between himself and supervising teacher. In this relation, his supervising teacher held all of the power and thus had seemingly limitless control over Thomas's success within placement. This relation is reflective of the Self and Other racial relations as discussed by Aveling (2006) and Santoro (2009). In this relationship, the Self holds absolute control over the marginalized other. As a mature student, male and immigrant, Thomas had many aspects of his identity acting against him. Indeed, he acknowledged that some teachers referred to him as intimidating. This issue became even more problematic as he felt that

the school did not stand behind him and advocate for his success. This ultimately resulted in his failure. Thus by failing to provide the necessary support, the Bachelor of Education program perpetuated notions of Whiteness through their favouritism towards Whiteness as evident in their lack of services for students of diverse backgrounds.

Thomas's experience and the population of pre-service teachers within the teacher education program can also be considered reflective of the stereotypes surrounding the ideal pre-service teachers. Indeed Thomas addressed the stereotype of the typical teacher candidate: White, young and female. Such a stereotype is reflective in the demographics of teachers researched by the National Centre for Education Statistics (2002) that revealed that 83.5% of elementary teachers are White. Furthermore, the findings are consistent with that of the United States Department of Education (2016) analysis that found that 25% of students enrolled in teacher education programs were individuals of colour. Thus there is a seemingly overrepresentation of White students within teacher education programs that could contribute to the stereotype associated with pre-service teachers. Such findings are confirmed by Elizabeth who estimated that approximately ninety-percent of pre-service teachers enrolled in the Bachelor of Education program were White females. Thomas addressed an expectation held by his supervising teacher that her student teacher would presumably be young, White and female. He felt judged and frowned upon on as his identity did not match the expectation held by his supervising teacher. Indeed, he acknowledged that the program is geared towards young, White females. In this sense the program can be seen as contributing to the existing stereotype. It is interesting to note that three of participants in this study met the expectations of White and female while two participant's identities aligned exactly with the stereotype.

This stereotype is problematic as it serves as a way to further reinforce dominant ideologies of Whiteness within teacher education programs by framing pre-service teachers as White and through this, excluding others who do not meet the stereotypical characteristics. This stereotype allows dominant discourses of Whiteness to remain unchallenged by sending a subliminal message that pre-service teachers who meet the ideals of young, White and female are met with the greatest success in the teacher education program. This enables the overrepresentation of White teachers to continue. This becomes an issue as the student population is becoming increasingly diverse but teachers are not reflective of the students they meet (Solomon et al., 2005). Thus there is a need for teacher education programs to diminish this stereotype so they can develop a future generation of teachers who are reflective of the diverse student population and best meet students' needs.

The perpetuation of Whiteness was further evident in the pre-service teachers' placement experiences. These findings were contradictory, however, as some participants acknowledged the presence of diversity within their placements while others discussed a lack of. For Danielle, her placement experience was reflective of dominant discourses of Whiteness. She noted that she was shocked to find there was only one minority student in her class. The lack of diversity she experienced, however, could be a result of the environment in which her teaching placement occurred. She noted that Simcoe County as a whole is predominantly White and this demographic is reflected in the school population. She further elaborated on the fear she held in regards to her ability to discuss other cultures within her classroom. These cultures were seen as different and as topics to which parents did not necessarily feel comfortable exposing their children. In this sense,

diversity was limited within her placement experience not only through the demographics of her students but also through her ability to integrate diversity into the classroom environment. Thus her placement experiences supported the perpetuation of Whiteness by limiting her experiences to interactions with predominately White students and failing to expose her to diverse student populations. Such an experience is reflective of Levine-Rasky's (2000) study. The study revealed that Whiteness placed pre-service teachers at a disadvantage by limiting their interactions with racialized students (Levine-Rasky, 2000). Indeed, Danielle acknowledged that her placement experience lacked exposure to other races which she believed was an important skill for future educators. As a White educator, these experiences were especially important to prepare her for interactions with diverse student populations that will force her to question her own racial identity in relation to marginalized students. To address this, she sought to implement multicultural pedagogies such as the inclusion of teachings on First Nations, Metis and Inuit, to greater incorporate diversity within her own practice in future placement experiences. On the contrary, Elizabeth found her placement experience to be highly reflective of diversity. She had an indigenous student in her class and was able to incorporate First Nations, Metis and Inuit practices into her teaching. In this sense, her placement experience offered the opportunity to challenge dominant discourses of Whiteness by implementing multicultural pedagogies into her teaching. Interestingly, Elizabeth's placement was in the same board as Danielle's but both pre-service teachers had drastically different experiences. Thus, the findings are consistent with the literature review in that Danielle's placement contributed to the perpetuation of Whiteness by limiting her exposure to diversity. Contradictory, Danielle's placement experience enabled her to challenge



dominant discourses of Whiteness through her interaction with diverse student populations and integration of educational pedagogies reflective of such diversity and thus was inconsistent with the findings of Levine-Rasky (2000). It is important to note, however, that the implementation of multicultural pedagogies and the acceptance of diversity does not constitute one's acceptance of White privilege. Indeed, it is possible to accept diversity without having accepted the notion of White privilege. The implementation of multicultural pedagogies addresses issues of race at the institutional level but not at an individual level. Thus, it becomes important for pre-service teachers' to understand their own racialized identities and personal pedagogies.

Literature from Aveling (2006) and McIntosh (1997) suggested that White pre-service teachers often failed to recognize their own privileges that have resulted from their race. Indeed, the invisibility of Whiteness and privilege were common themes amongst the examined literature (Aveling 2006; McIntosh, 1997; Marx, 2004; Solomon et al., 2005). This was deemed as problematic as pre-service teachers' denial and blindness resulted in their inability to utilize culturally responsive pedagogies in their teaching practices (Santoro & Allard, 2005; Santoro, 2009). This then further reinforced the concept of Self and Other within the student/teacher relationship (Aveling, 2006; McIntosh, 1997). Such was not true, however, for the pre-service teachers examined in this study. All of the pre-service teachers who self-identified as White recognized the powerful role their Whiteness played in their roles as pre-service teachers. They also demonstrated a sufficient and critical understanding of White privilege. Such is true for Linda who displayed a conscious awareness of her privileges by questioning if certain events would have occurred if she was of a different race. Danielle also shared similar

views noting a particular bias she held towards racial issues as a result of her identity as a White female. In this sense, the pre-service teachers demonstrated an ability to question their own racialized identities and the manner in which they shaped their roles as pre-service teachers. The distinction between being aware of White privilege and accepting White privilege is important to make. Being aware of White privilege constitutes one acknowledging that it exists within society. Accepting White privilege, however, occurs at a personal level. The acceptance of White privilege means the acknowledgement that one is personally privileged by their Whiteness and that they are consciously aware of their perceived privileges. While all participants demonstrated an awareness of White privilege, it was difficult to comprehend whether any fully accepted their privileges. Indeed, all the pre-service teachers agreed that White privilege would have an effect on their future teaching practice. For Danielle, Linda and Elizabeth this would have a personal effect as a result of their White identities while for Thomas it had more of an external effect due to his status as a minority in the program. Marx (2004) and Solomon et al. (2005) suggested that pre-service teachers took their privileges for granted and thus would struggle to interrogate their role as Self in relation to the diversity of their students. It became evident from the findings, however, that the pre-service teachers were critically aware of their identity as Self and sought to eliminate the existence of Self and Other relationships with their future students by being critically conscious of their own identities. As such, the pre-service teachers' inability to recognize their privileges and question their racialized identities did not appear to be a barrier in preparing the participants of this study to teach in racially diverse settings. Therefore, the findings of this study were not supportive of those addressed within the literature review in relation

to pre-service teachers' understanding of their own racial identities. Furthermore, these findings were contradictory to two of the assumptions discussed in this thesis: White pre-service teachers are unaware of their privileges granted to them by their Whiteness and pre-service teachers are unable to relate to diverse student populations as a result of the indivisibility of their privileges. The findings were consistent, however, with the assumption that White pre-service teachers are privileged by being White. The pre-service teachers did indeed confirm the belief that they were privileged by their White identities.

One particular area of concern in regards to the pre-service teachers' perceptions of their racial identities was in relation to their practices that were reflective of the "White saviour" role. Pennington (2007) conducted a study that observed that pre-service teachers perceived their racially diverse students as in need of rescuing. Thus, the pre-service teachers altered their teacher practices to reflect this and, "intervened and tried to repair and replace [the students'] lives with what the [pre-service teachers] perceived they needed" (Pennington, 2007, p. 99). In doing so, the pre-service teachers stripped their students of power to establish a dichotomy of Self and Other within their classrooms (Pennington, 2007). The primary issue with this, however, was that the pre-service teachers were largely unaware of the negative impact that such practices had on their students – they simply thought they were helping them (Pennington, 2007). Such was not true for this study. While only one pre-service teacher specifically mentioned the "White saviour" role, she did so in a manner that demonstrated her critical awareness of the issue. Linda acknowledged that her race afforded her such privileges that she would encounter difficulty interacting with marginalized students. She demonstrated her

awareness of the issue by observing that she wanted to stand by her students but in a manner that was culturally responsive to their own racialized identities and not reflective of her own identity through the role of “White saviour”. Similar views were held by Danielle. While Danielle did not directly reference the role of the “White saviour”, she did acknowledge her understanding of its’ impact on marginalized students through her discussion of choosing materials that reflected diversity in her classroom. She referenced how selecting materials that were reflective of a White perspective would create an environment that condoned the perpetuation of White ideologies and the Self/Other relationship. Thus, she chose to select materials that reflected the diversity of her students and even when her classroom may lack diversity amongst students, she chose to still include these materials to expose her students to different perspectives. In doing so, she diminished the effects of the “White saviour” by embracing the diverse identities of her students and also of the cultures that may not exist within her classroom. Thus, it becomes clear that the pre-service teachers in this study were critically aware of the “White saviour” role and took the necessary steps to prevent the presence of it within their classrooms. In such, the findings of this study did not support those found within Pennington’s (2007) study.

A key aspect discussed in the literature review that aligned with one of the objectives of this study was to include opportunities within teacher education programs for pre-service teachers to engage in critical dialogue surrounding race and racial issues. In doing so, it was hoped that pre-service teachers would be better prepared to teach in diverse settings (Hill-Jackson, (2007). Through the present study it became evident that the two-year Bachelor of Education program at Lakehead University was utilizing such

methods. Indeed, all the pre-service teachers acknowledged that they were provided with opportunities in their courses to discuss and critically engage with topics pertaining to race. Through these opportunities, the teacher education program at Lakehead appears to be following the methods outlined by Hill-Jackson (2007) designed to prepare pre-service teachers for teaching in diverse settings. The first-step is the unconscious stage in which pre-service teachers are exposed to beliefs that contradict their own but often express hesitation in believing in them (Hill-Jackson, 2007). During this stage, the pre-service teachers expressed “the belief that the world operates a certain way and [that] they can have no real impact on changing the world through their awareness or participation in cultural diversity issues” (Hill-Jackson, 2007, p. 30). It is evident, however, that the pre-service teachers within this study are well past this stage as they all acknowledge an understanding of Whiteness and privilege and sought to implement culturally responsive pedagogies. In doing so, they believed that their actions had an impact and thus, their attitudes did not align with the first stage of Hill-Jackson’s (2007) study. The second stage, the response stage, is where pre-service teachers begin to critically engage with topics pertaining to racial issues and begin to question their own racialized identities (Hill-Jackson, 2007). This appears to be the stage that all the pre-service teachers within the study have fallen into. Such is evident through the acknowledgment of their privileges which highlights their acceptance. Danielle, Elizabeth and Linda also demonstrated critical awareness of the manner in which their White identities influenced their teaching practices. The last stage of Hill-Jackson’s (2007) work, however, is far more complicated and requires a great deal of time. Thus the pre-service teachers, particularly Linda, Danielle and Elizabeth, appear to be on their way to reaching this stage but as they are

only in their first-year of the program, they still have a while to go. Through the opportunities provided within the courses at Lakehead to critically engage with topics of race and diversity, the program appears to be effectively preparing students to teach in diverse settings and thus aligns well with the work of Hill-Jackson (2007).

Although teacher education program examined appears to be preparing pre-service teachers for teaching in diverse settings as evidenced through their opportunities to engage with critical dialogue, it is through their own personal experiences that the pre-service teachers felt their greatest level of preparedness stemmed from. The majority of pre-service teachers acknowledged that the program did have an influence on their understanding but believed that even without having taken the courses within the program (Teaching in a Multicultural Setting, Social Differences, Global Citizenship) that they would have been adequately prepared to teach in diverse settings. In regards to the course selection, however, it is important to address the effect of the Teaching in a Multicultural Setting course on the students. Multiculturalism is something which exists at an institutional level. As an example, Canada is often deemed a multicultural society but that does not mean that everyone within that particular society embraces multiculturalism. Similarly, teaching pre-service teachers about multiculturalism, only teaches them about it at an institutional level. Thus, taking a course on multiculturalism does not necessarily imply that one will value the beliefs of multiculturalism. It is up to the student to move beyond the examination of multiculturalism at the institutional level and to address the subject at a personal level. The exception to this, however, was Linda who grew up in a predominately White environment and first became exposed to the concept of White privilege through one of the courses in her teacher education program.

For Linda, Peggy McIntosh's article *Unpacking the Invisible Knapsack* was a real eye-opener. As she wishes to teach overseas, the information she has learned through her program in relation to race has been essential for preparing her to teach in these culturally diverse settings. Linda moved beyond the examination of such topics at an institutional level to explore them at an individual level. Danielle, Elizabeth and Thomas, however, had opposite experiences to that of Linda. Danielle grew up in the greater Toronto area, a large urban area, and thus was exposed to a variety of cultures growing up. This experience shaped the way she viewed the world and her attitudes towards other races. For Danielle, it was this experience that had the biggest effect on her level of preparedness to teach in diverse settings. Elizabeth on the contrary, has been exposed to a variety of ethnically diverse populations throughout her life having lived in South Africa and Australia. These experiences enabled her to be exposed to her privileges in a manner that she would not have been exposed to in her current setting. Thus, it is through her experiences living overseas that she has been prepared to teach in diverse settings. As an immigrant, Thomas offers a different level of preparedness having had the experience being a student in a setting that is not reflective of his own racial identity. He thus builds onto his own personal experiences and the challenges he has faced as a minority to prepare himself for taking on the role of teacher in diverse environments. Thus while the teacher education program examined in this study has had an influence on pre-service teachers' level of preparedness to teach in diverse settings, the extent to which it has had an effect is limited. While it has had an immense impact on Linda's preparedness, the effect has been quite minimal for Elizabeth, Danielle and Thomas whose personal experiences have best prepared them for teaching in culturally diverse settings.

## **Conclusion**

In concluding my analysis of Pre-Service Teachers Perceptions of White Privilege in a Two-Year Teacher Education program, it is important to emphasize that while the pre-service teachers that participated in this study demonstrated an understanding of White privilege and its perceived effects on their future practices, their teacher education program did not serve as the greatest influence on their level of preparedness to teach in diverse settings. Nevertheless, the goals of the study: to understand the manner in which pre-service teachers perceive White privilege; to examine how pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege influenced their role as prospective teachers; and to explore how their perceptions of White privilege influenced their preparedness to teach in diverse settings and the extent to which their preparedness was based on their experiences in their program, were met. The literature review for this study suggested that pre-service teachers would have an understanding of white privilege but acceptance would be limited. The findings of this study revealed, however, that the participants held a thorough understanding of White privilege but that this understanding was largely based off their lived experiences and not learned within their teacher education program.

As a result of the findings, the following implications for teacher education programs and the ministry are proposed. It is proposed that to better prepare students for teaching in diverse settings, the two-year Bachelor of Education program at Lakehead should provide greater opportunities and exposure to diverse student populations. As the post-secondary institution is based in a predominantly White rural environment, this may be done through the inclusion of a non-traditional placement such as on a First Nations reserve or within a community outreach program such as that for new immigrants. Doing



so will enable pre-service teachers to gain greater experience for teaching within diverse settings and ultimately better prepare them for their roles as prospective teachers. Another implication of the study was in regards to the support provided for non-traditional students enrolled in the teacher education program. Indeed, it was acknowledged by pre-service teachers that the primary population of the program was comprised of White females. This further reinforces the stereotypes of teachers and ultimately contributed to the overrepresentation of Whiteness within the education system. To attract non-traditional pre-service teachers and also to ensure the success of those already enrolled, it is essential that Lakehead provide the supports necessary for these pre-service teachers' success in the program. One key feature that was seemingly absent was the inclusion of services for English language learners such as writing workshops and editing services. The inclusion of such services is fundamental to ensure the success of all pre-service teachers and not just those who meet the stereotype of the ideal pre-service teachers. The failure to offer these supports only further contributes to the perpetuation of Whiteness within both the education system and teacher education programs. To create an effective educational system, it is essential that teachers meet the needs of their diverse students. There is currently, however, a racial discrepancy amongst teachers and the students they are teaching (Marx, 2004). To address this discrepancy teacher education programs must educate pre-service teachers who are reflective of the students they are preparing to teach or who are equipped with the skills to connect with diverse student populations. While the two-year teacher education program at Lakehead is preparing pre-service teachers through classes which promote diversity, the open discussion of race and racial issues and through raising awareness on the influence of

White privilege, it has become evident through this study that the program still has some ways to go to ensure that pre-service teachers are best prepared for teaching in diverse educational settings. The racial discrepancy amongst pre-service teachers and the lack of diversity, however, is a much larger issue that goes beyond that of this teacher education program. The Ministry of Education along with post-secondary institutions need to develop initiatives that encourage non-traditional students to enroll in Bachelor of Education programs. Non-traditional groups of students such as mature students or minorities tend to face greater barriers in their access to post-secondary education. Such barriers were noted in this study through the experiences of Thomas. To eliminate these barriers and encourage the enrollment of diverse student populations, the ministry along with teacher education programs need to offer supports whether that be through funding, academic support, housing or childcare. Furthermore, the Ministry of Education also needs to examine the hiring practices utilized by school boards. While non-discriminatory hiring practices are in place, there is seemingly a lack of diversity amongst teachers. This, however, is directly related to teacher education programs. The lack of diversity amongst students in teacher education programs then contributes to the homogenous identities of present teachers. Thus it is essential that post-secondary institutions and the Ministry of Education work together to not only attract diverse populations of teachers but also to ensure their success.

In regards to future areas of study, it becomes clear that greater information is needed on the role that teacher education programs play in preparing pre-service teachers for teaching in diverse settings and the extent to which their own personal experiences influences this. Furthermore, the research should seek to examine how this can be

achieved in post-secondary environments which lack exposure to diversity. It is proposed that a study examine the effects of offering non-traditional placements to pre-service teachers and the extent to which this influences their level of preparedness to teach in diverse settings. A longitudinal study that explores how pre-service teachers' perceptions of White privilege change through their teaching experiences after graduation would also pose interesting results. This type of study would also be valuable for teacher education programs to see how effective their programs were in preparing these pre-service teachers for their future practices as teachers and the practicality of the information they learned.

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## **Appendix A**

### Interview Questions

1. How do you perceive White privilege?
2. How do you believe White privilege influences your role as a prospective teacher?
3. How has your teacher education program influenced your understanding of White privilege?
4. What role does White privilege play in teaching in a diverse setting?
5. How has your teacher education program prepared you to teach in diverse settings?
6. What would you like to add to this discussion?

## Appendix B

### Consent Form

My name is Whitney Taylor and I am a student in the Master of Education program here at Lakehead University. As part of my degree, I am required to complete a thesis. I am conducting a study on pre-service teachers and White privilege. Participants of this study will be asked participate in an interview that should require no more than 30 minutes of their time. The interviews will be audio recorded then transcribed. Only those on the research team will have access to the recordings. Some questions require the discussion of sensitive information pertaining to race and ethnicity. All information will remain completely confidential and pseudonyms will be assigned to ensure confidentiality. The results of the data will be used in the writing of a thesis but no subject's identity will be revealed nor will the data be traceable back to the participants. Data will be securely stored on Lakehead's Orillia campus according to the requirements of Lakehead University's Research Ethics Board, and then destroyed. Should you wish to withdraw from the study at any time, you have the ability to do so without penalty. You will be notified via email of the availability of the findings. The findings will be accessible through the Lakehead University library.

**In signing this consent form, I acknowledge that I have read this consent form and cover letter understand the nature of the study: what I am being asked to do and the potential harms associated with it, and that I can withdraw at any time without penalty.**

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**Signature**

---

**Date**

**In signing this consent form, I understand that the interview will be audio-recorded, and I consent to this.**

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**Signature**

---

**Date**

**In signing this consent form, I understand the risks and benefits associated with my participation in this study.**

---

**Signature**

---

**Date**

## Appendix C

### Survey Monkey Questions

1) Are you currently enrolled in the two-year consecutive Bachelor of Education program at Lakehead University?

Yes No (If No, this is the end of the survey)

2) Please select your sex

Male Female Do not wish to disclose

3) Please select your ethnic background. If more than one, select all that apply.

Caucasian

Hispanic or Latino Black or African American

First Nations, Inuit or Metis

Asian or Pacific Islander

Do not wish to disclose

Other (Please Identify):

4) Do you wish to be entered into the gift card draw?

Yes No

5) If selected yes to the above question. please enter an email through which you can be contacted:

6) Are you willing to participate in a brief (30 minute) interview about topics related to race and racial issues as they arise in your teacher education program?

Yes No

7) If selected yes to the above question, please enter an email through which you can be contacted:

## Appendix D

### Cover Letter

Dear Potential Participant,

My name is Whitney Taylor and I am a graduate student at the Lakehead University Orillia campus within the department of Education. For my thesis, I am conducting a study entitled Pre-Service Teacher's Perceptions of White Privilege in a Two-Year Teacher Education Program. The purpose of the study is to investigate how pre-service teacher's perceptions of Whiteness and White Privilege influence their role as prospective teachers and their ability to teach in racially diverse settings. As you are a teacher candidate in the two-year consecutive Bachelor of Education program, your opinions are highly valuable and I would like to invite you to participate in this study. While there are no direct benefits, your participation will contribute to research that is intended to inform Lakehead University's and other teacher education programs. Your participation is voluntary and you have the right to refuse participation in any part of the study and may withdraw without penalty at any time. The study will involve your participation in a 30 minute interview that will be audio recorded and in signing the consent form, you agree to this recording. The recordings will only be available to those directly involved in the study: Dr. Seth Agbo and myself. All information pertaining to this study will be securely stored for a minimum of five years and will remain confidential and anonymous. To ensure confidentiality and anonymity, a number will identify participant's data and a pseudonym will be assigned when referring to participant's comments within published results. As this study addresses sensitive racial issues, it is possible that participation may induce some emotional distress but appropriate measures will be taken to decrease the risk. The summary of results will be made available to participants through the thesis, which will be available for reading in the Lakehead University library. Participants will be notified of its availability through the email in which they originally expressed interest in the study. Thank you for your interest in participating in this study, your time is greatly appreciated. Should you have any questions or concerns please do not hesitate to contact the co- investigator Whitney Taylor at wtaylor4@lakeheadu.ca or the principal investigator Dr. Seth Agbo at sagbo@lakeheadu.ca. This study has been approved by the Lakehead University Research Ethics Board. If you have any questions related to the ethics of the research and would like to speak to someone outside the of the research team please contact Sue Wright at the Research Ethics Board at 807-343-8283 or research@lakeheadu.ca.

Thank You,

Whitney Taylor  
Co-Investigator

## Appendix E

# PARTICIPANTS WANTED



**A study investigating pre-service teacher's perceptions of white privilege is seeking students currently enrolled in the two-year consecutive Bachelor of Education program at the Lakehead Heritage Place campus for participation in their study. The study requires selected students to participate in an individual 30-minute interview taking place at the Heritage Place campus during the month of February. Interested candidates may contact Whitney Taylor at [wtaylor4@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:wtaylor4@lakeheadu.ca) for further information. Those who express interest will be emailed a survey to complete prior to selection to provide background information necessary for sample. Please note that not all those who express interest may be invited to participate.**

*All those who express interest and complete a brief pre-interview survey will be entered into a draw for a \$50 gift card!*

**Appendix F**

Hi Dr. B.,

I am a Masters of Education candidate here at the Lakehead Orillia campus. I am currently conducting a study on Pre-Service Teacher's Perceptions of White Privilege. My sample involves teacher candidates currently enrolled in the two-year consecutive Bachelor of Education program at the Lakehead Heritage Place campus. In order to reach my target sample, I have been advised by my committee members to contact you in regards to sending an email out to all two-year BEd students and faculty (to share with their students). I have attached a poster that outlines my study and invites students to participate. I have also included a sample email that can be sent to students below. Please let me know if this is a possibility, Your assistance is greatly appreciated.

Thank You,

Whitney Taylor

Sample Email:

A graduate student is seeking participants currently enrolled in the two-year consecutive BEd program at the Lakehead University Orillia campus for a study regarding race and racial issues as they arise in their teacher education program. Participation involves a brief 30 minute interview scheduled to take place during the month of February at the Heritage Place campus. Interested participants are invited to complete a short survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/G89Q8X7>. All those who complete the survey and express their interest in participating will be entered into a draw for a \$50 gift card. Further information can be found on the attached poster or by contacting Whitney Taylor at [wtaylor4@lakeheadu.ca](mailto:wtaylor4@lakeheadu.ca). Thank you for your consideration.