

Building Community Through Asset Mapping in an Alternate Route to Licensure Program

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Teacher preparation programs in the U.S. have adopted social justice approaches in their work. However, it is necessary to investigate how teacher preparation programs foster an asset orientation in teacher candidates—particularly as Alternative Routes to Licensure have increased in popularity. The current investigation was an interview study of teacher candidates' experiences after completing an asset mapping activity as part of their field experiences. Participants consistently described how the activity helped them to foster relationships with their students through (a) making connections, (b) humanizing students, and (c) community scaffolding. We explore the implications of these findings for teacher preparation research and practice.

Keywords: asset mapping, interview study, teacher preparation

As teacher education programs in the United States have adopted social justice and equity informed approaches to teacher preparation (e.g., Agarwal et al., 2010), it has been documented that teacher candidates (TCs) and inservice teachers continue to hold deficit views of or carry unchallenged biases and stereotypes about both the students and the communities they serve (da Silva Iddings & Reyes, 2017; D'Haem & Griswold, 2017; Kwok et al., 2020). This demonstrates that social justice teacher education is difficult, and these difficulties may be compounded within Alternate Route to Licensure (ARL) programs that are inconsistently designed and have shortened timelines to licensure (Davies & Bansel, 2007). When TCs and inservice teachers carry their biases into classroom and schooling spaces, they can cause significant tension within communities and can cause learners and their families to feel unheard or misunderstood (Zeichner et al., 2016). Regardless of the impetus, it is necessary for teacher education programs to ground their conceptualization of social justice teacher education in

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their teacher preparation practices (Kapustka et al., 2009). In the last decade in the United States, ARL programs experienced as much as a 40% increase in enrollment while traditional programs saw a corresponding decline (Partelow, 2019). Thus, it is important to explore how these temporally shorter programs can foster asset-based attitudes to combat biases that TCs may hold.

This study is framed through an asset-based approach, both of our TCs and of the youth, families, and communities they may go on to serve (Moll et al., 1992). This asset-based approach is situated within a structured field experience assignment as we recognize that Reyes and colleagues (2016) and other researchers (Gomez, 1994; Wiggins et al., 2007) have demonstrated the power of preservice experiences to combat bias and allow for more meaningful community development. Moreover, there is evidence that course assignments can facilitate connections between university teacher preparation course work and field placements (McDonald, 2008). However, there is a need to continue to investigate the activities teacher preparation programs use to intentionally combat bias and foster democratic classroom practices as others have reported risks of field experiences reinforcing the biases that TCs may bring with them into preparation programs (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Salter & Halbert, 2019).

The purpose of the current interview study (Maxwell, 2013) was to explore how an asset mapping

field experience informed TCs' self-reported practices. We wanted to know, what are TCs' lived experiences in an asset mapping field experience? How do TCs understand this experience's relationship to their teaching practices? We report this study as an opportunity to introduce and explore asset mapping as one potentially innovative tool that holds promise in supporting teacher educators in moving toward realizing their missions of equity and social justice.

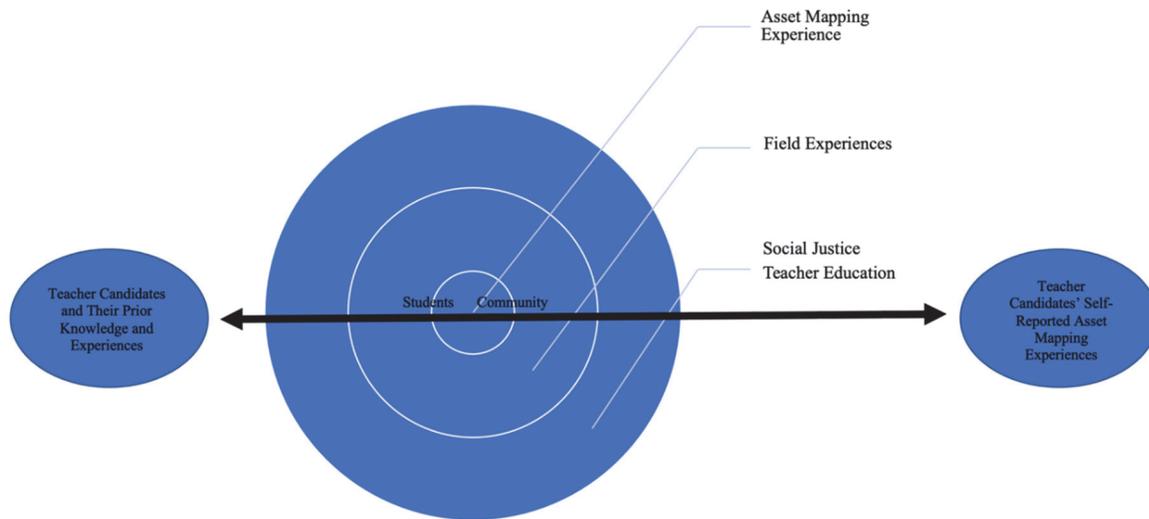
Conceptual Framework

In order to explore the research questions outlined above, our conceptual framework¹ (Ravitch & Riggan,

2017) includes field experiences as a means of fostering social justice practices in TCs in an ARL program—specifically, an asset mapping experience. Figure 1 represents how we conceptualized this study including the previous research on asset mapping, our TCs' prior knowledge and experiences, research on community field experiences, and TCs' self-reported experiences during the asset mapping activity. TCs' prior knowledge and experiences are presented on a continuum with their self-reported experiences during the asset mapping study. Next, we review the topical research relevant to the study before grounding our work in our theoretical framework on funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992; Moll & Greenberg, 1990).

Figure 1

Visual Depiction of the Conceptual Framework for this Study



Literature Review

To frame our study, we elaborate on social justice teacher education (SJTE) broadly before examining the research on community field experiences and asset mapping more specifically.

Social Justice Teacher Education

Research on SJTE is sprawling. A cursory search of Google Scholar revealed over 3,000,000 hits for this search term at the time of this writing. As the construct has gained popularity, it has also been misappropriated. While a comprehensive review of the work on this topic is well beyond the scope of the current study, for the purposes of this manuscript we will briefly trace the theoretical roots of the construct before providing an operational definition that we used for this study. We use Dover's (2013) conceptualization of social justice education because of her attention to the various theoretical roots that have fed this extensive body of literature, and we specifically home in on Moll's work on

¹The terms "conceptual framework" and "theoretical framework" are often used interchangeably in the field. For the purposes of this manuscript, we are using Ravitch and Riggan's (2017) definition of conceptual framework that refers to the overarching argument put forward through the different elements of the manuscript including the literature review, theoretical framework, and methods.

funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992) to help explain how we conceptualized asset orientation.

SJTE is grounded in frameworks such as culturally relevant pedagogy (Ladson-Billings, 2009), culturally responsive pedagogy (Gay, 2010), humanizing pedagogy (Freire, 1970/2000), democratic education (Dover, 2013), and asset-based approaches (Moll et al., 1992). In brief, these frameworks espouse the importance of understanding students as individuals, learning about diverse cultures, making curriculum relevant, disrupting inequitable power structures, and valuing students' and families' background knowledge and prior experiences. Paris and Alim's (2014) work on culturally sustaining pedagogy is the most recent extension of these frameworks and emphasizes sustaining the cultures of students while also maintaining a critical stance on them as well. McDonald (2008) applied the notion of social justice to teacher education specifically:

Social justice teacher education programs intend to integrate social justice across the curriculum, making the social, political, and cultural structures that underlie inequity fundamental to learning to teach ... Such programs prepare teachers with knowledge of societal structures that perpetuate injustice and with skills and strategies for taking individual and collective action aimed at minimizing institutional oppression. (p. 152)

Research on SJTE has focused on many different topics including sexuality and gender (Jones & Hughes-Decatur, 2012; Rands, 2009), ability (Lalvani & Broderick, 2013), hip hop pedagogy (Akorn, 2009; Emdin, 2016), and responses to neoliberal policies (Wiener, 2007). However, it is important to keep in mind that SJTE has been misused and has even leveraged harm on students of color (Souto-Manning & Emdin, 2020). Thus, it must be implemented thoughtfully and critically to ensure it is not used to uphold the very systems it is purported to disrupt. For the purposes of our manuscript, we utilize Moll and colleagues' (1992) funds of knowledge approach because it most closely aligns with our definition of asset orientation, which we elaborate on in the next section of this manuscript. However, to further ground this work, next we describe how field experiences have been used as a vehicle for SJTE. Specifically, we situate our research within the context of community-based field experiences which are most closely aligned with an asset-based approach to students and families.

Community-Based Field Experiences. There is a long history of community field experiences within the

larger literature on clinically rich teacher education. Of note is the concept of a community teacher, "an accomplished urban teacher who develops the contextualized knowledge of culture, community, and identity of children and their families at the core of their teaching practice" (Murrell, 2000, p. 340). A community teacher can produce results in the development and achievement of their students as a result of their skill set and expertise. Murrell noted, "university students who co-participate in community settings develop a broad and situated view of teacher competence and effective practice than those who merely do course reading" (p. 344). Thus, field experiences are an important part of developing community teachers.

More than a decade after Murrell's (2000) germinal work, Kretchmar and Zeichner (2016) generated the idea of Teacher Preparation 3.0 programs that, "value community expertise, emphasize place-based learning, and prepare community teachers who are knowledgeable of the communities in which they teach" (p. 428). They noted that these programs must shift power and knowledge to value community and family members. In one study, Zeichner and colleagues (2016) engaged community members as mentors to TCs in two teacher education programs through panels, geographically based small group conversations, and a one-credit field-seminar course and course connections. As a result of this community-based experience, TCs repositioned families as allies, translated knowledge into action, and influenced the way they began their first year of teaching thus confirming Murrell's (2000) work. Zeichner and colleagues (2015) have also advocated rethinking how TCs and university faculty liaise with communities and schools as part of this effort as well and who is an "expert" in teacher education.

Factors Mitigating Community Field Experiences. However, even when clear learning goals are attached to field experiences, and the TCs are open minded, field experiences may not deliver the intended curriculum and leave TCs feeling overwhelmed (Salter & Halbert, 2019). This dissonance could broaden TCs' perspectives or confirm deficit assumptions of their field experience contexts. Salter and Halbert found that TC experiences in field placements were influenced by both the goals of the field experience and TCs' conceptualizations of them. The participants believed they possessed the "necessary experiences" (p. 12) to be culturally responsive teachers, which presents a challenge for teacher educators to reframe preconceptions of their responsibilities. This work informed our careful design of our own asset mapping experience to support TCs' curriculum and address their preconceptions including

“resilience in encountering new environments” and “taking risks and shifting perspectives that challenge self-concept” (p. 14) to avoid reinforcing deficit assumptions or superficially altering those assumptions. Through the asset mapping project, we attempted to address TC anxiety about confronting bias, and our goal was to “focus on process rather than right answers ... to support non-linear processes of transformation” (p. 14). Through dialogue with peers, faculty, cooperating teachers, and their students, TCs were able to reflect on their experiences and develop their identities as professional learners.

TCs’ preconceptions of what is required of teachers and teaching are influenced by their own experiences as students in schools, and this identity adds a layer to their development into reflective practitioners. In Barnes’s (2017) study, TCs were assigned a community inquiry project alongside their practicum and methods course with the goal of considering how familiarity with the community could inform their curriculum. The participants had difficulty conceptualizing that place is fluid and, as a result, they perpetuated the assumption that schools are separate from communities. In their international study, Harfitt and Chow (2017) found evidence of skills and knowledge acquisition learned from community-based placements that are fundamental to 21st century teaching such as “personal and professional qualities like learner-centeredness, a passion for teaching, social awareness, critical and creative thinking, life-long learning, and risk taking” (p. 128). Despite a common belief that these are positive learning experiences, some of the TCs questioned how such community-based projects were beneficial to teacher preparation. Thus, we understood that TCs’ prior knowledge and experience would mitigate the asset mapping activity and would require careful conceptualization and scaffolding.

Asset Mapping as a Scaffold for Teacher Candidate Learning. Community-based field experiences can help TCs avoid developing deficit views of the communities in which they work (Zeichner et al., 2016) when they are structured in a way that fosters community-readiness in addition to classroom-readiness (Salter & Halbert, 2019). Being “community ready” relates to TCs’ readiness to engage with the community as well as “with the development of their own dispositions, knowledge, and skills” (p. 15). In this section of the literature review, we elaborate on two of these methods: community mapping and asset mapping. Community mapping allows TCs to reframe their understanding of the region in which they will be teaching (Ordoñez-Jasis & Jasis, 2011) and to “discover, gather,

and analyze a rich array of resources from a specific geographical area” (Dunsmore et al., 2013, p. 238). This gathering of information and data through general ethnographic methods allows the mapper to see what is important to students and students’ communities. They engage with a community that they may never have been a part of, which bridges the divide between the TCs’ backgrounds and experiences and that of the students (Córdova & Matthiesen, 2010). Tindle and colleagues (2005) identified two types of community mapping: concrete mapping and abstract mapping. Concrete mapping resembles a scavenger hunt, whereas abstract mapping is completed through Internet research. Community mapping is grounded in theories of kinesthetic learning, authentic learning, and problem solving which is what we used in the current study.

When community mapping is done from a place of honor and respect and with a stance of countering deficit views and dismantling systemic oppressions, the process of community mapping becomes asset mapping (Amsden & VanWynsberghe, 2005). By entering a community to look for funds of knowledge that include community-based literacy, community social connections, and familial knowledge and skills, TCs learn to leverage “community resources” and “organize classroom instruction that far exceeds in quality the rote-like instruction these children commonly encounter” (Moll et al., 1992, p. 132). Asset mapping must be carefully designed and supported to avoid becoming “poverty porn” (Giroux, 2011; Mooney & Hancock, 2010) in which the “normality” of middle-class lives are contrasted with dysfunctional working-class families” (Mooney & Hancock, 2010, p. 16). Thus, an asset orientation is central to this work.

Asset mapping has demonstrated several other potential possibilities such as changing teachers from community outsiders to community members through shared experiences (Tredway, 2003); increasing learning, interest, and motivation in TCs (Tindle et al., 2005); and removing “cultural and linguistic barriers” allowing TCs “to view language through new lenses” (Ordoñez-Jasis, & Jasis, 2011, p. 192). Ordoñez-Jasis and Jasis’s study, however, was the only empirical study that concretely demonstrated asset mapping’s ability to inform pedagogical instruction in the classroom. Borrero and Sanchez (2017) and Jackson and Bryson (2018) conducted studies on asset mapping with TCs, both framed through culturally relevant pedagogies. Borrero and Sanchez (2017) found that asset mapping was effective at building community, fostering self-reflection, and supporting students and teachers in learning about one another. Jackson and Bryson

(2018) found that asset mapping effectively built community and cultural knowledge, developed “conceptions of self and others by highlighting the causal relationship between the community and the school” (p. 116), and built effective and caring relationships. According to the literature reviewed above, shifting TCs’ preconceptions of students and communities can be difficult. In the current study, we sought to extend this body of knowledge by analyzing an additional method (i.e., asset mapping) that is explicitly meant to counter deficit perspectives that TCs bring to preparation programs with them. Furthermore, we aimed to support TCs in extending their asset-based understanding of students and communities by drawing on the funds of knowledge they gained through the asset mapping experience and enacting those funds of knowledge into pedagogies and curricular content that are qualitatively different from what they were teaching prior to the asset mapping experience, which the literature reviewed above also demonstrated to be difficult. Next, we explore the theoretical underpinnings of our asset mapping activity.

Theoretical Framework

Funds of Knowledge

The structure and culture of school is often in opposition to the culture and structure of students’ households. Classrooms are often treated as isolated from the rest of the community, while households exchange what Moll and Greenberg (1990) call “funds of knowledge” (p. 322). These funds “are not possessions or traits of people in the family but characteristics of people-in-an-activity” (p. 326). Thus, they are recognizable while members of the community are engaged in activities. These funds of knowledge do not only consider “visible, apparent knowledge where contexts of application, such as cooking a meal, are ubiquitous, but more latent, hidden knowledge displayed in helping or teaching others or as part of the families’ production” (p. 326). Moll and colleagues (2005) expanded on this understanding to define funds of knowledge as “historically accumulated and culturally developed bodies of knowledge and skills essential for household or individual functioning and well-being” (p. 72). These skills and bodies of knowledge encompass both the visible and hidden functions of everyday life. As Moll and Greenberg (1990) pointed out, historically, children are more involved in creating their learning in households than they are in creating their own learning

in classrooms; at home “knowledge is obtained by children, not imposed by adults” (original emphasis; p. 326). In the context of this study, the goal was to help TCs understand the value of funds of knowledge (i.e., an asset orientation) and the value of knowledge attainment rather than imposition.

The funds of knowledge framework has two purposes: to oppose pervasive deficit assumptions about historically marginalized groups and “to better inform the instructional practices and enhance the learning experiences of diverse students” (Rodriguez, 2013, p. 89). Deficit thinking “posits that students who fail in school do so because of alleged internal deficiencies (such as cognitive and/or motivational limitations) or shortcomings socially linked to the youngster—such as familial deficits or dysfunctions” (Valencia, 1997, p. xi). Moreover, deficit thinking has been connected to racial superiority and white privilege (Oakes et al., 2018). However, an asset orientation recognizes the institutional elements related to student success and challenges deficit thinking. When TCs develop an asset orientation, they view students’ home cultures, lived experiences, and funds of knowledge as literacies or “ways of knowing” (Morrison, 2017, p. 184). Students’ abilities to speak multiple languages, code switch (Auer, 2013), and use “cultural knowledge to cross borders” (Morrison, 2017, p. 184) are examples of ways of knowing that are sometimes viewed by teachers as deficits rather than assets. To accomplish these twin purposes, teacher preparation programs “emphasize the presence of knowledge, skills, and strategies among students that [are] produced in settings beyond the school—and, therefore, beyond the immediate view (and appreciation) of their teachers” (Rodriguez, 2013, p. 90). This endeavor entails having TCs reflect on their own positionality and how it informs their relationships with students. When referring to positionality, we recognize that “one’s knowledge is inevitably incomplete and situated” because of epistemic gaps that cause one’s perspective to be generated from “only a subset of the total informational content of the respective situation” (Simandan, 2019, p. 130). For the purposes of the current study, we were most interested in how TCs could learn about students’ cultural backgrounds via an asset mapping field experience and to view their students more holistically.

Methods

The current study was an interview study (Maxwell, 2013) of the self-reported experiences of TCs after

completing an asset mapping activity as part of their field experiences. For the current study, we focused specifically on the experiences of our TCs within the asset mapping activity and how TCs reported that these experiences pertained to their instruction in their class-rooms. We followed all human subjects ethics proto-cols including avoiding undo coercion of our partici-pants.

Research Context

The current study was set within the context of an ARL program in summer 2016. In the program associated with this study, TCs completed two courses (one on classroom management and one on secondary teaching methods) that intentionally incorporated constructivist pedagogy (Moshman, 1982; Piaget, 1977) and democratic teaching practices (Apple & Beane, 1995) which are aligned with SJTE practices. These concepts were explicitly taught to candidates both theoretically and in practice through modeling. In their seminar associated with their 150-hour practicum, asset mapping

was connected with both constructivism and democratic teaching. The seminar also required the TCs to write daily reflections on their experiences in the program and on how they built relationships with students.

The practicum operated as a free summer enrichment opportunity for local middle school students (i.e., rising Grade 6, 7, and 8 students) called Summer Academy². TCs completed the remainder of their coursework while teaching full time in a local school in the ensuing three years. Southwestern State University, the university that offered the ARL program, is a doctoral-granting university that serves approximately 30,000 students (citation withheld to preserve confidentiality). More than half of these students identify with historically marginalized racial and ethnic backgrounds (see Table 1) and the university and studied community are often considered to be among the most ethnically diverse in the country. The local school district—Desert School District— was equally diverse (see Table 1). A charter school organization was serving an increasing population of students in the region and was the setting for Summer Academy (see Table 1).

Table 1

Demographic Information for Southwestern State University, Desert School District, and the Summer Academy School Site

Cultural Group	Southwestern State University	Desert School District	Summer Academy School Site
American Indian or Alaskan Native	0.3%	0.4%	
Asian	14.1%	6.3%	3.9%
Native Hawaiian/Pacific Islander	1.0%	1.6%	
Black or African American	7.5%	14.1%	17.2%
Hispanic/Latino	25.0%	46.5%	41.2%
White	36.1%	24.5%	27.9%
Multiracial	9.3%	6.5%	7.7%

Asset Mapping

The asset mapping assignment was student-driven, meaning that TCs elicited help from students by draw-ing upon their funds of community knowledge. Stu-dents were positioned as the teachers in this activity (see Appendix), and TCs asked their students what places came to mind in their community if they wanted

to participate in one of the following categories: (a) commerce; (b) religion, faith, and belief systems; (c) transportation; (d) health and wellness; (e) politics, activism, and community building; (f) education, learning, and self-improvement; (g) leisure activities; and (h) arts and creativity. The goal was for pairs of TCs, who together chose one of the topics above, to

²All names of people and places are pseudonyms.

engage with authentic community activities and participate in students' cultures. The categories were purposefully broad to provide the opportunity to explore chosen topics without much direction.

The assignment required TCs to talk to students and their families to find out where they experienced or participated in the assigned topic. They visited at least five locations within the community related to the topic and filled out an asset mapping log. For instance, the politics, activism, and community building group talked to students in each of their classes to determine how they and their families engaged with those aspects of community life. This group had a particularly challenging time because many of the students did not understand what they meant by activism, so they spent some time talking to students about causes that mattered to them and their families. The students suggested that the TCs visit two community centers, an arts center, the Y.M.C.A, and a center that supports individuals once they leave the prison system. The TCs visited each of

these locations, spoke with the staff, and learned about resources available to families in the community. The TCs then reported their findings to the class using pictures from the locations, and many of them told their students about their experiences. After the presentations were completed, the class finalized a community map with one significant location from each topic.

Participants

Thirteen TCs completed coursework and the practicum experience in summer 2016; two additional TCs started the program but did not complete it. Of the thirteen TCs who are included in the study, four are men and nine are women. Two TCs are Latinx, two are Black, and nine are White (see Table 2 for self-reported demographic information). While Southwestern State University had rich diversity in its student body, TCs were still predominantly white and female which is reflected in our participants.

Table 2
Participant Demographic Information

Participant Name	Content Area	Gender	Ethnicity
Alyssa	English Language Arts	Cisgender Female	White
Ashley	Science	Cisgender Female	White
Austin	English Language Arts	Cisgender Male	White
Eve	Social Studies	Cisgender Female	White
Felicity	English Language Arts	Cisgender Female	White
Haley	Social Studies	Cisgender Female	White
Kayla	Math	Cisgender Female	Black
Lucy	Social Studies	Cisgender Female	Latina
Maya	Social Studies	Cisgender Female	White
Nolan	English Language Arts	Cisgender Male	Black
Samuel	Science	Cisgender Male	Latino
Stanford	English Language Arts	Cisgender Male	White
Taylor	Social Studies	Cisgender Female	White

Data Collection

Data collection included semi-structured interviews (Merriam, 2009) with TCs at the beginning and the end of Summer Academy. Interview questions focused on TCs' beliefs, working with diverse students, teaching practices, and the asset mapping activity. Semi-structured interviews were chosen so that similar data were

collected, but researchers were provided the opportunity to ask follow-up questions to get a complete understanding of participants' lived experiences during the asset mapping activity. In all, approximately 14.5 hours of interview data were collected with the 13 TCs.

Data Analysis

We conducted multiple rounds of emergent coding (Saldaña, 2009) to explore our participants' experiences with the asset mapping assignment. In qualitative research, codes and themes are actively constructed (Hays & Singh, 2012). Our analysis was driven by our research questions, and by our own positionality as social justice teacher educators. Initially, the first and second authors conducted an open coding of all interview transcripts. After coding was complete, they created a "key points" data analysis memo for each participant highlighting their self-reported experiences during the asset mapping experience and their beliefs about students and the community. Using a combination of process coding—which includes observable and conceptual action—and values coding—which reflect the participants' values, attitudes, and beliefs—the authors created a matrix of the various themes present in the data. This matrix helped us to identify how the experience of relationship building was repeated across the interviews. We then used the larger experience of building relationships to generate the subthemes of making connections, humanizing students, and community scaffolding. The first and second authors then met to discuss recurring ideas they were seeing in the data across the 13 memos. As part of this process, they discovered that TCs were not connecting community mapping to their instruction which was in stark contrast to the literature we had used to inform this study. These authors then reviewed all of the TCs' lesson plans in the process of discrepant case analysis (Maxwell, 2013). The first author then used these memos to synthesize the findings. The second author read this synthesis to confirm its accuracy.

Limitations

We understand that the brief nature of our program (i.e., five weeks) may have limited our understanding of how the TCs experienced the asset mapping activity. We encourage other researchers to conduct longitudinal studies of these field experiences that exceed five weeks and are situated in contexts different from the current study so that the field can generate a deeper understanding of how these asset mapping experiences support TCs.

Findings: Building Relationships, Building Community

The most consistent experience reported throughout participants' interviews was fostering relationships with students throughout the asset mapping activity. Below we expand on what these relationships looked like with verbatim evidence from the interviews.

Building Relationships

Almost all of the TCs whom we interviewed after the asset mapping assignment described how it built relationships between them and their students. Within the theme of building relationships, three subthemes emerged: making connections, humanizing students, and community scaffolding.

Making Connections. The asset mapping assignment created an opportunity for TCs to make connections with students outside of those already being established in their daily classroom interactions. Kayla described how it helped her connect with her middle grades students:

I guess it could help me understand my students' backgrounds a little better and help me relate to students better. For example, with the [City Art Center], when one of my students recommended that to me, I came back and told her that I went there and she seemed very excited.

The asset mapping experience was structured so that middle grades students were positioned as the experts, and TCs were asked to draw from students' knowledge of their community. When TCs conveyed to the students that they had learned something from them or could relate to things they liked, the TCs perceived that it fostered relationships between them and their students. Felicity elaborated further on how she experienced these relationships:

That was actually the most helpful thing I've ever done. And I will actually make sure I do something like that in my own class with my own students. It gave me a whole new perspective of where these kids come from ... But I feel like the students should've seen me there. I felt like that would have been a great rapport builder.

At the same time that Felicity described how she perceived that the asset mapping experience built her relationships with students and how it could be further leveraged, she also distanced herself from "these kids."

Stanford explained how the experience built relationships for him:

I think it's super important to be involved in what the students are involved in, even if that doesn't just mean showing up. I went to a lot of high school sports games and the students were so surprised to see me ... Just seeing your students in the community and them seeing your face. And when they ask you why you're there, you can say, "Because I care about you and was excited to come watch you play soccer" or whatever. That builds immediate rapport.

Stanford's reaction to the asset mapping activity was similar to Felicity's in that he recognized the power of the process to build relationships with students. However, the TCs' abilities to interrogate their own positionalities in relation to their students' lived experiences and identities appears to be limited. Both Felicity and Stanford seemed to recognize the importance of being visibly involved in their students' communities, but they both also seemed to miss the opportunity to find where students' competencies and funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992; Moll & Greenberg, 1990) were coming from based on the places they visited. For both Felicity and Stanford, the element of visibility and interacting with students and/or their families was critical to fostering rapport.

Some of the TCs recognized that the asset mapping experience could make them and their delivery of content more relevant to their students because the TCs drew on their students' rich knowledge of their community's assets. Maya explained this sentiment, "I think it maybe gave me some ideas of what's relevant to the kids. Things that we could discuss or they might understand or have in common. Connect, see a little bit of their daily personal lives." Nolan expressed a similar reaction to his asset mapping experience:

You know, those little moments that you have with kids when they're like telling you about their day, where you can talk about things. I think that's important because it means that the kids understand that you can see where they're coming from and you validate where they're coming from. So I wouldn't use the asset mapping as in directing kids to places unless it's kind of one of those places where they should be directed to, but it's more about like where are you and how can it make your learning and your school environment more relevant to you.

Nolan's point here is that the purpose of the asset mapping activity was not to help students by learning about

resources that they could be directed to, but for the TCs to become the learners and develop the ability to recognize their students' funds of knowledge and community assets. This distinction is nuanced but important in order to avoid savior approaches to communities (Chubbuck, 2010). Samuel, however, did convey a savior view after participating in the asset mapping experience:

I think it was kind of an eye-opening experience. Because, you know, it's one thing to see the kids and then it's another thing to actually see maybe where they live or where they have to go socialize or where they go for activities, or like services ... At least on this side of town, [it] opened up my eyes to, hey, man, these kids have all these hardships. So when they come into school you better treat them nicely ... So I think it's been really beneficial in that sense that you kind of empathize with them.

It seems that the asset mapping experience taught Samuel to feel bad for his students but did not fully foster an asset orientation in this TC in which he recognized the rich backgrounds and prior experiences of his students. However, he did seem to express a feeling of connectedness to his students.

Humanizing Students. Interestingly, at least two TCs noted how humanizing (Freire, 1970/2000) the asset mapping experience was for them. Haley captured this partnership and humanization when she explained, I learned that you feel like you know these students because you have them in your class ... but you know nothing about their life. What they're actually doing. What their families are like. What's important to their families. So the asset mapping was really interesting because you think you know someone and then you learn that they have like this other interest. And they might not be the best student in your class, but then you learn that they're in two choir bands and they go to this church and that church and they play five instruments. And they have this whole other life outside of school. Or you have one student who comes in, "Oh, I'm tired, I'm tired." Oh well they play a sport and they have a part time job. You know? ... It's nice to see their life outside of school. Because you figure when they're in front of you that's the only thing that should matter, when really they could have a million other things going on in their life, just like you.

In this excerpt from her interview, Haley conveyed a more nuanced understanding of students' lives outside

of school including the social barriers that could influence their performance in the classroom (e.g., part-time work). She also effectively recognized the funds of knowledge some of her students have such as the fact that they play several instruments and are talented musicians or singers. Lucy expressed a similar sentiment:

So we discussed this in class, just the fact that these places that we went to are places that anyone could go to. It doesn't matter if you have money or not, anyone can go to In-N-Out [Burger]. Using that to talk to your students and build the relationship with them like, "Oh my gosh, I love In-N-Out." Like, "You go there all the time," or like, "What movie did you watch this weekend?" It helps you in trying to build a good relationship with them, to know where they go, to know where they hang out. We are just like our students. I mean, I go to In-N-Out, I go to Cane's, my husband loves going to the movies. I take my kids all the time. Just for them to see you like that, to see that you are also a human being just like them. That will help your relationship with them.

Lucy thus recognized that this experience humanized her with her students because she stopped viewing them as different and started recognizing their humanity.

Community Scaffolding. Austin brought up an interesting point about how his asset mapping experience played out with members of the community, "And then we could also talk with the people who were there and have a further discussion, which I think was beneficial." Nolan echoed this sentiment when reflecting on what he learned from a conversation with a community member at the local music center:

I also learned what the kids don't do. So I went to go talk to this guy at the Music Center. He's talking about how there's no local bands around here and he doesn't know why . . . I'm like, hm, well, why don't we have any local bands [here]? Is that something that the kids would actually be interested in? And what is standing in their way for them to actually do those things?

Nolan continued by explaining how this conversation changed his thinking around integrating student interests into the classroom. He began to think about what students may not have access to in the community and how he could support them in realizing the agency that they possess. Thus, this community member's input further supplemented his thinking around his students' funds of knowledge and possibilities for their growth.

Conclusion

Through this study, we sought to determine what ARL TCs' self-reported experiences in an asset mapping field experience were and how TCs made sense of these experiences in relationship to their reported practices as teachers. The findings seem to somewhat support earlier recommendations that carefully scaffolded field experiences can support asset orientations to PK-12 students (Haberman & Post, 1992), but they more meaningfully demonstrated that engaging in asset mapping could develop a sense of relationship between TCs and the students they teach. The findings also add to the limited literature on field experiences in ARL programs. The findings did not confirm that asset mapping had any connection to TCs' classroom instruction.

The primary empirical contribution of our study is how this asset orientation manifested as relationship building between the TCs who participated in this study and the middle grades students attending Summer Academy. While other studies have demonstrated that TCs made connections between community mapping and curriculum planning, our TCs did not. Rather, TCs focused on the relationship building aspects of asset mapping with few references to actual implementation in teaching their content. This finding was contrary to the asset-orientation findings of Moll and colleagues (1992), who found that when teachers enter a community looking for funds of knowledge, they will begin to leverage community resources and integrate them into the classrooms. Although our TCs felt as though the asset mapping activity helped them to get to know students in a holistic way—what Moll and colleagues have described as "thick" and "multi-stranded" relationships (p. 133)—these relationships will need to be sustained over time. Thus, the asset mapping activity described began a dynamic and longitudinal process of sense making in which TCs are moving toward seeing a larger, systemic picture of their students and their teaching context (Philip, 2011). In this way, the asset mapping project is one experience among many that may move TCs toward being educators who see both the individual student and the systemic nature of education within a specific community context.

Discussion

As ARL programs increase in number in the United States (Partelow, 2019), it's important that research on these programs also keeps pace to determine how they are supporting TC growth—particularly because these programs tend to be shorter in duration and their design

varies from program to program (Davies & Bansel, 2007). Moreover, many TCs may carry harmful biases and stereotypes about students and families into the classroom (da Silva Iddings & Reyes, 2017; D’Haem & Griswold, 2017; Kwok et al., 2020). The brief nature of ARL programs makes it challenging to disrupt these deficit views, and field experiences have been shown to reinforce these stereotypes (Anderson & Stillman, 2013; Salter & Halbert, 2019). Thus, it is particularly important to explore how field experiences in ARL programs can be used to foster asset orientations in TCs. Our study demonstrated the power of an asset mapping activity to foster relationships between TCs and their students.

While we were pleased with how our TCs leveraged the asset mapping experience to build relationships with their students, humanize them, and use community resources, these TCs did not integrate the knowledge they gained from this activity into their curricula. Moreover, some of our TCs still harbored savior views (Chubbuck, 2010) about their students, and others did not recognize their students’ funds of knowledge (Moll et al., 1992). It seems as though our findings support those of Baily and Katradis (2016) that teacher candidates’ social justice beliefs move in a Z-wave pattern back and forth. If SJTE programs are going to “prepare teachers with knowledge of societal structures that perpetuate injustice and with skills and strategies for taking individual and collective action aimed at minimizing institutional oppression” (McDonald, 2008, p. 152), more community-based experiences and other scaffolds such as readings and reflections will be necessary to support these fluctuating beliefs and move TCs beyond their beliefs to action. Our TCs did not use their knowledge of students, families, and communities to act. We encourage other teacher educators working in ARL programs to consider the goals of their field experiences and ensure that they plan backward carefully from these goals to ensure that theory of action and scaffolds are clearly aligned. Otherwise, SJTE programs could end up leveraging harm on the very population they are reported to support: PK-12 students.

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Appendix

Asset Mapping Assignment Description

The goal of the community mapping exercise is to support teacher candidates as they get to know the community in which their students live. The assignment will be a part of the seminar component of the course, and it will be student-driven. Pairs of teacher candidates will go out into the community and observe positive aspects of their students' culture. Ideally, the explored area will be in [the area where the summer program occurred]. However, if your students lead you outside of the immediate area, that is absolutely acceptable. Eight topics will be explored:

- Commerce
- Religion/faith/belief systems
- Transportation
- Health/wellness
- Politics/activism/community building
- Education/learning/self-improvement
- Leisure activities
- Arts/creativity

The categories are purposefully broad to give you the opportunity to explore these areas without too much direction, and there may be overlap among some of the topics. For example, if a group explored cuisine, they may focus on different types of restaurants and grocery stores, but they also may visit students' homes or a local park for a cookout.

Your assignment is to talk to your students and their families to find out where they experience your assigned topic. You are to visit **at least 5** locations within the community related to your topic, fill out the asset mapping log, and take a picture with your partner/group at each location. You will upload your photos to [Learning Management System] so the rest of the cohort can see your progress.

Once you have experienced at least 5 locations, you will create a brief, 10-minute presentation on the positive things that you learned about the culture of your students and their families. With the exception of the first seminar meeting, each week two groups will present their findings and **choose one location** that they feel best exemplifies the positive aspects of the students' culture. After the presentations on the final seminar day, we will finalize our community map with one location from each topic. Then, during your [other course] on Thursday, the entire cohort will follow the map to see the 8 amazing places that were discovered (this may change depending on the weather and activities in your other course).

First submission received April 16, 2021
 Revision received January 23, 2022
 First published online February 21, 2022