Subject: Equity & Excellence in Education - Decision on Manuscript ID UEEE-2020-0022

Date: Saturday, November 21, 2020 at 9:11:44 AM Eastern Standard Time

From: Equity & Excellence in Education

To: Carrie Rood

Dear Dr Rood:

Thank you for submitting your article titled "Working the cracks: Teacher identity and resistance" for consideration for publication in Equity & Excellence in Education (EEE). The editorial team and external reviewers have given your article careful consideration for general publication in the Journal. The reviewers are very supportive of your manuscript, but have recommended revisions before it can be accepted for publication in the Journal. The reviewer comments are included at the bottom of this letter.

We are very excited about this promising article. With that said, there are important concerns that need to be addressed in a revision to make the article even more powerful. We ask that you seriously examine the suggestions and comments given then use these to improve your manuscript. We understand that reviewers and editors sometimes offer opposing advice and/or offer recommendations that you may think are counter to the purpose of your manuscript. Thus, we do not expect you to enact everything that is recommended. However, we do believe the excellent advice offered can be used to improve the quality of your manuscript, and we trust that these suggestions will be helpful to you overall. The recommendations may seem extensive; however, this reflects serious engagement with an article that we believe, with careful revision and reworking, has the potential to inform theory, research, and/or practice.

When resubmitting your manuscript, please honor the 6000-8000 word limit, inclusive of references. Also, please be sure to include references from scholarship previously published in the Journal. Accepted manuscripts typically include 4-6 references to articles published in the Journal.

Along with your revised manuscript, we ask that you include a letter that describes which recommendations you did use and why and which recommendations you did not use and why. This letter is very important as we make our final decision about the disposition of your manuscript. The reviews were generally supportive of your manuscript, so if you address the concerns noted well, there is a strong probability that your manuscript will be accepted for publication. All changes should also be clearly highlighted in the manuscript. Lastly, manuscripts "age" for both you and us; thus, we need you to send us your revision in a timely fashion so that you do not have to restart the review process.

Please note that although this invitation to revise and resubmit indicates strong editorial interest in your work, it does not guarantee that your manuscript will be accepted for publication. Editors must ultimately examine a nexus of factors when making final decisions regarding a manuscript’s disposition.

We appreciate that you considered EEE an appropriate venue for your work and we look forward to receiving your revised manuscript. We hope you will suggest that others submit their work to the Journal as well. We wish you the best in your continuing research.

In community,

Drs. Jamila Lyiscott, Keisha L. Green, Justin A. Coles, & Esther O. Ohito

Editors-in-Chief
To start the revision, please click on the link below:

*** PLEASE NOTE: This is a two-step process. After clicking on the link, you will be directed to a webpage to confirm. ***

https://mc.manuscriptcentral.com/eee?URL_MASK=e01a17d0eea548f083141614892024dd

This will direct you to the first page of your revised manuscript. Please enter your responses to the comments made by the reviewer(s) in the space provided. You can use this space to document any changes you made to the original manuscript.

This link will remain active until you have submitted your revised manuscript. If you begin a revision and intend to finish it at a later time, please note that your draft will appear in the “Revised Manuscripts in Draft” queue in your Author Center.

Because we are trying to facilitate timely publication of manuscripts submitted to Equity & Excellence in Education, your revised manuscript should be uploaded by 05-Jan-2021. If it is not possible for you to submit your revision by this date, we may have to consider your paper as a new submission.

Thank you for considering Equity & Excellence in Education as an outlet for your work.

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author:

Reviewer: 1

Comments to the Author
This is an excellent article. I suggest just a little more explication of what it means to have a DSE identity. Is there a checklist of some sort or do teachers just have to say "I have a DSE identity"? I realize this is tricky since it's an identity question. But what would happen if a medical modelist said, "I have a DSE identity"?

Reviewer: 2

Comments to the Author
Thank you for the opportunity to read and analyze this study. I feel this study is important, includes strong revealing data and can make an interesting contribution to the field of DSE if the author can address some of the aspects highlighted below. The introduction is strongly framed within and equity framework that aligns well with the journal Equity & Excellence in Education. Yet, we need more concreteness so that we can really build upon this potentially important work. I outline my comments, which are meant to push the manuscript forward and ensuring it clearly makes the contribution it can make, organized by the sections of the paper.

Literature section
The section titled literature section is both literature and theory:

- In describing identity, a deeper engagement with constructs of identity and the extensive work that has been done around identity in teacher education. Specifically, I suggest that the author explores the idea of identity more in depth as explained below.
In the explorations of identity, it might be helpful to look into the distinction of “identity-in-discourse” and “identity-in-practice” which is more action oriented (Varghese et al., 2005, p. 39 and on).

Could the author directly engage with the multiple, at times opposite, views on the issue of identity in teacher education? What is the main contradiction at the heart of identity work in teacher education? Some work argues that the focus on identity has provoked a detriment of a broader discussion about knowledge-base to teach productively (not as a dichotomy of course but maybe explore briefly this debate for those who might wonder as they entertain your manuscript).

I also think the role of imagination, or the envisioning of utopias in enacting DSE, will be useful in the section on special education and DSE if briefly brought up here and in the discussion. One route might be Maxine Green (1997), who puts it as imagination that “allows people to think of things as if they could be otherwise” (p. 2). In this Green (1997) continues speaking of looking into alternative realities. Another idea that could be helpful here and that might be closer to the author’s framework is Greenstein’s radical versus reductionist ideas of inclusion; Or, maybe even Gutierrez and Vossoughi’s (2010) publication in the Journal of Teacher Education where they discuss the notion of “rising to the concrete” in relation to imagining social futures. The author can go in the direction that best works in this context to situate the larger overarching view of the possibilities the study entertains. This does not need to be extensive.

Similarly, can the author say a little more about the framework of resistance? Particularly, I feel we need some empirical study on which yours is building. Is there other empirical work using this framework? I am more familiar with the work in resistance and agency from cultural historical theoretical frameworks, but it will be helpful to go more in detail on the perspective the author is taken since this is so central to the article. So, include some of the literature the manuscript is built upon and, again, to which it is making a contribution. You can then go back to this in the discussion to better situate your study and clearly explaining how you are adding to what is already in the field. The author does state on page 5 that the author is offering an “overview of literature on teacher identity and resistance” but the empirical work on which the author builds is not very clearly outlined.

Also, on page 8, when the author states “the impact DSE pedagogy on their practices”, still more concreteness might be needed about what this DSE pedagogy is referring to. This can be short, and I know this is a difficult endeavor, but we need to figure out what it is exactly that makes most of a difference so that we can all benefit from that and learn from it.

Methods and data sources

In reference to the participants, the table in the Appendix is essential so I feel maybe add within the manuscript as a table (if space allows for this)? It is relevant that two of the participants were part of minoritized communities and one of them was at the intersection of disability and ethnically diverse. Also, three of the participants were disabled themselves. This is of great relevance for the study, but this is not mentioned except for in this table. Can the authors offer any insights into these multiple identities and how that might have impacted the process of resistance the author aims to document?

What were the particularities of the programs they attended? As a teacher educator in related areas myself, I always struggle for that balance of exposing candidates to DSE while at the same time preparing them for the special education world (i.e., beliefs, terminology, or practices) that dominate our schools today. The author does recognize this but not much detail is provided as to how their programs enacted this balance (i.e., “Further, teacher educators who employ this critical perspective often equip graduates to navigate the world of special education, but at the same time, understand, be critical of, and co-opt the processes within it”). Also, later on, as part of the first section of findings on page 12, the author states “having a clear conception and deep understanding of the mechanisms of special education within their district or school.” How did they acquire this? Offer a little more information about the teachers’ programs in the methods: How
long, toward what degrees/certifications were the candidates working to? Is it possible to offer more of a
glimpse into their preparation work and the kinds of contexts where they were now enacting their learning
and continuing to develop those identities?

- In the data analysis section, what does the author mean by “supporting documents”? What is the
specific data the author collected and analyzed? As it is right now it seems it was all discursive texts from the
interviews. Is there anything else?

- Also, I understand how the author generated the category of “working the cracks”, but the way the
author arrived at the other three subcategories is unclear. Maybe go a step further in this section on page 12
“The codes that surfaced (and that I constructed) from this analysis related to the language, situations,
perspectives, ways of thinking, events, activities, and relationships that afforded participants’ opportunities
to enact their identities. Throughout the rounds of analysis, I began to unearth the overarching frameworks
for resistance”; what were the codes and were these the roots of the “overarching frameworks for
resistance”? A table, or an appendix, might suffice in clarifying this, if space is an issue.

Findings

The experiences the author describes in the findings are highly problematic, worth reporting, and provide
good insights for all of us. The author provides extensive, and very interesning data. I just have some
comments that the author could attend to that might deepen the way data is discussed and provide an
opening for clearer discussion.

For the findings the author organizes them into these categories:
1. Working the cracks: “I have to find a way to work within it, even if it is tough.”
a. Reframing and exposing by challenging taken for granted assumptions.
b. Supporting family’s advocacy efforts.
c. Remaining silent.

- Right before the findings, the author explains “participants consistently referenced knowing and using
special education law” to support their beliefs, is this the first finding, 1a? If so, the title could be
reformulated to more clearly connect these two as there is a lot of connection to the education law in this
subsection and it seems to be at the cores of this 1a sub finding. It seems indeed this subsection is about that
as shown in the closing of the section on page 19: “Participants’ manipulation and utilization of the
procedures and law of special education toward their own goals”. Maybe use the special education law to
name the subsection.

- Is this part from the analysis “the participants descriptions of the strategies they used for supporting
students, parents and families fit similarly within this framework for understanding” connected to finding
subsection 1b? I am trying to create the schema of the manuscript from analysis to findings in my mind for
cohesiveness and coherence. I think going through this process and deepening the internal organization of
the manuscript in this way will help readers.

- Other comments/ideas: On page 19 Yvonne’s idea to send the child to a paraprofessional in a different
class could also be seen as being segregation but it is situated as a path “to support the child’s continued
inclusion within her school.” I would recommend mentioning this/engage with this tension briefly. Did this
eventually make a difference? Was the child in the end inside Yvonne’s class more consistently? If the author
knows how this event unfolded, was the child taken to the other school?

- Parallel to the two participants who are from minoritized communities, some of the examples are
situated alongside race or ethnicity and disability. Language also plays a role in the section on page 22:
“because you know she missed pieces of it because her English ... you know she couldn’t quite catch up with her English. Her English is beautiful, but she is still working on it. But in a meeting like that it was just very intimidating for her.” However, the author does not engage with these important topics in the context of disability very much, despite it being so relevant for the focus of the study.

Discussion

- Since you do offer some implications here, maybe rename as Discussion and Implications?

- I would also encourage the author to engage with race/ethnicity, language, and disability in the discussion since it does surface in the study and the data.

- Also, once the author goes in brief over some of the literature on which this study builds in the introductory section, the author can then go back to it and explain how this article builds upon/expands the body of research.

I hope these ideas, taken within the author’s direction and preferences, help in moving the manuscript toward making a contribution to DSE and education in general.

Reviewer: 3

Comments to the Author

Overall, the manuscript is a timely and important piece that, if revised, has the potential to positively impact the teacher education field by demonstrating critical ways that Disability Studies in Education (DSE) tenets drive educators to question, confront, and dismantle oppressive practices - particularly in special education. There are ways in which the manuscript can be strengthened, specifically what the author is stating is a phenomenological approach to methods (and the thinking behind the methods) is weak in its current form. I have provided several recommendations to improve the framework and methodology so that there is cohesiveness between the two. Thank you for writing this manuscript and for pushing the educational field forward to consider what it means to resist dominant practices while "working in the cracks."