From Seeds to Systems: A Qualitative Study of Global Majority Teacher Educators of Color Advancing Global Justice, Critical Pedagogy, and Sustainability in Higher Education

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Abstract

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Within teacher education, the imperative to foster critical global perspectives has emerged as a vital component of preparing educators for the complexities of an increasingly interconnected world. This qualitative multiple case study, grounded in critical pedagogy, critical globalization studies, and teacher agency, explores how four Global Majority teacher educators—individuals who identify as Black, Brown, Asian, Indigenous, dual-heritage, and/or racialized—understand, enact, and sustain their commitments to global justice within U.S. higher education contexts.

Drawing on contemplative thematic analysis (Bhattacharya, 2025) and Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism, this multiple case study analyzes interview data and course artifacts to surface the pedagogical, ethical, and political labor these educators carry. Findings reveal justice as a deeply embodied and relational stance—expressed through practices of discernment, refusal, ethical subversion, and care. These educators navigate institutional constraint while cultivating student agency and preserving their own integrity, often through quiet yet powerful acts of resistance.

The study synthesizes these findings into a set of generative insights that function as guiding principles—not prescriptions—for justice-oriented teacher education. These include: honoring discomfort and complexity, refusing institutional co-optation, cultivating protective pedagogical space, and aligning justice commitments across roles. These principles are grounded

in lived practice and invite reflection on how educators might design programs, relationships, and curricula with ethical clarity and sustainable vision.

This research contributes to the field of teacher education by offering a grounded, relational understanding of global justice as practice—deeply situated, emotionally demanding, and spiritually rooted. It challenges conventional frameworks of social justice teacher education and invites new conversations around sustainability, agency, and ethical alignment for educators committed to transformation across time, space, and systems.

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To my family: including my parents, husband, children, siblings, nieces and nephews. A special thanks to A—who made *this* finish line possible. (To many more!) Thank you all for the millions of ways you love, support, inspire, try and teach me.

Dedication

For the children of Gaza.

And for those who are doing something about it.

And for my parents, H and Zay - may this be a dua (prayer) for you.

Chapter 1 - Introduction

In an era marked by increasing interconnectivity and global challenges, the concept of global justice has become pivotal in shaping teacher educational practices and policies. This study aims to explore how global majority teacher educators, who are deeply committed to global justice, understand and enact this concept within their unique sociopolitical contexts and positionalities. By focusing on a select group of 4 such educators, this research will employ thematic analysis and critical interpretivism to uncover the nuanced ways in which their commitments to global justice inform their professional roles and responsibilities.

The first research question examines how these educators critically understand global justice in relation to their sociopolitical realities. This inquiry seeks to reveal how their personal and professional experiences shape their interpretation of global justice and the implications for their teaching practices. The subquestion explores how these understandings translate into their roles as teacher educators, specifically how their conceptions of global justice inform their pedagogical approaches, interactions with students, and overall responsibilities.

A significant aspect of this study is the investigation of how these educators cultivate a sense of agency around global justice in their students. This involves analyzing the strategies and practices they use to empower/activate/encourage students to engage with global justice issues critically and actively. Furthermore, the study will explore the sources of sustenance for these educators, investigating what motivates and sustains their ongoing commitment to global justice amidst the challenges of their professional and personal lives.

Through thematic analysis, this study will identify and interpret recurring themes and patterns in the educators' experiences and practices. Contemplative methods will be employed to reflect deeply on the educators' perspectives, fostering a space for critical self-awareness and

meaningful insights. Critical interpretivism will guide the analysis, focusing on understanding the contextual and power dynamics that shape the educators' views and practices.

Ultimately, this research aims to contribute to the field of teacher education by providing a richer understanding of how global majority educators navigate and promote global justice within their practice. By highlighting their experiences and strategies, this study seeks to offer insights into how educator commitments can be sustained and how their impact on students can be maximized, fostering more just and equitable teacher educational spaces.

Eurocentrism and Neoliberalism in the Making of a One-World World

Eurocentrism is the major organizing paradigm through which meritocratic and neoliberal discourses flow and shape how the production of knowledge is understood. This one, taken-for-granted, naturalized way of understanding the world politically serves a larger project of fitting all worlds into one: the One-World World. The One-World World refers to "dominatory or hegemonic 'Northern' strategies which naturalize mononaturalism and reduce indigenous realities to beliefs which may be discounted" (Law, 2015, p. 1). One-World World is anything but natural, as it fails to account for the multiplicity of experiences, or fractiverses (Law, 2015) of people the world over. This is evidenced in the ways that teacher education in general and standardized teacher testing practices and policies often perpetuate Eurocentrism through biased content, language preferences, pedagogical norms, cultural assumptions, implicit biases, and limited diversity in test development (Evans‐Winters & Twyman Hoff, 2011; Flynn, 2023; Sleeter, 2016).

At the same time many scholars of teacher education call for decentering Whiteness in teacher education (e.g. Matias et al., 2017; Salazar, 2018; Sleeter, 2017). Additionally, Andreotti (2012), in her work on critical literacy in global citizenship and development education,

identified “recurrent patterns of relationship, flows and representations between over-exploited and over-exploiting communities” (p. 197). Particularly helpful, Andreotti (2012) uses the acronym “HEADS UP” to represent these common practices of engagement and education:

> 1. Hegemonic (justifying superiority and supporting domination); 2. Ethnocentric (project one view, one ‘forward,’ as universal); 3. Ahistorical (forgetting historical legacies and complicities); 4. Depoliticized (disregarding power inequalities and ideological roots of analyses and proposals”; 5. Salvationsist (framing help as the burden of the fittest); 6. Un-complicated (offering easy solutions that do not require systemic change); [and] 7. Paternalistic (seeking affirmation of superiority through the provision of help). (p. 2)

Through “active engagement with oppressed and exploited groups” (Kirylo et al., 2010, p. 332) this study aims to help develop what Freire called conscientization: “the process in which men [and all genders], not as recipients, but as knowing subjects, achieve a deepening awareness both of the socio-cultural reality which shapes their lives and their capacity to transform that reality” (Freire, 1970, p. 51). Thus, this study seeks to highlight the perspectives, practices, and experiences of global majority teacher educators working within and beyond the U.S., including Canada and Chile.

The Global Majority

This study takes up Campbell-Stephens’ (2020) conception of “global majority" as a collective term that refers to people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or have been racialized as 'ethnic minorities'. Globally, these groups currently represent approximately eighty per cent (80%) of the world's population making them the global majority. At the same time these groups are minoritized and considered “subordinate to the imagined, but never defined, ‘majority’” (Campbell-Stephens, 2020, p. 2). This study takes

up “Global Majority” as a term in an effort not only to move these groups of people from the margins, but also to foreground and interrogate the structures that produce marginalization, specifically the historical and ongoing operations of systemic racism, white supremacy, and the relational power dynamics that shape educational institutions and knowledge production. “Global majority” seeks to capture the “added value” that global majority teacher educators potentially bring from their rich, diverse heritages. Additionally, it is global majority communities that most often bear the brunt of systems of injustice - locally and globally whether it be economically, environmentally or politically - emerging from histories of imperialism, colonialism and capitalism. While I use the term “global majority teacher educators” throughout the dissertation to reflect my political and epistemological commitments, I include “teacher educators of color” in the title solely for accessibility and academic searchability, as it remains a widely recognized term in US-based education research.

Considering how ideas and theories related to global justice are understood and applied by global majority teacher educators who bring rich histories of resistance, subalternity and the “authority of lived experience” (hooks, 1994, p. 81) can afford meanings that may deepen and broaden larger teacher education discourses (Mansur & Friling, 2013). This points to long-standing questions in teacher education research that require sustained and persistent attention around who is doing the research, with whom it is being conducted and how the research is being conducted in ways that amplify voices, promote equity, and prioritize global justice in teaching and learning for the most vulnerable, locally and globally.

Critical Globalization in the Context of this Study

I take up critical globalization as a concept within critical global studies that offers a framework for teaching about the challenges and complexities of living in an increasingly

interconnected world while also inviting students to be informed, engaged and responsible, globally. I advocate for the development of critical globalization orientations, perspectives and approaches in teacher education so that educators can be better equipped to address the global dimensions of teaching and learning and can contribute to the development of thriving K-12 students, communities and societies "locally" as well as thriving people, communities and societies around the world. This study is an effort to expand the notion of critical globalization in teacher education, centering the voices of people from communities most negatively impacted by it (Andreotti et al., 2008; Giroux, 2001; Robertson, 1992).

Background of the Problem

Teacher educators are called to meet the demands of an increasingly precarious world, with rising destruction of natural resources, an exploitation-based approach to economic development, widening socioeconomic inequality, genocide, deepening forms of oppression and the resurgence of ethnonationalism and fascist approaches of governance with rising political repression and unrest (Acosta & Abarca, 2018; Foa & Mounk, 2017; Lenton et al., 2019).

"Ethnofascism", as defined by political historian Roger Griffin (1991), emerges at the intersection of nationalism, racial supremacy and authoritarianism; ethnofascism emphasizes the primacy of a particular racial identity in defining a nation, it promotes exclusivism and supremacist ideas and policies. Furthermore, it promotes authoritarian regimes that prioritize the interests of the dominant ethnic or racial group (Griffin, 1991). This maps onto schooling and teacher education in stark ways given the hegemony of whiteness (Deckman & Ohito, 2022) that pervades it—in curriculum and textbooks, pedagogy and classroom practices, teacher recruitment and education, student discipline and control and school culture and climate.

Research on teacher education practices in light of the increasingly pervasive and multifaceted manifestations of these global challenges in daily life is relatively scant (Bruno-Jofre & Johnston 2014; Paine et al., 2016; Paine, et al., 2017). Despite an internationalization trend in higher education at the turn of the 21st century, teacher education programs lag behind according to a literature review conducted by Schneider (2007, as cited in Mahon, 2010). Developing global justice teacher educator pedagogy, not as an add-on, but as a defining feature of teacher education has yet to receive due attention (Mahon, 2010; Rock et al., 2016). This includes the development of global perspectives as well as capacity building in cross-cultural competence and critical inquiry (Mahon, 2010).

The discourse on what constitutes good teacher education itself faces many contradictions. For example, while some voices call for attending to cultural diversity and critical and culturally sustaining pedagogy (Aronson & Laughter, 2016; Boutte, 2018; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Hytten & Bennitez, 2008; Ladson-Billings, 2012; Paris & Alim, 2017; Sleeter, 2012), others call for more flexible expectations for those entering the field, stronger clinical and less university-based experiences, and quick route approaches to preparing teachers (Goldhaber et al., 2017; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Johnson & Birkeland, 2003; Kane et al., 2008).

Defining Globalization

This study takes up a conception of globalization that encompasses two of its forms that both interact with each other as they interact with systems of education. One conception of globalization is the "objective flows of people, policies, and ideas" while the other deals with the "discursive construction" of globalization that serves as an impetus for research, policy reform, and modifying teaching practices (Paine et al., 2016, p. 718). These two conceptions serve to capture the intra-active relationship between materiality and language that the world is shaped by

and that shapes the world. Globalization is also made up of processes with multiple actors imbued with the capacity to enact flows and disjunctures at different granularities with different degrees of reach and effect (Choat, 2018; Paine, et al, 2016). Finally, "globalization" helps to capture the notion that, according to Hytten & Bennitez (2008):

> The world is a web of relationships. To be truly effective, every effort to make a difference needs to be grounded in that broader analysis. Likewise, every effort to teach about the world also needs to be informed by the bigger picture. (p. 7)

Globalization and Teacher Education

O'Connor & Zeichner (2011) argue that Globalization in education is often reduced to two approaches in teacher education: preparing student teachers to prepare students for competition in the global marketplace *or* cooperation in solidarity with others against global systems of oppression. These contradictions and over-simplifications show up as an entangled mismatch of values, priorities and purposes in the work of teacher educators, creating a morally injurious experience.

At the same time, there are examples of teacher educators engaged in the work of global justice. Bigelow & Peterson, authors of *Rethinking Globalization* (2002), begin their book with a discussion of bias, language, and metaphors. According to them, the aim of teaching about globalization is to enable teachers to establish connections between everyday items like clothing, food, and toys and the unjust globalized production processes behind them. They advocate that by understanding these connections, as well as by developing a comprehensive analysis of the broader global system, teachers can be empowered to effect change. As both Bigelow and Peterson have experience as classroom teachers, their book integrates robust conceptual analyses with an extensive array of teaching activities and resources.

In my own experience as a graduate student in education through two masters and a doctoral program, I have taken only a handful of courses that even allude to globalization in a meaningful way. One course I took on Anthropology & Education had students research an educational system in another country, another course had us read David Hansen's (2017) *The Teacher and the World*. After that, the only two courses in my doctoral program that dealt with systemic injustice on a global scale, world history and centering minoritized voices were taught by Dr Daniel Friedrich and Dr Felicia Moore-Mensah, the first and second readers of this study, respectively.

The work of teacher educators is to help student teachers become good teachers. Critical pedagogy, broadly, posits that this work includes supporting student teachers in (further) developing commitments to oppressed and marginalized populations, and in preparing K–12 students to work, individually and collectively, to make the world more just. However, student teachers enter teacher education programs with varying degrees of understanding, interest, and investment in global justice. Some bring a deep awareness shaped by lived experience or prior learning, while others may hold deficit perspectives, harbor resistance, or view justice issues as irrelevant to their future classrooms. This variability presents a pedagogical and political challenge for teacher educators, who must navigate how to meet students where they are without reinforcing the very systems of inequality the work seeks to dismantle. Within this complexity, the role of the teacher educator expands to include cultivating critical consciousness, fostering ethical clarity, and expanding students' capacity to connect local practice to global systems of power.

Teacher education is a site where student teachers come in already being in relationship with and having particular orientations to the larger world. Student teachers allowed to *witness*

these relationships and interconnectedness, with clearer and sharpened analytical and interpretive capacities, can better serve their K-12 students in cultivating their own critical globalist orientations. For teachers and their students in the US, this would include conscientization of the role of the US in the larger world, challenging blind patriotism, engaging with difficult histories and understanding the role of the media and multinational corporations. Also, and importantly, it would include developing an understanding of the relationship between ideology, power and culture (Bartolomé, 2004) as well the development of counter-hegemonic discourses and practices to resist and transform oppressive ones (Darder & Miron, 2015).

A demonstration of teacher educators involved in this endeavor can be found in Bartolomé's (2007) research, which focuses on their endeavors to achieve ideological clarity with students in colleges of education. Student teachers juxtaposed their interpretations of inequality, for instance, with those prevalent in the dominant society. This comparative approach allows students to discern potential alignments, contrasts, or overlaps, thereby facilitating an examination of the underlying sources of their potentially tacit assumptions (Bartolomé, 2007).

Neoliberalism, Globalization and Teacher Education

Though it is well-established that formal education, including teacher education, is political and shaped by imbalanced relations of power (Fanon, 1967; Freire, 1970; hooks, 2003), technological developments risk increasing the speed and intensity of these imbalances. This is coupled with the effects of teacher education pedagogical and programmatic logics impacted by neo-liberalism including intensified public management approaches (Avalos & Razquin, 2017).

In education these logics materialize into particular standards, accountability pressures and teacher control that contrast starkly with how many teacher educators in university based settings view teachers and teaching (Avalos & Razquin, 2017). The systemic ways that teacher autonomy

is encroached upon - through policies and practices - are often interlocked and interconnected in ways that encroach on the self-sovereignty and dignity of multiple minoritized groups. Identifying and attending to the systematic ways that oppressive policies and practices are enacted can be effective in combating oppression (Riley & Mensah, 2023). Particular to teacher education this can include developing an understanding of the role of global capitalism in perpetuating oppression of minoritized communities as well as of teachers, including how it shapes modern subjectivity, teacher education spaces, schools and classrooms.

There are examples of teacher educators teaching against these neoliberal global technologies of control. Lupinacci et al. (2018) point out that teacher educators committed to anti-neoliberalism must consider the ways in which a logic of domination undergirds the unjust and destructive social and economic ideologies and policies that constitute it. They shared pedagogical strategies they use to challenge dualistic thinking, hegemonic perceptions, and false notions of independence.

Intersectionality and Teacher Education

Intersectionality offers a lens for understanding how systems of oppression operate along multiple axes simultaneously. It is also important to recognize that "oppression has many faces and that focusing on only one at the expense of others (e.g., class oppression versus racism) often elides the interconnections among them" (Kincheloe & McLaren, 2005). Given the problem of the centering of whiteness of teacher education and its trickle down effects into K-12 teaching and educational practices (Deckman & Ohito, 2020; Matias et al., 2017; Picower, 2009; Salazar, 2018; Sleeter, 2016), centering the voices of global majority teacher educators can offer insights, norms and practices needed to disrupt the (re)production of the multiple interlocking ways that this manifests in the teacher preparation experience.

Intersectionality refers to the interconnected nature of social identities, such as race, gender, class, sexuality, and ability, and how they intersect to shape individuals' experiences of privilege and oppression. In the context of teacher education, global majority teacher educators often contend with various overlapping identities and experiences of marginalization, shaping their perspectives, practices, and commitments. Research could explore how global majority teacher educators' intersectional identities inform their understandings of global justice, equity, and diversity in education, and how they incorporate intersectional approaches into their teaching, research, and advocacy efforts.

An instance of teacher educators actively working to refocus teacher education on the knowledge and experiences of intersectionally marginalized educators is evident in university based teacher educator Souto-Manning's (2018) initiative. In this study, a weekly Freirian culture was established in a school setting, involving one student teacher, nine teachers of color, and a white teacher ally in the most segregated state school system in the US, serving students from minoritized and low-income backgrounds. Souto-Manning collaborated with these educators in a series of critical cycles, including thematic investigation, identification of key themes, problem posing, dialogue, problem-solving, and transformative action. Over the academic year, these culture circles became intergenerational spaces of pre- and inservice teachers engaged in learning and unlearning, marked by collective agency, and sites for transformative action. Furthermore, teachers resisted notions that positioned them as mere technicists, challenging the traditional notion that the classroom of minoritized students is where knowledge about teaching and learning gets applied.

Teacher Education as a Site for Global Liberatory Praxis

Classism, racism, sexism and all forms of oppression are not essential characteristics "owned" by any particular person or group of people. Rather, they are enacted and (re)produced through flows and entanglements of policies, accountability measures, practices, discourses, standards, curriculum material, the organization of learning spaces - and through the bodies and words of educators and the communities in which they teach. This understanding allows for a grounded optimism. That is, if oppression can be (re)produced through these entanglements, it is in the entanglements that they can also be interrupted, disrupted and transformed.

This opens up a space for teacher educators to consider their own positions in these systems and for them to develop an acumen for enacting liberatory teacher education praxis that aims to liberate and empower both educators and students from oppressive structures and systems. It involves critically examining and challenging traditional educational norms and practices that perpetuate inequality and marginalization. Liberatory teacher educator praxis emphasizes the importance of fostering critical consciousness, promoting social justice, and creating inclusive learning environments where all students can thrive. This approach prioritizes collaboration, reflection, and action, with the goal of advancing equity, empowerment, and liberation in education. Developing liberatory teacher educator praxis can enable the discontinuation of perspectives and practices that produce injustice, and the continuation and/or bringing into fruition of perspectives and practices that produce justice.

Liberatory Affordances of the Practice-Based Turn in Teacher Education

An important consideration is that systems of oppression did not and do not spontaneously develop; nor are they deterministically static. These relations of power are historically rooted in material-discursive enactments that manifest in the present moment (Choat, 2018). This also

means that, relevant to the work of teacher education, it is through material-discursive enactments that global relational transformations can take place, including creating conditions that exceed the time and space of the enactments themselves.

I use "liberatory affordances" to emphasize the potential of a particular approach, practice, or concept to facilitate empowerment and social change in the development of "liberatory intellectuals" with the capacity to make meaningful choices in their lives (McLaren & Farahmandpour, 2001, p. 147). The term "liberatory affordances" suggests that certain elements within a system or framework offer possibilities for individuals or communities to challenge and transform oppressive structures and achieve greater freedom, agency, and justice. Liberatory affordances can exist within various contexts, including teacher education, where they may manifest as pedagogical methods, curriculum content, or institutional practices that promote critical consciousness, equity, and liberation for marginalized groups. These affordances enable individuals to envision and enact alternative futures that challenge systems of domination and work towards collective liberation and social transformation, locally and globally.

The practice-based turn in teacher education refers to a shift towards emphasizing practical, hands-on experiences and situated learning in teacher preparation programs. This transition, which began gaining momentum in the late 20th century and continues into the 21st century, prioritizes field experiences, reflective practice, and the integration of theory with real-world teaching contexts to better prepare teachers for the complexities of the classroom. This move places what teachers do at the center of teacher education. When reductively understood, this has been the impetus for many approaches within alternate route teacher education programs that define teacher "mastery" by a set of discrete practices such as those found in Doug Lemov's

Teach Like A Champion (2010, 2015, 2021) that contains 49, 62 and, in its most recent edition, 63 strategies considered necessary for "champion-level" teaching.

When expansively understood, however, the practice-based turn allows for the development of pedagogical reasoning and judgment, not separate from, but inherent to the development of practice (Loughran & Hamilton, 2016). It allows for an approach to teacher education that recognizes that a particular teacher action can be analyzed for its purpose, values, possible tensions, and consequences. Moreover, the pedagogical reasoning and intentions of the teacher can offer insights into the value differential of these actions (Biesta & Stengel, 2016).

Nganga's (2020) work with 17 student teachers exemplifies this. The teachers crafted various instructional activities rooted in critical multicultural education, such as meticulously examining hidden biases in children's books. Written responses from the student teachers at the start, middle, and end of the semester showed that while they initially lacked understanding and expertise needed for analyzing children's books for hidden biases, they acquired emerging capacities throughout the course, making them better prepared to integrate critical multicultural education into their future classrooms (Nganga, 2020).

Problem Statement

While collective action, policy reform, and community engagement are integral to the broader effort of dismantling racist policies and practices in education and beyond, teacher education holds its own unique responsibility in this endeavor (Cochran-Smith, 2004; Picower, 2009). Along with cultural responsiveness and anti-racism, by engaging future teachers with critical pedagogy, teacher education programs can help educators to recognize and contribute to dismantling systemic racism in schools and society through practices like curriculum design, classroom engagement and advocacy.

Numerous perspectives exist between the extremes of uncritical acceptance of globalization and calls for radical overthrow of existing systems (e.g., Noddings, 2005; Stromquist, 2002, as cited in Hytten & Bennitez, 2008). These perspectives acknowledge the significance of understanding the global landscape that supports the cultivation of critical thinking and commitments to global justice. Additionally, globalization features prominently in various disciplinary areas such as economics, political science and postcolonial studies.

Hytten and Bennitez (2008) argue that education's primary goal is to foster capacities essential for democratic belonging across local, national, and global lines. This includes promoting critical thinking, problem-solving, and engagement for collective welfare (Hytten & Bennitez, 2008). Critical pedagogy perceives the field of teacher education as holding untapped potential for fostering liberation, and offering a spectrum of envisioned futures; by offering a framework to critique teaching practices and societal norms, critical pedagogy encourages educators to explore and develop pedagogies that promote humanization (Kitts, 2022). That said, as a field, teacher education has been criticized for "more talking, conceptualizing, and theorizing, than doing, acting, or impacting" (Goodwin & Darity, 2019, p. 73) and though instinct, tacit knowledge and trial-by-error have their place in the work of teacher educators, a reliance on them alone no longer serves the growing needs of an increasingly complex world (Goodwin & Darity, 2019).

Paine et al. (2017) point to a global need for more research on teacher learning as a global concern as people, ideas and policy actors move across the globe. This need can extend to teacher educator learning. Recent years have shown a sharp rise in research on practice-based teacher education (Kavanagh & Danielson, 2020) accompanied by a rise in research on social justice in education (Zeichner, 2012) but not a lot of the latter shapes the former (Kavanagh &

Danielson, 2020; Zeichner, 2012). Thus, there is a gap between PBTE and social justice education, including global justice, meaning that research on what social justice looks like in practice is sparse.

Purpose Statement

The purpose of this study is to develop normative praxis for teaching about/ for/ towards global justice in teacher education. This will be done by exploring the pedagogical reasoning and judgment as well as the recollected experiences of a group of 4 global majority teacher educators committed to global justice. It is hoped that a broader, deeper and more nuanced approach to teacher education can be developed. By engaging in communal sensemaking it is also hoped that some of the common, and/or even inevitable tensions in global justice-oriented teacher educator practice can be better understood. By engaging participants in individual and group interviews and analyzing their submitted artifacts—including materials, pedagogical choices, and relational practices—I hoped to learn from their experiences as global majority teacher educators committed to global justice. Finally, and no less importantly, the work of global justice-oriented teaching done by global majority teacher educators can feel isolating. This study aims to uncover if and how these teacher educators sustain their commitments given the complex and daunting nature of the work. This would help develop visions of normative praxis for other teacher educators who share similar commitments.

Research Questions

1. How do 4 global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understand the concept of global justice within the context of their sociopolitical realities and positionalities?
    a. How do their understandings of global justice inform their practices, roles, and responsibilities as teacher educators?

b. How do they cultivate a sense of agency around global justice in their students?

2. What, if anything, sustains these teacher educators in their commitments and practice?

At the heart of this dissertation lies a multifaceted inquiry into the understandings and practices of global majority teacher educators who are deeply committed to advancing global justice, which is crucial in diversifying the discourse on education and justice. The focal point of this exploration revolves around understanding, enactment, and sustainability. Firstly, the study seeks to unravel the intricate web of meanings and interpretations global majority educators attach to the concept of global justice, both in their personal convictions and within the professional realm of education.

Secondly, it delves into the practical manifestations of their commitment to global teacher education, examining how these commitments are translated into pedagogical practices, curriculum design, and broader engagement with educational communities. This includes how they cultivate a sense of agency in their student teachers in sociocultural, organizational and pedagogical dimensions of teaching for global justice. Finally, the research aims to uncover the underlying factors that sustain and fortify these commitments over time, exploring the interplay between personal motivations, institutional support structures, and the myriad challenges encountered in the pursuit of global justice within teacher educational contexts. By addressing these dimensions, the dissertation endeavors to provide a comprehensive understanding of how global majority teacher educators navigate, embody, and sustain their dedication to global justice in the complex landscape of contemporary teacher education.

Rationale

In the face of genocide in Palestine, ongoing settler colonialism, accelerating environmental collapse, rising ethnonationalism, and deepening global inequality, teacher

educators committed to global justice are called to reckon with what it means to teach for justice across time, space, and systems. Within the framework of critical globalization studies and teacher agency, this work demands not only content knowledge, but also ethical clarity, political commitment, and the capacity to navigate contradiction and constraint.

Scholars argue that there is significant misalignment between the discourse surrounding social justice teacher education and its actual implementation (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015; Goodwin & Chen, 2016; Goodwin & Darity, 2019; Mills and Ballantyne, 2016). Considering that schools and schooling is often a site where inequities get reproduced, this points to a need for the formal development of knowledge, capacities and perspectives to enable teacher educators to actually do what they say they are doing.

Goodwin & Darity (2019) studied three teacher education journals from 2010 to 2016 across the US, UK and Australia and found only 76 out of over 1,700 articles spoke about teaching for diversity in teacher education, indicating a dearth of research on social justice teacher preparation. This is disconcerting considering worldwide concern with achievement and opportunity gaps, economic imperatives associated with under-served and under-educated youth, and global mobility and migration that affect classroom demographics across the world. The research that did focus on social justice teacher education found that teacher educators' primary focus was on teacher beliefs about their students and the social, political and economic contexts in which they taught. Goodwin & Darity identify these as "essential beginnings" but not enough (2019, p. 73). A significant gap was noted in pedagogical, sociological and social aspects of social justice teacher education, indicating that teacher educators needed more support in these domains. This study, in part, seeks to fill this gap.

Moreover, Goodwin & Darity (2019) discovered that only 4 out of the 76 articles addressed the topic of race, underscoring the necessity for teacher education programs to address the imperative of facilitating "uncomfortable conversations" and fostering ways for their predominantly White teacher candidates to confront issues of race in a self-reflective and transformative manner (Matias & Grosland, 2016, as cited in Goodwin & Darity, 2019). Supporting preservice teachers in reassessing and adjusting their perspectives on diversity has been recognized as a core challenge in teacher preparation (Cochran-Smith et al., 2015, as cited in Goodwin & Darity, 2019) including content specific areas, such as science teacher education (Mensah, 2013).

Teacher educators of the global majority are uniquely positioned based on their experiences within systems of oppression to offer valuable insights into the development of a global critical pedagogy but their voices and experiences are scant (Mensah, 2022). Teacher educators are in need of spaces dedicated to sustained and deliberate learning as “collective work where teacher educators would be able to speak together with a louder voice” (Goodwin & Darity, 2019, p. 74). This is even more salient for global majority teacher educators given the overwhelming Eurocentrism of teacher education.

Simplistic approaches to teacher education based on notions, for example, that “inquiry transforms practice” (Rosiek & Atkinson, 2005, p. 425), show little evidence of teacher learning that transforms their practice from the perspectives of the lived experiences and epistemologies of diverse “others” (King, 2008, p 1116). Though critical pedagogy calls for “active engagement with oppressed and exploited groups” (Kirylo, et al., 2010, p. 332) there is a dearth of research on the experiences, perspectives and practices of teacher educators who belong to these groups.

This study seeks to fill the gap between their knowledge, perspectives and practices and how preparing teachers for global equity is generally understood.

Significance

Teacher education is complex, in-between, meso-level, culture work (Giroux, 2005). Gloria Ladson Billings' definition of culture "encompasses worldview, thought patterns, epistemological stances, ethics and ways of being along with the tangible and readily identifiable components of human groups" (2017, p 143). It allows for attending to the complexity and dynamism of lived experience and serves as an in-between space for catching, interrupting, disrupting, and catalyzing flows of human actions in the world. Pedagogy, understood broadly, is about (re)considering relations between self, other and the world, recognizing the work of teacher educators as one location for the development of a sense of agency in (re)orienting "right relations" in the world.

Pedagogical content knowledge involves how an educator articulates the big ideas around an issue, their reasons for students to learn about them, the difficulties students have with understanding particular content and their knowledge of student thinking that influenced their approach (Loughran & Hamilton, 2016). This study seeks to explore what particular content global majority teacher educators teach around critical globalization and critical pedagogy, how they teach it and for what reasons with particular groups of students within particular contexts. It also seeks to explore the responses of students and other teacher educators. By focusing on the work of global majority teacher educators as reflective practitioners committed to global justice, this study seeks to offer a way for other teacher educators committed to global justice to develop "a vision for their own professional learning" (Loughran & Hamilton, 2016, p. 8).

This study is significant because it addresses a need for the development of sustained and deliberate learning experiences for global majority teacher educators particularly around the intersection of teacher education and globalization. Not only does it attend to the dearth of research on global justice grounded in practice, generally; by centering the voices, experiences and expertise of global majority teacher educators it offers valuable insights needed to develop critical pedagogical approaches to preparing all teacher educators with the knowledge, skills, competencies and perspectives needed for preparing teachers to teach for global justice.

Chapter 2 - Literature Review

In this chapter, I provide an overview of the literature on critical theory, anti-imperialism and critical globalization studies and global justice teacher education while holding teacher agency as a central consideration. This will include research about how multicultural teacher education, while being situated within the context of empire (Chavez-Moreno, 2021), is in some ways "halfway there" in regards to global justice. The literature survey also supplies scholarly discourse on the role of critical theory in teacher education. This includes "subaltern" articulations on the roles of educators and researchers in teacher education. Lastly, Chapter 2 provides a description and integration of the theoretical frameworks utilized in this study.

The primary focus of this inquiry is to explore how global majority teacher educators committed to promoting global justice perceive their roles in teaching for global justice and how these understandings shape their roles, responsibilities and practices. It also studies how they cultivate agency in their student teachers as well as how they maintain their practices in teaching about/towards global justice. Chapter 1 establishes the necessity of considering a multitude of perspectives in addressing the challenges and opportunities presented by an increasingly interconnected and multipolar world. It also establishes that global majority teacher educators committed to global justice can help to expand the field of teacher education to meet the opportunities and challenges that globalization brings, particularly in developing solutions to issues of global injustice. This review of literature seeks to establish a rich contextual backdrop for understanding the broader educational landscape in which global majority teachers operate. It helps situate how global majority teacher educators understand their experiences, their practices and challenges within larger theoretical frameworks and educational discourses. Furthermore,

this review seeks to frame concepts, practices and pedagogies relevant to the study along with their implications for global justice, broadly.

The central problem of this study involves the disconnect between teacher education and critical pedagogy (Kitts, 2022) as well as between practice-based teacher education and teaching for social justice (Zeichner, 2012). In an increasingly globalizing world, these challenges in teacher education position the field as, not merely having a zero effect, but implicit in the reproduction of injustice. There is an imperative to invite the perspectives and experiences of global majority teacher educators who enjoy "epistemic privilege" (O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011) to offer their insights on how they make sense of their commitments to global justice and their practice.

I draw on my conceptual framework (expounded later in this chapter) that combines critical theory, critical globalization studies and teacher agency as a tool for examining the literature. I used Google Scholar as a database to search for peer-reviewed articles from 2000 to the present using keywords such as: *global justice, multicultural*, critical pedagogy, anti-imperial*, (critical) global(ization) studies, neoliberalism, international*,* and *difficult knowledge*. All terms were combined with *teacher education*. I excluded articles that did not take place at least partially in the US as well as those that did not relate to the research questions in significant ways.

After reviewing numerous articles, I sorted and organized this review into four major themes: (a) multicultural teacher education; (b) difficult knowledge; (c) (Critical) Global(ization) Studies; and (d) how global-minded teacher educators sustain their practice. I begin with the existing research literature on multicultural teacher education for its engagement with diversity of people, places and ideas within the context of empire (Chavez-Moreno, 2021). Second, I

attend to the notion of difficult knowledge in teacher education as it recognizes that justice work calls for deep unlearning as much as it does deep learning. I then focus on (critical) global(ization) studies, anti-imperialism and teacher education because it attends to larger meta-structures and processes as well as more deeply engages with connecting the local and global. I finally focus on what the literature says about how (teacher) educators sustain themselves in the work. I conclude by bringing together these themes with my research questions and theoretical frameworks.

Multicultural Teacher Education

Deficit Discourses

Many studies have shown a preponderance of deficit discourses in multicultural teacher education. Lowenstein (2009) found that numerous strategies used in multicultural teacher education operate under assumptions that the white teacher candidates who make up the majority of the teaching force in the US simply lack cultural awareness, individualizing deficiencies while ignoring systemic, institutional and community factors that sustain the hegemonic influence of white cultural norms and values in education (Chang & Viesca, 2022; Lowenstein, 2009). Bartolomé (2007, as cited in Kitts, 2022) illustrates one of many efforts that challenge this deficit framing through a description of their work with student teachers, in which they compared their explanations of inequalities with dominant ones, identifying alignment, contrast and/or overlap allowing them to study sources of their unexamined assumptions. Stevick & Brown (2016) found that exposing student teachers to a range of social, historical and cultural contexts can help dispel deficit-based perspectives they have been acculturated into through dominant culture, allowing them to develop pedagogical and professional practice beyond their immediate experiences and

beliefs. While deficit framings serve to stifle voices, perspectives and a sense of agency of those targeted by them, they can also be challenged and resisted.

These deficit framings also apply to the ways of knowing of global majority people within academic research. Finding a noticeable absence of in-depth exploration of racialized and cultural ways of knowing within research literature on multicultural teacher education, Chang & Viesca (2022) advocated for the development of research that decentered white epistemologies. Along the same lines, Bernal and Villalpando (2002) argue that the "apartheid of knowledge" within mainstream academic research excludes diverse epistemologies, characterizing the research of scholars of color as “biased” and “nonrigorous” and neglecting the cultural resources that they bring. This points to a need to include research that reflects a larger range of racialized, cultural and epistemological perspectives that can contribute to the development of theory and practice within teacher education in ways that are answerable.

The above literature highlights the dominance of deficit discourses in multicultural teacher education, which this study seeks to challenge by focusing on global majority teacher educators. These scholars underscore the importance of decentering white epistemologies and including diverse racialized and cultural perspectives, aligning with my aim to explore how these educators understand, enact and sustain their commitments to global justice. By addressing the exclusion of non-dominant epistemologies, this section provides a foundation for understanding the systemic challenges this study’s participants face and the need for inclusive research that reflects their ways of knowing.

Saviorism

Converse to deficit discourses that shape perceptions of students and communities is the self-identification with benevolent saviorism often attached to teaching. Teacher educators can

enter into teacher education spaces looking to save teachers (Cariaga, 2023), teachers enter into schools looking to save students (Aronson, 2017) and teachers see their role as preparing students to save people around the world (O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011). Aronson (2017) argues that overly romanticized and depoliticized notions of teachers as superheroes serve to perpetuate implicit power relations and do nothing to challenge the structural status quo. Furthermore, considering that power imbalances exist globally and locally in interconnecting ways, active oppression persists when dominant groups fail to recognize it (McGaha, 2015; Roberts, 2007; Stevick & Brown, 2016).

Biesta et al., (2019) found that teacher beliefs about children, the role of education and the role of the teacher played a particularly important role in teacher agency. While some scholars recommend courses in critical whiteness studies and critical race theory that would help student teachers to unpack white supremacy (Aronson, 2017), other scholars call for resisting notions of teaching for justice as charity that not only perpetuate top-down inequitable relations of "savior" and "victim" but also do little to develop collective agency necessary for deep, engaged work necessary to transform inequitable systems (O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011).

The literature points to a need for teacher education that goes beyond personal dispositions and identity categories to examine broader social, historical, and institutional contexts, including the complicity of teacher education itself in reproducing inequity (McLaren & Farahmandpur, 2001; Souto-Manning, 2018). Sleeter (2012) shares her use of role play with student teachers being sure to create a role for "the system" to emphasize the problem is not in any one person but in the mechanisms at play. This points to the necessity of developing capacities in both teacher educators and student teachers to continuously question mechanisms within their practice and

beyond that diminish and undermine the worth of human life across social, political, and economic spheres (Kitts, 2022).

This connects directly to my research questions, which examine how global majority teacher educators understand, enact, and sustain commitments to global justice. Existing literature raises important questions about how such educators might resist saviorist logics while fostering agency in ways that are relational, ethical, and attentive to structural dynamics. These insights frame the significance of investigating how justice-oriented teacher educators approach their work and the pedagogical tensions they navigate in the process.

Neoliberalism

At the same time, teacher education is faced with increased standardization through the rise of alternative route teacher preparation programs, teacher evaluation methods, high stakes teacher certification exams and reductionist neoliberal mandates from accreditation agencies (Kitts, 2022). These standards primarily prioritize technical-rational skills that serve to stifle ideological critique while also emphasizing the acquisition of dominant discourses in psychology and child development, behaviorist approaches to student management, and "methods" courses in the development of pedagogical skills (Kennedy, 2015, as cited in Gaches, 2018; Kumashiro, 2015, as cited in Gaches, 2018) These banking approaches can often contraindicate the epistemic curiosity needed to continuously learn through experience, a propensity necessary for engaging with communities in solving issues of injustice (Katz, 2008, as cited in Kitts, 2020).

According to Sleeter (2012) once teachers begin their careers, they find themselves with limited time for researching and crafting curriculum that resonates with students. Experimental curriculum often fades away as the pressure to improve test scores mounts and teachers face heightened scrutiny to ensure they adhere strictly to the mandated curriculum and pace of

instruction. In a study examining new teachers trained from a critical multicultural perspective, Flores (2007) discovered that the schools where they were employed exerted pressure to disregard their commitments. This pressure was perpetuated through their senior colleagues, themselves overwhelmed by the standardized nature of curricula and testing (Roegman et al., 2021), and the institutionalized notion of an ideal student. Particularly in schools with underachieving students, teachers felt compelled to prioritize teaching to the test over showing responsiveness to the needs of diverse students despite administrative support and teacher ability to navigate standards (Berg & Mensah, 2014).

Gutiérrez and colleagues (2002) describe neoliberal reforms as "backlash pedagogy," highlighting how they create professional and legal risks for employing culturally responsive practices conflicting with purportedly equitable mandated uniformity. They emphasize that backlash pedagogies are not spontaneous events but rather products of backlash politics, which stem from ideological and institutional structures seeking to maintain privilege and power dynamics as historically marginalized communities make progress.

Taken together, this literature on neoliberalism highlights the structural pressures that constrain teacher agency and undermine the critical pedagogical practices central to global justice education. My research questions explore how global majority teacher educators understand, enact, and sustain commitments to justice within such contexts. This literature establishes the significance of examining how these educators navigate, resist, and reimagine their work amid dominant discourses and institutional mandates that often run counter to liberatory aims.

Ethnofascism

Sleeter (2012) argues that advancing teaching that is culturally responsive and justice-oriented requires both a stronger research foundation as well as political efforts to counter its marginalization. Resistance to culturally responsive pedagogy has been attributed to oversimplified understandings of what it actually is as well as to white fears of losing global hegemony. Furthermore, despite more recent gains in ethnic studies and anti-racist education, there has been an uptick in fascist, white supremacist, heteropatriarchal ideologies, with right-wing groups persistently obstructing racial justice efforts in education (Cariaga, 2023).

This literature highlights the challenges faced by global majority teacher educators in advancing culturally responsive and justice-oriented teaching. It emphasizes the need for both robust research and political action to counter resistance and marginalization. These challenges align with my inquiry into how these educators understand and navigate global justice, and what sustains them in their efforts amid ideological opposition.

To conclude, deficit discourses in multicultural teacher education do more than mischaracterize students and communities; they reflect a deeper epistemic and institutional alignment with whiteness that constrains what is seen as valid knowledge, experience, and capacity. While scholars continue to call for transformative pedagogies rooted in critical consciousness, such efforts often encounter resistance in the form of ideological suppression, institutional inertia, and superficial reform. These discourses not only shape how future teachers view their students, but also how teacher educators come to understand their own roles, responsibilities, and agency. This study emerges in response to such constraints by exploring how global majority teacher educators, positioned at the intersection of structural marginalization and epistemic insight, challenge deficit-based framings through their teaching and justice

practices. In doing so, the study seeks to illuminate how their perspectives and pedagogical labor offer vital counterpoints to dominant paradigms in teacher education.

Learning Across Disciplines

Gaps in Teacher Education

In a review of teacher education literature from 2010 to 2016, Goodwin & Darity (2019) found that teacher educators across contexts focused on developing personal knowledge (autobiography, philosophy of teaching) and contextual knowledge (children, school and society), but failed to focus on pedagogical knowledge (theories, methods and curriculum development), sociological knowledge (cultural relevance, social justice) and social knowledge (cooperation, democratic group processes and conflict resolution.) (Goodwin & Darity, 2019). Cochran-Smith et al., (2009) called for teaching preservice students about the social, intellectual, and organizational contexts in preparation for teaching for social justice. O'Connor & Zeichner advocated for the development of political finesse in students teachers that would allow them to manage school culture that resists counter hegemonic practices (2011).

This body of literature reveals that teacher education programs often emphasize personal and contextual knowledge while neglecting pedagogical, sociological, and structural dimensions essential to justice-oriented practice. These omissions present particular challenges for global majority teacher educators, who must often navigate gaps in institutional preparation while sustaining their commitments to equity and transformation. The absence of support for developing political discernment, curriculum critique, and relational praxis raises key questions for this study—particularly around how global majority teacher educators make sense of their roles, negotiate institutional constraints, and cultivate pedagogical approaches to global justice.

Attending to these gaps offers a foundation for investigating the knowledge, strategies, and orientations that shape their work.

Culture as Produced and Productive

According to the literature, understanding of culture as a phenomenon could help student teachers recognize the relationship between the causes and consequences of global economic disparities. Some scholars stress the need for student teachers to develop an understanding of culture as not just events and artifacts (Sleeter, 2012), but as fluid and socially constructed, shaping how one experiences the world (Kozleski et al., 2013; Villegas & Lucas, 2002). Other scholars contend that students should recognize how cultural and racial systems of domination contribute to the socioeconomic marginalization of specific populations, in turn impeding equal participation in the making of culture as well as in social and economic prosperity (Mensah & Jackson, 2018; O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011). The historical and cyclical nature of material exploitation, cultural othering, and marginalization of perspectives calls for the development of student teachers' acumen for recognizing how oppression is implicated, and can be interrupted, in both material and discursive ways in classrooms and the larger world.

Teacher educators found that their mostly white middle class student teacher populations grew up in US-centric K-12 schools, reinforced by the media and society; they had limited experiences with and carried stereotypical views of people of color (Boutte, 2018; Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Kitts, 2022; Mensah, 2009; Stevick & Brown, 2016). Gay and Kirkland (2003) found that their prospective teachers failed to critically examine the origins of their concepts of universality, the practical implications of how these concepts manifested in their classroom practice, or the potential conflicts between color-blindness and other educational principles like maximizing students' potential and leveraging their prior knowledge when teaching new

material. A primary objective in cultivating multicultural critical awareness in student teachers was to recognize that these beliefs and associated actions are culturally influenced and, when put into practice, can discriminate against students who do not share the same values and beliefs as their teachers. The development of preservice teachers' understanding of how sociocultural background shapes one's perceptions, experiences and actions in the world must also extend to include an awareness of the ways in which their own modes of thinking and being are intricately connected with their American identity in a global society (O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011).

The above scholarship emphasizes the importance of understanding culture as fluid, relational, and socially constructed, shaping both lived experience and systemic inequality. It points to the ways cultural frameworks, including Eurocentrism and colorblind ideologies, are embedded in educational practices and structures, reinforcing hierarchies that marginalize students and educators of the global majority. This body of work also calls on teacher education programs to move beyond superficial treatments of culture and instead cultivate deep critical awareness in prospective teachers, including reflection on their own sociocultural positionalities. These insights inform the framing of this study, which seeks to examine how global majority teacher educators understand and engage with culture as both produced by and productive of power, and how this informs their efforts to prepare future teachers for justice-oriented practice in a global context.

Learning to Teach Across Contexts

As a teacher "moves from justice as theory to justice as praxis" (Ladson-Billings, 2015 in Souto-Manning, 2018) they need to attend to an expansive understanding of context as it relates to teaching for justice. Context-specific teacher education entails preparing educators for particular environments like urban or rural schools, considering the multifaceted aspects of those

settings, such as people, politics, and cultures, and their interplay. Contexts are dynamic and relational, encompassing various dimensions like perceptual, sociological, and ideological factors. Advocates argue that such programs are crucial for social justice, as applying uniform standards to diverse groups can perpetuate inequalities. Effective teaching in a specific context requires educators to cultivate context-specific skills, knowledge, and philosophies, recognizing the complexity and nuances inherent in each educational setting (Roegman et al., 2021). This points to a need to develop a robust methodology for continually reading within and across contexts with regard to teaching for justice as teacher educators move from understanding justice in theory to applying it in practice. The discussion on the need to develop skills and philosophies tailored to specific contexts aligns with my focus on how these educators navigate diverse sociopolitical realities throughout their careers as they strive to teach about/for global justice.

Centering Critical Voices

Understanding the need to center perspectives and voices of “Others” was another common theme in the literature. Kitts (2022) points to the instructional value in teacher education of the "deculturalizing" effects of residency schooling on indigenous children as part of the oppressive legacy of schooling, followed by IQ testing in the early 20th century. Kirkland (2001, as cited in Gay & Kirkland, 2003) used “poetry as pedagogy” to examine critical social and educational issues from the perspectives of different ethnic groups. Cochran-Smith et al., (2019) points to the need for conceptions of K-12 teaching that fully recognize the experiences and knowledge traditions of marginalized groups which involves preparing teachers to disrupt cultural biases of curriculum, educational policies and practices and school norms. Student teachers need to understand that how they respond in the classroom shapes social dynamics, and can delineate certain individuals as central while others as merely tolerated. This calls for a pedagogical

emphasis on learning through their interactions. These educational methods call both teacher educators and student teachers to explore their own identities, sense of belonging, and community (McLeod et al., 2020).

This literature review on centering critical voices ties directly to my study because it highlights the importance of amplifying marginalized perspectives, which is central to my focus on global majority teacher educators. By exploring how these educators understand and enact global justice, I am centering voices that are often overlooked in mainstream education. The discussion on disrupting cultural biases and recognizing the experiences of oppressed groups aligns with my goal of showing how these educators bring their unique sociopolitical realities into their teaching. This supports my emphasis on highlighting their agency in challenging dominant educational narratives.

Epistemic Privilege as a Cultural Resource

Finally, global majority teacher educators bring with them the cultural resource of "epistemic privilege"; that is, they often have a more intimate understanding of how systems of oppression act on their bodies and communities (O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011); they also have access to the cultural resources needed, developed within the context of oppressive conditions, to resist and transform these systems to be more just (Bernal & Villalpando, 2002). Nevertheless, global majority people are often left out in the production of knowledge on teaching, learning and learning to teach (Kohli, 2009, as cited in Souto-Manning & Winn, 2019).

This ties to my study because it highlights the "epistemic privilege" that global majority teacher educators possess, which is central to my focus on how they understand and enact global justice. Their intimate understanding of oppression and access to cultural resources for resistance align with my exploration of how these educators challenge and transform unjust systems.

Additionally, the fact that global majority people are often excluded from knowledge production reinforces the importance of centering their voices and experiences in my research.

Critical Global(ization) Studies, Anti-Imperialism & Teacher Education

By placing teacher education curriculum and pedagogy within the context of imperialism and globalization, teacher educators can offer a more expansive context within which student teachers can understand a range of social, political, economic, cultural and educational issues. The role of colonialism, past and present, in the development of racism, classism, and sexism, for example, can be better understood when placed in historical relation with the rest of the world, as can educational reforms shaped by global competition and corporate influence. Additionally, formal structures are often operationalized to "engineer complicity" among teachers and students in relation to exploitation and oppression (McLaren &Farahmandpur, 2001, p. 144). This creates an imperative for teacher educators to consider in their work how decisions and actions made locally influence and are influenced by people and places more globally (Chavez-Moreno, 2021; Goodwin, 2014; Hytten & Bennitez, 2008).

Global-Mindedness

To adequately equip students with the knowledge, skills, and mindsets required to navigate an increasingly interconnected and interdependent world, it is imperative that they are taught by global-minded educators who understand global dynamics and can incorporate a global outlook into their teaching (Goodwin, 2020; Heyl & McCarthy, 2003, as cited in Quezada 2010; O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011). Part of that involves understanding the opportunities afforded by globalization: economic opportunities, enhanced communication, and ease of travel; it also involves awareness of the tensions between those who benefit from these processes and those

subjected to the adverse impacts of them, with many people falling within both categories (Hytten & Bennitez, 2008; Mcgaha, 2015; Stevick & Brown, 2017).

Recent studies show that student teachers need deeper engagement with issues related to teaching for global justice. In a study of preservice teachers' lesson plans in an elementary social studies methods course, Rock et al., found that integration of global justice issues in lesson plans was strongest in foundational knowledge with minimal or nonexistent content calling for critical engagement (2016). O'Connor & Zeichner (2011) call for the need to prepare teachers to integrate experience with disciplined inquiry of global issues in ways that help students explain or meaningfully extend their own experiences. Both of these studies show that critical teacher education requires intensive study of global issues along with the development of pedagogical approaches for designing lessons that engage students deeply and critically.

Goodwin (2014) argues that developing globally competent teachers requires more than checking off requirements, earning credits, or mastering a predefined set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes. Instead, it demands cultivating in student teachers a mindset and pedagogical orientation that prepares them to apply a diverse professional toolkit to unpredictable and complex educational challenges. Given the highly contextualized nature of teaching, educators must be equipped to unpack and develop context-specific understandings, practices, and philosophies (Roegman et al., 2021). This imperative extends to teacher educators themselves, who must navigate the unique demands of their own institutional and sociopolitical contexts in order to meaningfully foster global perspectives in their students (Ochoa, 2010, as cited in Quezada, 2010).

O'Connor & Zeichner (2011) points to Curry-Stevens (2007) who offers non-judgmental steps to developing anti-oppressive awareness among adults. The initial phases involve raising

students' awareness of oppression, its structural aspects, and how it shapes them as targets of the system. Subsequently, they progress towards recognizing their own privilege and acknowledging their complicity in maintaining oppressive systems. Upon completion of these stages in the process of self-reflection, the teacher can then focus on fostering agency for taking action (An, 2022; Hambacher & Ginn, 2021; O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011).

Roberts (2007) offers “consciousness perspective” as an embodied practice for shaping and mediating study of global issues. Consciousness perspective involves a set of knowledge, skills, and attitudes for viewing issues on a global scale while engaging with the funds of knowledge afforded by the diversity of communities in their more immediate neighborhood, town, or city. Consciousness perspective is meant to be used as a lens for exploring issues through other cultural systems in terms of how people live as well as the diversity of worldviews, habits, and traditions represented in these communities (Roberts, 2007). Gay & Kirkland's (2003) study in the US demonstrates a similar trend, where student teachers participate in reflective practices involving the deconstruction and reconstruction of significant American symbols and celebrations, including national holidays, the national anthem, and other patriotic songs to reflect different ethnic and cultural perspectives. This points to the need of teacher educators to incorporate diverse cultural perspectives into exploring issues of global justice.

In my dissertation, I investigated how teacher educators' diverse perspectives can enhance their ability to prepare students for a globalized world. The literature above highlights the need for teacher educators to integrate global dynamics into their teaching, yet it also points to the importance of incorporating diverse cultural perspectives and anti-oppressive practices in their own professional development (Goodwin, 2020; O’Connor & Zeichner, 2011). By examining how teacher educators bring their own diverse experiences and viewpoints into their practice,

this research will explore how these perspectives can be used to foster a global-minded approach in their students (Roberts, 2007; Gay & Kirkland, 2003). The goal is to understand how teacher educators can leverage their own contextual insights to design pedagogical strategies that engage students critically with global justice issues and prepare them for an interconnected world.

Challenges

Community Resistance

There are many reasons offered in the literature for why teachers would hesitate to engage with issues of global justice. For one, teachers might operate under the assumption that education should cultivate blind national allegiance. This would cause teachers to avoid "contentious" topics that challenge the portrayal of the United States as a global savior (Poole & Russell, 2017).

Scholars have found that the prevailing culture within the schools can also make it difficult for novice teachers to readily embrace efforts for global justice. This is the case when, once teachers enter the field, they encounter charges of indoctrination from parents "whose values come into conflict with the fundamental messages of global education" (O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011). O'Connor and Zeichner (2011) offer for diminishing accusations of indoctrination that teachers design curriculum that includes "multiple intellectually defensible" interpretations of global issues. These perspectives should include both dominant and subaltern perspectives as well as multiple frameworks, such as feminist and antiracist, for analyzing these perspectives. This would require the incorporation of carefully crafted questions that invite students to engage critically and radically with global justice issues, while allowing them to arrive at their own conclusions (Gay & Kirkland, 2003; Ochoa in Quezada, 2010; O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011).

While Poole and Russell (2017) found a high correlation between teachers' decisions to take up critical global education in their classes and the extent to which these themes were stressed in their teacher preparation programs, O'Connor and Zeichner (2011) argued that new teachers might engage in self-censorship regarding issues of global justice based on a mere sense of it not being welcomed or supported by their school culture. To illustrate an example for extension, Smith-Crocco (2008, as cited in O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011) studied the practices of first-year teachers who had undergone a program in critical gender studies during their formal teacher education period. They had hardly implemented any of what they had acquired regarding gender from their education program.

The emphasis in the above literature on preparing teachers to navigate global dynamics through critical and context-responsive pedagogy provides important grounding for this study. These works underscore the need for teacher education that supports both political discernment and pedagogical flexibility, capacities essential for addressing complex, justice-related issues in diverse educational contexts. In particular, the emphasis on anti-oppressive awareness and reflective practice speaks to the kinds of transformative learning processes this study seeks to explore. By investigating how global majority teacher educators conceptualize and enact global justice, this research builds on the literature's call to engage teacher candidates in critical inquiry shaped by multiple worldviews, lived realities, and structural analysis.

Ethnocentrism

Ethnocentrism shows up within teacher education as well, reflected in a tendency to interpret the world according to dominant European values and experiences (Ladson-Billings, 2000, as cited in Souto-Manning & Winn, 2019) with an imposition of "eurocentric realities as universal, i.e., that which is white is presented as applied to the human condition in general,

while that which is non-white is viewed as group-specific and therefore not human" (Asante, 1991, p. 172, as cited in Souto-Manning & Winn, 2019). This can be seen in student teachers interpreting racist advertisements as normatively acceptable ways of selling products while failing to see how they contribute to the perpetuation of injustice (McGaha, 2015).

Subedi (2013) found that in deficit approaches particular to global curriculum, the content tended to favor predominantly white experiences, ideologies, and historical narratives because historically they held authority in Western societies. Mainstream educational experiences, in turn, prioritize the validation of problematic hegemonic narratives of the shaping of modern American history and present world conditions. Crocco (2013, as cited in Subedi, 2013) levels that introducing critical ''global material always means confronting some measure of students' ethnocentrism — the view that one's ways of doing things are 'natural' whereas others' practices are 'strange.'' (p. 25) Such an epistemological orientation devalues the experiences of communities of color and excludes the experiences of educators of color (Kohli, 2009, as cited in Souto-Manning & Winn, 2019).

When global education is engaged there is a tendency to focus on learning a superficial notion of culture, while neglecting to engage with global challenges and global oppression as well as cross-cultural understanding necessary to attend to them (Sleeter, 2012; An 2014). The expansion and intensification of global relations calls for careful study of the present global landscape, deliberation on potential solutions to global issues, and active engagement in the process of effecting change (An, 2014). Interdependency highlights the reality that while global systems face challenges, solutions proposed by transnational organizations like the World Bank or UNESCO may not always be feasible. Rather, top-down approaches to solutions often result in inequitable and counterproductive outcomes (Roberts, 2007).

This section on ethnocentrism directly relates to my study by highlighting how dominant Eurocentric narratives and values in teacher education marginalize the experiences of educators and communities of color, which parallels my focus on how global majority teacher educators engage with global justice. The critique of deficit approaches and the prioritization of white experiences resonates with my exploration of how these educators navigate and resist such hegemonic narratives in their own teaching. The tendency to engage global education superficially, without addressing deeper global challenges and oppression, underscores the importance of my research on how these educators critically approach global justice within their specific sociopolitical realities. This section reinforces the need for teacher education that moves beyond ethnocentric frameworks, a central theme in my study.

Technocratic Culture

Teacher educators must not only prepare teachers for how to teach for global justice, but also how to resist an increasingly technocratic culture while cultivating a supportive one that encourages new teachers to integrate critical perspectives on global justice into their teaching practice. This indicates a need for teacher educators to support the development of political savvy, conflict resolution and collaborative working capabilities in their student teachers needed to navigate the cultures of their schools and communities. These capacities are also necessary for K-12 students to see embodied as part of their learning to advocate for global justice. This is salient particularly considering the collective and often slow nature of meaningful, transformative change (Goodwin & Darity, 2019; McGowan et al., 2021; O'Connor & Zeichner 2011).

This section connects to my study by emphasizing the role of teacher educators in not only preparing teachers to teach for global justice but also helping them navigate and resist

technocratic pressures in education. It aligns with my research on how global majority teacher educators support their students in developing the critical perspectives, political savvy, and collaborative skills needed to enact global justice in their teaching. The focus on fostering these capacities to advocate for change mirrors my interest in how these educators cultivate a sense of agency around global justice, both in their own practices and in their students. This reinforces the importance of preparing educators to engage in the slow, collective work of transformative change, which is central to my study.

Critical Global Education

O'Connor and Zeichner (2011) expand upon "mainstream" global education to include Critical Global Education (CGE), which they define as "an approach to global education that seeks to educate students about the causes and consequences of global injustices that aims to support students to work in solidarity with the world's people toward transformative change" (p. 523). Essential to CGE is a discussion of not only the economic and power imbalances between and among nations, but also within nations to explore the link between these issues in both global and local contexts (McGaha, 2015). The emphasis on exploring economic and power imbalances both globally and locally connects with my interest in how these teacher educators navigate and address similar dynamics in their teaching. CGE's focus on solidarity and transformative change also resonates with my study's exploration of how these educators cultivate agency and a commitment to global justice in their student teachers.

Epistemic Privilege

Scholars advocate against viewing oppressed individuals as mere victims while urging educators to avoid adopting a savior mentality. O'Conor and Zeichner (2011) advocate for recognizing the "epistemic privilege" of marginalized people, emphasizing their unique

understanding of oppression and their capacity to address their own challenges. Educators are urged to prioritize subaltern voices, particularly those of migrant students, and to value the diverse knowledge they bring, which can shed light on global systems of oppression (Chavez-Moreno, 2021; O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011). Students born in the US and hailing from historically marginalized communities can also greatly benefit from global education when teachers can establish connections between their experiences of marginalization and global systems of oppression. Furthermore, connecting the experiences of marginalized students in the US with global oppression can enhance their learning of global education as they make connections between global mechanisms of marginalization and their experiences of it locally (Howard, 2003; Boutte, 2018).

Among student teachers, scholars found that international students exhibited greater awareness of structural issues compared to their American counterparts (Sleeter, 2012). Additionally, students of color and those from working-class backgrounds demonstrated a better grasp of global issues, while more privileged students (in terms of race, class, and gender) tended to resist, aligning with Delpit's argument (2006, in Hytten & Bennitez, 2008) that individuals with power often struggle to recognize and acknowledge it (Hytten & Bennitez, 2008). This is also reflected in the tendency of the more privileged to hyperfocus on the local, masking their privilege in relation to global Others (Roberts, 2007).

Thus, the imperative of cultivating a sense of self-knowledge within and across contexts within teachers, especially those who “benefit” from systems of injustice cannot be understated. Hytten & Bennitez (2008) argue that embracing a broader framing of globalization reduces the likelihood of white students feeling personally targeted as the sole perpetrators of inequalities.

Instead, it enables them to recognize their participation in larger economic and social systems and understand how they can contribute to reshaping them in more just ways.

This section on epistemic privilege connects to my study by emphasizing the value of marginalized individuals' knowledge in understanding and addressing oppression, which aligns with my focus on how global majority teacher educators bring their unique perspectives and experiences to teaching for global justice. The call to prioritize subaltern voices mirrors my research on how these educators navigate their sociopolitical realities and resist dominant narratives in education. Additionally, the connection between local and global systems of oppression reinforces my exploration of how these educators help students understand global justice through their own lived experiences. The critique of privilege and the need for self-knowledge among teachers also resonates with my interest in how these educators foster critical awareness and agency in their students, encouraging them to contribute to reshaping unjust systems.

Solidarity Across Space

There are many opportunities afforded to global justice by exploring the relationship between global and local priorities, issues and values. Although marginalized youth might perceive their experiences as specific to the American context, global education holds the promise of cultivating solidarity among them and other oppressed groups worldwide by, for example, helping students understand how the racial stratification in the United States is intricately connected with the Western dominance of the world's majority. Linking multicultural issues or racial politics in the United States to global issues enables teachers to assist students in developing the knowledge and critical awareness necessary to comprehend the interconnectedness of their own experiences with those of people worldwide.

Furthermore, various transnational challenges, such as nuclear disarmament, environmental pollution, resource shortages, and the interconnected global economy, have impacted nearly everyone's lives. The metaphor of a domino line illustrates contemporary global issues, emphasizing the interconnectedness of causes and effects. Just like tapping any domino affects the entire line, addressing one national problem reveals its interconnectedness with other dilemmas, spanning from local to global scales. This has the potential to unite culturally, socially, and economically isolated communities both within the United States and globally, facilitating the transformation of political, cultural, social, and economic systems of dominance (Roberts, 2007; O'Connor & Zeichner, 2011).

In this study, this discussion on solidarity across space relates to the ways global justice connects local and global struggles, which is central to understanding how global majority teacher educators navigate and enact their commitments. By linking local issues like racial stratification in the U.S. with global systems of oppression, I can explore how teacher educators help student teachers develop a critical understanding of the interconnectedness between their own experiences and broader global realities. This perspective allows me to examine how educators foster a sense of solidarity that transcends borders, ultimately promoting transformative practices that challenge dominant political, social, and economic systems.

How Global-Minded Teacher Educators Sustain Their Practice

Teacher educators committed to justice must remain attuned to the sociopolitical contexts in which they teach and to the emotional terrain of their classrooms. This requires not only strategic and critical group facilitation, but also an embodied awareness of how discomfort, resistance, and vulnerability circulate in dialogic spaces (Zembylas, 2016). Facilitators must hold space for emotional complexity, including learners' reactions that may challenge or unsettle

others, while remaining aware of their own limitations and positionalities. For teacher educators who themselves belong to marginalized communities, this labor is especially challenging. Extending empathy while navigating the emotional and cognitive demands of justice-oriented teaching constitutes a form of emotional labor that is often unacknowledged and under-supported in white-dominated teacher education spaces (Matias & Zembylas, 2014). These compounded "pedagogical stressors" can place educators—particularly Black women—at professional and personal risk, as they contend not only with institutional whiteness but also with the racialized scrutiny that shapes their experiences in the academy (Hudson-Vassell et al., 2018; Deckman & Ohito, 2020)

Neoliberal discourses continue to shape the daily realities of teachers, often in ways that undermine their social and emotional well-being. The relentless pressure to perform, produce, and standardize has been well-documented as a source of burnout and attrition (Damico et al., as cited in Gaches, 2018). For teachers of color, however, these pressures are compounded. Many teach in communities still reeling from the effects of the global pandemic, where grief, economic precarity, and systemic neglect remain unevenly distributed. Layered onto this is the enduring colonial legacy of schooling: a legacy that frames certain bodies as expendable, certain voices as disruptive, and certain forms of knowledge as unworthy. Within this landscape, educators of color continue to be pushed out—through demoralization, institutional gaslighting, and the cumulative exhaustion of doing justice work in spaces that were never designed to hold it (Cariaga, 2023).

In my study, understanding the challenges faced by teacher educators committed to justice is crucial for exploring how global majority teacher educators navigate their roles. These educators must manage the emotional labor of facilitating critical discussions and addressing

their own and their students' reactions, particularly within a context of systemic inequities and neoliberal pressures. By examining how these stressors affect educators, especially those from marginalized backgrounds, I can better understand the impact on their practice and commitment to global justice. This insight helps illuminate how they address and integrate complex global and local issues in their teaching.

Mindfulness

Mindfulness showed potential in the review of the literature. Damico et al. (2018), recognizing the impacts of neoliberal discourses on teachers, conducted a small-scale study of "mindfulness-based support" (p. 828) for first year teachers. Findings showed that in addition to the intervention itself offering support in managing the tensions and demands, the opportunities to connect with other first year teachers was equally contributive to the effectiveness of the mindfulness practice. Flynn (2023) found preservice teacher participants benefited in several ways when mindfulness and equity goals were combined: fostering mental health, addressing systemic inequities, facilitating classroom management, making connections to curriculum, and empowering students. Cariaga (2023) also employed a practice of the "mindful minute" employing breathing, movement, or reflection to "tune into ourselves, nurture home in our bodies, and reclaim embodiment in our learning spaces" (p. 22).

In my study, the exploration of mindfulness practices is relevant as it highlights how global majority teacher educators might use such strategies to manage the emotional and systemic challenges they face. The findings from Damico et al. (2018) and Flynn (2023) underscore the benefits of mindfulness in supporting teachers' mental health and addressing systemic inequities, which can enhance their effectiveness in teaching and commitment to justice. Additionally, Cariaga's (2023) focus on mindfulness as a tool for personal and

professional grounding aligns with understanding how these educators navigate their roles amidst various stressors, ultimately influencing their approach to global justice in education.

Processing Pain

Processing pain is another theme from the literature relevant to global justice teacher education as it addresses the need for transformative pedagogies and practices in the face of systemic challenges, including those exacerbated by the COVID-19 pandemic.

Cariaga (2023) highlights the importance of confronting discomfort and pain within teacher education to foster meaningful change. By drawing on Menakem's concept of "clean pain" and "dirty pain," Cariaga emphasizes the necessity of engaging with reality, challenging oppressive systems, and working towards equity and justice. Clean pain encourages educators and learners to embrace discomfort as a catalyst for growth and transformation, while dirty pain hinders progress by perpetuating harmful attitudes and maintaining the status quo. This framework underscores the importance of addressing systemic injustices and cultivating resilience within global justice teacher education programs.

Deckman & Ohito's duoethnographic study, inspired by Dillard's concept of "re-membering," involves a similar deep exploration of their own experiences as Black female teacher educators. By revisiting and reconstructing past experiences in light of present circumstances, they aim to heal, humanize, and transform teaching, learning, and educators' lives. This approach fosters critical self-awareness, empathy, and a deeper understanding of how personal and collective histories intersect with current educational practices, making it highly relevant for social justice-oriented teacher educators.

Vulnerability

A common theme in the literature was the value of emotional vulnerability in teacher education for justice. Andrzejewksi et al. (2019), understand vulnerability is a part of all complex systems. By exploring their work as teacher educators committed to justice, they attempted to "hack vulnerability" by considering how power and positionality operate in their particular social and ideological contexts. They considered how they could then "hack the system" through their own pedagogical moves to attend to privilege and oppression. Andrzejewski et al. emphasized the significance of vulnerability as they reached out to fellow social justice-oriented colleagues beyond their immediate work settings, finding strength in shared critical perspectives and feeling empowered in their pursuits (2019).

However, in recent times, the global pandemic and the enduring colonial heritage of schooling have intensified the vulnerability of communities of color experiencing disproportionate economic insecurity and loss. This includes the loss of educators of color affected by pushout and demoralization. Cariaga (2023) points to the power of vulnerability and connection, that requires an authenticity and integrity with the self in teaching for justice, stating that this can often be hindered by unprocessed pain.

The exploration by Deckman & Ohito (2020) into the impact of social justice teaching practices on whiteness within teacher education contexts directly relates to vulnerability. Their questioning of how trust is built and lost, and whether social justice teaching privileges the feelings of White-identified individuals, reflects a vulnerability in acknowledging the complexities of power dynamics and racial hierarchies within educational spaces. By delving into these uncertainties and interrogating the potential harm caused by centering whiteness, Deckman and Ohito (2020) share their vulnerability as Black feminist educators navigating

within a predominantly white environment. This vulnerability allows them to critically reflect on their experiences and challenge dominant narratives, contributing to a deeper understanding of how systemic inequities manifest within educational institutions.

By acknowledging vulnerability as a collective and contextual phenomenon, teacher education programs can better prepare educators to address power dynamics, advocate for social change, and promote inclusive and equitable learning environments.

Critical Friendships

Educators often found strength in collectivizing their efforts towards equity in education. Andrzejewski et al. (2019) fostered critical friendships to navigate and transform their teaching practices, drawing from Moore & Carter-Hicks' concept. Similarly, Souto-Manning (2018) facilitated culture circles where teachers collaboratively identified and addressed inequalities, transitioning from individualistic to collective approaches to teaching. Roegman et al. (2021) echoed these sentiments, highlighting the importance of support networks like communities of practice and weekly meetings in sustaining student teacher residents transitioning into activist-oriented roles within education, creating space for reflection on vision and purpose behind pedagogical decisions. Hudson-Vassell, et al. (2018) and Deckman and Ohito (2020) point to the need for collaboration and mentorship as critical for developing liberatory pedagogy for Black women teacher educators working within white hegemonic teacher education spaces. This can extend to my study of how global majority teacher educators leverage collaboration and mentorship to navigate systemic challenges and sustain their commitment to equity and global justice in education.

Managing Expectations

Roegman et al. (2021), drawing from their experiences as former K-12 educators and observing their student teachers, emphasized the importance of managing expectations, particularly for first-year teachers working with marginalized students. They recognized that while teaching for justice is vital, it's essential to prioritize supporting new teachers as they navigate their roles and emotional investments in the classroom. Their approach shifted towards planting seeds for future practice rather than immediate implementation. Similarly, Boutte (2018) advises teacher educators to acknowledge that not all students may immediately embrace new perspectives, suggesting that some may need time to process information or resist it for various reasons. Instructors should accept this reality, recognizing that not all preservice teachers will immediately connect with their course material. Additionally, Roegman et al. (2021) caution against assuming others' understandings of social justice, advocating instead for critical listening, collaboration, and collective action to envision and enact social justice practices.

In my study, these insights about managing expectations and supporting new teachers underscore the importance of recognizing the gradual process of integrating social justice into teaching. This aligns with understanding how global majority teacher educators approach their roles by planting seeds for future practice, responding to diverse responses to social justice concepts, and emphasizing critical listening and collaboration in enacting their commitments to global justice.

Implications of Prior Research for the Study

The study of how global majority teacher educators understand, enact, and sustain their commitments to global justice is multifaceted, encompassing various themes and implications. Multiculturalism underscores the importance of context-specific teacher education to navigate

diverse educational contexts. This also calls educators to move beyond reductionist standards and adapt curriculum content to be more inclusive, diverse, and globally oriented.

Contextualizing teacher education within imperialism and globalization provides a comprehensive understanding of social, political, economic, cultural, and educational issues. This involves equipping educators to navigate an interconnected world, addressing challenges such as community resistance, ethnocentrism, and technocratic culture, calling teacher educators to foster critical consciousness, provide safe spaces for discomfort, and cultivate political savvy and conflict resolution skills among student teachers.

Studying global majority educators involves recognizing that the "epistemic privilege" of marginalized individuals is crucial, urging educators to prioritize subaltern voices and connect local experiences of oppression with global systems. Cultivating solidarity across space, Critical Global Education can help student teachers to understand the interconnectedness of global issues and fosters a sense of collective action in addressing systemic injustices.

Finally, engaging with discomfort, pain, and vulnerability is crucial for sustaining teacher educator commitments to equity and justice, particularly for global majority teacher educators impacted by their very experiences within the work, necessitating support systems and critical friendships. Overall, holistic approaches addressing emotional, systemic, and contextual factors are vital for supporting global justice-oriented teacher educators and advancing meaningful change in education.

Conceptual Framework

Three specific constructs will be used to form a guiding conceptual framework to shape and support this study. These constructs together will inform the methodological decisions concerning research design, data collection, and data analysis. The following is a brief

description of how I combined critical pedagogy, critical globalization studies, and teacher agency in carrying out this study on how global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understand, enact, and sustain their commitments.

Critical Pedagogy and Liberatory Praxis

To start, critical pedagogy as liberatory praxis is defined as facilitating "reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it" (Freire, 1970, p. 36). It recognizes that all knowledge is partial and incomplete and constructed within cultures, contexts, and experiences and it is only through collective sense-making and action that social transformation can take place (Shor, 2009). It seeks to equip students with "critical analytical tools necessary to understand oppression and their own socialization within oppressive systems, and to develop a sense of agency and capacity to interrupt and change oppressive patterns" (Bell, 2007, p.4).

Liberatory praxis as a concept highlights teaching and learning to teach imbued with an emancipatory purpose while recognizing schooling as a political process (Darder, 2011). Furthermore, as Freire posits, a liberatory education can never be conceived without a profound commitment to our humanity and faith in the capacity of students and their communities to shape their own destinies (Darder, 2011).

In her book *Freire and Education,* Antonia Darder calls on critical educators to fully embrace a "dialectical understanding of our relationship with the world" as a way to "together … transform our teaching and learning into a revolutionary praxis—a critical praxis that encompasses reflection, dialogue, and action, where theory and practice are regenerating and in alliance" (2014, p. 43).This dialectical understanding can be developed—and misalignment between theoretical commitments and practice can be ameliorated—in community, as togetherness. Audre Lorde (2012) writes that "difference must not be merely tolerated, but seen

as a fund of necessary polarities between which our creativity can spark" (pp. 111-112) pointing to the generative potential of the tensions created by the differences in sociopolitical realities, positionalities, and understandings of global justice that these educators brings to their work as well as the creative tensions that can be sparked in their work with student teachers.

Positioning teacher education for global justice as creative work of "ordinary action" (Akera, 2007, p. 414), and one that requires a particular consciousness of and attunement with the world can be "sparked" by engagement with the different perspectives, expertise and experiences of other teacher educators. Importantly, a helpful approach to critical discourse involves asking what one is being critical of, what position or stance one is holding, and what the consequences of holding that position are (Ellsworth, 2010).

The development of a critical pedagogical perspective involves the acknowledgement of the intimate relationship between cultural politics and economic forces in society. Critical educators as culture workers are attentive in their practice to the ways that meaning itself is constructed, contested and entangled within systems of power and control. That is, knowledge is produced from within historically bound social, political and economic spheres and then disseminated through particular social formations. Contesting these hegemonic norms involves challenging the educational processes that reproduce normativity itself.

Furthermore, often research and theorizing on globalization in western academia serves to maintain continued western dominance, foreclosing consideration of what educational needs this arrangement actually demands for a more just world. Postcolonial theorist Gayatri Spivak calls this a "sanctioned ignorance" (Spivak, 1999, p. 2) that additionally proliferates the field of knowledge production in normative ways steeped in a particular historical, colonial and cultural

framing. These normative ways are then uncritically applied to all contexts, including educational ones.

Within teacher education, failing to challenge student teachers early on in their assumptions puts them at risk of developing a habit of not considering the beliefs and values that ground practice. This limits their ability in-service to respond adequately to student needs that emerge because they have been habituated to implementing practices "without considering the complex moral, social and intellectual consequences of their pedagogy" (McDonough, 2012, p. 12). McDonough (2012) argue that because their formal teacher education experience initiation hyper-focused on the technical aspects of teaching devoid of exploring the values and purposes embedded into practice, this "later on evolves into a kind of de-professionalized mindless servitude to 'procedural efficiency' for those in-service teachers who unfortunately continue to see their assignment in merely technical terms" (p. 12).

That knowledge is produced within social and power relations calls for teacher education research and praxis that "is rooted in a critical approach that focuses on creating counter hegemonic intellectual spaces in which new readings of the world can unfold, in ways that lead us toward change, both in theory and practice" (Darder, 2015, p. 63). This includes practices that seek to support (re)readings of the world in order to unearth worldviews, standpoints and modes of being that have enabled communities to withstand, resist and overcome oppressive conditions. What is needed in teacher education is the facilitation a "politically emancipatory and humanizing culture of participation, voice, and social action" (Darder et al., 2009, p. 10) while recognizing the "contingency, indeterminacy, and heterogeneous complexity of knowledge production" (Akera, 2007, p. 413).

Critical Globalization Studies

This study takes up Critical Globalization Studies (CGS) as the second component of its conceptual framework in studying how teacher educators committed to global justice understand, enact and sustain their commitments. CGS brings together scholarship from multiple fields including globalization, global justice, and global activism offering a theoretical approach that captures the complexity of the modern world from a critical perspective. CGS as a framework "maintains elements of the old order, identifies continuities and discontinuities with the contemporary order, and permits glimmers of a transition to a new order" (Mittelman, 2004, p. 227). It allows for "digging deeper" (expanding the field of analysis in understanding how things have come to be across time - and space) and "relating wider" (expanding our sense of accountability and responsibility) by helping us to better understand systemic violence, our entanglements, and the ways we are coerced and complicit in harm (Stein & Andreotti, 2021).

We are witnessing an emergence of a more multipolar world including nation-states, international organizations, and multinational corporations, each with distinct spheres of influence and interests. This is marked by factors like the rise of new economic powers in regions such as Asia and Latin America and changes in geopolitical alliances - as well as other factors like rapid changes in technological advancements, climate change, inequality, evolving roles of universities and international bodies, efforts to regulate privatization, global mobility, and the resurgence of nationalistic populism. Furthermore, as the flaws of the neoliberal vision of globalization have become increasingly evident (Rizvi et al., 2022) stemming from the shortcomings of neoliberal and managerialist education reforms, teacher educators are presented with an opportunity to reimagine their practice in ways that can contribute to building a more inclusive, equitable, and interconnected global society.

At the same time, teacher educators are faced with the negative impacts of globalization in their local communities such as the rise of ethnofascism, the banning of books, anti-CRT bills, the heightened surveillance of teachers, as well as the rise of poverty, environmental racism, and the digital divide that impact students and communities in intersectional ways. Furthermore, within the US, at the turn of the century there has been a rise in domestic US militarization. This is exemplified by the "1033 program", launched in 1997, which to date has distributed $7.4 billion dollars worth of surplus military equipment for free to 8,000 law enforcement agencies across America (Human Rights Watch, 2020), including, according to the NAACP, 20 school districts (Scott, 2014). Cell phone videos of the 2014 Black Lives Matter protests, for example, showed police officers equipped with military grade gear including riot shields, gas masks, tasers and mine-resistant vehicles (Cobbina, 2019).

CGS recognizes the importance of studying embodied practices across various fields of practice in enacting transformative change (Mittelman, 2004), locating the body as "engendered and positioned within concrete configurations of power and forms of material oppression" (Giroux, 2005, p. 63). It recognizes the need for a "new philosophy of revolution" (Appelbaum & Robinson, 2005, p. 137) that attends to "processes that create flow and disjunctures and recognizes the role of many actors" (Paine et al., 2016, p. 718) . It recognizes the particular as possible sites of resistance - and not just within the people and communities that experience the negative microstructural effects of macrostructures of globalization. It recognizes the interstitial relationship between the local and global locating a multiplicity of particular sites of resistance to neoliberal globalization (McGovern, 2005). These particular sites include teacher education spaces as well.

"A critical orientation calls for not only deconstructing extant knowledge and practice but also constructing new knowledge about what exists and what ought to exist on the basis of transformed relations of power" (Mittelman, 2004, p.221). This perspective is further developed by Abdi (2015) who argues for a multiplicity in conceptualizations of what it means to be a good global citizen, calling for consideration of epistemic pluralism and multi-locationality in the development of global citizenship education.

This study takes up Mittelman's (2004) definition of a critical orientation to globalization as a complex of five interacting components: reflexivity (awareness of relationships between knowledge, historical materiality and politics), historicism (recognition that globalization is historically located, politically enacted and open-ended), decentering (bringing knowledge outside in, from the global margins to the epicenter), crossovers between social inquiry and other streams of knowledge (bridging social and natural sciences), and an emphasis on strategic transformations (pragmatically articulating processes of replacing hegemonic power with democratic self-determination).

Teacher Agency

Teacher agency is the third component of this study which explores how teacher educators committed to global justice understand, enact and sustain their commitments. First, to be clear, this study takes up human agency as always occurring in particular contexts, in relationship with other beings, human and other. These contexts, with histories of how they formed, become sites of activity where an individual with their own commitments acts agentically in relation with others (human, objects, systems, etc.) to produce particular effects.

Many novice teachers committed to global equity often find themselves isolated in their commitments in the field, from their student teaching to their first years (Gaches, 2018;

Roegman et al., 2021). Because of the imbalance between risk and protective factors, social justice concepts, notions and theories taken up in teacher education programs often get "washed out" (Zeichner & Tabachnik, 1981) in K-12 contexts. For example, the course content, the standardized exams, policies, other teachers, administration and staff act in ways that make it seemingly impossible for teachers committed to equity to enact those commitments.

However, Ball argues that there are "discretionary spaces" (2018) in which equity can take place. What it means to educate student teachers in sensing and perceiving these discretionary spaces "involves participation in what is being perceived" (Greene, 2018, p.55). That is, teacher educators committed to global equity are called to help student teachers make sense of themselves, their classrooms and their world as parts of the "tangled scenes of life" as "clarified, coherent, and intensified or 'impassioned' experience" (Dewey, 1934, p. 290). Taking it further this includes developing capacities in teachers for staying with the trouble, discomfort and ambiguity of attending to global injustice. Furthering this work of students teachers' perceptual acumen includes capacities to develop "a politically informed map of one's historical and social locations, enabling the analysis of situated formations of power" (Braidotti, 2011, p. 271) in order to determine how to enter into relationship with other - human and nonhuman actors - in the enactment of global justice.

Teacher Agency as Contextually Situated

Relatedly, this study resists how teacher agency is often conscripted and individualized in ways that elide the political dimensions of teachers' work. This can serve to limit how teachers, and important to this study, teacher educators tasked with preparing them, sense teacher agency within these ecologies. Lesson plans, curriculum and even discipline policies, for example, become parts of the hidden curriculum that presents singular ways of being that get normalized

and reproduced, foreclosing difference and diversity. Furthermore, this study seeks to challenge and go beyond conceptions of teacher agency often invoked in education reform discourse to, for example, promote the "successful" implementation of particular discipline practices and/ or policies (Priestley et al., 2012).

Policies and practices that shape teacher education programs can fail to attend to the highly contingent nature of the lived experiences that characterize teacher work. There are dimensions of teacher practice that require reliance on intuition because of the highly unpredictable environments they are working in. This applies even more so for teachers committed to global equity. This can be understood as "a learning process of development in relation to their ecological contexts" (Spencer et al., 2020, p. 51). That is, preparing teachers to learn for, in and through their experiences within their contexts, as embedded within them and also part of change, becomes part of shaping the subjectivity of the student teacher.

Teacher Agency Can Include Harmful Practice

Stemming in part from a notion of teaching and education as apolitical, teacher agency is sometimes defined in solely positive ways (Leander & Osborne, 2008). Doing so fails to account for harmful purposes and risks that can characterize teacher practice. Up until the late 20th century, for example, epistemic and cultural genocide was perpetrated by residential school teachers of indigenous American children forcibly removed from their families. Bettina Love writes about the ongoing "spirit murdering" of Black and Brown children in American schooling as a "slow death steeped in racism whose intent is to reduce, humiliate, and ultimately destroy people of color" (2016, pp.1-2).

Teacher Agency and Learning to Teach

Learning to teach within a framework of teacher agency calls for cultivating capacities to develop one's commitment to justice while navigating the uncertainty of discerning the most equitable course of action amidst the multiplicity of particular variables in any given circumstance. As educators, this journey unfolds within the dynamic space of designing learning experiences and fostering connections within school communities, all while continuously engaging with diverse disciplinary knowledge to enrich pedagogy. Central to this process is embracing a culture where experimentation and learning from mistakes are normalized, essential steps towards refining practice and striving for improvement (Gutiérrez et al., 2002; Kitts, 2022).

Chapter 3 - Research Methodology

In the following chapter, I presented the design and methodology of this study, which combined multiple case study (Stake, 1995), contemplative thematic analysis (Bhattacharya, 2025), and Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism to explore how a group of global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understood their commitments. I examined how these understandings shaped their practices, roles, and responsibilities as they worked within systems while striving to transform them (Souto-Manning & Martell, 2019). I also explored how these teacher educators cultivated agency in their student teachers around global justice. Finally, I investigated if and how these teacher educators sustained their commitments to teaching for and about global justice, considering the challenges of doing this work as global majority educators. This study employed a case study methodology grounded in interpretivism, as described by Stake (1995), emphasizing the simultaneous processes of data gathering and interpretation. I recorded what was happening while also analyzing meaning in real-time, noting interpretive moments and patterns across interviews and artifacts. This method supported "progressive focusing," allowing for evolving inquiry while staying grounded in the socio-material-cultural contexts in which these teacher educators worked.

Saldaña's (2024) thematic analysis framework guided the identification of "codes, patterns, categories, concepts, assertions, and themes," ensuring the analysis was not merely descriptive but meaningfully interpretive. I used multimodal methods (Jackson, 2008), aligned with Bhattacharya's (2019) framing of qualitative research as a "meditation on interiority." This approach captured the reflective processes of both the participants and myself as a researcher. I incorporated poetic inquiry and visual and textual artifacts to analyze and represent data in layered and meaningful ways.

To further deepen the interpretive process, I integrated Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism. This framework supported exploration of structural power dynamics, institutional forces, and the sociohistorical contexts shaping participants' meaning-making. It enabled me to interpret diverse forms of data—including interview transcripts, visual imagery, and pedagogical narratives—while attending to issues of inequality, resistance, and transformation.

Throughout the study, I engaged in critical reflexivity. Rather than attempting to bracket my positionality, I acknowledged how my experiences, identities, and justice commitments shaped how I read, interpreted, and engaged the data. Reflexivity was maintained through iterative close readings of transcripts, recursive coding, and regular conversations with trusted colleagues. This sustained self-awareness grounded the research in epistemic responsibility and critical integrity.

As part of this reflexive process, I also acknowledge that some of my interpretive insights—particularly around concepts such as ethical clarity, purpose, and discernment—draw on what I understand as spiritual dimensions of practice. Participants did not always name their work as "spiritual," but I often interpreted their pedagogy as deeply rooted in values-aligned action, protective refusal, and care that exceeded institutional or strategic logic. Following Bhattacharya's (2025) framing of inquiry as relational and interior, and Darder's (2015) emphasis on human meaning-making within systems of power, I use the term "spiritually rooted" not in a religious or doctrinal sense, but to signal a quality of integrity, coherence, and moral orientation that emerged across participants' stories and actions. This interpretive move is not an attribution, but a reflection of how I, as a Muslim and critical qualitative researcher, read and respond to the data.

I conducted two one-on-one semi-structured interviews with each participant via Zoom, as well as one whole group interview. These interviews created space to reflect on commitments, pedagogical choices, challenges, and ways of sustaining justice work. Course artifacts were analyzed collaboratively with participants, expanding over time to include not only materials like syllabi and assignments, but also pedagogical practices, relational dynamics, and curricular decisions. Research findings are presented multimodally—juxtaposing thematic narrative, poetic fragments, and visual representations—to honor the complexity and nuance of participants' work.

Research Questions

To reiterate, my research questions are:

1. How do 4 global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understand the concept of global justice within the context of their sociopolitical realities and positionalities?
    a. How do their understandings of global justice inform their practices, roles, and responsibilities as teacher educators?
    b. How do they cultivate a sense of agency around global justice in their students?
2. What, if anything, sustains these teacher educators in their commitments and practice?

Data collection included semi-structured interviews, course artifacts, and a whole group interview.

Research Design Overview

In this chapter, I discuss the context of the study, the research design, and the research questions. I also describe the methods I used for data collection and analysis, along with my

positionality as a researcher. Lastly, I evaluate the trustworthiness of the study and acknowledge its limitations.

Research Approach

Qualitative Research

This study utilized qualitative methods for their affordance in developing an understanding of the "complex interrelationships among all that exists" (Stake, 1995, p. 37), including the self in relationship to everything else (Bhattacharya, 2024), and in seeking patterns, both expected and unexpected (Stake, 1995, p. 41). By integrating multiple case study with thematic analysis (Saldaña, 2024), including creative, contemplative approaches (Bhattacharya, 2019), this methodology aimed not only to uncover the intricate connections within the data but also to foster a deeper, more reflective engagement with the lived experiences of the participants. This contemplative stance enriched the research process, allowing for a more nuanced exploration of the complexities inherent in teaching teachers about/for global justice as a global majority person.

This study did not aim to explain why things are the way they are but rather to provide an in-depth exploration of "how things are at a particular place in a particular time" (Stake, 1995, p. 38). I did not seek to uncover the causes behind particular events or practices, recognizing that human activity is complex and shaped by multiple factors. Instead, my focus was on understanding the *what* and *how* of teacher educator practices, along with insight into the reasoning that shaped these practices. I prioritized "the quality of activities and processes more than effectiveness," employing interpretive assertion (Stake, 1995, p. 95) and phenomenological theming to capture the meanings these educators assigned to their work, as well as the "data's meanings and interrelationships" (Saldaña, 2024, p. 22).

Any interpretive moves I engaged in were intended to offer the reader a richer "experiential understanding" (Stake, 1995, p. 40) of the phenomenon under study. I anticipated that issues included in the interview protocol—whether drawn from the literature or my personal experiences in teacher education—would "grow, emerge or die" (Stake, 1995, p. 21). I designed this study to remain receptive to the growing complexities that emerged during data collection and analysis, while staying grounded in established definitions, socio-cultural and material histories, and the current realities of teacher education spaces.

Finally, and importantly, as a qualitative researcher, I resisted the notion that research is value-free; advocacy was a part of my approach in every stage of this study. I deliberately "turned away from the goal or presumption of sanitization" (Stake, 1995, p. 95). I was committed to avoiding any impulse to oversimplify, censor, or "clean up" the data or findings. Instead, I sought to embrace complexity, messiness, and even discomfort. This approach prioritized authenticity and honesty, ensuring a full and unfiltered representation—even, and especially, when it included difficult or challenging elements.

Multiple Case Study

This study employed a multiple case method to study "extensively and intensively" (Stake, 1995, p. 36) how global majority teacher educators understood, enacted, and sustained their commitments to teaching about global justice. While the study did not aim for generalizability, I expected that certain activities, problems, or responses would cut across all cases, creating what Stake calls "petite generalizations" (1995, p. 7)—findings that are tentative and contextually bound, yet still meaningful within and across cases.

These petite generalizations offered nuanced insights and deepened understanding within individual cases. They also contributed richness and specificity to broader conversations in social

justice teacher education, providing contextually grounded findings that more abstract generalizations might overlook.

I formulated interview questions based on issues and tensions identified in the literature—those found to be "deeply puzzling" (Stake, 1995, p. 10)—while remaining open to new issues as they emerged in interviews and artifact analysis. As data unfolded, both through my own analysis and in collaborative meaning-making with participants, some issues transformed into assertions as new observations were made and prior ones confirmed. I also aimed to invite naturalistic generalizations through multimodal data presentation—inviting readers to draw their own conclusions from the visual, poetic, and thematic materials presented (Stake, 1995, p. 20).

This study explored the complexity of global justice work and the "embeddedness and interaction" (Stake, 1995, p. 16) of justice-oriented teacher education within the specific sociopolitical, institutional, and relational contexts in which these educators worked. I anticipated that issues tied to political, historical, social, and personal contexts would surface, along with the surprises and disappointments shaped by participants' expectations prior to engaging in this work.

I designed the study with a flexible protocol of one-on-one and group interview questions (see APPENDIX E and APPENDIX F), which allowed me to continuously redefine key issues and remain receptive to unexpected findings (Stake, 1995, p. 29).My analysis included both structured coding and interpretive engagement with participants' affective and embodied experiences. Drawing on contemplative thematic analysis, I sought to honor both the analytic patterns in the data and the emotional, phenomenological texture of participants' narratives.

Site Selection

While the original intent of this study was to focus solely on the United States, recruitment challenges led me to expand the participant pool to include teacher educators based in Canada and Chile. This decision remained aligned with the study's critical focus, as all three national contexts share entanglements with colonialism, imperialism, and neoliberal educational policy—though these manifest in different forms. Notably, the participant based in Chile earned degrees in the United States and continues to be professionally shaped by US-based teacher education discourses and networks.

The rationale for the initial focus on the United States was rooted in its status as a European settler colonial entity with a long history of imperialism—including colonization, slavery, and expansionism—which have directly impacted, and continue to impact, Indigenous, Black, and Brown lives. Slavery and colonialism formed the foundation of the U.S. economy and sociopolitical order, entrenching racial hierarchies and inequalities that persist in education and society today.

Internationally, the U.S. remains implicated in what Tikly (2004) describes as a new "regime of global governance," wherein formerly colonized regions are now embedded within global economic structures designed to advance the interests of the U.S., its Western allies, and transnational corporations (p. 173). Though colonization predates capitalism, many scholars refer to global capitalism as a contemporary form of imperialism—one that reproduces domination through exploitative labor practices, resource extraction, and cultural hegemony, both domestically and abroad.

At the same time, teacher education is increasingly called to respond to the complexities of a multipolar world. Global crises—such as rising wealth inequality, environmental

degradation, and the resurgence of ethnofascism—are juxtaposed with technological advances and transnational flows of people, ideas, and pedagogy. These global realities shape the work of teacher educators across national boundaries and call for critical, justice-oriented approaches in teacher preparation.

By including participants from Canada and Chile alongside those from the United States, this study broadened its analytical scope while remaining grounded in a shared commitment to examining how global majority teacher educators navigate their justice work across interconnected sociopolitical and institutional contexts.

Participant Sampling, Selection & Recruitment

Choosing global majority teacher educators for a study on how they understand, enact, and sustain their commitments to global justice offered significant advantages. These educators brought diverse perspectives shaped by their cultural, linguistic, and experiential backgrounds, enriching teacher education discourse with a wide range of insights. As members of historically marginalized communities, they offered unique understandings of the challenges and opportunities for promoting global justice in education, ensuring that the voices and experiences of underrepresented groups were centered in the research (Cochran-Smith et al., 2016). Their lived experiences of discrimination and oppression provided authenticity and relevance to the study, while their deep personal and professional investment in justice-oriented work held transformative potential for teacher education specifically, and education broadly. By focusing on global majority teacher educators, the study illuminated perspectives and practices that contributed to meaningful change and equity in teacher education.

To identify participants, I used snowball sampling (Merriam & Tisdell, 2015), drawing heavily on my professional networks as a doctoral student in a teacher education specialization at

a top-tier research university. This supported purposeful sampling, allowing me to select participants whose experience and context could bring about a deeper understanding of the phenomenon (Bogdan & Biklen, 2007).

I aimed to recruit four teacher educators whose work aligned closely with the study's focus. Interested individuals completed a brief demographic survey (Appendix B), which enabled me to gather relevant background information. All individuals who expressed interest and aligned with the study's focus were included as participants and sent a formal recruitment email (Appendix C) and consent form (Appendix D) via Qualtrics[1].

The following table (Table 1) provides basic contextual information about the four participants in this study.

Table 1

Participant Profiles

Psuedonym	Racial/Ethnic Identity	Discipline/ Field	Institutional Context	Years in Teacher Education
Amara	Chilean/ Jewish origin	Teacher Leadership/ YPAR	State University, Rural Chile	8
Chiara-Mai	Japanese/ Irish	Social Studies Methods	Urban University, US	5
Cristina	Filipina	Critical Curriculum Studies	Private Jesuit University, US	14
Nabeel	North African/ Racialized Muslim	Social Studies Methods	Urban University, Canada	6

[1] Note: Recruitment materials and consent forms referenced participants as "U.S.-based" teacher educators. However, the final group included participants from Canada and Chile. Their inclusion reflects the study's framing of global justice as a transnational concern and aligns with its conceptual grounding in critical globalization studies.

Data Collection

Semi-Structured Interviews

Semi-structured interviews were conducted over multiple sessions to allow for both consistency and flexibility. This format ensured that key topics were addressed across participants while also leaving space for individualized exploration based on each participant's context and responses. All interviews were conducted one-on-one in order to create a comfortable and confidential environment in which participants could share their experiences openly.

The interviews were guided by a predetermined set of questions shaped by the study's research questions, conceptual framework, and relevant literature. At the same time, I remained open to allowing new questions to emerge in response to participant insights and the evolving dynamics of each conversation. This approach supported the depth, adaptability, and relational trust essential to qualitative inquiry grounded in critical interpretivism.

Course Artifacts

Initially, participants were asked to submit 2–3 course artifacts (via Google Forms) in advance of the semi-structured interviews. These artifacts could include items such as syllabi, excerpts from syllabi, texts, memes, images, maps, or video clips they had used in their teaching—materials that they found meaningful in teaching about or for global justice, that made their practice sustainable, or that sustained them in their commitments. Along with each submission, participants were invited to describe how and why the artifact was used, the context in which it appeared, how students responded, and why they chose to share it in this study.

As the study progressed, and influenced by Bhattacharya's (2025) framing of artifacts as inclusive of practices, relationships, and interactions, I expanded my conception of what

constituted an "artifact." In addition to the materials participants shared, I treated their pedagogical decisions, classroom practices, and relational dynamics as artifacts in their own right—each revealing embedded values, tensions, and commitments. This broader interpretation enabled a more expansive and textured understanding of justice-oriented teacher education. Artifacts were analyzed through a multimodal and contemplative thematic lens. Rather than limiting the analysis to explicit content or coded categories, I approached the artifacts as multimodal expressions of justice-oriented pedagogy, attending to their relational, affective, and communicative dimensions within the contexts in which they were shared. Participants' own reflections on the artifacts—shared during interviews—were essential to this process, surfacing insights about what sustains justice work, what challenges it, and how it materializes in everyday pedagogical acts.

This approach allowed the study to capture both the visible and less visible elements of participants' justice commitments. It honored the layered, complex, and often deeply felt nature of their practice—acknowledging that global justice teaching is not only intellectual work, but also relational, affective, and embodied.

Whole Group Interview

A single whole group interview was conducted toward the end of the study to create a collaborative and reflective space where participants could engage with emerging themes across cases. The session offered an opportunity for participants to reflect on shared challenges and practices, respond to one another's experiences, and surface collective insights through dialogue. Rather than presenting findings in a fixed or finalized form, I shared excerpts of interview data and descriptions of course artifacts in ways that invited further meaning-making. The group conversation was designed to prioritize reflection, comparison, and interaction—allowing

participants to build on one another's insights and identify resonances and divergences across their work.

Although the group interview did not incorporate visual display technologies as originally planned, the session retained a multimodal orientation through the integration of participant voices, pedagogical examples, and embodied stories. This collective engagement enabled a textured, affective exploration of the themes that had begun to emerge through individual interviews and artifact analysis.

One participant, Cristina, was unable to attend the group interview due to scheduling conflicts. However, her second individual interview was conducted shortly afterward, ensuring that her perspectives continued to inform the themes and analysis developed during and after the group session. This sequencing allowed her voice to remain in dialogue with those of the other participants, even if not in real time.

This approach aligned with Bhattacharya's (2019, 2025) emphasis on contemplative inquiry by fostering a space where participants could reflect not only on what they do, but how and why they do it—rooted in a recognition of the emotional, ethical, and spiritual dimensions of their justice work. The session contributed not only to thematic development, but also to a sense of solidarity among participants navigating similar tensions across institutional and national contexts.

Darder's Critical Interpretivist Approach

This study was grounded in Darder's (2015) critical interpretivist methodology, which emphasizes the ethical imperative of understanding how individuals make meaning within systems of power. Rather than treating data as neutral, I approached it as situated and

political—shaped by participants' histories, institutional contexts, and positionalities, as well as my own.

From this perspective, the whole group interview served as a crucial site for collective meaning-making and critical dialogue. By presenting excerpts of data and inviting participants to respond, reflect, and challenge emerging themes, I aimed to center their interpretations and ensure that their voices remained primary in the analytic process. This space created an opportunity for participants to expand upon or contest early patterns identified in the individual case analyses, deepening the interpretive process through relational exchange.

Darder's framework also shaped how I understood my own role—not as a detached observer, but as a co-constructor of meaning. My analysis was informed by an ongoing attention to power, language, and relational dynamics, both within and beyond the interview setting. I attended to the ways global majority teacher educators are situated within broader structures of inequity while also holding space for their agency, critique, and imaginative pedagogical work. This interpretive stance aligned with the study's broader goals: to challenge normative frameworks in teacher education, surface hidden inequalities, and highlight how global majority educators navigate, resist, and transform institutional conditions through their commitments to global justice.

The timeline below offers an overview of how the study unfolded across its main phases. While I entered the process with a flexible plan, much of the pacing and flow were shaped by participant availability, the evolving nature of the data, and my own process of learning and reflection. Rather than following a rigid schedule, I allowed the work to unfold in ways that honored relational trust, emergent insights, and the depth required for meaningful analysis.

Table 2

Data Collection Timeline

Phase	Date	Actions
Recruitment	Oct-Nov 2024	Filed IRB with Teachers College, recruited participants through snowball sampling, collected and analyzed demographic survey data. Conducted preliminary participant meetings.
Individual Interviews & Artifact Collection	Oct 2024-Feb 2025	Collected course artifacts and conducted first and second individual interviews with participants. Began initial thematic analysis of interviews and artifacts. Expanded artifact definition in alignment with Bhattacharya (2025) to include pedagogical practices and relational dynamics.
Whole Group Interview	Feb 2025	Conducted one whole group interview via Zoom to facilitate collective reflection and meaning-making.

		Shared emerging themes and artifact descriptions to prompt discussion. Cristina was unable to attend; her second individual interview was conducted shortly afterward.
Data Analysis & Synthesis	Feb-Apr 2025	Completed full thematic analysis of interviews and artifacts using contemplative and critical interpretivist methods. Synthesized findings, wrote up thematic interpretations, and prepared for submission to the dissertation committee. Timeline extended slightly to accommodate layered analysis.

Researcher Positionality

I am a first-generation doctoral student, second-generation South Asian American Muslim, and third-generation educator. My identity has always been deeply rooted in community—personally, professionally, and spiritually. My K–12 experience, including a ten-year teaching career, was grounded in New York City's global majority neighborhoods, where schooling was inseparable from migration, resilience, and struggle.

Five years into my teaching—and shortly after 9/11—I began working at a high school serving global majority Muslim students from low to middle-income households. During this

time, I witnessed firsthand the complexities of education in a post-9/11 world. Through the lens of works like Dickinson's *Hope is the Thing With Feathers* and *The Autobiography of Malcolm X*, I navigated the pressure to prepare students for standardized exams while also addressing the palpable realities of surveillance, grief, and Islamophobia. My students recalled soot drifting across classroom windows for days, the smell of burning in the air, and the fear blanketing their communities. In response, we co-created projects on Islamophobia, media representation, and imperial violence—experiences that deeply shaped my understanding of what justice-oriented education requires.

In the decade that followed, I moved into teacher education, working as a teacher development coach, a professional development facilitator, an adjunct instructor, and most recently, a fieldwork supervisor. With each step deeper into academic and institutional spaces, I encountered new layers of epistemic exclusion - surprisingly at the hands of white feminists! At the orientation of my doctoral program my legitimacy was questioned by a white female senior professor, "What brings *you* here?" In another moment, I was invited by a white female colleague to collaborate on a justice project that I had no interest in, and was asked "Don't you care about feminism?" One white female student from my adjuncting days even reminded me (I was teaching about anti-Black racism) that I "should be grateful" that I was "allowed to be here [in the US]." These were not isolated slights; they pointed to enduring structures that conflate Eurocentrism with neutrality and position non-Western, racialized, and spiritual epistemologies as peripheral, excessive, or suspect (Subedi, 2013). Within teacher education, this often takes the shape of institutionalized white feminism—a framework that claims justice language while refusing to reckon with its own complicity in upholding whiteness as the normative center.

I name these experiences not as grievances but as data points in a broader pattern. As bell hooks (2000) has written, white women—particularly those who have not deeply engaged with their own racialized subject positions—are often positioned within white supremacist patriarchy in ways that allow them to wield institutional power while claiming innocence. Rather than pathologize individual actors, I'm interested in how these dynamics reveal the larger architecture of teacher education spaces: who gets to speak, who gets to be heard, and under what conditions.

As a Punjabi Brooklynite who once wore toughness like armor, I was surprised by how disorienting these microaggressions felt. But what disturbed me more was how these dynamics shaped educational culture itself. I began asking: How do other global majority teacher educators—those committed to global justice—navigate these same systems? How do they sustain their work in institutions that are often unprepared or unwilling to support it? And how do they cultivate agency in their students while protecting their own sense of purpose?

I turn to this study with a postcolonial and diasporic sensibility—one that refuses erasure and fragmentation, and insists on coherence, even when the world around us demands silence or compromise. I'm moved by Leigh Patel's (2021) claim that post-imperial subjects are often called upon to erase themselves to belong in academia. I reject that. This study is an act of refusal, of presence, and of solidarity. By centering the experiences of global majority teacher educators, I seek to contribute to a growing body of justice-oriented scholarship that does not simply theorize justice, but lives it—through relationships, practices, and commitments.

Methods of Analysis & Interpretation

Relational Thematic Engagement

I analyzed the data using a layered approach grounded in de/colonial, contemplative, and creative methodologies. Drawing from Bhattacharya's (2019) framing of contemplative research

as “a meditation on interiority,” I approached analysis as an act of relational meaning-making—one that honored not only what participants said, but how they made sense of their roles, tensions, and commitments as global majority teacher educators. Bhattacharya’s (2025) call to imagine liberatory futures free from coloniality guided my attention to how participants resisted, reworked, and reimagined practice amid structural constraints.

Rather than seeking fixed categories, I allowed meaning to emerge through recursive engagement, multimodal tools, and close listening to symbolic, emotional, and affective dimensions. The analytic process was iterative and inductive. I first immersed myself in the transcripts and artifacts, generating open codes based on participant language, emotional tone, and pedagogical concerns. These codes were then grouped into broader categories and provisional themes. Following Saldaña (2024), I treated themes as assertions of meaning rather than content summaries, paying close attention to tensions, metaphors, and affectively charged moments that pointed to deeper conceptual and ethical commitments. Bernard, Wutich, and Ryan’s (2016) guidance further informed my identification of indigenous terms and moments of conceptual transition.

To support consistency and organization across the coding process, I used ChatGPT as a collaborative tool—not to generate analysis, but to preserve exact participant language, manage the evolving codebook, and help ensure that existing themes were applied consistently across all transcripts. Each transcript was coded line-by-line using a framework that began with Amara’s first and second interviews and expanded through iterative comparison. This process included documenting new codes, revisiting earlier transcripts, and maintaining a cross-case matrix to hold emerging themes in relation. ChatGPT supported the logistical and structural demands of

this process while final interpretive and analytic decisions remained fully in my hands, grounded in the theoretical and ethical commitments of the study.

I documented analytic decisions through embedded memos, spreadsheets, and a cross-case matrix that supported conceptual synthesis across data sources. While I did not keep a formal coding journal, I engaged in structured, reflective tracking through these tools, which became spaces for holding, regrouping, and refining meaning over time. I also engaged in ongoing memoing—within codebooks, margins, and matrices—to surface contradictions and trace emerging insights. I drew on poetic inquiry (Faulkner & Watson, 2024) to attune to tone, rhythm, and symbolic resonance in participant language, particularly during theme construction.

This multimodal and contemplative stance ensured that the analytic process remained rigorous and ethically engaged. I applied "rigor" not simply as technique, but as methodological integrity—aligning each analytic choice with my theoretical frameworks and with my responsibility to honor the voices and complexities of the educators at the center of this study.

When I say that meaning was co-constructed, I'm referring to a process of dialogic and relational meaning-making that unfolded through recursive listening, emotional attunement, and the affective experience of being with the data. Drawing from Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism and Bhattacharya's (2025) contemplative thematic analysis, I did not separate my analytic voice from participant voice—I understood interpretation as always situated, always relational.

For example, with Amara, I kept returning to the pauses she took before naming terms like "empire" or "survival." At first, I wasn't sure how to interpret those moments. But on re-listening—often while walking or being still—I began to understand those silences as

intentional. They were a form of ethical withholding, a refusal to name too quickly, too cleanly. That realization shaped the way I approached silence not as absence, but as practice.

With Chiara-Mai, it was the moments where she said, “Maybe that’s not the right word,” or “I don’t know if this makes sense,” that stayed with me. Initially, I flagged those as uncertainty. But over time, I came to see them as part of a justice-oriented pedagogy that resists simplification. Her careful, sometimes interrupted phrasing taught me to listen beyond clarity—and those moments became foundational to the theme of “illegible praxis.”

My analytic voice shows up most clearly in the connective tissue—how themes were titled, how excerpts were sequenced, and what tensions I chose to hold rather than resolve. But these choices were shaped by what participants offered, withheld, emphasized, or repeated. In that sense, the themes were not imposed—they emerged through a layered and relational process of thinking with, not about, the educators at the heart of this work.

At the same time, I was mindful not to over-interpret or extract meaning from every moment of hesitation or silence. In some cases—especially when pauses or omissions carried a sense of emotional weight—I chose not to analyze further. That restraint was not an oversight, but a form of protection. Following both Darder’s (2015) and Tuck and Yang’s (2014) call for ethical refusal, I understood some silences as spaces that were not mine to decode. Respecting those boundaries became part of the integrity of this analytic process.

Methods of Data Presentation

Chapter 4 presents the data through a combination of narrative, visual, and interpretive forms that reflect the contemplative, de/colonial, and critical commitments of this study. I used multimodal methods—including extended participant quotes, thematic narrative, and visual collages composed of found poetry (drawn from participants’ own words) and affectively chosen

imagery (inspired by their artifacts and my interpretive engagement with the data)—to convey the lived realities of these educators' justice work. These compositions are not new data, but rather analytic artifacts that reflect my positionality and emotional attunement, in line with Bhattacharya's (2025) contemplative thematic analysis. The collages emerged through close engagement with transcripts and artifacts; I selected participant language that held emotional and conceptual weight and shaped it into poems that preserved voice while surfacing thematic resonance.

In composing the collages, I drew on Bhattacharya's (2025) contemplative thematic analysis, which foregrounds interiority, symbolic resonance, and emotional attunement. I selected participant quotes not based on frequency or representativeness, but on affective charge, conceptual density, and thematic alignment. In other words, I chose language that stayed with me—phrases that sparked emotional pause, evoked visual imagery, or carried ethical or political weight. These were not always the most concise or quotable statements; some were fragmentary, dissonant, or indirect. But they were charged with meaning. I excluded some comments not because they lacked value, but because they echoed points already highlighted elsewhere or felt less connected to the symbolic or emotional layer I was assembling. The collage was not meant to be comprehensive—it was designed to hold emotional truth in aesthetic form.

Images and fonts were chosen to reflect the tone, mood, and tensions of each narrative. The design of each collage unfolded through a contemplative and intuitive process, aligned with Bhattacharya's (2019, 2025) vision of qualitative research as interior, relational, and aesthetic. These visual-poetic compositions became a form of embodied analysis, offering not only representation but encounter—inviting readers to feel and reflect alongside the participants.

While I was careful not to over-code or over-interpret participants' silences in the thematic analysis—especially when those silences felt protective or emotionally charged—I allowed them to emerge differently in the collages. In those visual-poetic compositions, pauses, refusals, and unfinished thoughts were rendered aesthetically: through spacing, fragmentation, repetition, or rhythm. These gestures were not about exposing what was withheld, but about honoring the emotional and political textures of what could not—or should not—be fully named. The collages allowed me to work with silence not as an analytic gap, but as a meaningful and ethical presence. In this way, they became a space for holding the unsaid with care rather than resolving it through explanation.

Chapter 5 moved from case-centered expression to cross-case synthesis. I developed a set of interpretive principles drawn from recurring tensions, pedagogical strategies, and relational practices across participants. Unlike Chapter 4, which centers participant voice directly, this synthesis emerged from my interpretive engagement with the data. Still, I remained accountable to the spirit of participants' commitments by anchoring each principle in their language and concerns. These principles were then translated into justice-oriented teacher education programming, grounded in what participants lived and voiced, yet also reaching toward what might be possible.

Across both chapters, data presentation was guided by Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism and Stake's (1995) emphasis on interpretive rather than veridical representation. I aimed not to generalize or distill, but to offer layered, contextually grounded, and ethically attuned interpretations. This included maintaining contradiction, honoring complexity, and resisting the pull toward oversimplification or closure.

In combining narrative, thematic, visual, poetic, and design-based forms, I sought not only to convey findings but to co-create meaning. This approach was both rigorous and liberatory—an attempt to remain faithful to participants' voices while also contributing to the transformative possibilities of global justice in teacher education. In Chapter 4, my voice appears most clearly in the narrative framing and in the visual and structural design of the collages. While the language in the collages came entirely from participants' words, I made the interpretive decisions about which quotes to include, how to arrange them, and what imagery to pair with them. I did not seek to separate my voice from theirs completely, but rather to remain in ethical relationship—to interpret with care, without overriding what participants shared or protected.

Trustworthiness

Trustworthiness in this study was supported through methodological rigor, critical reflexivity, and the integration of multimodal, thematic, and interpretive strategies. Following Lincoln and Guba's (1985) criteria, I addressed credibility, transferability, dependability, and confirmability through a layered, relational approach to qualitative inquiry.

To support credibility, I employed both multimodal and systematic analytic methods. Visual collages—composed of found poetry and affectively chosen imagery—enabled deeper engagement with participants' narratives by surfacing meanings that might remain obscured in linear or exclusively textual forms (Bhattacharya, 2019). Alongside this visual interpretation, I conducted line-by-line coding of all nine transcripts, preserving exact participant language and applying a recursively developed coding framework. ChatGPT was used as an organizational aid—to track codes, maintain consistency across transcripts, and support the logistical demands

of cross-case synthesis. All interpretive and analytic decisions were mine, grounded in sustained attention to conceptual nuance and affective depth.

The convergence of multiple data forms—transcripts, artifacts, spreadsheets, and visual and thematic syntheses—enabled a form of triangulation (Miles & Huberman, 1994) that enriched interpretation and affirmed thematic coherence.

Transferability was supported through thick description and aesthetic expression. Rose (2007) highlights the potential of visual modes to foster connection across contexts, and I sought to present data in ways that invited emotional and intellectual resonance for readers—even those outside teacher education—who may recognize similar dilemmas, tensions, or commitments in their own work.

Dependability was enhanced by the multiple case study design (Stake, 1995), which allowed for deep, contextual exploration of each participant's experiences. I followed a systematic and iterative process of coding, categorizing, and theme development as outlined by Saldaña (2024), documenting interpretive decisions across transcripts using embedded memos, analytic matrices, and cross-case charts.

Confirmability was supported through recursive engagement with the data and through participant involvement. I invited participants to reflect on emerging interpretations during follow-up conversations. Cristina, who was unable to attend the group interview, participated in a second individual interview shortly afterward, allowing her perspectives to continue shaping the cross-case analysis. Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism guided this process, emphasizing relational responsibility and the ethical obligation to center participants' voices while interrogating systems of power.

By weaving together thematic and visual methods with contemplative and critical frameworks, this study offered not only multiple layers of evidence but also multiple ways of knowing. These strategies collectively contributed to the reliability, depth, and integrity of the findings—supporting a trustworthiness grounded in both methodological rigor and epistemic care.

Limitations

As with any qualitative study, this research was shaped by methodological choices, contextual constraints, and epistemological commitments. One primary limitation was the reliance on online interviews for all data collection. While Zoom allowed for synchronous, one-on-one engagement, it limited my ability to observe participants' physical environments, embodied gestures, and informal relational cues. As Timmermans and Tavory (2012) and Neuendorf et al. (2021) note, in-person interactions often support deeper rapport-building and allow for richer contextual interpretation. The absence of such cues may have influenced the tone and depth of participant disclosure, or my ability to fully attune to affective undercurrents in real time.

Another significant limitation was the absence of field-based classroom or instructional observations. This study did not include direct observation of participants engaging with students or navigating their institutional settings. Observational methods could have offered valuable insight into the material, relational, and institutional dynamics that shape and constrain global justice work. They also would have allowed for additional triangulation between stated commitments and enacted practice—surfacing potential dissonances or revealing subtle justice strategies that might not be easily verbalized. Without these observations, the study relied primarily on self-reported narrative data and course artifacts, which, while rich and reflective,

provide only a partial view of participants' pedagogical realities (O'Toole & Beckett, 2013; Cohen & Manion, 2018).

Additionally, while the initial recruitment materials described participants as U.S.-based teacher educators, the final participant pool included educators from Canada and Chile. This development occurred through snowball sampling and reflected alignment with the study's conceptual framework, which is grounded in critical globalization studies, teacher agency, and liberatory praxis. The inclusion of international participants enriched the study's transnational relevance by challenging U.S.-centric framings of teacher education and illuminating global-local entanglements in justice work. At the same time, it introduced some variability in institutional contexts, which may influence the transferability of findings to teacher education programs within the U.S. alone.

That said, this study was not designed to evaluate performance or test consistency between belief and behavior. Rather, it aimed to explore how global majority teacher educators understand, enact, and sustain their commitments to justice—and how they make meaning of these commitments within complex, often contradictory environments. Within this interpretivist and contemplative frame, the absence of observation did not invalidate the findings, but it did shape their scope. The study foregrounded participants' reflections, intentions, and dilemmas rather than direct behavioral evidence—an approach consistent with Bhattacharya's (2025) and Darder's (2015) emphasis on epistemic agency, narrative integrity, and relational ethics.

Chapter 4 - Cross-Case Thematic Findings

This chapter brings together the voices, pedagogies, and tensions expressed by four global majority teacher educators as they engage in the ongoing work of understanding, enacting, and sustaining commitments to global justice. I offer this chapter not as a neat summary of findings, but as a layered, dialogic exploration. These are not "answers" so much as impressions of becomings —portraits of practice and possibility that move across borders, disciplines, emotions, and contexts.

To review, my research questions are:

1. How do these 4 global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understand the concept of global justice within the context of their sociopolitical realities and positionalities?
    a. How do their understandings of global justice inform their practices, roles, and responsibilities as teacher educators?
    b. How do they cultivate a sense of agency around global justice in their students?
2. What, if anything, sustains these teacher educators in their commitments and practice?

As described in the methodology chapter, this analysis is grounded in contemplative thematic analysis (Bhattacharya, 2025) and Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism, framed within a multiple case study approach (Stake, 1995). The voices of the four participants—Cristina, Chiara-Mai, Amara, and Nabeel —are reintroduced throughout the themes that follow. These are pseudonyms, chosen to reflect participants' cultural and political identities while protecting their confidentiality. While they are not presented as isolated cases, their perspectives are situated through contextual reintroductions and the integration of course artifacts, understood in this study as critical pedagogical texts.

Initial theme development drew on Saldaña's (2024) guidance around coding and categorization; however, the interpretive orientation throughout this chapter follows Bhattacharya's (2025) contemplative thematic analysis, with attention to emotional, relational, and symbolic dimensions of meaning-making. This process of theme development was iterative, layered, and grounded in my evolving positionality as a global majority emerging scholar and teacher educator. I led all aspects of thematic construction—identifying patterns, surfacing tensions, and naming categories through sustained engagement with transcripts, artifacts, and structured spreadsheets. I used ChatGPT to support the logistical aspects of organizing coded excerpts. This tool was used to help manage complexity in ways that helped me clarify my thinking and stay accountable to the data.

The themes are not static. They bend and stretch across transcripts, course materials, memories, and moments. They are emergent and exploratory, shaped as much by what was said as by what was held in the silences. My own voice as a researcher is woven throughout, sometimes in the background, sometimes in response, always learning.

Positionality and the Complexity of "Global Majority"

In framing this study, I initially used the term "global majority" to describe my participants—a term meant to decenter whiteness and affirm the collective power and presence of people whose communities have historically been minoritized, racialized, or colonized (Campbell-Stephens, 2020). However, over the course of this study, I began to see the limitations and tensions embedded in that term. Several participants complicated any stable notion of racial identity. One participant identified as half-Japanese and half-Irish, and described herself as "a white American" when abroad—someone whose family was interned during World War II and yet whose own sense of cultural belonging had been shaped by deep assimilation (Chiara-Mai ,

whole group interview). Another participant identified as half-Jewish and half-Chilean, and reflected on her whiteness in the Chilean context, while being racialized as "other" in U.S. academic spaces. These realities complicate simplistic identity categories.

More importantly, the term "global majority"—while politically affirming—does not ensure justice-oriented thinking or practice. As several participants noted, teacher education often reproduces white supremacy not only through white educators, but also through educators of color who have been shaped by Eurocentric systems. Nabeel agreed that "plenty of teacher educators of color uphold white supremacy—sometimes even more efficiently than their white colleagues," echoing my own observation that positionality alone does not determine ideological clarity. Cristina went further, stating bluntly, "Teacher education is a white supremacist enterprise that produces ideological white people—even among people of color."

Rather than using "global majority" as a fixed or identity-based label, I have come to approach it as a relational and strategic orientation—one that reflects a set of histories, epistemologies, and lived experiences shaped by colonialism, racialization, migration, and resistance. What binds participants in this study is not a common racial identity, but a shared commitment to disrupting dominant systems from within. Their work resists easy classification, and it calls for a more nuanced accounting of how race, class, history, and ideology shape what justice means in teacher education.

Global Justice as Orientation

This study began not with certainty, but with curiosity. My research questions asked how global majority teacher educators understand, enact, and sustain commitments to global justice in teacher education. But I did not arrive with a fixed definition of global justice in hand. Instead, I carried fragments—ideas shaped by critical globalization studies, by decolonial and liberatory

frameworks, and by my own experiences navigating systems shaped by power, silence, and survival. I brought with me a hope that global justice could be relational, historical, and unfinished.

What I encountered in the interviews and artifacts, however, was not a clear definition—but a deepening of complexity. Some participants refused the phrase "global justice" entirely, critiquing its Americentrism or its vagueness. Others taught through it intuitively, drawing from embodied practices, moral clarity, counter-mapping, or care. Still others redefined it as transnational, poetic, or spiritual. What mattered most was not how they named it, but how they lived it—in their teaching, their refusals, their scaffolding, and their sustaining strategies.

As an emerging scholar, I've come to see global justice not as a category to define, but as a condition to attend to. A condition shaped by memory, critique, refusal, and relationship.

This section doesn't aim to settle that complexity. It offers, instead, an orientation: one shaped by those who spoke to me, and the space we made together. What follows are five themes that trace how justice moved—through curriculum, emotion, resistance, language, and space.

Expanding the Notion of Artifacts

Following Bhattacharya's (2025) call to approach artifacts as emergent, relational, and affectively charged, I take up an expansive definition of what constitutes a justice artifact in this chapter. While participants submitted formal materials—such as syllabi, assignments, and student work—many of the most generative artifacts emerged in the moment, during conversation. These included pedagogical moves, strategic decisions, and relational practices that participants described as integral to their justice work. For Nabeel, artifacts were often embedded in his dialogic approach: creating non-threatening classroom spaces where students could name bias and be guided—gently but deliberately—toward reflection. He shared how he

brings in community voices and refugee perspectives not to "teach diversity," but to reframe what students believe school is for.

For Cristina, the artifact was ideological clarity—refusing institutional gestures of reform and instead embedding justice into the very structure of her courses. Her refusal to emotionally manage whiteness for student comfort, and her recommendation that students take an ethnic studies track, became living, political artifacts of resistance. Amara shared how she used music, oral history, and poetry collaboratively with students—describing one musician-scholar whose integration of spoken word into Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR) pedagogy inspired her students to compose music from "Where I'm From" poems. "Just having that person there was the artifact," she said, naming the *experience* as the pedagogical tool. Similarly, Chiara-Mai treated the curriculum as living terrain. In one example, she describes a student-created counter-map of queer spaces in New York as a map not of landmarks, but of personal memory and cultural erasure. These were not static products, but ephemeral and affective acts of justice-making. Honoring Bhattacharya's (2025) framing, I take these pedagogical gestures, ways of being, and relational moments as artifacts—traces of justice in practice that extend beyond documents and into the living fabric of teacher education.

Portraits: Context and Commitments

Amara

Amara is a teacher educator based in the far south of Chile, in a remote and wind-swept region near Antarctica. Her town is geographically isolated—accessible only by plane, ferry, or by driving through Argentina and re-entering the country. The climate is harsh, with winds so strong that handrails line parts of the street to keep people from falling; several have died from the wind alone. This landscape—cold, difficult, and infrastructurally forgotten—is also marked

by deeper historical violence, shaped by British colonization and the genocide of Indigenous communities. Amara situated her work within these legacies, alongside the more recent trauma of Chile's dictatorship and the ongoing reach of neoliberal reform. She identifies as half-Chilean and comes from a family in which half are Jewish—identities she navigates with nuance, shifting how they show up depending on geographic and political context. Her pedagogy centers uncertainty, community knowledge, and refusal. She leads a teacher education program grounded in democratic leadership and Youth Participatory Action Research (YPAR), where students investigate and challenge systemic conditions in their own communities.

Chiara-Mai

Chiara-Mai is a teacher educator based in New York City, where she has worked in teacher education for five years. She serves as an adjunct fieldwork supervisor and teaches social studies methods to preservice teachers at a public university. She identifies as half-Irish and half-Japanese, though she described feeling more culturally integrated into whiteness than in touch with her Japanese heritage. Her family was directly impacted by the incarceration of Japanese Americans during World War II, a history that remains woven into her understanding of place, belonging, and silence. Chiara-Mai's pedagogy is rooted in spatial inquiry, counter-mapping, and transnational memory. She rarely uses the phrase "global justice," but her curriculum challenges U.S. exceptionalism, foregrounds refugee and migrant experiences, and helps students trace what has been erased—geographically, historically, and emotionally. Her work moves between the visible and the quiet, the teach-in and the teachable pause, always attentive to what can be named, and what must be protected.

Cristina

Cristina is a Filipina teacher educator based in the United States, where she has worked in teacher education for over 15 years. She currently teaches undergraduate and graduate courses in a college of education with a Catholic mission and a global justice requirement. The daughter of Filipino immigrants, Cristina began her academic journey studying the decolonization of the Filipino American mindset—a thread that continues to inform her critique of whiteness, colonialism, and the emotional architectures of power. Her pedagogy is unapologetically political and structurally grounded. She rarely uses institutional language like "equity" or "diversity" without interrogating it first, and she urges her students—and colleagues—to pursue what she calls ideological clarity. Cristina mentors junior faculty of color, teaches through discomfort, and holds a firm stance that justice must include emotional labor, institutional refusal, and rigorous curriculum design. For her, global justice is not a slogan, but a structural and spiritual commitment: embodied, costly, and non-negotiable.

Nabeel

Nabeel is a teacher educator based in Canada, where he has worked in teacher education for six years following an earlier career in a more technical field. His entry into education was not incidental—it emerged from a desire to engage people more directly and confront systemic injustice from within. As a Muslim man teaching in post-9/11 North America, his justice work is shaped by the ongoing realities of hypervisibility, risk, and the quiet labor of navigating institutional scrutiny. His pedagogical approach resists grand abstractions. Instead, he cultivates justice through climate inquiry, refugee narratives, racialized case studies, and community storytelling—tools he uses to unsettle the normalized assumptions embedded in Global North curricula. In his classrooms, justice is practiced through presence: in silence that invites

reflection, in dialogue that creates space for rupture, and in the deliberate act of unlearning. For him, justice is not performative. It is relational, strategic, and held with intention. It unfolds in the everyday decisions of teaching, and in the willingness to hold complexity—even when retreat might feel safer.

The next five sections of this chapter explore how global justice shows up in the teaching lives of the participants: how they enact it, protect it, reframe it, language it, and map it—each in their own way, and always in conversation with the world around them.

These five themes are:

1. From Seeds to Systems: Relational and Reflective Justice Work,
2. Illegible Praxis: Subversive Pedagogies in the Age of Surveillance,
3. Reframing Global Justice: Beyond Americentrism and Liberalism,
4. Performative or Transformative? The Politics of Justice Language, and
5. Mapping Justice: Counter-Hegemonic Curriculum and Pedagogies of Place.

Together, they offer a textured and layered account of how global majority teacher educators define, enact, and sustain justice work across shifting contexts.

Theme 1: From Seeds to Systems: Relational and Reflective Justice Work

One of the central aims of this study was to understand how global majority teacher educators committed to global justice conceptualize and enact that commitment in their teaching lives. What emerged across interviews and artifacts speaks directly to RQ1a and RQ2: participants did not teach justice as a fixed ideology or distant goal. Instead, they cultivated it through everyday pedagogical choices—relational, affective, and deeply reflective—that slowly seed more expansive possibilities. These early justice moves—whether through language, storytelling, emotional regulation, faith-based critique, or collective inquiry—are not end goals

in themselves. Rather, they are intentional acts of pedagogical groundwork, designed to help students see systems, question assumptions, and begin to imagine themselves as participants in structural change.

Drawing from Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism, I understand these practices as not only personal but political—interpretive responses to the contradictions of teaching within systems that often constrain justice work. At the same time, Bhattacharya's (2023) framing of artifacts as situated, emotional, and politically charged reminds us that pedagogical choices are never neutral. Teaching without historical knowledge risks reproducing dominant narratives, erasing the legacies of resistance and harm that shape educational spaces, and detaching curriculum from the material realities of students and communities. For educators working from the edges of dominant institutions, grounding pedagogy in historical consciousness becomes not just a political act, but an ethical imperative. This theme traces how participants plant these seeds with care and clarity, cultivating the kinds of classroom soil where systemic critique, ethical rigor, and future action might eventually take root.

For Amara, justice work begins not with disruption, but with planting. "The seed is my whole work," she explained. "The whole course is thinking of the seed." Teaching in post-dictatorship Chile, she views justice not as a destination to be reached, but as a process of political awakening—one that emerges through language, memory, and community dialogue. In her classrooms, students are not given fixed answers or ideological roadmaps. Instead, she offers provocations, metaphors, and questions—trusting that "even if they don't get it right away, you're planting something that might grow later."

Amara's commitment to seeding change is rooted in her own early experiences of political formation. Raised by a community of leftist women during her childhood in the U.S.,

she describes her political education as collective and embodied: “There’s just this sense of being raised collectively in those beginning years… those were seeds but they are ungraspable.” These ungraspable seeds now inform how she approaches teacher education—not as a transfer of knowledge, but as a space of collective remembering, ethical inquiry, and epistemic disruption.

Her pedagogical stance is marked by intentional slowness. Whether introducing Freirean texts or engaging students in youth participatory action research (YPAR), she creates openings for discomfort, for what doesn’t immediately make sense. One artifact she shared was a YPAR video she uses with teacher candidates. At first, students expressed confusion: “They don’t understand how this works, or how it can relate to their reality.” But after completing their own YPAR projects, Amara reflected, “If we showed it to them now, they would understand it a lot more.” The arc of understanding is long, and her pedagogy is designed to make space for that gradual unfolding.

This slow, relational practice is not separate from systems. In fact, it is her way of working against them. “Sometimes that seed just dies and becomes absorbed into neoliberal understandings of the world. And sometimes it doesn’t—something else comes along and it grows,” she explained. “My job is not to force that seed to grow.” By refusing the logics of certainty, efficiency, and control—hallmarks of neoliberal education—Amara protects the possibility of deeper transformation. She knows the risks of this stance: becoming eligible to her institution, having her work misread or dismissed as “just conversation.” Yet she remains committed to planting seeds of critique and care.

Amara’s work reminds us that systems thinking does not always look like systems language. It begins in the slow work of helping students name what has shaped them, question what they’ve inherited, and imagine what else might be possible. Her pedagogy teaches students

not only how to listen, but how to listen historically—how to connect the present to the past, the personal to the political, and the local to the global. In that way, every seed she plants carries with it the potential to take root far beyond the classroom.

Chiara-Mai's justice pedagogy begins with what she calls a "pedagogical arc"—an unfolding process grounded in trust, sustained attention, and reflective practice. "I'm only getting a snapshot… it's the beginning of an arc," she noted, signaling that justice, for her, is not a destination but a trajectory—a process of becoming that begins with relational groundwork. In her social studies methods courses, she invites students to begin that arc through inquiry, resisting the pressure for immediate clarity or closure. "Mostly I've been trying to challenge students to deepen inquiry," she explained, framing questioning not as a delay in justice learning, but as its foundation.

Her entry point is often language. By affirming emergent bilingualism and encouraging students to pursue TESOL certification alongside social studies, she creates early openings to reframe who holds knowledge, whose voices are centered, and whose experiences are structurally marginalized. "Bilingualism is such an asset," she emphasized, not only as a pedagogical tool, but as a gateway to larger questions of epistemic justice. In this way, her affirmation of multilingualism becomes more than inclusion—it becomes a seed toward reimagining systems that privilege dominant language and cultural norms.

In practicum settings, Chiara-Mai scaffolds justice reflection with care, supporting students where they are while nudging them toward where they could go. "I'm here just to have a gentle conversation about who you are at this stage in your career," she told one preservice teacher, foregrounding reflection over performance. Yet her feedback is neither passive nor purely affirming. She recalled observing one student who translated lesson materials into

Spanish for ESL students—an act of linguistic care that she acknowledged as meaningful. "That's critical UDL work," she reflected, "but it stopped there." What was missing, she noted, was deeper engagement with the structural forces shaping students' lives—immigration policy, racialization, and the epistemologies embedded in dominant curricula.

For Chiara-Mai, these are the moments when seeds must be planted with purpose. Her teaching helps future educators move from acts of care to acts of critique, from inclusive gestures to interrogations of the systems that necessitate them. Her approach makes visible the slow, recursive labor of justice education—one that begins with affirming identity and experience but always gestures toward structural understanding. The arc may start with a snapshot, but its trajectory points toward transformation.

Nabeel's justice pedagogy begins in the emotional register. As a Muslim educator navigating post-9/11 North America, he brings to his work a keen awareness of the ways emotion, identity, and risk intersect in educational spaces. Rather than using this position to assert authority, he models a form of relational presence that is at once grounded and strategic. His pedagogical stance is not built on disruption, but on deep listening, careful questioning, and a commitment to reflective dialogue—even when the content cuts close to home.

In both K–12 and teacher education contexts, Nabeel has encountered students who express Islamophobic or racially charged views, sometimes directly in his presence. Rather than respond with reactive anger, he sees such moments as opportunities to scaffold deeper thinking. "If I had a visceral response, it wouldn't be conducive for dialogue," he reflected. Instead, he asks students clarifying questions—inviting them to unpack their assumptions, reveal the gaps in their reasoning, and begin the work of unlearning. These quiet acts of ethical inquiry are not just interpersonal; they are, for Nabeel, the seeds of systemic consciousness. "Ultimately, my goal is

not to make everyone believe what I believe," he explained, "but to have students think about their assumptions."

This pedagogical ethic extends into his curriculum design. In one social studies methods course, Nabeel used a Pulitzer Prize–winning photograph of a starving child with a vulture in the background—not to shock, but to open space for ethical reflection. Students engaged with the image not as passive viewers, but as emerging educators responsible for helping others understand global systems of poverty, war, and neglect. By prompting students to grapple with the emotional weight of visual storytelling, Nabeel cultivates habits of critical seeing that stretch beyond individual feeling and into questions of structural violence.

His work frequently explores how racialized emotional norms shape what can be said, felt, or taught in teacher education. Rather than naming this dynamic in abstraction, he invites students to notice it in themselves—how discomfort might silence inquiry, or how empathy can be a portal to deeper engagement. For Nabeel, emotional regulation is not about neutrality. It is a strategic practice—an ethic of care that holds space for vulnerability while guiding students toward complexity.

These practices may seem small—asking a follow-up question, using an image, choosing when to respond—but they are not incidental. They are, as Nabeel enacts them, deliberate pedagogical moves designed to open students to systems they may not yet be ready to name. Through his teaching, students begin to trace the links between personal experience and structural inequity, between belief and behavior, between feeling and power. In cultivating this capacity, Nabeel prepares future educators not only to teach content, but to interrogate the systems in which that content lives.

Cristina's justice pedagogy begins with emotion—not as a private experience, but as a political structure. She teaches her students to see how emotional regimes, particularly whiteness, shape whose feelings are protected, whose discomfort is centered, and whose suffering is erased. "When we cater to one emotionality," she explained, "we don't see the humanity of those that they're hurting." For Cristina, this emotional shielding is not incidental—it is ideological manipulation on a global scale.

Her teaching does not shy away from contradiction. It leans into it. In one classroom exchange, she told a student, "You can't be racist and Christian. You gotta choose." The comment, direct and unapologetic, was not designed to provoke for provocation's sake. Rather, it served as an ethical rupture—an opening for the student to examine the dissonance between personal identity and structural complicity. These moments, Cristina explained, are not meant to shame. They are meant to wake students up. "My goal is ideological revolution," she shared—a revolution that asks students to go beyond personal narrative or identity affirmation and confront the structural roots of harm.

Cristina's pedagogy is rigorous in its demands, but also deeply grounded in care. She understands that justice is not simply about what students know—it is about who they are becoming. Her classroom is a space where becoming requires loss: of comfort, of certainty, of narratives that no longer hold. It is also a space where new ways of thinking—and being—can take root. Through her teaching, Cristina plants the seeds of structural critique in places where students often expect moral affirmation. She challenges them to see whiteness not just as a racial identity, but as a global ideology with emotional, spiritual, and material consequences. Her use of emotion, contradiction, and clarity helps students begin to name systems of harm—and to recognize their own entanglement within them. Cristina's pedagogy invites students to think and

feel at once—to trace how belief and behavior, faith and fear, values and violence are interwoven. The work is disruptive, yes—but not in service of spectacle. It is in service of clarity. And clarity, for Cristina, is a necessary precursor to systemic transformation.

Together, these educators model a justice praxis that begins in relationship, humility, and reflection—but never stays there. Their pedagogies are not only sustaining; they are quietly radical, rooted in small openings that reach toward deeper transformation. By planting seeds of inquiry, unsettling assumptions, and linking everyday choices to broader systems, they prepare their students to move from the personal to the political, from the relational to the structural. As Darder (2015) reminds us, such pedagogical meaning-making is never apolitical; it is interpretive work shaped by ideology, resistance, and the uneven terrain of power in education. And in the spirit of Bhattacharya (2023), these justice moves—often expressed through artifacts, pauses, questions, and classroom gestures—are deeply situated, emotionally resonant, and contextually grounded. In their hands, teaching becomes a practice of care that is also a practice of critique—rooted in the now, but always reaching toward what might yet be possible.

Yet not all justice work is named so directly. In the next theme, I explore how these same educators navigate institutional landscapes where clarity is punished, and how their justice practices often take quieter, more ambiguous forms—what might be misread as compliance, but are in fact deeply intentional acts of resistance and survival.

The collage below (Figure 1) serves as a multimodal expression of Theme 1, *From Seeds to Systems: Relational and Reflective Justice Work*. Created through a layered process of data engagement, the visual integrates participant language, poetic fragments, and symbolic imagery to surface the emotional, historical, and pedagogical textures of justice work. A candle nestled in a pink flower evokes tenderness and mourning, while the map of the famine road, a torn

newspaper clipping, and a magnifying glass suggest the labor of looking closely—at history, at power, and at everyday acts of resistance. The ripple gestures toward the unseen reach of pedagogical choices that extend far beyond the moment. Surrounding the college are fragments of dialogue and reflection that gesture toward the intergenerational, affective, and agentic dimensions of justice work. At its center is a found poem constructed entirely from participants' words, composed to illuminate how justice is cultivated through care, iteration, and belief in slow change. Rather than illustrating the theme, the image becomes part of the inquiry—a visual meditation on the recursive, relational, and embodied nature of justice-oriented teaching.

Figure 1

From Seeds to Systems: Relational and Reflective Justice Work" Collage

Theme 2: Illegible Praxis: Subversive Pedagogies in the Age of Surveillance

This theme explores how participants enact and sustain their commitments to justice under institutional conditions that are often indifferent, extractive, or openly hostile. It speaks directly to RQ1b and RQ2, illuminating how these educators navigate surveillance, risk, and emotional labor through strategies grounded in both critical pedagogy and teacher agency. While their actions were not always loud, they were always intentional. Refusal, redirection, and strategic invisibility became powerful tools of resistance. Their work was not apolitical for being quiet—it was, in many ways, more enduring because of it.

Justice work does not always announce itself. In fact, some of the most powerful pedagogies described in this study were intentionally hard to name. Participants created subversive, often ambiguous spaces within institutions that could not—or would not—hold their full commitments. These were practices of refusal, silence, coded language, and gentle questioning—each a form of what one participant called "quiet activism." As Darder (2015) argues, acts of pedagogical meaning-making are always situated within larger ideological and structural tensions. These educators were not disengaged; they were deeply engaged in the co-construction of justice under conditions that rendered their work illegible. And, drawing on Bhattacharya's (2023) view of artifacts as affective and political expressions of place, identity, and risk, these moments—a poem, a map, an unreadable syllabus, a well-timed walkout—emerge as critical interventions in systems not designed to hold them.

Cristina offered a sharp critique of performative resistance. "Younger academics want to battle everything. They want to battle every microaggression, every racist old white professor, every moment of institutional violence. But it's not sustainable. You gotta know when it's just psychic mutilation." For Cristina , agency is not about disengagement—it's about discernment.

She described mentoring junior faculty, creating space for doctoral students of color, and choosing not to expend energy in spaces that will only extract it. Sometimes, she said, the most powerful act is simply getting up in the middle of a meeting and walking out. These refusals—quiet but forceful—are part of what she calls "ideological revolution": knowing when to speak, when to stay, and when to leave.

Amara spoke candidly about how institutional constraints shape the everyday choices of teacher educators. In Chile, she explained, even well-intentioned reform efforts can be co-opted by systems of control. "We marched for educational quality… but it became a surveillance." Teachers, she noted, often adapt by using bureaucratic tools not as instruments of compliance, but as shields. "Teachers rely on 'doing what the website says' to protect themselves." In such environments, resistance doesn't always look radical—it looks quiet, strategic, and protective. Amara's work models what it means to survive inside systems that are constantly watching, and to find ways of holding onto one's commitments without becoming a target. Her justice work, though often subtle, is deeply intentional: sustaining space, protecting others, and refusing to perform the language of resistance for institutional approval.

Nabeel described justice work not only as what happens inside the classroom, but as what happens around and beneath it. Aware of the limits imposed by institutional rhetoric and risk, he turns to collective, often informal, spaces to sustain his commitments. "You do have the confines of your institution," he explained, "but… within those, you find spaces. For me, it's collective work with colleagues—even across disciplines." These counter-spaces—study groups, teach-ins, collaborations—function as living justice artifacts (Bhattacharya, 2025), allowing him to build community and organize without requiring institutional permission. In these spaces, Nabeel doesn't just navigate around constraint—he refuses to let it define the boundaries of his work.

Justice, for him, is sustained not only through content or pedagogy, but through the networks that make it possible to keep going.

Chiara-Mai spoke about using curriculum design as one of the last remaining spaces for agency in an increasingly surveilled and standardized teacher education landscape. “Curriculum isn’t something you’re handed,” she said. “It lives in the world… it changes with your students. That’s where agency still exists.” As an adjunct, Chiara-Mai described having more curricular flexibility than tenure-track faculty—a kind of strategic invisibility she uses to her advantage. “I’m so low on the totem pole that they don’t really survey my curriculum as much… I assign books like *100 Years’ War in Palestine*, and if I get in trouble, I’ll just deal with it later.” Her counter-mapping project invites students to chart sites that resist erasure—queer bars, neighborhood fires, hidden histories—creating visual artifacts that challenge canonical narratives without needing to declare them overtly political. She also integrates poetry, like Eavan Boland’s verses about Irish famine roads, to surface questions of absence, empire, and memory. “You’ve got to take a chance,” she said. In Chiara-Mai ’s pedagogy, quiet refusal and creative risk are not just methods—they are modes of survival.

Together, these accounts suggest that illegibility is not a sign of weakness, but a strategy of care. These educators are not hiding—they are protecting the work. In classrooms, curriculum, and conversation, they teach in ways that may not always announce themselves as radical, but that steadily unsettle dominant narratives and institutional norms.

This quiet labor should not be mistaken for passivity. It is not in opposition to public protest, but in deep relationship with it. Movements like Black Lives Matter and the more recent pro-Palestine campus encampments remind us that justice is fought for both in the streets and through the subtler decisions made in classrooms, syllabi, and faculty meetings. For the

participants in this study, strategic illegibility became a way of holding onto justice in spaces that sought to dilute or contain it. As Darder (2015) reminds us, pedagogical choices are always ideological—they are interpretive acts made within structures that seek to define the boundaries of what justice can look like, and who is allowed to pursue it.

Outside these institutions, participants made themselves more visible: Cristina, through sharp refusals, mentorship, and embodied resistance—like walking out of meetings without apology; Amara, through arts-based feminist pedagogy and quiet navigation of surveillance cultures; Nabeel, through cross-disciplinary organizing and teach-ins that bypass formal channels; and Chiara-Mai, through counter-mapping, poetry, and a curriculum laced with risk, taught from the margins. These were not contradictions, but calibrations—each one balancing protection with public truth-telling. As Bhattacharya (2023) argues, artifacts of justice are always relational and situated. A poem, a map, a moment of silence—these are not just methods; they are effective inscriptions of resistance. In doing so, these educators redefine what it means to teach for justice—not as performance, but as practice. Not as spectacle, but as a deliberate choreography of survival, impact, and care.

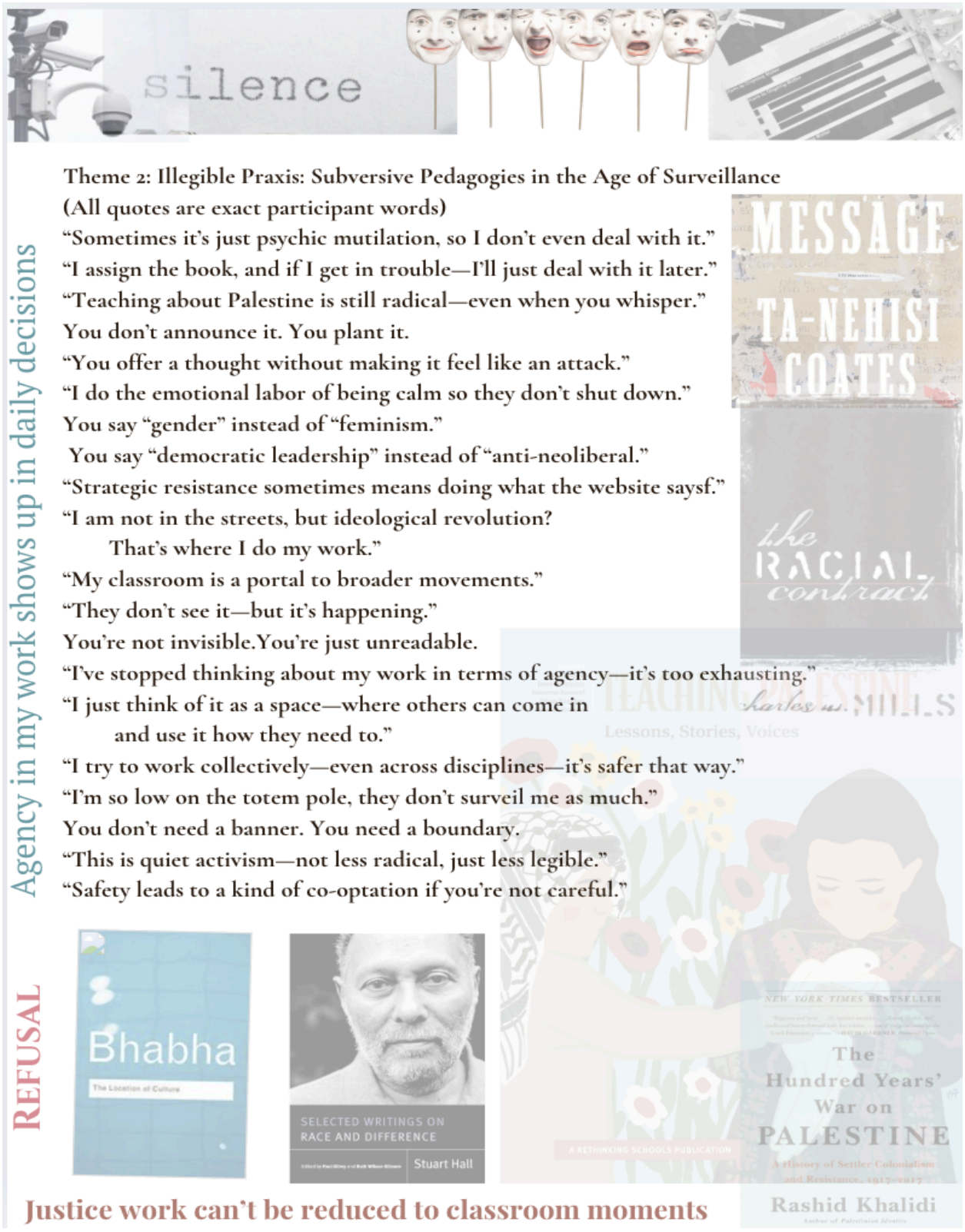
But teaching for justice isn't only about how it's practiced—it's also about how it's understood, named, and, at times, resisted as a concept. In the next theme, I turn to how participants grappled with the very term "global justice," offering redefinitions shaped by their geographies, histories, and discomfort with liberal and Americentric frames.

The collage below (Figure 2) serves as a multimodal expression of Theme 2, *Illegible Praxis: Subversive Pedagogies in the Age of Surveillance*. Composed through layered engagement with participant language, poetic fragments, and visual metaphor, the image reflects the affective and strategic complexity of doing justice work under watchful institutional eyes.

Redacted text, surveillance imagery, and faded book covers evoke the quiet tension between ideological clarity and professional risk. The mask-like faces on sticks suggest the performance, containment, and affective labor educators undertake to remain legible enough to survive, but unreadable enough to resist. Along the edges, fragments of participant speech name refusal, boundary-setting, and collective safety as daily acts of resistance. At the center, a found poem built entirely from participant words speaks to the subtle, iterative, and often unreadable ways justice is practiced.

Figure 2

Illegible Praxis: Subversive Pedagogies in the Age of Surveillance" Collage



Theme 3: Reframing Global Justice: Beyond Americentrism and Liberalism

This theme speaks most directly to RQ1, which asks how participants understand global justice in relation to their sociopolitical realities and positionalities. While all participants were deeply committed to justice, many questioned the usefulness—or even the legitimacy—of the term *global justice* itself. For some, it was unfamiliar. For others, it had been co-opted by liberalism, emptied of its radical edge, or used to recenter U.S. moral authority under the guise of benevolence. What emerged instead were justice orientations shaped by transnational memory, critique of empire, moral clarity, and geopolitical context. Drawing from critical globalization studies, decolonial thought, and transnational feminist praxis, this theme explores how participants resist, reframe, or refuse dominant framings of global justice.

Following Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism, I understand these refusals not as conceptual detours, but as ideological interventions—interpretive acts through which participants reconstruct justice in ways that are more politically honest and historically accountable. At the same time, Bhattacharya's (2023) emphasis on artifacts and practices as emotionally situated, relational, and context-specific allows us to see how justice work unfolds not only in discourse, but in the everyday materials and movements of pedagogy. When I began this study, I held a working definition of global justice rooted in structural critique—colonialism, neoliberalism, white supremacy. That definition still matters. But across these conversations and artifacts, I encountered something more unsettled, more embodied: global justice not just as a political commitment, but as a contested, situated, and deeply relational practice. Many participants never used the term. And yet, their work disorients liberal certainty, refuses Americentric narratives, and remaps who is allowed to teach, remember, and resist. This theme explores how they

name—and unname—justice, not from theory alone, but from the geographies they inhabit, the histories they carry, and the refusals they enact.

Amara was the most explicit in her discomfort with the phrase global justice. “I don’t think there’s any other justice if it’s not global,” she said. “And then at the same time, I don’t use that word because… I might use it here, like in Chile, but I feel like when it’s used in the US, it can also mean just the US.” For Amara, the term has been distorted by Americentrism and liberal frameworks that sanitize struggle. Her critique aligns with bell hooks’ assertion that “we live our lives as theory” (1994, p. 71)—a reminder that justice is not an abstract principle, but a lived, embodied practice rooted in survival, clarity, and refusal. To strip it of that context is to strip it of meaning.

Living and teaching in southern Chile—a country shaped by dictatorship and neoliberal economic restructuring—she challenges the assumption that education alone can solve systemic problems. “Climate change? Education. Poverty? Education. Domestic violence? Education… It’s the same individualist discourse,” she explained. “If education is being defined in neoliberal terms, how can it solve the problems it’s implicated in?” Her justice pedagogy resists these depoliticized narratives, pushing students to confront the realities they’ve been taught to overlook. “We don’t teach decolonization as violent resistance,” she said. “We teach it as peaceful transition. That’s a lie.” For Amara, cultivating agency means teaching history as a site of struggle—not as consensus or reform, but as ongoing resistance.

Chiara-Mai, a teacher educator in New York City, admitted she had never used the term “global justice” before being invited into this study. “The first time I ever heard this term used was in your study, of course,” she reflected. Her hesitation was not due to a lack of commitment—but rather to the ideological baggage she sensed the term carried. In her

experience, terms like “global” are often used in U.S. educational spaces to recenter Americentric frameworks, even when they claim to decenter them. Her work, by contrast, is grounded in transnational memory, critique of empire, and a fierce commitment to naming injustice clearly, without euphemism.

In her global social studies methods course, Chiara-Mai invites students to move beyond what she calls “the narrowly circumscribed idea of the U.S.” She urges future teachers to think critically about U.S. foreign policy, to trace the long arc of imperialism, and to see curriculum not as neutral but as deeply ideological. “The history curriculum is entirely informed by Western civilization… it claims to be global, but it’s still driven by imperial encounters,” she noted.

After October 2023, as the Israeli bombardment of Gaza intensified, Chiara-Mai brought this commitment to the forefront. She distributed digital copies of Rethinking Schools’ special issue Teaching About Palestine and accompanied her students to attend a Palestine teach-in. One of her students created an entire unit on Palestinian literature. “I wanted them to feel it was okay to talk about it,” she said. “We stayed after class, just talking. That was the justice work.” These were not add-ons. They were part of an intentional refusal to teach around injustice—and an insistence on moral clarity in a moment when silence was being incentivized.

For Chiara-Mai, justice is not about neutrality. It is about discernment. “It’s not complex,” she said, reflecting on Gaza. “The murder of children, bombing of hospitals, denial of aid—that’s not complex.” In rejecting the liberal impulse to “both-sides”ness, she models for her students how to teach with courage, historical grounding, and ethical precision. Her justice work is not defined by slogans or frameworks—it is animated by a deeper question: What is our responsibility to the world as educators?

In this way, she reframes global justice not as a technical concept but as a moral stance. Her approach resists the idea that teaching about global issues must remain abstract or diplomatic. It is rooted instead in truth-telling, solidarity, and curricular integrity. For Chiara-Mai, being a justice-oriented teacher means refusing to participate in the quieting of crises—and instead helping students see the world as it is, and as it might yet become.

Cristina approaches global justice through a sharp, transnational critique of whiteness—not only as a structural force, but as an emotional regime that operates across borders. “We need to reframe how whiteness operates, not only in the U.S., but with specificities around the world,” she explained. “Our emotionality impacts the policies that shape laws.” For Cristina , liberal justice language—diversity, inclusion, tolerance—is often a cover for the reproduction of dominance. “How do we diversify the teaching force? That’s white supremacist rhetoric… it’s designed that way.” Her justice pedagogy rejects institutional gestures of reform, particularly those that center white comfort or inclusion optics without redistributing power. She spoke about failed coalitions with white feminists who reproduced servant-served dynamics, and about how white superiority is not simply a personal bias but a worldview with global consequences: “That mentality—white superiority—leads to redlining… then to war. So who are you to teach your kids?” For Cristina , global justice is not about expanding access to broken systems—it’s about naming, refusing, and dismantling the ideologies that keep those systems intact.

Nabeel reframed global justice through a critique of liberalism, Eurocentrism, and Global North positionality. “Global justice is… recognizing that the world is interconnected,” he explained, “especially the inequalities in the Global South caused by the Global North.” His pedagogy aims not only to teach global issues—like climate change, genocide, and forced

migration—but to confront the assumptions students bring to those topics. “If someone sees things from a different perspective and you assume they’re backwards—you’re assuming your positionality is inherently right.” Nabeel challenges students to see that their worldviews are not neutral. “A lot of my students don’t realize how much of their thinking is framed around a white, neoliberal sort of framework… it’s seen as normative, as default.” He extends this critique to educational frameworks themselves: “Culturally responsive pedagogy has to go deeper—to interrogate Eurocentric frameworks rooted in Enlightenment humanism.” For Nabeel, teaching global justice requires more than empathy—it requires epistemic disruption. He draws on his experiences during the war on terror and his upbringing as a Muslim post-9/11 to show how the empire lived and felt. “The war on terror made me realize how much the Global North impacts the rest of the world… and how that needs to be part of what we teach.” Justice, for Nabeel, is not a fixed position. It is a practice of ongoing reflection, unsettling, and reframing.

Together, these participants do not offer a singular definition of global justice—nor do they need to. What they offer instead is a shared refusal: to let justice be reduced to liberal inclusivity, moral equivalence, or U.S.-centric frameworks. Nabeel interrogates the unspoken assumptions embedded in Global North perspectives, urging his students to move beyond empathy toward epistemic accountability. Amara challenges the myth of education as neutral ground, grounding her pedagogy in political memory and the imperative to name colonial violence. Cristina exposes how emotional regimes uphold global white supremacy, refusing reformist narratives that protect dominant comfort. Chiara-Mai critiques the imperial architecture of the curriculum and insists on clarity where liberal discourse demands ambiguity.

They are not simply expanding the frame of global justice—they are dismantling and rebuilding it. Their pedagogies reflect what Darder (2015) describes as a critical interpretive

process: a praxis of reimagining justice through the lens of resistance, power, and place. And as Bhattacharya (2023) reminds us, these interventions are not abstract—they are embodied, emotionally situated, and pedagogically alive. In their words, in their silences, and in the curriculum they refuse to dilute, these educators call us to take seriously other geographies, other genealogies, and other grammars of justice. And in doing so, they ask: *Whose world does this curriculum make possible—and whose does it erase?*

But rebuilding the frame also requires examining the language we use to name justice. If global justice itself is contested, then so too are the terms that circulate within institutions in its name. In the next theme, I turn to how participants navigate the politics of justice language—how words like equity, diversity, and even decolonization are taken up, emptied out, and, at times, reclaimed within teacher education.

The collage below (Figure 3) serves as a multimodal expression of Theme 3, *Reframing Global Justice: Beyond Americentrism and Liberalism*. Rendered entirely in grayscale, the image reflects the moral complexity and historical entanglements participants navigate in their justice work. A colonial ship, a pixelated city skyline, the shape of Palestine, and the earth signal layered geographies of empire, migration, and refusal. Phrases like "conceptual clarity," "unbordering," and "decolonial memory" float throughout, alongside a found poem composed from participants' words. Together, these elements unsettle dominant narratives and reframe justice as a shifting, contested orientation—rooted in memory, clarity, and the refusal to look away.

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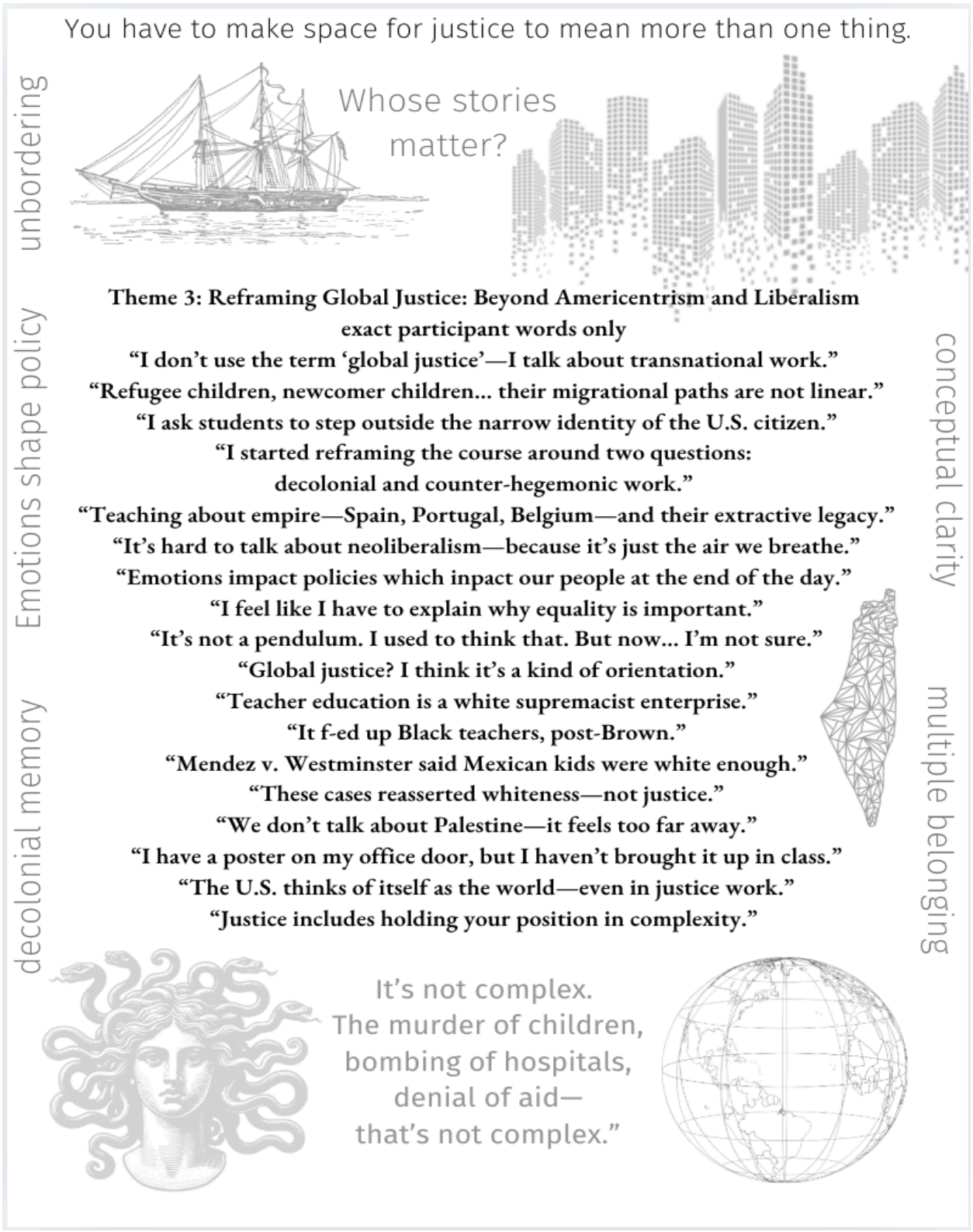
Figure 3

"Reframing Global Justice: Beyond Americentrism and Liberalism" Collage



Theme 4: Performative or Transformative? The Politics of Justice Language

This theme speaks to both RQ1a and RQ2 by exploring how participants navigate the contested terrain of justice language in teacher education. In a time when institutions increasingly adopt terms like *equity*, *diversity*, and *decolonization*, participants encountered those same words not as tools of liberation, but as signals of compliance—circulated in strategic plans, hiring documents, and course catalogs, often stripped of their radical histories. For these educators, justice language is not neutral. It is a site of struggle: shaped by power, flattened by bureaucracy, and sometimes weaponized to silence dissent.

Drawing on Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism, I understand language as a terrain where meaning is always ideological, always contested, and always shaped by institutional logics. Language is never just communication—it is a reflection of power. In this light, participants' navigation of justice discourse reveals how educational institutions regulate what can be said, who may say it, and at what cost. At the same time, inspired by Bhattacharya's (2023) framing of artifacts as situated, emotional, and political, I approach participants' syllabi, assignments, and classroom strategies as more than neutral tools. They are embodied responses to institutional constraints—acts of refusal, redirection, and survival.

Across all four cases, participants expressed unease with the institutional appropriation of justice discourse. They spoke of how radical frameworks are repackaged as professional "best practices," how clarity is penalized while euphemism is rewarded, and how justice itself becomes a performance rather than a practice. But their responses were not only discursive—they were pedagogical. They embedded resistance into course design, curated reading lists, participatory research, and spatial inquiry. Their agency emerged not just in what they said, but in how they built classrooms that could hold what institutions refused to name.

In this theme, I trace how participants grapple with the politics of justice language—when to speak, what to name, what to resist, and how justice is shaped not only by what is taught, but by the very terms we are allowed to use—and the practices that protect what cannot always be spoken.

Cristina doesn't use justice language to signal virtue—she uses it to disrupt power. Her critique of institutional discourse is sharp, but it is grounded in practice. "Multicultural education and CRP are not salsa to the main dish," she told her students. "They are the main dish." In her classroom, this isn't a metaphor—it's a curriculum design principle. Cristina teaches her students to read the world through the epistemologies of those most excluded from dominant educational frameworks. Her syllabi do not include white voices—not as omission, but as intention. "You're going to read only from perspectives that are not white—not a single one," she told her students. That meant texts from Stuart Hall, Homi Bhabha, Charles Mills, and Fanon. "Even Mills—he was in Chicago, but he came from a Jamaican intellectual tradition. That matters."

In one course, she brought in guest speakers to complicate her students' frameworks and foreground lived expertise. She curated the course to open with Fanon—not to offer a global detour, but to anchor the course in decolonial thought from the start. "You have to be direct-instruction explicit," she said, describing her approach in teacher education. "You can't assume they'll connect it—you have to show them how these logics of empire are still at work."

Cristina's critique of institutional discourse is not just about what's said—it's about what's incentivized. "How do we diversify the teaching force?" she asked, with pointed skepticism. "That's white supremacist rhetoric. It's designed that way." She describes teacher education as a "white supremacist factory," where language like "equity" and "diversity" often serve to shield the institution from meaningful transformation. She draws a clear line between

liberal inclusion efforts and systemic harm: “The system isn’t broken,” she told me. “It was built this way.”

But Cristina doesn’t disengage. She chooses her words with precision, and at times, withholds them entirely. In moments of pressure, she leans into silence, refusal, and boundary-setting as forms of pedagogical resistance. Her curriculum becomes a site where ideological clarity is modeled—not as performance, but as a form of political literacy. By refusing euphemism and centering counter-epistemologies, Cristina pushes students to confront not only the system’s language, but its logics. And in doing so, she shows that transformation begins not with what institutions say about justice—but with what educators are willing to name, even when such naming is met with denial, resistance, or erasure. The educators in this study navigated these moments not by retreating from justice work, but by recalibrating—through reflection, community, and pedagogical shifts that protected their integrity while holding space for possibility.

Nabeel approaches justice work through careful calibration—balancing clarity and constraint, conviction and caution. As a racialized Muslim educator working in the Canadian teacher education system, he is acutely aware of the political costs of language. He doesn’t abandon justice frameworks like culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP), but neither does he use them uncritically. “Students think CRP is about adding a book,” he said. “I try to reframe it as confronting Eurocentric frameworks rooted in Enlightenment humanism.” Rather than teach CRP as an inclusionary technique, he presents it as a tool for decolonizing knowledge—situating it within critiques of Western epistemology and the colonial foundations of modern schooling.

His pedagogical moves are subtle but intentional. In his undergraduate methods courses, Nabeel uses visual thinking routines (VTRs)—structured tools that guide students through

images, texts, or videos—to help them deconstruct materials related to global oppression, forced migration, and racial violence. These routines become vehicles for embedding justice questions into methodology itself: not "what should students learn," but "*whose knowledge is made visible*?" Even in courses that are ostensibly about methods, Nabeel builds critical awareness through content selection and framing. "The themes they're analyzing—racism, refugee crises, systemic inequality—are already part of the material. They just don't always realize it," he explained.

At the graduate level, where he has more freedom, Nabeel integrates CRP and anti-racism as core parts of a decolonizing framework, guiding students to interrogate how white, neoliberal assumptions shape their teaching philosophies. He teaches through counter-narratives and case studies, and occasionally invites community speakers to share the lived experiences of marginalized groups—like local leaders working with refugee youth in the public school system. These curricular choices are not framed as add-ons. They are Nabeel's way of refusing the soft language of "equity" and "diversity" and replacing it with embodied, relational, and geopolitically situated truths.

Yet Nabeel is also strategic. "By virtue of working within an institution," he said, "you have to think twice." He described how he sometimes avoids using words like "genocide" in class, not because he lacks clarity, but because he understands the constraints of tenure-track precarity and institutional risk. "If I'm too vocal, I could be targeted. So instead, I structure the conversation in ways that let students come to those conclusions themselves." His justice pedagogy is not loud—but it is precise, silently teaching. In a context where performative allyship is often rewarded more than actual disruption, Nabeel's restraint is itself a form of resistance. For Nabeel, justice language is always relational: shaped by positionality, risk, and

audience. He doesn't speak to be heard—he speaks to open space. And in doing so, he reminds us that the politics of justice language are not only about what is said, but about what can be heard, and who pays the price for saying it.

Chiara-Mai spoke directly to the risks and limitations of justice language in teacher education. "There's fear around even using the word *Palestine* in teacher ed," she said. "People will call it 'the conflict' instead." For Chiara-Mai , these euphemisms are not neutral—they are part of the institutional machinery that disciplines what can be named. Her critique is grounded in firsthand experience: while doing freelance test question writing work for ETS, she was instructed to remove any content that might provoke emotion or imply political critique. "You cannot write about racism or anything. It really has to be flat—it can't examine power or take a particular stance." This flattening, she argues, is not incidental—it is structural. Terms like "professionalism," "civility," and "objectivity" are often institutional codes for "don't say that here."

Rather than retreat, Chiara-Mai reclaims curricular space through counter-mapping and spatial inquiry, helping students name power, place, and belonging in ways that bypass formal constraints. "Mapping queer comfort spaces was about saying: we belong here. That's not just a geography assignment—it's political." Her students often recognize the stakes of justice language before they feel equipped to use it. "Some of them say, 'I want to teach this, but I don't know if I can say it that way.' And I say, 'That's the work.'" For Chiara-Mai , justice language is not just about what gets said—it's about who has the right to speak, and what it costs to do so.

Amara, teaching in Chile, is no stranger to the politics of justice language. "Three years ago, we were teaching feminism," she recalled. "We'd say, 'Choose feminist theory.' I don't think I could do that now. So we say 'gender,' because gender is kind of neutral." In a climate

where even naming colonialism directly can trigger institutional discomfort, her language shifts are not about dilution—they are acts of survival. “The system inhales everything,” she said, “and turns it into objectives.” Even Freire, widely respected in Latin America, is reduced to a list of learning indicators. “Nobody critiques him,” she explained, “but they empty him out.” Best practices, she added, “take away your sense of thinking about how to teach.” For Amara, justice language is not only about what is said, but what can be heard, and by whom.

Yet she continues to teach what she calls “what you’re not supposed to do”—not to provoke, but to protect justice work from being neutralized. Over the past eight years, Amara has co-designed a diploma program for school leaders across Chile, embedding participatory action research (YPAR) into the core of the curriculum. Her students choose real issues—gender violence, disability, surveillance—and conduct site-based inquiries that name systemic harm in their own schools. Rather than package this as a decolonial framework—language that might trigger institutional resistance—she grounds it in democratic practice and local relevance. “We let them choose their issues and connect them to power,” she said. “That’s how the work gets in.”

Amara also brings in guest speakers—activist educators, artists, and youth organizers—who embody critical pedagogy in ways that transcend formal language. In one course artifact, her students co-created “Where I’m From” poems after a virtual visit from a Chilean hip-hop artist and teacher-scholar. One student turned her poem into a song. “That,” Amara said, “was the curriculum.” For her, the artifact is not the product—it is the moment of transformation, the rupture that makes something else possible.

These practices allow Amara to hold space for critique even within repressive policy regimes. But the emotional cost is real. “I don’t know how to do the one-slide PowerPoint thing,” she said. “To me, it feels like betrayal.” She described feeling increasingly illegible to her

own institution—and yet unwilling to translate herself into the language of bureaucratic justice. "Being illegible might be the only way to escape systems that turn our ideas into compliance."

For Amara, justice work is not declared—it is practiced in quiet acts of disruption, often outside the frame of official recognition. Her refusal is not loud, but it is layered: pedagogical, poetic, strategic, and precise. In a system that demands neutrality, she teaches discomfort. In a system that punishes naming, she teaches metaphor. Her justice language is not a slogan—it is a deeply local, relational act of protection.

Together, these stories suggest that the justice language itself has become a site of struggle—one shaped by institutional power, cultural memory, and the politics of survival. Words like *diversity*, *objectivity*, *feminism*, and even *decolonization* no longer guarantee alignment with justice. What words still carry weight? What words have been emptied out, institutionalized, or weaponized? And what does it mean to teach for justice in a space where the very language of justice has been flattened, co-opted, or made dangerous?

Participants don't offer tidy resolutions—but they do show what it means to teach with both clarity and care. Cristina refuses euphemism by designing syllabi around non-white epistemologies and setting firm boundaries in her classrooms. Nabeel rewires method courses to surface decolonial critique, embedding resistance into routines rather than slogans. Chiara-Mai uses counter-mapping and inquiry to help students navigate what they cannot yet say aloud. Amara builds justice into poetry, performance, and participatory research, making space for what institutions seek to erase. Their work is not about mastering the right terminology. It is about what Darder (2015) calls *critical discernment*—a pedagogy attuned to power and committed to co-creating meaning in unjust systems. And it echoes Bhattacharya's (2023) insistence that what happens in the classroom—what is read, sung, mapped, or withheld—is never neutral. In their

hands, justice is not a brand or a buzzword. It is a living practice: contested, contextual, emotionally risky, and deeply worth protecting.

If language is one terrain where justice is contested, curriculum is another. In the final theme, I turn to the material, spatial, and embodied practices through which participants challenge dominant narratives and reimagine the possibilities of teacher education. Their use of counter-mapping, spatial analysis, and visual storytelling resists standardized curricula and reclaims place as a site of knowledge. These practices make power visible—not only in what is said, but in what is taught, mapped, and remembered. Justice, in this context, is not just a discourse. It is a design, a gesture, a way of locating oneself—and one's students—within systems that too often erase them.

The collage below (Figure 4) serves as a multimodal expression of Theme 4, *The Politics of Justice Language*. Layered with muted visuals and floating phrases like “white comfort,” “language games,” and “compliance-speak,” the image surfaces the tensions participants named around how justice is flattened, branded, or weaponized through institutional discourse. Images of performative DEI slogans, reporting mechanisms, and sanitized classroom rules reflect how radical pedagogies are often reduced to tidy slogans or risk-managed gestures. At the center, a found poem composed of participants’ exact words calls out the emotional management, erasure, and strategic silence that shape how justice is allowed—or denied—in teacher education. The college holds the discomfort of navigating language as both shield and sword, asking what it means to speak truth in systems that reward performance over praxis.

Figure 4

"Performative or Transformative? The Politics of Justice Language" Collage

Theme 5: Mapping Justice: Counter-Hegemonic Curriculum and Pedagogies of Place

This final theme takes up RQ1a and RQ1b by exploring how participants enact global justice through the design of curriculum and the use of place, mapping, and memory. For these educators, justice is not only something to name or critique—it is something to locate, to feel, and to reimagine through pedagogy. Informed by critical pedagogies of space and place, the work described here asks students to see the world differently—not only through content, but through the very structure of their learning. This is a curriculum as cartography: a practice of justice that is historical, affective, and grounded.

Justice, for these educators, was not only conceptual or relational—it was also spatial. In this theme, participants described how they use mapping, place-based inquiry, and visual storytelling to reorient curriculum. These practices made injustice visible and, more importantly, made space for students to imagine and remember otherwise.

Chiara-Mai framed her approach to global justice through counter-mapping, spatial storytelling, and place-based pedagogy. Early in her global social studies methods course, she introduces students to the idea of "remapping the world," explicitly positioning history curriculum itself as "a kind of counter map." Her students created artifacts that unsettled traditional ways of knowing the place, including a deeply personal map by a student named Kira, who explored the complexities of her sister's transracial adoption into a white Jewish family. "She tries to emplace herself in her sister's past," Chiara-Mai reflected, "reckoning with identity, belonging, and how place shapes who we are." Another student mapped a devastating fire at a Bronx social club—recovering and honoring a history that had been otherwise forgotten or dismissed.

Chiara-Mai noted how the standard history curriculum remains stubbornly static: "The

things being taught now are the same I learned in the 90s," she observed. Counter-mapping, for her, disrupts this stagnation—not merely by adding marginalized stories, but by shifting the very grounds of knowledge and memory. She described mapping as a form of slow pedagogy, noting, "I'm always surprised how long it takes the students to process these maps, because they're so accustomed to seeing things a certain way." For Chiara-Mai , maps are not neutral artifacts but political interventions—acts of visibility, reclamation, and reorientation that challenge students to think more deeply about how power shapes not only what is remembered, but where and how those memories are allowed to exist.

Amara rooted her justice pedagogy in the geographies of Chile—through oral tradition, regional history, and the shared cultural memory of place. One of the most powerful classroom moments she described came when Peña, the author of the only culturally responsive pedagogy (CRP) article she could find written in Spanish, visited her students. "Getting someone you're reading to actually talk to you is very unusual here," she said. His presence became an artifact in itself—transforming theory into dialogue, and affirming that justice knowledge can and must emerge in local languages and contexts. "This person—his presence—was my artifact," she reflected. Inspired by this visit, students began turning their "Where I'm From" poems into music, drawing on Chilean spoken word and hip hop traditions. "Everybody was working on the poem… He made his into music, and one of the students made theirs into music too."

These were not simply creative exercises; they were culturally and spatially grounded acts of storytelling. "It was just this connection to our history and who we are," Amara explained, "in order to think about who students are and their histories." Her approach also embedded YPAR (Youth Participatory Action Research) as a spatial and political practice. "Instead of just reading about democratic leadership, they *do* it," she said. Students worked

across regional boundaries in Chile, building projects that expanded local insight and civic engagement. “Teachers in central Chile push the thinking here,” she noted. “Having students work across space makes a difference.”

For Amara, culturally sustaining pedagogy is inseparable from place. She described how hiring teachers who had taken her course deepened the collective understanding of what it means to “be a teacher here.” Through music, memory, and relationality, students were encouraged to see themselves not only in the present, but across time and space—located in histories of struggle and futures of possibility. In Amara’s classroom, justice was mapped not through abstraction, but through song, region, and shared experience.

Nabeel approaches justice not only through critique, but through spatial, visual, and community-based reorientation. His curriculum is grounded in what he calls “reconfiguring the lens”—an invitation for students to consider not just what is taught, but whose knowledge is centered, where that knowledge comes from, and what geographies it renders visible. He uses themes like migration, climate justice, and genocide to expose the spatial dynamics of power, but pushes students further to examine how settler colonialism continues to shape their own institutions and identities. “We always begin events with land acknowledgments,” he said. “I always mention how these things often come off as performative.” For Nabeel, a land acknowledgment that doesn't connect to action—to curricular shifts, to naming complicity, to meaningful reparation—is not justice. “If we want to recognize injustices of the past,” he tells students, “we also have to come to terms with our complicity in ongoing systems of oppression”The entire chat of codi….

This pedagogical stance shows up in how he engages space and place in the classroom. Visual storytelling is a core part of his curriculum: he uses iconic, unsettling images—like the

Pulitzer Prize-winning photograph of a starving child and a vulture—to push students beyond abstraction. “They don’t get the famine,” he said. “A picture does what a textbook doesn’t.” Alongside these images, he uses short documentaries, media artifacts, and refugee narratives as what Bhattacharya (2023) might call situated justice artifacts—embodied entry points into historical trauma and global displacement. These aren’t add-ons to a unit on “global issues”—they are the lens itself.

But perhaps most powerfully, Nabeel repositions place not only as subject, but as speaker. He brings refugee community members and grassroots organizers into his classroom, not as guest content but as co-teachers of spatial counter-narratives. “These are people who carry the trauma of war, of loss, of being dislocated,” he explained. “Their voices are counter-maps. They show students what it means to live through the consequences of policy, curriculum, and empire.” In these moments, students come face to face with people whose lives have been shaped by borders and whose stories unsettle the frame of liberal multiculturalism. “Justice,” he said, “means creating contact with that lived reality—and making sure it changes what we do next.”

In one unit, he asked students to redesign lessons around place-based justice: not just “where is this happening?” but “what systems make this happen here—and not somewhere else?” Another course project invited students to trace a global issue—such as food insecurity or forced migration—through both a local and global map, analyzing how history, infrastructure, and ideology converge on land. These mapping projects were scaffolded with visual routines and community conversations, but the goal was always the same: “To get them to stop seeing justice as an abstract value, and start seeing it as something you stand on,” Nabeel explained.

For Nabeel, counter-hegemonic curriculum is not about replacing one set of content with another. It is about reframing how knowledge is situated, how space is lived, and how history moves through bodies and land. His classroom becomes a space where students are asked not only to analyze the world—but to reorient themselves within it.

For Cristina, mapping is not a metaphor—it is a personal, political, and pedagogical stance. She remembers being five years old, sitting in the back seat of a car with her family when they were pulled over at the U.S. border. "Didn't matter that we were Filipino," she said. "It was the Spanish last name. That was enough." The experience didn't leave her. It lives in her pedagogy as a justice artifact: a visceral reminder that space is never neutral, that the politics of race, language, and empire follow people across borders. These early encounters with spatial surveillance inform how she teaches future educators to read curriculum and place through a critical lens.

In her current work with doctoral students, Cristina emphasizes curriculum not as content delivery, but as spatial production. She introduces students to thinkers like Charles Mills and Frantz Fanon, but also asks them to analyze the ideological architecture of their institutions—what spaces feel safe to speak the truth? What stories are allowed to circulate? Who decides what gets included in a syllabus, and who is always framed as supplementary? "Teacher education is structured by empire," she explained. "It's not just about what's in the textbook. It's about what kind of knowledge can travel without translation—and what kinds are always made to explain themselves."

Cristina also brings spatial critique into classroom discussions of professionalization. She asks her students to consider how "objectivity," "neutrality," and "fit" are tied to institutional space—who these norms serve, and who they erase. She doesn't treat these as abstract concepts.

She names them as coordinates on a map of structural exclusion. Her students complete positionality journals that include spatial reflections: Where have you felt safe to speak in your academic journey? Where have you gone quiet, and why? In reflecting on these patterns, students begin to see their biographies as spatial texts—ones that can be revised. Cristina's approach is deeply relational, but it is also risky. While she is not always the only faculty member committed to justice, she often stands at the edge of institutional consensus—modeling a pedagogy that challenges structural norms, even when others in her department remain silent, complicit, or cautious.

Justice, in Cristina's classroom, is not a standalone unit. It is a re-mapping of who belongs where—and why. Her pedagogy brings students into confrontation with the geographies of race, power, and belonging, not only in the world outside, but in the institutions they are moving through. For her, teaching global justice means refusing to find home in places that were never meant to hold you. Instead, she asks students to become cartographers of refusal—charting new paths through old landscapes and learning, in the process, how to claim space without apology.

Together, these educators remind us that maps—whether literal or curricular—are never neutral. They are shaped by power, memory, and silence. Across classrooms in Chile, Canada, and the U.S., participants used counter-mapping, spatial storytelling, and embodied pedagogy to challenge who gets seen, who gets heard, and who gets to belong. Whether through music and poetry rooted in Chilean oral traditions, counter-maps of queer and racialized spaces, refugee testimonies that reframe global conflict, or transnational readings that stretch beyond U.S.-centric frameworks, these educators turn curriculum into a living cartography. Their

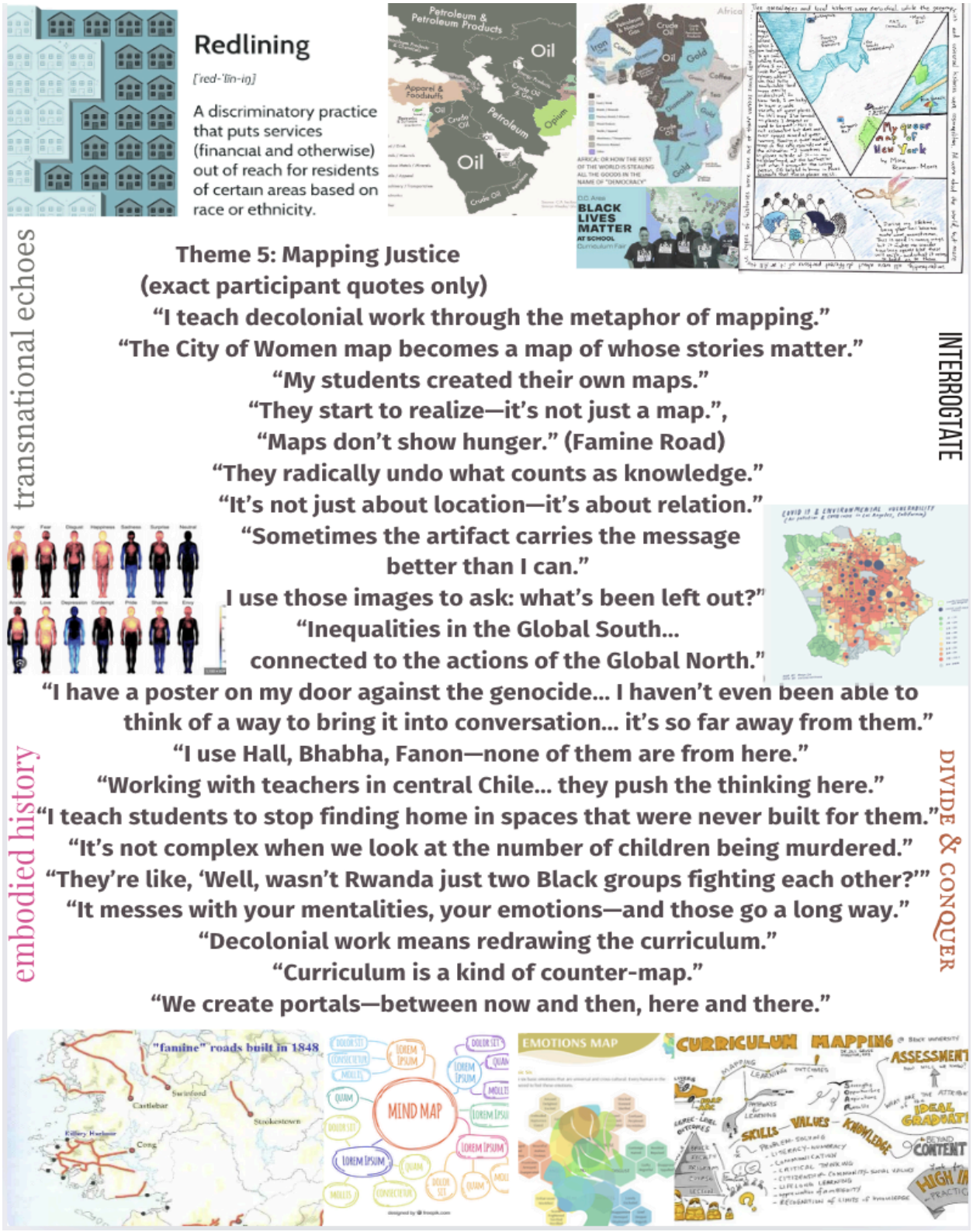
classrooms are not just sites of knowledge, but of reorientation—places where students learn to locate themselves within systems of empire, migration, and resistance.

Drawing from Darder's (2015) understanding of pedagogy as a critical interpretive act, these curricular choices are not only instructional—they are ideological interventions. Educators in this study do not simply deliver content; they reconfigure the spatial logic of the classroom itself, making visible the structures that education often asks students to forget. And as Bhattacharya (2023) reminds us, these maps—whether poems, projects, or spoken testimony—are not symbolic. They are affective, relational, and politically situated justice artifacts. Across these cases, mapping emerged not just as a pedagogical tool, but as a justice practice—one that reorients students toward history, power, and place.

The collage below (Figure 5) serves as a multimodal expression of Theme 5, Mapping Justice. Blending geographic, curricular, and emotional mapping, the image reflects how participants use mapping to reframe knowledge, expose absences, and teach relation across space and time. From redlining and resource maps to student remappings and curriculum mind maps, each visual challenges dominant narratives and surfaces hidden histories. A found poem at the center, composed entirely from participant language, highlights mapping as both metaphor and method—an embodied, political act that links the local and the global. Justice, in this theme, is mapped not just by place, but by memory, emotion, and refusal.

Figure 5

"Mapping Justice: Counter-Hegemonic Curriculum and Pedagogies of Place" Collage



Justice as Praxis

Across the five themes, what becomes clear is that the justice work of participants was not limited to personal identity or abstract critique. It took shape through curriculum design, counter-hegemonic pedagogies, spatial intervention, moral clarity, and structural confrontation. Goodwin and Darity (2019) argue that social justice teacher education has often emphasized the personal and contextual while leaving the pedagogical, sociological, and structural dimensions underdeveloped. They warn that teacher education risks "talking, conceptualizing, and theorizing, more than doing, acting, or impacting" (p. 73). This concern is well-placed. Yet the educators in this study offer a counterpoint—an embodied response to the challenge. Their teaching practices move toward precisely the kind of structural engagement and grounded justice work Goodwin and Darity call for.

While participants drew on their lived experience and personal commitments, their work consistently extended beyond the self. They enacted justice through the complex architectures of teaching: designing curriculum that reframes history, choosing language that navigates risk, building collective political memory, and scaffolding difficult conversations. Cristina challenges the emotional politics of teacher education, naming the ideological work of whiteness while designing race-centered curriculum drawn from Black, Caribbean, and Filipino thought. Chiara-Mai scaffolds social studies methods with linguistic justice, spatial counter-mapping, and inquiry that invites future teachers to question U.S. exceptionalism and imperial curriculum logics. Nabeel reorients teacher education toward global power and spatial trauma—moving students from symbolic land acknowledgements to material questions of land theft, occupation, and sovereignty. Amara weaves together YPAR, feminist theory, and arts-based resistance,

creating what she calls “the curriculum you’re not supposed to teach”—spaces where students can study domestic violence, systemic inequality, and neoliberal schooling as connected forces.

These are not isolated acts of inspiration. They are pedagogical, sociological, and political practices—rooted in theory and enacted in classrooms shaped by bureaucracy, risk, and hope. In their hands, justice is not a buzzword or an add-on. It is praxis. Their work begins to answer the critiques raised by Goodwin and Darity not by declaring a solution, but by offering lived, layered examples of what justice can look like in teacher education. These educators show that it is possible to hold the personal, the political, and the pedagogical together—without collapsing one into the other.

Holding the Work: A Closing Reflection

Across these five themes, what emerged was not only a map of how global justice is understood and enacted by global majority teacher educators, but also how it is sustained—quietly, creatively, and courageously. Justice, for the participants in this study, was not just a political stance or a pedagogical strategy. It was an emotional commitment, a spiritual clarity, a set of practices refined over time and tested in moments of fatigue, uncertainty, and risk.

While they named the emotional toll, institutional resistance, and ongoing co-optation of justice discourse, they also pointed to what keeps them going: the beauty of student breakthroughs, the integrity of critical scholarship, the grounding power of faith and community, the laughter of children, the slow building of curriculum that reflects something real.

Cristina spoke of protecting spaces that allow her to feel whole. Amara leaned into the poetic and the uncertain, refusing to offer answers she didn’t believe in. Nabeel embodied empathy not as a feeling, but as a form of resistance—an opening into difficult truths.

Chiara-Mai found sustenance in memory and mapping, in letting students trace what's been lost and what could be reclaimed. Together, their work suggests that sustainability in justice education is not found in institutional affirmation or professional recognition. It is found in the slow work of relationships. In building something that lasts—not in permanence, but in presence. Not in outcomes, but in openings.

This chapter, like their teaching, does not aim to conclude. It aims to witness. And to hold open the possibility that justice, however fragmented, however fleeting, is still worth practicing.

Justice in Context: Returning to the Questions

What these five themes begin to illuminate is not only how justice is taught, but how it is made—locally, relationally, and in motion. Through counter-mapping, refusal, risk, and curriculum-making, the participants in this study revealed a form of teaching that is at once deeply grounded and globally entangled. Their work does not resolve the contradictions of justice in teacher education, but it names them, lives with them, and gestures toward something more possible. In Chapter 5, I return to the conceptual framework that shaped this inquiry—drawing from critical pedagogy and liberatory praxis (Freire, 1970; Darder, 2015), critical globalization studies (Andreotti, 2011; Appadurai, 1996), and teacher agency as situated, collective, and relational (Priestley, Biesta, & Robinson, 2015). I also reflect on Bhattacharya's (2025) notion of inquiry as contemplative, relational, and co-constructed.

This chapter re-engages the tensions raised in my problem statement, the aspirations of my purpose statement, and the layered nature of my research questions, especially the call to understand how global majority teacher educators not only enact but sustain their commitments to global justice. In doing so, I revisit critiques raised in the literature—such as Goodwin and Darity's (2019) concern that social justice teacher education often emphasizes "talking,

conceptualizing, and theorizing, more than doing, acting, or impacting" (p. 73)—and consider how the educators in this study may offer a response. Chapter 5 is less an answer than a reckoning—with the literature, with the field, and with the fragile and necessary work of imagining justice as something both pedagogical and global.

Chapter 5 - Designing for Justice: Reimagining Teacher Education and Its Afterlives

Introduction

This chapter offers a design-centered response to the thematic findings explored in Chapter 4. It emerges from a question that sits at the heart of this study: If we took seriously the lived wisdom of teacher educators who are already teaching from clarity, relationship, and refusal, what kind of teacher education might we imagine together? What would it mean to design programs not only to introduce ideas about justice, but to sustain the people called to enact them?

Rather than organizing this chapter by case or theme, I trace across the study to identify seven justice-centered design principles–grounded in the practices, tensions, and insights of the four participants. These are not fixed answers or prescriptive frameworks. They are invitations, emerging from what was said and what was felt, from what was shared openly and what was held quietly. In naming them, I do not aim to simplify. I hope instead to honor the complexity and care with which each participant approached their work, and to carry forward the questions their pedagogies continue to ask. This way of working, holding analysis in relationship, resisting premature conclusions, and designing toward coherence rather than finality, reflects my conceptual and methodological commitments. This chapter is guided by critical pedagogy, teacher agency, and critical globalization studies, and shaped by contemplative thematic analysis and Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism. I treat design not as a technical task, but as a form of meaning-making, a practice grounded in relationship, refusal, and the ongoing labor of sustaining clarity in systems not built for it.

The chapter unfolds in two parts. First, it outlines seven design principles, each illustrated with practice-based examples–some drawn directly from participant interviews and course

artifacts, others imagined through the logic of their commitments. Second, it offers one possible vision for a reimagined teacher education program: a four-year arc that integrates these principles into the rhythms and structures of coursework, fieldwork, reflection, and practice. This vision extends the study's second research question–not only asking what sustains individual educators in their justice work, but also what kinds of programs, pedagogies, and institutional conditions make that sustainability possible. The goal is not to offer a model to be replicated in a prescriptive or decontextualized way, but rather to present a vision that others might adapt, iterate, and build upon. While replication is not the aim, I do hope the principles and practices offered here serve as an invitation—for teacher educators to imagine what justice might require in their own contexts, not as duplication, but as relational and situated design. This vision also responds directly to critiques that social justice teacher education has too often overemphasized the personal at the expense of the pedagogical, sociological, and social (see Goodwin & Darity, 2020).

Throughout this chapter, I aim to stay attuned to the spirit of the participants—their conviction, their complexities, their principled refusals, and the ethical precision that shaped their pedagogies. This design is not the end of the inquiry–it is part of the afterlife of the study, shaped by what the participants made thinkable, and by the questions I carry forward.

Section 1: Design Principles for Justice-Oriented Teacher Education

While this chapter does not repeat the term global justice at every turn, it is wholly animated by the meanings surfaced in Chapter 4–where participants challenged US-centric framings, traced the afterlives of empire and migration, and reimagined justice as structural, relational, and unfinished. Some refused the phrase altogether, naming its vagueness or violence; others taught through it intuitively, drawing from transnational memory, counter-mapping, and

spiritual clarity. What emerged was not a singular definition, but a constellation of commitments shaped by history, risk, and refusal. The design principles that follow are not generic enhancements to social justice teacher education–they are grounded in the pedagogies of global majority educators who live and teach at the intersections of colonial residue, institutional constraint, and everyday survivance. This chapter deepens and broadens the discourse of SJTE by placing global justice not at the margins, but at its structural and pedagogical core.

1. Justice begins in relationship

Justice is not delivered through content alone. It is cultivated through relationships–between faculty and students, between student teachers and communities, and among colleagues working in solidarity. Cristina shared that she does not emotionally manage whiteness in the classroom–a boundary that emerges from a deeper relational ethic: one that prioritizes truth-telling, protects students of color from harm, and refuses to confuse comfort with care. Her approach challenges the idea that relationship requires appeasement; instead, it affirms that justice-aligned relationships begin with clarity and accountability. Amara's strategic shifts in language–using "gender" instead of "feminism" in repressive contexts–reflect a commitment to relational pedagogy as survival. Nabeel's use of evocative imagery to provoke reflection in students is another example of how justice begins not with frameworks but with ethical presence.

In practice, this principle might guide teacher education program design in the following ways:

- **Relational Praxis Seminar:** A cohort-based space where students begin their formation not with content, but with story, witnessing, and critical friendship. This course helps

students locate themselves in their justice commitments and practice being in relationships across differences.

- **Advising That Centers Justice and Growth**: Move beyond checklist advising to reflective mentorship. Advisors might ask: “What relationships are sustaining your teaching right now?” or “What risks have you taken for justice this semester?” These questions model justice as relational–not only intellectual.
- **Capstone Symposium**: The Ethics of Presence: Students present not only their projects, but the relationships that shaped them. They reflect on where they showed up, when they pulled back, and what they’ve learned about justice as a lived, ongoing stance.
- **Mentorship as Horizontal and Vertical**: Build structured peer mentorship across cohorts–so that justice is carried not just by faculty, but through student-to-student care, modeling, and memory.

In addition to the longer-term structures outlined in the 4-year program design, this principle lives in the everyday architecture of coursework, fieldwork, and advising. Justice begins in the micro–how we listen, who we invite in, and what we risk naming in a relationship.

2. Clarity must be protected, not diluted

Rather than striving for comfort or surface-level inclusion, participants emphasized the need to protect clarity—especially around power, white supremacy, and the role institutions play in sustaining inequality. Cristina frames clarity not as aggression or provocation, but as an act of care. In her classroom, care means telling the truth—even when it’s uncomfortable. She challenges students to examine whiteness as a global structure and to confront their own complicity in systems of harm. For Cristina, clarity is not an endpoint—it’s a necessary condition for deeper transformation.H

Chiara-Mai voiced a similar commitment to pedagogical clarity when reflecting on the genocide in Gaza. “It’s not complex,” she said. “The murder of children, bombing of hospitals, denial of aid–that’s not complex.” Her assertion cuts through euphemism and liberal detachment to make room for moral clarity in the classroom. Rather than framing such violence as politically complicated or ideologically contested, she refuses the narrative of complexity when it comes to the dehumanization of children. This stance directly resists institutional habits of equivocation and avoidance. Designing for justice must create space for this kind of clarity–moral, political, and rooted in the uncompromising recognition of children's humanity.

In practice, this principle might guide teacher education program design in the following ways:

- **Rupture Labs Across the Curriculum**: Embed recurring, low-credit reflective spaces within or alongside existing courses where students name what justice work costs them—emotionally, politically, and pedagogically. These labs are not designed for debate, but for holding the line: spaces to process tension, protect clarity, and reflect on the ethical weight of their commitments. To make these sustainable, they might be co-facilitated by faculty and advanced students, structured as peer-led inquiry, or rotate facilitation responsibilities—so that the labor of justice reflection does not rest solely on already overextended instructors.c
- **Mentor Prompts that Resist Euphemism**: In fieldwork reflections, ask students:
    - “Where were you asked—explicitly or implicitly—to dilute your clarity this week?”
    - “How did your cooperating teacher navigate tensions between justice and institutional expectations?”

    - "What compromises felt necessary—and what did they cost?"

These prompts are not about judgment, but about learning to notice how justice work surfaces—or gets constrained—in everyday practice.

- **Faculty Inquiry on Refusal**: Host voluntary inquiry groups where faculty ask:
    - "What are we refusing right now?"
    - "How do we support one another in protecting ideological clarity?"

  These gatherings normalize refusal not as burnout, but as boundary work.
- **Curriculum That Names**: Model reading and writing practices that do not avoid language–teach through Gaza, settler colonialism, patriarchy, white supremacy, global capitalism–not around them. Chiara-Mai's insistence that "the murder of children… is not complex" can become a pedagogical anchor.

While foundational courses are reimagined in the 4-year design to engage directly with systems of power, this principle also shows up in how we speak, what we name, and when we refuse to soften truth–especially in moments when clarity feels risky.

Interlude: On the Labor of Justice-Oriented Design

While the design principles outlined in this chapter are grounded in real pedagogical practices, they are not without cost. Justice work—particularly work rooted in relationship, refusal, and collective care—requires time, emotional labor, and institutional support that many teacher educators simply do not have. Faculty in adjunct, clinical, or pre-tenure positions are often stretched thin, navigating expectations of research productivity, compliance-driven program demands, and institutional cultures that reward efficiency over depth.

The intention here is not to frame these proposals as utopian or impossible—but to name the structural constraints that can make even modest justice commitments feel unsustainable.

Some of the practices offered—like horizontal mentorship or relational advising—might emerge organically in community, while others, like restructured coursework or capstone symposia, require deeper institutional reimagining and restructuring. Acknowledging these tensions is part of the design itself. Rather than offering a blueprint to scale, this chapter invites a different question: *What becomes possible when we design not only around justice, but also around the labor that justice requires?*

3. Students as co-theorists

Across cases, student teachers were not framed as empty vessels, but as knowledge-makers shaped by lived experience. Amara used collaborative inquiry to support students in generating their own research questions. Chiara-Mai designed counter-mapping projects where students traced silenced histories in urban space. These pedagogies treated students as co-theorists—participants in the process of constructing meaning and producing insight that bridges everyday experience and structural critique[2].

By *co-theorist*, I mean more than someone who contributes knowledge. Drawing on Kessels & Korthagen (2001) distinction between *Theory* (with a capital T)—formal, generalized knowledge—and *theory* (lowercase t)—context-rooted insights developed through lived practice—I use *co-theorist* to describe students actively generating interpretive frameworks that help them understand and respond to injustice. Community- and identity-rooted knowledge—what González et al. (2005) call "funds of knowledge"—can serve as an entry point to this process. But co-theorizing moves further, requiring reflection, synthesis, and conceptual

[2] I use "co-theorists" intentionally here, and continue to develop this framing as part of my larger research agenda. It reflects a commitment to recovering theory as a site of collective meaning-making—not only as formal scholarship, but as interpretive praxis grounded in structural analysis, lived experience, and pedagogical risk. I take inspiration from Audre Lorde's assertion that "theory is not inherently healing, liberatory, or revolutionary. It fulfills this function only when we call upon it to answer the cries of our lives" (1984, p. 112). Co-theorizing, in this context, is not about abstraction but about answering those cries—naming what is, and imagining what could be.

risk. In this sense, it is a process of connecting the particular to the systemic, the personal to the political.

In this model, students do not simply apply Theory (with a capital T); they generate theory (with a small t) through praxis—working iteratively between experience and reflection, action and interpretation. Their observations of classroom dynamics, structural inequities, or moments of tension and ambiguity become the raw material for emergent theory-building. Through this process, students begin to see themselves not just as implementers of existing knowledge, but as co-creators of frameworks that help explain, interrogate, and reshape the conditions of teaching and learning.

This framing is deeply influenced by Freire's (1970) notion of *praxis*—the ongoing cycle of reflection and action that makes transformation possible. For Freire, education is not about depositing knowledge into passive recipients, but about supporting learners in "reading the word and the world": critically interpreting their lived reality and naming the systems that shape it. When students act as co-theorists, they are engaged in precisely this process—bringing ancestral knowledge, organizing strategies, oral traditions, spiritual practices, and lived experience into conversation with canonical texts and dominant narratives. While much of what is privileged as "Theory" in teacher education reflects Eurocentric paradigms, students may still encounter concepts, texts, or analytic tools that can be repurposed toward justice when engaged critically and contextually. Co-theorizing is not about rejecting all dominant knowledge, but about reorienting how it is used, for whom, and toward what ends.

A justice-centered teacher education program must honor students as participants in this kind of meaning-making. This framing draws on—but also stretches beyond—"funds of knowledge", centering not only what students know, but how they use that knowledge to

theorize, disrupt, and reimagine systems. It must treat their reflections not as anecdotes, but as theory—emergent, relational, and capable of unsettling inherited assumptions.

In practice, this principle might guide teacher education program design in the following ways:

- **Theory & Praxis Studios Rooted in the Everyday**: Offer recurring spaces where students bring community knowledge–oral traditions, spiritual frameworks, movement wisdom–into conversation with academic texts. These are not "enrichment units"–they are epistemic homecomings.
- **Justice Journals as Co-Theorizing Tools**: Replace compliance-driven field logs with inquiry journals that invite theory-building from lived experience. These are not just reflections on "what happened"—they are spaces where students begin to trace patterns, surface contradictions, and connect classroom practice to systemic dynamics. Prompts might include:
    - "Where did justice show up in ways you didn't expect?"
    - "What knowledge did your students or community offer that wasn't in your syllabus?"

  These journals become living archives of emergent, grounded theory—shaped by the interplay of action, context, and critical reflection.
- **Community-Centered Capstones**: Final projects are not proof of mastery, but contributions. Students co-create curriculum, media, or inquiry projects with community partners. Knowledge is not extracted–it's exchanged.

- **Intergenerational Learning Circles**: Facilitate shared dialogues between preservice teachers and elders, organizers, and artists. These are not lectures–they are circles of co-theorizing across time, where wisdom is carried and re-seeded.

While the 4-year program design scaffolds student inquiry from cultural autobiography to community-rooted capstones, this principle calls for an ontological shift in how students are seen: not as recipients of theory, but as its future ancestors.

4. Holding the emotional weight of justice work

Justice work carries emotional weight. Engaging systemic harm—particularly for teacher educators and candidates from historically marginalized communities—can involve grief, exhaustion, fear, and rage. Cristina described the spiritual and relational practices that sustain her through the effective toll of teaching. Nabeel spoke to the emotional regulation required of him as a Muslim man in post-9/11 classrooms. These stories remind us that emotional labor is not a personal failing—it is a consequence of working within systems not designed for our thriving.

Yet many teacher education programs treat emotion as private, secondary, or unprofessional. When students are encouraged to reflect, it is often framed through universalist expectations about what vulnerability should look like or when it should be shared. A justice-centered program must reject these norms. Emotional labor should be acknowledged—but not demanded. Reflection must be protected—but not prescribed. And privacy must be recognized not as avoidance, but as a form of integrity, self-protection, or cultural value.

Drawing on Paris and Alim's (2017) call for culturally sustaining pedagogy, this principle affirms that programs must design for choice and respect, not disclosure. Students should never

be expected to perform emotion to signal alignment. Silence, distance, and restraint can be signs of dignity or survival, not disengagement. What justice demands is not visibility, but care.

Let students know: feeling is not a distraction—it's part of the root system of justice, entwined with analysis, history, and structure. As both Freire and hooks remind us, emotion and structural analysis are not opposites; they are entangled in the labor of teaching for liberation. Feeling helps us remain attuned to the cost of injustice—and to the possibility of transformation. In practice, this principle might guide teacher education programs in the following ways:

- **Create Space, Not Pressure**

  Design optional spaces where students and faculty who wish to explore the emotional dimensions of justice work can do so—through art, dialogue, journaling, or ritual. These spaces should be framed clearly as invitations, not expectations.

- **Acknowledge Emotional Labor in Fieldwork**

  Without requiring emotional processing, practicum seminars can offer reflection prompts that acknowledge the toll of justice teaching:

  - "What helped you stay grounded this week?"
  - "Where did something feel heavy, even if you couldn't name it?"

  These questions allow for presence without pressure.

- **Model Boundaried Mentorship**

  Prepare mentor teachers—especially those engaged in justice-oriented teacher education—to name the emotional labor of teaching justice when appropriate, and to model care through boundaries, rest, and refusal. Justice can be enacted not only through sharing, but through discernment and containment. At the same time, not all mentor teachers will take up this work—or recognize it as part of their role. Rather than

assuming universal alignment, programs can scaffold reflective capacity, offer structured support for novice teachers navigating value dissonance, and create pathways for mentors who *are* ready to engage this work to do so with intention and care.

- **Protect Emotional Privacy as a Cultural Right**

  Make explicit that emotional restraint is not a sign of disengagement. Offer guidance to faculty and peers on how to respect silence, emotional privacy, and cultural variation in how people process or protect themselves in learning spaces.

- **Resource Without Extracting**

  Ensure that programs provide trauma-informed support—such as access to counseling, peer care networks, or community healers—without positioning students as subjects to be "processed." Support must be available, not obligatory.

While the four-year program includes structures like affinity spaces, reflection seminars, and sustainability workshops, this principle reminds us that emotional labor must be named and held—with care, with flexibility, and without compulsion. Justice is not served by uniformity. It is sustained through trust, discretion, and an ethic of respect.

5. Decentering US-centrism

Participants challenged both the U.S.-centric and Eurocentric assumptions embedded in many teacher education programs. While distinct, these frames are often intertwined—U.S.-centrism frequently reproduces Eurocentric hierarchies, treating Western liberalism, Enlightenment thought, and white normativity as universal. Participants drew on transnational perspectives, diasporic histories, and critiques of American exceptionalism to unsettle these defaults. Cristina rejected frameworks that reduce justice to U.S. diversity metrics, instead invoking decolonial critique. Nabeel's approach to culturally responsive pedagogy

reflects a deeper critique of the US-centric assumptions embedded in teacher education. "Students think CRP is about adding a book," he said. "I try to reframe it as confronting Eurocentric frameworks rooted in Enlightenment humanism." For him, justice pedagogy must go beyond inclusion and representation. It must unsettle the epistemological foundations that frame Western liberalism as universal. His curriculum challenges students to see that what counts as "critical" or "rigorous" is often rooted in a white, Eurocentric canon–and that refusing that default is itself a justice move. Justice-oriented teacher education must decenter the nation-state as the sole referent for justice, and open space for global, historical, and diasporic ways of knowing.

In practice, this principle might guide teacher education program design in the following ways:

- **Transnational Justice Threads Across Courses:** Don't silo the "global." Infuse every method, foundations, and practicum course with transnational memory, anti-imperialist critique, and diasporic wisdom. For example: In a literacy course, pair migrant oral histories with refugee-authored poetry. In social studies, teach housing justice through the lenses of settler colonialism and apartheid land theft.
- **Diasporic Inquiry as Lived Curriculum**: Invite students to trace their own stories across borders, displacement, and migration. Through counter-maps, memory walks, and oral testimony, they learn justice as something that lives beyond the nation-state–and sometimes in spite of it.
- **Justice Fieldwork Lives in the Everyday:** Partner with schools and organizations that serve displaced, diasporic, or multilingual communities—not as "global education" add-ons, but as core sites of justice practice. These communities are not elsewhere; they

are often the very settings where teachers already work. Refugee resettlement zones, neighborhoods shaped by colonial migration, and rural districts impacted by extractive economies all hold global histories within local geographies. Justice fieldwork doesn't require travel—it requires learning to see how militarism, migration, language, and policy are entangled in the everyday spaces of schooling and communities.

- **Reciprocal Dialogues Across Borders:** Facilitate virtual and in-person learning exchanges with educators abroad–especially in places shaped by U.S. imperial policy. These are not guest lectures. They are co-theorizing circles. Ask: What does justice look like when viewed from there?
- **Capstones That Trace Justice Across Time and Place:** Help students map how global struggles echo in local contexts. What links police violence in the U.S. to surveillance in Palestine? What connects extractivism in Latin America to school closures in Detroit? These connections are not abstract–they are the curriculum.

The 4-year design[3] embeds global perspectives throughout–rather than isolating them in electives. This principle demands more than inclusion. It calls for a deep restructuring of what we center, what we name, and what stories we allow to shape our pedagogies.

6. Sustainability as a design principle

Rather than treating burnout as a private issue, justice-centered design must begin with the question of sustainability. What kinds of relationships, infrastructures, and rhythms allow justice work to continue? How do we design for longevity–not just for institutional compliance? Sustainability must be built in from the beginning–not retrofitted in response to crisis.

[3] While the structure of this chapter follows a four-year arc aligned with a traditional undergraduate teacher education program, this framework is not meant prescriptively. Many programs—particularly graduate-level or certification-based pathways—are condensed into one or two years. The themes and insights offered here can be adapted across varied timelines; what matters most is not duration, but the intentional spiraling of justice-oriented learning across coursework, field experiences, and relational practices.

In practice, this principle might guide teacher education program design in the following ways:

- **Justice Sustainability Check-ins:** Create space for recurring reflection on the full range of labor involved in justice work—for both students and faculty. This includes not only credit hours or assignments, but emotional labor, caregiving, community ties, and the embodied effects of navigating institutions not designed for everyone's thriving. While these experiences cannot always be measured or compared, they can and should be named. Programs can invite collective reflection on these dimensions—not to quantify them, but to notice their impact, redistribute burdens where possible, and recalibrate expectations toward sustainability. These reflections may not always produce immediate structural change—but they can shift what programs notice, how they talk about labor, and what kinds of care and recognition are built into their cultures over time.
- **Rhythms of Rest and Reflection:** Build in institutionalized "pauses" each semester–weeks with no new content, only reflection, integration, or collective breathing space. These intentional lulls model that justice work is not a sprint. They help students and faculty resist urgency culture, honor recovery, and return to the work with clarity rather than depletion.
- **Reimagined Practicum Models That Center Justice-as-Practice:** Rethink student teaching placements not as temporary observations of fixed content, but as opportunities to notice how justice is enacted in the ordinary rhythms of classroom life. Rather than seeking out schools explicitly committed to justice—rare as they are—place students with mentor teachers who find or create discretionary spaces for critical pedagogy, relational care, and principled refusal. These may be fleeting, subtle, or embedded in

content work, but they are often where justice lives. Programs should support mentor teachers in naming these practices and reflecting on what sustains them. While extended placements can help deepen this work, what matters more is how we prepare pre-service teachers to read the space, ask better questions, and recognize justice not as a setting, but as a stance (See Chen & Mensah, 2018).

- **Sustenance Seminars for Faculty and Staff:** Create protected space for faculty and staff across the program to meet regularly for what Cristina might call "ideological nourishment": a place to share resources, readings, and practices that help them stay in the work. These gatherings aren't a side project–they're structural. Because the sustainability of the program depends on the sustainability of the people in it.
- **Hope as a Pedagogical Skillset:** Offer workshops or course modules focused on cultivating hope–not as naive optimism, but as a skillful stance. Teach hope as praxis: how to recognize collective wins, how to locate joy in struggle, how to imagine otherwise. Invite guest facilitators (organizers, artists, movement elders) to lead students through exercises that tether them to long-view visions of change.

7. Community-rooted, culturally responsive

Teacher education must be accountable not only to institutions, but to the communities schools serve. This includes designing programs in partnership with community knowledge holders, but also being responsive to the cultural and emotional landscapes of student teachers themselves. Programs that attend to local wisdom, student identity, and cultural humility create more relevant, sustaining, and liberatory learning environments. Justice is not abstract–it is contextual, intimate, and collective.

In practice, this principle might guide teacher education program design in the following ways:

- **Community Co-Design Labs**: Collaborate with local elders, organizers, youth, and families to co-create curriculum units, simulations, and classroom practices. These are not "community engagement projects"–they are spaces where knowledge is built together. Justice begins with who gets to decide what matters.
- **Cultural Self-Study Seminars:** Offer guided spaces where students map their own epistemologies–ancestral stories, learning traditions, migrations, and ruptures. These aren't confessionals. They are inquiries into how we came to know–and what that asks of us as educators.
- **Fieldwork Pathways That Stay Close to the Root:** Prioritize placements in schools and community organizations where students can return, build relationships, and begin to notice how justice is enacted in subtle, often-unseen ways. Rather than waiting for perfect "justice-aligned" sites, focus on preparing students to read ordinary spaces with critical attention—so they can witness how teachers use their discretion, relationships, and pedagogy to push against harmful norms. Whenever possible, create opportunities for students to revisit the same placement across semesters to deepen trust and context. But ultimately, justice fieldwork is less about duration than about learning to stay long enough to see what might otherwise remain invisible. Proximity without relationship is not justice—it's extraction.
- **Language as Pedagogical Integrity:** Create coursework that treats multilingualism as epistemic wealth, not remediation. Invite students to teach and write in their home

languages. Ask: What becomes possible when we stop translating ourselves for institutions?

- **Community Accountability Panels:** For capstones or public showcases, invite feedback not just from faculty, but from community members. Not as a gesture of outreach–but as a ritual of return. This helps students learn that justice work is not evaluated–it is witnessed.

While the 4-year program[4] design weaves in cultural autobiography, local fieldwork, and public accountability, this principle centers community not as context, but as co-creator. Justice is not imagined from above. It is grounded, particular, and shaped in relationship with the people and places we are accountable to.

Holding the Tensions: Designing for Justice Within Constraint

The design principles outlined above are not intended as blueprints to be dropped into existing teacher education programs without friction. In fact, each principle emerges from the very tensions that justice-oriented educators must navigate within institutional structures not built for liberatory work. Naming these tensions is not a disclaimer–it is part of the design itself. To treat justice as a shared responsibility means also attending to the constraints, contradictions, and risks that justice work invites, particularly for faculty of color, adjunct instructors, and those working outside of mainstream frameworks.

For example, while justice begins in relationship (P1), those relationships can also become sites of emotional extraction–especially when educators are expected to absorb white fragility or manage student resistance in silence. When clarity is protected (P2), that clarity often

[4] Once again, while this chapter is organized around a four-year arc to model a spiraled approach to justice learning, I recognize that many programs—including those at TC—are structured across just two to four semesters. The framework offered here can be compressed, adapted, or sequenced nonlinearly to meet the constraints of shorter programs while still maintaining coherence and intentionality.

comes at a cost: institutional pushback, misreadings of "bias," or professional precarity. Treating students as co-theorists (P3) challenges deep hierarchies around who gets to produce knowledge and what counts as rigor. And while emotional labor must be named and held (P4), doing so can risk being seen as unprofessional or unfit, particularly within neoliberal institutions that prize efficiency and detachment.

Naming the tension is not a flaw in the practice–it is part of the practice. These tensions do not undermine the design–they animate it. They mark the limits of current program structures, they also point to what might be possible. What would it look like to design a teacher education program that holds clarity without punishment, relationality without exploitation, and refusal without isolation? The following section sketches one such possibility–not as a universal model, but as a provocation. Grounded in the principles and pedagogies explored above, this four-year arc offers one vision of what teacher education might become when justice is treated not as an elective or endnote, but as its ethical core.

Section 2: Designing Across Time and Structure

While Section 1 articulated the seven design principles that emerged from the participants' practice, this section explores how those principles might be integrated into the structural and curricular architecture of a justice-centered teacher education program. Rather than separate the reimagining of traditional courses (foundations, methods, fieldwork, and research) from the vision of a four-year arc, I present them together here as a unified design. This structure reflects not only what justice looks like in a single course, but how it is scaffolded, protected, and deepened across time.

What follows is a year-by-year overview of a teacher education program grounded in the seven design principles. Each year includes reimagined course structures and developmental

priorities. Together, they offer one possible vision of what it might mean to treat justice as a design imperative–not as content, but as coherence.

While this vision is my own synthesis, it is deeply informed by the insights, tensions, and practices shared by the participants in this study. I imagine Cristina pushing against rigid sequencing, insisting that justice work must remain responsive and embedded in real classroom conditions. Nabeel might emphasize the need for gentle entry points—pedagogical onramps that protect students from overwhelm while still inviting ethical clarity. Amara's critique of global justice as a Western frame would likely appear as a call to anchor global coursework in transnational memory, survival, and critique. And Chiara-Mai would likely insist that any justice-oriented curriculum remain attuned to space, presence, and the politics of visibility—inviting students to map what has been hidden, and why. This design, then, is not a prescriptive map, but a relational offering—shaped by their wisdom and open to contradiction, adaptation, and refusal.

This design embraces the idea that justice is not a static stance but a continuous process of becoming. Drawing on Freire's (1970) notion of *praxis*—the cyclical interplay of action and reflection—and Bhattacharya's (2025) emphasis on emergence and relational depth, this program structure is not meant to produce uniformly aligned graduates. Instead, it seeks to create the conditions where teacher candidates and educators alike can encounter discomfort, contradiction, and possibility as necessary parts of justice work. Clarity, in this model, is not a prerequisite—it is cultivated, challenged, and reshaped through time, relationship, and guided inquiry.

Year 1: Foundations and Positionality

The first year of the program begins not with ideological certainty, but with relationship, reflection, and remembering. The design assumes that students and teacher educators alike arrive

with diverse histories, dispositions, and degrees of awareness; clarity is not a prerequisite, but a process. The goal is to create conditions in which relational trust, ideological dissonance, and community engagement can surface what has been inherited, internalized, or taken for granted—and allow new questions to emerge.

The same is true for teacher educators, who are also navigating their own clarity, contradictions, and evolving commitments within institutions that often constrain justice work. Rather than assuming shared alignment, the program recognizes that justice-centered pedagogy must be supported—intellectually, relationally, and structurally. To this end, the program offers collaboratively developed syllabi, faculty inquiry groups, and design frameworks that are grounded in justice commitments but open to adaptation. These structures are not about enforcing ideological purity; they are about ensuring coherence, care, and capacity—so that teacher educators are not left to improvise justice work in isolation. Courses in this year are structured not only to introduce theoretical tools, but to unsettle neutrality, disrupt default narratives, and begin anchoring teaching in memory, ethics, and community.

Carity must be protected)

Foundations of Education: Systems of Power and Possibility

This course reimagines traditional education foundations through a justice-centered lens. Students engage deeply with the histories of schooling as sites of both state violence and resistance. Core frameworks include critical pedagogy (Freire, Darder), Black and Indigenous feminist theory (hooks, Lorde, Grande), and decolonial thought (Tuck & Yang, Maldonado-Torres). Canonical texts are placed in conversation with community testimony, oral histories, and policy analysis. Rather than assume ideological fluency, the course creates space to surface inherited narratives, discomfort, and questions. Students begin to explore schooling as a

site of racial capitalism, empire, and epistemic violence—and also as a space of historical refusal, survival, and insurgent pedagogy. This course lays an early foundation for justice inquiry, helping students begin to articulate their relationship to the political ethics of teaching.

Relational Praxis Seminar

This yearlong, cohort-based seminar introduces students to justice formation through sustained reflection, community-building, and affective awareness. Rooted in principles of feminist pedagogy, Indigenous relationality, and critical race theory, the course invites students into guided practices such as identity mapping, cultural autobiography, and critical friendship. Activities like story-as-method, ancestral tracing, circle dialogue, and reflective journaling support students in surfacing inherited narratives and beginning to articulate their personal-political commitments. Justice is framed not as an individual stance to adopt, but as an evolving, interdependent ethic—one that emerges through relationship, accountability, and time. These commitments are reflected in the course design of Year 1, where students are invited into foundational inquiries that center memory, relationship, and structural critique—not as endpoints, but as starting points. What follows are three core courses that introduce students to justice-oriented teaching as an embodied, historical, and relational practice.

Historical Memory & Decolonial Inquiry Lab

This project-based course introduces students to the recovery of erased, silenced, or distorted educational histories within local and global contexts. Students engage in archival research, learn from community elders and oral historians, and use arts-based inquiry methods (such as counter-mapping, visual collage, and digital storytelling) to explore how coloniality, race, gender, and nation have shaped schooling. Drawing from decolonial studies, diaspora studies, and historical memory scholarship, the lab invites students to experiment with justice as a

method of remembering, relational repair, and epistemic reclamation—without assuming prior alignment or familiarity.

To note, while this program reimagines teacher education through justice-centered design, it does not abandon the "foundational" skills traditionally taught in teacher preparation. Preservice teachers still learn to design lesson plans, align instruction to standards, differentiate for diverse learners, and navigate classroom routines. These practices are important—and they remain part of the program. What shifts, however, is the frame. These competencies are not taught as neutral techniques or bureaucratic requirements, but as sites of ethical decision-making. Lesson planning becomes a space to examine whose knowledge is centered, whose is omitted, and what pedagogical choices uphold or disrupt systems of harm. Standards are not treated as static constraints, but as texts to be interrogated, negotiated, and—when necessary—refused or reimagined.

Rather than position justice and practicality as opposites, this program teaches them in relationship. Students are not asked to choose between meeting institutional expectations and pursuing liberation; they are equipped to navigate both—critically and with care. In their methods courses, students explore how to build lessons that meet content objectives while also honoring community histories, student languages, and transnational memory. In practicum, they practice classroom management strategies—but also reflect on when those strategies protect learning and when they reinforce control. Justice here is not an add-on. It is the context through which all pedagogical choices are made. What emerges is a vision of teacher education where clarity, rigor, and responsibility are cultivated not in spite of justice, but in service of it.

Year 2: Systems, Method, and Rupture

JIn Year 2, students continue their justice learning through expanded fieldwork, methods courses, and deeper engagement with curricular design. This is not a moment of arrival, but of intensification: students begin to wrestle more directly with questions of clarity, responsibility, and the everyday practice of justice in educational spaces. While some may feel increasingly aligned in their commitments, others may still be uncertain—or newly resistant—as the stakes of justice work become more concrete. The program anticipates this range and supports students in navigating discomfort, contradiction, and disorientation as part of their pedagogical formation. Rather than aiming for ideological closure, Year 2 emphasizes reflection-in-practice and the cultivation of tools to stay engaged even when clarity feels incomplete.

Critical Methods Courses (Math, Literacy, Science, Social Studies)

These discipline-specific courses are restructured to introduce students to epistemic justice as both a lens and a practice. Drawing from the work of Paris & Alim, Ladson-Billings, Gutstein, and other critical scholars in subject-area pedagogy, students are supported in analyzing how disciplinary knowledge is produced, whose knowledges are marginalized, and how curriculum can be designed to resist neutrality. Students enter this work with varying degrees of familiarity and readiness; the course invites inquiry, discomfort, and experimentation rather than ideological certainty. In science, this might include teaching environmental racism and Indigenous land-based knowledge. In literacy, it could mean centering zines, refugee narratives, or multilingual storytelling. Students are encouraged to explore what it might mean to design toward liberatory possibilities—not as a fixed goal, but as an iterative, relational, and context-responsive practice. This represents a shift from “best practices” to “politically and relationally grounded practices.”

Rupture Labs: Global Events and Pedagogies of Crisis

Rupture Labs are 1-credit, semester-long spaces for analyzing contemporary justice events—such as the genocide in Gaza, environmental collapse, police violence, anti-immigrant policy, or the state suppression of student and faculty protest on college campuses. Drawing on affect theory, critical media literacy, and pedagogy of refusal, students examine how institutions respond to rupture: with silence, control, co-optation, or surveillance. Students enter these conversations with differing levels of political clarity, emotional proximity, and lived experience. The labs do not assume agreement, but instead create space for witnessing, processing, and beginning to articulate ethical and pedagogical responses. Students are invited to name what is happening around them—including within their own programs and schools—and to consider what it means to teach and learn through crisis. Labs are collaborative, emotionally grounded, and designed to cultivate political awareness, relational resilience, and ethical risk-taking in the face of institutional backlash.

Global Justice and Transnational Pedagogies Seminar

This course challenges the U.S.-centric assumptions of many teacher education programs by introducing a transnational framework for justice. Students explore comparative education histories, colonial schooling systems, and transnational social movements. They examine how global migration, war, and imperialism have shaped communities and classrooms—often in ways that remain unacknowledged in dominant curricula. Students enter this work with varied relationships to nation, diaspora, and global struggle; the course creates space to interrogate inherited narratives, surface discomfort, and build understanding over time. Drawing from critical globalization studies, diaspora studies, and Third World feminisms, students are invited to imagine curricula that move beyond U.S. exceptionalism and toward ethical, relational forms

of global solidarity. This course emphasizes humility, multiplicity, and deep listening as core pedagogical practices—allowing students to develop transnational clarity through connection, not assumption.

Justice Inquiry Journal

Students maintain an ongoing inquiry journal that weaves together their experiences across courses, fieldwork, and rupture labs. Entries are scaffolded to support metacognition, emotional processing, and the development of political clarity over time. Prompts invite students to reflect on dissonance, institutional complicity, joy, and refusal—without assuming shared levels of readiness or insight. The journal is not assessed for content or ideological stance, but for presence, curiosity, and engagement. It becomes a site of co-theorizing with self, community, and course texts—a space to notice, question, and make meaning in motion.

Year 3: Immersion, Community, and Collective Inquiry

In Year 3, students begin to take up justice work more explicitly in the spaces where they will teach. With foundational knowledge, relational practices, and developing clarity in motion, this year challenges students to translate their evolving commitments into pedagogical choices, classroom discourse, and fieldwork-based decision-making. Students do not arrive at this year with equal levels of clarity or certainty—and even for those who feel more grounded, enacting justice in real-world settings introduces new tensions, blind spots, and contradictions. Justice here is no longer primarily a site of internal reflection or historical inquiry; it becomes something that must be navigated amid school constraints, policy mandates, and uneven institutional support. The program meets this moment with expanded practicum structures, pedagogies of refusal, and space to critically reflect on how justice work is always contextual, partial, and in process.

Justice Practicum (Start of 2-Year Placement)

Students are placed in community-based educational spaces, mutual aid collectives, or schools where educators engage justice work in everyday, often improvised ways. Rather than seeking out perfectly "justice-aligned" sites, the program supports students in learning to notice how justice is enacted through relationships, curriculum, and discretionary choices—often within underfunded, contested, and policy-constrained environments. Practicum agreements are co-developed and emphasize reciprocity, transparency, and reflective inquiry. Students are not placed merely to observe, but to co-learn in context—to grapple with how justice shows up, where it is constrained, and what it feels like to try. Assessment includes collaborative debriefs with mentor educators and community partners, shifting emphasis away from university-defined standards toward relational presence and ethical reflection.

Critical Pedagogy Seminar: Institutional Navigation and Refusal

This seminar runs alongside the practicum to support students in navigating institutional gaslighting, surveillance, and compromise. Drawing on Freire, Darder, hooks, and Ahmed, students are introduced to frameworks for understanding how justice is co-opted, diluted, or weaponized within teacher education and public schooling. Students enter this work with varying relationships to power, policy, and refusal; the seminar creates space to process those differences with honesty and care. Readings are paired with story circles and "refusal planning" sessions, where students explore scripts, strategies, and solidarity tools that can support them in navigating constraint. The course helps students move from critique to clarity—not by prescribing what justice should look like, but by creating space for them to define how they want to show up inside systems that are often hostile to the work.

Community-Based Action Research

Students collaborate with a community partner—such as a youth justice group, parent collective, or faith-based education space—to co-design and conduct a participatory research project. Research questions emerge from the community's needs and priorities, not the student's agenda. Students are introduced to care ethics, anti-extractivist methodologies, and Indigenous research frameworks, and are supported in learning how to engage these practices with humility, accountability, and relational care. Final projects are shared in community venues (not just academic settings) and may take the form of public tools, zines, digital archives, or community-designed curricula. The goal is not to generate "new" knowledge, but to surface, amplify, and circulate knowledge that is already alive—and often already under threat. Students are encouraged to view research not as inquiry into, but as learning alongside.

Political Economy of Schooling (Local and Global)

This course traces how education systems are shaped by global capitalism, racialized labor regimes, and settler-colonial governance. Students are introduced to political economy as a lens for understanding education policy, philanthropic influence, budget politics, and state violence. They are supported in connecting large-scale historical forces—such as neoliberalism, militarism, and migration—to the dynamics of their current practicum sites. Students enter this work with varying levels of familiarity and comfort; the course emphasizes scaffolding, discussion, and collective analysis as tools for making complexity legible. Assignments include budget audits, district policy analysis, and community knowledge interviews. The course closes with a group teach-in where students publicly share findings and facilitate discussion—not as experts, but as emerging educators committed to inquiry, clarity, and transformation.

Year 4: Public Pedagogy and Pedagogies of Refusal

In Year 4, students prepare to step into public teaching, community practice, and the ongoing labor of justice work beyond the program. The Year 3 practicum continues into Year 4, allowing students to remain embedded in their school or community site while engaging in capstone and reflective coursework. Justice is not only theorized, but practiced in real time as students prepare to step into the profession. This is not a moment of ideological mastery, but of transition—where students are asked to synthesize what they've learned, reflect on who they've become, and imagine how they will carry their commitments into uncertain and imperfect institutions. While some may feel confident in their justice stance, others may still be clarifying what justice requires of them, and under what conditions. The program embraces this tension by offering scaffolded structures for capstone work, mentorship, and transition into the profession—not as a closing gesture, but as an extension of the work. In this final year, students are supported in articulating a vision of practice rooted in integrity, accountability, and care for both themselves and their communities.

Capstone: Community Accountability Project

Instead of a traditional research paper or portfolio defense, students co-design a culminating project in collaboration with a community partner. Projects may include designing curriculum rooted in local histories, co-authoring policy memos with advocacy groups, leading multilingual literacy nights, or building a digital archive of school resistance. The work is not framed as a demonstration of expertise, but as an act of return—an offering shaped by what students have learned, struggled with, and begun to understand. Students enter this year with varying levels of clarity and confidence; the program provides sustained support to help them engage in co-design processes with humility and care. Projects are presented publicly, not as performances of mastery, but as moments of relational accountability. Evaluation includes a community feedback

panel, faculty reflection, and a self-authored letter of accountability that students write to their future selves. This work unfolds alongside students' continued engagement in their Year 3 practicum placements, allowing for real-time integration of justice commitments into classroom and community life.

Hope as Praxis: Seminar on Sustaining Justice through Care, Rhythm, and Resistance

This seminar supports students in reflecting on how they hope to sustain their justice work—emotionally, spiritually, and strategically. Through a blend of readings (Ginwright, hooks, Brown, Ahmed), personal storytelling, art practice, and ritual, students are invited to explore what care, clarity, and endurance look like in their lives. They engage with practices that may include prayer, protest, poetry, or play—without assuming shared beliefs or experiences. The seminar includes guest facilitators such as community organizers, movement elders, artists, and healer-educators, offering diverse models of long-term justice engagement. Each student closes the course by crafting a "sustainability map"—a visual or multimodal articulation of how they imagine sustaining their future rhythm of resistance, rest, and community.

Navigating Institutions: Workshop Series

This skill-building series addresses the everyday labor of working toward justice inside schools and systems not built for it. Topics include how to respond to tokenization, how to write boundary-setting emails, how to organize from within without being co-opted, and how to navigate relationships with families across cultural, political, and ideological difference. Workshops are led by educators in the field who offer scripts, reflections, and relational strategies—reminders that resistance does not mean going it alone. Students bring a range of identities, roles, and readiness into this work; the series honors those differences while offering

tools to help students act with integrity, even amid constraint. Over time, students co-create a "Justice Teaching Survival Guide" that they contribute to and take with them post-graduation.

Public Panel: Community Witnessing & Sendoff

Instead of a private graduation event, the program hosts a public sendoff where students share excerpts from their capstones, letters of accountability, or artistic responses to their learning. Community members, families, peers, faculty, and local educators are invited not just to celebrate, but to witness. This closing ritual reaffirms that justice teaching is a public act, that learning is incomplete without return, and that no one crosses the threshold into the next phase of their work alone. Participation is shaped by each student's comfort, identity, and relationship to the work; witnessing is framed not as performance, but as shared accountability, memory, and care.

Justice Is Not in Place of Practice–It Is the Frame for It

While this program reimagines teacher education through justice-centered design, it does not abandon the foundational skills traditionally taught in teacher preparation. Preservice teachers still learn to design lesson plans, align instruction to standards, differentiate for diverse learners, and navigate classroom routines. These practices are essential–and they remain part of the program. What shifts, however, is the frame. These competencies are not taught as neutral techniques or bureaucratic requirements, but as sites of ethical decision-making. Lesson planning becomes a place to examine whose knowledge is centered, whose is omitted, and what pedagogical choices uphold or disrupt systems of harm. Standards are not treated as static constraints, but as texts to be interrogated, negotiated, and–when necessary–subverted.

Rather than position justice and practicality as opposites, this program teaches them in relationship. Students are not asked to choose between meeting institutional expectations and

pursuing liberation; they are equipped to navigate both, critically and with care. In their methods courses, students explore how to build lessons that meet content objectives while also honoring community histories, student languages, and transnational memory. In practicum, they practice classroom routines–but also reflect on when those routines protect learning and when they reinforce control. Justice here is not an add-on. It is the context through which all pedagogical choices are made. What emerges is a vision of teacher education where clarity, rigor, and responsibility are cultivated not in spite of justice, but in service of it.

From Readiness to Responsibility: Lifelong Justice Learning in Teacher Education

This program does not promise to produce finished teachers. It prepares justice-rooted educators who know how to keep learning, questioning, adjusting, and remembering–long after the program ends. In contrast to traditional models of teacher education, which often treat "readiness" as a checklist of technical competencies, this program offers a different stance: that readiness is not arrival, but orientation. A justice-centered teacher must not only know how to plan a lesson, but also how to trace the histories behind a standard, how to notice when a curriculum silences, and how to remain accountable to the communities they serve–even when it's inconvenient, unpopular, or institutionally unsupported. This orientation is deeply rooted in critical pedagogy and liberatory praxis (Freire, Darder, hooks), which insist that teaching is always a political act, and that education should prepare students and teachers alike for principled struggle. It also reflects Goodwin and Darity's (2020) call for teacher education to attend to the pedagogical, sociological, and social dimensions of justice–not only the personal or contextual.

This design responds directly to the literature gaps identified in the proposal, especially the tendency of social justice teacher education to remain focused on self-reflection without

providing sustained preparation for navigating systems, rethinking curriculum, or protecting ideological clarity under institutional pressure. By aligning with critical globalization studies (Andreotti, McLaren, Farahmandpur), the program supports teachers in learning to see how justice work must span local and global scales. It also repositions teacher agency not as performative empowerment, but as a reflective, strategic practice (Cochran-Smith, Zeichner, Roegman)–an ongoing ability to read context, act ethically, and stay in relationship with communities and colleagues. The very structure of this program–its sequencing, embedded reflection, mentorship, and public accountability practices–enacts that redefinition of agency. Students are not only taught to evaluate their teaching choices, but to ask: What am I refusing? Who am I returning to? How does this choice align with the justice I claim to teach for?

This orientation also directly responds to the research questions that guided this study. Across the four cases, participants identified sustaining justice commitments not through isolated training, but through community, memory, clarity, and strategic refusal. Cristina spoke about clarity as a spiritual imperative; Nabeel about navigating silence while holding space for rupture; Amara about honoring the unspeakable in poetry and protest; and Chiara-Mai about transnational memory as pedagogical inheritance. These are not skills that appear fully formed–they are cultivated through intentional design. This program takes those insights seriously. It scaffolds learning not only through content, but through care: through rupture labs and sustainability audits, through story-as-method and refusal planning, through public witnessing and community-grounded return.

Rather than preparing students to survive teacher education and "enter the field," this model prepares them to survive teaching itself. It builds capacity for discernment, relational presence, and long-haul justice orientation. While no single participant embodied all seven

design principles in full, each principle emerged through patterns across their practice—revealing shared commitments, tensions, and protective strategies. This model reflects that synthesis. At the same time, justice teaching does not end at program completion. Participants described their own learning as ongoing—shaped by institutional struggle, community ties, and iterative reflection. Preparing future teachers, then, must also include modeling what post-program justice development can look like: layered, relational, and lifelong.

The structure outlined in this chapter is not a fixed blueprint. It is a design proposition shaped by the lived pedagogies of four justice-committed teacher educators, the tensions they named, and the strategies they enacted to protect clarity, community, and coherence. Across four years, this program asks what it would mean to reimagine teacher education not as a compliance system, but as a relational, political, and spiritual preparation for principled teaching. Through the integration of justice-centered principles, course redesign, and field-responsive rhythm, the program offers one way to cultivate educators who do not just learn about justice–but live it, protect it, and continue learning with it across time.

Yet even as this program prioritizes clarity, sustainability, and relational learning, it must also speak back to the broader critiques of the field. Goodwin and Darity have argued that social justice teacher education too often remains in the personal and affective realm, neglecting the pedagogical, sociological, and social dimensions that give justice its structural weight. The model presented here–rooted in the findings of this study–offers one response. What follows is an articulation of how this program addresses their call: not by abandoning the personal, but by situating it within curricular, institutional, and community-based commitments that hold justice as both a practice and a design imperative.

Conclusion

This chapter has offered not a fixed blueprint, but a design proposition shaped by the lived pedagogies of four justice-committed teacher educators—their clarity, their care, their contradictions, and their refusals. Across four years, this program asks what it would mean to build teacher education not around compliance, but around coherence: a coherence rooted in memory, affect, accountability, and political clarity.

This chapter extends the study's second research question–not only asking what sustains justice-oriented educators in their work, but what kinds of programs, pedagogies, and institutional conditions might make that sustainability more possible. It also offers one response to critiques that social justice teacher education has remained overly focused on identity and reflection at the expense of pedagogical, sociological, and social clarity (Goodwin & Darity, 2020). What this chapter proposes is not a departure from the personal, but a reorientation: toward justice that is embodied, practiced, and held in structure as much as in stance.

This is not a model to be replicated in total, but a possibility to be adapted in context. What happens when justice is treated not as a specialization, but as a shared responsibility—carried across time, institutions, and bodies? The principles and arc presented here do not resolve the tensions surfaced in Chapter 4. Instead, they move with them, asking how we might design teacher education in ways that protect clarity, honor refusal, and sustain the people doing the work. It recognizes that students and educators alike arrive at different places in their clarity, commitments, and capacities—and that sustainability depends on designing for this variation, not despite it. The invitation is not toward certainty, but toward coherence—with each other, with our purposes, and with the world we hope to help shape.

Author's Note

In drafting this chapter, I relied on the same kinds of reflective tools I used in Chapter 4–supports that helped me think more clearly, organize what felt unwieldy, and articulate what I actually meant. These tools didn't replace the work; they were part of it. They helped me stay close to the commitments of the study and to the people who shaped it–whose clarity, tension, and care called for a clarity that stayed accountable to the weight of what was shared. This chapter, like the rest, is mine. But it carries others, and I've tried to write in a way that honors that.

Chapter 6 - Reflections, Risks, and Reimagining Justice in Teacher Education

Bearing Witness to the Work

This chapter is not a conclusion. It is a return—a return to what has quietly carried this work from the beginning: the voice, the niyyah[5] (intention), and the grounding commitments that shaped each part of the study. Beneath the citations, the interviews, and the structure of case study and analysis, there has always been a deeper current—one that holds together the personal, the political, and the spiritual.

This return is shaped by the frameworks that ground my study. Darder's (2015) critical interpretivism invites bicultural and historically situated readings of human experience, where interpretation is never neutral, and where lived struggle becomes a site of knowing. Bhattacharya's (2025) contemplative thematic analysis similarly affirms that meaning-making is embodied, relational, and spiritual. In this spirit, this chapter brings to the surface what I once hesitated to center—not as an afterthought, but as an essential part of how I've come to understand what justice in teacher education requires—how it can be more honestly lived and sustained.

Vanessa Andreotti (2021) critiques the kind of "soft" justice that aims to save or fix, while leaving the dominant order intact. She asks instead what it means to build the capacity to sit with complicity, to name root causes, and to interrupt harm without rushing toward premature resolution. Her work has helped me understand justice not as moral performance, but as a practice of discernment. One that demands clarity, risk, and relationship—within and beyond the classroom.

[5] Throughout this chapter, I draw on Islamic concepts and language as part of my own grounding and reflection. These are not generalizable claims, but situated expressions of my epistemological and ethical commitments.

What I want to make unmistakably clear is that my Islamic tradition and the field of social justice teacher education do not simply inform one another—they demand something of me. SJTE, as Andreotti argues, requires that I resist fragmentation and remain accountable to my own epistemic grounding. And my Islamic tradition requires that I take up justice not as theory alone, but as a lived ethical imperative—one that must be enacted with rigor, sincerity, and humility. These two frameworks sharpen one another. They hold each other to account. And in that tension—not despite it, but because of it—I find a more honest form of alignment.

As a Muslim woman, I understand justice not only as a pedagogical or political commitment, but as a sacred obligation. My pursuit of justice in education is rooted in the Qur'anic command to stand firm for truth, even when it is difficult, even when it is lonely. "O you who believe! Stand firmly for justice, as witnesses to Allah, even if it be against yourselves..." (Qur'an 4:135). To bear witness, in the Islamic tradition, is not a passive act. It is a moral position, a willingness to be seen—and to speak—on behalf of what is right. Throughout this study, I witnessed that same moral clarity in different forms—whether through Amara's artistic pedagogies, Chiara-Mai's spatial memory work, Cristina's structural precision, or Nabeel's deliberate, quiet resistance.

This final chapter, then, is my shahada (witnessing)—not in the doctrinal sense, but in the broader meaning of testimony. It is my bearing witness to the work, to what I've learned, to what I can no longer unsee. It is a space to reflect, to grieve, to recalibrate, and to write myself back into the research without fear.

While previous chapters were grounded in frameworks like contemplative thematic analysis and critical interpretivism, this chapter draws from the same commitments to pursue a different kind of clarity—one that is personal, ethical, and spiritual. Beneath and alongside these

frames, there has always been another framework—one that lives in my bones and breath: my Islamic faith. I did not name it fully in my proposal. I was afraid to. Afraid it would make my work illegible to those who decide what counts as "academic." But I now understand that leaving it out did not protect the work. It fragmented me. As Leigh Patel (2016) reminds us, "The academy provides presence through its forms of recognition, but that presence often comes at the cost of one's full self" (p. 14).

This chapter is my refusal of that cost. It is a practice of returning, of repairing, of writing from wholeness. In the pages that follow, I revisit my findings not only as a researcher, but as a believer, a daughter of diaspora, a mother raising children in a world scarred by injustice. I write from the heart of my tradition—not to universalize it, but to stand honestly in it. To say: this is the ground I stand on. This is the amanah (trust) I carry. This is the work I was called to do.

The Ethics of Visibility and Protection

One of the central tensions I encountered in the lives and practices of the participants was discerning what to make visible and what to hold with care. Cristina, in particular, navigates this with intentionality—curating syllabi and classroom spaces that fulfill institutional requirements while embedding deeper commitments beneath the surface. She chooses her words carefully, not out of fear, but out of clarity and ethical discernment—recognizing that justice work, in certain settings, requires strategic choices to protect both the work and those it serves.

That refusal struck something in me—not as defiance, but as amanah–a sacred trust. In Islam, amanah is not merely a responsibility; it is a moral weight we carry with humility and care. And like Cristina, I have learned that part of honoring this amanah is knowing when to speak, and when silence is a form of protection.

Yet amanah also demands visibility. It asks us to name what others avoid, to take risks with our truth, and to act with moral clarity. In this way, visibility, too, is a form of amanah. The burden is not only what we protect, but also what we allow to be seen—what we choose to reveal, despite the costs. This means that both the visible and the hidden can be sacred. Both require discernment. Both can be sites of struggle and sincerity.

In justice work, visibility is often equated with bravery. We are told to speak out, to disrupt, to name everything. But what I have learned from this study—and from my own experience as a Muslim woman navigating academic institutions—is that not all naming is safe, and not all silence is surrender. Sometimes, withholding is a form of care. Sometimes, discretion is what allows the work to live another day. And sometimes, the refusal to stay silent is the very thing that sustains the soul.

This is particularly true in spaces shaped by white supremacy, surveillance, and tokenized diversity. Institutions often reward performance over substance. As Cristina noted, they want the language of justice without the labor it requires. In such spaces, too much visibility can become a liability. For Nabeel, a visibly Muslim man teaching in a post-9/11 context, the stakes of visibility are especially high. He shared that even a flicker of emotion—especially anger—could be misread as threatening. His pedagogy, then, involves navigating not only what he teaches, but how he exists while teaching. His silence is not absence; it is strategy. In one course, he described pausing mid-discussion, not because he lacked an answer, but because he knew the emotional register of his voice could be weaponized. This kind of discernment—rooted in experience, identity, and self-protection—is also a form of pedagogical care.

These reflections called me to examine my own relationship to visibility. What have I protected by staying quiet? What have I risked by speaking? And what are the conditions under which I can begin to do both—with intention, with wisdom, and with tawakkul (trust in God)?

The Qur'an reminds us, "Do not confuse truth with falsehood or hide the truth knowingly" (2:42). But it also reminds us that wisdom is situational, relational, and guided by ihsan—doing what is most beautiful, most just, most aligned with God-consciousness. In this chapter, I do not aim to resolve this tension. I aim to honor it. To say: there are things I have chosen not to write. Not because they are untrue, but because they are still becoming. Still too tender. Still protected.

This, too, is part of the work. To write what must be said—and to guard what must still be held in the heart.

Justice as Praxis: Between Identity and Alignment

I should also acknowledge that part of what drew me to this study was, in all honesty, a deep curiosity. As an aspiring teacher educator committed to justice, I wanted to understand how other teacher educators of color were doing this work—without burning out or getting fired. I wanted to learn how they navigated institutions not designed for our full selves, and how they stayed aligned with their commitments while protecting their well-being and their jobs. This study was, in many ways, a mirror I needed. I wasn't only trying to define justice in teacher education; I was trying to figure out how to show up more fully in my own practice, how to integrate my whole self into this work, and how to sharpen my understanding of what it takes to do that with integrity.

At the same time, I was navigating a personal rupture—a marital separation—that required me to confront the growing distance between my values and my reality. It pushed me to

choose alignment over comfort, clarity over appearance. That experience reshaped not just how I think about justice, but how I live it. I came to see that the questions I brought to this study were not only intellectual—they were existential. What does it cost to live with integrity? What does it mean to protect your own clarity while also protecting and honoring others—especially the most vulnerable? What does it look like to stay aligned when the institutions, relationships, and cultures around you reward compliance instead?

As educators, we do hold a responsibility to all our students—but that responsibility includes honoring agency, allowing for timing, and trusting that what we teach might take root long after the course ends. Sometimes justice teaching is about planting a seed that will only break open years later. But this long view cannot come at the expense of those already ready to learn. One of the hardest parts of justice teaching is managing classrooms where students are at vastly different stages of awareness—where some arrive ready to engage deeply, while others resist, deflect, or re-center themselves in ways that derail the learning of others. The burden of educating those who are resistant must be balanced with the responsibility to protect the learning space for those more apparently receptive and/or impacted by injustice.

Still, I am not giving up on students who resist. I am trying to offer them something more difficult—and ultimately, more freeing. Part of the work of teacher education is helping teachers see not only how they are positioned to uphold systems of oppression, but how those same systems diminish their own freedom, flatten their moral imagination, and demand their complicity. It means teaching them how the architecture of schooling is designed to reward conformity, obscure power, and make injustice feel normal—even benevolent. If this recognition lands—and it often does, eventually—it can provoke an existential discomfort: *"Wait, I didn't sign up for this."* And that moment is not a dead end. It's a doorway.

Cristina doesn't soften that doorway. She tells her students directly: now that you know, if you choose to do nothing—you're racist. Not to shame them, but to name the stakes. To make clear that awareness without action is complicity. Amara helps her students reach that threshold through local inquiry, connecting histories of colonization, neoliberalism, and resistance to the lived realities of their communities. Chiara-Mai does so through spatial critique and counter-mapping, guiding students to see how violence often hides in plain sight—until we learn to trace its contours. And Nabeel reminds his students that silence is never neutral. His pedagogy insists that if we do not name our position, it will be named for us.

Our work, then, is not to persuade every student in real time, but to name the system, reveal its logics, and trust that something will stay with them. To create the conditions for clarity—so that when the moment of recognition comes, they are not alone. That, too, is part of the work, part of what integrity demands.

Reflections on Positionality and Purpose

One of the questions raised in feedback from my advisor, reflecting on the findings in Chapter 4, asked whether I could have done this study with white teacher educators and arrived at similar results. At first glance, this question appears to challenge the specificity of my focus on global majority participants. But on deeper reflection, it offers an important provocation—one that reveals a central tension in justice work: the difference between positionality and praxis. What I found in this study was not a uniform ideological position among global majority teacher educators. Nor did I assume there would be. In fact, several participants explicitly critiqued the notion that shared racial identity guarantees shared commitments. Cristina stated this most directly: "Teacher education is a white supremacist enterprise that produces ideological white people—even among people of color."

Chiara-Mai reflected on her own sense of disconnection from her Japanese heritage and questioned whether she was the "right person for the job," given her deep integration into white American culture and her position as a mixed-race educator several generations removed from immigrant experience. In response, I offered a reflection that had surfaced across multiple interviews: that "plenty of teacher educators of color uphold white supremacy—sometimes even more efficiently than their white colleagues." Nabeel, who was part of the same conversation, agreed immediately and unequivocally. This moment underscored a critical throughline in the study: that racial identity, while always contextually meaningful, cannot be assumed to indicate ideological clarity or a commitment to justice. Justice-oriented practice is not guaranteed by positionality alone—it is enacted through a praxis of clarity, accountability, and ongoing refusal of systems that reproduce harm. But such refusal requires not only conviction, but also an informed understanding of how those systems operate—historically, structurally, and affectively—in order to subvert them with precision rather than abstraction.

As a Muslim scholar, I hold a personal understanding of justice rooted in the Islamic concept of ʻadl—a justice that is lived, practiced, and grounded in ethical alignment. This concept shapes how I approach my own commitments, not as a measure of others, but as a reminder of the responsibility I carry. My aim in naming this here is not to universalize it or impose it on participants, but to remain transparent about the framework that helps me navigate questions of practice, risk, and alignment. For me, ʻadl is not only a principle; it is a spiritual imperative—to act with integrity, to strive for balance, and to remain in relationship with justice in all its complexity. As the Prophet Muhammad (peace be upon him) taught in a hadith (a narration passed down from the Prophet's teachings, preserved as spiritual, ethical, and—at times—legal guidance): "Help your brother, whether he is an oppressor or is oppressed." When

asked how to help the oppressor, he replied, “By preventing him from oppressing others.” (Sahih al-Bukhari 6952). Justice is not always soft or sympathetic; it is also intervention. It demands that we act—not only to protect those who are harmed, but to hold accountable those causing harm, even when doing so feels risky, relationally or institutionally.

This is why, in answering the advisor’s question, I must say: perhaps similar thematic findings could have emerged with white educators—if those educators shared a praxis of ideological clarity, ethical risk, and relational accountability. But what cannot be replicated is the particular texture of justice work as it is embodied by those navigating the intersecting violences of racialization, migration, surveillance, and epistemic erasure. These contexts shape not only what is possible in the classroom, but what must be risked. The stakes are different. The risks are different. And the forms of refusal, care, and strategy that emerge from these histories carry knowledge that is both embodied and hard-won—even when, as in the cases of Chiara-Mai or Amara, that embodiment includes tension, ambiguity, or proximity to whiteness. Their reflections remind us that justice is not guaranteed by identity, nor disqualified by it—but shaped through situated struggle, memory, and ethical clarity.

This study is not about essentializing justice as belonging only to the global majority. It is about affirming that justice is a praxis—a way of being, knowing, and doing that must be cultivated, protected, and aligned over time. And as a Muslim researcher, I understand that alignment as part of my own striving toward ‘adl (justice). It is a reminder to check my ego, to interrogate my assumptions, and to ensure that my work reflects not only my commitments, but my responsibilities.

Justice is not something static or inherent. It lives in the small, daily decisions—how we listen, how we show up, how we speak when it would be easier to stay silent. Like intention, it

must be renewed regularly. It is a practice of checking in with the self, realigning, and returning—again and again—to what matters most.

Holding Hands and Letting Go: Loneliness, Allyship, and Discernment

One tension I've held while writing this chapter is whether and how to name the Islamic concepts that guide me—without placing them on the participants, or suggesting that their justice work flows from the same sources. It doesn't. And it doesn't need to. My use of terms like *'adl* (justice), *amanah* (a trust), or *shahada* (witnessing) is not prescriptive—it is a way of locating myself, of speaking from within my own ethical and spiritual commitments. These terms help me narrate my return to myself, not to frame theirs. In a similar way, the visual collages—though grounded entirely in participant words and themes—were shaped by my aesthetic and affective lens, one rooted in a justice ethic that includes, but is not confined to, Islamic commitments.

Cristina's metaphor of "holding hands and letting go" stayed with me as a description of the loneliness that often accompanies justice work. I found myself reflecting not only on the weight of that solitude, but also on the complicated nature of solidarity. As someone whose justice commitments are shaped by my Islamic faith, I once assumed I would find the deepest solidarity among others who shared that faith. But that has not always been the case. More often, it has been those from other traditions—or none at all—who have stood beside me in clarity, moral courage, and care. Amara's poetry, Chiara-Mai's counter-maps, and Nabeel's deliberate refusals offered models of how justice can be practiced across very different geographies of belief. They reminded me that justice is not the property of any one tradition. It is a collective trust, a shared risk. And that realization, paradoxically, makes allyship both easier and harder. Easier, because I no longer expect mirrors. Harder, because clarity and alignment are rare, and must be discerned again and again in the everyday work of walking together.

At the end of one course, Cristina facilitated a simple but powerful exercise for her students—one she designed to help them hold on to a sense of agency and emotional grounding in their justice work. She shared:

"I did a small activity to help them find their sense of agency—because it's so easy to lose their emotional fortitude in this work.

At the end of the class, I would tell them:

'Close your eyes.'

Then I'd say:

'Hold hands. Feel each other's presence. Right now, we're learning together. You know they're there, right?'

Then I'd tell them:

'Now, let go. But stay close. Move forward, but keep sensing the people around you.'

And I'd let them stay like that for a while.

Then I'd tell them:

'That's exactly what social justice work is like.

You won't always have someone holding your hand.

Sometimes, you'll feel alone.

But you have to remember—you aren't.

You have to trust that others are doing this work, too.

Otherwise,

You'll burn out.'"

These conversations reminded me that justice work, while often lonely, is never truly solitary. Even when we walk without company, we are walking alongside others who have made a way before us, and others who will walk after us. That knowledge—however quiet—is what I hold onto when the path feels uncertain.

Sustaining the Work

Throughout this study, participants shared not only their commitments, but their strategies for sustaining those commitments. The work of justice, especially in institutions shaped by compliance, surveillance, and exhaustion, is not simply about pedagogy—it is about endurance.

Cristina spoke of surrounding herself with other faculty of color—"even one person," she said, "who helps you remember who you are." Nabeel described building quiet, intentional relationships rather than relying on large-scale networks. Amara shared how music, art, and poetry functioned not as extras, but as essential forms of spiritual nourishment. Chiara-Mai emphasized the importance of finding spaces outside a particular institution altogether sometimes, to remember that justice can and does exist beyond the university.

The wisdom that emerged from these conversations was not formulaic. It was embodied, humble, and deeply relational. What I saw across all four cases was a practice of intentional preservation. Whether through community, creativity, prayer, therapy, or strategic solitude, each participant made deliberate choices about what to carry, what to release, and what to hold sacred. No one framed the work as easy. But all of them, in their own ways, described it as deeply meaningful.

For me, the Islamic concept of ṣabr—often translated as patience, but better understood as steadfastness—offered language for what I witnessed in them. Ṣabr is not passive waiting. It is

active, resilient, principled perseverance. It is what carries one through difficulty with dignity and purpose. In Qur'anic terms, "O you who believe, seek help through patience (ṣabr) and prayer. Indeed, Allah is with the steadfast" (2:153). Again, I offer this not as a universal framework, but as one that gives shape to my own understanding of how educators survive the long work of justice—not only by resisting harm, but by holding on to purpose.

Tenderness, too, showed up across their reflections—a quiet, unexpected kind that refused perfectionism in favor of grace. Cristina reminded me that clarity doesn't mean rigidity. Her stories of navigating exclusion and retaliation made it clear: sustaining this work requires strength, yes—but also perspective, and sometimes irreverence. "Because I didn't come here to punk out over a few bitches," she said. "And you just put it in perspective—and you keep going." Amara, too, emphasized that justice work isn't about forcing outcomes or perfect performances. "Sometimes that seed [of justice] just dies and becomes absorbed into neoliberal understandings of the world," she said. "And sometimes it doesn't—something else comes along and it grows. My job is not to force that seed to grow." Their words reminded me that sustainability is not just about endurance—it is about grace. Grace for the self. Grace for others. A refusal to let perfectionism mimic justice.

To sustain this work is to resist urgency, to embrace process, and to build relationships that hold us accountable and hold us gently. It is to remember the shared sentiment that emerged throughout the study: we are not machines. We are people—imperfect, intuitive, and often exhausted—doing the best we can in institutions that don't always recognize our full humanity.

As I reflect on what it takes to sustain justice work over time, I return to an older question—not only what educators must do, but what they must become. Aristotle, in his Nicomachean Ethics, emphasized the cultivation of practical wisdom (phronēsis): the ability to

make sound moral judgments not through rigid rule-following, but through ethical discernment developed over time. This feels especially relevant in justice-centered teacher education, where there are few clear roadmaps, and where educators must constantly weigh ethical, political, and emotional demands.

Goodwin and Darity's critique—that social justice teacher education too often neglects the social, the pedagogical, and the sociological—feels pressing here. If we want teachers and teacher educators to cultivate justice as a way of being, then we must ask: What knowledge enables that kind of judgment? Is it history? Sociology? Personal story? Political memory? Spiritual practice? Likely all of the above—held together in tension, embodied in practice, and developed over time. The work is not simply to master theory or methods, but to become the kind of person who can hold justice with courage, clarity, and care.

Policy Recommendations

The educators in this study were not simply resisting unjust systems—they were redesigning possibility from within them. Their work calls for more than individual recognition or isolated reform. It invites structural rethinking. Based on the findings of this study, I offer the following policy recommendations to support justice-oriented teacher education at the institutional and systemic level.

Sustain Justice-Oriented Faculty Through Institutional Funding, Not Personal Sacrifice

Three of the four participants described paying out of pocket to bring in community leaders, artists, and scholars whose presence supported the relational and political goals of their courses. This kind of justice work should not depend on personal financial sacrifice. Institutions must create dedicated, recurring funding streams—small grants, course-based budgets, or yearly stipends—for faculty engaged in justice-centered teaching, particularly faculty of color. This

support should not require additional labor to access and should be protected from annual budget fluctuations or grant cycles.

Protect Justice Work in Evaluation and Promotion Structures

Participants frequently described needing to shield themselves from the language and logic of institutional review—especially when that logic was steeped in whiteness, neutrality, or measurable "impact." Their use of refusal, silence, and strategic ambiguity often operated as forms of protection. Justice work that is relational, slow, or intentionally invisible must still be recognized as labor. Institutions should revise evaluation and promotion criteria to include ethical refusal, emotional labor, community accountability, and protective practice as legitimate forms of pedagogical contribution.

Require Ongoing Justice-Centered Pedagogical Development for All Teacher Educators

Every participant in this study taught toward justice—but often in spite of dominant frameworks, not because of them. While justice work showed up in their syllabi, methods, and mentoring, they also described being isolated or misunderstood by colleagues. Justice pedagogy cannot remain the burden of a few faculty of color. All teacher educators—particularly those who supervise or evaluate preservice teachers—should engage in ongoing pedagogical development rooted in critical race theory, decolonial thinking, and relational ethics. This is not a checkbox DEI training. It must be embedded, long-term, and developed in partnership with faculty who are already doing this work.

Align Accreditation Standards with Relational and Community-Centered Justice Practices

Participants repeatedly named the limitations of externally imposed rubrics, standards, and dispositions frameworks that flatten or erase the political dimensions of their work. These tools often reward legibility, not justice. State and national accreditation bodies must revise their

expectations to allow for culturally sustaining, community-anchored, and relational forms of teacher education. Indicators of excellence should include ethical care, refusal, and sustained community engagement—not only outputs that align with neoliberal or white institutional expectations.

These recommendations are not intended to be exhaustive or final. They are starting points for structural alignment—rooted in what participants practiced, protected, and sustained. If institutions are serious about justice, they must be willing to shift not only what is encouraged, but what is resourced, protected, and made possible.

Closing Reflections

As I return to the questions that shaped this study—how global majority teacher educators understand, enact, and sustain commitments to global justice—I find that the answers are not formulaic, but textured, embodied, and always in motion. I learned that justice is not defined by identity alone, but enacted through ideological clarity, relational risk, and ethical alignment. Participants challenged the assumption that shared racial identity guarantees shared commitments, and instead emphasized justice as a praxis—something that must be cultivated through refusal, clarity, and ongoing critical reflection.

In terms of enactment, I learned that justice work requires both curricular precision and emotional discernment. It demands institutional navigation and pedagogical strategy, but also moral clarity—like Chiara-Mai's insistence that "the murder of children… is not complex"—and structural refusal, like Cristina's refusal to emotionally manage whiteness. Amara reminded me that sometimes justice emerges through poetry and process, not policy, while Nabeel showed how justice can be scaffolded through gentleness and dialogue, even under surveillance.

And when it came to the question of sustenance, I found that what sustains these educators is not certainty or consensus, but the clarity of their purpose, the relationships they build, and the space they make for contradictions and care. Whether through Amara's weaving of resistance into story and song, Chiara-Mai's use of spatial memory to trace erasure and belonging, Nabeel's cultivation of emotionally safe entry points for difficult truths, or Cristina's uncompromising mentorship and structural clarity—each participant modeled that justice is not only something taught—it is something lived.

These insights do not resolve the questions in a final sense, but they deepen my understanding of what justice asks of us: pedagogically, politically, and spiritually. They also offer guidance for how I—as a Muslim scholar, teacher educator, and mother—might continue walking this path.

Not with answers, but with *amanah* (taking up the trust). With clarity. With intention. And with the quiet courage to begin again.

This work, too, is only one trial of love among many:

ستاروں سے آگے جہاں اور بھی ہیں

ابھی عشق کے امتحان اور بھی ہیں

Sitaron se aage jahan aur bhi hain,

Abhi ishq ke imtihaan aur bhi hain.

Beyond the stars are other worlds still—

There are yet more trials of love to come.

—Allama Iqbal

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APPENDIX A: Participant Recruitment Flier

Hello, my name is Rozena Raja. I am an educational researcher interested in the ways that global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understand what it means to teach about/ for global justice, and how this shapes their roles, responsibilities and practices. Additionally, I am interested in how they cultivate a sense of agency in their students teachers to teach about/for global justice as well as if and how these teacher educators sustain themselves in their practice of teaching about/for global justice.

Any (a) US university-based teacher educator* (b) committed to global justice, (c) with at least three years of experience, (d) who teaches from or adjacent to a critical globalization** framework in their college teaching, and (e) identifies as global majority*** may participate. This study is non-evaluative and involves a few simple steps. (Note: all interviews and group meetings will take place online, via Zoom).

1. Submit *THREE* course artifacts (through Google forms) such as a syllabus, part of a syllabus, a text, meme, image, map or video clip you have used in a course that is meaningful to you in one or more of the following:
    a. what it means to teach teachers about/for global justice.
    b. cultivating a sense of agency in your students around teaching about/for global justice.
    c. sustaining you in your practice of teaching about/for global justice.

    Write a short commentary explaining the context of each artifact, why you are sharing it, where it falls within your course/ academic year, as well as what student responses were to the artifact.

2. Attend 2-3 one-on-one interviews, each lasting approximately 45 minutes in which we will explore how you understand what it means to teach about/for global justice using your course artifacts, how these understandings shape your roles, responsibilities and practices, how you cultivate a sense of agency in your students around global justice as well as if and how you sustain yourself in your practice. We will use Miro board[6] and meet via Zoom.
3. Attend 1-2 whole group interviews (of approximately 90 minutes) where course artifacts are shared among all participants in a gallery walk format on Miro board. You will be asked to share, comment and respond to yours and other participants' artifacts and share-outs, verbally - as well as textually and visually via Miro board. These meetings will take place via Zoom.

If you satisfy all the criteria and would like to participate in this study, please fill out this survey form and/or to find out more about joining this study, email me, Rozena: rr2840@tc.columbia.edu.

***Teacher Educator** - Someone who works in a university or college setting preparing teachers for K-12 classrooms. This could be within Education departments, but is not limited to them.
****Critical Globalization** - Critical globalization is the critical analysis of the economic, political, and cultural dimensions of globalization, focusing on its negative impacts and advocating for alternative approaches that prioritize social justice and sustainability while challenging dominant narratives and power structures within global systems (Robinson, 2006).
*****Global Majority** - a collective term that refers to people who are Black, Asian, Brown, dual-heritage, indigenous to the global south, and or have been racialized as "ethnic minorities". Globally, these groups currently represent approximately eighty per cent (80%) (Campbell-Stevens, 2020).

[6] **Note:** The Miro board component was originally planned as part of the individual and group interviews but was ultimately not used in the final study.

APPENDIX B: Recruitment Survey

1. **Demographic Information**
    a. What is your name?
    b. What is your gender?
    c. What is your racial/ethnic identity?
    d. What is your current position in education (e.g., teacher educator, professor, etc.)?
    e. How many years of experience do you have as a teacher educator?
2. **Commitment to Global Justice**
    a. On a scale of 1-5, how important is global justice to your work as a teacher educator?
    b. What are the top global issues you have addressed in your class in the past 3 years?
3. **Sociopolitical Context and Positionality**
    a. How would you describe your positionality (e.g., social class, nationality, cultural background)?
    b. In what ways does your positionality (race, gender, class, etc.) influence your approach to global justice in education?
4. **Teaching Practices and Curriculum**
    a. How often do you incorporate discussions on global justice into your teaching? (scale: rarely, sometimes, often, always)
    b. Please provide an example of a lesson or activity you have implemented that centers on global justice.
5. **Availability and Interest**

a. Are you willing to participate in one-on-one interviews for a study focused on global justice, critical pedagogy, and teacher education? (Yes/No)
b. Would you be open to participating in group interviews with other teacher educators who share a commitment to global justice? (Yes/No)
c. How did you hear about this study?

6. **Contact information Request***

Thank you for your interest in participating in this study! If you are willing to be contacted for further information or to schedule an interview, please provide your preferred contact details below:

a. Email Address: _____

*Your contact information will be used solely for the purposes of this study and will remain confidential. You may choose to withdraw your contact information at any time by contacting the researcher.

APPENDIX C: Participant Recruitment Email and Letter

Subject: How do you understand, enact and sustain your commitments to teaching about/for global justice?

Dear _____,

As you may know, I'm working on my dissertation in the Curriculum and Teaching Department at Teachers College, Columbia University. I would like to invite you to participate in my study.

What:

- My study is about (1) the ways that global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understand what it means to teach for global justice, (2) how these understandings shape their roles, responsibilities and practices, (3) how these teacher educators cultivate a sense of agency in their student teachers to teach for global justice and, (4) if and how these teacher educators sustain themselves in their practice.

Who:

- The participants are any US university-based teacher educators who identify as global majority.

When:

- This study asks you to provide three course artifacts from your practice that can be submitted at any point between October - December 2024 and to participate in 2-3 one-to-one interviews (approx. 45 minutes each) between October - December 2024. You will also be asked to attend 1-2 group interviews (approx. 90 minutes each) with me, the researcher, and 3-4 other participants from late January 2025 - February 2025.

How:

- I will meet to tell you more about submitting course artifacts, such as a poem, image, essay, collage, link, video clip, syllabus, or other materials that represent your understanding of what it means to teach teachers about/for global justice. These artifacts should reflect how these understandings shape your role, responsibilities, and practices, how you cultivate a sense of agency in your student teachers around global justice, and/or how you sustain yourself in your practice of teaching teachers about/for global justice.
- Write a short commentary explaining the context of each artifact, where it falls within your course/ academic year, as well as what student responses were to the artifact.
- I will welcome your submissions digitally.

We will meet with other fellow participants online to discuss themes.

The contents of the course artifacts, individual interviews and whole group interviews will be transcribed and recorded for research purposes and may be used in academic papers, publications, and presentations at conferences. Your contributions will only be used with your consent and your name and personal information will be assigned a pseudonym, along with anyone that you happen to mention in our discussion. Please note that your artifacts and salient parts of your one-to-one interviews will be made available to other participants during the whole group interview(s). Thank you very much for your consideration—I hope you will participate in this study. If you have any questions or would like more information, please feel free to contact me by email: rr2840@tc.columbia.edu.

Rozena Raja
Doctoral Candidate
Dept. of Curriculum and Teaching
Teachers College, Columbia University

APPENDIX D: Consent for Participation in Interview Research

Protocol Title: How Do Global Majority Teacher Educators Committed to Global Justice Understand, Enact & Sustain their Commitments to Teaching About/for Global Justice?

Principal Researcher: Rozena Raja, MEd

rr2840@tc.columbia.edu

INTRODUCTION You are invited to participate in this research study called "A Qualitative Inquiry into How Global Majority Teacher Educators Committed to Global Justice Understand, Enact & Sustain their Commitments". You may qualify to take part in this research study because **you are a** (a) US university-based teacher educator* (b) committed to global justice, (c) with at least three years of experience, (d) who teaches about critical globalization** in their college teaching, and (e) identifies as global majority***. Approximately 5 people will participate in this study and it will take approximately 5 hours of your time to complete over the course of 2-3 one-to-one interviews and 1-2 whole group meetings.

WHY IS THIS STUDY BEING DONE? Studying how global majority teacher educators commit to and sustain their dedication to global justice provides insights into the diverse perspectives and strategies employed to address systemic inequalities in education, fostering greater understanding and support for inclusive and equitable teaching practices. This research seeks to illuminate the challenges and successes of global majority educators in promoting justice-oriented pedagogies, informing efforts to enhance teacher preparation programs and educational policies with a focus on social justice on a global scale.

WHAT WILL I BE ASKED TO DO IF I AGREE TO TAKE PART IN THIS STUDY?

You will be asked to submit (1) *THREE* course artifacts (via Google forms) a poem, image, essay, collage, link, video clip, syllabus, or other materials that represent your understanding of what it means to teach teachers about/for global justice. These artifacts should reflect how these understandings shape your role, responsibilities, and practices, how you cultivate a sense of agency in your student teachers around global justice, and/or how you sustain yourself in your practice of teaching teachers about/for global justice **along with a description of what it is and why you are sharing it.**

You will be asked to participate (via Zoom) in 2-3 individual interviews (approximately 45 minutes each) where we will engage with the course artifacts as well as discussions about how you understand global justice, how these understandings shape your roles, responsibilities and practices, how you cultivate a sense of agency in your students as well as if and how you sustain yourself in your commitments to teaching about/for global justice. You will be asked to contribute to the discussions, the zoom chat and/or the Miro board throughout the meetings.

If you decide to participate, I, the primary researcher, will individually interview you, ask that you participate in whole group interviews with your peers, and complete a survey.

You will also be asked to participate in 1-2 whole group interviews run by me, the primary researcher where global majority teacher educators like yourself will discuss their experiences teaching about/for global justice. You will be asked to contribute to the discussions, the zoom chat as well as Miro boards throughout the meetings. These will be **video-recorded, and the video recordings will be deleted after it is transcribed and analyzed.** Everyone will be asked not to discuss what is being spoken about outside of the group but it is impossible to guarantee complete confidentiality. Each of the 1-2 whole group interviews will take about 90 minutes.

All of these procedures will be done on Zoom and via Miro Board.

(Note: ***Your identity will be known to other focus group participants and the researcher(s) cannot guarantee that others in the group will respect the confidentiality of the group. As a researcher, I ask that you will keep all comments made during the focus group confidential and not discuss what happened during the focus group outside the meeting.***

WHAT POSSIBLE RISKS OR DISCOMFORTS CAN I EXPECT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? This is a minimal risk study, which means the harms or discomforts that you may experience are not greater than you would ordinarily encounter in daily life while taking routine physical or psychological examinations or tests. However, there are some risks to consider. You might feel embarrassed to discuss problems that you experienced in your life or in your teacher education career. You do not have to answer any questions or share anything you do not want to talk about. You can stop participating in the study at any time without penalty. You might feel concerned that things you say might get back to your supervisor. Your information will be kept confidential.

The primary researcher is taking precautions to keep your information confidential and prevent anyone from discovering or guessing your identity, such as using a pseudonym instead of your name and keeping all information on a password protected computer and locked in a file drawer.

WHAT POSSIBLE BENEFITS CAN I EXPECT FROM TAKING PART IN THIS STUDY? There is no direct benefit to you for participating in this study. Participation may benefit the field of teacher education to better understand the best way to prepare K-12 teachers as well as the best ways to support global majority teacher educators committed to global justice.

WILL I BE PAID FOR BEING IN THIS STUDY? You will not be paid to participate. There are no costs to you for taking part in this study.

WHEN IS THE STUDY OVER? CAN I LEAVE THE STUDY BEFORE IT ENDS? The study is over when you have completed the narrative artifact submission, the course artifact submission, and the focus group sessions. However, you can leave the study at any time even if you have not finished.

PROTECTION OF YOUR CONFIDENTIALITY The primary researcher will keep all written materials locked in a desk drawer in a locked office. Any electronic or digital information (including audio (and video) recordings) will be stored on a computer that is password protected. What is on the audio recording will be written down and the audio recording will then be destroyed. There will be no record matching your real name with your pseudonym.

For quality assurance, the study team, the study sponsor, and/or members of the Teachers College Institutional Review Board (IRB) may review the data collected from you as part of this study. Otherwise, all information obtained from your participation in this study will be held strictly confidential and will be disclosed only with your permission or as required by U.S. or State law.

HOW WILL THE RESULTS BE USED? The results of this study will be published in journals and presented at academic conferences. Your identity will be removed from any data you provide before publication or use for educational purposes. Your name or any identifying information about you will not be published. This study is being conducted as part of the dissertation of the primary researcher.

CONSENT FOR VIDEO RECORDING - Video recording is part of this research study. You can choose whether to give permission to be recorded. If you decide that you don't wish to be recorded, **you will not be able to participate** in this research study.

_____I give my consent to be recorded

_____

Signature

_____I **do not** consent to be recorded

_____

Signature

WHO MAY VIEW MY PARTICIPATION IN THIS STUDY

(Choose the appropriate description below for your research)

___I consent to allow video-recorded materials viewed at an educational setting or at a conference outside of Teachers College, Columbia University

_____

Signature

___I **do not** consent to allow video-recorded materials viewed outside of Teachers College, Columbia University

_____

Signature

OPTIONAL CONSENT FOR FUTURE CONTACT

The primary researcher may wish to contact you in the future. Please initial below to indicate whether or not you give permission for future contact.

The researcher may contact me in the future for other research opportunities:

Yes _____ No_____

Initial Initial

The researcher may contact me in the future for information relating to this current study:

Yes _____ No_____

Initial Initial

WHO CAN ANSWER MY QUESTIONS ABOUT THIS STUDY?

If you have any questions about taking part in this research study, you should contact the primary researcher, Rozena Raja, MEd at rr2840@tc.edu.

If you have questions or concerns about your rights as a research subject, you should contact the Institutional Review Board (IRB) (the human research ethics committee) at 212-678-4105 or email IRB@tc.edu or you can write to the IRB at Teachers College, Columbia University, 525 W. 120th Street, New York, NY 10027, Box 151. The IRB is the committee that oversees human research protection for Teachers College, Columbia University.

PARTICIPANT'S RIGHTS

- I have read the Informed Consent Form and have been offered the opportunity to discuss the form with the researcher.
- I have had ample opportunity to ask questions about the purposes, procedures, risks and benefits regarding this research study.
- I understand that my participation is voluntary. I may refuse to participate or withdraw participation at any time without penalty.
- The researcher may withdraw me from the research at the researcher's professional discretion.

- If, during the course of the study, significant new information that has been developed becomes available which may relate to my willingness to continue my participation, the researcher will provide this information to me.
- Any information derived from the research study that personally identifies me will not be voluntarily released or disclosed without my separate consent, except as specifically required by law.
- Identifiers may be removed from the data. De-identified data may be used for future research studies, or distributed to another researcher for future research without additional informed consent from you (the research participant or the research participant's representative)
- I should receive a copy of the Informed will Form document.

My signature means that I agree to participate in this study:

Print name: _____

Date: _____

Signature:_____

APPENDIX E: Individual Interview Questions

Research Questions*: How do these global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understand global justice? How do their understandings shape their responsibilities, roles and practices? How do they cultivate a sense of agency in their student teachers around global justice? How do they, if they do, sustain themselves in their practice?*

These semi-structured one-to-one interviews will take place via Zoom. Each participant will be interviewed 2-3 times for approximately 45 minutes each time.

Main Questions

How do you understand what it means to teach about/for global justice in your practice of teacher education? How do you define global justice? How do these understandings shape your roles, responsibilities and practices? How do you cultivate a sense of agency around global justice in your student teachers? How do you sustain yourself, if you do, in your commitments to global justice?

On Miro Board: Share excerpts from participant course artifacts/ survey responses. Use them as "diffractive lenses" to explore the following questions. (Have participants respond orally, via chat and via Miro board.)

Course artifacts: Please share the context and story of each artifact. Where does it fit in within your academic year/ course schedule? How did students respond?

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Discussion Questions:

1. Defining Global Justice: How do you personally define global justice, and how does this definition shape your teaching practice?

2. Personal Commitment and Experiences:What specific experiences or events have shaped your commitment to global justice in education?

3. Contextual Issues: In your context, what pressing global justice issues should be addressed through education?

4. Positionality and Sociopolitical Realities: How does your positionality as a global majority teacher educator affect your understanding and approach to global justice?

5. Curricular Integration: Can you describe how you integrate global justice themes into your curriculum and pedagogical practices?

6. Engaging Students: How do you engage your students in discussions about power, privilege, and oppression in a global context, and how do you foster a sense of agency in them?

7. Overcoming Resistance: How do you address and overcome resistance from students or institutional structures when discussing global justice?

8. Reflection and Self-Care: What role does reflection play in your teaching practice, and how do you maintain your own sense of agency and motivation in your work on global justice?

9. Challenges and Strategies: What are the most significant challenges you face in maintaining your commitment to global justice, and what tools and/ or strategies do you use to address these?

10. Vision for Teacher Educators: How do you envision the role of teacher educators in shaping future advocates for global justice?

APPENDIX F: Whole Group Interview Protocol

Research Questions: *How do these global majority teacher educators committed to global justice understand global justice? How do their understandings shape their responsibilities, roles and practices? How do they cultivate a sense of agency in their student teachers around global justice? How do they, if they do, sustain themselves in their practice?*

These 1-2 whole group interviews will take place via Zoom for approximately 90 minutes each.

Main Questions: How do you understand what it means to teach about/for global justice in your practice of teacher education? How do you define global justice? How do these understandings shape your roles, responsibilities and practices? How do you cultivate a sense of agency around global justice in your student teachers? How do you sustain yourself, if you do, in your commitments to global justice?

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I. Preview

On miro board[7], I will share individual participant responses from the survey and individual interviews to the questions: How do you define global justice? What does this look like in your practice? How can teacher education for global justice be practiced sustainably? I will explain that we will come back to this and add/modify at the end of the session as a closing activity.

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[7] Note: While Miro was originally proposed as a collaborative tool during the group interview, it was not used in the final implementation of the study.

II. **Miro Interview Excerpts & Course Artifact Gallery Walkthrough**[8] (each participant, in turn) Please share the context of this artifact. How does it fit into your syllabus? What were students' responses to it?

1. Discussion (Participants will be invited to respond verbally, in chat or on the miro board) Please share the context and story of your artifact.
2. Everyone else: Share questions, comments, reactions etc in chat and/or miro board.
3. Repeat for each participant.

III. **Discussion** (Participants will be invited to respond verbally, in chat or on the miro board)

1. What surprises or new perspectives have emerged for you after hearing each other's definitions of global justice?

2. How do your approaches to teaching global justice complement or differ from each other, and what can be learned from these differences?

3. What opportunities do you see for collaboration among teacher educators committed to global justice, based on the shared challenges you face?

4. How do you collectively navigate the tension between addressing global issues and being responsive to local contexts in your teaching?

5. How does engaging in this group discussion shape your thinking about how teacher educators can better support one another in sustaining a commitment to global justice?

6. What shared strategies or practices have emerged from this conversation that might help you all address institutional resistance more effectively?

[8] Note: The gallery walkthrough was part of the original protocol but was not conducted in the final group interview.

7. How do you see the role of collective action among educators in shaping the future of global justice education?

8. What are the common emotional or personal challenges you face in this work, and how can a community of practice help in navigating these challenges?

9. Have any of your practices evolved based on interactions or insights from your peers in this group? If so, how?

10. What collaborative efforts or shared resources might help amplify the impact of global justice education across your different contexts?

IV. **Closing Activity: Discussion**

1. What themes, patterns, motifs did you notice through the entire group interview? Explain.

2. We will revisit individual responses to the following questions: How do you define global justice? What does this look like in your practice? How can teacher education for global justice be practiced sustainably?

3. We will end by collectively making a list of 7-10 “Principles of Practice” for teaching about/ for global justice in ways that make the practice sustainable for global majority teacher educators.