

SOURCE 1

The article “‘Diversity as a Verb’ in Preservice Teacher Education: creating spaces to challenge the profiling of young children” is an article that addresses the discriminatory profiling of children in schools. The article was written by Susi Long, Dinah Volk, and Julia Lopez-Robertson who are all professors in early education, Mary Jade Haney is an author as well and works in an elementary school in South Carolina. This paper’s focus is centered around the discrimination and profiling of children from their classmates, teachers, and parents. This concern is very serious, since the years including early education tend to make a lasting impact on children, and it is where many kids find their influences and role models. The education system has a very important task; to prepare the youth for the contemporary world. Without addressing the ongoing war against racism children won’t be able to fully understand what some of their actions mean, and by using the word ‘diversity’ as a verb it creates a positive action. The authors use this as one of their main points of the paper, and they believe that opening the discussion of prejudice and racism with young children will help them comprehend the issue quicker. The article was based around an experiment where student-teachers were able to spend several hours with a particular child over the course of six weeks. The children who were paired with the students were all in some way a minority to the classroom by race or ethnicity, and or by a language barrier. ‘Visitas’ became ways for the student-teachers to spend time with the children outside of the classroom and it included the children’s sporting events, dinners with their family, religious services at mosques, synagogues and churches, as well as language schools and even birthday parties. The goal was to connect the preservice teacher with the child to create a bond that was stronger than any unconscious or conscious bias. At the end of the experiment, most of the preservice-teachers expressed that they had learned a lot about their child’s life as a minority in their community, as well as learning to recognize and examine their own attitude and mindset toward certain people.

This paper was one of the first articles I read regarding the issue of prejudice and profiling against children in early education and it helped me form some of the main points that I strongly believe in. The article gives firsthand accounts from different individuals working with children who belong to a minority group and with their focus on diversity, it makes it a great informative piece regarding the current state that these children are in as well as the varying mindsets of our preservice teachers. Since this was the introduction article to this topic for me, I’ve expanded my canon starting with the ideas and concepts I picked up from this article. It has a strong connection to the second article I found that is another firsthand account from the point of view of experienced teachers working with a curriculum that includes learning about diversity and bias. This article also highlights many great examples of the unconscious bias that creates prejudice attitudes, it’s especially important that these are noted because of the realization that is made by many of the student-teachers that they were actually ignorant to their own prejudice until they examined their own actions. This became the main takeaway from the article for me because so many people who claim to be against racism do not realize their actions are part of the problem, and the idea to instill mindfulness should be recognized as an important practice in every field, not just in the education system.

Long, Susi, et al. “‘Diversity as a Verb’ in Preservice Teacher Education: Creating Spaces to Challenge the Profiling of Young Children.” *Contemporary Issues in Early Childhood*, vol. 15, no. 2, 2014, pp. 152–164., doi:10.2304/ciec.2014.15.2.152.