"Are We There Yet?" An Examination of Teacher Diversity Within Canada's Physical and Health Education Community

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Abstract

The purpose of this research was to examine teacher diversity within Canada's Physical and Health Education (PHE) community. In particular, we gathered information on gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and racial identity of teachers within the PHE community and compared this information to the Canadian population and the Canadian teacher population. Overall, the proportion of teachers within the PHE community from historically underrepresented groups were disproportionately low in comparison to the Canadian population and the Canadian teacher population on most diversity features. Our results showed similarity between participants' sexual orientation and the Canadian population. Further, results showed similarity between teachers who identified as Métis and visible minority to that of the Canadian teacher population. The paper concludes with a discussion on 'calls to action' to achieve a fuller match between Canada's diverse populations and teachers within the PHE community.

Keywords: racial identity; gender identity; equity; teacher education

Résumé

Le but de la présente recherche est de décrire la diversité enseignante dans le domaine de l'éducation physique et de la santé (EPS) au Canada. Plus spécifiquement, nous avons collecté des informations sur l'identité de genre, l'orientation sexuelle, l'invalidité, l'identité raciale auprès de ce groupe d'enseignants et comparé cette information à la population canadienne et à la population enseignante dans son ensemble. Globalement, la proportion d'enseignants en EPS provenant de groupes historiquement sous représentés est disproportionnellement bas comparée à la population canadienne et à la population enseignante dans son ensemble sur la plupart des caractéristiques de diversité. Nos résultats montrent que l'orientation sexuelle des participants est similaire à celle de la population canadienne. De plus, les résultats montrent également une similarité entre les enseignants qui s'identifient comme Métis et provenant d'une minorité visible comparé à la population canadienne. Nous concluons par une discussion sur des « appels à l'action » pour en arriver à une meilleure concordance entre la population canadienne et le groupe d'enseignant d'EPS en terme d'invalidité, de race, et de culture.

Mots clés : identité raciale; identité de genre; équité; formation à l'enseignement.

Introduction

Many Canadian communities are home to the most multicultural, multiethnic, and multilingual schools in the world. Student diversity is attributed to the current increases in immigration (Statistic Canada, 2017a). The 2016 Canadian census found that 2.32 million school-age children in Canada were foreign-born (first generation) or had at least one foreign-born parent (second generation). This corresponds to 37.5% of the total population of children, adolescents, and young adults in Canada. The majority (more than three-quarters) belong to a visible minority group. Of these, almost half came from the Asia and Pacific Region. A further 25% came from Africa and the Middle East (Statistics Canada, 2016a). Even more compelling is that there are clear indications that the population in Canada will continue this upward trajectory and become increasingly diverse over the next decades (Statistics Canada, 2017a). Based on these projections, the immigrant population in Canada will represent between 39.0% and 49.0% of the population in 2036 (Statistics Canada, 2017a). While immigration is a significant influence on the diversity of Canadian classrooms, the Indigenous population also represents 4.6% and is one of the fastest growing segments of the population (Statistics Canada 2016). Furthermore, diversity of student populations in nonvisible ways, such as dis/ability, gender non-conformity, and sexual orientation is also on the rise. For example, approximately one million people identify as part of the 2SLGBTQ+ (Two-Spirit, lesbian, gay, bisexual, trans, queer plus) communities, accounting for 4% of the total population aged 15 years and older (Statistics Canada, 2019). In addition, 6.2 million Canadians—approximately one in five of the population in this country—are living with some form of disability. Of that number, over 540,000 are youth (Statistics Canada, 2017b).

Despite these dynamic demographic shifts of children, adolescents, and young adults in Canada, the demographics of the teaching profession have not significantly altered (Dlamini & Martinvoic, 2007; Ryan et al., 2009). In the Teacher Diversity Gap in Ontario report (2014), it was identified that while racialized minorities represented 26% of the population, only 9% of elementary teachers identify as racialized (Turner Consulting Group, 2014). More telling is that post-secondary pre-service teacher education programs enrollment continues to be predominantly white, able-bodied, middle-class, and mono-lingual females (Childs et al., 2010; Cho & DeCastro-Ambrosetti, 2005; Janzen & Cranston, 2016). In other words, the teaching profession has not and is not "keeping pace" with the dynamic changes in student population (Carter Andrews et al., 2019; Ryan et al., 2009).

The case for diversity-representation is not new. For many years, scholars and educational organizations have researched and recognized the inequity and oppression of diverse groups within the educational system and pushed for system change that increases the number of diverse teachers (e.g., National Collaborative on Diversity in the Teaching Force, 2004; Solomon, 1997; Toronto District School Board, 2007). They make their case based on the strength of symbolic representation (Ryan et al., 2009), relationships and kinship (Villegas & Lucas, 2004), pedagogical strategies (Solomon, 1997) and student outcomes (Santoro, 2007). Despite this long-standing research, we are not there yet and the impact of this teacher diversity gap continues decades later unchanged (Janzen & Cranston, 2016).

Studies have demonstrated inequitable assessments and treatment of racialized students (Dee, 2004; Eddy & Easton-Brooks, 2011). For example, a study found that teachers in Ontario were twice as likely to assess a White student as "excellent" than a Black student on their report

card—even when those students had the same standardized test scores (James & Turner, 2017). Furthermore, racialized students are 2.5 times more likely than White students to be streamed into non-academic "applied" programs in Toronto—in turn affecting everything from graduation rates to post-secondary prospects (James & Turner). At the same time, the Ontario Human Rights Commissions 2017 report noted that racialized students receive harsher treatment or punishment than their White peers for similar behaviour (Ontario Human Rights Commission, 2017). These inequitable assessments of potential and harsher punishments stay with the adolescents and young adults through their academic careers and are closely connected to entry into post-secondary education programs. The University of Toronto's Toronto District School Board (TDSB) Cohort Analysis, for example, showed that those with a gifted exceptionality, those never suspended, and those with low levels of absenteeism had higher entrance rates (Brown et al., 2019). A second important finding was that students who described themselves as Aboriginal, Latin American, or Black had noticeably lower entry rates into post-secondary education programs (Brown et al., 2019).

Several scholars have made the argument that when teachers and students share the same identities it creates social ties and kinship that can help mediate learning, resilience, confidence, and perseverance (Alexakos et al., 2011; Ryan et al., 2009). Research on students with disabilities find that they are lacking the institutional support and role models required to access and benefit from the same quality of education as their fellow students (Canadian Human Rights Commission, 2017; Wills, 2017). Furthermore, Ryan et al. (2009) found that teachers with the same lived experiences as students can generate improvement in attendance, school satisfaction, sense of relevance at school, and lower dropout rates among students. More studies further link teacher diversity with an increase in enrolment in post-secondary schooling and a decrease in the probability of dropping out (James et al., 2017). The impact of having teachers who share the same racial and cultural features creates a sense of belonging, self-worth, self-efficacy, and acceptance that affects the wellbeing of children, adolescents, and young adults (Shizha, 2020). This is of critical importance in these unprecedented times of unrest, where health insecurity is of significance.

A number of researchers cite the importance of role models with the same lived experience as students (Bariso, 2001; Brown, 1999; Solomon, 1997; Villegas & Lucas, 2004). The theoretical explanations for why same-lived experience teachers have positive educational benefits for students includes the symbolic impact of representation (Goldhaber et al., 2019; Villegas & Lucas, 2004; Villegas et al., 2012). Racial minority, differently abled, and 2SLGBTQ+ students are not seeing their identities, histories, or experiences meaningfully reflected in schools through everyday curriculum or in authority positions. Research shows that when they do, it is most often done through superficial representation and pedagogy rather than everyday practice (Suzuki, 2006; Villegas & Irvine, 2010). Classrooms are not only a context in which academic knowledge is constructed but also a setting in which values, assumptions, and expectations are learned (Villegas & Irvine, 2010). Teachers that reflect the students' lived experiences can teach from a shared lens and can relate subject content to real life for diverse students (Ryan et al., 2009). For instance, educators with disabilities can help to dispel stereotypes about people with disabilities (Wills, 2017). Goldhaber et al. (2019) explains there may be important cultural differences between teachers of different backgrounds in regard to instructional strategies and interpretation of student behaviours. Representation also sends a message to both diverse and non-diverse students that people of racial and ethnic minority backgrounds, sexual orientation, and dis/ability are successful and contributing members of society (Irvine, 1988; Villegas & Irvine, 2010). For example, in

education settings where diverse teacher/administrator representation is not present, students may learn that this inequity is the norm (Ryan et al., 2009).

Another strong reason for increasing teacher diversity is that teachers from diverse backgrounds can engender unique relationships with students and the communities in which they live. Building strong relationships with and investing time in community in this way can honour the interconnectedness of the school community and contribute to the building of a healthy school (Canadian Healthy School Alliance, 2021). Schools with diverse representation provide a unique opportunity to dispel myths of inferiority that children, adolescents, and young adults may have internalized from their socialization within other contexts outside of the school (Villegas et al., 2012; Waters 1989). Diversifying the pool of educators to match the vibrant and dynamic diverse classrooms will help integrate and raise traditionally marginalized voices within modern curricula (Bava et al., 2019; Sanger, 2020). Taylor and Peter (2011) examined students experiences of homophobic and transphobic incidents within Canadian schools and measures taken to combat negative experiences. The authors reported that 2SLGBTQ+ matters were only covered in one course (minimizing any impact) and suggested that related concepts need to be implemented more widely across subject matter (Taylor & Peter, 2011). Further, the hidden curriculum subtly and invisibly operates from a Eurocentric, gender normative, and able-bodied lens and is typically taught from this perspective as well. This Eurocentric, gender, and able-bodied normative dominance can perpetuate itself in the education system through the omission and denial of different worldviews, pedagogies, and scholarship in resources, materials, curricular content, and the construction of "othered" identities. Teachers from equity-deserving groups can bridge this gap and offer numerous strengths, contributions, and insights to enhance the learning of all students and the community as a whole (Santoro, 2007).

In 2020, Physical and Health Education Canada (PHE Canada) committed to addressing this diversity gap. PHE Canada is Canada's national physical and health education (PHE) teacher association and it fills a critical role in supporting both the K–12 as well as the post-secondary education systems through advocacy, research, knowledge exchange, and teaching and learning support. PHE Canada's vision is that all children and youth in Canada lead active, healthy lives. Grounded in its passion for PHE, the PHE Community, its academics, educators, and related social and health experts, PHE Canada is dynamically positioned to support physical and health literacy, resilience, and the wholistic growth and development of children, adolescents, and young adults in Canada. While it must be noted that increasing teacher diversity will not resolve the systemic barriers and opportunity gaps that are linked to the disproportionately negative outcomes that children, adolescents, and young adults from communities that have been oppressed face throughout their K–12 learning journeys, it is an important step in creating the space to foster change and social justice.

This examination of teacher diversity within Canada's PHE Community realizes a commitment to equity, diversity, and inclusion. It is rooted in the significant body of literature that affirms that a match between the lived experiences of teachers and students is a critical factor in improving student outcomes and offers wholistic benefits to students, the school community, and the education system (Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020; Ogbu, 2002; Ryan et al., 2009; Villegas & Irvine, 2010).

To that end, this manuscript is the result of PHE Canada seeking to understand the representation of teachers in the PHE community (composed of both generalist and specialist PHE teachers) in Canada. It then further identifies the differences and similarities between the teachers within PHE Community and the Canadian population using Canadian Census data and other

Canadian population data. This is to examine whether teachers in the PHE community matches, is similar or dissimilar to Canada's population at large. Specifically, our purpose was twofold: (a) to examine the gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and racial identity of elementary and secondary teachers in the PHE community; and (b) to compare elementary and secondary teachers in the PHE community to the Canadian population and the Canadian teacher population. The findings of this study will help many gain an understanding of the diversity of Canadian teachers within the community of PHE. This information is offered with honesty and humility as a catalyst for a cascade of investments across the school ecosystem and is of particular interest to Ministries of Education, superintendents, principals, teachers, pre-service teacher education institutions, and the wider community. Each has an interconnected role to play within the school community. Each holds invaluable information, influence, and support which co-exist and interplay and which will be necessary if we are to shift schools to be places where every child, adolescent, and young adult learns and thrives equitably.

Method

Data Collection

In the Fall of 2020, PHE Canada secured an Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion (EDI) Consultant to audit PHE Canada's organizational structure, policies, programming, and content. The audit identified several key directions for advancement to build organizational capacity of the PHE Board, staff, partnership development and resource sharing. An important piece of this audit was the development and distribution of the 'PHE Community Member Survey' to better understand the community and ensure PHE Canada is responsive, inclusive, and meeting the needs of its community members. Questions within the survey focused on equity, diversity, and inclusion, brand and role of PHE Canada, programming and membership, and impact of COVID-19. The data used in this study are derived from the questions focused on diversity.

To understand the diversity of the PHE Canada teacher community we analyzed questions in the survey that were focused on four features: (a) gender identity, (b) sexual orientation, (c) disability, and (d) racial identity. Four questions were asked to understand these features and participant responses were used within the analysis for this research. These questions were: (a) What is your current gender? (b) What is your current sexual orientation? (c) Are you a person that identifies having a disability? and (d) What racial group best describes you? Participants were able to select an answer from a list of responses and/or self-describe/prefer not to respond. Participants were also asked about their profession ('What category best describes you?'), in which they could choose from a list of professional categories (e.g., elementary teacher, professor, researcher), location of their school community, and other demographic information including age and the province/ territory in which participants reside. The survey was distributed in both English and French. Information collected in the survey on gender, sexual orientation, disability, and race is detailed in Table 1.

The survey questions were prepared based on the recommendations of PHE Canada's Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion committee. This committee is responsible for helping to drive decision-making around PHE Canada policies and procedures as they relate to leading and contributing to just, affirming, and equitable learning environments. Their decision to include the demographic features as set out by Statistic Canada's Visible Minority and Population Group Reference Guide (Statistics Canada, 2016a) was important as it allowed for comparison with multiple data sets included in this manuscript. One exception from the Reference Guide was type

of disability questions (e.g., mobility, sensory, mental health) which were provided by the Active Living Alliance for Canadians with a Disability. Finally, the survey questions were reviewed against Ontario's Data Standards set forth by the Ontario Anti-Racism Directorate.

Table 1
Diversity Information Collected in Online the PHE Community Member Survey

Features	Question	Available Responses
Gender Identity	What is your current gender?	a. Cisgender Man b. Cisgender Woman c. Non-Binary d. Transgender Man e. Transgender Woman f. Prefer not to respond g. Prefer to self-describe:
Sexual Orientation	What is your current sexual orientation?	a. Heterosexual b. Lesbian c. Gay d. Bisexual e. Queer f. Prefer not to respond g. Additional orientation not listed:
Disability	Are you a person that identifies having a disability? Please check all that apply.	a. Mobility b. Sensory c. Mental health d. Environmental sensitivity e. Intellectual/developmental f. Communication g. Prefer not to answer h. Other:
Race	What racial group(s) best describes you? Select all that apply.	a. Black (African, Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian descent) b. East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese, and/or other East Asian population descent) c. First Nations d. Métis e. Inuit f. Latino/Latina/Latinx (Latin America, Hispanic descent) g. Black (African, Afro-Caribbean, African-Canadian descent) h. East Asian (Chinese, Korean, Japanese, Taiwanese, and/or other East Asian population descent) i. First Nations j. Métis

        k. Inuit
        l. Latino/Latina/Latinx (Latin America, Hispanic descent)
        m. Middle Eastern (Arab, Persian, West Asian descent, e.g. Afghan, Egyptian, Iranian, Lebanese, Turkish, Kurdish, and/or other Middle Eastern population)
        n. South Asian (Indian, Pakistani, Bangladeshi, Sri Lankan, Indo-Caribbean, and/or other South Asian population)
        o. Southeast Asian (Filipino, Vietnamese, Cambodian, Thai, Indonesian, and/or other Southeast Asian descent)
        p. White (European descent)
        q. Prefer not to respond
        r. A racial group not listed above:

Procedures

Ethical procedures for this research adhered to PHE Canada's Responsible Conduct of Research policy which states all scholarly activities strive to follow the best research practices honestly, accountably, openly, and fairly in the search for and distribution of knowledge. Participant consent was implied by the participant completing the survey. Prior to the completion of the survey, participants were informed of the purpose of the survey, length of time expected to complete the survey, and use of the survey results. The survey was administered online and was sent through multiple channels (e.g., PHE Canada's membership listserv and social media) to the PHE community. The survey was also shared with organizations and councils that are associated with and supported by PHE Canada to disseminate among their networks (i.e., PHE Canada's Research Council and Council of Provincial and Territorial Physical and Health Education Teacher Associations). The survey was built and hosted on SurveyMonkey, an online survey and data analysis service from June 18, 2021 to June 29, 2021. Respondents were limited to one survey submission. Respondents were anonymous throughout their participation and provided no identifying or contact information.

Participants

The survey was completed by 270 respondents and included individuals from across the whole school community, such as educational leaders, parents, students, teacher educators, and beyond, including recreation, industry, community health, and government collaborators. Data were cleaned manually, and as the purpose of this study was to examine the diversity of Canadian Teachers within the PHE Canada community, only participants who reported their profession as 'elementary school teacher' and 'secondary school teacher' were included in this research. After filtering for respondents who did not identify as a teacher, respondents who lived outside of Canada, and respondents who had incomplete data, 200 participants were included in this research. Although a small sample size, the data collected from the participants provides valuable information to start to a conversation on teacher diversity within the PHE community.

Analysis

Descriptive analysis was conducted to examine the diversity (as determined by the four diversity features) of the respondents and compare our data to that of the Canadian population and Canadian teacher population. Descriptive analysis characterizes a phenomenon, describing trends and variations in populations and plays a critical role in the scientific process in educational

research (Loeb et al., 2017). Percentages were calculated to understand the diversity of teachers within the PHE community and used to compare the diversity of respondents to that of the Canadian population on all four features. We further compared gender identity and racial identity of respondents to Canada's teaching population. This analysis was only conducted for these two features, as data on the other features (sexual orientation and disability) within Canada's teaching profession was not available.

Diversity of Respondents

To understand the diversity of survey respondents, percentage of respondents were calculated for each of the four features: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and racial identity. We further analyzed the data by grade level taught to examine diversity among elementary and secondary teachers. For racial identity, analysis was also conducted by province/ territory to examine racial identity across Canada.

Diversity of Respondents Compared to Canadian Population and Canadian Teacher Population.

To compare respondents to the Canadian population, we retrieved data from seven sources: (a) Survey of Safety in Public and Private Space (Statistics Canada, 2019), (b) Back to School…by the Numbers (Statistic Canada, 2014), (c) Statistics Canadas' Statistical Portrait of Canada's Diverse LGBTQ2+ Communities (2021), (d) Statistics Canada Census (2018), (e) Canadian Survey of Disabilities (2017), (f) Statistics Canada Census (2016), and (g) Annual Report to Parliament 2020 Indigenous Services Canada from the 2016 Census. Specifically, we compared each feature to one or more of the data sources to determine if respondents matched the Canadian population. We were unable to solely use Canadian census data as Statistics Canada does not collect data on all features within the PHE Community Members Survey.

Gender Identity. For gender identity, we compared our data to the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Space (Statistics Canada, 2019) and Back to School… by the Numbers (Statistic Canada, 2014). Survey of Safety in Public and Private Space is the first large-scale, nationally representative survey in Canada to use statistical standards on the transgender population in Canada (Statistics Canada, 2019). However, the report only provided data on transgender men and transgender women combined and does not provide information on the Canadian population that identify as non-binary, cisgender woman, and cisgender man. To align with this data, and allow for comparison, we also display our data as a combined percentage representing respondents who identified as transgender. To compare gender identity to the Canadian teacher population the Back to School…by the Numbers (Statistics Canada, 2014) report was used. This report provided data on the number of Canadian teachers in Canada that identify as cisgender woman and cisgender man.

Sexual Orientation. Data on respondents' sexual orientation was compared to the Statistics Canada's Statistical Portrait of Canada's Diverse LGBTQ2+ Communities (2021) and Statistics Canada (2018). The portrait on LGBTQ2+ is drawn from the 2018 Statistic Canada survey cycle. The Portrait (2021) presents their data as both total population and by age cohort under 25 (30.0%) and over 65 (7.0%). No data was found with the 25–64 age cohort to match PHE Community Survey data. To align the survey and the Canadian data, we subtracted those under 25 and over 65 to allow for comparison. The data from Statistics Canada is displayed as one number for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, Two-Spirit, or those who identify with another non-binary gender or minority sexual identity (LGBTQ2+); so we also display our data as a combined

percentage. Further, we were unable to locate data on the Canadian population that identify as heterosexual by age cohorts; Statistics Canada does not collect data on sexual orientation in the 2016 and 2021 census.

Disability. The Canadian Survey of Disabilities (2017) was used to provide the percentage of the population that identify as having a disability. This report presented an estimation of Canadians who have one or more disabilities that limited them in their daily activities. The report does not report data on type of disability. Rather, it presents data on Canadians living with a disability. To align with the Canadian data, we also display our data as one percentage representing respondents having one or more disabilities.

Racial Identity. The Statistics Canada Census (2016) and the Aboriginal Peoples in Canada: Key Results from the 2016 Census were used to compare the racial identity of respondents to that of the Canadian population and the Canadian teacher population. We further analyzed racial identity by province/territory to better understand diversity across areas of Canada. Within the Annual Report to Parliament 2020 Indigenous Services Canada from the 2016 Census, it was noted that 44% of First Nations, Metis, and Inuit were under the age of 25. Because no notation was made for those over 65, we have used the full population statistics. This means that drawing a comparison is difficult.

Proportion of Difference

With the aim of this research being to understand the diversity of teachers within the Canadian PHE community and how it compares to the diversity to the Canadian population, we examined the difference between the respondents and data of the Canadian population and the Canadian teacher population. The percentages were used to measure how the PHE Community Member Survey data sample matched, was similar, or dissimilar to the Canadian population data points.

To determine the proportion of difference between the PHE Community Member Survey data and data of the Canadian population, we described data as: 'match' defined as <0.5% difference, 'high similarity' defined as <1.0% difference, and 'low similarity' defined as >1.0% difference. Additionally, positive and negative symbols were used to reflect where the percentage difference between the survey respondents were above (+) or below (-) the Canadian data sources. For example, if data from the PHE Community Member Survey was 2.0% lower than that of the Canadian population on a diversity feature, the proportion of difference would be -2.0% and therefore would have low similarity.

Results

The results section provides a description of the participants including age, province or territory of residence, and location of their school community (i.e., urban or rural). Following the description of respondents, the results are presented by demographic feature: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and racial identity.

Description of Respondents

The PHE Community Member Survey respondents (n = 200) were elementary school teachers (n = 130; 65.0%) and secondary school teachers (n = 70; 35.0%) from across Canada. Respondents ranged in years of age from 25 to 65+, with the majority of respondents in the age range of 35–54 years (n = 125; 62.5%). Respondents represented 10 provinces/territories across

Canada and described their school community as urban (n = 85; 38.5%), suburban (n = 63; 31.5%), rural (n = 46; 23.0%), and remote (n = 6; 3.0%). Refer to Table 2 for descriptive analysis of respondents. Refer to Table 2 for the descriptive analysis of respondents.

Table 2

Descriptive Analysis of Respondents

Characteristic			
Age	Professional Category		
	Elementary n (%)	Secondary n (%)	Total n (%)
25–34	21 (16.1%)	13 (18.6%)	34 (17.0%)
35–44	33 (25.4%)	24 (34.3%)	57 (28.5%)
45–54	43 (33.1%)	25 (35.7%)	68 (34.0%)
55–64	27 (20.8%)	8 (11.4%)	35 (17.5%)
65+	4 (3.1%)	0 (0.0%)	4 (2.0%)
Prefer not to respond	2 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	2 (1.0%)
Province or Territory of Residence			
Alberta	10 (7.7%)	9 (12.8%)	19 (9.5%)
British Columbia	10 (7.7%)	6 (8.6%)	16 (8.0%)
Manitoba	36 (27.7%)	13 (18.6%)	49 (24.5%)
New Brunswick	1 (0.8%)	2 (2.9%)	3 (1.5%)
Newfoundland and Labrador	1 (0.8%)	1 (1.4%)	2 (1.0%)
Northwest Territories	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (0.5%)
Nova Scotia	8 (6.1%)	1 (1.4%)	9 (4.5%)
Nunavut	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)
Ontario	44 (33.8%)	26 (37.1%)	70 (35.0%)
Prince Edward Island	1 (0.8%)	2 (2.9%)	3 (1.5%)
Quebec	14 (10.8%)	5 (7.1%)	19 (9.5%)
Saskatchewan	5 (3.8%)	4 (5.7%)	9 (4.5%)
Yukon	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)

Note: n = number of respondents. Percentages may not add up to 100 because of rounding.

Gender Identity

The analysis showed that 1.0% (n = 2) of the respondents identified as non-binary and 0.0% identified as transgender. Approximately 82% (n = 163) of the respondents identified as cisgender men and women. We compared our findings to data within the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Space (2021) and while no data existed on percentages of people who identify as non-binary, it showed that 0.24% of the Canadian population identify as transgender. PHE Community Member Survey respondents had a -0.24% difference; therefore, they had a high similarity to the transgender populations in Canada. This analysis is unreliable due to the low sample size (i.e., no respondents identified as transgender).

In comparison, 68.0% of Canadian teachers identified as women and 23.0% as men (Statistics Canada, 2014), the data from the PHE Community Member Survey showed an almost equal distribution of women (39.5%) and men (42.0%) teachers within the PHE community. PHE Community Member Survey respondents who identified as cisgender men had a +19.0% difference compared to the Canadian teacher population; therefore, had a low similarity to the Canadian teaching profession. PHE Community Member Survey respondents who identified as cisgender women had a -28.0% difference compared to the Canadian teacher population; therefore, had a low similarity to the Canadian teaching profession as well. Refer to Table 3 for the comparison of survey respondents to the Canadian population.

Table 3

Gender Identity of Respondents Compared to Canadian Population

Gender Identity	Respondents n (%)			Canadian Population* %	Percent Difference %	Canadian Teacher Population	Percent Difference %
	Elementary n (%)	Secondary n (%)	Total n (%)				
Non-Binary	0 (0.0%)	2 (2.8%)	2 (1.0%)	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
Transgender Woman	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0.24%*	-0.24%	Not available	Not available
Transgender Man	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)					
Cisgender Woman	47 (36.1%)	32 (45.7%)	79 (39.5%)	Not available	Not available	68.0%***	-28.0%
Cisgender Man	58 (44.6%)	26 (37.1%)	84 (42.0%)	Not available	Not available	23.0%***	+19.0%
Prefer not to respond	16 (12.3%)	5 (7.1%)	21 (10.5%)	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
Prefer to self-describe	9 (6.9%)	5 (7.1%)	**14 (7%)	Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available

*Responses were based on the population of Canada aged 15 and older. Respondents indicated their assigned sex at birth was different from their current gender (neither cisgender man nor cisgender female).
**Of the 14 respondents who self-described their gender identity, self-description included: "male" (n = 5), "woman" (n = 4), "man" (n = 3), "female" (n = 1), and "I don't know what this means" (n = 1).
***This data also includes professors and assistants, college and other vocational instructors.

Sexual Orientation

The results of the survey showed 2.5% (n = 5) of the respondents identified as lesbian, gay, bisexual, queer, or puls (pansexual; asexual) and 88% of the participants identified as heterosexual (n = 176). Statistics Canada (2018) reported 4.0% of the Canadian population aged 15 and older identified as LGBTQ2+. As PHE Community Member Survey respondents are 25 years of age and older and people under the age of 25 account for a disproportionately large share (just under a third [30%]) of the 2SLGTBTQ+ population (Statistics Canada, 2021) those 15–24 were removed. Similarly, those over 65 (7.0%) were also removed (Statistics Canada, 2021). The comparable age-matched number becomes 2.5%. PHE Community Member Survey respondents show a +0.5% percentage and a high similarity to the Canadian population. Refer to Table 4 for the sexual orientation of survey respondents in comparison to the Canadian population.

Table 4

Sexual Orientation of Respondent Compared to Canadian Population

Sexual Orientation	Respondents n (%)			Canadian Population %	Percent Difference %
	Elementary n (%)	Secondary n (%)	Total n (%)		
Lesbian	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.4%)	6 (3.0%)	2.5%	+0.5%
Gay	2 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)			
Bisexual	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)			
Queer	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.4%)			
Puls (Pansexual, Asexual)	2 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)			
Heterosexual	114 (87.7%)	63 (90.0%)	177 (88.5%)	Not available	Not available
Prefer not to respond	12 (9.2%)	5 (7.1%)	17 (8.5%)	Not available	Not available
Additional orientation not listed	*2 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	*2 (1.0%)	Not available	Not available

*Of the two respondents who indicated sexual orientation was not listed, they self-described their sexual orientation as pansexual (n = 1) and asexual (n = 1). These were included in the puls total/percentage to align with the Canadian population data from Statistics Canada displayed as one number for lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, Two-Spirit, or those who identify with another non-binary gender or minority sexual identity (LGBTQ2+).

Disability

Survey results showed 3.0% (n = 6) of respondents reported having a disability. Among those respondents that reported having a disability, the respondents selected mental health (n = 3; 1.5%), mobility (n = 2; 1.0%), and intellectual/developmental (n = 1; 0.5%). The majority of respondents indicated they did not have a disability (n = 189; 94.3%). According to the Canadian Survey on Disabilities (2017), 20% of Canadians identify as having one or more disabilities. Based on our findings, our participants have a -17.0% percentage difference and a low similarity with Statistics Canada data on disability. Refer to Table 5 for comparison of survey respondents to the Canadian population.

Table 5

Disability of Respondent Compared to Canadian Population

Disability	Respondents n (%)			Canadian Population* %	Percent Difference %
	Elementary n (%)	Secondary n (%)	Total n (%)		
Mobility	2 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (3.0%)	20.0%	-17.0%
Sensory	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)			
Environmental Sensitivity	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)			
Intellectual/ developmental	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)			
Communication	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)			
Mental Health	2 (1.5%)	1 (1.4%)			
I do not have a disability	121 (93.1%)	68 (97.1%)	189 (94.3%)	80.0%	-14.3%
Prefer not to respond	4 (3.1%)	1 (1.4%)	5 (2.5%)	Not available	Not available
Other	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	Not available	Not available

Note: The number of respondents (n) and percentages do not add up to 100 because respondents were able to select more than one disability.

*Responses were based on the population of Canada aged 25 to 64.

Racial Identity

The racial identities of respondents included, East Asian (2.0%), South Asian (1.5%), South East Asian (1.5%), Black (1.0%), Middle Eastern (0.5%), and multiple visible minorities (0.5%). Additionally, 4.5% of respondents identified as White and other identities and 86.0% as White. The data also showed that 4.6% of the respondents identified as First Nation (0.5%), Métis (3.0%), and Inuit (0.0%). PHE Community Member Survey respondents had a negative percent difference in comparison to the Canadian population across all racial identities, with the exception of Métis (+1.3%), Multiple Visible Minority (+0.2), and White (+8.3%)—which all showed a positive percent difference. Similarly, PHE Community Member Survey respondents had a negative percent difference in comparison to the Canadian teacher population on all racial identities, with the exception of Métis which showed a +0.7% difference. Refer to Table 6 for comparison of survey respondents to the Canadian Population and the Canadian teacher population.

Table 6

Racial Identity of Respondent Compared to Canadian Population and Teacher Population

Identity	Respondents n (%)			Canadian Population %	Percent Difference	Canadian Teacher Population %	Percent Difference
	Elementary n (%)	Secondary n (%)	Total n (%)				
Métis	6 (4.6%)	0 (0.0%)	6 (3.0%)	1.7%	+1.3%	1.0%	+0.7%
East Asian	2 (1.5%)	2 (2.8%)	4 (2.0%)	5.4%	-1.4%	2.4%	-0.4%
South Asian	0 (0.0%)	3 (4.3%)	3 (1.5%)	5.6%	- 4.1%	2.8%	-1.3%
Black	1 (0.8%)	1 (1.4%)	2 (1.0%)	3.5%	-2.5%	1.9%	-0.9%
First Nations	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.5%)	2.8%	-2.3%	2.0%	-1.5%
South East Asian	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.5%)	3.2%	-2.2%	0.7%	-0.2%
Middle Eastern	0 (0.0%)	1 (1.4%)	1 (0.5%)	2.3%	-1.8%	1.3%	-0.8%
Multiple visible minority*	1 (0.8%)	0 (0.0%)	1 (0.5%)	0.7%	-0.2	0.3%	+0.2%
Latinx	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	1.3%	-1.3%	0.4%	-0.4%
Inuit	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0 (0.0%)	0.0%**	0.0%	0.0%**	0.0%
White and other identity	6 (4.6%)	3 (4.3%)	9 (4.5%)	***Not available	Not available	Not available	Not available
White	112 (86.2%)	60 (85.7%)	172 (86.0%)	77.7%	+8.3%	90.0%	-6.0%

Note: The percentages are over 100%. Statistics Canada tables compare visible minority identity to White as a separate calculation; the comparisons only allow for visible minority and non-visible minority. Indigenous identity (First Nations, Métis, and Inuit) compared to White is presented as a separate table; the comparisons only allow for Indigenous identity and non-Indigenous identity. Therefore, the percentages for Canadian population and Canadian teacher population in the table presented will be imperfect.

*Multiple visible minorities included respondents who identify as more than one visible minority identity (who identify as two or more visible minority identities).

**Please note the percentages are too small to round to a whole number at two decimal points.

***Statistics Canada does not categorize by White and other identity.

Racial Identity by Province

     Survey results showed 6.0% (n = 12) of respondents self-identified as Black, East Asian, South East Asian, South Asian, Middle Eastern, First Nation, or Métis. Statistics Canada (2016) census data showed 22.3% of the population identified as racialized. Therefore, the data from respondents and Canadian population data indicate low similarity (-4.1%) between those that identify as racialized.

     The data was also compared to the total racialized population in each province (Statistics Canada, 2016b). The highest percentage of racialized survey respondents resided in British Columbia (n = 2; 12.5%) and Ontario (n = 7; 10.0%), followed by Alberta (n = 1; 5.3%) and Quebec (n = 1; 5.3%). In comparison to Canadian census (2016) data, respondents had a negative low similarity to all provinces. Similarly, in comparison to the Canadian teacher population, respondents showed a negative low similarity to all provinces.

Table 7
Racial Identity of Respondent Compared to Canadian Population and Teacher Population by Province

	Respondents By Province n (%)	Respondents Who Identified as Racialized* n (%)	Statistics Canada Census Data: % of Population Who Are Racialized %	Percent Difference	Statistics Canada: % of Teachers Who Are Racialized %	Percent Difference
Canada	**200 (100%)**	**12 (6.0%)**	**22.3%**	**-16.3%**	**10.1%**	**-4.1%**
Alberta	19 (9.5%)	1 (5.3%)	23.5%	-18.2%	8.4%	-3.1%
British Columbia	16 (8.0%)	2 (12.5%)	30.3%	-17.8%	14.5%	-2.0%
Manitoba	49 (24.5%)	0 (0.0%)	17.5%	-17.5%	6.3%	-6.3%
New Brunswick	3 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	3.4%	-3.4%	0.8%	-0.8%
Newfoundland and Labrador	2 (1.0%)	0 (0.0%)	2.3%	-2.3%	0.7%	-0.7%
Nova Scotia	9 (4.5%)	0 (0.0%)	6.5%	-6.5%	3.0%	-3.0%
Ontario	70 (35.0%)	7 (10.0%)	29.3%	-19.3%	13.9%	-3.9%
Prince Edward Island	3 (1.5%)	0 (0.0%)	4.8%	-4.8%	1.4%	-1.4%

Quebec	19 (9.5%)	1 (5.3%)	13.0%	-7.7%	5.8%	-0.5%
Saskatchewan	9 (4.5%)	0 (0.0%)	10.8%	-10.8%	2.5%	-2.5%
Northwest Territories	1 (0.5%)	**1 (100%)	9.6%	+90.4%**	4.6%	+95.4%**

*To be consistent with Statistics Canada reporting, the data was filtered for Indigenous peoples and members who are mixed White with non-White.
**The data is skewed (only one respondent for Northwest Territories).

Among the respondents, four identified as First Nation, Métis, and Inuit with representation in four Canadian provinces: Ontario, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, and Quebec. In comparison to provincial data, respondents showed a negative low similarity for Ontario (-1.6%), Manitoba (-16.0%), and Saskatchewan (-4.9%). For Quebec, PHE Community Member Survey respondents had a positive low similarity (+3.3%), showing a higher representation of First Nation, Métis, and Inuit in Quebec than Canadian population data.

Table 8
First Nation, Métis, and Inuit (FNMI) Respondents Compared to Statistics Canada Data by Province

Province	Respondents By Province n (%)	Respondents Who Identified as FNMI** n (%)	Statistics Canada Census Data: % of Population* %	Percentage Difference
Ontario	70 (35.0%)	1 (1.4%)	3.0%	-1.6%
Manitoba	49 (24.5%)	1 (2.0%)	18.0%	-16.0%
Saskatchewan	9 (4.5%)	1 (11.1%)	16.0%	-4.9%
Quebec	19 (9.5%)	1 (5.3%)	2.0%	+3.3%

*Responses were based on the population of Canada aged 15 and older. While 44% of the FNMI population is under 25 and outside of the PHE Community Member Survey respondent age range a true comparison is not possible.
***To be consistent with Statistics Canada reporting, the data was filtered for respondents who only selected First Nation, Métis, or Inuit; those that selected an additional racial identity were not included.

Discussion

In this study, we examined the diversity of elementary and secondary teachers within the Canadian PHE community. Our findings were compared to the Canadian population on four features: gender identity, sexual orientation, disability, and racial identity and the Canadian teacher population on two features: gender identity and racial identity. Efforts to diversify the teaching profession should be viewed as critical to the school experiences and educational outcomes of all students. The need for this work is more pressing as population demographic continue their upward trajectories. If Canada is to have greater diversity in the teaching profession, we need to first understand teacher representation of equity-deserving groups. Based on our findings, the proportion of teachers from historically underrepresented groups within the PHE community was disproportionately low in comparison to the Canadian population and the Canadian teacher

population on most features. Our findings did show a positive similarity to the Canadian population on sexual orientation (+0.5%) and a positive similarity of respondents who identified as Métis (+1.3%) and Multiple Visible Minority (+0.2) in comparison to the Canadian teacher population.

The results of this research indicated that 2.0% of the respondents identified as non-binary with 81.2% identifying as cisgender. Although we reported high similarity to the transgender population of Canada (-0.24%), none of our respondents identified as transgender. In comparison to the Canadian teacher population (Statistics Canada, 2014) which indicates that 68.0% of Canadian Teachers identified as women and 23.0% as men (including professors and post-secondary instructors), the PHE Community Member Survey demonstrated an almost equal distribution of cisgender women (39.5%) and cisgender men (42.0%) teachers within the PHE community. Notably, there is a shortage of male teachers in education (Gosse, 2011; Statistics Canada, 2014) and a call to counterbalance the overwhelming number of female teacher representation in schools has been warranted (e.g., Gosse, 2011). However, the representation of female PHE teachers is critical as gender norms (re)produced through physical education often privilege certain forms of gender, particularly hegemonic masculinities (Gard, 2006). Historically, women have had to push the margins within physical education, overcoming resistance within a traditionally male dominated field (Szerdahelyi & Robène, 2019). As stereotypes of physical educators are prevalently typecast as male, Caucasian, and masculine in behaviour and physique, female teacher representation may help shift notions of masculinity and femininity in movement contexts for students and help to transform the deeply rooted conception of gender within physical education (Vertinsky, 1992). Although, much work is needed within our field on gender stereotypes and those whose gender identities do not correspond to a dualist notion, our findings in this study suggest that within the Canadian PHE community there is an equal representation of female and male teachers.

The sexual orientation of our respondents demonstrated a positive high similarity (+0.5%) to that of the Canadian population. While there is limited information on sexual orientation in the teaching profession, teachers play a vital role in creating safe spaces for 2SLGBTQ+ students in schools (Travers & Reed, 2021). 2SLGBTQ+ youth face frequent forms of bullying and victimization at school (Aragon et al., 2014; Hong & Garbarino, 2012; Kosciw et al., 2012). The physical education context presents further challenges for children and youth in the 2SLGBTQ+ communities. Change rooms, undressing, gender-segregated classes, and binary gender discourses about body movement and physical activity environments are particularly distressing for students (Devís-Devís et al., 2018; Joy et al., 2021; Sykes, 2011). Representation alongside pedagogical methods, education, and awareness can challenge gender and explore the way gender influences student experiences in physical education; importantly, creating space for students to participate free of physical threats as well as verbal and emotional abuse (Joy et al., 2021; Landi, 2017). Devís-Devís et al. (2018) found that heteronormative contexts strongly determine transgender students' experiences in physical education, concluding a new physical education should be conceived by considering the subjective positions lived by those within 2SLGBTQ+ communities. Further, Berg and Kokkonen (2021) explored teacher and 2SLGBTQ+ student experiences about discrimination and problematic practices in physical education and how equality might be improved. Students recommended teacher familiarity with diversity in gender and sexuality, reduced gender stereotyping, and the use of inclusive language (Berg & Kokkonen, 2021). Teachers who identify as members of 2SLGBTQ+ communities can act as allies for students and help students negotiate their gender and sexual identity (Travers & Reed, 2021). With high proportions of Canadians under 25 identifying as members of 2SLGBTQ+ communities (Statistics

Canada, 2021) we need to ensure our teaching population remains a match to the increasing number of young people in 2SLGBTQ+ communities and we continue to support and educate all teachers on 2SLGBTQ+ matters and supporting practices.

A small body of research has examined teachers with disabilities in Canada, with most research focused on the experiences of teachers with a disability (Ferri et al., 2001; Neca et al., 2020), and limited research has focused on role-modeling and the impact of representation on students. Our findings indicated a small percentage (6.0%) of survey respondents reported a disability. Among respondents reporting a disability, mental health (1.5%), mobility (1.0%), and intellectual/developmental (0.5%) were identified as 'type' of disability. In comparison to national data, which reported 20% of Canadians identify as having one or more disability, teachers within the PHE community with a disability are underrepresented. Low representation of teachers with a disability in the community of PHE was anticipated, as physical education has been seen as an ableist subject area that perpetuates able-bodied participation and hegemonic discourses in movement and physical activity context (Fitzgerald & Stride, 2012; Penny et al., 2017). However, if we aim to have students with disabilities lead active lifestyles, representation can serve as a way of contributing to better experiences and discourse around disability. Neca and colleagues (2020) suggested that teachers with disabilities can act as important role models in schools and be key contributors in building inclusive education systems. By challenging the dominant discourse around disability, particularly within physical education, students and members of the school community may be educated regarding the stigma, attitudes, and treatment towards individuals with disability. Without representation of teachers with disabilities, students will not see themselves reflected in PHE classes.

Our findings are consistent with previous research (e.g., Turner Consulting Group, 2015), showing the racial diversity of Canadian teachers does not reflect that of the Canadian population. The racial identity of our participants across the 10 provinces represented showed lower representation in comparison to the Canadian population (-16.3%) and the Canadian teacher population (-4.1%), with the exception of Métis (+1.3) and Multiple Visible Minority (+0.2%). Specifically, 6.0% of the respondents identified as non-White in comparison to 10.1% of teachers in Canada. This may indicate that teachers in the PHE community are less racially diverse than the Canadian population and teachers across all subject areas. Further, both our data (6.0%) and the data on Canadian teachers (10.1%) shows lower percentages of non-White teachers in comparison to the Canadian population (22.3%; Statistics Canada, 2016c), suggesting that the teaching population as a whole does not reflect Canada's population. This is of concern as there is an increased priority for immigrants and new Canadians to move to Canada (Government of Canada, 2022). Setting up our education system to be prepared to welcome children from these families will be critical for ensuring that these students see themselves in their teachers when they enter the Canadian school system.

A promising finding from our research was the positive low similarity of respondents who identified as Métis to the Canadian population (+1.3%) and a positive high similarity to the teacher population (+0.7%). Indigenous peoples are the fastest growing population in Canada, with a population that grew by 42.5% between 2006 and 2016. Indigenous peoples are also the youngest population in Canada: about 44% were under the age of 25 in 2016. Although, our results are promising in exceeding a 'match' of representation for teachers in the PHE community identifying as Métis, we must continue efforts to counter the marginalization that First Nations, Métis, and Inuit and racialized people face to occupy positions of influence in education (Ryan et al., 2009). Based on our research and that of others, and our understanding of the importance of role models

from the same lived experience as students (Bariso, 2001; Brown, 1999; Solomon, 1997; Villegas & Lucas, 2004), we must continue to strive to bridge this racial gap to help improve student outcomes and experiences at school and within the education system (Ogbu, 2002; Kozleski & Proffitt, 2020; Ryan et al., 2009; Villegas & Irvine, 2010).

Identity representation of teachers and shared lived experiences between teachers and students can have positive educational benefits for students. Shared identities and same-lived experiences of teachers and students creates social connections that support learning, resilience, confidence, and perseverance. Students can form connections with their teachers who may have similar life experiences but whose identities may or may not be immediately visible or known to either the teacher and/or student. The results of this research highlight that the identities of teachers and students alike may not be visible or known (e.g., sexual orientation, mental health, disability). Educators are challenged to create and maintain supportive and accepting school communities for all students.

Strengths and Limitations

This study is the start to a conversation on teacher diversity in Canada in the field of PHE. To our knowledge, little research has been conducted on diversity of teachers in the PHE community. Moreover, the study examined gender identity, sexual orientation, and disability of teachers, areas which are limited within education literature. However, there are four main limitations that are important to mention. First, we had a small sample size especially for a national study and not all teachers in the PHE community were sampled in the survey. These exclusions may have led to an over or underestimation of the prevalence. Therefore, it is important that we do not make strong conclusions from our data but rather use our data as a springboard to more significant conversations between those conducting research on diversifying the PHE teaching community and other community members (e.g., post-secondary institutions, school district leaders, policy makers).

Second, no direct question was asked regarding participating teachers' subject area(s). As such, findings from this study are not necessarily representative of teachers who teach physical education and/or health education, rather, represent teachers within the PHE community. Third, we compared our data to the Canadian population. However, to accurately examine the teacher diversity gap, comparisons between teachers and the students should be examined. Given the benefit of closing the teacher diversity gap, future studies should evaluate the diversity of Canadian teachers in comparison to the demographic of our student population. To develop targeted teacher recruitment strategies in Canada, and within specific Canadian provinces/territories, it would be useful to understand teacher diversity in comparison to the rapidly changing student demographic.

Lastly, due to the limited available national data, it was difficult to compare our findings to the Canadian population and the Canadian teacher population. For example, we were unable to locate data on the Canadian teacher population for sexual orientation and disability. Further, some data sources used for comparison were not aligned with survey data. For instance, the Survey of Safety in Public and Private Space (2021) data used to compare gender identity was based on the population of Canada aged 15 and older, whereas our respondents were 25 years to 65+. This limits our understanding of the diversity gap and therefore hinders our ability to take targeted action towards reducing the underrepresentation of teachers in equity-deserving groups.

Conclusion and Calls to Action

Student health and well-being are identified priorities across Canada's educational landscape. With such tremendous natural and global crises, it is more important than ever to ensure that students are given the skills, tools, and support that they need to connect and be well. Research shows that quality PHE has incredibly positive impacts on the mental, physicals and social development of students. At the same time, Canadian schools are under pressure to improve student-learning outcomes in numeracy and literacy. Schools, however, should not be places where students go to pursue achievement in only these two areas. Schools should be nurturing environments that develop the whole child, including their social, emotional, physicals and mental well-being. As such, trained physical and health educators are already a tremendous and essential asset within a healthy school environment and the findings in this manuscript point to areas that should receive additional attention from both K–12 education and post-secondary to enhance it even further.

Overall, there was some similarity between PHE Community Member Survey results in comparison to Canadian population and Canadian teacher population data sets that is encouraging (i.e., positive similarity on sexual orientation and respondents who identified as Métis and Multiple Visible Minority). It is also critical to note however, that <0.1 as a marker of high similarity still represents <2,320 children, adolescents, and young adults. This is, still far too many who will not benefit from a more diverse teaching workforce. Therefore, it is important to not conflate a similarity with an optimal result. Other factors within the results showed areas for growth. The need for more attention to achieve a fuller match between Canada's dis/ability, racially, and culturally diverse populations and educators in the PHE community came through consistently in the results. Achieving a fuller match and retaining that match between the teacher and student diversity and the diversity of the Canadian population will, as evidenced in this manuscript, be meaningful. Villegas et al. (2012) recommended regularly measuring teacher demographics and sharing data, policies, and practices across research communities. This article offers this examination of the diversity of teachers within specific subject areas (i.e., PHE community). It is critical to note, however, that researchers caution against simply increasing teacher diversity and viewing teachers from equity-deserving groups as a 'fix' to the problems in the education system without considering the historical and contemporary context that complicates educators' roles in school alone (Haddix, 2017; Pabon, 2016). In that vein, equitable representation within the teaching profession is not a call to solve the issues in education, rather, equitable representation suggests that our profession stands to gain from a more diverse representation of teachers and educational leaders (Holden & Kitchen, 2019). This, however, will not occur without deliberate efforts (Turner Consulting Group, 2015).

To be sure, despite the wealth of research that supports this as shared in this manuscript, some critics still suggest there remains a lack of empirical studies that clearly demonstrate a correlation between students' achievement and race of the teacher (Dee, 2004; Redding, 2019). Regardless of our genuine effort to conduct this research there are a number of limitations to this study. In this spirit, we are putting forward this data to spark and highlight the need for more research and examination. Future research should consider a deeper exploration within school jurisdictions and post-secondary teacher training institutions; those explorations should employ methods that allow for analysis of causation. As well, future research should include the efficacy and effects of affirming intercultural practices and policies being put in place. With substantial increases in First Nation, Métis, and Inuit, immigrant, and 2SLGBTQ+ populations in Canada our

educational system must unlearn and relearn many of its practices in order to create the healthy and affirming work and learning spaces that will be necessary to open, welcome, and retain a more diverse workforce.

Secondly, this manuscript calls for a whole of education system response. This means that individually and collectively we need to invest energy and find the fiscal space to make sure teacher diversification throughout each step of the teachers journey to the front of the classroom is realized. This includes but in no way is limited to:

1. As diversity in the teacher workforce is to a large extent determined by the diversity of the pre-service teachers, increase the number of pre-service teachers from diverse backgrounds:
   a. Address the inequitable and disproportionately negative assessment and outcomes for students who have historically been oppressed;
   b. Increase the likelihood students entering teacher education programs represent diverse backgrounds;
   c. Investigate and address how the admission process (dis)advantages certain groups;
   d. Increase number of instructional hours dedicated to PHE across all post-secondary teacher education programs; and
   e. Ensure pre-service education and teacher placements are rich in PHE curricula inclusive of pedagogy that draws upon different world views, pedagogies, curricula, and scholarship.
2. Explore ways to hire PHE teachers from diverse backgrounds and immigration status:
   a. Invest in more trained PHE teachers per school as a means to invest in support school health and well-being;
   b. Unveil and address systemic barriers for teachers from diverse; backgrounds and immigration status; and,
   c. Explore credentialing for foreign trained educators.
3. Retain diverse teachers:
   a. Attend to in-service and pre-service teacher sense of belonging, affirmation, and place within the profession free from microaggressions and discrimination;
   b. Be open and welcome intercultural mentorship provided between trained, qualified colleagues and community members; and
   c. Increase awareness, knowledge, understanding, and skills of professional development opportunities for school system leaders and those tasked with hiring.

It is our hope that this manuscript and calls to action will spark and provide a basis for gaps in student achievement and outcomes to be closed and overall positive experiences for all students equitably. As more research and affirming practices are shared, we can build on each other's work and begin to shift schools to be places where every child, adolescent, and young adult learns and thrives.[1]

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[1] To support professional learning in equity, diversity and inclusion in PHE, consider the following resources: PHE Canada Learning Centre; 2SLGTBQ+ Inclusion in School-Based Physical Activity Programs; Welcoming & Engaging School Physical Education Opportunities for Girls; Return to School 2021: Equity, Diversity and Inclusion.

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