A compendium of publications base on multilevel and mixed method analyses on student perceptions of their social realities:

The role of curriculum and teaching strategies

Ann E. Wilson-Daily

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A compendium of publications based on multilevel and mixed method analyses on student perceptions of their social realities

The role of curriculum and teaching strategies

Ann E. Wilson-Daily

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DOCTORAL DISSERTATION
Universitat de Barcelona
December, 2020

A compendium of publications based on multilevel and mixed method analyses on student perceptions of their social realities: The role of curriculum and teaching strategies

WILSON-DAILY

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ABSTRACT

This thesis brings together five accepted, and one submitted, articles, along with a seventh in process of completion, all written and revised during a second doctoral candidacy. Quantitative, qualitative and mixed methods were used to delve into student perceptions of their socio-educational realities, regarding the role of curriculum and the influence of different teaching strategies related to the teaching of social studies or teacher training. In some articles, responses concerning the questions proposed within the studies were taken into account in conjuncture with sociodemographic variables, through multilevel modeling. In other studies with smaller sample sizes mixed methods approaches were used. Some articles compare and contrast teacher and student perspectives. Articles are organized into groups of two or three as they correspond to funding bodies and, when relevant, follow a chronological order of publication. Anonymous reviewer feedback is included and discussed in relation to the final article versions.

Keywords: social studies teaching strategies, compendium of publications, multilevel modeling, mixed methods analyses, curriculum.

RESUM

Aquesta tesi com a compendi de publicacions reuneix cinc articles acceptats i un presentat, juntament amb un setè en procés de redacció, tots set escrits i revisats durant la realització d'una segona tesi doctoral. S'han emprat mètodes quantitatius, qualitatius i mixtos per aprofundir en les percepcions de estudiants sobre les seves realitats socioeducatives, pel que fa al paper del currículum i la influència de les diferents estratègies docents relacionades amb l'ensenyament socials de les ciències socials o la formació del professorat. En alguns articles, es van tenir en compte les respostes a les preguntes proposades en els estudis en conjuntura amb variables sociodemogràfiques, mitjançant modelització multinivell. En altres, que conten amb mostres més petites, es van utilitzar mètodes mixtos. Alguns articles comparen i contrasten les perspectives dels professors i dels estudiants. Els articles s'organitzen en grups de dos o tres, ja que aquestes agrupacions corresponen als mateixos organismes de finançament i, quan és rellevant, l'ordre dels articles dins de la tesi segueix un ordre cronològic de publicació. S'inclouen i es posa en context els comentaris dels revisores i revisors anònims en relació amb les versions finals dels articles acceptats.

Paraules clau: didàctica de les ciències socials, compendi de publicacions, models multinivell, anàlisis de metodologia mixta, currículum.

RESUMEN

Esta tesis como compendio de publicaciones reúne cinco artículos aceptados y uno presentado, junto con un séptimo en proceso de redacción, los siete escritos y revisados durante la realización de una segunda tesis doctoral. Han sido empleados métodos cuantitativos, cualitativos y mixtos para profundizar en las percepciones de las y los estudiantes sobre sus realidades socioeducativas, en cuanto al papel del currículum y la influencia de las diferentes estrategias docentes relacionadas con la enseñanza de las ciencias sociales y la formación del profesorado. En algunos de los artículos se han tenido en cuenta las respuestas a las preguntas propuestas en los estudios en coyuntura con variables sociodemográficas, mediante modelización multinivel. En otros, que cuentan con muestras más pequeñas, se utilizaron métodos mixtos. Algunos artículos comparan y contrastan las perspectivas del profesorado y de los y las estudiantes. Los artículos se agrupan en número de dos o tres ya que estas agrupaciones corresponden a los organismos de financiación. Además, cuando es relevante el orden de los artículos dentro de la tesis sigue un orden cronológico de publicación. Se incluyen y se ponen en contexto los comentarios de las y los revisores anónimos en relación con las versiones finales de los artículos aceptados.

Palabras clave: didáctica de las ciencias sociales, compendio de publicaciones, modelos multinivel, análisis de metodología mixta, currículum.

To Marc
and David

~

To my esteemed and talented coauthors,
especially Markus, Richard and, of course, Maria,
who also has acted as my second dissertation supervisor
All three of you have been key mentors every step of our journey.

~

To Xavi my new academic dad.
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~

To all those who participated in data collection for the projects
corresponding to the articles contained here; often
a tedious and seemingly, at times, thankless task.

~

And to all my other coworkers, coauthors, and
friends who have aided and influenced me in a
multitude of ways along this long journey…

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Chapter I
INTRODUCTION

The following doctoral thesis is a compendium of publications in which myself, the doctoral candidate, has played an central role in recent years both in regard to data analysis and in writing the articles themselves (especially in regard to the five articles presented in Chapters II and III). This thesis was carried out within the doctoral program *Didàctica de les Ciències, les Llengües, les Arts i les Humanitats* of the University of Barcelona's (UB) Faculty of Education. The Faculty of Education and the UB designated a **minimum of three JCR and/or Scopus articles** at least accepted for a thesis to be considered as a Compendium of Publications (see Universitat de Barcelona, 2019).

As you will see in the following pages, **this minimum has been more than fulfilled as 5 articles (A1, A2, A3, B1, and C2, included in Chapters II, III, and IV of this thesis) have been either published (3) or accepted for publication (2)**. A further article (C2, included in Chapter IV) has been submitted to the *Cambridge Journal of Education* and is pending review. One final article (B2, Chapter III) is under preparation for its submission in February of 2021 and is included in its current draft form.

I understand that soon, modifications to these requirements in presenting a doctoral thesis as a compendium of publications will be less demanding. This makes sense since, as I have learned first-hand, revision periods can be lengthy, especially in the case of higher-ranked journals in which my co-authors and myself aspired to publish that seem to have much more rigorous review processes. Thankfully, this has been done, for the most part, successfully. Luckily, in my case this thesis is a second thesis, and I could pursue other aspects of my professional-academic career as my coauthors and I awaited

the results of, lengthy, and in the case of article A1 I would argue, a arduous revision process (see section 2.6, Chapter II).

1.1. Why opt for a thesis as a compendium of publications?

My undergraduate studies and true academic passion lie in the area of Social Studies Education and related fields. However, when I first moved to Catalonia I believed that it would be easier, as a native English speaker, to pursue graduate studies in Foreign Language Education. I soon was faced with a sort of anti-native-speaker xenophobia that I did not find later on as I found a home in the area of *Didàctica de les Ciències Socials* (DCS) at the University of Barcelona. As I was finishing my first doctoral thesis, I had already found my way to my true passion in DCS. This is not a far cry from my undergraduate studies that are in history and political science.

I figured that a second doctoral dissertation could act to "kill two birds with one stone"; I would have a second thesis at the same time as I worked to seek approval or "*acreditar-me",* perhaps if I was lucky, at a Full-Professor level, through the administrative bodies of AQU (*Agència per a la Qualitat del Sistema Universitari de Catalunya*) and ANECA (*Agencia Nacional de Evaluación de la Calidad y Acreditación*). Thankfully I received the news that the AQU had granted me Full-Professor *acreditació* in July of this year (2020). ANECA had previously granted me the equivalent in 2014, but I was to find that this is irrelevant for certain UB positions and the ideal is to have AQU approval in Catalonia.

In part thanks to academic pursuits in other areas, one might argue that my academic background thus far is varied, diverse, and interdisciplinary. In his Investment Theory of (academic) Creativity, Sternberg and colleagues, affirm that diverse profiles tend to be more productive and help avoid academic entrenchment (e.g., Frensch & Sternberg, 1989, Sternberg & Grigorenko, 2001). Sternberg is not alone in arguing that diversity of experience fosters creativity and successful problem solving (see, for example, Page, 2007; Webber & Donahue 2001; Williams & O'Reilly 1998). I consider myself fortunate to have learned from a variety of different people in a diverse range of pursuits; holding different methodological viewpoints. I hope that the advantages of this come through in the articles presented in this thesis.

1.2. Journals chosen for publication and their respective impacts

The following Table 1 outlines the articles as organized in this dissertation and their corresponding journals of publication, or in the case where the article has yet to be published, submission (C1). Table 1 also details in the stage of publication or submission of each article and the JCR Impact factor at time of submission, the current 2019 JCR Impact factor, the JCR tier ranking, and the current 2019 Scimago Journal & Country Rank (SJR) for overall comparison purposes among all 7 journals.

Table 1

Journals chosen for publication and their respective impacts

Group	Article Ref.	Journal	Stage	JCR Impact factor at time of submission	Current JCR Impact factor (2019)	JCR ranking	**SJR**
A (Chp. II)	A1	*International Journal of Intercultural Relations*	Published **2018** Print Version	1.580	1.981	**2018 – Q2** 2019 – Q1	**Q1**
	A2	*Youth & Society*	Published April 2019 Online First	2.523	1.794	2018 – Q1 2019 – Q2	**Q1**
	A3	*Journal of Youth Studies*	Published July 2020 Online First	1.732	1.679	Q2	**Q1**
B (Chp. III)	B1	*Teacher Development*	Accepted 15/12/2020	- (Scopus)	- (Scopus)	ESCI[1]	**Q2**
	B2	*Teaching and Teacher Education*[2]	Preparation for submission (see Chapter III)	-	2.686	Q1	**Q1**
C (Chp. IV)	C1	*Cambridge Journal of Education*	Under review November 2020	1.421	1.421	Q3	**Q1**
	C2	*Intercultural Education*	March 2020 Selected for Special Issue, currently with Editor	- (Scopus)	- (Scopus)	ESCI[1]	**Q1**

[1] Included in the Thomson Reuters Emerging Sources Citation Index (ESCI).

[2] Backup choice for submission: *International Journal of Educational Research* (JIF: 1.794).

1.3. Overview of article authorship, titles and, when relevant, citations to date

Table 2 outlines the articles as organized in this dissertation and their corresponding authorship, titles, and (when relevant) print volume, DOI, and citations to date (2020) as measured by *WOS* and *Google Scholar*.

Table 2

Article authorship, titles and (when relevant) citations to date (2020)

Group	Article Ref.	Authorship, title, and publication details	Citations	
			Google Scholar	*WOS*
A (Chp. II)	A1	Wilson-Daily, A. E., Kemmelmeier, M., & Prats, J. (2018). Intergroup contact versus conflict in Catalan high schools: A multilevel analysis of adolescent attitudes toward immigration and diversity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, 64, 12-28. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2018.03.002	20	12
	A2	Wilson-Daily, A. E., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2019). Youth perceptions of voting participation in the midst of Catalonia's active struggle for independence. *Youth & Society.* Published online first (12 April): https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X19840965	4	0
	A3	Wilson-Daily, A. E., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2020). Who is on our side? Complexities of national identification among native and immigrant youth in Catalonia. *Journal of Youth Studie*s. Published online first (12 July): https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2020.1784856	0	0
B (Chp. III)	B1	Wilson-Daily, A. E., Feliu-Torruella, M., & Romero Serra, M. (Accepted 15/12/2020). Key competencies: Developing an instrument for assessing trainee teachers' understanding and views. *Teacher Development.* RTDE-2019-0234	-	-
	B2	Feliu-Torruella, M., Wilson-Daily, A. E., (& possibly González-Sanz, M.) 'Why don't I know this already?' Are we failing our primary teacher trainees' regarding their need to learn and apply key competencies to the classroom? Projected first submission: 02/2021	-	-
C (Chp. IV)	C1	Harris, R., Wilson-Daily, A. E., & Fuller G. 'I just want to feel like I'm part of everyone else.' How schools unintentionally contribute to the isolation of students who identify as LGBT+. Submitted to *Cambridge Journal of Education*: 11/2020	-	-
	C2	Harris, R., Wilson-Daily, A. E., & Fuller G. Exploring the secondary school experience of LGBT+ youth: An examination of school culture and school climate as understood by teachers and experienced by LGBT+ students. *Intercultural Education.* Accepted: 08/2020 for Special IAIE Issue (August, 2021).	-	-

1.4. Dissertation structure

Following this introductory chapter (Chapter I), the present thesis is divided into three groupings of articles. The articles in this thesis have been largely guided by the research grants directed by the research groups with whom I have worked with at the Universitat de Barcelona (UB) and the University of Reading (UK). Therefore, these groupings (Chapter II, III, and IV) are determined in that each group corresponds to the same financing body or bodies. Each of these central chapters begins with a general introduction to the articles, general project descriptions, and a summary of my role within the corresponding project or projects.

In the case of published or accepted articles, each is introduced through an initial section accompanied by a *perspectiva general* in both Catalan and Spanish. Following each introductory section, my role regarding the writing of the article in question is explained and modifications to the article based on reviewer comments are contextualized. This is followed by the published or accepted full version of the article. In the case of the submitted article that has not yet received reviewer feedback and the draft article the modification section is, clearly, not relevant and therefore not included.

A fifth (Chapter V) concludes this thesis by briefly summarizing the findings most relevant to the area of *Didàctica de les Ciències Socials*. Final reference and bio sections conclude the thesis.

Chapter II
ARTICLES – GROUP A

2.1. General introduction to the three Group A articles

Schools are complex organizations where the interplay between many levels of influence are relevant. As complex organizations, any large-scale analyses should focus on different levels of that organization, including the individual, classroom and school level. Because individual students are "nested" within classrooms within the same school, large-scale quantitative response data from schools can be, and arguably, *when possible, should be,* contemplated using multilevel modelling.

Large-scale data compilations, like the one under analysis in the Group A articles presented here, allow for such statistical modelling. This technique highlights these structural social aspects, like one's school, classroom, or family, as hierarchical elements that in themselves are of interest as units of study. This approach is superior to traditional multiple regression which fails to contemplate the structured influence of peers and staff with whom the students interact as variables of study. The three articles (referred to as A1, A2 and A3) that are showcased in this chapter are based on such large-scale quantitative multilevel analysis of secondary schools in Catalonia. However, like traditional multiple regression, multilevel modeling also allows for the controlling of sociodemographic variables like gender, immigrant background and socioeconomic status.

This macro vision lets us look at classrooms and schools as their own units of analyses or variables in of themselves all while controlling for the aforementioned sociodemographic variables. Therefore, in very broad strokes we can ask to what extent is there variability among classrooms and/or schools in relation to the dependent

variables under scrutiny. At times, as you will see in the articles contained in the group A section, such as article A1 and A3, the answer to the question of classroom variability is "not much". Other times, as you can observe in article A2, the variability shown in the article reveals that the teaching strategies in the social studies classrooms under analyses are key to shaping student views of their surrounding world.

All three articles are based on multilevel modeling and written under the gracious mentoring of Dr. Markus Kemmelmeier of the University of Nevada, Reno.

These three group A articles are as follows:

- **A1.** Wilson-Daily, A. E., Kemmelmeier, M., & Prats, J. (2018). Intergroup contact versus conflict in Catalan high schools: A multilevel analysis of adolescent attitudes toward immigration and diversity. *International Journal of Intercultural Relations, 64,* 12-28. https://doi.org/10.1016/j.ijintrel.2018.03.002
- **A2.** Wilson-Daily, A. E., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2019). Youth perceptions of voting participation in the midst of Catalonia's active struggle for independence. *Youth & Society.* Published online first (12 April): https://doi.org/10.1177/0044118X19840965
- **A3.** Wilson-Daily, A. E., & Kemmelmeier, M. (2020). Who is on our side? Complexities of national identification among native and immigrant youth in Catalonia*.* *Journal of Youth Studies.* Published online first (12 July): https://doi.org/10.1080/13676261.2020.1784856

These are studies derived from data drawn from the following research projects (PI. Joaquím Prats Cuevas) in which I played a central role as coordinator of the instrument for quantitative data collection (see section 2.2.). One of the grants that made this research possible is the following: "*Educación cívica en les aulas interculturales: análisis de las representaciones e ideas sociales del alumnado y propuestas de acción educativa*" (Code: 2012 ACUP 00185). This project will be translated here as: "Civic Education in the Multicultural Classroom: An analysis of the social representations and ideas of students and proposals for effective education practices". This project incorporated 22

researchers and 2 university research teams, one at the Universitat de Barcelona and a second at the Universitat de Lleida and had a duration or three years from 2013 to 2015.

Funding for a second project entitled, "*Formación sociopolítica y construcción identitaria en la Educación Secundaria. Análisis y propuestas de acción didáctica en la competencia social y ciudadana*" or, as translated here: "Socio-political Formation and the Construction of Identity in Secondary Education: An analysis of proposed education practices related to the social and civic competences" from the *Ministerio de Economia y Competitividad*", was combined with the first research project to fund data collection. This second project involved 16 researchers in three university research teams in Spain from the Universitat de Barcelona Universidad de Murcia and the Universidad de Santiago (Code: EDU 2012-37909-C03-02, UB PI. Prats Cuevas). It was also a three-year project and funding lasted from 2013 to 2015, although as you can see from the final publication dates of the articles included in this Chapter (2018, 2019, and 2020 respectively) the actual publication of studies derived from the vast data gathered during these projects spanned many more years. For more details on what constituted the research carried out within these projects consult section 2.3.

2.2. Funding project descriptions

Civic Education in the Multicultural Classroom: An analysis of the social representations and ideas of students and proposals for effective education practices was based on previous studies that show that teaching methodologies can influence student perceptions and learning levels, and given the recent six fold increase in immigration to Catalonia, we propose the following three general objectives were proposed:

1. Identify and analyze the degree of impact that the school environment has on the implication of adolescents from a diverse cultural origins and nationalities in the different forms of citizenship participation that exist, not only within the school, but also in other settings frequented by teenagers (youth organizations, sports teams, social networking websites, etc.).
2. Describe and analyze the degree of impact that school has on the perceptions and assessments of students on intercultural coexistence and citizen participation.

3. Design strategies and teaching models planned from a pedagogical paradigm, based on participation, debate, and argumentation, which would be implemented and evaluated in multicultural educational contexts, with the goal of verifying the impact generated in the appreciation of otherness and coexistence between cultures.

Emphasis was placed on the necessity of working on the implementation and evaluation of a teaching proposal to serve as an example of sound practices for the academic and educational communities.

This project was carried out base on a combination of quantitative and qualitative research techniques, and would include surveying students nested in 30 different high schools (82 classrooms) through semi-structured focus group interviews with professors, and students, and questionnaires (n = 1709 students). It was hoped that the results of this research project would help to develop strategies to promote the inclusion of immigrant background students into the school system and social context in general.

The second project, *Socio-political Formation and the Construction of Identity in Secondary Education: An analysis of proposed education practices related to the social and civic competences* combined the efforts of three university research teams at the UB, Universidad de Santiago and Universidad de Murcia. This project shared many of the basic principles of the first *RecerCaixa* research project without the base of the focus placed on immigrant background students and their integration in classrooms and schools.

We proposed that citizenship education should develop clear conceptions and build a substantive knowledge base among students. The proposed project set out to (1) explore the present curricular norms, building on existing research and professional work in the area of civic and social competencies from an interdisciplinary perspective; (2) analyze the extent to which these civic competencies are actually developed (or not) in the classrooms of eight secondary schools; (3) develop, test, and empirically evaluate, through four interconnected teams, concrete teaching materials that integrate substantive content with competencies; and (4) provide widespread dissemination in

the form of recommendations for state policymakers and educators, academic articles, workshops for both current and future teachers, and press and web diffusion.

The overall project was designed to aid educational agents in incorporating civic skills and content into concrete materials and strategies. The articles in this section take a complex multilevel view of variables and predictors relevant to the social studies curriculum and its implementation in Catalan secondary schools.

2.3. My role within the two related projects (2012 ACUP 00185 & EDU 2012-37909-C03-02)

My role within the research grants 2012 ACUP 00185 and EDU 2012-37909-C03-02 can be summed up as follows:

- **Lead role in the writing of the grant proposals for UB's participation in EDU 2012-37909-C03** and a secondary role in the grant proposal: 2012 ACUP 00185.
- **Lead coordination of the quantitative survey for both studies.** Initially, I was particularity excited about this survey because our education-focused research group was to work with a group of Sociologists at another university, and it opened up a new area of research with which I was unfamiliar. Great, I thought, more opportunities to learn from others with perspectives much different than those of the researchers in my own group. During the months that the questionnaire was under construction I was on maternity leave. When I returned I waited in anticipation, excited to see what had been done in my absence. To my surprise, very little had been accomplished during this time, despite having 22 researchers assigned to the task. Likert items were on a 3-point scale, followed by others on a 4-point scale and even others on a 10-point scale. One item that was supposed form part of a series of items on view of gender roles, was an open-ended item that asked, "Write one word about a person that you love." The item's author had assumed that students would write about a girlfriend or boyfriend. You cannot assume, I told her, that all 14-16-year olds are in a romantic relationship. No plans had been made for pilot runs of the questionnaire. I went to the PI in despair and was informed that if I wanted to improve the questionnaire and pilot it, I had a month to make improvements. I dedicated any moment I could during that month

of August, my supposed month of vacation, to improving the questionnaire. I felt that the opportunity to survey students in 30 different high schools was not something I could pass up. Luckily, the opportunity was salvaged and has resulted in publications in top-tier journals (A1, A2, and A3) as well as many more written by other members of the research team and at least one doctoral thesis I am aware of.

- **Sole person responsible for the statistical analyses of the questionnaire pilot and resulting modifications in the final instrument versions.**
- **In-person visit with Dr. Kahne Director of the Civic Education Research Group (CERG) Date: 07.2013 at Mills College, Oakland, California** (Dr. Kahne currently works at the University of California, Riverside). I was lucky to meet with Dr. Kahne and his entire research group when they were still located in the Bay Area, California. When I met him, Dr. Kahne was the Chair of the MacArthur Foundation's Youth and Participatory Politics Research Network. He and his group also shared findings on his civic and media literacy studies among secondary students. They were kind enough to **share scales and input that were later applied to the RecerCaixa (2012 ACUP 00185) and I+D+i (EDU2012-37909-C03-02) research projects**. Dr. Kahne and I have recently communicated and shared publications through the Researchgate platform. This visit was partially financed thought the RecerCaixa (2012 ACUP 00185) grant.
- **Data gathering at secondary schools** including school located in Figueres, Viladecans, Reus, Constantí, and Tarragona. In Constantí I was the only member of the research team who gathered data there. In other schools I was part of a team that simultaneously went to a number of different classrooms.
- **Authored coding guides for some of the open-ended questions.**
- **Played a part in the construction of multilevel models along with of Dr. Markus Kemmelmeier**, Director of the Interdisciplinary Social Psychology Ph.D. program; Professor of Sociology, including Sociology of Education at the University de Nevada, Reno. This was done in weekly or by weekly virtual Meeting and in the visiting stays: 07.2016 - 08.2016; 07.2017 - 08.2017; 07.2018 - 08.2018, one of which was financed by the *Programa d'ajuts per a la mobilitat internacional del professorat dels centres de la UB* (OMPI – PR 1493).

Research teams were organized into Work Packages (WPs), see Figure 1.1. My role was concentrated in WP5, were I took on a coordinated role for the construction and piloting of quantitative surveys of schools and then WP11, publishing of results in high-impact international journals.

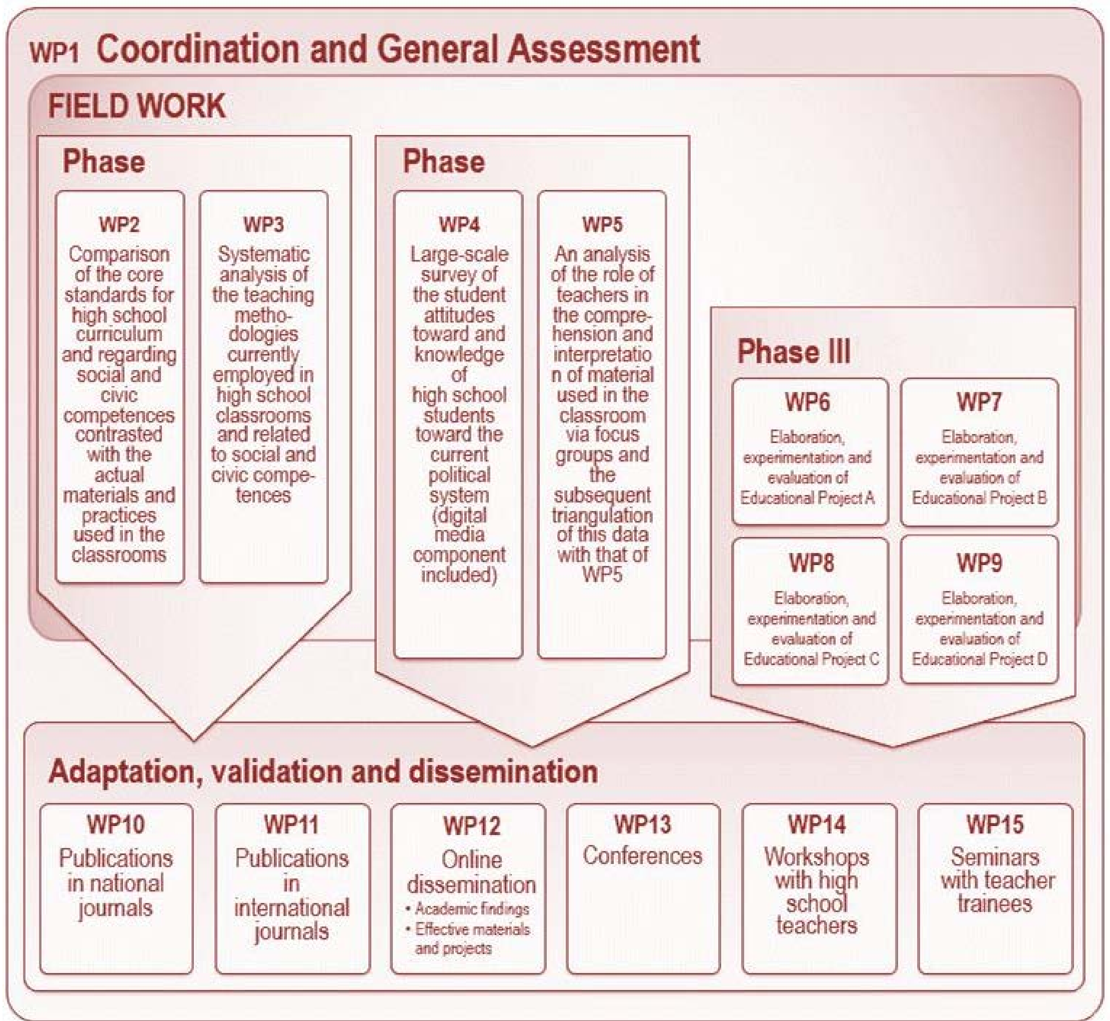

Figure 1.1. Diagram of Work packages for the UB participation in Socio-political Formation and the Construction of Identity in Secondary Education: An analysis of proposed education practices related to the social and civic competences (translated from the original Spanish version found in EDU 2012-37909-C03-02; creator/author of both versions of the figure: Ann E. Wilson-Daily).

As one might imagine, multilevel modeling is a complicated and long process and the length of the publication review process draws out the final publishing dates even more. Also, my dedication as first author of this articles was limited time-wise as my actual contract with the Universitat de Barcelona did not contemplate research;

therefore, all such writing and analysis on my part was done in my free time and not economically compensated. My contract as a researcher ended in 2014. Before that time, however, all of my research pursuits (constructing the questionnaire scales based on previous empirical studies, piloting, etc.) fell within these two projects and my contract.

2.4. Introduction to Article A1 (Wilson-Daily et al., 2018)

Catalan high schools provide interesting contexts for studying the not only social studies teaching strategies that might be more likely perceived at the school level (Level 3) especially regarding schools that have social studies teachers teaching many class groups at the same grade level, but also allows for a sort of petri-dish analysis of social interactions within the classroom (Level 2). Although tracking within the compulsory levels is prohibited by educational legislation, students are often placed in informal ability groups which may remain relatively stable not only throughout the day, but sometimes throughout the entirety of one's compulsory secondary education (Carrasco et al., 2009; Ferrer et al., 2008; Gibson, & Carrasco, 2009; Pàmies, 2006). There is little to no institutional support in many Catalan schools for contact and friendships outside of students' fixed groups. Drawing data from these particular high school settings also provides other advantages. When studying adult populations, it is

☞ Perspectiva general de l'artícle A1 (Wilson-Daily et al., 2018) en català

Les escoles d'educació secundària són organitzacions complexes on la interacció entre molts nivells d'influència és rellevant. Com a organitzacions complexes, qualsevol anàlisi amb una mostra gran s'hauria de centrar en els diferents nivells d'aquesta organització, inclosos els nivells individual, d'aula i d'escola. Aquest enfocament és superior a la regressió múltiple tradicional que no contempla la influència estructurada dels companys i del personal amb qui els estudiants interactuen com a variables d'estudi. La modelització multinivell aplicada a Wilson-Daily et al. (2018) mostra els efectes que tenen les identificacions nacionals, la freqüència de contacte, l'estatus socioeconòmic i la composició ètnica de l'aula en la xenofòbia, l'apreciació de la diversitat i les actituds envers els drets de la població immigrada entre l'alumnat d'últim curs d'educació secundària obligatòria.

Sorprenentment, malgrat que els anàlisis es va fer sobre una mostra de 30 instituts (82 grup-classes) i tenia en compte múltiples factors i nivells alhora, es va demostrar que el paper del centre educatiu era irrellevant en la determinació del grau de xenofòbia i apreciació de la diversitat i del tipus d'actitud vers els drets de la població immigrada. Aquesta troballa és desconcertant si considerem que un dels objectius secundaris de l'estudi era identificar les bones pràctiques en els instituts i professors de Ciències Socials dels quals poguessin reduir les actituds xenòfobes per fer una recerca qualitativa focalitzada en aquestes pràctiques en diversos centres d'ESO. Com que moltes vegades les classes de Ciències Socials d'una mateix curs les sol impartir una mateixa persona, els resultats suggereixen que actualment en els instituts analitzats hi ha una manca de bones pràctiques destinades a reduir la xenofòbia, incrementar l'apreciació de la diversitat i fomentar actituds positives cap als drets de la població immigrada. Així mateix, l'estudi destaca la importància d'encoratjar i estudiar les intervencions docents i les polítiques institucionals que es podrien aplicar en un futur a fi de reduir les actituds xenòfobes.

☞ **Perspectiva general del articulo A1 (Wilson-Daily et al., 2018) en español**

Las escuelas de educación secundaria son organizaciones complejas en las que la interacción entre muchos niveles de influencia es relevante. Como organizaciones complejas, cualquier análisis que cuenta con una muestra grande debería centrarse en los diferentes niveles de esta organización, incluidos el nivel individual (ej. nivel 1), el de aula (nivel 2) y el de escuela (nivel 3) a través de la modelización multinivel. Este enfoque metodológico es superior a la regresión múltiple tradicional que no contempla la influencia estructurada de los y las compañeras y del personal con el que las y los estudiantes interactúan como variables de estudio. La modelización multinivel aplicada en Wilson-Daily et al. (2018) muestra los efectos que tienen las identificaciones nacionales, la frecuencia de contacto, el estatus socioeconómico y la composición étnica del aula en la xenofobia, la apreciación de la diversidad y las actitudes hacia los derechos de la población inmigrada entre el alumnado de último curso de educación secundaria obligatoria.

Sorprendentemente, a pesar de que los análisis se realizaron sobre una muestra de 30 institutos (82 grupo-clases) y tenían en cuenta múltiples factores y niveles al mismo tiempo, se demostró que el papel del centro educativo era irrelevante en la determinación del grado de xenofobia y apreciación de la diversidad y del tipo de actitud hacia los derechos de la población inmigrada. Este hallazgo es desconcertante si consideramos que uno de los objetivos de los proyectos correspondientes era identificar las buenas prácticas entre los y las profesoras de Ciencias Sociales. La finalidad era que esa identificación se pudiera estudiar en una siguiente etapa cualitativa para así trabajar la reducción de actitudes xenófobas a mayor escala. Como las clases de Ciencias Sociales de un solo curso suelen ser impartidas por un mismo docente, los resultados sugieren que actualmente en los institutos analizados existe una falta de buenas prácticas destinadas a reducir la xenofobia, incrementar la apreciación de la diversidad y fomentar actitudes positivas hacia los derechos de la población inmigrada. Asimismo, el estudio destaca la importancia de alentar y analizar las intervenciones docentes y las políticas institucionales que se podrían aplicar en un futuro.

difficult to discern to what extent adults are actually in close proximity with people from different ethnic backgrounds for extended periods of time (Dejaeghere et al., 2012; Alesina & La Ferrara, 2000). By contrast, the practice of ability grouping ensures that many high school students in Catalonia spend many hours with one steady set of classmates, at least during the roughly nine months of the school year.

Multilevel modelling revealed the effects of sub/national identifications, frequency of contact, socioeconomic status, and classroom ethnic composition on xenophobia, appreciation of diversity, and attitudes toward immigrant rights, among secondary students during their last year of compulsory education (10th grade).

Surprisingly, although data from 30 schools (82 classrooms) were included in the multilevel analyses, which controlled for numerous factors and levels simultaneously, the role of the

school was not relevant in determining lower (or higher) levels of xenophobia, appreciation of diversity, or attitudes toward immigrant rights. This is disconcerting given a side goal of this study was to identify schools and/or social studies teachers, whose best practices might potentially lower xenophobic attitudes in order to carry out targeted qualitative research into these practices across different schools.

Since many social studies classes in a given grade-level are typically taught by the same teacher, the findings suggest that there is currently a dearth of best practices in reducing xenophobia, increasing appreciation for diversity and positive attitudes toward immigrant rights within the high schools studied. This study points to the importance of encouraging and studying future potential teaching interventions and school policies aimed a reduction in xenophobic attitudes.

2.5. My role in the writing and revision of the Article A1 (Wilson-Daily et al., 2018)

As first author, not only did I play a key role in instrument construction and aid in data collection (see section 2.3.), but I also wrote the first draft of all sections except the Results section (which was written by Markus Kemmelmeier with the aid of my feedback, insight and collaboration). Dr. Kemmelmeier and I met weekly or biweekly to revise all first versions of the different article sections, Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion. We also worked together on responses to reviewers, albeit Dr. Kemmelmeier took on the weight of the more statistically-focused responses. Dr. Prats was included as an author as he was the project PI although he did not read versions of the article prior to submission. Nevertheless, we are conscious that without Dr. Prats the survey of 1709 secondary students would not have taken place.

2.6. Modifications made to article Article A1 (Wilson-Daily et al., 2018) in lieu of reviewer/editor feedback

At a reviewer's suggestion, we added cross-level interactions to our models. The addition of the cross-level interaction did not improve overall information criteria, though their test was essential from a theoretical perspective. This is illustrated in the emergence of Level-2 effects (classroom composition). The effects for the proportion of immigrants are not significant without cross-level interactions in the models

summarized in appendices A1 and A3, but they yield significant effects when cross-level interactions are introduced.

The reviewer in question seemed to have in mind a demonstration according to which a level-2 classroom-composition effect is diminished when grand-mean centered individual-level frequency-of-interaction predictors are included. However, as evident from the Appendix (Tables A1 to A3), our interest was in finding out if classroom composition would yield an effect independent from any individual-level frequency-of-interaction predictors. As shown in Model 2 of Table A1 (p. 41, xenophobia) and A3 (p. 45, immigrant rights), such an independent level-2 effect for proportion of immigrants was not found, though there are clearly significant cross-level interactions. Nevertheless, Model 2 of Table A2 does show such an independent effect, suggesting that students base their responses to our appreciation of diversity item not only on personal interaction experiences. Yet, as discussed above, closer examination reveals that there are important cross-level interactions implying that classroom diversity (in terms proportion of immigrants) qualifies any implications of individual-level frequency of interaction.

Based on a reviewer comment urging us to more explicitly reveal in the article text the dummy-coded variable natives=0/immigrants=1. The associate editor suggested that we refrain from making the coefficient represent either native or immigrants. She wrote,

> I think Reviewer 1 has pointed at an important technical detail that needs to be addressed: the coding of your dummy variable in regression analysis with interaction testing. The dummy should be coded as -1 and +1 as only this way interaction results would tell about the difference in associations being produced by the membership in two different groups studied, as otherwise the associations obtained seem to apply to or be produced by only one of the two groups.

We noted in our response that our interpretation of this comment from Reviewer 1 was different from that of the associate editor. The associate editor suggested that we refrain from making the coefficient represent either native or immigrants. We did not feel that this recoding would be helpful in this study, and may unnecessarily complicate matters. When dummy-coding is used (0/1), with interaction terms in the model, what appear to be "main effects" are *never* true main effects in the ANOVA sense, but always specific effects (simple slopes) for the group condition coded as 0. With our having

coded natives = 0/immigrants = 1, the "main effects" for all predictors (other than immigrant status) are indeed the specific coefficients for natives. The interactions involving immigrant status and other predictors (regardless of whether at level-1 or level-2) always show the differences between the coefficients/slopes for immigrants and for natives. We believe this makes it very useful for the reader to know that the effect of a level-1 variable is for natives, while also being able to determine whether there is a different effect for immigrants and what the size is of this effect for immigrants. When any interaction term involving immigrant status was significant, we have consistently decomposed our interactions by reporting relevant simple slopes for immigrants in the text. That is, a reader is always aware of the effects we found for these different groups.

We would also pointed out that in some recent articles published in the *International Journal of Intercultural Relations*, (e.g., Ham et al., 2017) dichotomous predictors in multilevel regressions were also 0/1 dummy-coded. We felt that many others would advise this as well and kept the dummy coding as it was but more explicitly explained the coding in the article text.

A reviewer wondered to what extent the three dependent variables were redundant, and if not collapsing them would allow us to report our results in a more parsimonious way. The original decision to focus on the three separate measures xenophobia, diversity beliefs and immigrant rights was motivated by theoretical considerations and in order to be coherent with existing research. Notably, we obtained diversity belief items and immigrant rights items from distinct sources in the literature. Moreover, we thought the inclusion of such a measure was not redundant with diversity beliefs. The xenophobia measures asked about a particular group of people ("people who have arrived from other countries"), whereas diversity beliefs remain fairly abstract. Moreover, our xenophobia and immigrant rights measure we did not consider redundant; rather, though empirically related, we consider these measures conceptually distinct. Whereas most xenophobic individuals may not wish to grant immigrants any rights, it is by no means certain that non-xenophobic individuals automatically wish to grant immigrants potentially far-reaching rights (e.g. "All immigrants who live here, even if they haven't been here for long, should be able to vote in all elections").

However, we did appreciate the reviewer pointing out that it is on us to demonstrate that the use of three distinct constructs is superior to the use of just one, or potentially two constructs, collapsing xenophobia and our immigrant rights measures into one. For this purpose, we carried out a two-level confirmatory factor analysis in Mplus 7.4. To evaluate the relative fit of the different solutions, we focused on a comparison of the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Schwartz's Bayes Information Criterion (BIC). Recall that in a comparison of information criteria "lower is better." The single-factor solution produced AIC = 65694.524, BIC 66149.606, whereas the three-factorial solution yielded a much lower AIC = 63536.789 and BIC = 64013.038. The two-factorial solution, in which xenophobia and immigrant rights were collapsed onto one factor, yielded values in-between, AIC = 64425.223, BIC= 64880.305. That the three-factorial solution was much superior to the two-factorial solution, and the single-factorial solution was also evident in the comparison of the RMSEA scores, where were .061, .084 and .326, respectively.

We would have been glad to include this information into our manuscript, but hesitated to do so because of space constraints, which we battled with from the beginning. We would be certainly ready to report this fit information, but feel that most previous readers of our work, including most reviewers, have thus far not questioned the distinctness of our three dependent variables which can be observed in the Table 2 correlations (see article A1).

That same reviewer wondered to what extent some of the unexpected effects involving the share of immigrants in the classroom (level-2 context variable) emerged because it was largely redundant with the aggregated individual-level (level-1) effects of interaction frequency (three variables). Though we were ready to do so, we were surprised by the question itself. It seems to imply that interaction opportunity (i.e., the presence of people with different people in the classroom) is identical with the actual interaction (here: as self-reported by the students). The self-reported frequency of contact could potentially refer to in-classroom, in-school or other contact outside of school. Whereas the two must be related to some extent (interaction cannot occur without any opportunity), conceptually the two seem quite distinct. This is just to make

clear that, before we engage in any kind of analyses concerning this issue, we are hesitant concerning the premise of the reviewer's comment.

However, in an analysis between the classroom level aggregates concerning interaction frequency with people of different nationalities, speaking different languages and of different religious (*k* = 82 classrooms), we did find that the share of immigrants in the classroom is correlated with interaction frequencies: *r* = .48, -.26, and .40, respectively. Whereas the positive correlations for nationalities and religion was expected, the negative correlation between interaction frequencies-other languages and the share of immigrants is certainly surprising, and not consistent with the notion that interaction frequency and diversity in the classroom are redundant. As we note in the article (Wilson-Daily et al., 2018, p. 18), "language diversity exists in both native and immigrant groups, with contact frequency also potentially referring to native Catalan and Spanish speakers".

In initial analyses, aside from those shown in Table 3, we removed the three self-reported interaction variables from all of the models, including all of the interaction in which they were involved. We then observed to what extent the level-2 effects for the share of immigrants in the classroom changed. We observed that all of the level-2 effects and cross-level interactions (involving identification variables) were replicated. Whereas the effects were sometimes stronger and sometimes weaker, all were clearly significant. The only exception was the immigrant-share (%) main effect for our diversity-beliefs dependent variable. This particular effect was weakened from p = .042 (as currently reported) to p = .13 (no change in the direction of the coefficient from what is reported in Table 3 (p. 19). However, there were a number of other significant effects involving immigrant-share (%). This is not unexpected given that, as the reviewer in question suspected, the level-1 interaction frequency variables and this level-2 context variable are (and have to be) correlated. Yet, given the argument we outline in our paper, we are hesitant in interpreting these effects, most because they—as argued above, mainly refer to intergroup contact opportunities, not to actually experienced intergroup context. Nevertheless, the evidence did not support the suspicion of this reviewer that our context-level effects reported for immigrant-share (%) are merely artefacts resulting

from the inclusion of our level-1 interaction frequency, which she or he suspected were measuring the very same thing. In sum, we politely disagreed.

2.7. Final published version of Article A1 (Wilson-Daily et al., 2018)

The following 17 pages contain the final published version of Article A1 (Wilson-Daily et al., 2018). On p. 23 we thank the DHIGECS research team for their support in data collection and the three anonymous reviewers for their feedback.

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Intergroup contact versus conflict in Catalan high schools: A multilevel analysis of adolescent attitudes toward immigration and diversity

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ABSTRACT

Western educational systems are often insufficiently prepared for the ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity resulting from immigration. In Catalonia, one of the wealthiest regions of Spain, a diverse, recent, and large-scale immigration coincides with a popular nationalist movement and increasingly salient national identifications. Focusing on a context where ethnic, national, religious, and linguistic divisions intersect daily, our aim was to determine if both beneficial and detrimental effects of intergroup contact exist by measuring three separate dependent variables, xenophobia, appreciation of diversity, and attitudes toward immigrant rights, among native (n = 1219) and nonnative (n = 379) students during their last year of compulsory education (10th grade). Multilevel modeling, with students nested within 82 classrooms in 30 high schools throughout Catalonia, revealed effects of national identifications, frequency of contact, socioeconomic status, and classroom ethnic composition. Results provide strong support for intergroup contact theory in that classrooms with higher proportions of immigrant students demonstrated less xenophobia and more positive attitudes towards immigrant rights overall. Implications of classroom characteristics were qualified by national identification and intergroup interactions. Simultaneously, modest detrimental implications of intergroup contact were unveiled in that higher proportions of immigrants in a classroom predicted lower appreciation of diversity; immigrants were more likely to embrace diversity when they were a minority in the classroom, though native and immigrant students were both low on appreciation of diversity in majority-immigrant classrooms. Findings also highlight the critical importance of national identification in a context where national identities are often contested.

Over the last half century, immigration has sharply increased in many European countries, altering the demographic landscape of its regions and rapidly increasing overall ethnic heterogeneity. Questions of immigration are at the forefront of political discussions throughout the Western world. A case in point is the recent surge of anti-immigrant parties and the outcry against the influx of refugees from war-torn Syria. Within these debates, xenophobia and hostility toward immigrants, especially if they are of a different race or religion, act as critical barriers to social cohesion (see McPherson, Smith-Lovin, & Cook, 2001).

Challenges to positive intercultural relations regularly occur in educational systems whose teachers and overall organizations are often unprepared for ethnic, religious, and linguistic diversity (e.g., Deusdad Ayala, 2009; Gibson & Carrasco, 2009; Gutiérrez, Morales, & Martinez, 2009; Hopkins, & Stern, 1996; Villegas, Strom, & Lucas, 2012). Schools are often the first place where children

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and parents engage in intercultural and/or interethnic encounters. These interactions shape relations between established and newly-arrived communities. However, whereas these contacts offer opportunities for mutual appreciation, they also harbor a potential for conflict. Both of these trends are contemplated within competing strands of theory, namely, intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954; Pettigrew & Tropp, 2006) and various incarnations of intergroup conflict theory (Blalock, 1967; Bobo, 1999), including the recent constrict theory (Putnam, 2007).

In this research, we investigate intergroup relations focusing on xenophobic attitudes, appreciation of diversity, and attitudes toward immigrant rights within high schools in Catalonia, an autonomous region within Spain, where a large-scale and recent rise in non-European immigration is one of the highest in the European Union (Hjerm, 2001; Koopmans, 2010; OECD, 2009, 2015). We test two dominant theories, or families of theories, against each other: intergroup contact theory, the idea that intergroup relations will improve through mutual contact (e.g., Allport, 1954; Tropp, 2006, 2008;), and what we refer to as "conflict theory", namely, the notion that close proximity of different groups will encourage intergroup divisions (e.g., Blalock, 1967; Bobo, 1999). Though such competitive tests have been undertaken before (e.g., Savelkoul, Scheepers, Tolsma, & Hagendoorn, 2010), we argue that the Catalan educational system provides a unique context for such an investigation. Immigration to the region has brought a great deal of socioeconomic, linguistic, and religious diversity with many young immigrants mainly from northern Africa, South America, Asia, and Eastern Europe (Garreta Bochaca, 2006). Moreover, and complicated by the recent economic crisis, Catalonia is characterized by an increasingly sharpening conflict between two competing national identities, the regionally national Catalan identity and the official national identity of Spain, of which Catalonia is part (see García, 2013; Muñoz & Tormos, 2015). In contrast to other European contexts with similar identity constellations (e.g., Belgium), there are claims that one of the national identities, specifically the Catalan identity, is inherently open to incorporating immigration (e.g., Erickson, 2011; Woolard, 2016). Therefore, we hypothesize that national identity moderates the consequences of intergroup contact (Crisp & Beck, 2005; Munniksma et al., 2015). We use multilevel modeling to investigate the implications of self-reported contact experience as well as the classroom composition (proportion of immigrants vs. natives) in which these intergroup contacts took place, while simultaneously examining other potentially relevant variables such as gender, immigrant background, and socioeconomic status.

1 Intergroup contact theory

The basic tenet of intergroup contact theory is that contact with outgroups reduces tension and improves intergroup attitudes. The original "contact hypothesis" by Allport (1954) specified that equal status, common goals, intergroup cooperation, and authoritative support, are necessary conditions for the reduction of prejudice through intergroup contact. In a meta-analysis of 515 studies, Pettigrew and Tropp (2006) confirmed the importance of these four preconditions, but demonstrated that not all are necessary for intergroup contact to yield desirable consequences. The more of them are present, however, the more likely it is that intergroup contact will reduce prejudice. In subsequent meta-analytic work, Pettigrew and Tropp (2008) showed the prejudice-reducing effects of intergroup contact were mediated by increased knowledge about the outgroup, a reduction of intergroup anxiety, and an increase in empathy and perspective taking.

Occasionally, negative intergroup interactions render group boundaries more salient and intergroup attitudes more negative (e.g., Paolini, Harwood, & Rubin, 2010). On balance, however, intergroup contact tends to have positive consequences for intergroup relations, evidenced by large-scale representative surveys (e.g., Schmid et al., 2012; Sigelman & Welch, 1993), longitudinal studies (e.g., Christ et al., 2010; Eller & Abrams, 2004), laboratory experiments (e.g., Cook, 1978; Ensari & Miller, 2002; Gaertner et al., 1999), and large-scale field interventions (e.g., Deutsch & Collins, 1951; Nesdale & Todd, 2000).

2 Intergroup contact in European schools

Despite the seemingly overwhelming support for contact theory, findings in school settings are often complex and multifaceted (e.g., Schofield & Eurich-Fulcer, 2001). Particularly in European school settings, results are surprisingly tenuous and varied. In many instances, high levels of intergroup contact predict better interethnic relations (e.g., Brown, Eller, Leeds, & Stace, 2007; Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009), though occasionally worse intergroup relations (e.g., Vervoort, Scholte, & Scheepers, 2011), with some studies providing evidence for both (e.g., Binder et al., 2009; Stark, 2011).

Beyond the larger societal environment (macro context), school and class compositions represent critical micro contexts in which interactions between native and immigrant students occur. The proportion of native versus immigrant students in a classroom, for instance, may help shape the overall class climate, increase (reduce) opportunities for intergroup interaction, and lower (heighten) the risk of untoward behavior (e.g., Van Geel & Vedder, 2010; Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009; Verkuyten, Thijs, & Bekhuis, 2010).

Moreover, opportunities for, and implications of, intergroup contact may vary between immigrants and natives. Van Houtte and Stevens (2009) observed that, due to free school choice, many native Flemish students in Belgian secondary schools attended ethnically homogeneous schools, whereas most non-native students attended schools alongside at least some native students. Furthermore, when majority and minority groups are engaged in intergroup contact, beneficial implications are stronger among majority groups—a consistent finding among both student and adult populations (Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005; see also Binder et al., 2009).

One might conclude that intergroup contact findings in European schools are, so far, mixed. Part of the heterogeneity of findings might stem from varying methods of intergroup contact assessment (see Thijs & Verkuyten, 2014 for a comprehensive review). Some research focuses on the ethnic composition of the classroom or the school, with the implication that intergroup contact is more likely to occur when diversity is high. Other studies focus primarily on self-reports of intergroup interaction. With the ethnic composition of one's social environment defining opportunities for intergroup contact, self-reports of intergroup contact and ethnic composition

should be related. Nevertheless, both aspects are not redundant and must be investigated separately. Whereas personal intergroup experience tends to produce the beneficial consequences documented by intergroup contact theory, merely witnessing diversity or a lack thereof within one's immediate social environment may also shape beliefs about diversity. Thus, our investigation focuses both on classroom composition as indicator of diversity, as well as self-reports of intergroup interaction.[1]

3 Conflict theory

Whereas contact theory highlights the reconciliatory consequences of intergroup exposure, the mixing of different groups may evoke much more parochial tendencies. A range of approaches, such as realistic conflict theory (Jackson, 1993; LeVine & Campbell, 1972), racial position theory (Blumer, 1958; Bobo, 1999), and ethnic competition theory (Scheepers, Gijsberts, & Coenders, 2002) focus on intergroup conflict as an immediate consequence of the proximity of different groups (see Blalock, 1967 for other examples of conflict theories). The central argument of what we refer to as "conflict theory" is that groups tend to compete over limited resources, resulting in more pronounced ingroup/outgroup distinctions and enhanced ethnocentrism. This is also a prediction of constrict theory (Putnam, 2007), which postulates that in ethnically heterogeneous environments, members of different groups tend to affiliate mostly with their ingroup. Though Putnam's theory uniquely predicts that diversity undermines social capital, it coincides with other conflict theories in predicting that close proximity of different groups will exacerbate intergroup divisions.[2] Yet, Putnam's theory argues that this is a transient phenomenon as over the long term ethnic diversity increases creativity and economic growth (see Florida, 2002; Page, 2008; Simonton, 1999).

There is much support for intergroup conflict theory among adult populations (for reviews see Ceobanu & Escandell, 2010; Meer, & Tolsma, 2014; Meuleman, Davidov, & Billiet, 2009). Nevertheless, our question is to what extent conflict manifests itself in intergroup relations within high schools. School settings provide opportunities for close contact and cooperation; and high school students, compared to adults, are rarely faced with an apparent struggle over material resources (full-time jobs, use of tax money for government services, etc.). Therefore, conflict theory may receive less support in high school settings.

Nevertheless, Vervoort, Scholte, and Scheepers (2011) found that in Dutch schools, higher levels of ethnic heterogeneity predicted worse intergroup relations. In classes with high proportions of ethnic minority adolescents, more negative outgroup attitudes were reported—both by ethnic majority and ethnic minority adolescents. Furthermore, ethnic minority adolescents held less positive ingroup attitudes. Janmaat (2015) reported a longitudinal study on white British youth in which school ethnic diversity exerted a negative influence on trust, but had no implications for inclusive attitudes towards immigrants.

Notably, intergroup conflict in school settings seems contingent on whether socioeconomic factors taken into consideration, and whether study participants are natives or immigrants. Multilevel analyses by Demanet et al. (2012), in 85 Belgian high schools, revealed that it was schools' socioeconomic composition, not ethnic heterogeneity, which predicted patterns of friendships and attachments within schools. These authors also noted that higher ethnic diversity positively affected immigrant students' friendships, but the opposite effect emerged for natives.

Interestingly, some studies support both intergroup contact theory and conflict theory. Stark (2011) reported that stronger outgroup presence increased perceptions of threat but simultaneously resulted in positive intergroup contact. Binder et al. (2009) observed that contact improved intergroup attitudes among majority group members, though at the same time prejudice restricted intergroup contact among both majority and minority group members. Lancee and Dronkers (2010, 2011) found that increased ethnic diversity related to quality of contact with neighbors, as predicted by conflict theory, but, for natives, to greater inter-ethnic trust as predicted by contact theory, though this relationship did not emerge for immigrants. Gijsberts and Dagevos (2007) reported that ethnic minorities had the least contact with native Dutch in more ethnically-heterogeneous neighborhoods. Areas with a sudden increase in ethnic-minority immigrant populations held more negative attitudes toward out-groups; however, when contact occurred, it positively influenced natives' attitudes toward ethnic minorities.

Presently, for high schools, the support for conflict theory appears weaker than the support for intergroup contact theory. However, results regarding both dynamics are complex, varied, and context-dependent. Given 1) the recent character and massive surge in non-European immigration to Catalonia from a variety of different parts of the world (Alarcón, Parella, & Yiu, 2014); 2) the lack of studies on the impact of immigration on adolescent views on immigration and diversity in southern European contexts; and 3) the contentious national identity struggle in Catalonia with one identity seemingly more open than the other to immigration (e.g. Rodon & Franco-Guillén, 2014), we consider it relevant to investigate, in a diverse sample of Catalan high schools, which dynamic prevails.

4 National identity and national context

National identities may act as a lens through which intergroup experiences are filtered (e.g., Brewer, 1991; Tajfel & Turner, 1979). National identity often is exclusionary (Billig, 1995; Gilroy, 2002); in many instances, those highly identified with their nation are especially motivated to emphasize ingroup distinctness and favorability. Thus, high national identifers are often more likely than low identifiers to hold intergroup biases or avoid contact with members of other groups present in society (e.g., Ariely, 2012; Citrin,

[1] See "The present study" for why we focus on classroom composition rather than school composition.

[2] The literature testing constrict theory has mostly focused on ingroup trust (e.g., Demanet, Agirdag, & Van Houtte, 2012; Schmid et al., 2012). Here, we focus on a prediction that converges with that of various other conflict theories.

Reingold, & Green, 1990; Hjerm, 1998).

Yet, competing findings exist concerning the role of ingroup identification in moderating the implications of intergroup contact. Evidence suggests that intergroup contact often produces the larger attitude change among high identifiers than low-identifiers (e.g., Hodson, Harry & Mitchell, 2009), though others have found attitude change less likely to occur in high identifiers than low identifiers (e.g., Crisp & Beck, 2005; cf. Turner & Reynolds, 2001). The key to reconciling these apparently disparate findings is that group identification, especially national identification, is not inherently based on exclusivity. Some nationalities, or types of national identification, may include a sense of diversity and openness toward new arrivals (e.g., Adams, 2007; Hjerm, 1998; McAllister, 2016; Spry & Hornsey, 2007). If one views one's own nationality as committed to these ideas, intergroup encounters may have beneficial consequences among those highly identified with their nation.

Sub-state nations often seek identities which differentiate them from the larger nation state (Conversi & Jeram, 2017; Erickson, 2011; Hepburn, 2011, 2014; Jeram, 2013). In Catalonia, questions of national identity are complex. Catalonia is an autonomous region within Spain with its own history, language, and identity (Hernàndez Cardona, 2014). Native residents may identify as Catalan, Spanish, or both (Woolard, 2016). Moreover, throughout Catalonia, the concepts of "majority" and "minority" are blurred, varying spatially in terms of group status, power, and size, depending on the context in question (see Astor, 2016; Rico & Jennings, 2012; Vila, 1995; Woolard, 2016).

Among natives, Catalan identity orients many against Spain, especially to the extent that Spain is perceived by many secessionist supporters as the prime obstacle to an independent Catalonia (Muñoz & Tormos, 2015). More pertinent to the present investigation, competing national identities (see García, 2013) are associated with a very different stance toward immigration (Rodon & Franco-Guillén, 2014). Catalonia's population includes the offspring of many Spanish migrants to Catalonia, which used to be refered to as "immigrants" by Catalans, and some of whom, years after their arrival, identify soley as Catalans and/or support independence (Astor, 2016; Serrano, 2013; Woolard, 2016). Critically, Catalonia may encourage immigrant assimilation with the aim of strengthening Catalonia as a separate culture and political unit distinct from the larger nation state of Spain (Conversi & Jeram, 2017; Erickson, 2011; Franco-Guillén, 2011; Rodon & Franco-Guillén, 2014; Woolard, 2016). Specifically, Erickson (2011) argued that many native Catalans and Spanish migrants to Catalonia are united in a rejection of fascism associated with the Franco dictatorship, including fascist anti-immigrant values. Moreover, the survival of Catalonia as a nation is reliant on an alliance between natives and immigrants, and the "largely successful integration" of Spanish migrants is used as a public argument against xenophobia (Erickson, 2011). Other scholars have also noted an openness of some Catalans to immigration and immigrants whom they may see as allies in their quest for independence and/or cultural perpetuation. Conversi and Jeram (2017) have claimed: "regional immigration policies [in Catalonia] have been constructed in opposition to those of the central state, while attempting to involve immigrants closely in subnational belonging and social cohesion" (p. 53). In adult populations, Rodon and Franco-Guillén (2014) found that Catalan identity is related to less negative attitudes toward immigrants than a Spanish idenity, whether contact occurs with immigrants or not.

5 The present study

Using a multilevel approach, the current study examined Catalan high school students' views of immigration and diversity. In particular, we assessed xenophobia, appreciation of diversity as well as attitudes toward immigrant rights among both native and immigrant students within the same classrooms. We tested whether self-reported frequency of intergroup contact as well as classroom composition (percentage of immigrants) would be linked to more favorable views, as predicted by contact theory, or to less favorable views, as predicted by conflict theories.

The percentage of foreign-born students enrolled in the compulsory levels of Catalan high schools was 14.6% at the time of study (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2014); with stark variations between school and classrooms, this provides an excellent opportunity to discern the effects of personal experience as well as classroom composition. Our multilevel analyses focus on the classroom, not school, as the most critical context variable. Although tracking in Catalan high schools is prohibited, in practice, students are placed in ability groups which often remain stable not only throughout the day, but throughout the entirety of one's compulsory secondary education (Carrasco et al., 2009; Ferrer, Valiente, & Castel, 2008; Gibson, & Carrasco, 2009; Pàmies, 2006). This contrasts with other educational systems where students move to different classroom settings daily (Van Houtte & Stevens, 2009; see also Mickelson, 2001). With there being little opportunity for contact and friendships outside these fixed classroom groups, we predicted that classroom contexts are more potent in shaping students' experience than the broader school context.

Futhermore, we expected both national identification and immigrant (vs. native) status to moderate the effects of intergroup contact (e.g., Munniksma et al., 2015). As outlined above, we anticipated that higher identification with the substate nationality (Catalan) identity would enhance any benefical consequences of intergroup group contact on intergroup attitudes, if, as the literature implies, Catalan national identity is not exclusionary. By contrast, higher identification with the state-level nationality (Spanish) should relate to more exclusionary attitudes, with higher identification associated with less favorable intergroup responses (Rodon & Franco-Guillén, 2014). Moreover, we examined the implications of dual identity, that is the simultaneous identification with a state-level (Spanish) and a sub-state (Catalan) nationality (e.g., Moreno & Arriba, 1996), as dual identifiers are often more open to intergroup encounters (Brewer, 2010). Likewise, we examined to what extent immigrant status qualifies the implications of intergroup contact as contact typically works better for majorities (e.g., Tropp & Pettigrew, 2005); that is, beyond whether they identified with Catalonia, Spain or both, we explored whether what applies to natives might not apply to immigrants (see Verkuyten & Martinovic, 2012).

Importantly, in all analyses we modeled socioeconomic status (SES) as there is ample evidence that SES shapes attitudes toward and interactions with immigrants. Lower-skilled and less-educated natives are especially likely to view immigrants as a threat to their economic well-being (Hjerm, 2001; Scheve & Slaughter, 2001; Verbeck, Scheepers, & Felling, 2002; Wagner & Zick, 1995). Conversely, groups

Table 1
Overview of descriptive statistics.

	N	Min	Max	Mean or%	SD
Dependent Variables					
Xenophobia	1585	1	5	2.701	0.719
Appreciation for diversity	1592	1	5	3.698	0.672
Support for immigrants' rights	1584	1	5	3.739	0.855
Individual-Level Variables					
Gender (0 = male)	1598	0	1	51.2%	
Parental SES	1598	−3.997	1.889	0.022	0.998
Catalan identification	1598	1	5	3.510	1.467
Spanish identification	1598	1	5	3.130	1.479
Classroom-Level Variables					
Immigrant background (0 = native)	82	0	85.7%	23.7%	0.222
Proportion girls					
Native	82	0	82.1%	36.4%	
Immigrants	82	0	57.1%	12.5%	
Parental SES	82	−1.56	1.28	−0.034	0.617
Catalan identification	82	1.29	4.75	3.455	0.822
Spanish identification	82	1.65	4.26	3.100	0.617
School characteristics					
School sector (0 = public)	30	0	1	60%	
School size	30	1	5	2.90	1.062
Proportion girls					
Native	30	9.1%	65.2%	36.4%	
Immigrants	30	0	41.7%	12.5%	
Parental SES (school mean)	30	−1.32	1.04	0.015	0.597

viewing their status and resources as secure tend to hold more positive views of immigrants (e.g., Blumer, 1958; Bobo, 1999). Thus, we accounted for the possibility that higher SES, individually and at the classroom level, would be associated with more favorable intergroup attitudes, also ensuring that effects of intergroup contact or classroom composition are not confounded by SES.

6 Method

6.1 Participants

A total of 1709 high school students (48.8% female) from 30 Catalan high schools (82 classrooms) participated in this spring 2014 study. These 15 and 16-year-old students were in their final year of compulsory education. Schools were selected in order to obtain a representative sample of students from all four Catalan provinces, and were diverse in geographic location, size, and socioeconomic status. Only participants for whom all independent variables were available ($n = 1598$) were included in the multilevel analyses (see Table 1 for sample description), meaning 111 students (44.4% female) needed to be dropped. The share of immigrants not included in the analyses was higher than among those who were retained (30.6% vs. 23.7%), possibly due to language issues.

Non-native, immigrants in the sample (first and second generation) were from South America, 9.3%; North Africa (mostly Morocco), 5.8%; Eastern Europe, 2.4%; Asia, 1.3%; Central America, 1.3%; Sub-Saharan Africa, 1.0%; the Middle East, 0.9%; Western Europe, 0.8%; and North America, 0.2%. Additionally, 0.7% of the non-native respondents were not classifiable to a single region.

6.2 Measures

6.2.1 Dependent variables

Xenophobia. A 7-item scale was created, based on a previous pilot, to assess xenophobic attitudes among adolescents (Cronbach's $\alpha = 0.83$). Participants were asked to imagine that a peer made a series of statements about "people who have arrived from other countries" and to rate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with these statements (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). The items were (a) "They enrich our society culturally," (b) "They take jobs away from people who were born here," (c) "They are hard workers," (d) "They are a burden; they take advantage of the welfare system," (e) "They are unfamiliar with the laws here and don't follow them," (f) "They help our economy grow," (g) "They abuse the health system and fill up our emergency rooms." Items a, c, f and h were reversed.

Appreciation for Diversity. We used the CERG Interest in diverse perspectives scale ("I can learn a lot from people with backgrounds and experiences that are different from mine"; "I think it's important to hear others′ ideas even if I find their ideas very different from mine"; and "I enjoy working in groups or on projects with people with backgrounds and experiences that are different from mine" (Kahne, Crow, & Lee, 2013). Two additional items were generated: "I find it interesting to talk to people that have different religious beliefs than I do," and "I like to talk to people whose political views differ from mine" (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree;* overall $\alpha = 0.73$; 5 items total). In contrast to the xenophobia and immigrants' rights scales, this scale did not specifically mention immigrants.

Immigrants' Rights. To assess opinions on immigrants' rights, five items were adapted from Schulz and Sibberns (2004), also on a 5-point Likert scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree;* α = 0.83). The items were: (a) "All immigrants who live here, even if they haven't been here for long, should be able to vote in all elections," (b) "Immigrants should have all the same rights than the people from here," (c) "Immigrants should be forbidden to engage in political activity" (d) "Immigrants who live in a country for several years should have the opportunity to vote in elections", (e) "Immigrants should not have political rights." Items c and e were reversed; we used the original wording of items c and d, but amended a, b and e.

6.2.2 Independent variables

Demographics. Students indicated their gender. A standardized factor score of socioeconomic status (SES) was constructed based on highest parental educational attainment; estimated number of books at home; frequency of travel abroad; whether participants had their own room, their own desk, a computer, and Internet at home; and the highest parental occupational level as categorized by the Spanish National Classification of Occupations or CNO-11 (INE, 2011).

Immigrant background. Individuals' immigration background was determined by parent birthplace. Students marked whether their parents were born in Catalonia, the rest of Spain, or abroad. If it was the latter, students provided the country of origin. We classified participants as immigrants if both parents, or in cases of single parents, mother or father, were born abroad. Students with one native parent were considered natives (see Stanat & Christensen, 2006). We aggregated immigrant background (0–native, 1–immigrant), such that the proportion of students with immigrant background served to reflect classroom ethnic composition.

National identity. Respondents indicated on a scale of 1 *not at all* to 5 *very* to which extent they "felt or identified" as Catalan and as Spanish. By multiplying these two separate national identification variables, we also created a dual-identification variable.

Frequency of contact. Focusing on salient characteristics of immigrants (national, linguistic, and religious background), participants were asked how often they interact with peers who 1) are of a differing nationality than themselves, 2) speak different languages at home than the participant, and 3) belong to other religions. For each, students indicated their frequency of interaction on a scale from 1 *never* to 5 *very often*. These three variables were only moderately correlated (zero-order correlations ranging from 0.36 to 0.45).

6.3 Data collection

Students were surveyed in their classrooms by research team members as part of a larger study and assured that their answers would remain anonymous. All instruments were administered in Catalan. As with other international educational surveys (e.g., PISA), the questionnaires of students whose level of Catalan was deemed insufficient by their teachers, e.g., because they were recent arrivals to the Catalan educational system, were not included (see Burns, Wang, & Henning, 2011, p. 297).

6.4 Analytical approach

Because all students in each classroom participated in the study, with typically several classrooms sampled from the same school, the conventional assumption about the independence of observations is violated. Therefore, a multilevel approach was used, which did not only allow us to handle the interdependence in our data, but also isolate individual-level, classroom, and school levels effects (e.g., Bickel, 2007; Raudenbush & Bryk, 2002). It was particularly important to separate student background effects from educational context effects, especially given that students in Catalan schools are often ability-grouped and spend their high school in-class experience with the same group of students, often for consecutive years. In other words, students' responses might reflect not merely personal disposition, but also the influence of their educational context.

7 Results

Data were analyzed, unless otherwise specified, using a three-level linear mixed model (SPSS MIXED), in which 1598 students were nested within 82 classrooms, themselves nested within 30 schools. Schools had between 1 and 5 classrooms (M = 2.73), with schools' contribution falling between 21 and 112 students (M = 53.3). The number of participants per class ranged from 9 to 31 (19.5 average).

7.1 Preliminary analyses and model

Factor structure. Since the three dependent variables (xenophobia, appreciation of diversity, immigrant rights) were conceptually related, we sought to confirm that their use as distinct constructs was warranted. Therefore, we carried out a two-level confirmatory factor analysis in Mplus 7.4. To evaluate the relative fit of the different solutions, we focused on a comparison of the Akaike Information Criterion (AIC) and Schwartz's Bayes Information Criterion (BIC). The single-factor solution produced AIC = 65661.91, BIC = 66296.91, whereas a two-factorial solution, in which xenophobia and immigrant rights were collapsed into one factor yielded improved values, AIC = 64394.14, BIC = 65029.13. Yet, the three-factorial solution yielded the most favorable information criteria, AIC = 63518.67 and BIC = 64185.42. Thus, the three-factorial solution is superior to both the two-factorial and single-factorial solutions. This was also evident in the RMSEA comparison, which were 0.057, 0.042 and 0.026, respectively.

To gauge different sources of variance within our three-level model, a null model was applied to the three dependent variables, which were correlated, but far from redundant (see Table 2). Shares of variance attributed to school and classroom differences (i.e. intraclass correlations) were generally small, ranging from 1.9% to 3.8% for the former, and from 2.4% to 4.3% for the latter, making the use of multi-level modeling not an urgent matter. However, our multilevel model accurately reflected the structure of the data,

Table 2
Zero-order correlations among the dependent variables.

	1	2	3
1. Xenophobia	–		
2. Appreciation for diversity	−0.27	–	
3. Support for immigrants' rights	−0.58	0.29	–

enabling us to test which contextual factors shaped student-level responses, even when intraclass correlations signified a comparatively low power of detecting between-school and between-classroom differences. Especially when cross-level interactions are present, scholars have demonstrated that making model decisions, based on variance shares attributed to different levels, can be misleading (e.g., Sadler & Judd, 2001).

All individual-level variables were grand-mean centered.[3] To generate classroom (Level 2) predictor variables, the class proportion of immigrants was computed as well as the classroom SES average; both variables were then centered to the means of all 82 classes. We developed our models across multiple steps (see Appendix A). Firstly, all individual-level (Level 1) variables and their interactions were entered. Secondly, relevant classroom-level predictors (Level 2) were added, and thirdly, hypothesized cross-level interactions between Level 1 and 2 were modeled, with relevant Level-1 predictors estimated as random slopes if they were expected to vary at Level 2 (classroom). In some planned models, the cross-level interactions could not be estimated because the Hessian matrix was not invertible, which occurs in the absence of sufficient cross-unit variation in the slopes (Gill & King, 2004). When these effects could not be estimated, cross-level interactions are not reported. Models including school-level (Level 3) predictors did not generally improve model fit nor qualify our hypothesized Level-1 effects, thus confirming our expectation that the classroom was the critical context variable. Hence, school effects are not reported.

We report our findings across all three dependent variables. Immigrant status was coded native = 0, immigrant = 1, rendering natives the reference group. We present our results below following the order outlined in Table 3, further indicating findings by referring to Panel A to I.

7.2 Effects of demographics (individual-level): SES, immigrant background, and gender

As summarized in Table 3 (Panel A) and replicating previous findings, female students held more positive views of immigrants and diversity than males regarding all three dependent variables (see Bergamaschi, 2013; Verkuyten & Masson, 1996). Not surprisingly, immigrant students were less xenophobic and more supportive of immigrants' rights than native students, though immigrant status did not predict appreciation of diversity. Higher-SES students were less xenophobic, more appreciative of diversity, and more supportive of immigrant rights, replicating, for example, Scheve and Slaughter (2001).

7.3 Effects of contact frequency (individual-level)

The data is congruent with contact theory; higher levels of interpersonal contact with members of other nationalities and religions predicted more favorable intergroup attitudes across all three dependent variables (Table 3, Panel B). With the exception of support for immigrant rights, this pattern was absent for contact with speakers of other home languages, presumably because language diversity exists in both native and immigrant groups, with contact frequency also potentially referring to native Catalan and Spanish speakers.[4]

Immigrant status qualified only the effect of contact with people of other nationalities (see Table 3, Panel C). Such contact was more strongly linked to lower xenophobia for immigrants, simple slope $b = -0.219$, $p < 0.001$, than for natives, simple slope $b = -0.071$, $p = 0.004$, and to higher appreciation of diversity, simple slopes $b = 0.181$, $p < 0.001$ vs. $b = 0.096$, $p = 0.11$, respectively. Immigrant status did not otherwise moderate contact frequency with other groups and no effects were found for immigrant rights.

7.4 Effects of (sub)national identification (individual-level)

As summarized in Table 3 (Panel D), expressing a stronger personal identification with Catalonia versus Spain had starkly different implications for natives. Identification with Catalonia was linked to greater appreciation of diversity—consistent with the idea that Catalan identity is aimed at explicitly reaching out to diverse others. But whereas among natives there was no link between Catalan identification and xenophobia, $b = 0.004$, $p = 0.83$, among immigrants, identifying with Catalonia clearly implied lower levels of xenophobia, $b = -0.077$, $p = 0.013$, though for neither group was Catalan identification related to support for immigrant rights.

As series of interactions with immigrant status indicated that identifying with Spain did not inherently imply lower openness to diversity and outgroups, as originally hypothesized. As expected, for natives Spanish identification implied greater xenophobia, $b = 0.089$, $p < 0.001$, and opposition to immigrant rights, $b = -0.130$, $p < 0.001$, though not necessarily a lower appreciation of diversity, $b = -0.014$, $p = 0.41$. Yet, for immigrants Spanish identification had no reliable implications for xenophobia $b = -0.037$, $p = 0.36$, and

[3] Because group-mean centering produced occasionally different findings, we followed the advice of Kelley, Evans, Lowman, and Lykes (2017).

[4] Within-classroom interaction frequency with members of outgroups did not interact with classroom or school characteristics, nor did between-classroom differences in frequency of intergroup interactions predict any of the three dependent variables.

Table 3
Final models of multilevel analysis for xenophobia, appreciation of diversity, and immigrant rights.

	Xenophobia			Diversity			Immigrant Rights		
	b	*(se)*	*p*	*b*	*(se)*	*p*	*b*	*(se)*	*p*
Intercept	2.811	(.041)		3.622	(.033)		3.609	(.052)	
Level 1(Individual)									
Panel A									
Female (0 = male)	−0.081	(.032)	0.011	0.167	(.032)	< 0.001	0.174	(.039)	< 0.001
Immigrant[a]	−0.495	(.060)	< 0.001	0.096	(.059)	0.11	0.414	(.073)	< 0.001
Socioeconomic status	−0.054	(.021)	0.010	0.069	(.021)	0.001	0.056	(.026)	0.030
Panel B									
Frequency of contact									
Other nationalities	−0.072	(.024)	0.003	0.050	(.023)	0.035	0.108	(.027)	< 0.001
Other religions	−0.090	(.022)	< 0.001	0.092	(.022)	< 0.001	0.081	(.026)	0.002
Other languages	−0.014	(.020)	0.48	0.029	(.019)	0.13	0.061	(.024)	0.010
Panel C									
Immigrant*Frequency of contact									
Immigrant*Nationalities	−0.146	(.062)	0.019	0.131	(.062)	0.035	0.030	(.070)	0.67
Immigrant*Religions	0.056	(.052)	0.29	0.021	(.051)	0.68	−0.010	(.063)	0.87
Immigrant*Languages	−0.039	(.050)	0.44	−0.037	(.050)	0.46	−0.058	(.062)	0.35
Panel D									
Identification									
Catalan identity	0.004	(.020)	0.83	0.037	(.018)	0.046	0.012	(.023)	0.61
Spanish identity	0.089	(.018)	< 0.001	−0.014	(.017)	0.41	−0.130	(.023)	< 0.001
Dual identity	−0.036	(.012)	0.003	0.039	(.011)	< 0.001	0.051	(.014)	< 0.001
Immigrant*Catalan identity	−0.082	(.037)	0.027	0.011	(.034)	0.75	0.052	(.043)	0.23
Immigrant*Spanish identity	−0.126	(.044)	0.004	0.120	(.042)	0.005	0.210	(.054)	< 0.001
Immigrant*Dual identity	−0.016	(.023)	0.50	0.022	(.022)	0.32	−0.013	(.028)	0.64
Panel E									
Identification*Frequency of contact									
Catalan identity*Nationalities	0.009	(.015)	0.54	−0.003	(.014)	0.84	−0.019	(.017)	0.28
Catalan identity*Religions	−0.006	(.013)	0.68	−0.015	(.013)	0.23	−0.014	(.016)	0.39
Catalan identity*Languages	−0.016	(.013)	0.21	0.003	(.013)	0.82	0.004	(.016)	0.79
Spanish identity*Nationalities	−0.015	(.013)	0.23	0.008	(.013)	0.52	0.020	(.015)	0.18
Spanish identity*Religions	0.023	(.012)	0.050	−0.026	(.011)	0.026	−0.022	(.014)	0.12
Spanish identity*Languages	−0.011	(.011)	0.32	−0.006	(.011)	0.62	−0.010	(.014)	0.47
Dual identity*Nationalities	0.017	(.008)	0.020	−0.015	(.007)	0.038	−0.009	(.009)	0.33
Dual identity*Religions	−0.003	(.007)	0.70	0.009	(.007)	0.19	−0.002	(.008)	0.77
Level 2 (Classroom)									
Panel F									
Immigrant (class%)	−0.0052	(.0023)	0.026	−0.0040	(.0020)	0.042	0.0057	(.0027)	0.038
Class SES (avg.)	−0.0021	(.0007)	0.005	−0.0008	(.0006)	0.21	0.0020	(.0009)	0.025
Cross-level interactions Level 1-Level 2									
Panel G									
Immigrant*Immigrant (class%)	0.0024	(.0026)	0.35	−0.0048	(.0020)	0.018	−0.0049	(.0029)	0.088
Panel H									
Frequency of contact									
Nationalities*Immigrant (class%)	0.0010	(.0015)	0.52	0.0010	(.0015)	0.50		n/a	
Religions*Immigrant (class%)	0.0035	(.0014)	0.016	−0.0012	(.0014)	0.41	−0.0016	(.0015)	0.31
Nationalities*SES (class%)	−0.0001	(.0005)	0.78	0.0007	(.0005)	0.14		n/a	
Religions*SES (class%)	0.0017	(.0005)	0.001	−0.0004	(.0005)	0.39	−0.0005	(.0005)	0.33
							(Continued)		
Panel I									
Identification*Immigrant (class%)									
Catalan identity*Immig. (class%)	−0.0003	(.0008)	0.72		n/a			n/a	
Spanish identity*Immig. (class%)	0.0015	(.0008)	0.053		n/a		−0.0021	(.0010)	0.036
Dual identity*Immig. (class%)	0.0012	(.0004)	0.005		n/a		−0.0004	(.0005)	0.47
Random components/parts									
Level 1 (individual)	0.361	(.014)	< 0.001	0.369	(.014)	< 0.001	0.563	(.022)	< 0.001
Level 2 (classroom)	0.006	(.006)	0.32	0.005	(.005)	0.34	0.003	(.007)	0.34
Level 3 (school)	0.020	(.009)	0.022	0.005	(.004)	0.23	0.039	(.015)	0.010
2 LL	3171.651			3143.506			3813.140		
AIC	3187.651			3153.506			3825.140		
BIC	3230.419			3180.269			3857.223		

Note. * Denotes interaction; [a] Coded 0 = native, 1 = immigrant.

immigrant rights, $b = 0.080$, $p = 0.11$, though it was associated with *greater* appreciation of diversity, $b = 0.106$, $p = 0.006$. Those who identified both with Catalonia and Spain (dual identity) had greater appreciation of diversity, were less xenophobic, and most supportive of immigrants' rights, and effects of dual identification were not moderated by immigrant status (Table 3, Panel D).

7.5 Effects of contact frequency qualified by identification (individual-level)

Though Catalan identification did not qualify the implications of self-reported intergroup interaction frequency, this was the case for Spanish and dual identification (Table 3, Panel E). Identification with Spain moderated the statistical effects of contact frequency with members of other religions on xenophobia and appreciation of diversity. If students identified with Spain or were high dual-identifiers, otherwise beneficial effects of contact on xenophobia and appreciation of diversity were mitigated. To illustrate, for high Spanish identifiers (1 *SD* above the mean), the effect of this type of contact was reduced to $b = -0.058$, $p = 0.028$ on xenophobia, and to $b = 0.054$, $p = 0.036$ on appreciation of diversity, whereas for low Spanish identifiers (1 *SD* below the mean) the implications of frequency of contact with members of other religions were more pronounced, $b = -0.124$, $p < 0.001$, and $b = 0.130$, $p < 0.001$, respectively. Overall, this pattern is consistent with the expectation that identification with Spain is associated with *less* welcoming intergroup attitudes.

However, a parallel pattern was obtained for dual-identifiers and contact with other nationalities. For those who identified with both Spain and Catalonia (versus those less identified with both) the statistical impact of contact with other nationalities diminished. This was not in line with the expecations that dual identification would be associated with *more* welcoming intergroup attitudes

7.6 Classroom composition (classroom-level)

Ethnic composition. Consistent with contact theory, xenophobia was lower and support for immigrant rights was higher in classrooms with larger proportions of immigrants (Table 3, Panel F). Whereas this might result from native students having more opportunity for contact with immigrant students, it may be that in these classrooms there are simply more immigrant students expressing opinions favorable toward immigrants. Yet, this pattern was starkly different for appreciation of diversity—a variable that did not explicitly mention immigrants but referred to others more generally. When more immigrants were present in the classroom, students (natives and immigrants) were *less* open to interacting with people whose backgrounds, experiences, and opinions were different from their own. This pattern is not consistent with contact theory, but appears to be coherent with conflict theory.

SES composition. Similar to individual-level SES effects, and confirming expectations, classrooms, in which the average student came from a higher-SES family, demonstrated less xenophobia and more support of immigrant rights, but no effect emerged for appreciation of diversity (Table 3, Panel F).[5,6]

7.7 Effects of immigrant status moderated by classroom composition (cross-level interactions)

Though immigrants were generally less xenophobic and more supportive of immigrant rights (Table 3, Panel A), classroom composition helped shaped the appreciation of diversity expressed by both natives and immigrants (Table 3, Panel G). When the share of immigrants in the classroom was average (24%), there was little difference between immigrants and natives in terms of appreciation of diversity, $b = 0.096$, $p = 0.11$. However, the cross-level interaction, $b = -0.0048$, $p = 0.018$, showed that, for every 1% of more immigrants in the classroom, this association weakened whereas it increased by the same amount as the share of immigrants decreased. Only in classrooms in which immigrants constituted a small minority (10%) did immigrants express a greater appreciation for diversity than natives, $b = 0.163$, $p = 0.021$. Conversely, when immigrants made up half (50%) of the class, there were no discernible native-immigrant differences, $b = -0.030$, $p = 0.69$. With higher shares of immigrants in the classroom predicting more skeptical views of diversity, as reported above, this finding appears to be consistent with conflict theory and inconsistent with contact theory. No significant cross-level interactions emerged for the other two dependent variables.

7.8 Effects of contact frequency moderated by classroom composition (cross-level interactions)

Classroom diversity did qualify the statistical effects of self-reported intergroup contact on xenophobia, although only regarding contact with members of other religions (see Table 3, Panel H). Whereas in classrooms with an average share of immigrants (24%) contact with members of other religions was linked to lower xenophobia, $b = -0.090$, $p < 0.001$ (Panel B), the positive coefficient of the cross-level effect, $b = 0.0035$, $p < 0.016$, resulted in a weaker slope when more immigrants were in the classroom. Thus, in a classroom in which 50% of the students are immigrants, this effect is practically nil, $b = -0.0001$, $p = 0.99$.

Though not directly related to either contact theory or conflict theory, we observed a similar pattern for classroom SES as a context variable (Table 3, Panel H). As stated already, in average-SES classrooms, contact frequency with members of other religions was linked to lower xenophobia ($b = -0.090$). Yet, as evidenced by the cross-level interactions, $b = 0.0017$, $p = 0.001$, this effect weakened as classroom SES increased. In a class whose average SES was 1 *SD* above the mean of other classes, the effect disappeared, $b = 0.014$, $p = 0.71$, whereas the effect increased when the class average SES was 1 *SD* below the mean, $b = -0.194$, $p < 0.001$. Thus, frequent

[5] Exploratory analyses did not reveal any non-linear effects of classroom composition (cf. Havekes, Uunk, & Gijsberts, 2011).

[6] No similar effects emerged for schools; meaning even within different schools there were noticeable differences between classrooms, which created a more or less friendly climate for immigrant groups.

interaction with members of other religions more positively affected attitudes toward immigrants in less affluent environments. Since we sought to isolate classroom-SES effects from classroom-composition effects, we are confident that these two variables are not confounded.

7.9 Interaction Effects between (sub)national identity and classroom ethnic composition (cross-level interactions)

Some of the statistical effects of classroom composition varied as function of students' national identification (Table 3, Panel I). Whereas the effects of classroom ethnic composition summarized in Panel F pertain to students of average levels of identification, there was a cross-level interaction between immigrant proportion and Spanish identification pertaining to immigrant rights, $b = -0.0021$, $p = 0.036$. Among students low in Spanish identification (1 *SD* below the overall mean), a larger share of immigrants predicted greater support for immigrant rights, as predicted by contact theory, $b = -0.0087, p = 0.01$, whereas no such effect was observed among students whose Spanish identification was high (1 *SD* above the mean), $b = -0.0024, p = 0.40$. A parallel, though weaker cross-level interaction emerged for xenophobia, $b = 0.0015$, $p = 0.053$, showing that only for low Spanish identifers greater proportions of immigrants were related to lower levels of xenophobia, $b = -0.0076$, $p = 0.006$, whereas the same relationship was not reliable among high Spanish identifiers, $b = -0.0031$, $p = 0.17$. Perhaps surprisingly, dual identification moderated the effects of ethnic classroom positition on xenophobia, $b = 0.0012, p = 0.005$; only among low dual identifers (1 *SD* below the mean), but not high dual identifiers (1 *SD* above the mean), more immigrants in the classroom predicted lower xenophobia, $b = -0.0081, p = 0.001$ vs. $b = -0.0041, p = 0.41$, respectively.

The very same cross-level interactions summarized in Table 3, Panel I can be thought of as implications of both Spanish and dual identification being qualified by the ethnic makeup of the classrooms. From this angle, Spanish identification predicted greater opposition to immigrant rights in classrooms with an average proportion (24%) of immigrant students, $b = -0.130, p < 0.001$ (see Panel D), when the proportion of was 50%, this effect was considerably stronger, $b = -0.185, p < 0.001$, but weaker when immigrants represented only a small minority (10%), $b = -0.101$, $p = 0.001$. The equivalent cross-level interaction effect for xenophobia made clear that Spanish identification was more strongly associated with this intergroup variable in high rather than low immigrant-share classrooms. Correspondingly, the cross-level interaction involving the proportion of immigrants in the classroom and dual identification showed that whereas with an average immigrant classroom share (24%) greater dual identification spelled lower xenophobia, $b = -0.036, p = 0.003$, this relationship disappeared in classrooms in which immigrants represented 50% of the students, $b = 0.0048$, $p = 0.78$.[7]

8 Discussion

The present investigation simultaneously tested intergroup contact theory (Allport, 1954) against conflict theory (Blalock, 1967; Bobo, 1999) in predicting attitudes towards immigrants and diversity among Catalan students. Our findings generated clear support for intergroup contact in a context not often studied. Both at the individual and classroom levels our research confirmed contact theory (e.g., Allport, 1954; Brown et al., 2007; Tropp, 2006, 2008;). Students who reported frequent interaction with those of different nationalities and religions held more positive intergroup attitudes. This applied to xenophobia, immigrants' rights, as well as beliefs about interacting with people of different backgrounds, experiences, and opinions more generally. At the classroom level, the presence of a larger number of immigrants, providing especially native students an opportunity for intergroup contact, was related to lower xenophobia. These results affirm that, in spite of the surprising ambiguity of previous findings in European school settings, Catalan schools represent a context in which intergroup contact improves intergroup relations.

Perhaps counterintuitively, larger classroom immigrant proportions were linked to lower appreciation of diversity. Thus, with a higher share of immigrants, students (both natives and immigrants) generally felt that interaction with those who were "different" was less desirable. This limited finding is compatible with conflict theory, namely, the claim that when surrounded by greater diversity, groups are less likely to value intergroup contact. Thus, our data confirm that favorable intergroup contact effects and detrimental distancing effects may occur simultaneously (Binder et al., 2009; Gijsberts & Dagevos, 2007; Dronkers, 2010, 2011; Stark, 2011).

Notably, the xenophobia and immigrant rights scales included questions about rights and political processes, topics which 10th grade participants may have an opinion, though are unlikely to possess much personal experience. Adolescents may believe that immigrants should have the right to vote or are undermining public budgets and the economy; yet, they themselves are not eligible to vote and, age-wise, unlikely to have ever held a formal job or take on important economic responsibilities like paying rent. Consequently, students may provide favorable evaluations of immigrants based on rather abstract, symbolic beliefs relevant in a seemingly far-off future.

Conversely, the appreciation of diversity scale refers to specific (potential) high school experiences. These include working in groups, talking to and learning from students of different faiths, worldviews, and backgrounds. Perhaps the lack of novelty of this type of diverse interaction did not spike the interest of those who experienced heterogeneity in its many forms every day in the classroom, like it did for those who did not. That is, students were less in favor of this diversity when it was their daily reality. Notably, native and immigrant students seem equally skeptical of diversity in majority-immigrant classrooms. The divergence of classroom-level findings for our three dependent measures is perhaps due to immigrant student heterogeneity, i.e. students from different areas of North Africa may interact with students from South America, Asia, the Middle East, and Eastern Europe in the same classroom. Whereas immigrant students were prompted to resist xenophobia and support immigrants' rights, the same students, when immersed in immigrant-majority classrooms, lost confidence in the more immediate benefits of diversity as related to concrete classroom interactions.

Yet, immigrant status did qualify the implications of individual-level contact with those from other nations: compared to natives,

[7] Recall that we were unable to test several cross-level interactions involving national identification and classroom composition, marked as "n/a" in Table 3, and Tables A2 and A3 in Appendix A.

as among immigrants more frequent contact was more closely linked with lower xenophobia and a greater appreciation of diversity. Whereas the overall presence of individual-level contact effects corroborates contact theory, the weaker effect for natives (e.g., Bratt, 2002) might serve as partial evidence in support for conflict theory, such that any beneficial effects of contact were muted by perceived intergroup division. The absence of any xenophobia-reducing implications of contact with members of other religions, when the proportion of immigrants in the classroom was high, could be interpreted in a similar manner.

Nonetheless, while these latter and modest aspects of our data may be compatible with conflict theory, it is important to remember that such effects are presumably short-lived, even when estimating a concrete timeframe is difficult. Over time, diversity enriches societies, with benefits superseding any initial intergroup friction and discomfort. As the massive surge of immigration to Catalonia is very recent, long-term improvement is anticipated (see Putnam, 2007). From this perspective, the positive effects of contact theory are expected to dominate.

The present investigation revealed highly intriguing patterns regarding national identification. As expected, among natives, high levels of Spanish identification were associated with higher levels of xenophobia and lower support for immigrant rights, consistent with research in other contexts (e.g., Citrin, Reingold, & Green, 1990; Hjerm, 1998; Knudsen, 1997). Yet, the link between identification with Spain and less favorable intergroup attitudes was absent for immigrants, for whom Spanish identification was related to greater appreciation of diversity. This pattern suggests that for natives, Spanish national identity implied a skeptical, perhaps hostile, attitude toward immigrants—a finding consistent with the notion that Spanish identity represents an ethnic, rather than a civic identity, with the former related to negative perceptions of immigrants (see McAllister, 2016). However, given the lower overall social status of Spanish-born populations (Miley, 2006), we cannot exclude the possibility that Spanish-identifiers' rejection of immigration to Catalonia could potentially result from a view of non-Spanish newcomers as economic and social competition within Catalonia, thus producing more negative views (cf. Blumer, 1958; Bobo, 1999; see also Astor, 2016). Whereas we sought to guard against such effects by including both individual and classroom SES in our model, one cannot completely exclude this possibility.

Comparatively, Catalan identification was linked to greater appreciation of diversity; however, to lower levels of xenophobia only among immigrants. Catalan identification never predicted more hostile intergroup attitudes. Possibly, this reflects an effort of Catalan identifiers to support the nationalist cause by attempting to include, or at least not reject, immigration and diversity, though various authors view this as an inherent part of the Catalan identity itself (Conversi, 1990; Conversi & Jeram, 2017; Erickson, 2011; Franco-Guillén, 2011; Woolard, 2016). Interestingly, immigrants themselves appear to understand Catalan identity to mean a favorable disposition toward diversity and immigration.

As suspected, Spanish-Catalan dual identifiers rejected xenophobia and embraced diversity. This pattern did not vary between immigrants and natives, giving credence to the idea that those who already see themselves as members of different groups generally accept others (e.g., Brewer, 2010). Nevertheless, in spite of apparent beneficent implications for intergroup relations, dual identification seemed to reduce the positive effects of contact with members of different nationalities. Moreover, the statistical effect of dual identification in predicting lower xenophobia was markedly reduced in classrooms with more immigrants. Remarkably, classrooms with a high share of immigrants moderated a reduction in the statistical effect for Spanish identification as well, weakening intergroup-friendly implications. At the present time, we have no cogent explanation, though we suspect that the "driver" is Spanish identification, an inherent component of the dual identification studied here.

As with all social science research, our study suffers from a number of limitations, of which we would like to highlight two. Firstly, relying on cross-sectional data renders us unable to offer any firm conclusions about causal processes, even when our correlation data are consistent with causal theories. Field-experimental studies are expensive and difficult, as are longitudinal studies, which provide better insight into causal processes. But whereas such studies are typically much smaller, our data included a diverse, representative sample of Catalan high schools. Secondly, it was unfeasible to differentiate immigrants of different origins, implying greater homogeneity than warranted. An even larger, equally diverse sample might remedy this issue.

To conclude, our study contributes not only to a large body of research supporting intergroup contact theory, but also to a much smaller group of studies suggesting that contact theory and conflict theory may operate simultaneously. Ultimately, in spite of the realtively recent arrival of non-European immigrants to Catalonia, the evidence supporting contact theory is considerably stronger than that supporting conflict theory; therefore, these results have wider implications for discussions about diverse schools and how they are structured. Whereas school composition bore no relationship to students' xenophobia and appreciation of diversity, the makeup of one's classroom was clearly relevant.

More broadly, the effects of intergroup contact documented here suggest that diverse student populations do not necessarily drive anti-immigrant sentiment in European schools (e.g., Faas, 2012). Intergroup contact and exposure improves intergroup attitudes, even if there are contexts and constellations less conducive to this end. Although our data have yielded limited support for conflict theory, there are grounds for optimism. Group boundaries are not firm and exclusionary; but rather permeable, presumably facilitating the integration of recent arrivals. Futhermore, it is encouraging that strong national identification does not inherently imply the exclusion of immigrants; Catalan identity appears somewhat welcoming. Some optimism is also justified for Spanish identity, as among immigrant students, their identification with Spain, at least, implied greater appreciation of diversity. Future studies should focus on detecting additional classroom characteristics, such as teaching strategies, that combat xenophobia and other negative attitudes toward immigrants and diversity.

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Appendix A

Table A1
Multilevel analysis of xenophobia.

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	b	*(se)*	*p*	*b*	*(se)*	*p*	*b*	*(se)*	*p*
Intercept	2.832	(.041)		2.831	(.041)		2.811	(.041)	
Level 1(Individual)									
Female (0 = male)	−0.086	(.032)	0.008	−0.083	(.032)	0.010	−0.081	(.032)	0.011
Immigrant[a]	−0.493	(.057)	< 0.001	−0.499	(.058)	< 0.001	−0.495	(.060)	< 0.001
Socioeconomic status	−0.064	(.020)	0.001	−0.049	(.021)	0.019	−0.054	(.021)	0.010
Frequency of contact									
Other nationalities	−0.079	(.023)	0.001	−0.083	(.023)	< 0.001	−0.072	(.024)	0.003
Other religions	−0.084	(.023)	< 0.001	−0.087	(.023)	< 0.001	−0.090	(.022)	< 0.001
Other languages	−0.013	(.019)	0.50	0.010	(.020)	0.60	−0.014	(.020)	0.48
Immigrant*Frequency of contact									
Immigrant*Nationalities	−0.126	(.058)	0.030	−0.118	(.058)	0.041	−0.146	(.062)	0.019
Immigrant*Religions	0.061	(.050)	0.22	0.062	(.050)	0.21	0.056	(.052)	0.29
Immigrant*Languages	−0.051	(.050)	0.31	−0.052	(.050)	0.30	−0.039	(.050)	0.44
Identification									
Catalan identity	0.009	(.019)	0.63	0.011	(.019)	0.56	0.004	(.020)	0.83
Spanish identity	0.078	(.017)	< 0.001	0.075	(.017)	< 0.001	0.089	(.018)	< 0.001
Dual identity	−0.042	(.011)	< 0.001	−0.043	(.011)	< 0.001	−0.036	(.012)	0.003
Immigrant*Catalan identity	−0.094	(.035)	0.007	−0.093	(.035)	0.008	−0.082	(.037)	0.027
Immigrant*Spanish identity	−0.108	(.043)	0.012	−0.108	(.043)	0.012	−0.126	(.044)	0.004
Immigrant*Dual identity	0.003	(.022)	0.88	0.003	(.022)	0.88	−0.016	(.023)	0.50
Identification*Frequency of contact									
Catalan identity*Nationalities	0.007	(.014)	0.63	0.008	(.014)	0.60	0.009	(.015)	0.54
Catalan identity*Religions	−0.002	(.013)	0.90	0.0007	(.013)	0.96	−0.006	(.013)	0.68
Catalan identity*Languages	−0.016	(.013)	0.21	−0.016	(.013)	0.22	−0.016	(.013)	0.21
Spanish identity*Nationalities	−0.008	(.013)	0.54	−0.008	(.012)	0.54	−0.015	(.013)	0.23
Spanish identity*Religions	0.018	(.011)	0.12	0.017	(.011)	0.13	0.023	(.012)	0.050
Spanish identity*Languages	−0.014	(.011)	0.20	−0.014	(.011)	0.21	−0.011	(.011)	0.32
Dual identity*Nationalities	0.019	(.007)	0.011	0.018	(.007)	0.014	0.017	(.008)	0.020
Dual identity*Religions	−0.0004	(.007)	0.95	−0.0009	(.007)	0.89	−0.003	(.007)	0.70
Dual Identity*Languages	−0.004	(.007)	0.54	−0.004	(.007)	0.54	−0.002	(.007)	0.81
Level 2 (Classroom)									
Immigrant (class%)				−0.0026	(.0021)	0.22	−0.0052	(.0023)	0.026
Class SES (avg.)				−0.0020	(.0008)	0.010	−0.0021	(.0007)	0.005
Cross-level interactions Level 1-Level 2									
Immigrant*Immigrant (class%)							0.0024	(.0026)	0.35
Frequency of contact									
Nationalities*Immigrant (class%)							0.0010	(.0015)	0.52
Religions*Immigrant (class%)							0.0035	(.0014)	0.016
Nationalities*SES (class%)							−0.0001	(.0005)	0.78
Religions*SES (class%)							0.0017	(.0005)	0.001
Identification*Immigrant (class%)									
Catalan identity*Immigrant (class%)							−0.0003	(.0008)	0.72
Spanish identity*Immigrant (class%)							0.0015	(.0008)	0.053
Dual identity*Immigrant (class%)							0.0012	(.0004)	0.005
Random components/parts									
Level 1 (individual)	0.372	(.014)	< 0.001	0.372	(.014)	< 0.001	0.361	(.014)	< 0.001
Level 2 (classroom)	0.013	(.007)	0.066	0.009	(.006)	0.14	0.006	(.006)	0.32
Level 3 (school)	0.019	(.009)	0.041	0.020	(.009)	0.028	0.020	(.009)	0.022
-2 LL	3180.006			3177.929			3171.651		
AIC	3190.006			3187.929			3187.651		
BIC	3216.828			3214.685			3230.419		

Note. The variance estimates for the null model were Level 1 0.476 (*se* = 0.017), Level 2 0.018 (*se* = 0.011), Level 3 0.022 (*se* = 0.010) with *–2 LL* of 3399.610, and a *BIC* of 3421.713.

Table A2
Multilevel analysis of appreciation for diversity.

	Model 1			Model 2			Model 3		
	b	*(se)*	*p*	*b*	*(se)*	*p*	*b*	*(se)*	*p*
Intercept	3.614	(.034)		3.607	(.033)		3.622	(.033)	
Level 1(Individual)									
Female (0 = male)	0.171	(.032)	< 0.001	0.168	(.032)	< 0.001	0.167	(.032)	< 0.001
Immigrant[a]	0.030	(.056)	0.60	0.076	(.057)	0.18	0.096	(.059)	0.11
Socioeconomic status	0.077	(.019)	< 0.001	0.067	(.021)	< 0.001	0.069	(.021)	0.001
Frequency of contact									
Other nationalities	0.049	(.023)	0.029	0.058	(.023)	0.011	0.050	(.023)	0.035
Other religions	0.090	(.021)	< 0.001	0.093	(.021)	< 0.001	0.092	(.022)	< 0.001
Other languages	0.028	(.019)	0.14	0.025	(.019)	0.19	0.029	(.019)	0.13
Immigrant*Frequency of contact									
Immigrant*Nationalities	0.133	(.057)	0.021	0.116	(.057)	0.043	0.131	(.062)	0.035
Immigrant*Religions	0.011	(.049)	0.82	0.010	(.048)	0.83	0.021	(.051)	0.68
Immigrant*Languages	−0.022	(.050)	0.67	−0.023	(.050)	0.64	−0.037	(.050)	0.46
Identification									
Catalan identity	0.036	(.018)	0.051	0.035	(.018)	0.054	0.037	(.018)	0.046
Spanish identity	−0.012	(.017)	0.49	−0.010	(.017)	0.54	−0.014	(.017)	0.41
Dual identity	0.039	(.011)	< 0.001	0.037	(.011)	0.001	0.039	(.011)	< 0.001
Immigrant*Catalan identity	0.024	(.034)	0.48	0.020	(.034)	0.57	0.011	(.034)	0.75
Immigrant*Spanish identity	0.116	(.042)	0.006	0.113	(.042)	0.007	0.120	(.042)	0.005
Immigrant*Dual identity	0.018	(.022)	0.40	0.021	(.022)	0.33	0.022	(.022)	0.32
Identification*Frequency of contact									
Catalan identity*Nationalities	0.002	(.014)	0.91	0.0007	(.014)	0.96	−0.003	(.014)	0.84
Catalan identity*Religions	−0.017	(.013)	0.19	−0.018	(.013)	0.16	−0.015	(.013)	0.23
Catalan identity*Languages	0.003	(.013)	0.83	0.003	(.013)	0.78	0.003	(.013)	0.82
Spanish identity*Nationalities	0.005	(.012)	0.69	0.005	(.012)	0.71	0.008	(.013)	0.52
Spanish identity*Religions	−0.002	(.011)	0.054	−0.023	(.011)	0.041	−0.026	(.011)	0.026
Spanish identity*Languages	−0.008	(.011)	0.48	−0.006	(.011)	0.57	−0.006	(.011)	0.62
Dual identity*Nationalities	−0.016	(.007)	0.029	−0.015	(.007)	0.037	−0.015	(.007)	0.038
Dual identity*Religions	0.008	(.007)	0.25	0.008	(.007)	0.24	0.009	(.007)	0.19
Dual Identity*Languages	−0.008	(.007)	0.22	−0.008	(.007)	0.21	−0.009	(.007)	0.18
Level 2 (Classroom)									
Immigrant (class%)				−0.0064	(.0017)	< 0.001	−0.0040	(.0020)	0.042
Class SES (avg.)				−0.0009	(.0006)	0.15	−0.0008	(.0006)	0.21
Cross-level interactions Level 1-Level 2									
Immigrant*Immigrant (class%)							−0.0048	(.0020)	0.018
Frequency of contact									
Nationalities*Immigrant (class%)							0.0010	(.0015)	0.50
Religions*Immigrant (class%)							−0.0012	(.0014)	0.41
Nationalities*SES (class%)							0.0007	(.0005)	0.14
Religions*SES (class%)							−0.0004	(.0005)	0.39
Identification*Immigrant (class%)									
Catalan identity*Immigrant (class%)								n/a	
Spanish identity*Immigrant (class%)								n/a	
Dual identity*Immigrant (class%)								n/a	
Random components/parts									
Level 1 (individual)	0.370	(.014)	< 0.001	0.369	(.014)	< 0.001	0.369	(.014)	< 0.001
Level 2 (classroom)	0.009	(.006)	0.13	0.006	(.006)	0.25	0.005	(.005)	0.34
Level 3 (school)	0.007	(.005)	0.21	0.005	(.004)	0.22	0.005	(.004)	0.23
-2 LL	3146.832			3136.424			3143.506		
AIC	3156.823			3146.424			3153.506		
BIC	3183.607			3173.203			3180.269		

Note. The variance estimates for the null model were Level 0.433 (*se* = 0.016), Level 2 0.009 (*se* = 0.006), Level 3 0.011 (*se* = 0.007) with *–2 LL* of 3238.843, and a *BIC* of 3260.960.

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2.8. Introduction to Article A2 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2019)

My first coordination assignment, in 2010, within the *Departament de Didàctica de les Ciencies Socials* at the UB was a pilot run of a large-scale mock election simulation held in real time at 30 high schools across Catalonia. Over 2000 students participated in this early project. I was initially hired at the UB to coordinate this project and to write grant proposals. During this project and the field work it entailed, a number of occurrences caught my attention which have peaked my interest in pursuing research and educational endeavors to this end that we later integrated in the study reported in Article A2.

One occurrence revolved around a teacher who commented that her students who watched a popular soft news sketch program on Catalan politics (*Polònia*) knew much more than her students that did not. This later inspired me to add a television media consumption aspect to the multilevel study in Article A2 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2019).

☞ Perspectiva general de l'article A2 (Wilson-Daily i Kemmelmeier, 2019) en català

L'article (Wilson-Daily i Kemmelmeier, 2019) mostra el paper central que té un entorn obert a l'aula a l'hora de fomentar les actituds positives dels i les adolescents en relació a la importància de la votació en diferents tipus d'eleccions: un possible referèndum d'independència i unes eleccions locals, autonòmiques, estatals i supraestatals. Es va constatar que el grau en què l'alumnat de secundària (4t d'ESO) percebia la predisposició del professorat de Ciències Socials per al debat, la participació i la intervenció del grup a l'aula determinava clarament la importància que, com a potencials futurs i futures votants, atorgaven a la votació a cadascuna de les diferents eleccions. Les anàlisis multinivell realitzats evidenciaven aquesta troballa principal, a al temps que tenien en compte una altra sèrie de factors, com ara la identificació amb el municipi, Catalunya, Espanya i Europa, l'estatus socioeconòmic, els interessos polítics, el consum mediàtic o el debat polític amb la família propera.

Els resultats suggereixen que el clima escolar i el professorat tenen un paper preeminent en el desenvolupament de l'orientació cívica en relació amb la importància de les eleccions, una àrea crucial per a futurs estudis qualitatius. Les futures investigacions haurien d'abordar les dinàmiques subjacents a aquesta troballa i explorar per què la docent convida a un major sentiment d'obertura política en alguns i algunes estudiants, però un sentit limitat a uns i unes altres. Se sospita que els i les professores tendeixen a estar, de manera conscient o no, més obertes a punts de vista polítics que coincideixen amb els seus i els reben millor en possibles debats. Pot ser que alguns i algunes estudiants no sentin que tenen veu a l'aula o un lloc on compartir opinions polítiques poc convencionals o menys acceptades. Això sembla relacionar-se amb la intenció de votar.

Another comment was from an excited student who had surveyed her family on their voting intentions in the upcoming Catalan Parliamentary election and realized that she knew much more about the topic than her family. A separate teacher said that the night before the mock election (students voted the Friday before the real Sunday election) many of her students excitingly watched televised debates of their own accord, without any prompting from her, their teacher.

Another time I was in a classroom watching a group of immigrant background students create their own political party. They commented to their teacher that they would let everyone ride the metro for free and give everyone who wanted it a job, she replied, "Great, how are you going to pay for that?" and their faces dropped. They had stared to realize the complexity involved in understanding how politics and economic policies work and the multiple dimensions of political opinions.

Social Studies teachers should ideally feel prepared and excited about integrating critical thinking about complex and controversial issues, for example, in dedicating a fair amount of informed effort within the social studies classroom to improving media literacy. As Wray-Lake (2019, online first publication) recently wrote:

> As we move through turbulent sociopolitical times now and in the future, we must take seriously the notion that young people can play a meaningful role in addressing society's problems. We need a new wave of rigorous, developmentally informed research that raises political voices among diverse groups of young people and identifies strategies that support the formation and growth of youth's political engagement.

A2 shows the central role that open classroom climate plays in forming adolescent attitudes toward voting importance across election types (a possible independence referendum and local, subnational, national, and supernational elections).

It was found that the extent secondary students perceived their social studies teacher as open to debate and the expression of student opinions within the classroom was central to the importance they, as potential future voters, placed on voting in each separate election. Multilevel analyses clearly highlighted this central finding while simultaneously controlling for a number of other factors, including local, subnational,

national, supernational identities, socioeconomic status, political interest, media consumption/ sources, and political dialogue with parents.

Furthermore, as we point out, many call for multivariable/ multilevel studies of the type we have carried out (e.g., Amnå, 2012; Quintelier, 2015, Wilkenfeld et al., 2010)

Our results also suggest that the school climate and teachers play an important role in the development of civic orientation regarding election importance, a crucial area for future qualitative-based study. Future research should address the dynamics underlying this finding, and explore why the same teacher invites a greater sense of political openness in some students, but a limited sense in others. We suspect that teachers are more open to political viewpoints that coincide with their own and receive these better in potential discussions and debates, whether consciously or not. It may be that some students do not feel they have a voice in the classroom or a place to share unconventional or less accepted political opinions. This seems to relate to intention to vote.

2.9. My role in the writing and revision of the Article A1 Article A2 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2019)

As first author, not only did I play a key role in instrument construction and aid in data collection (see section 2.3.), but I also wrote the first draft of all sections except the Results section (which was written by Markus Kemmelmeier with the aid of my feedback, insight and collaboration). Dr. Kemmelmeier and I met weekly or biweekly to revise all first versions of the different article sections Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion sections and to read through the various drafts and reduce word count. The latter task was quite difficult as the editor reduce the length from 7000 (announced on the journal web site) to 5,500 (his personal preference. We also worked together on responses to reviewers, which as one can perceive in section 2.10, were not that extensive nor did they require much difficulty in response, compared, for example to the highly technical response to reviewers required in the Article A1 revisions. In the case of Article A2, by far, the most difficult task was word reduction and we both felt that some quality of presentation was lost. This, however, was out of our hands.

2.10. Modifications made to article Article A2 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2019) in lieu of reviewer feedback

Compared to article A1, for example, article A2 received relatively few comments and most centered on clarifications, such as salience in more than one article section that the legal voting age is 18. One anonymous reviewer, however, wrote the following:

> This paper makes argument that political turmoil can increase youth civic engagement and/or likelihood to vote on particular issues. However, how do you account for the fact that political turmoil itself will make politics a more mainstream discussion and more present in media and in the lives of young people? Thus, the turmoil itself would not be the motivator, but rather the increase in political discussions.

We responded that if we understood the Reviewer's comment correctly, the Reviewer assumes that there must be a path that the political turmoil surrounding independence influences youth civic engagement outside of any mainstream discussion and media coverage. We caution to point out that (a) much of the actual political turmoil does take place in the form of controversial discussions, with

☞ Perspectiva general del articulo A2 (Wilson-Daily y Kemmelmeier, 2019) en español

El artículo (Wilson-Daily y Kemmelmeier, 2019) muestra el papel central que tiene un entorno abierto en el aula a la hora de fomentar las actitudes positivas de los y las adolescentes en relación a la importancia de la votación en diferentes tipos de elecciones: un posible referéndum de independencia y unas elecciones locales, autonómicas, estatales y supraestatales. Se constató que el grado en que el alumnado de secundaria (4º de ESO) percibía la predisposición del profesorado de Ciencias Sociales para el debate y la participación y la intervención del grupo en el aula determinaba claramente la importancia que, como potenciales futuros votantes, ellas y ellos otorgaban a la votación en cada una de las diferentes elecciones. Los análisis multinivel realizados evidenciaban este hallazgo principal, al tiempo que tenían en cuenta otra serie de factores, tales como la identificación con el municipio, Cataluña, España y Europa, el estatus socioeconómico, los intereses políticos, el consumo mediático o el debate político con la familia cercana.

Los resultados sugieren que el clima escolar y los profesores tienen un papel preminente en el desarrollo de la orientación cívica en relación con la importancia de las elecciones, un área crucial para futuros estudios cualitativos. Las futuras investigaciones deberían abordar las dinámicas subyacentes a este hallazgo y explorar por qué la docente invita a un mayor sentimiento de apertura política en algunos estudiantes, pero un sentido limitado en otras. Se sospecha que los y las profesoras tienden a estar, de manera consciente o no, más abiertas a puntos de vista políticos que coinciden con los suyos y los reciben mejor en posibles debates. Puede que algunos y algunas estudiantes no sientan que tienen voz en el aula o un lugar donde compartir opiniones políticas poco convencionales o menos aceptadas. Esto parece relacionarse con la intención de votar.

different arguments being advanced by different sides (in short, by "turmoil" we don't just mean violence on the streets, but also tumultuous discussions). In this sense, mainstream discussion is part and parcel of the turmoil; (b) In this situation, the controversial discussion may not only happen at home around the kitchen table, at schools, but also in the news, whether as part of news coverage of government and parliament, or as separate part of other programs that do debate on the issue of independence in some form. In short, media coverage is without a doubt an important element connecting youth with the issue of independence. This is not at all unusual, because media is likely to do the same for media consumers of any and all ages. However, we are fully aware that media exposure may have a separate influence in rendering the issue of an independence referendum more or less important in students' minds. Thus, our model does include specific two predictors, one pertaining to Catalan media consumption and the other one to Spanish media consumption, to ensure that our results for other predictors are not inherently contaminated by (differential) media consumption.

This same reviewer wrote the following:

> Much of this argument seems a bit obvious. For example, the notion that young people are more likely to vote when they feel the issues impact them. What, then, does this study say that is new or different from what we already know?

We responded that we agreed with the Reviewer: it seems rather self-evident that young people are more likely to vote if an issue is important to them. Note, however, this is not the focus of our research. Rather, we are interested what makes youth believe that the referendum/ conventional elections are important even though they do not yet have the right to participate. What actually might happen in the Social Studies classroom, for example to make a difference? We wrote that we hoped that the reviewer will agree that this issue is much less self-evident. Also, we test competing hypotheses where we state there are no clear predictions as to how Spanish identifications will play out regarding independence referendum importance. As is clear from our design, we are very much interested in the implications of students' different types of sub-/super-national identifications and in the implications of their experiences at school (while also examining the influence of media consumption and a number of

control variables). Furthermore, as we point out, many call for multivariable/ multilevel studies of the type we have carried out (e.g., Amnå, 2012; Quintelier, 2015, Wilkenfeld, Lauckhardt, & Torney-Purta, 2010) and we believe that the multilevel approach that we employ in this article (see full article included in section 2.11.) contributes to a deeper understanding of youth attitudes concerning the questions we propose.

2.11. Final published version of Article A2 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2019)

The following 28 pages contain the final published version of Article A2 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2019). On p. 19 we thank the DHIGECS research team for their support in data collection and the three anonymous reviewers for their feedback. On p. 20 we acknowledge the funding bodies.

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Youth Perceptions of Voting Participation in the Midst of Catalonia's Active Struggle for Independence

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Abstract

Focusing on youth attitudes during a time of political upheaval in Catalonia, we study 1,438 high school students, aged 15 to 16, nested within 30 high schools. Using multilevel analyses, we examine their perceptions of the importance of voting across different election types (independence referendum, local, subnational, national, supernational) and intent to vote regularly upon turning 18. Results show a matching effect of perceived voting importance with levels of municipal, Catalan, Spanish, and European identification. Notably, voting importance across different elections also relates to the extent students perceived their social studies teacher as open to debate and the expression of student opinions within the classroom. This study also highlights differences between the importance that students place on voting in a possible independence referendum compared with conventional elections. For example, socioeconomic status and political dialogue with parents are not associated with perceived voting importance concerning the referendum but are with other election types.

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civic engagement, identity, political behavior

Much research on young people's perceptions of political participation focuses on everyday political contexts, in which youth may or may not be exposed to the issues of the day. Rarely does research focus on youth during a time of political upheaval and change. Exceptional moments of turmoil can become relevant for political mobilization and identification (Hassan, 2015; Klandermans, 2014), especially during adolescence (El Shakry, 2011; Jennings, 2002; Jennings & Niemi, 2015). Such an exceptional situation exists in Catalonia, an autonomous region of Spain in which a widespread bottom-up political movement has rapidly made great leaps toward independence. The debate on whether Catalonia remains part of Spain or becomes an independent state within or outside of the European Union (EU) is a topic impossible for residents of Catalonia to avoid. It is a matter on which most all youth hold an opinion, even if some may otherwise view politics as uninteresting and irrelevant. The independence movement is discussed throughout Catalonia in the media, homes, and schools, complicated not only by competing Catalan and Spanish national identities but also by the interplay of Catalan and Spanish language identifications embodied in politically and sociolinguistically complex settings (Woolard, 2016).

The issue of Catalan independence seems to have energized youth (Capdevila Muntadas, 2015; Center d'Estudis d'Opinió [CEO], 2018). In light of the lack of studies on adolescent attitudes toward voting prior to them reaching voting eligibility, especially in Catalonia, our study focuses on youth who will reach the legal voting age of 18 within 2 or 3 years. We investigate how adolescents perceive the importance of voting in different election types as well as their general intent to vote once they reach 18. We examine which factors predict youth's perspective on voting and explore to what extent perceptions of voting in an independence referendum vary from those toward more conventional elections. Some theorists have argued that youth are more likely to pay attention to and engage with single issues rather than complex party politics (Soler-i-Martí, 2015). To our knowledge, no other studies have separated out various election types to examine whether different factors predict the perceptions of each in any context. The highly exceptional nature of an independence referendum further raises the question whether or not the same factors help shape the perceptions of voting as with more conventional elections, especially as far as various types of social identification are concerned.

The Case of Catalonia

Following the violent, and socially and culturally oppressive Franco dictatorship (1939-1975), Catalonia was granted the status as one of 17 autonomous regions within Spain. Catalan returned as an official language and the main language of instruction in schools. Catalan-language television was born, among many other independent institutions. The historic government, or *Generalitat*, and Parliament were restored (Hernàndez Cardona, 2014). Discussion of possible independence was also muted in part because partial political autonomy provided room for Catalan national and cultural aspirations (Conversi, 2000) and because many Catalans were still scarred by the memory of the devastating Civil War (1936-1939; see Hernàndez Cardona, 2014). Spain's membership in the EU stressed the notion of a "Europe of Regions" (see Anderson, 1990; Grúber, 2002; Loughlin, 1996) with emphasis on the preservation and respect for regional characteristics and interests. In 2006, the Catalan government sought to expand self-governance through an autonomy charter, which was subsequently struck down in 2010, instigating a surge of Catalan nationalistic sentiment (Crameri, 2015; Guibernau, 2013). Concurrently, grassroots referenda on independence spread throughout Catalonia at a local level beginning in 2009 (see Muñoz & Guinjoan, 2013).

Catalan and Spanish national "identities constitute a basic cleavage of political competition" within Catalonia (Rico & Jennings, 2012, p. 723), deepened by the polarized manner in which politics are portrayed by Catalan and Spanish news sources (e.g., Castelló, 2014). However, Catalonia has experienced sharpening conflict between its two competing Spanish and Catalan national identities, a conflict already multifaceted and complex (García, 2013; Hierro, 2015; Muñoz & Tormos, 2012; Tormos, Muñoz, & Hierro, 2015). The snap regional elections of 2012 were touted as a referendum on independence, as were the 2015 Catalan regional elections (Martí & Cetrà, 2016; Orriols & Rodon, 2016). The acknowledgment of proindependence support shortly went from an almost taboo topic in most social circles to one openly discussed (Cristancho Mantilla, 2014; Fernández-i-Marín, Rodon, & Serrano, 2013), and supported by campaigns and documentaries, for instance, about taxation injustices faced by Catalonia, and televised mass protests (García, 2013, 2016). Catalan youth have spent their formative years in the midst of this debate, which has seen a dramatic increase in public support of independence, more than tripling from 13.6% in 2005 to 49.4% in 2014 (CEO, 2015; Prat i Guilanyà, 2012; Serrano, 2013; Tormos et al., 2015).

Simultaneously, some Spanish-identified citizens within Catalonia, including youth and their families, have felt increasingly sidelined—arguably exacerbated by the often relative lower socioeconomic status (SES) of

Spanish migrants and their descendants compared with native Catalans (Astor, 2016; Miley, 2006; Woolard, 2016). Identification does not necessarily coincide with support for independence, however. Some Spanish-identifying individuals fervently resist Catalan independence, whereas others, albeit a minority, embrace it (Serrano, 2013; see also Rodon & Guinjoan, 2018). Youth in Catalonia, regardless of identity, are not mere bystanders and, just as adults (Fernández-i-Marín et al., 2013), often must position themselves within this larger debate. We look at not only youth's perceived voting importance among these conventional elections but also a potential independence referendum of debatable constitutionality (see Cetrà & Harvey, 2018; Guibernau, 2014).

Youth Voting in Catalonia

Legal Catalan residents aged 18 and above, like other legal Spanish citizens, are invited to vote at the municipal, regional, or subnational (Catalan), national (Spanish), and supernational (EU) levels. Prior to the vitalization of the independence movement, Catalan youth eligible to vote largely abstained from conventional participation in politics compared with other cohorts (Font & Virós, 1995; Magre, 1993; Tormos, 2005), a trend observed throughout Western democracies (e.g., Blais, Gidengil, & Nevitte, 2004; Rubenson, Blais, Fournier, Gidengil, & Nevitte, 2004; Wattenberg, 2008). Recently, in Catalonia, self-reported voting increased among 18- to 25-year olds more than for any other age group, rising from 58.7% in 2007 to 72.6% in 2014 (Capdevila Muntadas, 2015). Likewise, in the 2017 Catalan parliamentary elections, 80% of 18- to 24-year olds and 75.2% of 25- to 34-year olds voted, albeit earlier elections documented much higher abstention from the younger cohort (CEO, 2018).

Nonconventional youth's political participation in Catalonia has received some attention, although the relationship of youth with conventional forms of political participation, such as voting, is complex (INJUVE, 2012; Soler-i-Martí, 2015; Soler-i-Martí & Sànchez, 2013). This study sheds light on variables associated with future participant attitudes in the Catalan political process given that, overall, youth have been shown to have a good idea of how they plan to participate in political life once they get older and also hold relatively stable views (e.g., Boonen, Meeusen, & Quintelier, 2014; Hooghe & Stolle, 2004; Hooghe & Wilkenfeld, 2007).

Social Identity and Perceptions of Voting

People participate in politics to the extent that they identify with the groups and communities involved in the political process. That is, rather than being

driven by personal self-interest, they often pursue the benefit and well-being of the groups to which they belong (Sears & Funk, 1991; see also Crameri, 2015). Research under the umbrella of social identity theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1986; see also del Valle, Monreal-Bosch, Perera, & Giménez, 2013) has demonstrated that social identification (i.e., the extent to which individuals attribute importance to their group memberships) motivates collective action. For instance, high-identifiers are more likely to participate in rallies, sign petitions, and vote for the parties with whom they identify (Campbell, Green, & Layman, 2011; Greene, 1999; Simon & Klandermans, 2001).

In relation to social identity, whereas much research is limited to identification with one focal group, in this study, we look at differential identification with multiple groups. Each Catalan resident is formally a member of Catalonia (the subnational unit), Spain (nation-state unit), and the EU (supernational unit). Naturally, Catalan residents are also members of their respective cities and towns (the municipal unit). Thus, our concern is whether varying identification with these separate units uniquely predicts how youth view electoral participation at these various levels. In general, we hypothesize a *matching effect*, in that identification with a particular unit (e.g., Catalonia) increases perceived importance of voting in corresponding elections (e.g., Catalan parliamentary elections).

Our central prediction regarding identity is that an independence referendum inherently pertains to a conflict between subnational and national group membership; hence, only these two types of identities will predict perceived importance of voting in an independence referendum. High Catalan-identifiers will consider voting in a referendum of utmost importance; however, predictions for high Spanish-identifiers are less obvious. On one hand, high Spanish-identifiers within Catalonia might consider the elections important as well, if only to give themselves an opportunity to reject independence. Nonetheless, especially with no independence referendum scheduled at the time of our research, Spanish-identifiers should be more likely to discount the importance (and validity) of voting in such a referendum, in line with the Spanish national discourse at the time (e.g., Marraco, 2014). Our research contrasts these competing predictions.

Furthermore, for some there is no apparent conflict between otherwise competing group identities. These dual-identifiers exist in the Catalan context where especially recent immigrants tend to identify as both Spanish and Catalan with the same intensity (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2017). Thus, we also explore the relationship between dual-identity and importance assigned to voting in different elections.

The Importance of the School Setting

School settings powerfully influence youth development, among other things, because they offer the greatest number of extrafamilial contacts (Louch, 2000). Schools not only can increase students' civic knowledge (e.g., Niemi & Junn, 1998) but also foster positive democratic attitudes and behavior in social interactions (Flanagan, Cumsille, Gill, & Gallay, 2007; Torney-Purta, Richardson, & Barber, 2004). In a multilevel comparison between 22 countries on adolescent intent to vote, Hooghe and Dassonneville (2013) found 12% variance explained at the school level.

Well-known benefits stem from a classroom climate in which students are not only free to disagree with the teacher but are also expected to listen and empathize with those who hold opposing viewpoints (see Gibson & Levine, 2003; Hahn, 1998; Hess, 2009, for review). Students immersed in classrooms with an open in-class political dialogue have been shown to accept political conflict as an inherent part of democracy, tolerate views that conflict with one's own, and have higher levels of motivation, confidence, political knowledge, and voting intent (Campbell, 2008b; Hess & Ganzler, 2007; Hooghe & Dassonneville, 2013; Schulz, Ainly, Fraillon, Kerr, & Losito, 2010; Torney-Purta, 2002).

We investigate how students view the classroom climate and its relationship to students' perceptions of elections. We hypothesize that an open classroom climate predicts greater perceived voting importance and intent. Notably, social studies classes at the same grade level are typically taught by the same teacher (see Barriga Ubed & Sáez-Rosenkranz, 2018; López Hernández, 2007). Hence, we examine perceptions of classroom climate at the individual level as well as at the school level, rather than at the classroom level.

Most of students' social interactions within schools are with peers, and high schoolers are highly sensitive to others' opinions (Cotterell, 1996; McClellan & Pugh, 1999). Interactions occurring within schools are likely to influence perceptions of the importance of voting across different election types. Especially with regard to such a conflict-laden topic as Catalan independence, the general climate at a school, whether in support or opposition of independence, may sway individual student opinion (cf. Hierro, 2015; Pagès & González Monfort, 2010). Therefore, we hypothesize that school context plays a role in adolescents' opinions of electoral participation. Specifically, we expect average levels of identification with Spain or Catalonia at each school to predict voting importance. For instance, schools with higher average levels of Catalan identification should place importance on voting in an independence referendum and the Catalan parliamentary elections. In short,

we expect the same matching effect concerning identification and voting to emerge not only at the individual level but also at the school level.

The Present Study

This study employs a multilevel design to investigate how adolescents in Catalonia perceive voting importance among different election types as well as their general self-reported intent to vote. We focus on youth political views within Catalonia in spring of 2014, a moment when a potential referendum was a subject of evident and vigorous debate (e.g., "Catalan Leader Says Spain," 2014; Colomer, 2014). Though not yet of voting age, we expect Catalan students' levels of identification with their municipality, Catalonia, Spain, and Europe to match the importance they place on voting in each respective election, both at the individual and the school levels. Importantly, because the debate about Catalan independence pertains to a conflict between Catalonia and Spain, we expect identification with these two entities to predict perceived voting importance in a possible independence referendum. A second goal was to determine whether individual and schoolwide perceptions of open in-class political dialogue would predict importance across election types and general voting intent.

When studying implications of identification processes and open-school dialogue, it is critical to consider various other contextual influences shown to shape adolescents' outlook on the domain of politics, in general, and voting, in particular (see Amnå, 2012; Quintelier, 2015; Wilkenfeld, Lauckhardt, & Torney-Purta, 2010). Therefore, we include seven other individual-level predictors. This allows us to observe to what extent the perceived importance of an independence referendum, arguably a single-issue vote, would be subject to the same predictors as conventional elections. First, we examine student gender as some studies have shown that intent to vote and youth participation among adolescent females are higher than males (Fisher, 2012; Hooghe & Stolle, 2004; Kirby & Kawashima-Ginsberg, 2009; Lopez, Kirby, & Sagoff, 2005; see also Schulz et al., 2010).

Second, we include immigrant background. Non-European immigration to Catalonia is one of the highest in the EU (Herm, 2008; Koopmans, 2010; Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development, 2009, 2015), making it one of the world's increasingly diverse democracies. The percentage of first-generation immigrant students enrolled in Catalan high schools was 14.6% at the time of study (Departament d'Ensenyament, 2014). Immigrants may relate differently to their municipality, subnation, nation, and supernation, or to the political process in general. However, a U.S. study

comparing civic engagement showed no differences between immigrant and native students once SES was controlled (Lopez & Barrios Marcelo, 2008).

Third, SES is related to voter intent among prevoting adolescents across many contexts (Schulz et al., 2010) and reported voting behavior among young and older adults (Caínzos & Voces, 2010; Finlay, Wray-Lake, & Flanagan, 2010; Schlozman, Verba, & Brady, 2012; Solt, 2010; Wray-Lake & Hart, 2012). In the Catalan context, SES is also part of a broader discussion as to whether the Catalan independence movement is truly a "grassroots" movement. If so, one should expect no relation between support for an independence referendum and SES and span social classes (e.g., Keating, 2014). Yet, García (2010) and Miley (2007) argue that Catalan nationalism is primarily an elite project, carried by more affluent and educated societal groups, suggesting that high SES likely predicts greater perceived importance of voting in such an election, thus replicating the greater political involvement of high-SES groups in conventional elections.

Our fourth control is political interest, an established predictor of political participation and voting intent, including among adolescents (Amadeo, Torney-Purta, Lehmann, Husfeldt, & Nikolova, 2002; Brady, Verba, & Schlozman, 1995; Shani, 2009). Likewise, parents play a critical role in children's political socialization (Cross & Young, 2008; Hooghe & Boonen, 2015; Jennings, Stoker, & Bowers, 2001; McIntosh, Hart, & Youniss, 2007). Moreover, because political dialogue with parents has been related to prevoting adolescent voter intent (Lauglo & Øia, 2006; Torney-Purta et al., 2004), it was included as a fifth control.

We also consider media influences. Despite the advent of the Internet, television remains the most common source of political information among high school–age students in most countries, including Spain (Schulz et al., 2010). Studies have documented the highly dissimilar political messages in Catalan versus Spanish news (Castelló, 2014; Castelló, León-Solís, & O'Donnell, 2016; León-Solís, Castelló, & O'Donnell, 2018). We again expect a matching effect: consumers of Spanish news will find it more important to vote in the Spanish congressional elections, whereas Catalan news watchers will be more oriented toward Catalan elections as well as a possible independence referendum.

Finally, we include school-level variables in our models. Initial exploration showed that school averages of SES, political interest, and shares of immigrants were unrelated to our dependent variables, nor did they alter observed effects for other school-level predictors; they were excluded from further consideration. We do, however, control for school size as smaller school size has been linked with higher levels of student engagement (Lee, Bryk, & Smith, 1993; Lee & Smith, 1995). Moreover, we account for school

type because semiprivate or private schools (especially Catholic schools) are more likely to foster civic skills (see Campbell, 2008a).

Method

Participants

A total of 1,709 students at 30 Catalan high schools, aged 15 to 16, participated in a 2014 survey on their political experience (see also Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier, & Prats, 2018). Of the schools, nine were semiprivate Catholic, three semiprivate non-Catholic, and 18 public. Schools were selected as a representative sample from all four Catalan provinces, diverse in SES and ethnicity. Data were collected using a questionnaire administered in 82 classrooms during regular classroom hours. Only participants who provided answers on critical predictors (n = 1,438) were included in the present study. A total of 48.5% of students were female, and 22.1% had an immigrant background (Table 1).

Measures

Dependent variables

Voting importance. Students rated the importance of voting in five different elections: municipal, Catalan parliamentary, Spanish congressional, European parliamentary, and a possible referendum for Catalonia's independence on a scale ranging from 1 (*not important at all*) to 5 (*very important*). Participants who did not provide a rating, but selected the option "I have not heard of this election," could not be included in their respective analyses (0.6% municipal elections; 4.0% European Parliament elections; see Table 1).

Voting intention. One item assessed student voting intent: "When I am 18 I will vote in elections regularly": 1 (*completely disagree*) to 5 (*completely agree*).

Predictor variables

In-class political dialogue (open classroom climate). To assess the extent to which teachers are receptive to student discussion and free expression, we adapted five items from the Open Classroom Climate for Discussion scale (Schulz & Sibberns, 2004), assessed on a 5-point scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*; α = .77). Items included "Students feel free to disagree

Table 1. Overview of Descriptive Statistics.

	N	Minimum	Maximum	*M* or %	*SD*
Dependent variables—Importance to vote					
Independence referendum	1,438	1	5	3.635	1.533
Municipal	1,429	1	5	3.440	1.147
Catalan parliamentary	1,438	1	5	3.800	1.186
Spanish congressional	1,438	1	5	3.707	1.251
European parliamentary	1,381	1	5	3.570	1.258
Intent to vote regularly	1,435	1	5	3.472	1.277
Individual-level variables					
Gender (0 = male)	1,438	0	1	51.5%	
Parental SES	1,438	−3.997	1.889	0.029	0.976
Immigrant background students (0 = native)	1,438	0	1	77.9%	
Political interest	1,438	1	5	2.876	1.202
Political dialogue with parents	1,431	1	5	2.993	0.951
In-class political dialogue	1,427	1	5	3.476	0.803
Catalan news exposure	1,438	0	3	0.956	0.973
Spanish news exposure	1,438	0	8	3.350	2.194
Municipal identification	1,438	1	5	3.780	1.165
Catalan identification	1,438	1	5	3.535	1.467
Spanish identification	1,438	1	5	3.129	1.478
European identification	1,438	1	5	3.408	1.294
School characteristics					
School sector (0 = public)	30	0	1	60%	
School size	30	1	5	2.900	1.062
In-class political dialogue (school mean)	30	2.890	4.110	3.472	0.305

Note. Immigrant background students, both first and second generation, were from South America, 9.0%; North Africa (mostly Morocco), 5.8%; Eastern Europe, 2.2%; Asia, 1.4%; Central America, 1.0%; sub-Saharan Africa, 0.8%; the Middle East, 0.6%; Western Europe, 0.3%; and North America, 0.1%. In addition, 0.8% of the nonnative respondents were not classifiable to a single region. SES = socioeconomic status.

openly with their teachers about political and social issues during class" and "Students are encouraged to make up their own minds about issues."

Political discussion with parents. We adopted two items from Flanagan, Syvertsen, and Stout's (2007) Communication with Parents about Politics scale: "I talk to my parents/guardians about politics" and "I'm interested in my parents'/guardians' opinions about politics." Based on a third item by

Flanagan et al., we generated two additional items: "My parents/guardians encourage me to express my opinions about current events" and "My parents/guardians encourage me to express my opinions about politics" (α = .78).

Interest in politics. Participants respond to the item "I am interested in political issues" on a 5-point scale (Kahne, Middaugh, Lee, & Feezell, 2012).

Spanish/Catalan TV news exposure. Participants were asked how often they watched 11 different news or political-content programs, including specific prime-time political satire programs (i.e., soft news). The responses, *regularly* and *sometimes*, were grouped together to compare with *never* responses. Based on their language, eight programs were categorized as Spanish and three as Catalan news exposure.

Identification. On a scale of 1 (*not at all*) to 5 (*very*), students indicated the extent that they identified as belonging to the city or town they currently lived in, their subnation (Catalonia), their nation (Spain), and their supranation (Europe). By multiplying subnational and national identification variables, a dual-identification variable was created.

Immigrant background. Individuals' immigration background (coded 0 = native, 1 = immigrant) was determined by parent birthplace. Students marked whether their parents were born in Catalonia, the rest of Spain, or abroad. We classified participants as immigrants if both parents, or one single parent, were born abroad. Students with one native parent were considered natives (see Stanat & Christensen, 2006).

SES. Using factor analysis, a standardized composite indicator of SES was created based on highest parental educational attainment; estimated number of books at home; frequency of travel abroad; whether participants had their own room, own table for studying, and a computer and Internet access at home; and the highest occupational level of any parent. Occupational levels were categorized based on the Spanish National Classification of Occupations or CNO-11 (Instituto Nacional de Estadística, 2011).

Results

As responses were obtained from students nested within classes, which themselves were nested within schools, we used multilevel modeling to analyze our data. This data structure would ordinarily suggest a three-level model (students/classes/schools). However, data exploration revealed that a three-level model never converged for any dependent variable, presumably because

the variance explained by between-school differences and between-class differences was limited. Between-school differences never accounted for more than 5.4% of overall variance, and between-classroom differences never more than 4.5%. Only two-level models that treated students as either nested within classes *or* within schools produced valid results. Additional analyses showed that characteristics of different classes did not account for substantial variance in our outcomes, whereas this was the case for different schools. Hence, we used two-level multilevel models, which contemplated students as nested within their respective schools. Substantively, neglecting differences between classrooms within the same school was inconsequential because, at most schools, all social studies classes at the same grade level were taught by the same teacher (e.g., Barriga Ubed & Sáez-Rosenkranz, 2018), likely the main source of between-school variation and between-classroom similarity.

To isolate within-school and between-school effects, the four identification variables were school-mean centered, predicting variation in the importance of voting as it occurred relative to the average of a student's school. Concurrently, we included school means of the same four identification variables (centered on the grand means of all schools) to capture between-school differences or "school climate" regarding their orientation toward the municipality, subnation, nation, and supernation. The same was carried out for in-class political dialogue because, typically, the same teacher was responsible for all social studies instruction.

Table 2 summarizes the findings from our two-level models for the six voting variables. Predictors at the student-level (Level 1) first included student demographics: gender, SES, and immigrant background. We then added general political interest and political discussion with parents, followed by exposure to Catalan and Spanish TV news. Subsequently, we added the extent to which students experienced an open classroom climate concerning political discussion and the four national identification variables. At the school level (Level 2), our predictors included school type (public/semiprivate), school size, and school-level open classroom climate. Finally, we tested for school-level differences in national identification.

Individual-Level Results

Findings across our six dependent variables revealed generally no gender differences (see Schulz et al., 2010), although girls found it more important to vote in European elections. Immigrant background was not influential except that students with immigrant background seemed less invested in municipal elections. However, consistent with adult patterns in other countries (e.g., Brady et al., 1995; Nevitte, Blais, Gidengil, & Nadeau, 2009), higher SES

Table 2. Multilevel Analyses for Perceived Importance of Voting in Different Elections in Catalonia.

	Independence referendum[a]		Municipal		Catalan parliamentary		Spanish congressional		European parliamentary		Intent to vote (reg. when 18)	
	b (*SE*)	*p* value	*b* (*SE*)	*p* value	*b* (*SE*)	*p* value	*b* (*SE*)	*p* value	*b* (*SE*)	*p* value	*b* (*SE*)	*p* value
Intercept	3.144 (0.155)		2.981 (0.171)		3.496 (0.148)		3.465 (0.171)		3.389 (0.179)		3.300 (0.203)	
Level 1 (individual student predictors)												
Female (0 = male)	0.056 (0.067)	.40	0.106 (0.056)	.060	0.060 (0.053)	.26	0.036 (0.062)	.57	**0.184 (0.065)**	**.005**	−0.002 (0.054)	.98
Immigrant background	0.117 (0.101)	.25	**−0.225 (0.085)**	**.008**	−0.013 (0.080)	.87	0.046 (0.094)	.63	−0.008 (0.098)	.93	**−0.253 (0.082)**	**.002**
Socioeconomic status	0.063 (0.041)	.13	**0.107 (0.036)**	**.003**	**0.128 (0.039)**	**<.001**	**0.143 (0.040)**	**<.001**	**0.133 (0.042)**	**.001**	**0.075 (0.035)**	**.032**
Political interest (SMC)	**0.113 (0.037)**	**.002**	**0.136 (0.030)**	**<.001**	**0.157 (0.029)**	**<.001**	**0.170 (0.034)**	**<.001**	**0.116 (0.035)**	**.001**	**0.391 (0.029)**	**<.001**
Political dialogue with parents (SMC)	0.071 (0.045)	.12	0.055 (0.038)	.14	**0.108 (0.035)**	**.002**	**0.093 (0.042)**	**.026**	**0.146 (0.043)**	**.001**	**0.154 (0.036)**	**<.001**
Catalan TV news exposure	**0.172 (0.043)**	**<.001**	**0.094 (0.036)**	**.009**	**0.102 (0.034)**	**.003**	0.062 (0.040)	.12	−0.014 (0.042)	.75	0.026 (0.035)	.45
Spanish TV news exposure	0.014 (.017)	.40	**0.038 (0.014)**	**.006**	0.016 (0.013)	.23	**0.036 (0.015)**	**.020**	0.018 (0.016)	.25	0.017 (0.013)	.19
In-class political dialogue (SMC)	**0.133 (0.046)**	**.003**	**0.138 (0.038)**	**<.001**	**0.170 (0.036)**	**<.001**	**0.196 (0.042)**	**<.001**	**0.222 (0.044)**	**<.001**	0.045 (0.036)	.21
Municipal identification (SMC)	0.003 (0.031)	.92	**0.109 (0.026)**	**<.001**	**0.050 (0.024)**	**.038**	0.009 (0.029)	.77	0.011 (0.030)	.72	0.020 (0.025)	.41
Catalan identification (SMC)	**0.424 (0.032)**	**<.001**	**0.064 (0.027)**	**.018**	**0.206 (0.025)**	**<.001**	0.020 (0.030)	.52	−0.001 (0.031)	.97	**0.116 (0.026)**	**<.001**
Spanish identification (SMC)	**−0.232 (0.030)**	**<.001**	0.005 (0.025)	.85	**−0.061 (0.024)**	**.010**	**0.128 (0.028)**	**<.001**	0.001 (0.029)	.98	−0.046 (0.024)	.057
Dual-identification (SMC)	−0.005 (0.017)	.76	0.025 (0.014)	.083	0.005 (0.013)	.72	0.022 (0.016)	.17	**0.035 (0.017)**	**.035**	**−0.031 (0.014)**	**.026**
European identification (SMC)	−0.013 (0.031)	.67	0.021 (0.026)	.41	0.043 (0.024)	.075	0.041 (0.028)	.15	**0.148 (0.029)**	**<.001**	**0.063 (0.025)**	**.011**
Level 2 (School predictors)												
School type (0 = public)	**−0.264 (0.117)**	**.038**	−0.046 (0.148)	.76	−0.173 (0.125)	.18	−0.077 (0.143)	.60	0.068 (0.150)	.66	−0.187 (0.185)	.33
School size	**0.123 (0.050)**	**.023**	0.085 (0.060)	.17	0.072 (0.051)	.18	0.021 (0.058)	.72	0.000 (0.061)	.99	0.087 (0.075)	.26
In-class political dialogue (MoSC)	NA		0.309 (0.161)	.067	0.274 (0.137)	.058	0.253 (0.157)	.12	0.153 (0.165)	.37	0.277 (0.197)	.17
Municipal identification (MoSC)	0.335 (0.210)	.12	0.286 (0.245)	.26	**0.595 (0.209)**	**.010**	0.477 (0.238)	.059	0.286 (0.250)	.27	0.420 (0.305)	.18
Catalan identification (MoSC)	**0.254 (0.119)**	**.043**	0.013 (0.137)	.93	0.102 (0.116)	.39	−0.043 (0.133)	.75	−0.076 (0.139)	.59	0.141 (0.170)	.42
Spanish identification (MoSC)	−0.062 (0.114)	.59	−0.044 (0.140)	.75	0.035 (0.119)	.77	0.254 (0.135)	.076	0.077 (0.142)	.59	0.065 (0.174)	.71
Dual-identification (MoSC)	NA		−0.012 (0.186)	.95	−0.086 (0.159)	.59	−0.100 (0.182)	.59	0.009 (0.191)	.97	0.029 (0.228)	.90
European identification (MoSC)	−0.356 (0.194)	.078	−0.118 (0.239)	.63	**−0.439 (0.204)**	**.042**	−0.180 (0.234)	.45	0.079 (0.244)	.75	−0.194 (0.292)	.51
Random components												
Level 1 (individual)	1.558		1.067		0.951		1.325		1.381		0.993	
Level 2 (school)	0.004		0.027		0.016		0.018		0.021		0.056	
−2 LL	4,731.485		4,191.230		4,052.325		4,515.123		4,420.422		4,118.200	
AIC	4,735.485		4,195.230		4,056.325		4,519.123		4,424.422		4,122.200	
BIC	4,745.975		4,205.704		4,066.812		4,529.610		4,434.839		4,132.683	

Note. SMC = school-mean centered; MoSC = mean of school, centered based on mean across all schools; LL = log likelihood; AIC = Akaike information criterion; BIC = Bayesian information criterion. Coefficients that were statistically significant at $p < .05$ appear in boldface.

[a]Originally, this model resulted in a noninvertible Hessian matrix. Following exploration, we removed the Level 2 term, in-class political dialogue (centered on the mean of schools), as well as the Level 2 dual-identification variable to avoid this problem, improving the validity of our result. Alternative models, in which other (and a larger number of) Level 2 predictors were removed instead, ascertained that neither of these two predictors were significant.

was related to higher perceived importance of voting in all elections except the independence referendum.

As expected, student political interest always positively related to perceived importance of voting regardless of election type. Intriguingly, political discussion with parents was related to greater importance of subnational, national, and supernational elections, but unrelated to municipal elections and the independence referendum. The latter finding is again consistent with the idea that the independence issue differs from conventional elections.

Not surprisingly, Catalan-language TV news seemed to orient students toward the importance of a referendum. Likewise, Catalan news exposure also related to the perceived importance of municipal and Catalan parliamentary elections—the two types of elections that take place within Catalonia under primary participation of Catalan parties. Spanish news exposure was related to Spanish congressional election and municipal elections.

Notably, different types of identification predicted the perceived importance of different elections. First, we observed that students who identified with a specific entity were more likely to consider it important to vote in the corresponding elections, with higher municipal identification relating to higher perceived voting importance in municipal election, higher identification with Catalonia relating to higher perceived voting importance in Catalan parliamentary election, and so forth. Because support for the Catalan cause seemed strongest at the municipal level, Catalan identification also predicted greater importance of voting in municipal elections, and municipal identification predicted greater importance of voting in Catalan parliamentary elections. Spanish identification, however, negatively related to Catalan parliamentary elections. Voting in European elections related not only to European elections but also to higher levels of dual-identification, that is, the simultaneous identification with both Catalonia and Spain. This is consistent with the idea that students felt that both Catalonia and Spain together fit into Europe, a supernational political edifice.

However, voting in an independence referendum was linked to both national identifications. High Catalan identification predicted greater independence referendum importance, with the size of the coefficient ($b = 0.424$) twice as large as the association between Catalan identification and voting in the Catalan parliamentary elections. Similarly, higher Spanish identification negatively related to voting in the independence referendum; with again the absolute size of the coefficient superseding the association of this identification variable with any other election ratings. Only general intent to vote related to a varied set of identifications, including higher Catalan identification and higher European identification, yet lower dual-identification.

School-Level Results

School differences were unrelated to most of our dependent variables, with the exception of importance of voting in an independence referendum and Catalan parliamentary elections. Students at larger schools and at public schools were generally more likely to consider voting in a referendum important. The same was true for students at schools with high average levels of Catalan identification (Table 2). Notably, the latter reflects a context effect for identification such that, in terms of Catalan identification, the overall school environment predicted higher perceived importance of voting in a referendum *regardless* of individual student levels of Catalan identification.

Similar context effects emerged for Catalan parliamentary election importance with higher levels of municipal identification and lower levels of European identification related to voting importance in this type of election, suggesting that a school climate oriented toward one's local community facilitates political awareness with regard to subnational elections (Table 2). We did not observe that higher school-level identification with one's municipality, Catalonia, Spain, or Europe resulted in higher voting importance in the corresponding elections. Finally, exploratory analyses revealed no evidence for cross-level interactions.

Discussion

Our multilevel analyses provide three major insights pertaining to Catalan youth in a moment of political upheaval. These are the role of identity in participants' allocation of voting importance across election types, the unique character of predictors of independence referendum importance, and the role of school in shaping youth outlook on electoral participation.

As predicted, identity plays a crucial role in Catalan youth's perceptions of voting importance. More broadly, the hypothesized *matching effect* regarding identification and voting importance was confirmed. Those who identified with their municipality find it more important to vote in municipal elections: those with Catalonia in the Catalan parliamentary elections, those with Spain in Spanish congressional elections, and those with European in European elections. This pattern suggests that participation in political processes is contingent on an individual's perception that a political event or decision is relevant to their sense of self (e.g., Simon & Klandermans, 2001). More generally, these findings highlight that social identification serves an "orienting function" (e.g., Roskos-Ewoldsen & Fazio, 1992), signaling which events in one's social and political environment are important.

Identification was particularly relevant regarding voting in a possible independence referendum, where those identifying as Catalan perceived higher, and those as Spanish lower, voting importance. This pattern is consistent with the identity polarization observed among adult populations in Catalonia (e.g., Tormos et al., 2015). A notable relationship emerged between municipal identity and Catalan parliamentary elections and Catalan identity and municipal elections, possibly reflecting the way in which Catalan nationalistic sentiment was sustained during the oppressive Franco dictatorship. During this time, Catalan identity was largely maintained at a local level among close-knit circles within cities and towns (Conversi, 2000; Pi-Sunyer, 1971). The fact that such a pattern emerged among adolescents may indicate that the current nationalist movement reflects a grassroots movement that emerged in a "bottom-up" fashion from within towns and cities (e.g., Muñoz & Guinjoan, 2013). In this sense, prevoting-age youth may reflect the nature of identity debates in Catalonia. Political debates in school, the media, and at home affect their personal sense of attachment to their municipalities, and to Catalonia, corresponding to the surrounding political reality. Interestingly, dual-identification only predicted election importance regarding the European parliamentary elections. This supports the notion that those who identify with both Catalonia and Spain wish to see both identities integrated in a larger edifice of a united Europe (see Moreno, 2006).

Concerning the general intent to vote, at the individual level, a positive relationship emerged with Catalan identification. Catalan youth fervor in favor of independence (Capdevila Muntadas, 2015) may actually promote political participation in all election types. This suggests that, especially during adolescence, political turmoil *can* become relevant for political mobilization and identification (in line with Jennings & Niemi, 2015). High Catalan identification has the potential to not only engage nonstandard, issue-based participation in an independence referendum, but also may increase engagement in established democratic processes, including voting in conventional elections. This is consistent with the idea that identity turmoil acts as scaffolding for political involvement through already existing channels (Klandermans, 2014; Simon & Klandermans, 2001). However, a negative relationship emerged between dual-identification and general intent to vote. We speculate that, with most elections taking place at the regional or national level, dual-identifiers are less eager to face a conflict between their Catalan and Spanish identification, when they personally do not see any contradiction between the two. Again, the question posed to participants regarded how often they planned to vote *regularly*. Spanish identification was also negative on this measure, though not significantly.

The perceptions of voting in a possible independence referendum were of particular interest in the present investigation. Such a referendum represents an extraordinary political event, and an integral question was whether adolescents would view this event as distinct from other elections. Notably, in an independence referendum, participants are only voting on a single issue, albeit an important one. Specific issues may garner youth interest in politics among participants who are not interested in, confused by, or turned off by, more institutional aspects of politics (e.g., Soler-i-Martí, 2015). Clear differences emerged when comparing student perceptions of voting importance regarding a potential independence referendum with conventional elections and general intent to vote. Surprisingly, family-related predictors diverged from traditional voting importance and intent in that they were unrelated to referendum importance. Family SES *was* a crucial predictor of all dependent variables but referendum importance, mirroring the persistent pattern of high-SES individuals being more likely to vote (e.g., Schlozman et al., 2012; Schulz et al., 2010). Note that, in the Catalan context, various authors have argued that the spirit of Catalan nationalism is primarily a project of societal elites (García, 2010; Miley, 2007). Our data, however, seem to hint that the issue of independence spans social classes (Keating, 2014). Likewise, political dialogue with parents was a reliable predictor regarding most election types (except municipal) as well as general voting intent (e.g., Lauglo & Øia, 2006), but not relevant for voting in a referendum. We interpret this as evidence that extraordinary political events may transcend traditional patterns of political engagement.

Notably, the public debate concerning Catalan independence seemed to create distinct atmospheres at different schools. Average school levels of Catalan identification predicted perceived importance of voting in a referendum; that is, students in a school with many Catalan-identifying students were more likely to consider voting in a referendum as important—regardless of their level of Catalan identification. While again evidencing the extraordinary nature of the independence debate, this observation is compatible with Hierro's (2015) finding that Catalan schools help craft student identification with Catalonia, but not with Spain. Yet, school-level Catalan identification was unrelated to any other elections, including voting in the Catalan parliamentary elections. In this sense, the expected matching identification effect was not present at the school level. Students may lack awareness of peers' orientations, even when the school-level effects for identification suggest that some level of awareness is present.

Our analyses indicate that in-class dialogue plays a significant role in Catalan high school students' perceived voting importance across all five election types at the individual level, but not at the school (or classroom)

level, although for some dependent variables the regression coefficients approached significance. This implies that, despite there being typically one social studies teacher per grade/school, student opinions were heterogeneous as to whether in-class open political dialogue occurred. This comports with Schulz et al. (2010) who found variance in individual responses within classrooms and schools in that, for example, females were more likely to see their classrooms as open to political dialogue. Perhaps surprisingly, there was no link with open classroom discussion and intent to vote regularly, highlighting again that, at least in Catalonia, evaluations of intent to vote regularly and the importance given to participation in different election types must be distinguished (cf. Fishbein & Ajzen, 1975). With typically all social studies courses at a school taught by the same teacher, how individual students perceived classroom openness of debate was much more critical than a consistent teacher influence. Future research should address why the same teacher invites a greater sense of political openness in some students, but a limited sense in others.

Unlike in-class political dialogue, student political interest was a consistent predictor of voting intent—as with many previous studies (e.g., Amadeo et al., 2002). It is possible that in-class political dialogue is a hidden driver of political interest, such that students exposed to engaging political debates in the classroom become interested in politics—an issue to be explored in future research.

School size and type only predicted the importance placed on an independence referendum. We expected smaller school size to positively affect election importance and intent to vote (e.g., Lee & Smith, 1995). However, those who attended larger, not smaller, schools found it more important to vote in a potential independence referendum; otherwise, this predictor was irrelevant. Furthermore, semiprivate or private schools (especially Catholic schools) have been shown more likely to foster civic skills (Campbell, 2008a). Yet, public school students found it more important to vote in a potential independence referendum than those attending nonpublic schools. With middle- and upper-middle-class families overrepresented at semiprivate schools in Catalonia (Navarro, 2005), this result is difficult to reconcile with the notion that support for independence primarily comes from elites (e.g., Miley, 2007; see also Keating, 2014).

In keeping with the literature (e.g., Norris, 1996), television news exposure was another important predictor of voting importance and an additional matching effect emerged. Students who watched Catalan news programs perceived the Catalan parliamentary elections as more important, and those who watched Spanish programs placed more importance on the Spanish congressional elections. A similar positive effect was also present for voting

importance regarding the referendum, at least for Catalan TV news exposure (see Castelló, 2014). Comfortingly, news exposure to both Catalan and Spanish TV news was linked to greater municipal election importance. No relationship was found with TV news exposure and general intent to vote, in contrast to findings among adults (e.g., Norris, 1996).

Limitations

We would like to highlight two study limitations. First, we rely on self-reports of adolescents not yet eligible to vote. The fact that our 15- to 16-year-old participants have not yet reached the legal voting age of 18 may have limited the time they have spent pondering ideas such as "election importance" and "voting regularly." Nevertheless, adolescent attitudes have been shown as relatively stable from midadolescence into young adulthood and, therefore, worthy of study (e.g., Hooghe & Wilkenfeld, 2007). Second, due to the anonymity of the questionnaire aimed at eliciting honest responses, we did not obtain participants' addresses, meaning that a further level of analysis, that of neighborhood, could not be studied. Consequently, some school-level variance might be due to neighborhood effects. This possibility cannot be excluded with the current data.

Conclusion

Our findings are consistent with the idea that Catalan independence is a largely symbolic, identity-driven issue that transcends conventional political discourse and more established patterns of political engagement. If, as our study suggests, Catalan youth are engaged in a broader debate on independence, whether willingly or not, we have reason to believe that this constitutes a vital characteristic of their civic development, relevant for potential future political mobilization and identification (e.g., Jennings & Niemi, 2015). Furthermore, given the observed *matching effect*, it is likely that subnational, national, and supernational identity will continue to play a central role across election types.

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2.12. Introduction to Article A3 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2020)

The study in article A3 focuses on the host identity manifestations (Catalan/Spanish) of both native and immigrant background high school students in Catalonia, immersed and subject to institutions (participants' schools) seeking to shape its future citizens. The main aim of this study was to determine if value incompatibilities (e.g., Martinovic & Verkuyten, 2012) deter immigrants from identifying with one or both of the host nationalities in Catalonia. Specifically, we examine the extent to which two different categories of immigrants, Non-Muslim and Muslim, as well as natives, identify with Catalonia and with Spain. Multilevel regression was used to analyze the effects of individual variables (including immigrant category, age of arrival, gender, and SES), class composition characteristics, and individual-level interactions in three separate models of host national identification: 1) Catalan, 2) Spanish, and 3) High Dual-Identity).

☞ Perspectiva general de l'article A3 (Wilson-Daily i Kemmelmeier, 2020) en català

Centrant-nos una altra vegada en models multinivell, es va investigar la identificació amb identitats nacionals (identitat catalana i identitat espanyola) i si hi havia alguna relació entre l'aula de ciències socials (professorat) o al nivell d'escola (p. ex. Hierro, 2015) i la identitat de l'alumnat.

Les i els estudiants nadius perceben que les identificacions catalanes i espanyoles són incompatibles entre si, però no és així en el cas de les i els estudiants d'origen immigrant, que majoritàriament s'identifiquen com catalans i espanyols en el mateix grau, tot i que amb menys intensitat. Investigant la base percebuda del que fa que algú sigui "català", els i les estudiants autòctones consideraven la seva identitat nacional tant una qüestió d'adscripció (p. ex. naixement, estatus jurídic) com de pràctica (p. ex. adoptar tradicions, sentiments personals). D'altra banda, en l'alumnat d'origen immigrant el concepte de la identitat es basava exclusivament en considerar la identitat catalana com una qüestió de pràctica, o sigui que adoptant tradicions i sentiments nacionals un es podria considerar català indiferentment del lloc de naixement.

No vam veure cap relació significativa entre identitat catalana ni espanyola a nivell d'aula o d'escola, el que significa que la identitat no sembla estar formada a les escoles sinó per influències exteriors a aquesta com l'entorn familiar i d'amistats (nivell individual).

We examined high Dual Identity by employing a method originally used in attitude research, that of ambivalence. Ambivalence is said to be high when participants endorse relatively high values on separate dimensions of positive and negative evaluations (Thompson & Zanna, 1995; Priester & Petty, 1996). However, ambivalence is low when evaluations are high on the positive (negative) dimension and low on the negative

(positive) dimension, or when the person is neither invested in either a positive or negative dimension. Because these measures of ambivalence are sensitive to the "high-high" constellation, we adopted this conceptual idea to the notion of dual identity, i.e. the extent to which someone might highly identify with two group memberships at the same time. Notably, ambivalence research often assumes that there is a "natural contradiction" between positive and negative evaluation. This is of course not relevant regarding identities as there no a priori requirement that someone identify with only one group (see Benet-Martínez & Haritatos, 2005). However, for the measure, the issue is conceptually the same. Therefore, this measure of "dual-identity" yields high values when a person highly identifies with both the Catalan and Spanish identities at the same time. It yields low values when the person identifies with only one identity, Catalan or Spanish, but not the other, but it also yields low values if the person identifies with neither Catalonia nor Spain (see the "Measures" section of this paper for the exact formula used).

☞ Perspectiva general del articulo A3 (Wilson-Daily y Kemmelmeier, 2020) en español

Centrándonos otra vez en modelos multinivel, se investigó la identificación con identidades nacionales (identidad catalana e identidad española) y si había alguna relación entre el aula de ciencias sociales (profesorado) o al nivel de escuela (por ejemplo, Hierro, 2015) y la identidad del alumnado.

Las y los estudiantes nativos perciben que las identificaciones catalanas y españolas son incompatibles entre sí, mientras que este no es el caso de las y los estudiantes inmigrantes, que son mucho más propensos a identificarse tanto como catalanes como españoles, aunque con menos intensidad. Investigando la base percibida de lo que hace que alguien sea "catalán", los y las estudiantes autóctonas consideraban su identidad nacional tanto una cuestión de adscripción (por ejemplo, nacimiento, estatus jurídico) como de práctica (por ejemplo, adoptar tradiciones, sentimientos personales). Por otro lado, en el alumnado de origen inmigrante el concepto de la identidad se basaba exclusivamente en considerar la identidad catalana como una cuestión de práctica, o sea que adoptando tradiciones y sentimientos nacionales uno se podría considerar catalán indiferentemente de lugar de nacimiento.

No se observó ninguna relación significativa entre identidad catalana ni española a nivel de aula o de escuela, lo que significa que la identidad no parece estar formada en las escuelas sino por influencias exteriores a esta como el entorno familiar y de amistades (nivel individual).

We also control for student perceptions on two basic prototypes of Catalan nationality identity a) nativist, as static and determined by birthplace or ethnic descent, and b) constructivist, or the view of Catalan identity is not exclusive but rather available (permeable) to those born outside the country if they so choose to. Perceived group

permeability (see Ellemers, 1993; Verkuyten & Reijerse, 2008) is central to constructivism, that in the current context of study refers to language acquisition and assimilation, determining if of not immigrants believe they are invited to belong if they would like to. As we discussed above, political discourse in Catalonia embraces constructivism. We hypothesized that how participants conceive of the nativism or constructivism of Catalan membership would have strikingly different implications as to how they view Catalan identity. What we ultimately found was in the following pages.

We had hypothesized that the classroom (social studies teachers) or classroom peers would play a role in identity constellations (cf. Hierro, 2015); however, that does not seem to be the case. However, see the article "Discussion" section for importance considerations regarding peer influence.

2.13. My role in the writing and revision of the Article A3 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2020)

As first author, not only did I play a key role in instrument construction and aid in data collection (see section 2.2.), but I also wrote the first draft of all sections except the Results section (which was written by Markus Kemmelmeier with the aid of my feedback, insight and collaboration). Dr. Kemmelmeier and I met weekly or biweekly to revise all first versions of the different article sections, Introduction, Methods, Results and Discussion. As a journal editor and reviewer for many years, he provided seasoned insight. We also worked together on responses to both anonymous reviewers outlined in the following section.

2.14. Modifications made to article Article A3 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2020) in lieu of reviewer/editor feedback

Reviewer 1 wrote:

> The sentence 'National identity is a complex, nested phenomenon influenced by many factors (e.g., McCrone, 2002; Medrano & Gutiérrez, 2001)' is too broad to be meaningful and it may be unclear to readers what is meant by 'nested'. National identity is to some extent explained earlier on pages 5 and 6, but it would be useful to briefly flag to readers earlier on which factors are of interest to this study.

Our response was as follows, “We have taken out this specific sentence, which in retrospect we agree could cause confusion. Thank you for calling our attention to this. The text now reads: “Specifically, we examine how the understudied native and immigrant adolescent populations negotiate their attachment to Spain and to Catalonia. These two different dimensions of national identification are likely shaped by a variety of factors discussed in the literature, including social environments, cultural background as well their understanding of what it means to be Spanish or Catalan. As a general approach, we rely on multilevel regression, we attempt to study national identification not only as a function of the characteristics of individuals, but also a function of social context. Classrooms and schools represent a critical life context for adolescents, which helps shape students’ relationship to larger society (e.g., Meece & Eccles, 2010). This is especially true in Catalan high schools, where classes of students are comparably stable across multiple years (see Authors, 2018). Hence, we considered multilevel regression imperative, if only to correctly assess predictors of national identification at individual, classroom and school levels.”

Reviewer 1 also argued:

> The framing of other key terms such as ‘dual identification’ are arguably reductive and binary. A more nuanced conceptual frame could be explored – there are three decades of research into hybridity that could be useful here. Perhaps more could also be drawn from recent citizenship research into the relational, affective and acts of citizenship (e.g., Isin) but given the word count limitation, this could be useful for future research.

We did believe, as we argue in the article, that our calculations of dual identification are less reductive and binary as those often used in studies on Catalan/Spanish dual identification (e.g., Centre d’Estudis d’Opinió [CEO], 2019; Hierro & Gallego, 2018; Tormos et al., 2015). However, in principle we do agree with Reviewer 1’s criticism. In this regard we would like to reference the statistician George Box’ (1987) famous aphorism, "Essentially, all models are wrong, but some are useful." We recognize that many parts of our (and any) model are reductive, by the simple act of translating a potentially complex human experience into a number. Yet, we do believe that the findings presented in the article provide relevant and interesting insights. Also, we were not familiar with Isin’s work. Since reading some of it we agreed that it would be

interesting to contemplate in regard to future related research. However, as Reviewer 1 pointed out, within the limited space we have, it was not possible to include Isin's work here.

Another of Reviewer 1's comments was the following:

> The paper concludes by acknowledging an omission in the present research that its focus was exclusively on conceptions of Catalan identity but not conceptions of Spanish identity. This is an odd omission given it was in part exploring 'dual identification'. The paper could be improved by explaining why this key methodological choice was made in the first place.

We responded as follows:

> We realize that this omission must seem as a bit strange and unexpected, and we fully concur. At the risk of this coming across as an excuse, please consider that the history of this project is a bit convoluted. As part of working within a research group at a Catalan university, the first-author did write the grant proposal that secured the funds for this extended project. But as soon as the funds came through, she went on an unplanned early maternity leave. Upon her return, the team that was contributing to the project had ballooned to over 20, with the questionnaires having exploded in length. Because the questionnaire had to get out into the field as soon as possible due to tight project piloting deadlines, much of her efforts were invested in not only cutting the questionnaire down in size but also negotiating final content with this unmanageable number of collaborators (most of whom have not been involved with this work long term, nor had experience in quantitative studies, as is also evident in that, ironically, most of them left the project as soon as data were available).
>
> Therefore, this data set was generated as a group effort, with the pros and cons that come with this approach. What we were left with is much more like a secondary data set, where we need to live with the limitations. The grant was aimed at intercultural classrooms and social representations in Catalonia; however, in retrospect, as often happens in research, we would have loved to have a parallel scale on conceptions of Spanish identity.
>
> At the same time, with this study being located in Catalonia and in the midst of the Catalan struggle for independence, we feel that, if we had a choice to make, Catalan identity should be of greater interest. For the reader, we have added the following to the "Study overview" section, "With the larger political conflict centred on the status of Catalonia, and with Catalan national identity being a topic of controversy, we assess two different conceptions of Catalan identity…"

Reviewer 2 had other concerns and also asked for clarification on both on minor points, but also on more important ones. One such comment was as follows:

> On p. 6 I suggest expanding a bit the criticism to the civic-ethnic conceptualization. The paper correctly highlights the fact that many stateless

> nations are not ethnic as expected by the conceptualization. This is one of the criticisms, but there is also the more important criticism that the conceptualization is misleading because identities in general contain both civic and ethnic elements (as also emerge in your paper, with the Catalan identity appearing at time more civic whereas other times ethnic features are highlighted).

We did appreciate the Reviewer's comment, as this pertains precisely to WHY the civic/ethnic distinction is an oversimplification (which we had mentioned before, as the Reviewer acknowledged). We then took this up this issue and mentioned in explicitly in our paper as follows (see p. 4 of the article for context): "Still, the civic-ethnic conceptualization has received much criticism as an oversimplification. Theorists have argued that most identities pertaining to nations frequently include elements that are both civic and ethnic (e.g., Kymlicka, 2001; Shulman, 2002)."

Reviewer 2 also provided some "food for thought" to keep in mind for future articles:

> Some other issues that at this point cannot be considered (but I mention them for future thoughts): For the items used to define Catalan identity by practice it would have been useful to use Pujol statement: everyone who lives and works in Catalonia, and makes Catalonia his country, is Catalan. The items used to define Catalan identity by ascription are not so ascriptive. For example, "The Catalan are people that were born in Catalonia" is inclusive toward second generation of migrants. it would have been better to use something like "being born in Catalonia by at least one parent born in Catalonia" and so on.

We thanked the reviewer for their input, but added the following:

> We will keep all this in mind for future studies. In fact, an early draft (pre-pilot) version did include a "Pujol-type" item. However, "makes Catalonia his/her country" was deemed too vague for students by the research project members. We also thought our sample of 15- to 16-year olds was too young for large numbers to have heard this type of discourse (although some of them could have). We did have two items that referred to 'living' in Catalonia, one item refers to 'people who live in Catalonia legally' and another includes those who do not. These were derived from Pujol's famous statement.

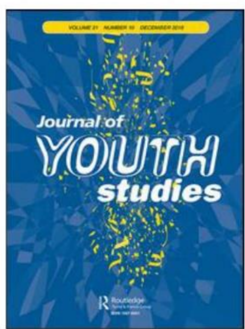
Along these lines, Reviewer 2 also wrote the following:

> I found troublesome that the survey was administered only in Catalan due to the specific topic of inquiry (identities, which are related to the language with whom people have more familiarity).

I responded that was of some debate previous to the pilot run of the questionnaire. Nevertheless, given that both international (i.e., Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA]) as well as most national standard assessments and all regional assessments are administered in Catalan, the official principal language of the Catalan educational system, we decided to follow this trend as it is the language students are used to being evaluated in. Again, as we wrote in the paper, “As with other international educational surveys (e.g., the Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA]), the questionnaires of students whose level of Catalan was deemed insufficient by their teachers, e.g., because they were recent arrivals to Catalonia, were not included (see Burns, Wang, & Henning, 2011, p. 297).” As two of the members of the research group, including myself, had previously worked for the Superior Council for the Evaluation of the Catalan Educational System, we followed that line of thinking, for better or for worse. Similar problems would have emerged if the questionnaire had been administered in Spanish, and budget limitations did not allow for the printing of enough copies so that students could choose which of the two languages they were surveyed in. Perhaps if the survey had been administered online this would have allowed for students to choose from a number of languages, but infrastructure limitations at many schools would have likely made this type of questionnaire administration difficult.

2.15. Final published version of Article A3 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2020)

The following 22 pages contain the proof version of Article A3 (Wilson-Daily & Kemmelmeier, 2020). On p. 18 we thank the DHIGECS research team for their support in data collection and the two anonymous reviewers for their feedback and acknowledge the funding bodies.



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Who is on our side? complexities of national identification among native and immigrant youth in Catalonia

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ABSTRACT

Youth in Catalonia are caught in the middle of a hotly contested political conflict over the region's possible independence from Spain. Focusing on a large sample of secondary school students ($n = 1550$; 24.6% immigrants) from 30 schools, we use multilevel modelling to investigate identification with competing national identities and their implications for xenophobia. The larger social context is reflected in native students viewing Catalan and Spanish identifications as incompatible with one another, whereas this is not the case for immigrant students, who are much more likely to identify as both Catalan and Spanish, albeit at a lower level. Investigating the perceived basis of what makes someone Catalan, native students viewed their national identity to be a matter of both ascription (e.g. birth, legal status) and practice (e.g. embracing traditions, personal feelings), whereas the identifications of both Muslim and non-Muslim immigrants were exclusively based on viewing Catalan identity as a matter of practice. Conceiving of Catalan identity as a matter of practice was also linked to lower levels of xenophobia. Our findings are consistent with the conception of Catalan national identity as cosmopolitan and welcoming to immigrants, in line with outreach of the Catalan independence movement seeking to attract support.

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National identity; students; immigration; adolescence; Catalonia

Introduction

Periods of political turmoil often reinforce pre-existing national attachments (Gibler, Hutchison, and Miller 2012; Klandermans 2014), especially when this turmoil occurs during adolescence (Hayes and McAllister 2009; Wainryb and Recchia 2015; also Schwartz, Côté, and Arnett 2005). Catalonia, an autonomous region of Spain, has recently been the setting of an often tumultuous struggle toward independence. Following ultimately thwarted efforts to expand Catalan's political autonomy during the first decade of the twenty-first century (Guibernau 2013), Catalan residents often feel social pressure to position themselves, in personal conversations or by vote, whether to identify with either Spain or Catalonia (Fernández-i-Marín, Rodon, and Serrano 2013). Coinciding with an upsurge in popular support for political independence (Tormos, Muñoz, and Hierro 2015; Woolard 2016), Catalans have increasingly identified as 'only Catalan.' And even

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though Catalans are, at least currently, citizens of Spain, there has been a recent large decline in Spanish identification (García 2013; Tormos, Muñoz, and Hierro 2015), though this decline may have preceded the increase in Catalan identification (Martínez-Herrera 2002; Serrano 2013). The result is a process of identity polarization observed elsewhere (Klandermans 2014).

National identification within Catalonia has been studied extensively in adult populations (e.g. Tormos, Muñoz, and Hierro 2015; Centre d'Estudis d'Opinió [CEO], 2019; Hierro and Gallego 2018), but these studies have largely neglected adolescent viewpoints, which, perhaps counterintuitively, remain relatively stable over time and are therefore worthy of study (e.g. Houston, Crozier, and Walker 1990; Hooghe and Wilkenfeld 2008). Furthermore, previous work has mostly ignored the viewpoints of the growing, diverse, and relatively young immigration population (IDESCAT 2014a; 2014b).

In this article, we examine how both native and immigrant youth position themselves regarding national identification during Catalonia's recent nonviolent political conflict within its diverse secondary school settings. We are interested to what extent the previously observed identity polarization among adults exists during adolescence, the transitional period from childhood to adulthood, specifically mid-adolescence (i.e. 15–16 year olds). Furthermore, we investigate the implications of different identifications for xenophobia in a region that prides itself as open to diversity and immigration (e.g. Erickson 2011; Woolard 2016).

Catalonia and 'rival' national identifications

Catalonia, with its capital Barcelona, is a region of contemporary Spain with a long history of its own language and political structures. After decades of linguistic and other cultural and political oppression during the Franco dictatorship and previous regimes, the region has gradually gained more autonomy; however, repeated demands for greater autonomy for Catalonia have been impeded throughout the past two decades (Guibernau 2013). Since the transition to democracy in the late 1970s Catalan is an official language, and the principle language of instruction in schools, which has greatly expanded its use and fluency, especially among youth. For a little over a decade there has been a growing independence movement, including grassroots municipal referenda (starting in 2009), as well as Catalan elections of 2012 and regional elections of 2015, which were touted as quasi-referenda on independence (Martí and Cetrà 2016; Orriols and Rodon 2016). A controversial 2017 referendum held by the Catalan government was declared illegal by Spain and resulted in the long-term imprisonment of Catalan leaders (Barceló 2018; 'Violent clashes,' 2019) and the Spanish government has also imposed direct rule on Catalonia, drastically reducing its autonomy (Garrido-Muñoz 2018). As one of Spain's more economically vibrant regions, Catalonia has recently experienced a tremendous influx of immigrants mainly from northern Africa, South America, Asia, and Eastern Europe (IDESCAT 2014b). Between 2000 and 2014 (the latter being the year in which we conducted our research) the immigrant population increased six-fold, representing around 14% of the Catalan population (IDESCAT 2014a). This has visibly augmented Catalonia's socioeconomic, linguistic, and religious diversity.

Due to Catalonia's status as an autonomous unit within the larger edifice of Spain, concepts of majority and minority groups are blurred. Aside from recent international

immigration and those with multi-generation roots in the region, Catalan residents include offspring of Spanish migrants enticed by Catalonia's relative economic vitality. Surges of this regional migration within Spain occurred in the 1960s and 70s (Woolard 2016). Individuals who migrated to Catalonia from other regions of Spain were habitually referred to as 'immigrants' themselves. Members of this group may be perceived as a majority or a minority; often depending on the geographic location within Catalonia or the institution in question, as group status varies spatially in terms of power and size (Astor 2016; Woolard 2016).

Because of intersecting memberships to Catalonia and Spain, and acute political tensions between the Spanish and Catalan governments, of late many residents of Catalonia feel a need to position themselves as belonging to either one or the other (e.g. Fernández-i-Marín, Rodon, and Serrano 2013). The consequence is identification polarization, as identifying as Catalan is increasingly considered incompatible with identifying as Spanish (e.g. Tormos, Muñoz, and Hierro 2015). As numbers of 'Catalan only' identifiers have been increasing (from 17% in 2005–32% in 2013), the largest group among Catalan residents still identifies to a similar degree as both Catalan and Spanish (35% in 2015; Hierro and Gallego 2018). Of late, these dual identifiers tend to retreat from nonviolent political confrontation in the wake of such conflict (Hierro and Gallego 2018). Yet, political support for an independent Catalan nation does not exclusively coincide with 'Catalan-only' identification, as many independence supporters identify as both Catalan and Spanish; some even identifying exclusively as Spanish (Serrano 2013).

Immigrants to Catalonia and negotiating national identifications

Immigration to Europe and other Western societies presents a number of new challenges both for hosts and newcomers. For immigrants, the relationship between ethnic and national identity is in continuous evolution as they interact with host society members and each other, negotiating obstacles, opportunities, and social pressures (Wainryb and Recchia 2015). As Tsang et al. (2003, 364) write, 'How one defines oneself within a context of multiple processes of identification becomes a central task in the immigrant's settlement and integration into the host country'.

In the context of an ongoing struggle of national identity and social relations, understandably, immigrants encounter complexities (Repke and Benet-Martínez 2018). Whereas in many other countries, immigrants negotiate their relationship with a single host nationality, in Catalonia, national identification might alternately, or conjointly, refer to Spain or Catalonia. If they wish to integrate, immigrants have to negotiate relationships between the two. They might choose to affiliate more closely with one national group or the other, thus positioning themselves in the ongoing identity conflict similarly to native residents. Alternatively, immigrants might identify with different national groups in ways that bypass the existing identity polarization, thus not embracing the aforementioned antagonism between Catalonian and Spanish identities. Instead, their identification may be driven by other forces, such as negative and/or positive personal experiences with different nationally-identifying individuals in Catalonia, a general desire to fit in, or even a lack of awareness that many natives view Catalan and Spanish identification as incompatible. Lastly, traditional cultural attachments to Spain or former Spanish colonies may also

facilitate identification with Spain (Petreñas et al. 2019). Importantly, over 23% of immigrants to Catalonia hailed from Spanish-speaking countries at the time of data collection (IDESCAT 2014b).

Nature and content of national identities

Not all national identities are created equal. Whereas high levels of national identification have been tied to negative attitudes toward immigrants, there is no necessary link between national attachment and prejudice (e.g. Adams 2007; Blad and Couton 2009). Kohn's (1944) distinction between an ethnic and a civic basis of national identity has long informed the literature. Ethnic identity typically refers to a membership in a cultural group, which is the result of heritage or upbringing, akin to tribal membership. Ethnic identity often means that ethnic 'others' are excluded from the concept of the nation (Billig 1995; Gilroy 2002). Identification with ethnically-based versions of national identity is generally linked to negative predictions of immigrants (Kunovich 2009). Civic notions of national identity refer to a membership based on involvement through acts of citizenship, including contributions to political and community life. These do not invoke ideas of heritage but presume that national identity is permeable and acquirable. Civic identity is often considered to include aspects that are under an individual's control like 'feeling' that one is from a nation or speaking the language (see Jones and Smith 2001a, 2001b; Janmaat 2006; Larsen 2017).

With ongoing efforts toward Catalan autonomy and independence, our interest centres on the nature of Catalan identity and identification. Recent studies have argued that substate nations generally tend to be open to immigrants and to their adoption of host national identities with the aim of cultural or political perpetuation (e.g. Blad and Couton 2009; Jeram 2013; Conversi and Jeram 2017). Catalonia seems to be no exception in this regard (e.g. Conversi 1990; Erickson 2011; Carlà 2018). Whereas Catalan identity may certainly be based on ancestry and heritage, one would expect Catalan identity to be highly influential as a civic identity as well. Consistent with this idea, Catalan independence supporters have specifically reached out and argued for the inclusion of immigrants (see Franco-Guillén 2015; Carlà 2018). The idea of being Catalan reflecting a civic identity has long played a role in Catalan integrationist discourse through the concept of convivència. Erickson (2011) argues that *convivència* itself is a 'vernacular interculturalist project in [Catalonia] … an alternative to both xenophobic and liberal multiculturalist discourses circulating in Europe' (114) where, he argues, both sides work to meet on a sort of middle ground.

Still, the civic–ethnic conceptualization has received much criticism as an oversimplification. Theorists have argued that most identities pertaining to nations frequently include elements that are both civic and ethnic (e.g. Kymlicka 2001; Shulman 2002). Furthermore, the popularity of civic–ethnic framework has enabled, if not encouraged, a mislabelling of stateless nations like Catalonia, Quebec, and Scotland as 'ethnic' nationalist projects (Kymlicka 2001; Blad and Couton 2009). Conversi (1990) argued that, compared to the nearby Basque Country, Catalan identity is not based on race or ethnicity, but rather on language use and competence. Because language proficiency can be acquired by new arrivals, a non-ethnic identity is more open and welcoming to immigrants than one based on ethnicity. Erickson (2011) expands: 'Catalan identity is rarely considered to reside in genetic or

racial origin but in residence, voluntary self-identification, political commitment to regional autonomy, and the use of the Catalan language' (116).

Yet, an open question remains as to if and how immigrants absorb, and even believe, these messages based on their personal experiences at school and elsewhere. Deusdad-Ayala (2009) documented rampant teacher-held xenophobic views within Catalan secondary schools (see also Petreñas et al. 2019). Likewise, Gibson et al. (2013) observed:

> As in other high schools with a predominantly native Catalan staff and student body, a particular nationalist discourse emerged that prided itself in the lack of racism and discrimination, as these were seen to be un-Catalan. Yet this discourse contradicted the everyday lived experiences of isolation and racialized discrimination among the newcomer students from non-EU countries (102).

Further confusing the situation, Muslims, especially when they are recent immigrants from north African countries or the Middle East, often face rejection and hostility from Spanish identifiers within Catalonia (Deusdad-Ayala 2009; Astor 2016). Astor (2016) argues that anti-Mosque protests have been held primarily in the peripheral districts of Barcelona in areas with large concentrations of Spanish-identifiers. It is well documented that lower-skilled and less-educated natives are especially likely to view immigrants as a threat to their economic well-being (e.g. Hjerm 2001; Scheve and Slaughter 2001). Spanish identifiers, given their recent migrant status and taken as a group overall, are economically disadvantaged compared to Catalan natives (Miley 2007); and may be more likely to view immigrant groups, as economic competition (see Astor 2016). This may be especially for Muslim immigrants, who have been arriving in Catalonia over a relatively short span of time and settled primarily in working-class areas with higher concentrations of Spanish-identifying migrants and their descendants.

Although some Catalan nationalists may seek to 'recruit' immigrants to share in their national agenda, immigrants are differentially responsive to the invitation. However, little is known about how immigrant adolescents position themselves within Catalonia's complicated identity constellation.

Study overview

Our research investigates questions of national identification in a large sample of adolescents in Catalonia—the first to focus on this population. Specifically, we examine how the understudied native and immigrant adolescent populations negotiate their attachment to Spain and to Catalonia. These two different dimensions of national identification are likely shaped by a variety of factors discussed in the literature, including social environments, socioeconomic background, as well as understanding of what it means to be Spanish or Catalan.

As a general approach, we rely on multilevel regression; we attempt to study national identification not only as a function of the characteristics of individuals, but also of the social context. Classrooms and schools represent a critical life context for adolescents, which help shape students' relationship to larger society (e.g. Meece and Eccles 2010). This is especially true in Catalan high schools, where classes of students are comparably stable across multiple years (see Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier, and Prats 2018). Hence, we

consider multilevel regression imperative, if only to correctly assess predictors of national identification at individual, classroom and school levels.

A novel contribution of this study is our measure of dual identity, for which we adapt a method originally used in attitude research, specifically, attitudinal ambivalence. We capitalize on the fact that measures of attitudinal ambivalence reflect the simultaneous endorsement of ideas or feelings that many view as incompatible with each other (Thompson and Zanna 1995; Priester and Petty 1996). Ambivalence is low when participants provide high ratings on one dimension and low on the other, or when a person expresses low ratings on both. However, ambivalence is high when participants provide high ratings on both positive and negative dimensions. Because many people in Catalonia increasingly view identifying as Catalan and as Spanish as incompatible, we repurpose the same method in order to study dual identification, i.e. the extent to which someone might highly identify as both Catalan and as Spanish. Our measure yields high values when a person highly identifies with both the Catalan and Spanish identities simultaneously. It yields low values when the person identifies with only one identity, Catalan *or* Spanish, but it also yields low values if the person identifies with neither Catalonia nor Spain[1] (see 'Measures' section).

Critically, we also examine the implications of Catalan, Spanish, and dual identification for xenophobia. Because our research addresses how youth absorb messages about Catalan identity, we considered it important to test if viewing being Catalan as a more civic, permeable national identity would promote higher levels of tolerance toward non-natives. This was important as other work has claimed that high levels of identification with civic-type identities can also predict prejudice and exclusion (e.g. Kunovich 2009). But given that the political discourse in Catalonia focuses on openness toward immigrants, with Catalan identity touted as inclusive and accepting, we hypothesized this would not be the case with Catalan identity.

With the larger political conflict centred on the status of Catalonia, and with Catalan national identity being a topic of controversy, we assess two different conceptions of Catalan identity, inspired by the ethnic vs. civic distinction, but adapted with subnation distinctiveness in mind (e.g. Blad and Couton 2009). Specifically, we assess whether students considered being Catalan a matter of *practice* or a matter of *ascription*, based on legal status implied by birth. Perceived group permeability (see Ellemers 1993; Verkuyten and Reijerse 2008) is central to the concept of an 'in-practice' Catalan identity, and reflects a non-exclusive idea of nationality as touted by the Catalan independence movement. However, conceptions of nationality resulting from clear criteria which either ascribe Catalan identity to a person or not, are likely more exclusionary.

As mentioned above, our interest lies in whether immigrants identify with Catalonia or Spain, and whether they adopt a similar stance as natives toward the two national identities, especially as far as perceived identity (in)compatibility is concerned. We also anticipate that immigrants' backgrounds matter, with immigrants from traditionally Spanish-speaking countries (e.g. Latin America) presumably less likely to identify as Catalan (Huguet and Janés 2008; Petreñas et al. 2019). Similarly, we also compare Muslim and non-Muslim immigrants, who, in our sample mostly hail from Morocco, and to a lesser extent Pakistan, as Muslim immigrants in Europe often face higher levels of prejudice and acrimony than those with other religious backgrounds (e.g. Deusdad-Ayala 2009; Astor 2016; Reitz, Simon, and Laxer 2017).

All of our models include four individual-level demographic predictors: gender, socioeconomic status (SES), immigration status, and the age of arrival in Catalonia when pertinent. Females are often expected to identify less with larger groups such as nations, and be lower in xenophobia (e.g. Bergamaschi 2013). In the Catalan context it was critical to control SES, which includes parental education, occupation, foreign travel, and space and amenities available in the home, since Spanish identifiers are generally of lower SES (Miley 2007), but higher in xenophobia (e.g. Erickson 2011). SES was also relevant in terms of the historical context of the recent economic crisis, resulting in a sizable increase in social instability and unemployment in Catalonia at the time of this research (IDESCAT 2014c) disproportionately affecting lower SES groups.

Method

Participants

High school students between 15 and 16 years old from 30 Catalan high schools (82 classrooms) participated in this study in spring 2014. Schools were selected in order to obtain a representative sample from all four Catalan provinces. Five were located within Barcelona's city limits, 8 in Greater Barcelona, and 17 elsewhere in Catalonia. They were diverse in size, overall socioeconomic status, and percentage of first- and second-generation immigrant students. Although 1709 students agreed to participate and filled out surveys, only those for whom all measures listed below were available, $n = 1550$ (48.5% female) were included in the multilevel analyses. This included 382 participants (24.6%) who were first- or second-generation immigrants (first-generation students were born in over 50 different countries). Of these, 106 (6.8% of the total sample) were Muslim identifying, with 53% born in Morocco, 9% born in Pakistan, with 7% each born elsewhere. The remaining Muslim-identifying immigrants, 31%, were second-generation, with 24% of these having parents born in Morocco; other parents were born elsewhere. For native students, which included only four Muslims, religious background was not taken into account.

Measures

Dependent variables

National identity. Respondents indicated on 5-point scale (1 *not at all* to 5 *very)* to what extent they 'felt or identified' as Catalan and as Spanish. We used two different measures of dual identification, based on approaches proposed in the ambivalent attitudes literature.[2] First, borrowing from the Similarity Intensity Model (SIM) by Thompson and Zanna (1995), we calculated a dual identification score based on the following equation:

$$DualIdentification(SIM) = (3*C - D).$$

For our purposes, C is the weaker of the two identities, and D is the dominant identity of the two (either may be chosen if identities are equal). The highest scores are both high *and* of similar magnitude (e.g. 5 = Catalan, 5 = Spanish, 15 - 5 = 10), the lowest scores (e.g. 5 = Catalan, 1 = Spanish or 1 = Catalan, 5 = Spanish, 3 - 5 = −2) are those that show conflicting magnitude regarding host national identification (Thompson and Zanna 1995; see also the

'Study Overview' section of this paper). Since the lowest possible score is −2, we added +2 to every score, thus changing the equation to Dual Identity = 2 + (3*C−D). This was merely for convenience to ensure that lowest possible dual-identity endorsement is 0 given our 5-point measurement scales.

The second approach relied on the graduate threshold model (GTM) by Priester and Petty (1996), with dual identity calculated as:

$$DualIdentification(GTM) = 5C^{.5} - D^{1/C}.$$

Referring to the examples above, the highest and lowest possible scores are 9.801 and 0, respectively.[3]

Xenophobia

A 7-item scale was created (Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier, and Prats 2018), to assess xenophobic attitudes among adolescents (Cronbach's α = .83). Participants were asked to imagine that a peer made a series of statements about 'people who have arrived from other countries' and to rate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed with these statements (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*). Sample items included: 'They take jobs away from people who were born here,' 'They are unfamiliar with the laws here and don't follow them,' and 'They help our economy grow' (reverse-coded).

Independent variables

Immigrant background and immigrant categorization based on religion

Participants indicated whether their parents were born in Catalonia, elsewhere in Spain, or abroad. Those born abroad were prompted to specify their birthplace. Students were considered immigrants if both parents, or in cases of single parents, mother or father, were born abroad. Students with one native parent were considered natives (see Stanat and Christensen 2006). *Muslim immigrants* were those who self-identified as Muslim on a close-ended multiple-choice item listing different religions. *Non-Muslim immigrants* were those who did not self-identify as Muslim on this same item.

By-practice and by-ascription views of Catalan identity

Students responded to seven items (1 *strongly disagree* to 5 *strongly agree)* on who they considered to be 'Catalan'. A principal component analysis with varimax rotation identified two distinct dimensions (see also Jones and Smith 2001a, 2001b). The first we refer to as *Catalan identity by practice* on which 3 items were loaded: 'The Catalans are people who live in Catalonia regardless of where they were born and whether or not they live here legally,' 'The Catalans are people who feel that they are from Catalonia,' and 'The Catalans are people who share the most common Catalan traditions and customs.' The second dimension we call *Catalan identity by ascription*: 'The Catalans are people that were born in Catalonia' and 'Catalans are the people who live here legally.' Two additional items related to Catalan language and multi-generational ancestry were eliminated due to cross-loadings.[4]

Age of arrival

Participants were asked how old they were when they arrived to Catalonia/Spain (if applicable). For our analyses, we created two categories: under 6 years and over 6 years spent in Catalonia (see Cummins 1981; Rumbault 2004). Natives and second-generation participants were assigned a 0, and those who were not born in Catalonia or Spain and had arrived before the age of six were recoded as 1, and those after six as 2.

Spanish-language-origin connection

Students who indicated that they themselves, or at least one of their parents, were born in Spain, outside of Catalonia, ($n = 413$; 35.4% of natives) or in another Spanish-speaking country ($n = 176$; 46.1% of immigrants) were dummy-coded into this category**.** This included students from Equatorial Guinea, for example, whose national language is Spanish.

Socio-economic status and gender

A standardized factor score was constructed based on highest parental educational attainment of either parent; frequency with which students had travelled abroad (if they had done so); whether participants had their own room, their own table for studying, and a computer and Internet access at home. In addition, the factor score included the highest occupational level of any parent, categorized according to the Spanish National Classification of Occupations or CNO-11 (INE 2011). Participants also indicated their gender (1 = female, 0 = male).

Data collection

Students were surveyed in their classrooms by research team members as part of a larger 2014 study and assured that their answers would remain anonymous. All instruments were administered in Catalan. As with other international educational surveys (e.g. the Programme for International Student Assessment [PISA]), the questionnaires of students whose level of Catalan was deemed insufficient by their teachers, e.g. because they were recent arrivals to Catalonia, were not included (see Burns, Wang, and Henning 2011, 297).

Data analysis

Analyses were conducted in R using the lme4 package (Bates et al. 2016). A multilevel approach was used, which allowed us to handle the interdependence in our data as it occurred with students nested within classrooms, which themselves were nested within schools. Hence, we used a series of three-level models, in which we tested individual-level effects, classroom-level effects, and cross-level interactions. School-level terms generally did not improve the models, and are therefore not reported.[5] All continuous predictors were grand-mean centred.

For each dependent variable, we tested four models: Model 1 included only main effects at the individual level (Level 1); Model 2 included both main effects and interaction effects at the individual level (Level 1); Model 3 added main effects at the classroom level (Level 2); and Model 4 finally included cross-level interaction terms. The four models were

tested in sequence, and a model was selected when a subsequent model no longer improved model fit based on comparisons of −2 log likelihood, Akaike Information Criterion (AIC), and Schwartz's Bayesian Information Criterion (BIC).

Results

The central goal of our analyses was to first to examine predictors of Catalan and Spanish identification, as well as dual identification, i.e. joint identification with both. Table 1 revealed that Model 3 was the last to improve model fit for all pertinent dependent identification variables, with the likelihood ratio test showing significant model improvement compared to Model 2. Table 2 (columns 1-4) summarizes the model results.

Catalan and Spanish identification

A first inspection reveals that the intercept for Catalan identification is substantially higher than for Spanish identification, implying overall higher levels of Catalan national attachment. Next, the negative coefficient of Catalan identity on Spanish identity and Spanish identity on Catalan identity imply that, generally, students view these two identities as incompatible with one another. However, this appears to be contingent on immigration status: the significant interaction terms highlighted that, whereas for native-born students there is the abovementioned negative link from Spanish identification to Catalan identity, $b = -.23$, $p < .001$, this relationship is reversed for both Muslim immigrants, $b = .49$, p

Table 1. Data for determining optimal model fit for the 5 dependent variables.

DV	Model	Df	Log Likelihood	BIC	AIC
Catalan identification	1	14	−2362.9	4828.6	4753.8
	2	18	−2357.0*	4846.2	4750.0
	3	**26**	**−2283.1*****	**4757.3**	**4618.3**
	4	37	−2270.2**	4812.2	4614.4
Spanish identification	1	14	−2596.6	5296.1	5221.2
	2	18	−2590.7*	5313.6	5217.4
	3	26	**−2475.7*****	**5142.4**	**5003.4**
	4	37	−2470.1	5212.0	5014.2
Dual identification (SIM)	1	15	−3724.8	7559.9	7479.7
	2	19	−3720.6^{+}	7580.7	7479.2
	3	29	**−3562.9*****	**7338.8**	**7183.8**
	4	40	−3560.1	7414.1	7200.3
Dual identification (GTM)	1	15	−3462.6	7035.3	6955.1
	2	19	−3459.1	7057.7	6956.2
	3	29	**−3306.2*****	**6825.5**	**6670.5**
	4	40	−3302.6	6899.1	6685.3
Xenophobia	1	16	**−1485.8**	**3088.8**	**3003.5**
	2	20	−1483.6	3113.8	3007.2
	3	32	−1475.8	3186.2	3015.7
	4	43	−1469.4	3254.1	3024.8

*p <.05; **p < .01; ***p < .001.

Note. 1 = Level 1 model; 2 = Level-1 and Level-2 model; 3 = Level-1 and −2 model only, within Level-1 interactions; 4 = Level-1 and −2 model only, with within Level-1 interactions and cross-level interactions. Asterisks levels refer to model fit comparisons between a model and preceding, less complex alternative model. Selected models are bolded (superior compared to previous model with regard to log likelihood, BIC and AIC).

Df = degrees of freedom.

LogLik = Likelihood ratio.

BIC = Bayesian information criterion.

AIC = Akaike information criterion.

Table 2. Final models of multilevel analysis for Catalan Identity, Spanish Identity, Dual Identity (SIM and GTM), and Xenophobia.

	Catalan identity			Spanish identity			Dual identity (SIM)			Dual identity (GTM)			Xenophobia		
	b	*se*	*t*	*b*	*se*	*t*	*b*	*se*	*t*	*b*	*se*	*t*	*b*	*se*	*t*
Intercept	3.948	(.059)		3.229	(.074)		2.329	(.119)		4.570	(.100)		3.070	(.053)	
Level 1(Individual)															
Female (0=male)	.129	(.054)	2.37*	.167	(.061)	2.73**	.031	(.124)	.25	.010	(.105)	.09	−.070	(.033)	−2.12*
Age of arrival (0-6 years)	−.259	(.171)	−1.52	−.526	(.193)	−2.72**	−.243	(.395)	−.62	−.173	(.335)	−.52	.076	(.102)	.75
Age of arrival (7+ years)	−.472	(.171)	−2.76**	−.794	(.192)	−4.14***	.091	(.398)	.23	.078	(.337)	.23	.151	(.101)	1.50
Socioeconomic status (SES)	.222	(.040)	5.50***	−.206	(.046)	−4.47***	.053	(.094)	.57	.025	(.079)	.31	−.070	(.021)	−3.41***
Non-Muslim immigrant	−.959	(.160)	−5.99***	.150	(.186)	.81	2.158	(.382)	5.65***	1.767	(.324)	5.46***	−.616	(.095)	−6.52***
Muslim immigrant	−.868	(.228)	−3.80***	.190	(.268)	.71	2.666	(.545)	4.89***	1.939	(.462)	4.20***	−.704	(.099)	−7.14***
Spanish-lang. origin connection	−.303	(.063)	−4.82***	.422	(.071)	5.93***	.227	(.145)	1.56	.109	(.123)	.89	−.077	(.038)	−2.04*
Cat. ID by practice	.114	(.037)	3.06**	−.280	(.041)	−6.78***	.054	(.085)	.63	.069	(.072)	.96	−.138	(.019)	−7.13***
Cat. ID by ascription	.176	(.034)	5.15***	.139	(.039)	3.57***	.031	(.079)	.39	.061	(.067)	.91	.066	(.018)	3.61***
Catalan identification		-		−.306	(.031)	−9.74***	1.579	(.066)	23.85***	1.203	(.056)	21.44***	.000	(.016)	.00
Spanish identification	−.225	(.024)	−9.28***		-		2.240	(.058)	38.84***	1.908	(.049)	39.03***	.059	(.016)	3.58***
Dual identification (GTM)		-			-			-			-		−.029	(.007)	−4.05***
Level 1 Interactions															
Non-Muslim Immi. X Cat. ID by practice	.209	(.080)	2.62**	.301	(.093)	3.24**	−.130	(.189)	−.69	−.235	(.160)	−1.47			
Muslim Immi. X Cat. ID by practice	.162	(.129)	1.26	.191	(.151)	1.27	−.127	(.307)	−.41	−.204	(.260)	−.79			
Non-Muslim Cat X ID by ascription	−.215	(.084)	−2.58**	−.205	(.094)	−2.17*	−.102	(.192)	−.53	−.090	(.162)	−.56			
Muslim Cat. ID X ascription	−.294	(.114)	−2.60**	−.002	(.127)	−.02	−.154	(.261)	−.59	−.121	(.221)	−.55			
Non-Muslim Immi. X Catalan ident.		-		.719	(.066)	10.91***	−.169	(.141)	−1.20	.066	(.119)	.55			
Muslim Immi. X Catalan ident.		-		.910	(.110)	8.30***	−.800	(.275)	−2.91**	−.598	(.233)	−2.57*			
Non-Muslim Immi. X Span. ident.	.514	(.054)	9.56***		-		−2.178	(.129)	−16.86***	−1.869	(.110)	−17.07***			
Muslim Immi. * Span. ident.	.714	(.084)	8.55***		-		−1.549	(.237)	−6.53***	−1.219	(.201)	−6.06***			
Non-Muslim Immi X SES	−.032	(.080)	−.40	.276	(.092)	3.00**	−.421	(.186)	−2.27*	−.354	(.157)	−2.25*			
Muslim Immi X SES	−.068	(.136)	−.50	.090	(.154)	.59	−.057	(.315)	−.18	−.083	(.267)	−.31			
Level 2 (Classroom)															
Socioeconomic status (class %)	.001	(.001)	.97	−.004	(.001)	−2.70**	.002	(.002)	.84	.003	(.002)	1.29			
Non-Muslim immigrants (class %)	.000	(.004)	.01	−.006	(.004)	−1.45	.008	(.007)	1.08	.001	(.006)	.21			
Muslim immigrants (class %)	−.005	(.005)	−.86	−.004	(.006)	−.75	−.005	(.011)	−.50	.000	(.009)	.04			
Spanish-lang. origin conn. (class %)	−.004	(.003)	−1.39	.001	(.003)	.44	.008	(.005)	1.53	.007	(.004)	1.69			
Random components															
Level 1 (individual)		1.0795			1.3947			5.6840			4.0917			.3972	
Level 2 (classroom)		.0273			.0000			.1547			.0962			.0138	
Level 3 (school)		.0253			.0695			.0000			.0000			.0187	

*$p < .05$; **$p < .01$; ***$p < .001$. *Note*. X Denotes interaction; [a] Coded 0=native, 1=immigrant.

$< .001$, and non-Muslim immigrants, $b = .29, p < .001$. Likewise, significant interaction terms showed that among native-born students high levels of Catalan identification predicted lower levels of Spanish identification, $b = -.31$, $p < .001$. This relationship was again reversed among both Muslim immigrants, $b = .60$, $p < .001$ as well as non-Muslim immigrants, $b = .41$, $p < .001$. These findings imply that *only* native-born students perceived identification with Catalonia and Spain to be incompatible with each other, whereas immigrants were likely to identify with both at the same time. It is important to note that both groups of immigrants were significantly less likely to identify with Catalonia than their native-born peers, whereas there was no reliable difference between the two immigrant groups with regard to Spanish identification.

Still, among immigrants and non-immigrants alike, having been born in or having a parent from a Spanish-speaking country (i.e. Spain but not Catalonia, a Spanish-speaking Latin American country, etc.) was a positive predictor of Spanish identification and a negative predictor of Catalan identification.

When considering the by-practice (embracing traditions/personal feelings) versus by-ascription (birth/legality) dimensions of Catalan identity, respondents showed the conception of being Catalan as a matter of practice was positively related to high levels of Catalan identification among native-born students, $b = .11$, $p < .01$, as well as among Muslim immigrant students, $b = .28$, $p < .05$, with the relationship being significantly stronger among non-Muslim immigrant students than native students, $b = .32$, $p < .001$. These findings highlight that, especially for immigrants, identifying as Catalan is rooted in feeling Catalan and doing 'Catalan things.' However, the pattern varied for Catalan identity by ascription. Only native students identified more with Catalonia the more they felt that being Catalan implied being born in Catalonia and having a legal status there, $b = .18$, $p < .001$. However, as shown by the relevant interaction effects in the first column of Table 2, this relationship was held neither among Muslim nor among non-Muslim immigrant students, $b = -.12$, $p = .12$ and $b = -.04$, $p = .60$, respectively. In other words, immigrants seemed to base their sense of identification with Catalonia exclusively on Catalan practices and feeling Catalan, whereas for native-born students legality and birth in Catalonia were important. In fact, a comparison of coefficients implies that for native students their beliefs about identity-as-ascription was slightly more predictive of their level of identification than their beliefs about identity as practice ($b = .11$ vs. $b = .18$).

Interestingly, conceptions of Catalan identity also related to Spanish identification. The more students viewed being Catalan to be a matter of practice, the less they identified with Spain, $b = -.28$, $p < .001$, again pointing to the sensed incompatibility between feeling Catalan and feeling Spanish. Yet, the more they viewed being Catalan as a matter of birth and legal status, the more they identified with Spain, $b = .14, p < .001$. The latter observation might be largely a reflection of the fact that, even when Catalonia is viewed as a separate nation, as of this writing, legally every Catalan citizen is also a Spanish citizen. That is, native students who view identity through an ascription (birth/legality) lens might be more likely to identify as both Catalan and Spanish. However, as indicated by significant interaction terms, both relationships were not reliable for non-Muslim immigrant students, $b = .02$, $p = .80$, and $b = -.07$, $p = .44$, respectively. Among Muslim immigrant students, non-significant interactions showed that relationships are not substantially different from those obtained for native students; yet, simple effects showed, as for non-Muslim immigrants, the respective relationships were not reliable, $b = -.09$, $p = .54$, and $b = .14$, $p = .26$.

A students' socioeconomic background had differential implications for identification with Catalonia and Spain. Whereas higher SES predicted greater Catalan identification, it also implied lower Spanish identification. Again, this pattern primarily manifested for native students, $b = .22$, $p < .001$ and $b = -.21$, $p < .001$. Whereas the individual-level relationships were consistent among both Muslim and non-Muslim immigrants, the link between SES and Spanish identification was non-significantly reversed among non-Muslim immigrant students, $b = .07$, $p = .41$. Notably, the lower the overall SES level of a student's class, the lower their identification with Spain (see Table 2). That is, a lower SES context seemed to relate to a weakened sense of Spanish identification.

Dual identification

Results for our two parallel measures of dual identification (SIM, GTM) converged (see Table 2, columns 3 and 4). Strikingly, both types of immigrant students scored substantially higher on dual identification compared to native-born students. This is consistent with the observation that, in contrast to native students, immigrant student responses revealed a positive correlation between Catalan and Spanish identification; i.e. immigrants tended to identify with both groups at the same time. However, this result must be viewed with caution. Whereas this finding indicates that immigrants were more likely to rate their identification with Catalonia and Spain equally, the absolute level of identification was substantially lower than among native students. For instance, a total of 27.4% of all native students rated being Catalan and Spanish as high or very high (a 4 or 5) on a 5-point scale. However, across immigrant groups, this higher dual identification was the case for only 3.5% of all the immigrant students. When examining, however, whether students exhibited at least a middling dual-identification (3 or higher on the 5-point scale), the proportion of native students increased to 41.4%, and more drastically jumped to 32.7% among immigrants.[6]

Not surprisingly, Catalan and Spanish identification were related to the dual identification scores, simply because the latter included the former. Likewise, the interaction effects (Table 2, lower panel of column 3 and 4) must be interpreted as a consequence of the SIM and GTM formula assigned slightly more or less importance to Catalan versus Spanish identification in the computation of the dual identification score depending on which was more or less likely to become the C or D component (see above). However, the inclusion of both identification terms, and their interactions with immigration status ensures that the above group differences in dual identification (i.e. native vs. immigrant students) are not merely a reflection of either Catalan or Spanish identification, but truly the result of joint identification with both groups.

Importantly, this analysis did not find any relationships between conceptions of Catalan identity (by-practice, by-ascription) and dual identification. In other words, how students think about what makes someone Catalan did not have any implications for whether they identified with both Catalonia and Spain simultaneously, even when conceptions of identity had implications for their identification with Catalonia or Spain by itself.

Xenophobia

Our final set of models addressed the implications of immigrant status, ethnic-national identifications and conceptions of Catalan identity for xenophobia. As shown in Table 1,

the simplest model (including individual-level main effects only) was not improved by the addition of interaction effects or classroom level effects. Hence, we report findings from our Model 1 in the last column of Table 2.

First and not surprisingly, both Muslim and non-Muslim immigrant students held less xenophobic views than native students, reflecting that 'newcomers' to a society held more favourable views concerning this very status as newcomers. Second, Spanish identification, was linked to higher levels of xenophobia, consistent with previous work (e.g. Hjerm 1998; Knudsen 1997); however, students born, or with at least one parent born, in Spain (not Catalonia) or a Spanish-speaking country were less likely to hold such attitudes. This makes clear that subjective importance assigned to Spain, not merely one's birth place or parentage from Spain or Latin America, were predictive of xenophobia.

Catalan identification itself was unrelated to xenophobia. Yet, how students thought about being Catalan clearly did have implications for xenophobia. The more students believed that being Catalan was a matter of daily practice and subjective feeling, the less likely were they to hold xenophobic attitudes. However, the more they believed that there were clear and objective criteria, such as birth or legal status in Catalonia, the more they embraced xenophobic beliefs.

Lastly, dual identification was also negatively related to xenophobia. Especially in a model which controls for its constituent components (Catalan and Spanish identification) dual identification is a distinct predictor.[7]

Discussion

Catalonia is living a moment of national political turmoil, complicated by a recent six-fold increase in immigration. Much of the future of Catalonia and whether parts of its population will continue to seek the region's independence is related to national identification (Tormos, Muñoz, and Hierro 2015). In this regard, whether feeling Catalan and feeling Spanish are seen as compatible or incompatible with each other by future political participants is likely of central interest (Hooghe and Wilkenfeld 2008; Hierro and Gallego 2018).

Whereas national identification among native adults in Catalonia has received much larger-scale empirical attention, to our knowledge, our investigation is the first of its type to investigate national identification in adolescents—individuals who will soon reach maturity and are able to help shape Catalonia's future through voting and other forms of political participation. Likewise, our investigation is the first to include immigrant youth, a part of the population that embodies an important part of the dramatic social changes occurring in Catalonia.

Our multilevel investigation revealed that identity polarization in Catalonia, i.e. identifying either as Catalan *or* Spanish, is not confined to adult Catalan residents, but is also prevalent among the native adolescent population. In other words, although we employed measures of identity different from those commonly used in studies of adults in Catalonia (e.g. Tormos, Muñoz, and Hierro 2015; Hierro and Gallego 2018), conceptually, our findings for native youth mirror their older counterparts in that being Catalan and being Spanish is viewed by many as incompatible, even when a substantial minority of dual-identifiers is present. Immigrants report overall lower levels of national identification,

but do not seem to buy into incompatibility between feeling Catalan and feeling Spanish and are much more likely to dual-identify.

Over the long term this pattern may have some profoundly ironic consequences—and a long-term perspective is warranted because our focus was on adolescents, many of whom would turn into legal voting citizens in a few short years. On the one hand, we know that Catalan nationalists portray the Catalan identity as inherently inclusive (e.g. Conversi 1990; Erickson 2011; Woolard 2016). The Catalan independence movement does reject identification with Spain, but displays openness to immigrants seemingly in hopes that nationalized immigrants might eventually support Catalan independence (Carlà 2018). On the other hand, Spanish-identifying residents of Catalonia, and who are much less likely to support Catalan independence, are much more likely to oppose immigrants and immigration (see Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier, and Prats 2018; cf. Wilson-Daily and Kemmelmeier 2019). Yet, it is precisely immigrant youth who find being both Catalan and Spanish compatible with each other, and who thus may not see a need for Catalan independence. Put differently, many of the native residents who strongly identify with Spain seem to oppose the influx of precisely the group that might be supportive of keeping Catalonia as part of Spain. Likewise, strong supporters of a Catalan national project might be precisely supportive of the group who, over the long term, might actually undermine their push for independence. Overall, our prediction is that as the growing immigrant population in Catalonia is nationalized or second generation immigrant youth come of voting age, chances of a successful referendum in favor of Catalan independence are likely to diminish.

Our data also provide important insight into youth conceptions of what determines national identity, which is only partially shared between native and immigrant youth. Outside of high Spanish identifiers, students seemed to embrace the current political discourse that the Catalan identity is permeable and open, accessible by sharing Catalan customs and feeling Catalan. Indeed, non-Muslim immigrant students, for example, seemed to subscribe to this idea even more than native students. Arguably, this reflects a success on the part of a Catalan movement that portrays itself as tolerant and cosmopolitan (e.g. Erickson 2011; Woolard 2016; but also Gibson et al. 2013). Yet, native students also felt that being Catalan was a matter of ascription, i.e. being born in Catalonia and having a legal status there, whereas immigrant students did not. This more objectivist Catalan identity entails the potential exclusion of newcomers to Catalonia, as reflected in our Catalan-by-ascription variable predicting higher levels of xenophobia. Overall, it is not surprising that for immigrant students whom they considered 'Catalan' was not seen as a matter of ascription. The conception of being Catalan as a matter of practice, of feeling Catalan, and doing Catalan things is inherently more inviting to newcomers.

Surprisingly, we also found that different conceptions of Catalan identity predicted levels of Spanish identification. As briefly alluded to earlier, believing that being Catalan is a matter of practice was inversely related to identifying as Spanish. At the same time, the notion that Catalan was a matter of ascription was positively related to Spanish identification, similar to what was found for Catalan identification. We speculate that viewing Catalan as a matter of practice may reflect a generally more open-minded stance on matters of identity and the political status quo in Catalonia. From this perspective, viewing Catalan identity as in-practice and permeable may convey a rejection of Spain as the political unit of which Catalonia is a part.

In line with the literature (e.g. Erickson 2011), Spanish identification was related to higher levels of xenophobia, but not Catalan identification. Muslim immigrants showed lower levels of xenophobia compared to non-Muslim immigrants, perhaps due to higher levels of discrimination toward Muslim immigrants in Catalonia even by other immigrant groups (Deusdad-Ayala 2009). Further speaking to the literature (e.g. Miley 2007), lower SES negatively predicted Catalan identity (see also Wilson-Daily and Kemmelmeier 2019). And as hypothesized, among immigrants, later age of arrival and having been born or having at least one parent from Spain (but not Catalonia) or another Spanish-speaking country (cf. Petreñas et al. 2019) negatively predicted Catalan identification. Yet, contrary what was hypothesized, no great differences were observed between Muslim and non-Muslim immigrants regarding any of the host identification categories. The literature reveals that, in spite of Catalan insistence on inclusivity, immigrants do often face exclusion in Catalan secondary schools, institutional and otherwise (Deusdad-Ayala 2009; Gibson et al. 2013; Petreñas et al. 2019). Nonetheless, our findings suggest that if indeed this type of exclusion does selectively target Muslim immigrants (Deusdad-Ayala 2009; Astor 2016), it does not affect their levels of Catalan, Spanish, or dual identification compared to non-Muslim immigrants.

As with all studies, our research is not without limitations. Our data, which were collected in 2014, offer a brief glimpse at the complex identity dynamics in Catalonia. It is unclear to what extent youth would have responded to the much more forceful 2017 attempt on the part of the Catalan independence movement to achieve its aim, the corresponding police brutality, the subsequent jailing and criminal conviction of Catalan leaders, and the Spanish government`s imposed direct rule of Catalonia (Barceló 2018; Garrido-Muñoz 2018; 'Violent clashes,' 2019). In particular, it remains an open question whose identifications were potentially affected by these events.

Arguably, an omission in the present research was that we focused exclusively on conceptions of Catalan national identity, but not conceptions of Spanish identity. It would have been interesting to observe whether conceptions of Catalan identity as either ascription-based or based on personal practice match the conceptions of Spanish identity. Though we speculate that Spanish identity is seen as much more ascription-based, we must be open to the possibility that adolescents residing in Catalonia vary to the extent that they entertain much more practice-based notions of national identity, regardless of what they think about Catalonia or Spain. Conversely, providing concrete evidence that practice-based conception of Spanish is rejected in favour of a more ascription-based Spanish would offer a stronger argument that the comparative accessibility of the Catalan identity is indeed what attracts and persuades immigrants to identify as Catalan.

The observation that the classroom-level variables were not related to our identity variables (with the exception of low-classroom-SES predicting Spanish identity) is surprising and diverges from the results of earlier studies (see Pagès and González Monfort 2010; Hierro 2015). Overall, little variability was observed among classrooms or schools, implying that our participants' identification is largely related to individual-level, and not school factors (but see Endnote 5). Studies drawing from the same data set did show that the school context is influential in Catalonia regarding attitudes toward political engagement (Wilson-Daily and Kemmelmeier 2019) and classroom make-up in attitudes toward different conceptions of diversity (Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier, and Prats 2018). We cannot provide a cogent explanation for this apparent discrepancy. We speculate that,

especially for immigrant youth, parental attitudes and students' own personal experiences (negative and positive) with members identifying with different national groups are of particular relevance. School represents a central life context for adolescents, and it is thus possible that identity-defining personal experiences might occur within the context of personal relationships with classmates (e.g. friendships). With students having both positive and negative experience with classmates, our current approach might have been too coarse by averaging across the mix of these experiences. That is, our approach could have resulted in the illusion that classrooms do not matter, when they are indeed central for critical relationships. This is an area worthy of future study.

Notes

1. Note that this method does not inherently assume that one of the identities is positive and the other negative; rather, the focus is merely on whether the actual patterns of identification with the two identities reflect whether these identities are compatible or incompatible with each other.
2. To operationalize dual identification, previous research (including our own: Wilson-Daily, Kemmelmeier, and Prats 2018) has often used the multiplicative interaction term made up of two separate identification variables when dual identification served as a predictor variable. We employed dual identification as a predictor only in our analysis of xenophobia (Table 1, bottom panel; Table 2, column 5). When repeating these analyses with a multiplicative interaction, results led to the same conclusions as those reported here. In other analyses, we treat dual identification as a dependent variable (Table 1, middle panels; Table 2, columns 3 and 4).
3. Uz, Kemmelmeier, and Yetkin (2009) and Uz and Kemmelmeier (2014) employed the same two models (SIM, GTM) to calculate a score reflecting what the authors termed 'ambivalent identification.' However, scores were based on respondents' stated response to be close to (approach) or to be distant from (avoid) a particular identity. Here, SIM and GTM are being used to assess identification with two competing, if not for many respondents, incompatible, group memberships.
4. Whereas as speaking the national language is sometimes treated as evidence of an ascribed ethnic identity, it is important to recall that in Catalonia speaking Catalan is a critical aspect of public life. Hence, it is not surprising that this item loaded on both dimensions.
5. The only exception was school location. Students in the schools located within Barcelona's city limits were less xenophobic than students in schools in Greater Barcelona or elsewhere in Catalonia. In turn, compared to elsewhere in Catalonia, dual identification was higher in Barcelona and Greater Barcelona. These patterns are consistent with previous research (Astor 2016; Rodon and Guinjoan 2018). However, because location did not qualify any of our present findings, it is not included here.
6. As apparent from Table 2, native students scored on average higher in terms of the Catalan identification than their Spanish identification ($M = 3.95$ vs. 3.23). Among Muslim immigrant students ($M = 3.08$ vs. 3.42) and non-Muslim immigrant students ($M = 3.08$ vs. 3.38), differences in average levels of identification were reversed and smaller in size.
7. The reported analyses rely on the GTM score for dual identification. Because analyses relying on the SIM score produced virtually identical results, they are not reported here (see Table 2).

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the author(s).

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Chapter III
ARTICLES – GROUP B

3.1. General introduction to the three Group B articles

The two articles presented in this chapter pertain to my work with the DIDPATRI research group after my departure from DHIGECS. Work on the projects underlying these articles began long before this departure, however, as I was invited by Mayca Rojo, Gemma Cardona, Maria Feliu and Xavi Hernàndez to collaborate on the teaching innovation projects detailed in the next section. As a team we felt that the questionnaire items related to key competencies would be relevant for a larger academic community as there seemed to be a clear lack of empirical work in this area. Maria Feliu, Mireia Romero and I continued work along these lines though a few subsequent REDICE grants after the departure from the University of Barcelona by Mayca Rojo and Gemma Cardona.

3.2. Funding project descriptions

The initial project that corresponds to the data for the articles in this section was entitled "*Estratègies per construir una didàctica de les Ciències Socials en formació inicial de mestres des d'una perspectiva competencial*" or "Strategies to construct initial teacher training in social studies teaching and learning in from a competency-based perspective". This project focused on improving teacher training in the field of social studies teaching and learning through the design, implementation and evaluation of an innovative training model that responding to the needs and motivations of teacher trainees. It was intended to affect the change in perception and conception of the teaching of the social sciences, on issues related to teaching innovation in the field and, at the same time, provide classroom examples of competence-based learning, formative

assessment and collaborative learning. It involved collaboration between university teachers and active teachers, from different backgrounds and departments, institutions and disciplinary fields, in order to achieve the implementation of a training model anchored in school realities, all while promoting meaningful learning of social studies among pre-school and primary school students.

The project was funded by the *Agència de Gestió d'Ajuts Universitaris i de Recerca* (AGAUR), grant number: 2014 ARMIF 00016 (Principal investigator: Francesc Xavier Hernandez Cardona).

A posterior related REDICE project was also applied for and obtained This one was called, "*La comprensión y puntos de vista sobre las competencias clave en alumnos de formación del profesorado: el afinamiento y validación de un cuestionario necesitado y una primera fase de un estudio longitudinal*" or "Comprehension and points of view about key competencies in teacher trainees: Instrument improvement and validation for a future longitudinal study" of the *Programa de Recerca en Docència Universitària* REDICE (ICE-UB) which is financed by the University of Barcelona's *Institut de Ciències de l'Educació* (ICE), Grant number: REDICE18-2080, (Principal investigator: Maria Feliu Torruella).

We applied for this project mainly to continue work on the scales that had emerged from the ARMIF study with the hopes that the psychometric properties of the scales could be improved enough for their consideration in a longitudinal study.

3.3. My role within the two related projects

In both projects I was responsible for 1) assistance in grant writing, 2) aid in the construction of the quantitative instruments, 3) the statistical analysis of the different pilots, and collaboration in the writing of some of the corresponding articles, namely the two presented (one in recently accepted: 15/12/2020 and second in draft form) in this Chapter.

3.4. Introduction to Article B1

Only when teachers' conceptions, knowledge, opinions, and beliefs are taken into account is curriculum innovation effective. Recently, broad policy mandates, such as Key

Competencies in the EU, or Common Core in the United States, encompass top-down intents to radically change instructional practice. Of particular interest is to what extent teachers in training are on board with these policy mandates and understand the why of their implementation to the extent policy makers intended. We present the construction processes of a questionnaire designed to access student teacher trainee's beliefs about key competencies and their role in education. A three-phase pilot process is described. Programs that focus on preparing teachers and teacher candidates to teach within a competencial framework, should have an empirically valid and reliable instrument with which to diagnose the understanding and opinions of their students. The intent of this instrument is for its use as a research tool but also as a means for EU university professors to evaluate their own students in regard to whether or not they see the utility of Key Competencies, feel comfortable applying them in the classroom, and understand the basic foundations of the concept of competencies. At the same time, educational administrations or academic institutions could use it to diagnose potential training needs among their teachers' and/or evaluate the effectiveness of training efforts.

3.5. My role in the writing and revision of the Article B1

As first author, not only did I play a key role in instrument construction and aid in data collection (see section 3.3.), but I also worked hand in hand with Maria Feliu-Torruella and Mireia Romero Serra in writing the article. A previous version was submitted in Spanish in *Educación XX1* but they responded saying that they did not publish instrument validation articles. We then decided to submit to *Teacher*

☞ Perspectiva general de l'article B1 en català

Donada la importància que les actituds, nivells de confiança i la comprensió de conceptes juguen en el procés d'implementació de polítiques educatives innovadores entre els futurs i futures docents, *i* la manca d'instruments empírics per mesurar aquests aspectes, l'objectiu d'aquest estudi era desenvolupar una eina per diagnosticar de manera sistemàtica les creences d'aquestes i aquests futurs docents sobre les competències clau i el seu paper en l'educació.

A l'article es descriu un procés pilot de tres fases i presenta avenços importants en la creació d'un instrument vàlid i fiable. Es proposen aplicacions possibles per al seu ús en futures investigacions multinivells i longitudinals. El desenvolupament d'un instrument d'aquest tipus és vital per determinar a gran escala la qualitat de formació del professorat relacionada amb les competències claus, una política educativa que ha assumit un paper central dins de la Unió Europea.

Development, a high-ranked Scopus that is on the WOS' "Emerging" list. We submitted in early December 2019 but did not hear back from reviewers until October 2020 (see Image 3.1)! We assume that personal situations related to the COVID-19 pandemic complicated the review process, as is/was the case with Group C articles (see Chapter IV). Thankfully the second review period was much shorter (see Image 3.1 below).

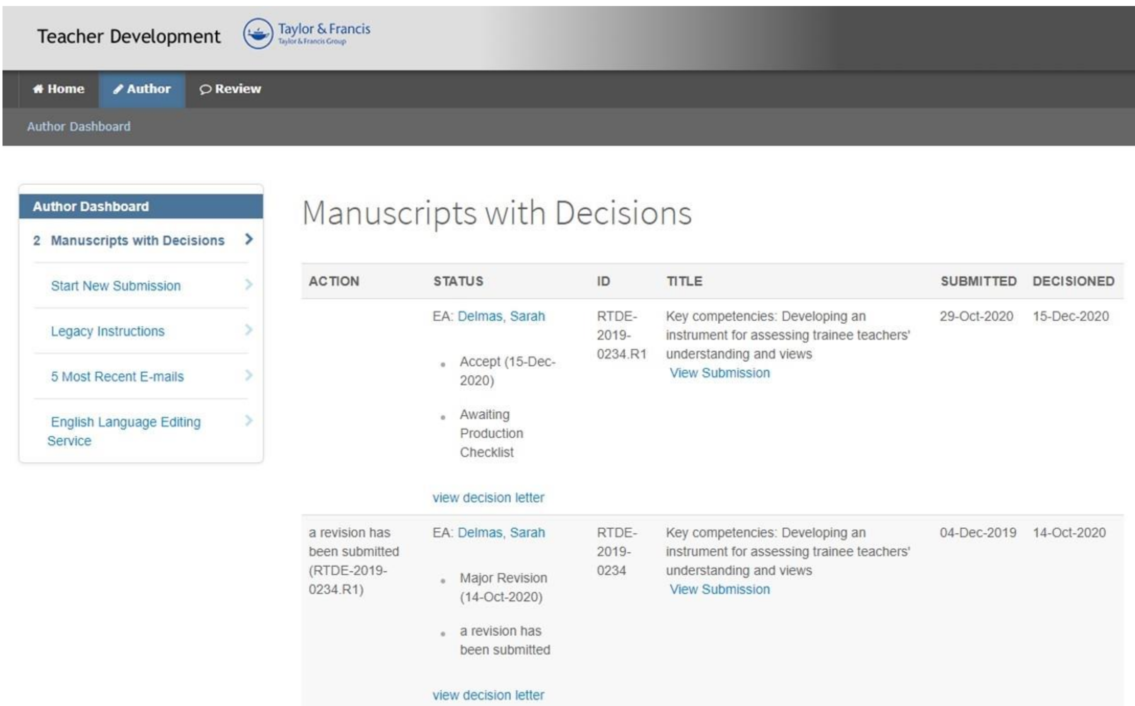

Image 3.1. Decision dates corresponding to RTDE-2019-0234. Accepted 15/12/2020. As one can perceive from the above image, it took over 10 months before we received reviews. We assume that personal situations related to the COVID-19 pandemic lengthened the review process.

3.6. Modifications made to Article B1 in lieu of reviewer/editor feedback

Consult the Peer Review copy of our resubmission for all Reviewers comments and our corresponding responses. Most of the comments related to: 1) minor technical clarifications, 2) the need to add more information on the Spanish primary educational context and its relation to competencies, and 3) a request for updated bibliographical references from 2015 onward. Reviewers coincided in their opinions and we appreciate their comments as we believe this resulted in a more quality article (proofs are currently being edited).

3.7. Current accepted version of Article B1

The following 44 pages contain 1) the acceptance letter from Editor Dr. Brindley and 2) the corresponding accepted version of Article B1 as well as our response to reviewers. We thank the DIDPATRI research team for their support in data collection and the anonymous reviewers for their feedback **and will thank Antonio Ruiz Bueno for his guidance and support. This we will do on the proofs when they arrive (shortly).**

☞ Perspectiva general del articulo B1 en español

Dada la importancia que las actitudes, niveles de confianza y comprensión de conceptos juegan en el proceso implementación de políticas educativas innovadores entre las y los futuros docentes, y la falta de instrumentos empíricos para medir estos aspectos, el objetivo de este estudio es desarrollar una herramienta para diagnosticar de manera sistemática a las creencias de ellos y ellas sobre las competencias clave y su papel en la educación.

En el artículo se describe un proceso piloto de tres fases y presenta avances importantes en la creación de un instrumento válido y fiable. Las autoras proponen aplicaciones posibles por su uso en futuras investigaciones multiniveles y longitudinales. El desarrollo de un instrumento de este tipo es vital para determinar a grande escala la calidad de formación del profesorado relacionada con las competencias claves, una política educativa que ha asumido un papel central dentro de la Unión Europea.

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Teacher Development

Preview

From: sb295@cam.ac.uk
To: awilson@ub.edu
CC:
Subject: Teacher Development - Decision on Manuscript ID RTDE-2019-0234.R1
Body: 15-Dec-2020

Dear Dr Wilson-Daily,

Ref, Key competencies: Developing an instrument for assessing trainee teachers' understanding and views

Your manuscript entitled "Key competencies: Developing an instrument for assessing trainee teachers' understanding and views", which you submitted to Teacher Development, has been reviewed. Our referees have considered your paper and have recommended publication. I am pleased to accept your paper in its current form which will now be forwarded to the publisher for copy editing and typesetting. The reviewer comments are included at the bottom of this letter.

You will receive proofs for checking from the publishers, and instructions for transfer of copyright in due course. Please do be patient as publication schedules can vary, and the proofs may take some time to reach you.

The publisher requests that proofs are checked and returned within 48 hours of receipt.

Thank you for your contribution to Teacher Development and we look forward to receiving further submissions from you.

Yours sincerely,
Dr Brindley
Editor in Chief, Teacher Development
sb295@cam.ac.uk

Reviewer(s)' Comments to Author,

Reviewer: 1

Recommendation: The Paper is worth publication as it stands

Comments:
Thank you for clearly addressing the feedback given in our last review. Based on the changes made, I recommend your manuscript for publication.

Additional Questions:
As a thank you and to acknowledge the contribution of our reviewers, the journal may publish a list of the names of those who have reviewed at the end of the year. This will not be linked to any specific paper and will only be done if the list of reviewers is long enough to protect the anonymity of the review process for individual papers. If you would prefer for your name **not to be included** in a published list of reviewers, please indicate this below.: No

The topic is directly related to the professional development
of teachers/trainers/lecturers: Agree

Comment: Agreed.

The abstract gives a clear account of the scope of the paper: Agree

Comment: The revisions to the abstract make the scope much clearer.

There is appropriate reference to previous work in the field: Agree

Comment: The updated references are useful to scope the timeliness and extent of the topics addressed.

The paper offers original knowledge, perspective or insight
and accords to the declared aims of the Journal: Agree

Comment: Agreed.

The paper is intelligible and relevant to an international
audience: Agree

Comment: The inclusion of more contextual information makes the paper more intelligible to an international audience and the topic is wide reaching.

The writing style is clear and accessible: Agree

Comment: Agree.

Academic conventions as published in Notes for Contributors in the journal are properly employed: Agree

Comment: The references have been updated to meet the journal guidelines.

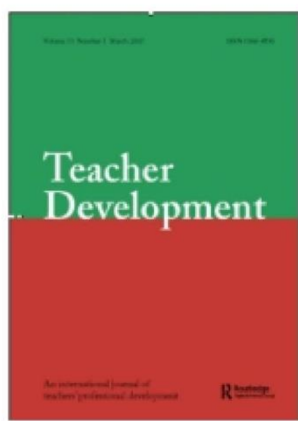
The paper is of a length appropriate to its purpose: Agree

Comment: Agree.

There are now over 1050 Taylor & Francis titles available on our free table of contents alerting service! To register for this free service visit, www.informaworld.com/alerting.

Date Sent: 15-Dec-2020

Close Window



Key competencies: Developing an instrument for assessing trainee teachers' understanding and views

Journal:	*Teacher Development*
Manuscript ID	RTDE-2019-0234.R1
Manuscript Type:	Original Articles
Keywords:	preservice teacher attitudes, educational policy, key competencies, self-evaluation, policy evaluation

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2
3
4 **Key competencies: Developing an instrument for assessing trainee teachers'**
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6 **understanding and views**
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8 **RESPONSE TO REVIEWERS**
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10 **Note to Editor and Reviewers:**
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12 Dear Dr Brindley,
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14
15 We are now resubmitting our manuscript entitled "Key competencies: Developing an
16 instrument for assessing trainee teachers' understanding and views" to *Teacher Development*.
17
18 Please note that aside from the changes detailed in the response top reviewers document, we
19 have integrated some minor modifications to the article in order to conform to the journal's
20 preferred in-text citation style:
21
22 https://www.tandf.co.uk//journals/authors/style/reference/tf_ChicagoAD.pdf
23
24 We would like to thank the reviewers for their helpful comments, which were very insightful
25 and, we believe, aided us in improving our article. We hope you and the reviewers are pleased
26 with our modifications and this new revised version.
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29 As indicated, the document indicates all changes through Word's "track changes" option.
30 However, as relevant, these changes are also detailed below.
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32 Sincerely,
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Reviewer 1	
The writings for the reason and gap of the study are considered very clear and interesting. However, it would better if the citations used this section are published within recent years, for instance 2015 at least to claim on the needs for teacher competencies.	Thank you for this point, which coincides in part with insight from Reviewer 2. In general, we have removed some of the older literature cited, such as: • Hoogveld, A. W., Paas, F., & Jochems, W. M. (2005). Training higher education teachers for instructional design of competency-based education: Product-oriented versus process-oriented worked examples. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 21*(3), 287–297. doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2005.01.002 • Baartman, L. K. J., Bastiaens, T. J., Kirschner, P. A. and Van der Vleuten, C. P. M. (2007). Teachers' opinions on quality criteria for Competency Assessment Programs. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 23*(6), 857–867. doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2006.04.043 And also added new references, such as the following:

For Peer Review Only

	• Null, W. (2016). *Curriculum: From theory to practice.* Rowman & Littlefield. • Pamies, J., Blanco, A., Villanueva, M., & Granados Sanchez, J. (2015). The introduction of a competence-based curriculum in Spain: From the Primary school to the training of teachers. *e-Pedagogium, 2,* 62-74. We also had cited Finsterwald incorrectly in the text on page 1 with the incorrect year (1997). That was an error and we apologize. The study we had wanted to reference was correctly cited in the reference section: Finsterwald, M., Wagner, P., Schober, B., Lüftenegger, M., and Spiel, C. (2013). Fostering lifelong learning – Evaluation of a teacher education program for professional teachers. *Teaching and Teacher Education, 29*, 144–155. doi.org/10.1016/j.tate.2012.08.009 The in-text citation has now been corrected. Please consult the updated article to see all updates to the literature review.
In the item generation, please provide clear explanation on how the item were developed? Whether based on the past experiences as teachers or based on previous studies that have examined the similar study?	In line also with a comment made by Reviewer 2, we have clarified the "Process" section (p. 9) with more specific information as to why 3 separate pilot studies were carried out. Furthermore, we now point out that the items were original to our research team: ***Process*** The process of generating original items for the survey was carried out in six stages: (1) identification of goal categories and initial item generation; (2) first draft of revisions ~~by an~~ by a six-member panel consisting of two academic experts, two active teachers and two student teachers~~expert panel~~; (3) pilot study 1 [*n* = 295]; (4) revision and modifications of pilot study 1 in order to improve psychometric scale properties; (5) pilot study 2 [*n* = 277]; (6) additional revisions and completion of pilot study 2 with the aim of further improving the instruments' psychometric properties, specifically internal consistency; (7) the pilot study 3 reported here [*n* = 263]. This section now reads: "The process of generating original items for the survey was carried out in six stages: (1) identification of goal categories and initial item generation; (2) first draft of revisions by a six-member panel consisting of two academic experts, two active teachers and two student teachers; (3) pilot study 1 [*n* = 295]; (4) revision and modifications of pilot study 1 in order to improve psychometric scale properties; (5) pilot study 2 [*n* = 277]; (6) additional revisions and completion of pilot study 2 with the aim of further improving the instruments' psychometric properties, specifically internal consistency; and (7) the pilot study 3 reported here [*n* = 263]."

For Peer Review Only

There also a need to explain on the decision of using the scale of **absolutely true** on the positive section and **absolutely false** within the negative section.	Thank you for pointing out this error! This was a mistranslation from the Catalan "*molt d'acord*" and "*molt en desacord*" which we have now more correctly translated to "strongly agree" and "strongly disagree" (see p. 10). We apologize for this oversight/ mistranslation on our part.
In the abstract, author did mention on the three phases of data collection. However, I can't find on the explanation within the sampling and participants. Why data collection phase must went through all three stages?	Thank you for pointing this out. We have modified the abstract to now say: "A three-phase pilot (*n* = 295, *n* = 277, *n* =263) was carried out with each phase aimed at progressively improving the instrument's psychometric soundness." Also, please refer to your second comment and our proposed improvements on the "Process" section (p. 9): ***Process*** The process of generating original items for the survey was carried out in six stages: (1) identification of goal categories and initial item generation; (2) first draft of revisions ~~by an~~ by a six-member panel consisting of two academic experts, two active teachers and two student teachers~~expert panel~~; (3) pilot study 1 [*n* = 295]; (4) revision and modifications of pilot study 1 in order to improve psychometric scale properties; (5) pilot study 2 [*n* = 277]; (6) additional revisions and completion of pilot study 2 with the aim of further improving the instruments' psychometric properties, specifically internal consistency; (7) the pilot study 3 reported here [*n* = 263]. This section now reads: "The process of generating original items for the survey was carried out in six stages: (1) identification of goal categories and initial item generation; (2) first draft of revisions by a six-member panel consisting of two academic experts, two active teachers and two student teachers; (3) pilot study 1 [*n* = 295]; (4) **revision and modifications of pilot study 1 in order to improve psychometric scale properties;** (5) pilot study 2 [*n* = 277]; (6) additional revisions and completion of pilot study 2 with **the aim of further improving the instruments' psychometric properties, specifically internal consistency**; and (7) the pilot study 3 reported here [*n* = 263]."
It would suggest to add on the limitation of the study together with future suggestion on to improve the limitation	Thank you for pointing this out. We have now clarified what we understood as our study limitation section with some important additions thanks to your comment (p. 13): "However, an expansion focused on the differences between these two concepts could increase the internal consistency of these two scales; this is a current limitation of the instrument. One additional limitation of the study is that instrument development has taken place in a specific university context. Future studies should

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	assess instrument validity and reliability in other university and national contexts." differences between these two concepts could increase the internal consistency of these two scales; this is a current limitation of the instrument. One additional limitation of the study is that instrument development has taken place in a specific university context. Future studies should assess instrument validity and reliability in other university and national contexts. Furthermore, A a longitudinal application could help to evaluate current and future teachers on the concept of competencies, beliefs in their ability to apply competencies in their future classroom experiences, and beliefs in the usefulness of
In the abstract, author should state on the gap and relevancy of the study. There are shortcomings which referring to the findings, sample and in fact a simple suggestion	Building off your previous comment, and that of Reviewer 2, we believe the abstract is now improved. Key competencies straddle an educational reform that has taken on a central role within the European Union. Despite the dominant emphasis that key competencies take on in educational policies throughout the EU, there lack empirical instruments to measure how familiar teachers and preservice teachers are with policy mandates, how confidently they apply them as student teachers and how completely they understand the intended rationale. Instruments with similar aims in other contexts suffer psychometric shortcomings. Therefore, our aim was to design an instrument to examine preservice teachers' beliefs , and potentially teachers' beliefs, about the role of key competencies in education, self-evaluate their understanding of the concept of key competencies, and determine if they understood the intended interdisciplinary focus. A three-phase pilot (N n = 295, nN = 277, nN =263) was carried out with each phase aimed at progressively improving the instrument's psychometric soundness. Drawing from data obtained from the third pilot, the psychometric scale properties are reported for a much-needed assessment tool. The revised abstract now reads as follows: "Key competencies straddle an educational reform that has taken on a central role within the European Union. Despite the dominant emphasis that key competencies take on in educational policies throughout the EU, there lack empirical instruments to measure how familiar primary preservice teachers are with the policy mandate they will have to apply to the classroom, how confidently they feel they do so in practicum experiences and how completely they understand a competency mandate's intended rationale. Instruments with similar aims in other contexts suffer psychometric shortcomings. Therefore, our aim was to design an instrument to examine primary preservice teachers' beliefs about the role of key competencies in education, self-evaluate their understanding of the concept of key competencies, and determine if they understood the intended interdisciplinary focus. A three-phase pilot (n = 295, n = 277, n =263) was

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	carried out with each phase aimed at progressively improving the instrument's psychometric soundness. Drawing from data obtained from the third pilot, the psychometric scale properties are reported for a much-needed assessment tool. We believe that gap and relevancy of the study are briefly alluded to in the following two sentences: "Despite the dominant emphasis that key competencies take on in educational policies throughout the EU, there lack empirical instruments to measure how familiar teachers and preservice teachers are with policy mandates, how confidently they apply them as student teachers and how completely they understand the intended rationale. Instruments with similar aims in other contexts suffer psychometric shortcomings" (the second and third sentences of the abstract).

Reviewer 2	
The abstract is clear; however, I would recommend removing reference to 'teachers' in the abstract as the study is set within the preservice context.	Thank you for pointing this out! We have removed references to teachers in the abstract as recommended: Key competencies straddle an educational reform that has taken on a central role within the European Union. Despite the dominant emphasis that key competencies take on in educational policies throughout the EU, there lack empirical instruments to measure how familiar ~~teachers and~~ preservice teachers are with policy mandates, how confidently they apply them as student teachers and how completely they understand the intended rationale. Instruments with similar aims in other contexts suffer psychometric shortcomings. Therefore, our aim was to design an instrument to examine preservice teachers' beliefs ~~, and potentially teachers' beliefs,~~ about the role of key competencies in education, self-evaluate their understanding of the concept of key competencies, and determine if they understood the intended interdisciplinary focus. A three-phase pilot (~~N~~ n = 295, n~~N~~ = 277, n~~N~~ =263) was carried out with each phase aimed at progressively improving the instrument's psychometric soundness. Drawing from data obtained from the third pilot, the psychometric scale properties are reported for a much-needed assessment tool. The revised abstract now reads as follows: "Key competencies straddle an educational reform that has taken on a central role within the European Union. Despite the dominant emphasis that key competencies take on in educational policies throughout the EU, there lack empirical instruments to measure how familiar primary preservice teachers are with the policy mandate they will have to apply to the classroom, how confidently they feel they do so in practicum experiences and how completely they understand a competency mandate's intended rationale. Instruments with similar aims in other contexts suffer psychometric shortcomings. Therefore, our aim was to design an instrument to examine primary preservice teachers' beliefs about the role of key competencies in education, self-evaluate

	their understanding of the concept of key competencies, and determine if they understood the intended interdisciplinary focus. A three-phase pilot (n = 295, n = 277, n =263) was carried out with each phase aimed at progressively improving the instrument's psychometric soundness. Drawing from data obtained from the third pilot, the psychometric scale properties are reported for a much-needed assessment tool.
The literature review presents a broad explanation of work conducted in the field but contains some older references that could be updated, particularly when referring to how teacher's own experiences as students shapes their teaching practices and beliefs.	Reviewer one also asked that we eliminate some older references and update the literature review. We have done so generally (see the" Introduction" and "Discussion and Conclusions" section and the relevant response to Reviewer 1). Specifically in regard to your concern we have added references to: • Buehl, M. M., & Beck, J. S. (2015). The relationship between teachers' beliefs and teachers' practices. In H. Fives, & M. G. Gill (Eds.), *International handbook of research on teachers' beliefs* (pp. 66-84). Routledge. • Ertmer, P. A., Ottenbreit-Leftwich, A. T., & Tondeur, J. (2015). Teachers' beliefs and uses of technology to support 21st-century teaching and learning. In H. Fives, & M. G. Gill (Eds.), *International handbook of research on teachers' beliefs* (pp. 403-418). Routledge. Please consult the updated article to see all updates to the literature review as there have been many.
Could you clarify if any changes were made between the second and third pilot study? It was unclear why the third pilot was conducted.	Thank you for your comment. We have tried to clarify the "Process" section (p. 9) with more specific information to this end in line, also with a few comments from Reviewer 1. ***Process*** The process of generating original items for the survey was carried out in six stages: (1) identification of goal categories and initial item generation; (2) first draft of revisions ~~by an~~ by a six-member panel consisting of two academic experts, two active teachers and two student teachers~~expert panel~~; (3) pilot study 1 [n = 295]; (4) revision and modifications of pilot study 1 in order to improve psychometric scale properties; (5) pilot study 2 [n = 277]; (6) additional revisions and completion of pilot study 2 with the aim of further improving the instruments' psychometric properties, specifically internal consistency; (7) the pilot study 3 reported here [n = 263].

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	This section now reads: "The process of generating original items for the survey was carried out in six stages: (1) identification of goal categories and initial item generation; (2) first draft of revisions by an expert panel; (3) pilot study 1 [*n* = 295]; (4) revision and modifications of pilot study 1 in order to improve psychometric scale properties; (5) pilot study 2 [*n* = 277]; (6) additional revisions and completion of pilot study 2 with the aim of further improving the instruments' psychometric properties, specifically internal consistency; (7) the pilot study 3 reported here [*n* = 263]." To this end, a more general reference to this process was added to the abstract: competencies, and determine if they understood the intended interdisciplinary focus. A three-phase pilot (~~N~~ *n* = 295, *n*~~N~~ = 277, *n*~~N~~ =263) was carried out with each phase aimed at progressively improving the instrument's psychometric soundness. Drawing from data obtained from the third pilot, the psychometric scale properties are reported for a much-needed assessment tool. This modified sentence now reads: "A three-phase pilot (*n* = 295, *n* = 277, *n* =263) was carried out with each phase aimed at progressively improving the instrument's psychometric soundness."
Can you make a comment on the potential for floor or ceiling factors in the survey, given some factors only had 2-3 items? It is common to see ceiling factors in instruments for preservice teachers who do not have much experience teaching, as their self-perception often changes as they gain more experience.	This is a good point. We had confirmed acceptable item and scale distribution though visualizing histogram distribution but had reported nothing on floor or ceiling effects. Thanks to this feedback we have now added the following sentence (p. 12): "Potential floor and ceiling effects were examined by observing the proportion of respondents who scored the lowest or highest possible score on any of the five scales. There were no concerning ceiling or floor effects; with ≤11% of respondents scoring the highest or lowest scale scores (average 3.1% across scales)." We also added SD values to Table 2.
For someone who works outside of the EU, some clarification would be useful in the introduction when talking about key competencies and competency-based systems. Does this refer to competencies for teachers in teacher training and beyond, or competency-based frameworks for students that teachers are having to work	We have added the following text (p. 2-3) which we hope clarifies the introduction in a general sense and the Spanish Educational context as well: *This means that primary preservice teachers are not only expected to develop professional competencies themselves during their university education, but also are expected to be ready to teach their own primary students guided by competency-based educational mandates.* *Within the EU, Spain is no exception in their undertaking of a complete restructuring of educational policies based on the aforementioned Council of the European Union educational guidelines. The term "competency" became*

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<td>with when they enter the classroom? The argument includes references to both initial teacher training and the classroom context, which led to some confusion. It only became clearer to me on page 4 when you start discussing existing instruments. A very clear definition of key competencies and what they are within the Spanish context would really help the reader.</td>
<td>commonplace in Spain as a reflection of European educational reforms and Spanish students' less-than-desirable performance in international assessment programs, such as PISA. There is an emphasis on competencial learning in both the Spanish 2006 Education Act (LOE) and the currently mandated 2013 LOMCE (Ley Orgánica de Mejora de Calidad Educativa). Educational reforms encourage a leap for many forced to emerge from entrenched practices of rote memorization and discipline-focused learning (see Gil 2014, Pamies et al. 2015). Pamies et al. write:

The Spanish educational system experienced a great shift in earliest nineties: Primary and Secondary Education curricula changed from a conception based on conceptual knowledge that was meant to be learn by heart, to a[n] educational system that focused on learning knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. That shift implied a massive training of in-service teachers. More than one decade after, the incorporation of the competence based approach [shook once] again the co[m]fort zone of teachers, but this time [fewer] training opportunities have been provided…Despite the reforms and efforts for implementing the competence-based approach, there are many internal contradictions in the educational system that hinder a proper development….Teachers are struggling with the assessment of competences achievements. It is not fully clear how to handle it, and how to split it into learning outcomes units of assessment (2015, 72-73).

…

We would like to differential between these professional competencies that Spanish (and other EU) primary-level preservice teachers are expected to acquire as students themselves, which is more often studied (e.g., De-Juanas et al., 2016) from their own views and attitudes on competency-based teaching as applied with their primary school students once they are in the classroom, first in practicum experiences and later as teachers. It is in regard to the latter where we notice a gap in the literature, both in Spain and in the EU in general, and a lack of psychometric sound instruments.

….

This study aimed to develop and pilot an instrument for preservice teachers to measure: 1) their opinion of the current primary education competency-based educational policy mandate; 2) how confidently they apply this competency-based mandate in the classroom during their practicum teaching experiences; 3) how confidently they apply this competency-based mandate in the classroom</td>
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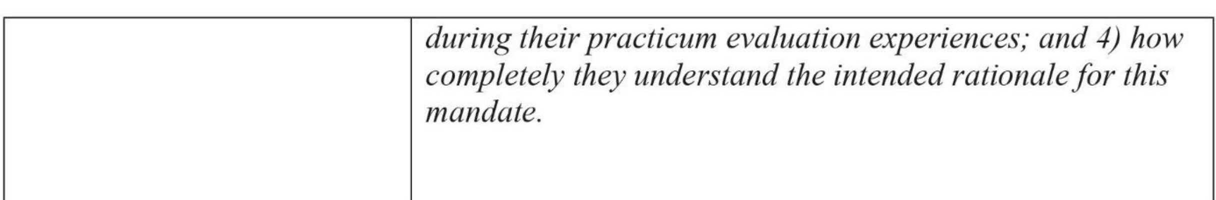

	during their practicum evaluation experiences; and 4) how completely they understand the intended rationale for this mandate.

We hope that these additions and modifications work to clarify the article for all readers. Thank you for your careful reading and detailed feedback!

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Key competencies: Developing an instrument for assessing trainee teachers' understanding and views

Key competencies straddle an educational reform that has taken on a central role within the European Union. Despite the dominant emphasis that key competencies take on in educational policies throughout the EU, there lack empirical instruments to measure how familiar primary preservice teachers are with the policy mandate they will have to apply to the classroom, how confidently they feel they do so in practicum experiences and how completely they understand a competency mandate's intended rationale~~how familiar teachers and preservice teachers are with policy mandates, how confidently they apply them and how completely they understand the intended rationale~~. Instruments with similar aims in other contexts suffer psychometric shortcomings. Therefore, our aim was to design an instrument to examine primary preservice teachers' beliefs ~~, and potentially teachers' beliefs,~~ about the role of key competencies in educa~~-~~tion, self-evaluate their understanding of the concept of key competencies, and deter~~-~~mine if they understood the intended interdisciplinary focus. A three-phase pilot (~~N~~ n = 295, n~~N~~ = 277, n~~N~~ =263) was carried out with each phase aimed at progressively improving the instrument's psychometric soundness. Drawing from data obtained from the third pilot, the psychometric scale properties are reported for a much-needed assessment tool.

Keywords: primary preservice teacher attitudes; educational policy; key competencies; self-evaluation; policy evaluation.

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Introduction

Key competencies, which are defined as an interdisciplinary application the harmonization of knowledge, skills, attitudes and values (see De-Juanas Oliva, Martín del Pozo ~~&~~and Pesquero Franco~~,~~ 2016), play a central role in education reform within the European Union across many levels of education. This is evident in the Lisbon Strategy and the Recommendation on Key Competencies for Lifelong Learning, adopted by the European Parliament and the Council in December 2006 (see Council of the European Union~~,~~ 2018; Finsterwald ~~Wagner, & Hutmacher~~et al.,~~,~~ ~~1997~~2013; Schober et al. ~~, Lüftenegger & Spiel,~~ 2013; Halász ~~&~~and Michel~~,~~ 2011; Valle ~~&~~and Manso~~,~~ 2013). This means that primary preservice teachers are not only expected to develop professional competencies themselves during their university education, but also are expected to be prepared and ready to teach their own primary students guided by competency-based educational mandates.

Within the EU, Spain is no exception in their undertaking of a complete restructuring of educational policies based on the aforementioned Council of the European Union educational guidelines. The term “competency” became commonplace in Spain as a reflection of European educational reforms and Spanish secondary students’ less-than-desirable performance in international assessment programs, such as PISA. There is an emphasis on competencial learning in both the Spanish 2006 Education Act (LOE) and the currently mandated 2013 LOMCE (*Ley Orgánica de Mejora de Calidad Educativa*). Educational reforms over the past three decades have encouraged a leap for many who have been forced to emerge from entrenched practices of rote memorization and discipline-focused learning (see Gil 2014, Pamies et al. 2015). Pamies et al. write:

> The Spanish educational system experienced a great shift in earliest nineties: Primary and Secondary Education curricula changed from a conception based on conceptual knowledge that was meant to be learn[t] by heart, to a[n] educational system that focused on learning knowledge, skills, attitudes and values. That shift implied a massive training

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> of in-service teachers. More than one decade after, the incorporation of the competence based approach [shook once] again the co[m]fort zone of teachers, but this time [fewer] training opportunities have been provided…Despite the reforms and efforts for implementing the competence-based approach, there are many internal contradictions in the educational system that hinder a proper development….Teachers are struggling with the assessment of competences achievements. It is not fully clear how to handle it, and how to split it into learning outcomes units of assessment (2015, 72-73).

It is not difficult to argue that in order to successfully implement educational political mandates at a large scale, current and future teachers must fully understand these policies and act as active participants in their day-to-day classroom application (Brindley 2013; Brown and Poortman 2018; Pantic and Wubbels 2010; Schleïcher 2011; Struyven and De Meyst 2010). It is increasingly recognized that the training of current and future teachers is key to the development of effective, innovative political mandates (e.g., Brindley 2013; Schleicher 2012). However, many argue that most teachers, and teacher trainees for that matter, have not received the necessary training required to implement competency-based strategies in a consistent, comprehensive, and integral way (Pamies et al. 2015; Hoogveld, Kaldi and Xafakos 2017). As Jasman writes, "Even when governments embrace a 'future' perspective in order to ensure competitive advantage in a global knowledge economy, the teaching workforce may not be able to engage with this agenda" (2009, 328).

We would like to differentiate between professional competencies that Spanish (and other EU) primary-level preservice teachers are expected to acquire as students themselves, which is more often studied (e.g., De-Juanas et al., 2016), from their own views and attitudes on competency-based teaching as applied with their primary school students once they are in the classroom, first in practicum experiences and later as teachers. It is in regard to the latter where we notice a gap in the literature, both in Spain and in the EU in general, and a lack of psychometrically sound instruments.

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This study aimed to develop and pilot an instrument for primary preservice teachers to measure: 1) their opinion of the current primary education competency-based educational policy mandate; 2) how confidently they apply this competency-based mandate in the classroom during their practicum teaching experiences; 3) how confidently they apply this competency-based mandate in the classroom during their practicum evaluation experiences; and 4) how completely they understand the intended rationale for this mandate.

~~However, in order to successfully implement these political mandates at a large scale, current and future teachers must fully understand these policies and act as active participants in their day-to-day classroom application (Brindley, 2013; Hoogveld, Paas, & Jochems, 2005; Pantic & Wubbels, 2010; Schleïcher, 2011; Struyven & De Meyst, 2010). It is increasingly recognized that the training of current and future teachers is key to the development of effective, innovative political mandates (e.g., Brindley, 2013; Schleicher, 2012). However, many argue that most teachers, and teacher trainees for that matter, have not received the necessary training required to implement competency-based strategies in a consistent, comprehensive, and integral way (Feinsterwal & Wagner, 2010; Hoogveld, Paas, & Jochems, 2005; Kaldi & Xafakos, 2017). As Jasman (2009) writes, "Even when governments embrace a 'future' perspective in order to ensure competitive advantage in a global knowledge economy, the teaching workforce may not be able to engage with this agenda" (p. 328).~~

Clearly, without effective training, achieving the educational improvements expected in a competency-based system is unlikely (Beijaard et al.~~,~~ 2000; Day~~,~~ 2002; Lask~~,~~ 2005; Pamies 2015; Pantic ~~&~~and Wubbels~~,~~ 2010). Many teachers and preservice teachers find they do not feel qualified to implement innovative educational policies, like those centered on key competencies (~~Baartman, Bartiens, Kirscher, & Van de Vleuten, 2007; Hadré & Sullivan, 2008;~~ Pamies et al. 2015, Pantic ~~&~~and Wubbels~~,~~ 2010; Spiel ~~&~~and Schober~~,~~ 2012). However,

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teachers and future teachers are crucial stakeholders in ~~the~~ any reform process, whether they act actively or passively (Datnow~~, Hubbard, & Mehen,~~ et al. 2002; Null 2016). The true merits of key competency application cannot be assessed if those that are supposed to implement these policies do not fully understand what its application implies.

Curricular innovation, particularly when it takes the form of a top-down policy, can be problematic and slow to implement. Ruiz Tarragó and Wilson ~~(2010)~~ argue that attempts to improve education through political mandates on key competencies ~~have~~ fail~~ed~~:

> [T]op-level school system administrators in many EU countries claim that curriculum adaptations harmonizing subject disciplines and competencies frameworks have already been carried out. Yet this "harmonizing" is not so straightforward for teachers, who face the daily realities of such changes, decided on and dictated in a far-removed, top-down manner (~~p.~~ 2010, 390-91).

If, indeed, such harmony is not a reality for most teachers, this truly proposes a problem in that competency-based curricular innovation is not fully effective unless it is carried out in an effective manner in the classroom. Teacher trainees are in a potentially privileged position as they can potentially receive many hours of both practical and theoretical training in key-competency-based educational policy; however, at least in the context of Spain, where our data were gathered, it is unclear to what extent teacher trainers at the university and active classroom teachers who take on teacher trainees hold similar understandings of how key competency-based educational policies should manifest themselves in the primary classroom (De-Juanas et al.~~,~~ 2016) .

Other complications arise when teachers and trainee teachers use their beliefs about how to teach, which are often based on personal experiences from when they were students of early child~~-~~hood, primary and secondary education, to filter new concepts introduced in university teacher training (see, for example, Calderhead ~~&~~and Robson~~,~~ 1991; Pereira~~,~~ 2009). Some authors consider that teachers' and teacher trainee knowledge and personal beliefs are

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inseparable and can strongly influence their perceptions and educational behavior in the classroom and assessment practices (Miller et al. ~~, Ramirez, & Murdock,~~ 2017; Pantic ~~&~~and Wubbels~~,~~ 2010; Suprayogi~~, Valcke, & Godwin,~~ et al. 2017; Smith et al.~~,~~ 2014; Tichelaar ~~, Vermun, & Brouwer~~et al~~,~~ 2014). For this reason, it can be difficult to change existing knowledge structures, as they help to focus understanding and can contribute to the rejection of new information (Buehl and Beck 2015; Chinn ~~&~~and Brewer~~,~~ 1993; Ertmer et al. 2015). Teachers and trainees are more likely to understand new information by adapting it to what they already know, which leads to knowledge gaps (Smith et al~~, diSessa, & Roschelle,~~ 1993). This pattern has also been observed in relation to new educational policies (Beck~~, Czerniak, & Lumpe,~~ et al. 2000; Spillane~~,~~ 2000).

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There continues to be a general lack of instruments for identifying misunderstandings, negative attitudes, or lack of confidence associated with the use of key competencies during university teacher training, which can make it even harder to implement any policy based on competency mandates. Some instruments, such as that created by Mérida Serrano~~, González Alfaya, & Olivares García~~ et al. (2011), have been designed to study university lecturers' and students' perceptions of competency-based learning in the university environment (see also Oser~~, Salzmann, & Heinzer,~~ et al. 2009; Tigelaar~~, Dolmans, Wolfhagen, & Van der Vleuten,~~ et al. 2004; Zhu~~, Wang, Cai, & Engels,~~ et al. 2013). However, we are unaware of any research that has examined teacher trainee beliefs, understanding, or attitudes on self-assessment of competencies or their comprehension of the concept of key competencies with the exception of De-Juanas et al.~~,~~ (2016) which assesses the value teachers and teacher trainees place on different key competencies in their teaching practices. This study, however, does not attempt to assess teacher attitudes and opinions of the educational policy as a whole. Furthermore, instruments with similar aims in other contexts, intended to measuring teacher views on Common Core in the US, for example, suffer psychometric shortcomings (e.g., Ajayi~~,~~ 2016;

Troia ~~&~~and Graham, 2016). Therefore, we argue that it is essential to create a diagnostic tool for researchers to gauge (a) the general opinion of future teachers on the political mandate of key competencies, (b) their understanding of competencies, and (c) their belief in their own capacity to implement this policy in the classroom in order to support teachers in their efforts to navigate this educational policy change. Here it is argued that understanding current and future teachers' knowledge and opinions toward key competency-related policy mandates constitutes an important aspect of efficient curricular innovation.

The purpose of this study was to develop and examine the psychometric properties of a questionnaire to provide a crucial step toward enhancing both scholar and practitioners' ability to assess preservice teachers' beliefs and understandings of a key-competency-based educational policy. Future teachers' perceptions of the new standards and assessments are important to understand they will be frontline implementers of a policy meant to shape their classroom instruction and assessment practices (e.g., Cooper~~, Fusarelli, & Randall,~~ et al.2004; Porter~~,~~ 2013). When teachers hold positive beliefs and attitudes about a policy, they are more likely to support it with words and deeds; when they view a policy unfavorably, teachers may begrudgingly adhere to it, simply ignore it, or subversively disrupt its intended effects (e.g., Biggs~~, Vernberg, Twemlow, Fonagy, & Dill~~ et al.~~,~~ 2008; Brown and Poortman 2018, McCoss-Yergian ~~&~~and Krepps~~,~~ 2010; Spillane~~, Reiser, & Reimer,~~ et al., 2002; Stein ~~&~~and Wang~~,~~ 1988). The proposed questionnaire aims to fill an imperative empirical gap given the lack of instruments of its kind.

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Theoretical perspectives used as the basis of the instrument

The relationship between trainee teachers and curricular innovation and education reforms is part of a complex dynamic comprised of previous and current personal experiences, beliefs, contexts, and authority. The initial stages of instrument construction was carried out with the

following themes in mind: a) teacher trainee (or teacher's[1]) opinions on the importance of implementing education reform; b) an attempt to tap into teacher trainees' understanding of what the proposed education reform entails, c) teacher trainees' self-assessment of their understanding of education reform, and d) teacher trainees' self-assessment of their ability to assess students within a competencial framework.

Teacher trainees' opinions of key competency-based educational reform

Reforms in education legislation are highly dependent on changes in the beliefs of the teachers who are involved. For many dedicated to the teaching profession, this is not an easy issue to address when the curriculum policy requires major changes (Minor~~, Onwuegbuzie, Witcher, & James,~~ et al. 2002; Pajares, 1992; Pamies et al. 2015, Prawat, 1992). Furthermore, as mentioned earlier, it is much easier than not for teacher trainees to apply the same methods they have observed year in and year out during their schooling experience as students (~~e.g.,~~see Buehl and Beck 2015, Ertmer et al. 2015, Smith et al., 1993). Although teachers' and future teachers' beliefs influence their behavior in the classroom (Buehl and Beck 2015; Fang~~,~~ 1996; Richardson~~,~~ 1996), contradictions may arise between these beliefs, opinions, and teaching practices (e.g. Wilcox-Herzog~~,~~ 2002). As Pajares ~~(1992)~~ notes:

> [E]ducational beliefs of preservice teachers play a pivotal role in their acquisition and interpretation of knowledge and subsequent teaching behavior and that unexplored entering beliefs may be responsible for the perpetuation of antiquated and ineffectual teaching practices (1992, ~~p.~~ 328; see also Buehl and Beck 2015, Ertmer et al. 2015~~Kagan, 1992~~).

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[1] The current scales were piloted with teacher trainees, but through slight modification and additional piloting could potentially be used with current teachers. It is our aim to use these items in longitudinal and multilevel analyses in the future.

Cognitive understanding of education reform

Education reforms fail due to a misalignment between theory and practice (see Null 2016; Van den Berg et al.~~, Vandenberghe, & Sleegers,~~ 1999). This misalignment can be caused by a lack of understanding of new concepts. It can be hard to comprehend the intentions of an education reform. For example, Hill (2001) established that US teachers did not understand the aims of a reform that should have radically changed the previous education policy. The teachers perceived little difference between what they had done before the reform, and what they should implement afterward (see also Spillane~~,~~ 1996, 1998). Furthermore, there may be considerable variation in teachers' understanding: a reform may be interpreted as a radical change or simply a superficial addition to existing policy (Haug~~,~~ 1999) that is easier to implement.

General self-evaluation of the key competency-based teaching understanding

When teacher trainees and active teachers assess themselves, the process influences their beliefs in their ability to be a capable teacher and affects their future decisions on how to teach (e.g., Ross ~~&~~and Bruce~~,~~ 2007). If a teacher or future teacher suffers from anxiety, confusion, frustration, or other negative emotions arising from the implementation of education policies that they have not experienced or observed in practice, they may give up trying to adopt these policies in their own classroom or in student teaching experiences (Huberman ~~&~~and Miles~~,~~ 1984).

Specific self-evaluation of ability to assess students within a key competency framework

The key competencial framework requires specific innovation and change regarding assessment tools (Halász ~~&~~and Michel~~,~~ 2011; Harlen ~~&~~and Deakin Crick~~,~~ 2003; Voogt ~~&~~and Pareja Roblin~~,~~ 2012), which seem to cause some unease among teachers and trainees alike (Buchs, Filippou, Pulfrey, ~~&~~and Volpé~~,~~ 2017; Smith et al.~~,~~ 2014). Given the specific change

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3 and innovation required in changing the way that teachers assess their students within a
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5 competencial framework it was deemed necessary to create a scale to specifically measure
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8 how prepared student teachers felt they were for this particular challenge. It is hypothesized
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10 that this scale may load as a separate factor from their general level of self-evaluation,
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12 although we expect some correlation with general self-evaluation.
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15 Based on the above research results and observations, the aim of the study was to
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17 develop, test, and validate an instrument for use as a research tool in longitudinal and multi-
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19 level studies, and as a means for university professors in the EU to assess their students with
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21 respect to whether they grasp the utility of key competencies, understand the basic principles
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24 of the competency concept, and feel comfortable applying and assessing their achievement in
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26 the classroom setting. Those who are largely responsible for teachers' initial training—
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28 university lecturers or Departments in teacher training faculties—could find the instrument of
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31 great use to assess their own teaching practices relating to key competencies.
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35 **Method**
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38 ***Participants and context***
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40 The sample pertaining to the third pilot run of the questionnaire reported here consisted of
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42 263 students from a third year course of University of Barcelona's Bachelor's Degree in
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45 Primary Education (79.8% female, average age 21.8). Students were surveyed in Catalan[2]
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47 their usual classrooms by a member of the research team (not their own professor).
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49 Answering the survey was optional, but those who participated received 1% in extra points
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51 towards their final grade. When students turned in surveys, they signed a separate sheet of
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54 paper used to calculate extra grade points.
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59 [2] Catalan is the habitual language of instruction in undergraduate university classes in Catalonia. Items
60 were translated into English by the authors for the purposes of this publication.

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Importantly, the Faculty of Education at the University of Barcelona has a high percentage of part-time adjunct lecturers (over 70% at the time of carrying out the field work for this study), who do not necessarily combine their work at the university with work at early childhood, primary, or secondary schools and may or may not be familiar in theory or in practice with the concept of key competencies when they teach the teacher trainees surveyed in this study.

Process

The process of generating original items for the survey was carried out in six stages: (1) identification of goal categories and initial item generation; (2) first draft of revisions ~~by an~~ by a six-member panel consisting of two academic experts, two active teachers and two student teachers~~expert panel~~; (3) pilot study 1 [*n* = 295]; (4) revision and modifications of pilot study 1 in order to improve psychometric scale properties; (5) pilot study 2 [*n* = 277]; (6) additional revisions and completion of pilot study 2 with the aim of further improving the instruments' psychometric properties, specifically internal consistency; and (7) the pilot study 3 reported here [*n* = 263].

In the first stage of the item generation process, the research team drew on their own experiences as teachers and teacher trainers. In the second stage, the expert panel, consisting of active primary teachers involved in research and a small group of fourth year students was consulted on the content and structure of the items, including their wording and suitability, which led to some changes in item wording. The instrument that was proposed at this stage was rated on a 5-point Likert-type scale and consisted of 20 items. This version of the instrument was tested on 295 participants. On the basis of an exploratory factor analysis of the initial test, four items were removed, 6 were slightly modified, and 2 were changed substantially. A second version, which was also rated on a 5-point Likert scale, consisted of 18 items and was tested on 277 participants. The final pilot stage [*n* = 263], reported here,

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consisted of an assessment of the psychometric properties of the questionnaire which were much improved compared to the results of the two initial pilot runs.

Results

In the third pilot study of the proposed survey, participants indicated their degree of agreement with 16 statements on competencies, on a 5-point Likert scale, from 1 – *strongly agree*~~*absolutely false*~~ to 5 – *strongly disagree*~~*absolutely true*~~. The analysis sought to validate the measurement model for the theoretical variables proposed and described above.

Factorial structure and item retention

All items were subjected to a principal component analysis with direct oblimin rotation. As in the first pilot study, two item-retention criteria were used: (a) item loading on the main factor should exceed .60 and (b) the loading on the remaining factors should not exceed .30 for the pattern matrix or .40 for the structure matrix. These criterion were met by all items (see Table 1).

[Table 1 near here]

The Kaiser–Meyer–Oklin (KMO) value was 0.814, over the recommended 0.6. Bartlett's test of sphericity indicated the necessary communality present to justify a factor analysis ($\chi2$ = 1437.568, df = 120, $p \leq .001$). Hence, it was deemed appropriate to factorize the variables. The factor analysis revealed a structure comprising five factors instead of the four that were hypothesized (see Table 1).

These factors explained 68.2% of total variability. The factorial structure is shown in Table 1. The first factor, identified as Opinion of key competency-based educational reform (Opinion of reform), is comprised of 6 items (e.g., "Teaching practices focused on key competencies allows for a more quality education for students.") and explains 27.6% of the variance. The second factor, Specific self-evaluation of ability to assess students within a key

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competency framework (Specific self-evaluation: Ability to assess) consists of 3 items (e.g. "I have received sufficient training to be able to evaluate my students in my future student teaching experiences.") and explains 15.8% of the variance. The third factor, Comprehension of the possibility of an interdisciplinary-focused approach (Comprehension of interdisciplinarity), consisting of two items (e.g., "Social and cultural aspects can be integrated when teaching all disciplines."), explains 10.7% of the variance. The fourth factor, we identified as Application of a preconceptualization of previous educational policies (Application of preconceptualization), also consists of 2 items (e.g., "Some specific competencies correspond to certain disciplines") and explains 7.8% of the variance. A final firth factor General self-evaluation of the key competency-based teaching understanding (General self-evaluation) accounts for 6.3% of variance. As is common, we only considered factors that obtained an eigenvalue above 1. All the eigenvalues were above this value: 4.42 for Factor 1, 2.53 for Factor 2, 1.72 for Factor 3, 1.25 for Factor 4, and 1.01 for Factor 5.

Scale reliability

To determine the reliability of the five factors regarding the retained items, we calculated Cronbach's alpha for each Factor consisting of 3 or more items. For the 6-item Factor Opinion of key competency-based educational reform (Opinion of reform, F1), Cronbach's alpha was .867. The alpha value for the 3-item Factor Specific self-evaluation of ability to assess students within a key competency framework (Specific self-evaluation: Ability to assess, F2) was .794. For the additional 3-item factor General self-evaluation of the key competency-based teaching understanding (General self-evaluation, F5) it was .751. While not ideal, the Spearman-Brown coefficient can be used to estimate reliability in two-item scales (Eisinga, te Grotenhuis, ~~&~~and Pelzer~~,~~ 2013). Therefore, two-item factor internal consistency was estimated through the Spearman-Brown Coefficient as well as for the other three factors (see Table 2).

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[Table near 2 here]

Table 3 shows the correlation coefficients for each of the scales resulting from the factor analysis. Non-redundant and non-significant correlations were confirmed between factors, confirming that there were no redundancy issues. Not surprisingly, higher, albeit non-redundant correlations were observed between the two self-evaluation factors F2 (Specific self-evaluation: Ability to assess) and F5 (General self-evaluation), as predicted, as well as the two factors (originally hypothesized as one) aimed at measuring an understanding of the educational policy F3 (Comprehension of interdisciplinarity) and F4 (Application of preconceptualization).

[Table 3 near here]

Potential floor and ceiling effects were examined by observing the proportion of respondents who scored the lowest or highest possible score on any of the five scales. There were no concerning ceiling or floor effects detected; with ≤11% of respondents scoring the highest or lowest scale scores (average 3.1% across scales).

Discussion and Conclusions

Recently, mandates on standards in education policy, such as key competencies in the EU, or Common Core in the USA, have included intentions to radically change the education practice of millions of professionals. There exists an urgent need to develop appropriate instruments to measure the extent to which teachers and teaches in training agree with these education policy mandates and understand why they are implemented as education policy, as they are designed by policy-makers. It is also beneficial for university lecturers who train future teachers to have access to valid, reliable tools for use with their students. Nevertheless, there is a dearth of valid and reliable instruments available to these ends. Those responsible for

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teacher training should determine whether their students are familiar with education policy reports, consider them to be useful, understand the concept cognitively, and feel able to apply it practically in the classroom. Our aim was to develop, test, and validate an instrument ~~that could be used in the~~for its ~~future~~ future implementation as a research tool in longitudinal and multilevel studies, in a wide range of educational contexts and used on a smaller scale as a way for professors and Departments at universities in EU countries to assess their own teacher training.

Initially, it was expected that the proposed variables based on the theoretical principles presented in the Introduction section would be similarly reflected in the factor analysis. For the most part, this was true. Indeed, the analysis revealed that three hypothesized variables, Opinion of key competency-based educational reform (Opinion of reform, F1), Specific self-evaluation of ability to assess students within a key competency framework (Specific self-evaluation: Ability to assess, F2), and General self-evaluation of the key competency-based teaching understanding (General self-evaluation, F5) clearly corresponded with three of the proposed variables. However, the expected loading for the third proposed variable Cognitive understanding of education reform, was not coherent with the factor analysis. In addition, the two resulting factors are worthy of further ~~analysis~~study. As established at the start of the paper, it is very difficult to change existing knowledge structures, as ~~our~~ understanding is based on what we already know. This could contribute to difficulties in accepting new information (see, for example, Calderhead, ~~&~~and Robson~~,~~ 1991; Beck, Czerniak, ~~&~~and Lumpe~~,~~ 2000; Chinn ~~&~~and Brewer~~,~~ 1993; Smith et al.~~,~~ 1993; Spillane~~,~~ 2000). Therefore, given the data presented here, we believe that separate consideration of a variable Application of a preconceptualization of previous educational policies (Application of preconceptualization) from Comprehension of the possibility of an interdisciplinary-focused approach (Comprehension of interdisciplinarity) is warranted. However, an expansion

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focused on the differences between these two concepts could increase the internal consistency of these two scales; a current limitation of the instrument.

One additional limitation of the study is that instrument development has taken place in a specific university context. Future studies should assess instrument validity and reliability in other university and national contexts.

L~~A l~~ongitudinal application could help to evaluate current and future teachers on the concept of competencies, beliefs in their ability to apply competencies in their future classroom experiences, and beliefs in the usefulness of the concept through changes over time. Longitudinal studies could identify potential changes over time in the five variables proposed here and during the various stages of formal and informal training. As indicated by Feiman-Nemser (2001), trainee teachers' initial perspectives should be examined critically before alternatives are presented, as teachers' beliefs and theoretical knowledge shape their understanding of concepts (see also Buehl and Beck 2015, Ertmer et al. 2015, Korthagen ~~&~~and Vasalos~~,~~ 2005). Future studies could also compare the opinions of different faculties of education with those of students at different universities to explore potential correlations and include students' assessments of their university lecturers' ability to transmit the concept. The tools should be combined with other more ~~-~~qualitative, practical evaluations that are also used longitudinally, to achieve their potential.

It would be particularly interesting to apply this instrument in a multilevel study comparing contexts and networks of communities. Multilevel models (also known as hierarchical linear models, among other names) can control many variables at the same time while they consider different levels of organizational groupings, for example, the individual, formal training, and the professional environment (see Bickel~~,~~ 2007; Raudenbush ~~&~~and Bryk~~,~~ 2002). It has been observed that social aspects of the community and the input of colleagues play an important role in understanding and shaping attitudes on how to improve teaching

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practices (e.g., Hofman and Dijkstra 2010Muijis & Harris, 2006; Snow-Gerono, 2005) as well as in understanding new education policies (see Brown and Poortman 2018Cobern, 2001; Stein & Brown, 1997). These influences could come from different contextual levels simultaneously (e.g., Jurasaite-Harbison &and Rex, 2010; McLaughlin & Talbert, 1993; Spillane, 1996). The context, organization, and community in which a teacher is placed influence the learning goals and collaboration (Brown and Poortman 2018King, 2002; Knight, 2002). By applying the scales proposed here and studying other variables, multilevel analyses could reveal "good practices" relating to the implementation of education reforms, considering the differences between universities providing formal teacher training and schools in terms of working in professional teams, tutoring, and other organizational structures.

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Table 1. Rotated factor and Structure Matrices for the proposed items.

Item	F1 Opinion of reform		F2 Specific self-evaluation: Ability to assess		F3 Comprehension of interdisciplinarity		F4 Application of preconceptualization		F5 General self-evaluation	
	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S	P	S
Teaching practices focused on key competencies allows for a more quality education for students.	.854	.844								
The future of primary education should be based on competencies.	.845	.838								
Good teachers are those who focus on competencies when they teach.	.766	.785								
All teachers should keep competencies in the forefront of their mind when they teach classes.	.743	.785								
If I follow a key-competency-based teaching curriculum I will be a better teacher than if I don't follow one.	.726	.690								
I do not understand why so much importance placed on key competencies in schools.[R]	-.657	-.704								
I have received sufficient training to be able to competencially evaluate my students in my future student teaching experiences.			.847	.864						
I know how to evaluate primary students with a key-competency focus.			.844	.865						
During my initial student teaching experience I was able to competencially evaluate my students.			.831	.844						
Social and cultural aspects can be integrated when teaching all disciplines.					.861	.856				
Social and cultural aspects can be taught at the same time as mathematics.					.832	.848				
There are specific competencies relevant to each subject.							-.830	-.834		
Some specific competencies correspond to certain disciplines.							-.797	-.803		
When I plan a teaching unit for an undergraduate degree subject, I am familiar enough with the key competencies so that I don't have to look them up.									.826	.837
I have interiorized the key competencies.									.751	.817
I am familiar with all the key competencies.									.687	.747

Note. Principal axis factor analysis with oblique rotation (direct oblimin) was carried out. P = pattern coefficients; S = structure coefficients. Items have been translated from the original version in Catalan. [R] Reversed item. Only pattern and structure coefficients with values of .400 or greater are shown.

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Table 2. Number of items (N), mean (M), range, and internal consistency (Cronbach's alpha and Spearman-Brown Coefficient).

	Factors (scales)	N_{items}	M	SD	Range	α	Spearman-Brown Coefficient
F1	Opinion of key competency-based educational reform (*Opinion of reform*)	6	3.505	.710	.533	.867	.892
F2	Specific self-evaluation of ability to assess students within a key competency framework (*Specific self-evaluation: Ability to assess*)	3	2.601	.784	.506	.823	.794
F3	Comprehension of the possibility of an interdisciplinary-focused approach (*Compre-hension of interdisciplinarity*)	2	4.555	.427	.011	-	.521
F4	Application of a preconceptualization of previous educational policies (*Application of preconceptualization*)	2	3.881	.573	.162	-	.646
F5	General self-evaluation of the key competency-based teaching understanding (*General self-evaluation*)	3	2.511	.769	.099	.751	.692

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Table 3. Correlations between the five dimensions items of part one (5-point scale) of the questionnaire.

	F1	F2	F3	F4	F5
F1. Opinion of key competency-based educational reform (*Opinion of reform*)	-				
F2. Specific self-evaluation of ability to assess students within a key competency framework (*Specific self-evaluation: Ability to assess*)	.148*	-			
F3. Comprehension of the possibility of an interdisciplinary-focused approach (*Comprehension of interdisciplinarity*)	.135	.061	-		
F4. Application of a preconceptualization of previous educational policies (*Application of preconceptualization*)	.195	.133*	.498**	-	
F5. General self-evaluation of the key competency-based teaching understanding (*General self-evaluation*)	.326**	.467**	.003	-.006	-

Note. *$p \leq .05$, **$p \leq .01$.

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3.8. Introduction to Article B2

Clearly, teacher trainees are key stakeholders in the teacher training process in regard to educational policies. However, this undeniable certainty can be at times placed aside in the midst of radical educational policy changes. Arguably, in the context under study, these are toxically combined with university budget cutbacks bringing with them an increasing reliance on underpaid and overworked adjunct staff. This article analyses open-ended responses of 157 3rd year university primary teacher trainees at a Spanish university regarding their views on the quality and quantity of their university training in applying key competencies mandated by the current Spanish educational policies to the primary classroom. These teacher trainees were surveyed in their *Didàctica de la Història* courses at the University of Barcelona. Results show that these students largely feel that the university professors that have given them classes over the last three years have been unsuccessful in adequately explaining how to apply a competencially-based curriculum to the primary classroom. They claim that, they, as future teachers on the brink of entering the classroom as teachers themselves, have little idea of how to evaluate future primary students competencially. They also

☞ Perspectiva general de l'article B2 en català

És evident que els professors en formació són agents clau pel que fa a la futura implementació de polítiques educatives. No obstant això, aquesta innegable certesa a vegades es pot deixar de banda enmig de canvis radicals en la política educativa. En el context de l'estudi, aquesta realitat es combina tòxicament amb retallades pressupostàries universitàries i comporten una dependència creixent en el personal associat mal pagat i poc apreciat per la institució acadèmica. Aquest article analitza les respostes obertes de 157 futurs i futures mestres d'educació primària cursant el tercer curs en una universitat espanyola. Es pregunta la seva opinió sobre la qualitat i la quantitat de la formació universitària rebuda sobre les competències clau relativa a les polítiques educatives espanyoles que hauran d'aplicar quan es trobin a l'aula. Aquestes i aquests professors en formació van ser enquestats durant la realització de l'assignatura de Didàctica de la Història. Els resultats mostren que aquestes i aquests estudiants consideren en gran mesura que el professorat que els ha impartit classes durant els últims tres anys no ha pogut explicar com aplicar un currículum basat en competències a l'aula de primària. Afirmen que, com futures i futurs professors a punt d'accedir a l'aula, tenen poca idea de com avaluar competencialment a l'alumnat de primària. També es queixen que els seus professors i professores universitàries sovint no ensenyen mitjançant competències. Hi ha qui sospita que gran part del professorat no té un coneixement profund de les competències i, per tant, eviten el tema, deixant en mans dels seus estudiants la seva autoformació sobre aquests aspectes. Aquestes queixes es refereixen no només als professors de Didàctica de les Ciències Socials, sinó també a la majoria de professors d'altres àrees de la Facultat d'Educació.

complain that their university professors themselves often fail to teach though competencies; some suspect that many of their teacher trainers lack of understating of what competencies are themselves and thus avoid the topic, leaving it to their students to teach themselves through documents how to apply key competencies to the classroom. These complaints apply not only to DCS professors, but also to (most) professors of other areas in the UB's Faculty of Education, with some non-DCS exceptions.

☞ Perspectiva general del artículo B2 en español

Es evidente que los profesores en formación son agentes clave en cuanto a la futura implementación de políticas educativas. Sin embargo, esta innegable certeza a veces se puede dejar de lado en medio de cambios radicales en la política educativa. En el contexto del estudio, esta realidad se combina tóxicamente con recortes presupuestarios universitarios y conllevan una dependencia creciente en el personal asociado mal pagado y poco apreciado para la institución académica. Este artículo analiza las respuestas abiertas de 157 futuros y futuras maestras de educación primaria cursando el tercer curso en una universidad española. Se pregunta su opinión sobre la calidad y la cantidad de la formación universitaria recibida sobre las competencias clave relativa a las políticas educativas españolas que deberán aplicar cuando se encuentren en el aula. Estas y estos profesores en formación fueron encuestados durante la realización de la asignatura de Didáctica de la Historia. Los resultados muestran que estas y estos estudiantes consideran en gran medida que el profesorado que les ha impartido clases durante los últimos tres años no ha podido explicar cómo aplicar un currículo basado en competencias en el aula de primaria. Afirman que, como futuras y futuros profesores a punto de acceder en el aula, tienen poca idea de cómo evaluar competencialmente el alumnado de primaria. También se quejan de que sus profesores y profesoras universitarias a menudo no enseñan mediante competencias. Hay quien sospecha que gran parte del profesorado no tiene un conocimiento profundo de las competencias y, por tanto, evitan el tema, dejando en manos al alumnado la autoformación sobre estos aspectos. Estas quejas se refieren no sólo a los profesores de Didáctica de las Ciencias Sociales, sino también a la mayoría de profesores de otras áreas de la Facultad de Educación.

3.9. My role in the writing and revision of the Article B2

As mentioned in section 3.3., I played a role in instrument construction and aid in data collection, but I also worked hand in hand with Maria Feliu-Torruella in data analysis and writing the current draft version of the article, with invaluable guidance and support from Antonio Ruiz Bueno.

3.10. Current pre-submission draft of Article B2

The following 17 pages contain the pre-submitted version of Article B2. We thank the **DIDPATRI research team for their support in data collection and Antonio Ruiz Bueno** for his continued help throughout this process. We are very open to any

feedback the dissertation committee has regarding article B2 in its current form as we are obviously at a stage where such feedback can be immensely helpful. Along these lines, we are contemplating interviewing adjunct professors and analyzing their responses alongside the student feedback.

‘Why don’t I know this already?’ Are we failing our primary teacher trainees’ regarding their need to learn and apply key competencies to the classroom?

Maria Feliu-Torruella[a] and Ann E. Wilson-Daily[a]*

Note. Myriam González-Sanz may also participate in potential adjunct interviews, the later stages of data analysis and article revision, and would thus figure as a third author.

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This article uses third year undergraduate Education student feedback (n = 157) to assess the effectiveness of competency-based training at a Spanish university. Students claim that, as future teachers on the brink of entering the classroom as teachers themselves, they have little idea of how to apply a competencially-focused curriculum in the classroom as teachers and less of a grasp on how evaluate future primary students competencially. They place the blame on a lack of quality instruction and support during their university degree. The authors argue that rigorous empirical study should have been widely implemented and disseminated in before radical education policy changes were made. Over a decade after educational reforms were made in Spain, this empirical study and focus is still lacking and studies in teacher training programs are few and far between.

Key words: preservice teacher attitudes; educational policy; key competencies; self-evaluation; policy evaluation.

1. Introduction

Clearly, teacher trainees are key stakeholders in the teacher training process in regard to educational policies. However, this undeniable certainty can be at times placed aside in the midst of radical educational policy changes. Arguably, in the context under study,

these are toxically combined with university budget cutbacks bringing with them an increasing reliance on underpaid and overworked adjunct staff.

This article analyses open-ended responses of 157 3rd year university primary teacher trainees at a Spanish university regarding their views on the quality and quantity of their university training in applying key competencies mandated by the current Spanish educational policies to the primary classroom.

The results of this study place further in doubt the usefulness of educational policy innovation which lacks bottom-up support of the educational community (Altrichter, 2005; Ruiz Tarragó & Wilson, 2010, see also Honig, 2006) and empirical testing in teaching training programs (Cornford, 2000; Wilson-Daily et al., in press).

2. Spanish educational policy reforms and the teacher training context

Recent education policy reforms in Spain have been driven not by empirical evidence but rather by ideology-driven politics (e.g., LOE, 2006; LOMCE, 2013; see Dobbins & Christ, 2019; Jiménez-Ramírez et al., 2020; Jover et al., 2017) combined with the influence of top-down reforms from the European Parliament (Commission of European Communities, 2005). As Jover et al. (2017) point out, since the ratification of the Spanish Constitution in 1978, *eight* different educational laws have been passed "thereby subjecting education to continual upheaval" (p. 63).

Furthermore, as Halász and Michel (2011) write of evolution in Europe towards more competence-based curricula:

> Successful implementation can be expected only in those countries where there is coordinated action in the following four areas: (1) the definition of competence development-related goals and standards in national curriculum documents, (2) the alignment of national and school level assessment and evaluation approaches with these goals and standards, (3) intensive capacity building among teachers so that they become capable of adapting their classroom level practices to the new goals and standards and, particularly, (4) massive support for school level pedagogical innovations that enhance the renewal of learning environments. This also requires investing in the development of school leadership and national educational innovation systems (2011, pp. 303-304).

The most recent LOE (2006) and LOMCE (2013) reforms employed a competence-based approach. Nevertheless, according to Pamies et al. few teacher training opportunities have been provided, corresponding to Halász and Michel's (2011) point 3 from above. Pamies

et al. (2015) further argue that there are many internal contradictions exist in that prevent a successful implementation and assessment of such approaches (2015, pp. 72-73).

Many teacher training programs in Spain face problems as well. Most universities have increasingly relied on part-time faculty, referred to here as adjuncts. In many cases of Spanish university teacher training programs, adjunct faculty teach a large percentage of the courses. The idea is that adjunct faculty would be active teachers in the classroom and share their real world experience in university courses as a "side job" (Martínez, 2016). Potentially, this could be a helpful bridge between theory and practice (e.g., Darling-Hammond, 2008). Nevertheless, the reality in Spain is that often more than not that adjunct faculty in university teacher training programs are "false" adjunct professors (see Moreno Gené, 2018). This means that real teachers are not enticed by the low economic compensation of adjunct professors and these positions are occupied by graduate students or recent graduates who may have little to no experience in the classroom. Low salaries often mean that professor turnover is common. As Zeichner and Conklin (2008) write,

> …if a program relies mostly on adjunct staff or faculty or graduate students who come and go frequently, it is less likely to be able to create a coherent program with a shared vision and purpose than in a program where more permanent faculty and staff are engaged in educating teachers (p. 281).

Competency-based educational reforms can present a significant challenge to experienced as well as novice primary classroom teachers (Pamies et al., 2015). High quality teacher training programs, albeit always a challenge (see Korthagen, 2017), could potentially play an important role in improving future teachers' abilities in implementing such educational reform.

3. Methods

3.1. Participants

In Fall 2018, 263 students from a third year course of University of Barcelona's Bachelor's Degree in Primary Education (20.2% male, average age 21.8) filled out surveys. Of these, 157 (16.6% males, average age 21.6) filled in open-ended responses. [We are also contemplating interviewing adjunct professors and analyzing their responses alongside the student feedback]. Most participants by their third year have acted as student teachers in primary classrooms on two separate occasions and therefore did have real practical experiences in primary classrooms before participating in this survey.

3.2. Research design

Students were surveyed within their regular university classrooms by members of the research team who were not professors of those surveyed. Survey participation was optional, but those who participated received 1% in extra toward their final grade. When students turned in their surveys, they signed a separate sheet of paper used to record these extra points. Voluntary participation in follow-up interviews was also solicited at this time.

Participants were urged to honestly share their views on their university training in applying key competencies mandated by the current Spanish educational policies to the primary classroom. Aside from close-ended items (see Wilson-Daily et al., in press), participants were asked the following:

1. Are there any Faculty professor or professors that explained what the primary curricular-mandated competencies are and how you should apply them to the classroom? If your answers is 'yes' please include the professor name or names (if you remember) and include a brief example of how this was done.
2. Please briefly comment on your experience regarding teacher training, as far as the primary curricular-mandated competencies are concerned, within the University of Barcelona's Primary Teacher Training degree program (quality and quantity of training).

3.3. Data analysis

Participant responses to the two open-ended questions were transcribed and then analyzed with the aid of IRAMUTEQ software (Ratinaud, 2009). IRAMUTEQ is an R-based interface that is particularly suited to Latin languages. It processes a top-down hierarchical classification by relying on an iterative algorithm that defines classes that maximize the distance between subsets through χ^2 tests. Our analyses were aided from the two dendrograms and lexicometric cluster analyses resulting from the separate software analysis of the open-ended questions. In the dendrograms, words are ordered according to their relative importance determined by the χ^2 metrics (see the Results section. IRAMUTEQ is also helpful for its ability to relate open-ended hierarchical classification results with close-ended responses. When these are significant, they are also included.

4. Results

Figure 1 and Figure 3 show the results of the lexicometric cluster analyses pertaining to question 1 and question 2 respectively. Figures 2 and 4 contain the Dendrogram based on the lexicometric cluster analysis pertaining to question 1 and question 2 respectively. In these figures, words are listed in the order of their χ^2-determined relative importance. Each of the two analyses resulted in 5 clusters. The findings below have been grouped under headings drawn from each cluster for a total of 10 headings and illustrated through student comments.

4.1.A. Many participant teacher trainees' claim that their professors are not adequately explaining competencies (Question 1, Class 1, red)

Many participants voiced their frustrations that few or no professors had been able to explain a primary competency-based curriculum well. The words that correspond to this "Class 1" of the lexicometric cluster analysis (19.3% or the words analyzed by the software in response to question 1) can be seen in red color in Figures 1 and 2. These frustrations were very clearly stated in participant responses:

> …I don't remember any good explanation or any explanation that stands out given by my professors.[1]

> If I have to be honest, the Faculty professors have only taught me how to look them up [competencies] in the curriculum document of the Catalan government to paste them onto a lesson plan. Few professors have provided an in-depth explanation of how to apply them actively in our future.[2]

This seemed especially true in relation to how prepared participants felt to evaluate future primary students in the classroom.

> On the other hand, honestly, I have no idea how to evaluate competencially in a way that is adequate and fair for the children.[3]

> No professor has taught us the competencies nor how to apply them nor how to evaluate them.[4]

---

[1] Spanish version:*... no me acuerdo de ninguna buena explicación o explicación destacada por parte de mis profesores.*

[2] Spanish version: *Siendo sincero, los profesores de la Facultad sólo me han enseñado a buscarlas [competencias] al currículo de la Generalitat para plasmarlas en las UD. Pocos profesores he sentido que realizaran una explicación profunda para poder aplicarlas activamente en nuestro futuro.*

[3] Spanish version: *Por otro lado, sinceramente no tengo casi ninguna idea de cómo evaluar por competencias de una manera adecuada y justa por los niños.*

[4] Spanish version: *Ningún profesor nos ha enseñado las competencias ni cómo aplicarlas ni como evaluar con ellas.*

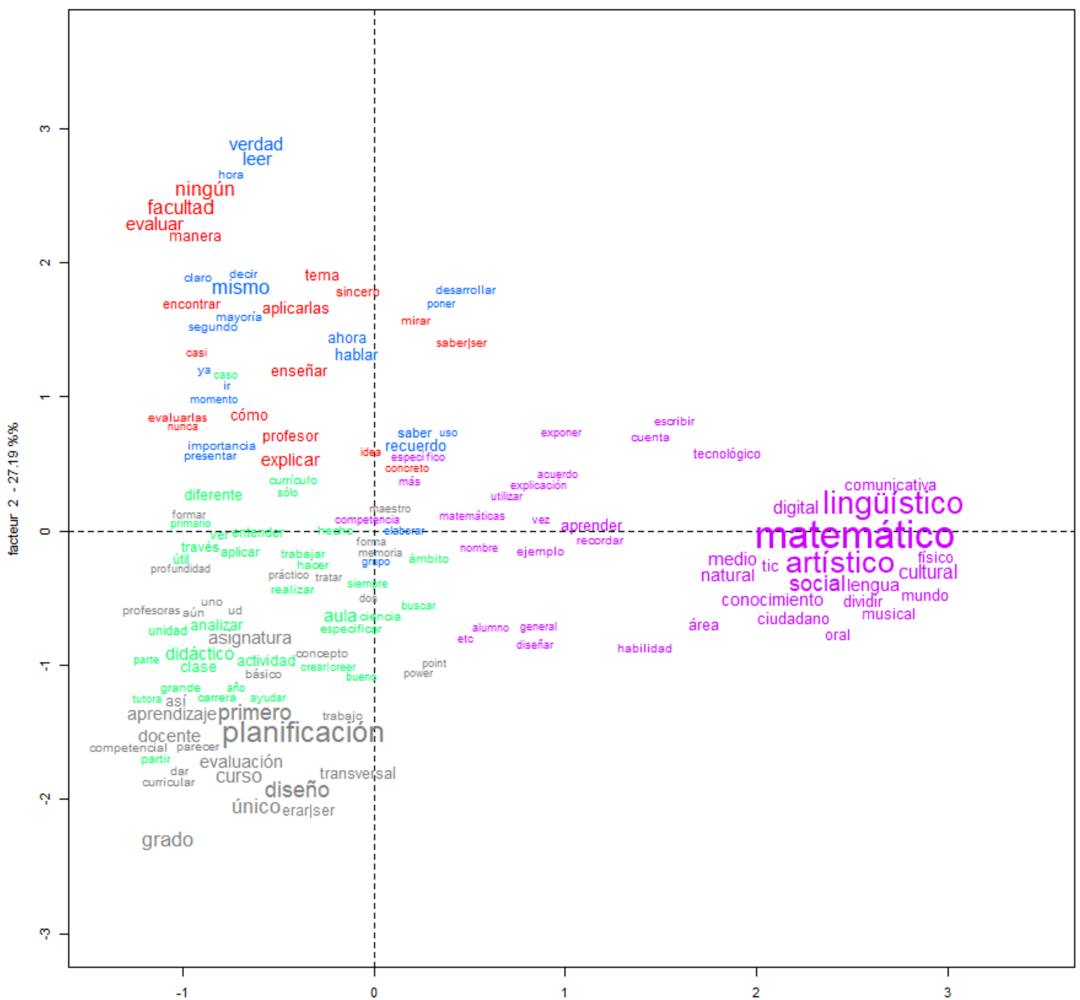

Figure 1. Lexicometric cluster analysis. These responses correspond to question 1: "Are there any Faculty professor or professors that explained what the primary curricular-mandated competencies are and how you should apply them to the classroom? If your answers is 'yes' please include the professor name or names (if you remember) and include a brief example of how this was done."

4.1.B. Many participant teacher trainees' claim that they are not taught competencies but rather must learn them on their own (Question 1, Class 4, blue)

Closely related to the Class 1 categorization above, the words (15.6% of the total words analized) that correspond to this "Class 4" of the lexicometric cluster analysis (question 1) can be seen in blue in Figures 1 and 2. Class 1 and 4 clusters are related in the Dendrogram (Figure 2). These class 4 comments relate to another type of participant frustrations voiced in that they claimed that the professors left it to them as students to learn about the competencies:

> Many of the competencies we are familiar with is because we learned them ourselves.[5]

> I don't remember very well what the professor[s] did, I've learned the different competencies by applying them [myself].[6]

> The truth is that I cannot praise any professor since the courses that we take at the university nobody focuses on teaching them expressly…I am aware of some competencies because we've either had to incorporate them into some paper (lesson plan) or they were indirectly mentioned in the classroom.[7]

The students whose comments fell under this Class 4 categorization were unable to name or even recall any professor that had made an impression on them regarding learning how to apply competencies to the primary classroom. There seemed to be resentment in their comments as they blamed their professors for being forced to learn competencies on their own to be able to apply them to course lesson plans.

4.1.C. Many participant teacher trainees' recall of good practice examples (Question 1, Class 3, green)

Other participant teacher trainees' could recall examples of working on competencies for the primary classroom in their university courses in a way that was useful for them. Just over a fourth (25.2%) of the software-analyzed words pertained to this Class 3 categorization, the results of the lexicometric cluster analysis (question 1) can be seen in green in Figures 1 and 2.

> Yes, professor C. ….I remember that he analyzed them with us and debated them with the aim of deciding if they were useful or not. We also understood how they were written and explained.[8]

> One professor of *Didáctica de la Geografía*….He taught u show to analyze them, understand them and apply them to our lesson plans.[9]

Unlike the words classified under Class 1 and Class 2 categories, the students whose comments fell under this Class 3 categorization were often able to name or at least recall

[5] Spanish version: *Muchas de las competencias que conocemos sabemos por nosotros mismos.*
[6] Spanish version: *No recuerdo muy bien hacia profesor la verdad, he ido aprendiendo las diferentes competencias a nivel práctico.*
[7] Spanish version: *La verdad es que no puedo destacar a ningún profesor ya que de las asignaturas que cursamos en la universidad no hay ninguno que se centre en enseñarlas como tal… tengo conciencia de algunas competencias porque las hemos tenido o bien incorporar en algún trabajo (UD) o bien han salido indirectamente en el aula.*
[8] Spanish version: *Sí, el profesor C. ….Recuerdo que las analizaron y discutir con el fin de ver si eran útiles o no. También entendimos como estaban redactadas y explicadas.*
[9] Spanish version: *Un profesor de didáctica de la geografía…Nos enseñó a analizarlas, comprenderlas y aplicarlas en actividades y UD.*

course activities related to learning about competencies as applied to the primary classroom.

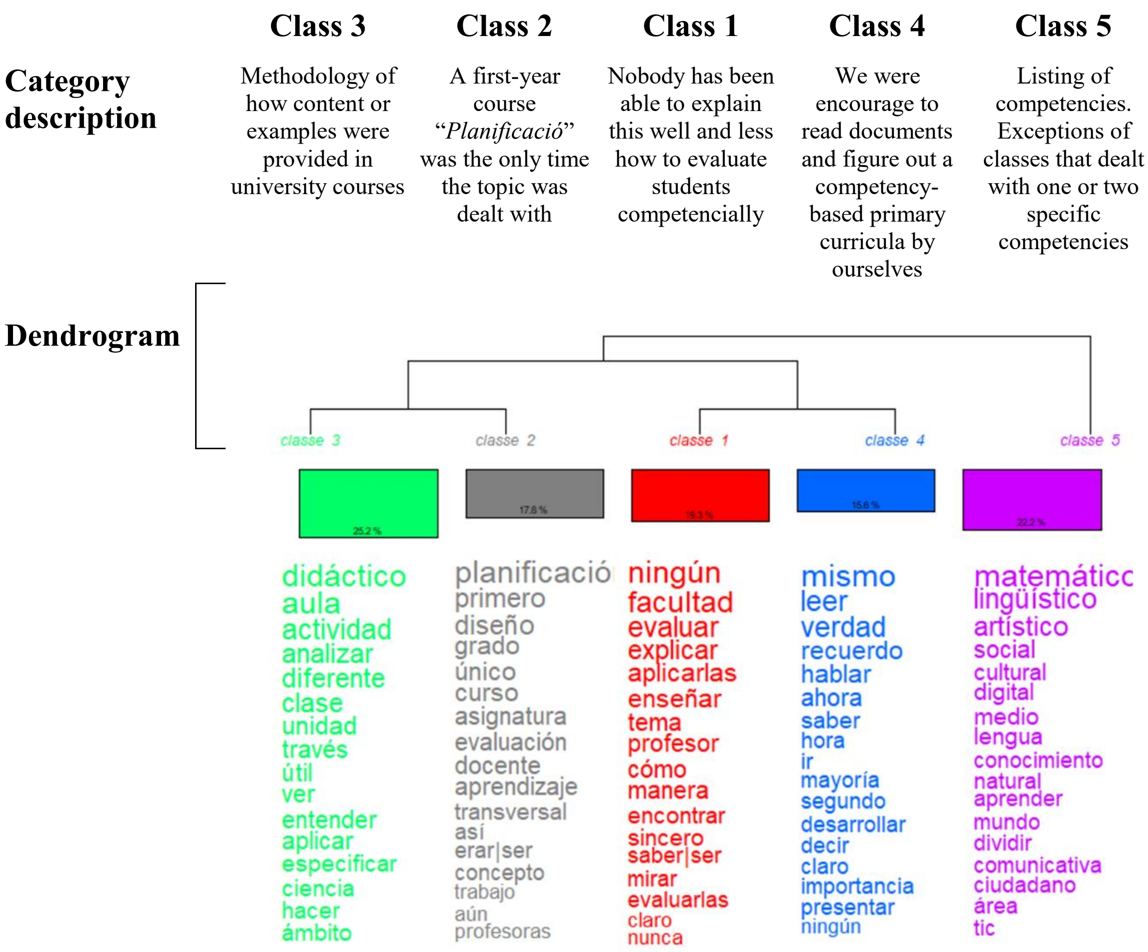

Figure 2. Dendrogram based on the lexicometric cluster analysis. Words are listed in the order of their χ^2-determined relative importance. These responses correspond to question 1.

4.1.D. Many participant teacher trainees' spoke highly of their Curricular Planning and Design course (Question 1, Class 2, gray)

Closely related to the Class 3 categorization above (see Figure 2's dendrogram, the words (17.8% of the total words analyzed) that correspond to this "Class 2" of the lexicometric cluster analysis (question 1) can be seen in gray in Figures 1 and 2. These class 2 comments relate to mostly praise for one class that many claimed was useful in learning about competencies as related to the primary classroom: *Planificació, Disseny i Avaluació de l'Aprenentatge i l'Activitat Docent*, translated here as "Curricular Planning, Design, and Evaluation".

> Yes, concretely the Curricular Planning and Design professor, he was the only that taught me about the competencies and how to design a quality lesson plan.[10]

> Yes. The professor was from Planning, Design and Evaluation and I remember that she designed a type of digital magazine…with dynamic examples and explanations and she showed us how to apply them. We did a big project of a lesson plan and she helped us very actively….[11]

4.1.E. Many participant teacher trainees' were familiar with some (not all) specific competencies (Question 1, Class 5, purple)

The Class 5 categorization can be seen in purple in Figures 1 and 2 (22.2% of the total words analyzed). These class 5 comments relate mostly to students who listed all the competencies that they remembered:

> [Only one teacher was able to teach me. The other ones didn't know]. I remember these competencies: mathematic, interaction with the physical world, initiative, literature and languages, ICT, musical, of sport.[12]

However, some of the comments in this category relate to a single competency that was explained very well in one course:

> Mathematic competence: using much material, many examples, much patience and motivation.[13]

4.2.A. Many participant teacher trainees' claimed that their training regarding competencies had been superficial and insufficient (Question 2, Class 4, blue)

The Class 4 categorization for question 2 can be seen in blue in Figures 3 and 4 (24.3% of the total words analyzed). These class 4 comments pertained who students who criticized their lack of training and communicated a dearth of preparedness:

> The training has not been sufficient because I am not at all sure how to apply them on my own as a future teacher.[14]

---

[10] Spanish version: *Sí, concretamente el profesor de Planificación y Diseño Curricular, ha sido el único que me dio formación sobre las competencias y cómo diseñar una unidad didáctica bien elaborada.*

[11] Spanish version: *Sí. La profesora era de planificación, diseño y evaluación y recuerdo que diseñó una especie de revista digital donde se exponían las competencias (matemática, lingüística, social y natural, TIC, aprender a aprender) y con ejemplos y dinámicas explicaciones nos enseñó cómo aplicarlas. Hicimos un gran trabajar de una UD con un seguimiento muy activo por su parte....*

[12] Spanish version: *[Sólo me ha podido enseñar una maestra. Los demás no lo sabían.] Recuerdo estas competencias: matemática, interacción con el mundo físico, iniciativa, literatura y lenguas, TIC, musical, del deporte.*

[13] Spanish version: *Competencia matemática: utilizando mucho material, muchos ejemplos, mucha paciencia y motivación.*

[14] Spanish version: *La formación no ha sido suficiente para que no estoy nada segura de aplicarlo por mi cuenta como futura docente.*

Many students complained that the coverage of competencies in their university courses was superficial:

> In all courses competencies are mentioned, in all our papers we have to specify what competencies we expect to work on with our students, but I have the impression that apart from this mention of them, they are not dealt with in any depth.[15]

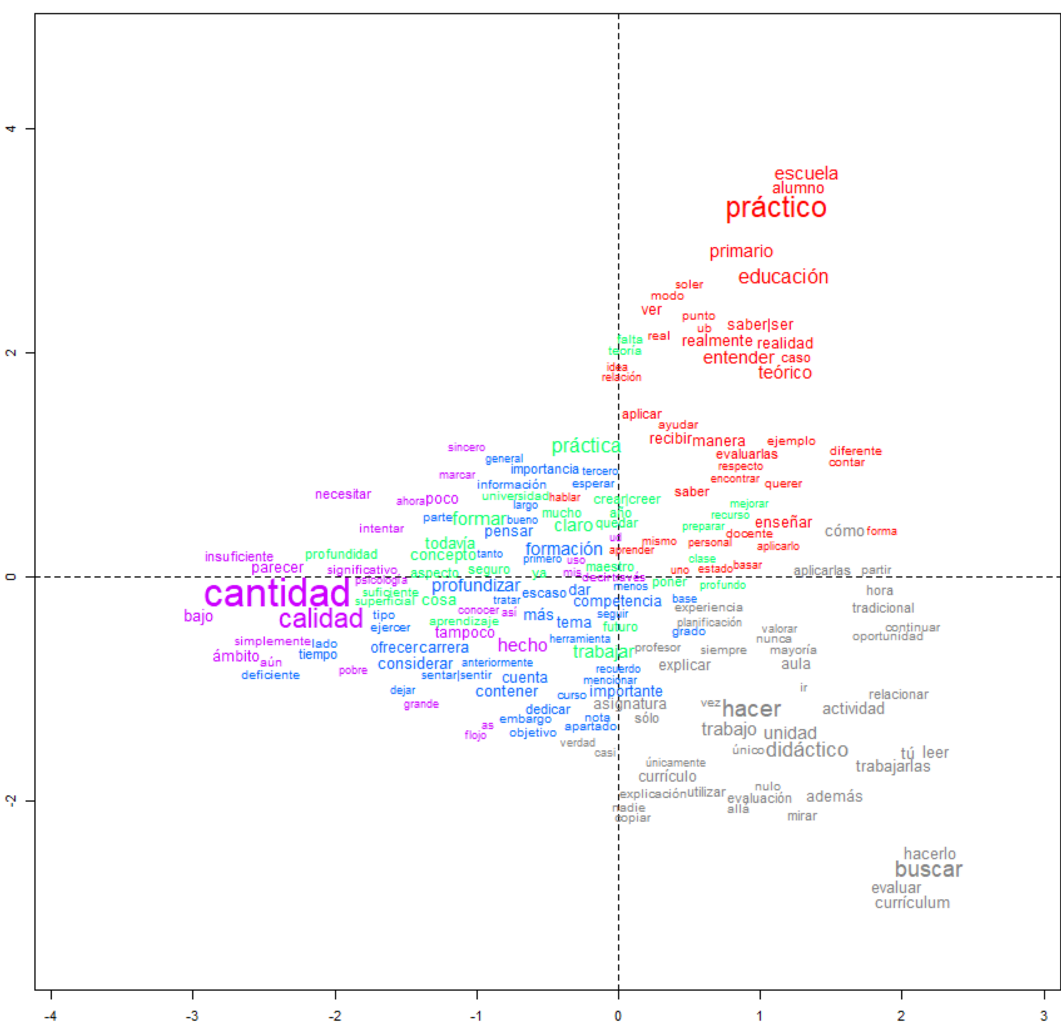

Figure 3. Lexicometric cluster analysis. These responses correspond to These responses correspond to question 2: "Please briefly comment on your experience regarding teacher training, as far as the primary curricular-mandated competencies are concerned, within the University of Barcelona's Primary Teacher Training degree program (quality and quantity of training)."

[15] Spanish version: *En todas las asignaturas mencionan las competencias, en todos los trabajos debemos especificar qué competencias esperamos trabajar con nuestros alumnos, pero tengo la sensación de que aparte de hacer referencia, no se abordan con profundidad.*

4.2.B. Many participant teacher trainees' feel their professors are failing them (Question 2, Class 3, green)

The Class 3 categorization for question 2 can be seen in green in Figures 3 and 4 (15.3% of the total words analyzed). As one can appreciate from Figures 3 and 4, this categorization is closely related to that of Class 4 described above in section 4.2.A and in Class 5 found in the following section 4.2.C. These class 3 comments related to a sense that the students feel that few professors are contributing in a worthwhile manner to their training as future teachers:

> The truth is that I find myself in the third year of the [Education] degree program and I feel very little educated in competencies and in many other things.[16]

> Insufficient in general, lots of theory but little practical application and they give us few resources for the future. The professors from whom we really learn are few and far between.[17]

> I have had very good professors from whom I have learned and I am learning a lot, but honestly I think there is a lack of motivation and purpose in some professors in this university[18]

4.2.C. Many participant teacher trainees' complain about quality and quantity of training in competency (Question 2, Class 5, purple)

The Class 5 categorization for question 2 can be seen in purple in Figures 3 and 4 (13.8% of the total words analyzed). As one can appreciate from Figures 3 and 4, this categorization is closely related to those of Class 4 and Class 3 described above in sections 4.2.A and 4.2.C respectively. These class 5 comments related to a sense that the students feel that quality and quantity of training has been insufficient:

> I feel that the training has been sparse and not very concentrated based on the fact of the importance that is placed on them now a days.[19]

> …There isn't any quality in the explanations.[20]

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[16] Spanish version: *La verdad es que están al tercer año de carrera me siento muy poco formada en competencias y en muchas cosas más.*

[17] Spanish version: *Insuficiente en general mucha teoría pero poca práctica nos dan pocos recursos para un futuro son pocos los profesores de los que realmente aprendemos.*

[18] Spanish version: *He tenido muy buenos maestros de los que he aprendido y estoy aprendiendo muchísimo pero sinceramente creo que falta motivación y vocación en algunos maestros de esta universidad.*

[19] Spanish version: *Opino que ha sido una formación escasa y poco intensa por el hecho de la importancia que se le da hoy en día.*

[20] Spanish versión: *...no hay calidad en las explicaciones.*

The quality hasn't been that great because all that I have learned has been consulting the curriculum and therefore quantity not great either since I have to go consult the curriculum.[21]

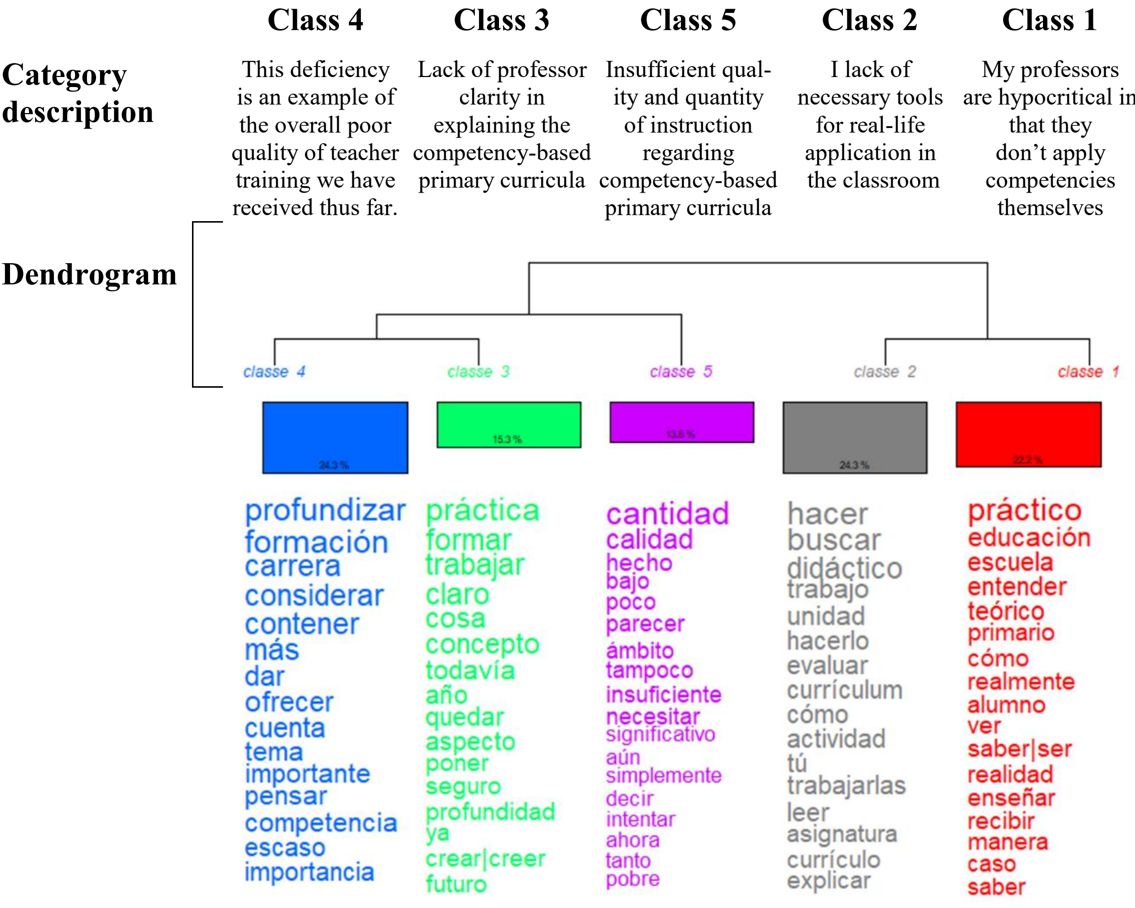

Figure 4. Dendrogram based on the lexicometric cluster analysis. Words are listed in the order of their χ^2-determined relative importance. These responses correspond to question 2.

4.2.D. Many participant teacher trainees' do not feel prepared for the classroom (Question 2, Class 2, grey)

The Class 2 categorization for question 2 can be seen in gray in Figures 3 and 4 (23.4% of the total words analyzed). Class 2 comments seemed to relay a sense of urgency in that students felt lost as to how to apply competencies in the classroom despite nearing the moment when they will be classroom teachers on their own.

[21] Spanish version: *La calidad no ha sido muy buena porque todo lo he aprendido consultando el currículo por tanto la cantidad tampoco ha sido demasiado cuando lo necesito consulto el currículo.*

> My experience has amounted to nothing because it's never been explained to me how I should apply this to the classroom and how to evaluate and the difference between teaching this way from a traditional way.[22]

> Nobody has explained well how and what to do.[23]

> The few professors that do talk to us [about competencies] only define them and they don't teach us how to apply them nor how to work on them.[24]

4.2.E. Many participant teacher trainees' do not feel their own professors teach competencially (Question 2, Class 1, red)

The Class 1 categorization for question 2 can be seen in red in Figures 3 and 4 (22.2% of the total words analyzed). Class 1 comments are related to those of Class 2 (subsection 4.2.D). Many teacher trainees complain that their professors do not teach or evaluate based on competencies themselves and are therefore not a great example for their students:

> Personally, I think that the university professors talk to us a lot about competencies but when they evaluate us they continue to do so in a traditional way; therefore, they do not help us understand competencies and the way they should be evaluated.[25]

Some teacher trainees even placed in doubt whether or not most of university professors were even familiar with a competency-based primary curricula:

> In my point of view, I don't think that all (the majority) of the professors are familiar with the competencies. When they are, they don't know how to teach about them.[26]

Discussion

We set out to explore teacher trainee evaluations of the quality and quantity of instruction received at a Spanish university on application of competencies to the primary classroom. Results show that the third year undergraduate Education students surveyed feel that their university professors that have taught them teacher training courses over the last three years, at least from a student perspective, have been unsuccessful in adequately

[22] Spanish version: *Mi experiencia ha sido nula porque nunca me lo han explicado bien nunca me han explicado cómo aplicarlo a un aula cómo evaluar y la diferencia de hacerlo así o hacerlo de manera tradicional.*
[23] Spanish version: *Nadie nos ha explicado bien cómo y qué hacer.*
[24] Spanish versión: *Los pocos profesores que sí que nos hablan sólo nos definen qué son y no nos enseñan cómo aplicarlas ni cómo trabajarlas.*
[25] Spanish version: *Personalmente yo creo que los maestros de universidad nos hablan mucho de competencias pero ellos cuando evalúan continúan haciendo exámenes de la manera tradicional por tanto no nos ayudan a entender mejor las competencias y la manera de poder evaluarlas.*
[26] Spanish version: *Desde mi punto de vista, pienso que no todos (la mayoría) de profesores conocen las competencias. En caso de que sí las conozcan, no las saben transmitir.*

explaining how to apply a competencially-based curriculum to the primary classroom. They claim that, as future teachers on the brink of entering the classroom as teachers themselves, they have little idea of how to evaluate future primary students competencially. They also complain that their university professors themselves often fail to teach though competencies; some suspect that many of their teacher trainers lack of understating of what competencies are themselves and thus avoid the topic, leaving it to their students to teach themselves through documents how to apply key competencies to the classroom.

As Sahlberg and Boce (2010) write: "without systematic data and evidence important parts of education policy-making will at best rely on hopes and beliefs. Improving teaching and learning, however, requires more than that" (p. 47). Rigorous empirical study should have been widely implemented and disseminated in *before* radical education policy changes were made. Over a decade after these educational reforms, such empirical study and focus is still lacking (Pamies, et al., 2015; Wilson-Daily et al., in press). Moreover, Spain does not seem to be the exception in this regard (e.g., Sahlberg & Boce, 2010; Leat et al., 2012). Training of active and trainee teachers also is lacking (Pamies, et al., 2015).

In the university context studied, this is combined with an underpaid staff. Investments and efforts have not been dedicated to train the many adjunct professors (over 70% of the overall teaching staff) nor fulltime or permanent university professors who take on the bulk of initial teacher training. The arguably toxic combination of lack of empirical research, lack of trainee and active teacher formation in a competency-based curricula lack of university professors prepared to train based on a competency-based curricula results in an educational reform destined to fail or at least for a painful, drawn-out bumpy ride.

Conclusions

Often times we strive to identify and disseminate best practices in teacher training programs. Nevertheless, arguably just as important is to identify weaknesses and grave fallbacks in teacher training programs that urgently need improvement or complete reconsideration. Teacher trainees' who pass through our programs will influence thousands of student lives over the next decades as they make their way into classrooms and schools. It is our debt to society to work to mend shortcomings in teacher trainees'

programs such as those identified in this study. Korthagen (2017) writes, “Without sufficient knowledge about teacher learning, attempts to improve the link between theory and teaching practices are no more than a shot in the dark”. Much more empirical work on competency-based educational reform and how to improve the connection between theory and teaching practices is urgently needed. Also needed is more financial investment in a stable, well-paid and well-trained university workforce.

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Chapter IV
ARTICLES – GROUP C

4.1. General introduction to the three Group C articles

During my academic stay with Dr. Harris, Associate Professor of History Education at the University of Reading, Dr. Harris showed me a questionnaire they were working on at the time that surveyed secondary school teachers on LGBT+ matters in the schools. I made a few suggestions and offered to work with Dr. Harris on the questionnaire. More specifically this teacher/staff questionnaire aimed at surveying 1) knowledge of curricular mandates or school policies related to LGBT+ topics /issues, 2) how comfortable they felt covering these topics or dealing with these issues in and outside of class, and 3) how prepared they feel to do so, among other aspects.

4.2. Funding project

Dr. Harris received a small internal University of Reading grant to carry out these studies.

4.3. My role within the project and the two articles

I was responsible for 1) aid in the construction of the quantitative instruments, 2) analysis of the quantitative data, 3) assistance writing, mainly the methodological and quantitative results sections as well as general article feedback.

4.4. Introduction to Article C1

LGBT+ students are the group most often bullied and victimized by their peers in secondary schools (e.g., Toomey & Russell, 2016). They suffer higher levels of attempted suicide and self-harm (e.g., Hatchel et al., 2019) and leave school with comparatively

lower levels of attainment (e.g., Birkett et al., 2009). Studies suggest LGBT+ students suffer from serious physical and mental health problems (Martxueta & Etxeberria, 2014) with long-lasting effects (e.g., Vega et al., 2012; Toomey et al., 2010).

This study aims to understand qualitative and quantitative data gathered in six UK secondary schools within Johnson and Amella's (2013) framework of social isolation. It seeks to identify aspects that best and least support LGBT+ students.

Teacher and student perspectives are compared and contrasted regarding the school curriculum and school support groups. This initial study is meant as a basis for future larger-scale studies in both Spain and in the UK.

☞ Perspectiva general de l'article C1 en català

Aquest estudi explora les experiències d'alumnes i alumnes de sis escoles secundàries de el sud d'Anglaterra que s'identifiquen com LGTB +. La literatura existent posa en relleu els principals reptes que afronten aquests i aquestes estudiants en les seves vides i com les escoles i el professorat de ciències socials, sense voler, pot contribuir a augmentar l'aïllament social de l'alumne o alumna. Basant-se en les dades de l'enquesta recollida de 153 membres de personal dels sis instituts, nou entrevistes amb professors i sis grups de discussió d'estudiants (38 estudiants en total), les dades mostren com les escoles poden aïllar l'alumnat socialment, emocionalment i cognitivament. S'evidencia com el currículum, els espais etiquetats amb gènere i els grups de suport poden contribuir a que molts estudiants se sentin 'diferents' i sovint obligats i obligades a ocultar la seva identitat. L'article utilitza el concepte d'aïllament i les seves diferents dimensions (segons Johnson i Amella, 2013) per emmarcar les dades i proporcionar un mitjà que permeti entendre millor com les escoles i el currículum de ciències socials poden -involuntàriament- aïllar els i les estudiants.

4.5. Modifications made to Article C1 in lieu of reviewer/editor feedback

We initially submitted to the *British Educational Research Journal* and were passed on to review. Not surprisingly, perhaps, the reviewers wanted a larger sample size and some clarifications and ultimately rejected the article. Dr. Harris incorporated some changes which I revised and resubmitted to the *Cambridge Journal of Education*.

☞ Perspectiva general del articulo C1 en español

Este estudio explora las experiencias de alumnas y alumnos de seis escuelas secundarias del sur de Inglaterra que se identifican como LGTB+. La literatura existente pone de relieve los principales retos que afrontan estos y estas estudiantes en sus vidas y cómo las escuelas y el profesorado de ciencias sociales, sin querer, puede contribuir a aumentar el aislamiento social del alumno o alumna. Basándose en los datos de la encuesta recogida de 153 miembros del personal de los seis institutos, nueve entrevistas con profesores y seis grupos de discusión de estudiantes (38 estudiantes en total), los datos muestran como las escuelas pueden aislar al alumnado social, emocional y cognitivamente. Se evidencia como el currículo, los espacios etiquetados con género y los grupos de apoyo pueden contribuir a que muchos estudiantes se sientan 'diferentes' y a menudo obligados y obligadas a ocultar su identidad. El artículo utiliza el concepto de aislamiento y sus diferentes dimensiones (según Johnson y Amella, 2013) para enmarcar los datos y proporcionar un medio que permita entender mejor como las escuelas y el currículo de ciencias sociales pueden –involuntariamente— aislar a los y las estudiantes.

4.6. Current submitted version of Article C1

The following 24 pages contain the submitted version of Article C1 to the *Cambridge Journal of Education*. This article is pending reviewer responses (see Figure 4.1. on the next page).

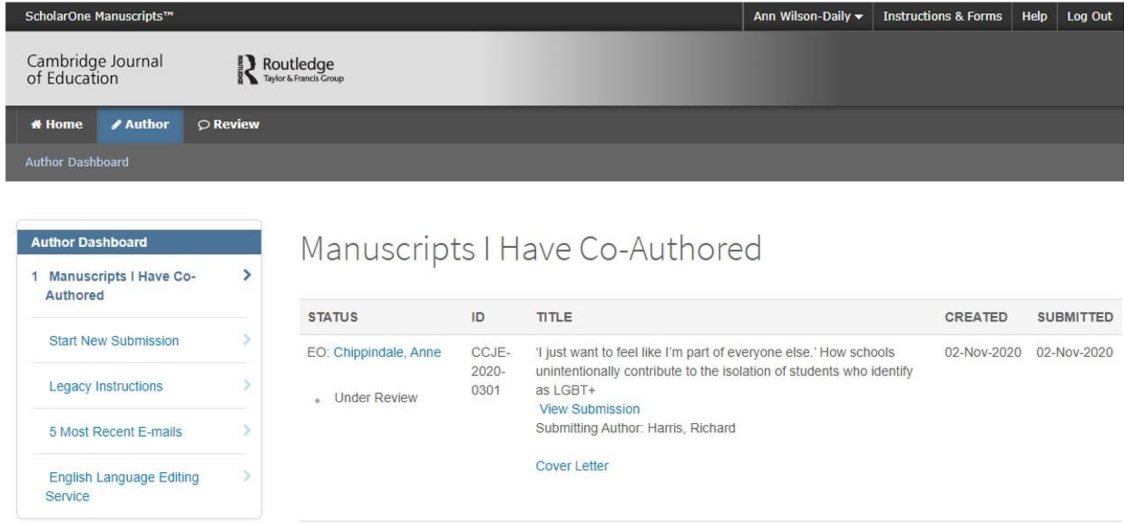

Figure 4.1. Article C1 was submitted by co-author Dr. Harris to the *Cambridge Journal of Education* on November 2, 2020. The reviewer responses are pending.

'I just want to feel like I'm part of everyone else.' How schools unintentionally contribute to the isolation of students who identify as LGBT+

Journal:	*Cambridge Journal of Education*
Manuscript ID	CCJE-2020-0301
Manuscript Type:	Original Article
Keywords:	LGBT+ students, isolation, support groups, secondary schools

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'I just want to feel like I'm part of everyone else.' How schools unintentionally contribute to the isolation of students who identify as LGBT+

This study explores the experiences of students who identify as LGBT+ in six secondary schools in the south of England. Drawing mainly on data from six student focus groups, and nine teacher interviews, supplemented by a survey of staff and school policy documents, this study examines how schools unwittingly increase LGBT+ students' sense of isolation. Using a framework that identifies different forms of isolation, this study found that use of gendered spaces, the creation of 'safe' spaces such as support groups, and the school curriculum, can exacerbate students' feelings of isolation, despite the good intentions of schools. Understanding how schools (unwittingly) contribute to LGBT+ students' sense of isolation potentially provides a means to identify more specific ways schools could address this issue.

Keywords: LGBT+ students; isolation; support groups; secondary schools.

For Peer Review Only

Introduction

This paper examines the ways schools can often and unwittingly contribute to LGBT+ students' sense of isolation. Although the policy context for the LGBT+ community has generally improved recently within the UK, this paper explores issues that LGBT+ youngsters still encounter in secondary schools. The concept of isolation, as outlined by Johnson and Amella (2013), is used to make sense of data drawn from six secondary schools in the south of England, and the ways in which schools fail to address adequately the isolation experienced by LGBT+ students, or understand its extent. Prior to data collection, an initial literature review highlighted issues around gendered spaces, the existence of support groups/'safe' spaces and the curriculum; these themes helped to initially inform the study's focus. However, through data analyses, especially of student focus group data, a theme of isolation kept emerging. This prompted a re-analysis of data around an isolation framework (Johnson & Amella, 2013), forming the basis of this article.

Literature Review

This literature review firstly provides a brief outline of the changing policy context for the LGBT+ community in the UK. Generally, policies have moved in a more positive direction, but not for all. The second section looks at the evidence of the experience of LGBT+ youngsters in schools, which presents a mixed picture. It also briefly highlights the types of interventions schools have adopted and the impact of these on LGBT+ students. The final section looks at the association between being LGBT+ and mental health; in

particular, the concern around the effects of isolation, and the different ways in which LGBT+ youngsters can be made to feel isolated.

The LGBT+ community and the changing policy context

In some ways the position of the LGBT+ community in the UK has improved considerably over the past decade; at least regarding recent policy changes. In the 1980s and 1990s, government policy helped to create a generally hostile environment for the LGBT+ community. In part, this was due to the government policy around HIV and AIDS, which served to stigmatise the LGBT+ community, but also included legislation which affected education. Section 28 of the 1988 Local Government Act, in particular, was interpreted by many as banning the teaching of homosexuality in schools (White et al., 2018). The 2010 Equalities Act, however, seems to mark a significant change in government attitude. This Act brought together many pieces of legislation designed to protect individual rights and to promote equality of opportunity for all. Of particular note was the designation of 'protected characteristics', including gender reassignment and sexual orientation. This means that all services, including schools, are legally obliged to make reasonable adjustments to promote equality of opportunity and protect individuals from discrimination. This shift in the policy landscape is evident in other legislation, e.g., in 2013 same-sex marriages were legalised in England and Wales. There has also been a change in expectations regarding sex education (now Relationships and Sex Education) in schools in that the most recent DfE guidance specifically mentions the need to teach about LGBT+ matters:

> At the point at which schools consider it appropriate to teach their pupils about LGBT, they should ensure that this content is fully integrated into their programmes of study for this area of the curriculum rather than delivered as a stand-alone unit or lesson. Schools are free to determine how they do this, and we expect all pupils to have been taught LGBT content at a timely point as part of this area of the curriculum (DfE, 2019, p. 15).

However, the climate for trans people recently has become increasingly hostile with the development of the so-called 'TERF (Trans-exclusionary radical feminists) wars' and the contested changes in the UK to the Gender Recognition Act (2004) (GRA) as to whether trans people can change the sex marker on their birth certificates to reflect their gender identity (see Pearce et al., 2020).

Although there have been generally positive shifts in official attitudes towards the LGBT+ community, the research on the lived experience of LGBT+ students in schools presents a mixed picture.

The experience of LGBT+ students in secondary education

Hines (2010) acknowledges there is a need to understand more fully how LGBT+ community members navigate the complexities of society, particularly within schools, especially as the existing research presents seemingly contradictory findings.

Some studies identify a very positive picture of LGBT+ youth acceptance in schools (McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Morris et al., 2014; White et al., 2018). These studies provide detailed qualitative insights into young people's experiences and suggest there is a significant cultural shift in attitudes towards LGBT+ matters amongst young people. White et al. (2018) even claim that homophobia itself is stigmatised in schools rather than homosexuality, whilst McCormack and Anderson (2010) found that prevailing attitudes in the educational institutions in their study were pro-gay. It is however hard to generalise as these studies tend to be small-scale, are often focused on single institutions and explore the stories of either homosexual or bisexual males, rather than the full range of LGBT+ experience.

In contrast, other studies highlight significant issues. Vega et al.'s (2012) study found that 61% of respondents felt unsafe in their school and 90% had experienced some form of harassment as a consequence of identifying as LGBT+. National surveys in the US and UK (e.g., GLSEN, 2017; Stonewall, 2017) do highlight an improving picture for LGBT+ students, but nonetheless show room for significant improvement . For example, Stonewall (2017), drawing on the experiences of around 3700 LGBT+ students, reported that approximately 50% were bullied, 68% said that teachers did not challenge the use of inappropriate language and 40% were never taught anything about LGBT+ matters. The Stonewall report (2017) also suggests that trans or gender non-conforming students experience much greater levels of victimisation and suffer from greater mental health issues than their LGB peers. This probably reflects the often visible nature of gender non-conformity (Miller and Grollman, 2015).

These national surveys, conducted by LGBT+ campaigning groups, have however been criticised for their methodological approaches, the claims they make, and their focus on LGBT+ students as victims (McCormack, 2020). They do however present a different perspective to a number of academic studies. This contradiction between these types of studies raises important questions about the nature of young LGBT+ students' school experience, and highlights the need for further study. There is a concern that many LGBT+ students find schools unsafe and do not enjoy their education. This is highlighted in some small-scale academic studies. For example, Formby (2015) shows the negative attitudes LGBT+ students encounter from teachers, and are often positioned as victims. Negative school experience can lead to poorer academic outcomes, which in turn can impact the professional future and life quality of young LGBT+ people (see Vega et al., 2012).

To support LGBT+ students, schools have taken steps to try to improve the educational experience for this group. Many interventions focus on policies around bullying, use of gendered spaces (e.g., Slater et al., 2018), provision of support groups/'safe' spaces and a more inclusive curriculum (e.g., Kosciw et al., 2013; Russell et al., 2010). Analysis, especially in the quantitative studies (which are often in the US) identify a positive correlation between such interventions and LGBT+ students' experience of school. However, these quantitative studies are often unable to comment on

the nature/quality of the interventions, which means it is difficult to draw any strong conclusions about how such interventions work. Smaller scale, qualitative studies, such as Formby (2015), provide more specific insight into LGBT+ students' experiences, which questions the benefit of well-intentioned interventions, for example requiring known lesbian/gay students to change for physical education classes away from their peers.

LGBT+ students and mental health issues

A number of medical and psychological studies demonstrate a relationship between LGBT+ identity and engagement in risky behaviours. For example, Seelman et al. (2017) found that incidents of victimisation and microaggressions were associated with lower levels of self-esteem amongst LGBT+ college students. Seelman (2016) and Miller and Grollman's (2015) studies of the experiences of transgender and gender non-conforming college students and adults found that these groups were at higher risk of suicide and health-harming behaviours as a result of victimisation. Stone et al. (2014) found that sexual minority youths tended to have increased risk of suicide ideation, planning and attempts. These findings, linking severe mental health problems with individuals who identify as LGBT+, are consistent across many studies. Of added concern is the connection between victimisation in someone's youth and lifelong mental health issues (D'Augelli et al., 2006); this link indicates it is imperative that schools provide appropriate, effective support for LGBT+ students so they are less likely to encounter mental health issues throughout their lives.

A significant factor in this heightened degree of risk is social isolation. Young people with small social networks generally experience more depressive symptoms (Falci & McNeely, 2019), suggesting that isolation is a contributing factor to poor mental health. Hussong et al. (2019), using social network analysis, also found a relationship between low social status and integration and risky behaviours. If social isolation is a major factor in poor mental health and well-being, then LGBT+ youth in particular are likely to experience "greater feelings of hopelessness, helplessness, worthlessness, alienation, and extreme loneliness" (Williams et al., 2005, p. 472), as a result of "a hostile social environment characterized by stigma, prejudice and discrimination" (Stone et al., 2014, p. 262). However, studies conducted in relation to the LGBT+ community and isolation are largely drawn from the psychology field. Research into the ways schools contribute to students' sense of isolation is rare (e.g., Murray, 2011). There is thus a need to examine this area more carefully.

Additionally, Johnson and Amella (2013) argue that isolation needs more clear conceptualisation to be useful in identifying those at most risk of poor mental health. They identify five dimensions (and four sub-dimensions) that clarify how isolation may manifest itself in LGBT+ youth:

- Social isolation
    - Lack of social support/network
    - No [or limited] contact with wider LGBT+ community
    - Social withdrawal – where, for example, fear of rejection, leads to self-isolation

    - Victimisation
- Emotional isolation –lack of affection and emotional detachment from family and friends
- Cognitive isolation –lack of access to information about LGBT+ matters
- Identity concealment –seeking to conform to heteronormative and/or cisgendered patterns of behaviour
- Aware of self as different – in this situation individuals are aware they don't 'fit in'

Clearly this outline contains elements that are interconnected, e.g., emotional isolation would appear to contribute to social isolation. This framework, however, provides an interesting approach to conceptualising ways in which LGBT+ individuals can experience isolation in secondary schools. Although written by medical professionals, Johnson and Amella's (2013) framework potentially offers a nuanced way to explore how educational settings may create and/or reinforce LGBT+ students' sense of isolation, and therefore corresponding ways to address this.

Drawing on the literature examined there is clearly dispute around the experience of LGBT+ students in schools, and the impact of attempts to support these students (such as use of gendered spaces, provision of support groups/'safe' spaces, and curriculum inclusion). This paper explores these issues through the lens of isolation, based around the following questions::

- How do LGBT+ students' experience of gendered spaces in schools contribute to a sense of isolation?
- How do LGBT+ students' experience of support groups/'safe' spaces in schools contribute to a sense of isolation?
- How do LGBT+ students' experience of the curriculum in schools contribute to a sense of isolation?

Methodology

This paper is drawn from a wider study, in which a mixed methods approach was adopted, to explore the culture and climate of six secondary schools from the perspective of staff and students, and the extent to which these schools provided a supportive LGBT+ environment. That study combined data from six student focus groups (whose participants identified as LGBT+ or as an 'ally'), a web-based quantitative survey of teachers and staff and follow-up interviews with self-selecting staff who volunteered through the survey. School policy documents were also scrutinised. The research design utilised a mixed methods qualitative priority model (QUAL + quant), in which student focus group data was emphasized and quantitative data played a complementary role (Morse & Niehaus, 2016).

For this paper, most data presented are drawn from the student focus groups, and teacher interviews. Where appropriate, additional data from the surveys and school policy documents are included to illustrate key points.

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Participants

Six schools (out of approximately 40 invited) agreed to participate. Reasons for non-participation were not collected. The six schools that engaged in the project were state-maintained; five had students aged 11-18, and one, aged 14-18.

[Insert Table 1 around here]

As seen in Table 1, the five larger schools are similar in terms of size and female/male demographic, but vary in terms of students with English as an additional language (EAL), reflecting the ethnic diversity of the school location, and free meal recipients (considered a crude indicator of levels of poverty within the local area). Schools provided what they considered to be relevant school policy documents (Table 2), which in most cases were the school's equality and anti-bullying policies; however, one school provided a curriculum policy, and another, a policy on transgender students. Schools also provided access to a student focus group and the link to an online survey to their teachers and other staff members. Names of schools, focus group participants and interviewee names are changed to protect the identity of all participants.

[insert Table 2 around here]

In each school a contact person was designated as a liaison point with the research team. In some schools this was a senior member of staff, responsible for student welfare, whereas in others it was a member of staff with a particular interest or connection with the LGBT+ community.

Data collection and ethical considerations

All data were collected in spring and early summer 2019. Six focus groups of LGBT+ students were conducted (in some focus groups 'allies' also attended), one in each school. In total there were 38 students (Yew Tree = 5 students, Oak Tree = 1[1], Elm Tree = 14, Ash Tree = 4, Rowan Tree = 8, Fir Tree = 6) (see Table 3). The liaison person in the school was asked to invite students to the meeting, given their better knowledge of the students, and who would be willing to contribute. In Yew Tree, Oak Tree, Elm Tree and Rowan Tree these students were drawn from an in-school support group, so these students knew each other. Fir Tree had a support group, but most students who attended the focus group were not part of it and thus these students were largely unknown to each other and unaware of how each other identified. At Ash Tree there was no support group from which to draw students, instead a member of staff invited students whom they thought would be interested; only one of the participants identified as LGBT+, the others were all advocates for LGBT+ rights.

[1] This was due to staff absence on the day, so students were unaware of where and when the meeting was happening. One of the researchers was however already familiar with a number of the students and issues in the school having worked with them on a previous project.

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Given the potentially sensitive nature of the issues to be discussed, ethical approval was gained from the University's ethics committee, and procedures that adhered to the British Educational Research Association's (BERA) (2018) guidelines were followed. Questions mainly focused on the schools' actions and not individual experiences, to avoid students having to share sensitive personal stories, unless they chose to do so. (see Appendix A for an outline of the indicative questions).

[insert Table 3 around here]

The other main source of data presented in this paper are teacher interviews. Nine teachers from five school indicated they were willing to be interviewed (two each from Fir Tree, Oak Tree, Rowan Tree and Yew Tree, one from Ash Tree, and none from Elm Tree). The first part of the interview was semi-structured, exploring teachers' perspectives and experiences of LGBT+ matters. The second part used a set of scenarios to examine teachers' attitudes, values and beliefs about LGBT+ related issues in schools.

Where other data (policy documents, and survey data) helped to contextualise and/or offer additional insights into the issues identified by students, it is included in the analyses presented below.

Data analysis

Focus group and interview data were transcribed and then analysed based on themes through deductive and inductive coding; deductive themes were gendered spaces, support groups/'safe' spaces and the curriculum. Following this initial coding, a process of inductive coding identified isolation as an issue for serious consideration. This code was further developed to identify different forms of isolation, drawing on Johnson and Amella's (2013) conceptualisation of the term. This qualitative data, examining how isolation is experienced by students and perceived (or not) by teachers, are the basis for this paper. Including other issues from the quantitative data were considered beyond the scope of this article.

Findings

How do LGBT+ students experience of gendered spaces in schools contribute to a sense of isolation?

Students at Fir Tree raised no issues about access to gendered spaces; the school had gender neutral toilets and students were allowed to use the toilets of their choice (although focus group data revealed trans students at this school did face significant abuse from their peers). However, in other schools gendered spaces offered challenges for many students. Several reported abuse in sports changing rooms –seemingly affecting the whole spectrum of LGBT+ students. For example, in Yew Tree, one of the transgender students who wears a binder across his breasts, had to use the girls' changing room, and felt compelled to change in a separate shower room to avoid anyone seeing. Also, one of the boys who identifies as gay

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reported extensive bullying, for example, being told he should go to the girls' changing room and being called a 'faggot' by his peers. This student truanted from sports lessons because of this consistent abuse. It seems that there is a great deal of 'policing' of these gendered spaces along heteronormative and cisgendered lines. Also, these spaces, or the LGBT+ students within them, were sexualised in the eyes of their peers. At Elm Tree the students said:

> I couldn't really look anywhere but the wall or the ceiling because otherwise people would go 'why are you staring at me, do you like me or something?' And it was a very uncomfortable period.
>
> I'd be in the girls' changing rooms and I'd be literally forced to go into the toilets otherwise people would say I'm perverting on them.
>
> I was getting so many stares and so many looks, and even now I struggle with stuff like that because I am pansexual. But that does not mean you have to come up to me and sexually flirt with me – absolute buffoons!

The struggle to conform to gendered spaces appears to increase LGBT+ students' sense of difference and therefore isolation within school.

This sense of isolation is exacerbated by school policies relating to gendered spaces, especially staff ignorance of these policies. As part of the survey, staff were asked about the availability of gender neutral toilets and whether students (with or without medical treatments to support transition) were able to use the toilets of their choice. Staff at Fir Tree were more aware of the existence of gender neutral toilets, with half (50%) of the teachers/staff surveyed confirming that these toilets were available. Staff at other schools were less aware of policies if they existed (see Figure 1).

[Insert Figure 1 here]

Teacher awareness as to whether school policy allowed trans students to use the toilets they felt comfortable using was low. For example, in Yew Tree, the only school where policy documents expressly included references to gender neutral toilet spaces and case-by-case toilet preference, only 29.4% of teachers/ staff were aware of the former (Figure 1) and 17.6% of the latter (Figure 2).

[Insert Figure 2 here]

Staff attitudes towards transgender and binary non-conforming students varied, and appeared to reflect either a lack of training or a poor under-standing of the issues facing such students. Ray (Rowan Tree) was very confident in LGB issues due to his personal experiences, yet admitted his ignorance of trans issues meant he was unclear on what was appropriate for matters such as use of toilets and changing rooms. When asked whether trans students should be allowed to use the toilet of their preference he replied:

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> I'm not very for gendered toilets anyway, a toilet is a toilet. I'm not too sure and I'm not trans so I don't know what is best for that person.

Tom (Fir Tree) similarly felt uncertain about answering such questions. Helen (Yew Tree) was more forthright:

> That's another very very very very very controversial, difficult question to answer …. If it was my child I would speak to my child. Ok, you can be who want to be at home but in school you have to maintain this role play for a while because it makes life easier. Otherwise, I don't want my child to be in confrontation.

Liam (Ash Tree) believed no gender neutral spaces should be provided for students, instead transgender students had to 'accept biology' and live with the body they were born with. He felt being transgender was a mental health issue and students should be counselled to love their bodies and not change them. Such views are only likely to make some students feel more isolated, especially given the position of authority teachers hold.

There were however schools or individuals within those schools who were being more proactive and supportive. Yew Tree was the only school that had a specific policy for transgender students. Not only does the school have gender neutral toilet spaces but the policy document also states students can use the toilet of their preferred identity following discussions and decisions made on a case-by-case basis. Their uniform policy also allows students to wear clothing aligning with their preferred gender, although again this is considered case-by-case. The policy also includes guidance on use of preferred names, rooming policy on residential trips (when students often share rooms/dormitories) and also offers advice on physical education (PE) and when it would be possible for students to play sports associated with their preferred gender. The policy does acknowledge there are limits on what is possible, e.g., students under the age of 16 cannot legally change their name without parental consent. The school also recognises there may be sensitivities for non-trans students that need to be taken into consideration; however, what this 'consideration' looks like in practice is unclear. Unfortunately, as mentioned above, few staff at Yew Tree were aware of this policy. Also, the fact that cases are addressed on an individual basis means that LGBT+ students will potentially feel 'singled out' and different.

In other schools, particular staff were strong advocates for transgender students. In Rowan Tree, Mary, who has a close family member who is transgender, explained how she supported and worked with students to make school work for them:

> we have a young person at the moment who identifies as transgender … I met with him and his mum when he was still in year six, so before he started with us, to look at the practical issues like toilets that he felt comfortable to use, whether he wanted, he felt comfortable to do boys PE rather than girls PE because they do slightly different sports and just to work out those practical issues to make sure that he felt comfortable.

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She also highlighted the challenges of name changes; the local education authority had insisted that school registers use legal birth names, which the school vigorously disputed and won the right to use a student's preferred name. On the surface this presents a very proactive approach to supporting transgender students, but the existence of gendered toilets and changing spaces and separate sports for boys and girls raises questions around the place of non-binary students and how they are supposed to 'fit in'.

How do LGBT+ students experience of support groups/'safe' spaces in schools contribute to a sense of isolation?

All of the schools involved in the study, except Ash Tree, had created support groups for their LGBT+ students and any straight allies. Some of the groups were newly formed, with some established only during the 2018-2019 academic year. Oak Tree's 'Identity' group has existed for a number of years, so was a stronger presence in the school, with its own display board advertising LGBT+ events. At Fir Tree, Tom felt the 'equalities council' was very effective, in part because it is largely student led, with teacher support (which was the case in all the schools); yet most of the students in Fir Tree's focus group were unaware of the existence of this support group.

For students, the existence of a support group was generally seen as positive. At Oak Tree students often referred to their group as a second family; offering a non-judgemental space where they could be themselves. This particular support group was unusual as staff members, who openly identified as LGBT+, would also attend. The presence of visible role models clearly impacted students positively. It is clear that such groups can counter isolation through the friendships offered. The teachers who support them (and often there are only one or two significant teachers involved) are seen as incredibly valuable.

> Mrs R is a godsend! (Rowan Tree)
>
> And with teachers that do understand, if anything goes wrong, it's always Miss D you go to. (Yew Tree)
>
> Mainly Miss P. She is the only one that really talks about this with us. (Elm Tree)

There was universal praise for these particular staff. Their presence and support was a welcome boost to many LGBT+ students' sense of self and well-being.

However, the presence of a support group is not without its problems. One of the students at Yew Tree described her experience of a support group at a previous school:

> they set up their LGBT club/support group thing and I went once and then I never went again because the amount of people that were there just to see who is different in school … just want to take the mick out of people who are there … was immense and that's why I don't go into things like that.

This experience was not uncommon. In two schools the support group moved because it met in rooms with large numbers of windows opening onto a playground, which meant other students could look in and see who attended. Several students expressed fear that support group attendance would out them to the wider school community, thereby furthering concerns about safety. One girl from Rowan Tree, who identified as bisexual, described how for weeks she would walk round and round the building where the meeting was being held debating whether to go in; her indecision was purely based on the reaction of her peer group:

> they would make comments like 'faggot', 'gay club', things like that … I would always hear people going 'oh you're so gay' and that's what made it hard for me. Especially the girls because they're very judgemental of people and so I was scared to come out.

There is therefore a potential stigma attached to belonging to a support group. Attending a group is often a visible way of being out. Hence in some places students chose not to join these groups out of fear and a sense of vulnerability. For example, at Fir Tree, a female student who identified as bisexual said:

> I just feel like more people are going to find out who is part of the LGBT and then when people know, make fun of them and things. Because assemblies … people are already being made fun of and if there was a club where everyone together it would just make it worse.

This raises a number of issues. Such groups can provide a 'safe' space, but if the wider school environment is not seen as a 'safe' space, then attendance at a support group can be deeply problematic. Various data collected in this study indicate that some schools appear to have a hostile culture towards the LGBT+ community. Students at Yew Tree and Ash Tree were unsure whether any staff were part of the LGBT+ community; this seemed to reflect the general atmosphere in the schools. Also, the survey data shows LGBT+ teachers in some schools, such as Ash Tree, were unwilling to be out. There were staff at Ash Tree that reported identifying as LGBT+; *however*, very few of their colleagues were aware of any out LGBT+ colleague. One student at Ash Tree described the school's culture as "toxic masculinity", thus deterring students from identifying as LGBT+.

How do LGBT+ students experience of the curriculum in schools contribute to a sense of isolation?

Feedback from the student focus groups all highlighted significant concerns about the school curriculum. LGBT+ topics were largely absent from the curriculum, contributing to a sense of isolation. Students in Rowan Tree appreciated the school was bringing more LGBT+ content into the Citizenship curriculum, but the general feeling was "we don't get taught enough about it". This was a common experience across all schools. Students were only able to recollect LGBT+ content being occasionally included, citing one or two examples from an entire year's teaching. Unfortunately, some attempts to incorporate LGBT+ examples into the curriculum were negatively received because of the way it positioned the

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LGBT+ community. For example, students at Elm Tree were taught about the persecution of homosexuals in Nazi Germany, which merely created a victim narrative of LGBT+ individuals, in need of protection (see Formby, 2015). LGBT+-related content was more a feature of some subjects for students aged 16+ and studying for their A levels, e.g., it was included in areas such as Art, English Literature, Sociology and Psychology. Although this was warmly welcomed, the students would have appreciated this integration at an earlier age.

Relationships and Sex Education (RSE) is another issue. Many of the students complained about the heteronormative and cisgendered approach to RSE. Those in Rowan Tree felt the situation was improving in their school, as they were allowed to feed into the curriculum to address this, in other schools the students felt their needs and concerns were neglected and ignored.

The staff survey showed huge variation in staff awareness of attempts to include LGBT+ topics/issues in the curriculum. Between 38.5% (in Ash Tree) and 75% (in Rowan Tree) were aware of steps to such material. In most cases, schools use Personal, Social and Health Education (PSHE), Citizenship and/or Religious Education as a vehicle for teaching LGBT+ topics. This is appropriate but does raise additional issues. These subjects tend to focus on personal and societal issues, which would clearly include issues relating to the LGBT+ community. However, these subjects are often associated with examining 'controversial' or 'difficult' issues; as such, placing LGBT+ related matters into these parts of the curriculum could inadvertently reinforce the message that LGBT+ issues are controversial in themselves.

There is also an issue over the strength of teachers' subject knowledge in relation to LGBT+ matters. In Rowan Tree there was a specialist team because "it's important that it's done right" (Mary), but this appears exceptional. In Fir Tree, all staff regardless of their subject were expected to teach various PSHE topics to their tutor groups; as Tom explained:

> there is a set curriculum of stuff that we're required to go through and that includes a lot of inclusivity, diversity … , each individual tutor will run sessions on equality across the board, on all the protected characteristics so, and we're given plenty of material to study and everything, in order for us to be able to confidently run that.

He admitted that staff had no training in teaching these materials and were expected to familiarise themselves with the subject, which seems the case in most schools.

Discussion

Johnson and Amella's (2013) theoretical conceptualisation of isolation offers a means of understanding how the schools in this study contribute to LGBT+ students' sense of isolation For example, student experiences of gendered spaces reveal they are often victimised by peers, yet are forced to use female/male toilets and changing rooms by schools when they did not

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want to due to their sexual orientation/gender identity. This simply reinforces any feeling of *being different*, which replicates findings elsewhere (e.g., Slater et al., 2018). Few schools have specific policies on the use of gendered spaces and, where these exist, most staff are unaware of these policies. This means that students receive little social support from teachers, further compounding a sense of *social isolation*. This isolation is reinforced, particularly for trans and gender non-conforming students, by the actions and attitudes of some staff, and expectations around subjects such as physical education where there are separate sports for boys and girls.

The issue of isolation is further exacerbated by the extent to which students are out. Often students were out to their peers at school before their family, and therefore reluctant to reports issues in school, as they feared their LGBT+ status would be communicated home. There is a clear sense students felt the need to *conceal their identity*, or at least limit the circle of people to whom they were out.

The existence of LGBT+ support groups in schools can provide social support and contact with LGBT+ peers, thereby tackling *social isolation* and providing some degree of *emotional* support. This is a view endorsed in other studies (e.g., Kosciw et al., 2013; Gower et al., 2018). However, the success of such groups seems to depend on the wider school culture. The potential stigma of joining such a group at some schools, i.e. Fir and Rowan Tree, meant some students felt the need to *conceal their identity* and avoid joining such groups. For other LGBT+ students, the support group was the only place they felt safe to be themselves – however, ideally, the whole school should be a 'safe' space. Consequently, schools need to pay more attention to the overall school culture and work to ensure the school is inclusive as a whole, rather than feeling the creation of a support group is sufficient. According to our data, support groups in most schools studied acted as a superficial fix, addressing some of the symptoms of a problem rather than the underlying causes. Dealing with the more deeply-seeded issues requires what Airton (2018) refers to as "extra effort" on behalf of the wider school population. The danger is that support groups, although providing contact with other LGBT+ youth and 'allies', can further isolate LGBT+ youth within the larger school community, potentially leading to victimisation outside of the group.

The lack of LGBT+ matters covered in the curriculum clearly seems to contribute to *cognitive isolation*, reinforcing a sense of othering (Formby, 2015). The issues around the curriculum are reminiscent of the debates around minority ethnic groups and their marginalisation through curriculum 'absence' (e.g., Wilkinson, 2014). The same case can be made for LGBT+ youth, whose experiences are rarely reflected in the curriculum. Although there is a move in England towards including LGBT+ issues in the new RSE guidelines (DfE, 2019), many students in this study experienced a largely heteronormative sex education. When LGBT+ issues were encountered these tended to be one-off sessions, which is expressly counter to what the guidelines recommend (see p. 15). Although individual teachers mentioned how they looked to include LGBT+ examples in their teaching in the wider

curriculum, this has largely gone unnoticed by the student focus group participants. This matters for three reasons. Firstly, those students who identify as LGBT+ are not learning about matters that directly affect them, and therefore likely to remain ignorant of matters around safe sex and positive relationships. Secondly, they fail to encounter any relevant examples or role models in the curriculum relating to their sense of identity, which serves to emphasise their difference. Thirdly, non-LGBT+ students do not encounter LGBT+ examples in their studies and therefore are unlikely to see LGBT+ issues as a normal part of society. In both instances the impact is likely to heighten any sense of marginalisation of LGBT+ youth. As DePalma, and Atkinson (2009) found in initial research stages with primary school teachers, even when explicit curricular inclusion policies existed, teachers lacked confidence and initiative to plan lessons that included LGBT-related content, which acts as a serious barrier to curriculum redesign.

Using Johnson and Amella's (2013) conceptualisation of isolation, does appear to provide a valuable way to understand how schools contribute to LGBT+ students sense of isolation. Many students reported feeling the need to *conceal their identity*, or at least limit to whom they are out. It can be argued that the way schools operate, regarding policy, curriculum integration and the knowledge, attitudes and beliefs of teachers, reinforce any notion of the self as *different*, fail to address issues around *identity concealment*, and create a sense of *social* and *cognitive* isolation. Although the data revealed few explicit examples of *emotional isolation*, there was a sense from the focus groups that students did find their school experience at times deeply frustrating and unsafe.

Taking these points collectively, the schools studied do unfortunately seem to contribute to the isolation that many LGBT+ youngsters experience. It is concerning that data show that schools seem to reinforce different forms of isolation, e.g., social, cognitive, identity concealment. Overall, there was a clear sense that LGBT+ students felt they had been 'othered' within the school community. This is largely the result of the prevailing heteronormative and cisgendered school cultures. For example, most of the students at Fir Tree and Ash Tree were too scared to be 'out' in school. Students across all the schools variously described themselves as "misfits", "weirdos", "dunces" and "feeling different" and in many places the LGBT+ support group was nicknamed the "gay gang". As one student at Yew Tree said "I just want to feel like I'm part of everyone else." It also has to be recognised that this study engaged with students who were, to varying degrees, willing to be out; many of the students knew of others who did not participate in the study who were reluctant to be out, and obviously there will be others who are completely closeted and experiencing potentially a more extreme sense of isolation (see Higa et al., 2014).

Conclusion

Although some studies (e.g. McCormack & Anderson, 2010; Morris et al., 2014; White et al., 2018) report an improving picture for LGBT+ students, this study highlights there is considerably more work that many schools

need to undertake. Numerous studies have highlighted the challenges facing LGBT+ youngsters; in particular the negative mental health issues many students have been well documented (e.g., Murray, 2011). It is equally clear that where schools have taken steps to address concerns these can be beneficial to a degree (e.g., Kosciw, et al., 2013).

Yet, essentially, any meaningful change requires a focus on the school culture and a critiquing of heteronormative and cisgendered norms (see Payne & Smith, 2013; Rawlings, 2019). Without a thorough and careful understanding of how to normalise being LGBT+ and ensuring this becomes part of the culture of the institution, other interventions (although helpful) are unlikely to make a significant difference to the experiences of young people who identify as LGBT+.

However, focusing on isolation, in its different forms, potentially allows schools to take a more systematic approach in supporting LGBT+ students and appreciate how the general school culture and climate can (unwittingly) have a negative impact on these students. For example, making changes to the curriculum to make it more inclusive of LGBT+ matters can address concerns around *cognitive isolation*, having clearer guidance on the use of gendered spaces for LGBT+ youngsters could counter issues around *social isolation*. Given the challenges facing young people who identify as LGBT+, the issues highlighted in this people require further intervention and investigation, if schools are going to become the inclusive environment that these students need.

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Table 1. Characteristics of participating schools

	Number of pupils on roll*	% females/males+	% of students with some form of SEN	% of students for whom English is an additional language (EAL)	% of students claiming free school meals
Oak Tree	1100	49/51	12	12	14
Yew Tree	1150	51/49	9	23	10
Elm Tree	1000	50/50	17	43	16
Ash Tree	1100	46/54	7	19	12
Rowan Tree	1000	49/51	7	12	7
Fir Tree	450	15/85	15	17	7
National average		50/50	11	17	14

Note. *The number of pupils on roll is rounded to the nearest 50. Data drawn from DfE performance tables (2019) https://www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables.

+This reports the female/male break down of the school population. However, this does not take into account those students who wish to identify as trans, gender fluid or non-binary.

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Table 2. Policy documents shared by schools relevant to LGBT+ topics and issues

	Equalities Policy	Anti-bullying Policy	Other
Oak Tree	✓	✓ (inc behaviour policy)	
Yew Tree			Transgender statement
Elm Tree	✓	✓	Equal opportunities pupils policy
Ash Tree	✓ (inc Relationship and Sex Education [RSE])	✓	Curriculum policy
Rowan Tree*			
Fir Tree	✓		

* LGTB+ policy documents under review by school during data collection.

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Table 3 Students' self-identification*

Sexuality	
Gay	5
Bi	7
Lesbian	5
Pan	6
Gender	
Trans	4
Gender fluid/'ace'	9
Other	
Allies	5
Undisclosed	1

*The total is more than 38 as some students expressed a gender and sexuality identity.

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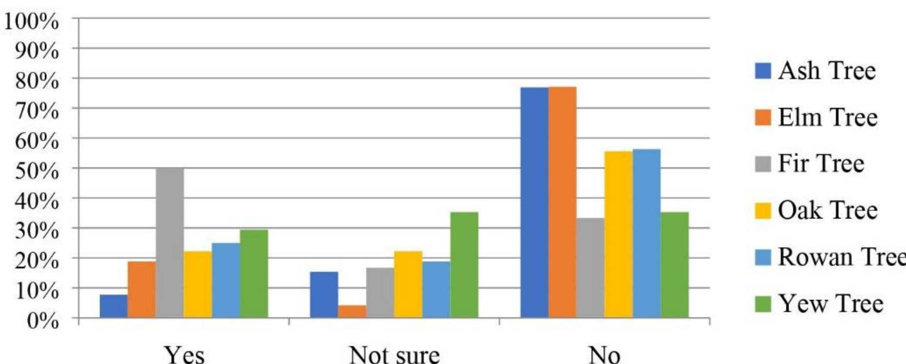

Figure 1. Teacher/staff impression of gender neutral toilet availability

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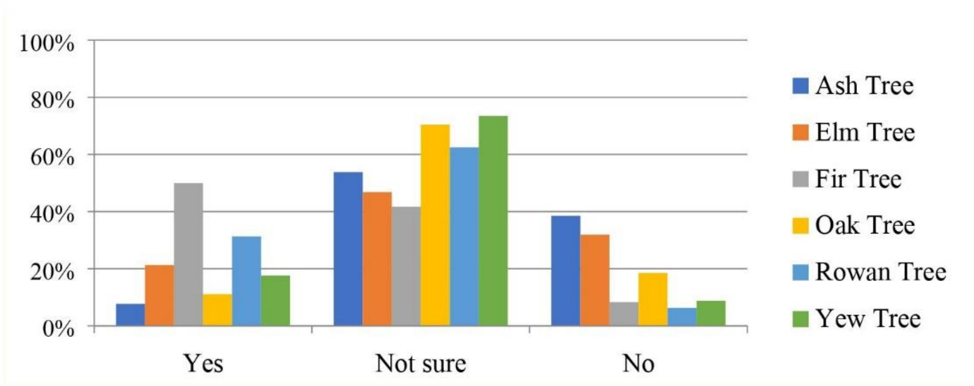

Figure 2. Teacher/staff impression of "Students are allowed to use toilets they feel comfortable in"

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Appendix A

Indicative questions for focus group

Start with introductions for the voice recorder – thank everyone – explain purpose is to examine their experience in school (and how this relates to what school policies say and what teachers say) – we may discuss some things with which they may feel uncomfortable but they do not have to respond if they prefer and reassure that anything said here will be made unattributable (the school may ask for a summary of key points to inform their next steps) – aim is to work with schools and local LGBT+ organisations to provide further training for schools and to write a possible article and to apply for money to conduct a larger study

- How do you self-identify? Are you out at school and home? How long have you been out?
- Do you feel safe/accepted/included at school?
  - Prompts – are you aware of any school policies about supporting LGBT+ students/does the school openly promote LGBT+ issues
  - Prompts - have you had any issues from other students/teachers for being LGBT+
  - Prompts – do you feel the curriculum meets your needs/reflects who you are
  - Prompts – do you feel able to talk to teachers about LGBT+ issues/who would you talk to
  - Give examples for all
- What does the school do to support you?
  - Does it work
  - Is it enough
- What more could the school do to help/support you?
- What could/would you do if you felt unhappy about something – e.g. use of inappropriate language directed at you for being LGBT+/lack of teacher sensitivity/awareness of LGBT+ issues/concerns about your mental health/well-being
- Do you think the school is equally supportive of trans issues as well as LGB issues?
- Is there anything else you would like to add? Are you happy with the questions asked – should I change anything for the other schools I will be visiting?

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4.7. Introduction to Article C2

Attempts to address the problems facing LGBT+ students in school have focused more readily on issues concerning school climate and constraining individual behaviours of aggressors, rather than addressing the issue of school culture. By not addressing the underling culture of heteronormative and cisgendered social norms that tend to exist within schools, most interventions, though well-intentioned, have been ineffective in creating real progress and change. Rather, even in secondary schools where interventions have taken place, LGBT+ students still experience significant harass-ment (e.g., Payne & Smith, 2013; Rawlings, 2019). Rawlings (2019) argues that the harassment and bullying of LGBT+ students is likely to continue unless real change occurs in the "the social, cultural or institutional structures [that] allow them to eventuate" (pp. 201-2).

> ☞ **Perspectiva general de l'article C2 en català**
>
> L'objectiu d'aquest estudi de metodologia mixta era examinar les actituds del professorat i dels i les estudiants LGBT+ respecte al clima i la cultura escolars. Els participants van ser 153 docents de sis instituts de secundària del Regne Unit que van omplir enquestes electròniques. Nou docents també van ser entrevistats i 38 estudiants van participar en sis grups de discussió a cada escola. Els resultats suggereixen una desconnexió entre els punts de vista del professorat i de l'alumnat en relació a el clima i la cultura escolar al voltant de qüestions relacionades amb LGTB + (vegeu Payne i Smith, 2013; Rawlings, 2019). Moltes professores i professors semblaven desconèixer la discriminació manifesta que estudiants LGTB+ rebien dels seus companys i que el col·lectiu d'alumnat LGTB+ no estava molt satisfet amb la manca d'integració curricular dels temes LGTB+. Els resultats suggereixen que la majoria de personal adopta una postura reactiva i no proactiva respecte a qüestions relacionades amb LGTB+, i que el desconeixement del professorat sobre les preocupacions dels i les estudiants significa que és probable que canviï poc. Per tot això s'evidencia un reflex d'una cultura heteronormativa i cisgènere, en què els docents no qüestionen les normes i convencions existents i culpabilitzen a les famílies del centre. L'estudi defensa un reexamen de com els i les professores de ciències socials i altres professionals dels instituts interpreten les experiències viscudes dels estudiants LGBT+ en aquests i en altres contextos de secundària.

We do not wish to diminish the importance of school climate and wish to understand this better. However, we submit that the central challenge is identifying aspects related to a positive school culture in which LGBT+ students experience widespread acceptance and belonging, instead of heterosexuality and gender-conformity being presented (even unwittingly) as the desirable and acceptable norm. Whereas school climate refers to the overall positivity of atmosphere, safeness and politeness of interactions, school culture refers to the kinds

of shared norms, practices and understandings underlying one's experiences. When it comes to LGB and gender-identity diversity, we argue this is a critical distinction. School climate refers to the friendliness of relationships among students and faculty, whereas school culture refers to how different kinds of gender identifications and sexual orientations are being treated. Many students may experience the climate at their schools as favorable, even if heterosexual norms dominate and if non-gender conforming gender identities are not discussed (Birkett et al., 2009). Concepts of what is "normal"/acceptable may lay dormant when the overall message of the school is to "be nice." However, a heteronormative or cisgender culture may allow for harassment and exclusion of those who are still viewed as outside that norm. Students may experience a positive school climate based on a culture of prevalent shared prejudice. Social studies teachers can potentially play a role in combating this discrimination.

☞ Perspectiva general del articulo C2 en español

El objetivo de este estudio de metodología mixta era examinar las actitudes del profesorado y de los y las estudiantes LGBT + respecto al clima y la cultura escolares. Los participantes fueron 153 docentes de seis institutos de secundaria del Reino Unido que completaron encuestas electrónicas. Nueve docentes también fueron entrevistados y 38 estudiantes participaron en seis grupos de discusión en cada escuela. Los resultados sugieren una desconexión entre los puntos de vista del profesorado y del alumnado en relación al clima y la cultura escolar en torno a cuestiones relacionadas con LGTB+ (véanse Payne y Smith, 2013; Rawlings, 2019). Muchas profesoras y profesores parecían desconocer la discriminación manifiesta que estudiantes LGTB+ recibían de sus compañeros y que el colectivo de alumnado LGTB+ no estaba muy satisfecho con la falta de integración curricular de los temas LGTB+. Los resultados sugieren que la mayoría del personal adopta una postura reactiva y no proactiva respecto a cuestiones relacionadas con LGTB+, y que el desconocimiento del profesorado sobre las preocupaciones de los y las estudiantes significa que es probable que cambie poco. Por todo ello se evidencia un reflejo de una cultura heteronormativa y cisgénero, en que los docentes no cuestionan las normas y convenciones existentes y culpabilizan a las familias del centro. El estudio defiende un reexamen de cómo los y las profesoras de ciencias sociales y otros profesionales de los institutos interpretan las experiencias vividas de los estudiantes LGBT + en estos y en otros contextos de secundaria.

4.8. Modifications made to Article C2 in lieu of reviewer/editor feedback

We received some feedback to an earlier version of this paper presented by attendees to the 2019 IAIE (International Association of Intercultural Education) conference in

Amsterdam, albeit most of this feedback was quite positive. It was at that conference that we were encouraged to submit a reduced version of the article to a Special Issue of *Intercultural Education*.

4.9. Current accepted version of Article C2

The following 25 pages contain the submitted **and accepted** version of Article C1 to guest editor Noemi Mena Montes of the **August 2021 IAIE Special Issue of *Intercultural Education*.** This article is pending guest editor feedback, despite its acceptance, and minor changes may be made before its publication. The authors are very open to any suggestions that this dissertation committee may have about the article in its current form.

Exploring the secondary school experience of LGBT+ youth: An examination of school culture and school climate as understood by teachers and experienced by LGBT+ students

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Georgina Fuller is a final year philosophy undergraduate at the University of Reading. Her interests include feminism, voice, human and animal rights. She was responsible for all qualitative data transcription for this study.

Funding

This work was supported by the University of Reading.

Exploring the secondary school experience of LGBT+ youth: An examination of school culture and school climate as understood by teachers and experienced by LGBT+ students

The purpose of this mixed methods study was to examine teacher and LGBT+ student attitudes around school climate and school culture. Participants were 153 teachers and staff from six UK secondary schools who completed electronic surveys, nine of whom were interviewed, and students who participated in focus groups at each school. Results suggest a disconnect between teacher and student viewpoints regarding both school climate and school culture around LGBT+-related matters. Many teachers seemed unaware of the overt discrimination that many LGBT+ students received from their peers and that these students were mostly unhappy with the lack of curricular integration of LGBT+ topics. Findings suggest most staff are taking a reactive rather than proactive stance to LGBT+-related issues, and their ignorance of student concerns means little is likely to change. These findings reflect a heteronormative and cisgendered culture, where those in charge are not questioning cultural norms and the status quo. The study argues for a re-examination of how teachers and other staff interpret lived LGBT+ student experiences in these and other secondary contexts.

Keywords: LGBT+ student viewpoints; teacher viewpoints; school culture; school climate; secondary schools.

Introduction

LGBT+ students are one of the student groups most often bullied and victimized by their peers in secondary school, suffer much higher levels of attempted suicide and self-harm, and leave school with comparatively lower levels of attainment (e.g., Birkett et al. 2009; Robinson and Espelage 2011; Stonewall 2017; Warwick, Aggleton and Douglas 2001). Schools have a responsibility to address LGBT+-related bullying due to these concerning documented consequences (Vega et al. 2012); however, studies assessing to what extent teachers and other school staff are aware of the experiences of their LGBT+ students are lacking. The present study examines school climate and culture as understood by Payne and

Smith (2013) drawing on qualitative (student and teacher) and quantitative (teacher) data from six schools in the UK.

During the 1980s and 1990s, UK government policy helped to create a generally hostile environment for the LGBT+ community (see White, Magrath and Thomas 2018). This resulted in many schools avoiding any discussion about issues of sexuality (Epstein 1994). Recently, however, there has been a softening of policy language, which has looked to lessen any stigma associated with the LGBT+ community via the Equalities Act of 2010; particularly, the designation of 'protected characteristics' included gender reassignment and sexual orientation. This Act means it is unlawful to discriminate against individuals who fall under 'protected' categories, and services must provide equality of opportunity. Furthermore, recent UK Department for Education guidelines specifically note the need to teach about LGBT+ matters (DfE 2019, 15). While some improvement has been documented, UK schools remain highly problematic for many LGBT+ students (METRO 2016; Stonewall 2017).

School culture vs. school climate

According to Payne and Smith (2013) a culture reflects the values and beliefs of an organisation and those within it, whereas the climate is a manifestation of this, where the individual interactions between members of an organisation determine the experiences of those within it. Attempts to support LGBT+ students tend to focus on improving the overall climate within a school. Different studies have identified various ways in which schools can improve climate. These include: safe physical, social and emotional environments, a focus on developing teaching and learning activities, the promotion of respectful relationships (Cohen et al. 2009); supportive staff, existence of 'support' groups, policies, inclusive curriculum (Kosciw et al. 2013; Goodenow, Szalacha and Westheimer, 2006); clear school policies, provision of information and resources for LGBT+ students, training for staff and creation of

'safe' spaces (Russell et al. 2016). Studies in the US have researched the association between interventions to support LGBT+ students and how such students feel as a way of assessing school climate and what seems to make a positive difference. Many of these studies (e.g., Black, Fedewa and Gonzalez 2012; Gower et al. 2018) consistently find that the existence of interventions is associated with LGBT+ students feeling safe at school and reporting lower levels of bullying and harassment. However, as these tend to be large-scale quantitative studies, it is difficult to assess the quality and effectiveness of specific interventions or dive into individual experiences. Payne and Smith (2013, 12) are critical of interventions that focus primarily on addressing concerns about climate: "Niceness cannot erase the stigma – it merely asks students in the dominant majority not to be unkind to those they deem deviant." Their concern is that school climate-focused attempts to address individual behaviours without addressing the surrounding culture and the heteronormative and cisgendered social norms that tend to exist within schools are likely to be ineffective. This may help to explain why, despite attempts to promote a more supportive climate; many LGBT+ students still experience significant harassment in schools (Stonewall 2017; GLSEN 2018). Rawlings (2019, 201-2) concurs, claiming that misdemeanours tend to be seen as the result of individual actions which require sanction, "rather than the social, cultural or institutional structures [that] allow them to eventuate"; such studies highlight the need to acknowledge the ways in which a heteronormative or cisgendered culture create the conditions in which LGBT+ individuals become the target of bullying or harassment. As Robinson and Espelage found:

> LGBTQ identification remains a unique predictor of risk after accounting for peer victimization, raising concerns about policies that focus almost exclusively on bullying prevention to address LGBTQ–heterosexual risk disparities. Moreover, the nearly identical disparities among matched samples at both lower and higher victimization levels provides further evidence that addressing victimization while ignoring other

> aspects of the schooling environment is unlikely to eliminate disparities in suicide-related outcomes (2012, 315).

However, the easiest solution for schools and those who work within them is to blame individual students and/or their families for discrimination against LGBT+ students, and *not* ask themselves what steps need to be taken as an organization to change the underlying culture (Payne and Smith 2013; Rawlings 2019).

The present study

In order to examine how teacher/staff views regarding school culture and school climate as differentiated by Payne and Smith (2013) might differ from those of students, data were drawn from teacher and staff interviews and survey data as well as student focus groups and triangulated to provide a more complete picture of the different perspectives of LGBT+ youngsters' experiences. Much of the literature presents a relatively simple relationship between the existence of interventions and an improved climate from either a teacher or student perspective, but this study examines general school culture and climate from a teacher perspective and how that is experienced by students. School policy documents were also analysed, but the corresponding findings related to these documents are beyond the scope of this article and will be published elsewhere.

Methodology

Participants

Data were collected between May and September 2019. Purposeful (Creswell and Plano Clark 2011) and convenience sampling were combined to make best use of limited resources and select knowledgeable participants for the qualitative phases of the study. The six participating secondary schools (see Table 1) were all state-maintained schools; five had

students aged 11-18 and one aged 14-18 (a specialist technology college). Names of schools and participants are changed.

[Insert Table 1 about here]

Qualitative data

Nine teachers from five schools were interviewed by phone[1], selected randomly per school from those who had marked their willingness to participate further on the survey. Interviews consisted of two parts. The first was semi-structured and explored teachers' personal and professional experience of LGBT+ matters, perceptions of how supportive their schools were of LGBT+ students, and their confidence in teaching about LGBT+ issues/topics. The second was based around a series of scenarios, designed to systematically examine their attitudes, values and beliefs about LGBT+-related issues in schools (see Appendix).

Focus groups of LGBT+ students and, in some schools, their friends, were conducted in each school (Yew Tree=5 students, Oak Tree=1[2], Elm Tree=14, Ash Tree=4, Rowan Tree=8, Fir Tree=6). School staff selected students. Focus group participants were asked about their experiences of staff actions regarding LGBT+ matters and the inclusion of LGBT+ issues within the school curriculum.

Quantitative data

Quantitative sample description

A sample of 202 secondary school teachers and staff participated in an online survey in all six schools. The survey was disseminated from a designated contact point to all staff. The initial

[1] Unfortunately, due to a technical problem, four of the interviews failed to record, so the data presented is based on the five transcripts of the recorded interviews, supplemented by notes from the other four interviews.
[2] This was due to staff absence on the day, so students were unaware of where and when the meeting was happening. One of the researchers was however already familiar with a number of the students having interviewed them for a previous project.

participation rate was an estimated 42%; however, only 153 of the questionnaires were deemed usable, due to missing data, leaving the valid survey rate at an estimated 32%. Valid participation rates per school were differentially representative (15-63%). Of the 153 teachers who responded to most of the close-ended items proposed, 67.3% were female, 28.8% male, one respondent identified as trans and another as a transgender male; four respondents did not specify their gender identity; 69.3% were teachers and others were administration, teaching assistants, leadership or other support staff. Only 40% of teachers/staff reported that they had received any training that covered LGBT+ topics/issues.

Quantitative measures

Teacher perception of LGBT+ school culture. A four-item scale assessed teacher perception of LGBT+ school culture (α = .79). Participants rated items on a five-point scale (1 = *never* to 5 = *very often*). Items were: (a) "How often do you believe students in your school feel comfortable disclosing that they are LGBT+?", (b) "How often do you believe LGBT+ students are proud to identify as LGBT+ at your school?", (c) "How often do you believe LGBT+ students at your school receive positive encouragement from their peers when they come out to them?", and (d) "How often do you believe LGBT+ students at your school receive positive encouragement from their teachers when they come out to them".

Teacher perception of peer-to-peer victimization. Three items were used to assess teacher perception of peer-to-peer victimization at their school (1 = *never* to 5 = *very often*) (α = .68). Items were: (a) "How often do you believe LGBT+ students at your school receive verbal abuse from peers (name calling, derogatory comments, etc.)?", (b) "How often do you believe LGBT+ students at your school receive physical abuse from peers (pushing, shoving, thrown objects, etc.)?", and (c) "How often do you believe LGBT+ students at your school receive death threats from peers?".

Teacher LGBT+ verbal engagement. Four items were used to assess to what extent LGBT+ matters/topics were discussed by teachers/staff (1 = *never* to 5 = *very often*; α = .84). Items were: (a) "I have verbally expressed my support of the LGBT+ community in front of other *teachers*.", (b) "I have verbally expressed my support of the LGBT+ community in front of *students*.", (c) "I engage in *formal* discussions with fellow teachers on LGBT+ topics or issues", and "I engage in *informal* discussions with fellow teachers on LGBT+ topics or issues."

Teacher perception of school responsibilities regarding LGBT+ matters/issues. A four-item scale was created to assess whether school teachers and other staff considered that it was the "school's job" to attend to LGBT+ matters/issues. Participants were asked to imagine that a co-worker made a series of statements and to rate the degree to which they agreed or disagreed (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*; α = .71). The items were: (a) "Students should work out LGBT+ tensions among themselves, it is not our job as teachers", (b) It is the school's job to teach about LGBT+ topics within regular school hours (even if parents/guardians disagree), (c) "A lot of attention to LGBT+ topics in schools might wrongly encourage students to identify as LGBT+", and (d) "I feel teaching about LGBT+ related topics should be a major priority in our PSHE curriculum". Items (a) and (c) were reversed.

Data analysis

Quantitative and qualitative data analyses were carried out concurrently. Interview and focus group data were analysed into themes. The quantitative data were analysed using simple frequency analysis and ANOVAs, which allowed for between-school comparisons. Results from the qualitative analysis informed which quantitative items were retained for analysis and findings from all methods were combined to enrich our understanding of LGBT+ matters within schools.

Results

Climate

All teachers interviewed felt student ignorance was at the centre of any troubles experienced by their LGBT+ peers. They were also all willing to challenge any negative behaviours and attitudes towards the LGBT+ community, although in the case of one teacher, Helen, this was a passive, reactive approach. She would not raise issues unless they were raised with her by students.

Students in Oak Tree, Yew Tree, Elm Tree, Ash Tree and Fir Tree, however, all commented that teachers were not very good at 'hearing' verbal abuse directed at LGBT+ students, were invisible around the school so were unable to intervene to prevent harassment, and when bullying was dealt with it was largely ineffectual. For example, one student said:

> I despise school … for the past two years of school [teachers] would roll it over their shoulders or just dismiss it and nothing would happen, and it's only got worse (Yew Tree, M1).

Although the teachers interviewed said they dealt with issues, it is probable that they do so on an individual level because of their close connection to the LGBT+ community and are more likely to appreciate the need to address negative behaviours towards LGBT+ students. However, for many students this variability in staff action meant they felt unsafe in schools. They felt that *many* teachers did not care. Sometimes, when students stood up for themselves they were even reprimanded:

> I get called slurs in class… I had a cover teacher and she did nothing about it. Basically, everyone was being like 'you're gay', 'you're a faggot'. And I was like, okay and then I responded aggressively and then the teacher told me off for responding, for sticking up for myself (gender fluid student, Yew Tree).

In Fir Tree school one of the transgendered students explained:

> I've actually been passing quite well I feel since I came here. But there is another trans girl in the school who doesn't pass as well and the things people say about her is just, it's scary. Because you think if they do it to her, they'd do it to me. (Fir Tree, T1)

Another Fir Tree student recounted an incident that very lunchtime where a trans student had been picked on by a group of boys, which he described as 'distressing to watch'. In contrast a bisexually-identifying female student acknowledged it was easy for her to 'go under the radar' and be perceived as 'normal'. It appears that students who identify as gay or lesbian, or in this case bisexual, but otherwise fit into social norms of female/male face fewer issues than other LGBT+ peers.

Quantitative data reveals that staff across schools significantly differed in their perception of to what extent LGBT+ students receive physical and verbal abuse at their schools, including death threats. Teachers at Fir Tree and Oak Tree perceived the lowest levels of peer-to-peer victimization at their schools (see Figure 1, solid line), for the most part claiming that students "never" or "very rarely" were recipients of such abuse. However, as can be perceived above in the student data, Fir Tree was seemingly one of the more problematic schools from a student perspective, as the student participants reported consistent bullying and harassment of LGBT+ students. Nevertheless, this was not perceived by Tom, a teacher at Fir Tree:

> I don't think anyone would specifically be rude or bullying towards any LGBT student, it's more a case of they don't blink their comments with actually disrespectful or anything behaviour towards individual students, so you have to point out to them, why do you think that's derogatory and so on…I've not been aware of any bullying or anything, issues that these students have faced, and certainly it wouldn't happen in any of my classes, let's be fair.

Specifically, 80% of Fir Tree teachers, including Tom, felt that their students were "never" or "very rarely" the victims of verbal (name calling, derogatory comments, etc.), 90% felt that

their students were "never" or "very rarely" the victims of physical abuse (pushing, shoving, thrown objects, etc.), and all teachers /staff surveyed (100%) felt that student lives were "never" verbally threatened. These perspectives are in stark contrast with that of the Fir Tree student participants.

[Insert Figure 1 about here].

In Rowan School there was a policy of zero tolerance towards verbal and physical bullying and harassment. The teacher interviews suggest this is implemented and the survey data suggests a higher level of perceived incidents of harassment (Figure 1) amongst staff. Perhaps the strictness of this policy made it easier for staff to identify when action was necessary than at the other schools studied. Rowan School students acknowledged the school was supportive of them and generally proactive in addressing their concerns. They did report that bullying, where it occurred, was forced 'underground' and was less obvious to teachers, and could result in bullying taking place outside of school via social media. However, students at Rowan appreciated that any issues they faced were from a small minority of the student body.

Culture

Most of the teachers/staff surveyed[3], and all teachers interviewed expressed positive support for LGBT+ students as individuals. Importantly, those interviewed were a self-selecting group and volunteered to participate further after filling out the survey. All those interviewed

[3] Most of the school teachers and other staff surveyed considered that it was indeed the "school's job" to attend to LGBT+ matters/issues (M = 4.0 on a 5-point scale) with only 7.1% of those surveyed averaging a less-than-middling response to the items on this scale.

had LGBT+ community connections either through self-identification or close family or friends.[4]

The quantitative data show that staff across study sites agreed that their schools were not necessarily spaces where their students felt comfortable and proud to come out as LGBT+ to peers and teachers. This lack of a positive perception of LGBT+ culture did *not* vary significantly across schools (Figure 1, black dotted line). Nor did teachers report significantly differing levels of verbal engagement in discussions with staff and students about LGBT+ topics /matters and verbal expression of their support of the LGBT+ community across schools (Figure 1, gray, longdash line); although, at Rowan Tree verbal expression ($M = 2.5$) was lower than at the other schools. As also may be perceived from Figure 1, schools varied in mean perceptions differences when one compares LGBT+ verbal engagement to peer-to-peer LGBT+ victimization (climate) perceptions. Fir Tree teachers report an almost 2-point deviance between these measures ($M = 1.9$). This suggests that at Fir Tree teachers perceived not only lower levels of LGBT+ bullying (more positive climate) among students, but also report higher levels of verbal engagement in discussions with staff and students about LGBT+ topics /matters and verbal LGBT+ support. This contrasts with Fir Tree students reporting that they were too scared to be out. Also at Fir Tree, Tom cited the ‘equalities council’ as a move forward in student/teacher communication and collaboration:

> Well, we do have an equalities council who are actually very prominent within the school so they will run events but it also, obviously, is a place or a group where they can communicate with each other and everything else…it’s student led in fact…I think it can always be improved, but it’s very effective.

However, most student Fir Tree focus group participants had not heard of this council.

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[4] Ned (from Oak Tree) identifies as a trans man, Ray (Rowan Tree) identifies as gay, Mary (also from Rowan Tree), Helen and Rachel (Yew Tree), Angela and Tom (Fir Tree) all have close family members who identify as LGBT+. Tom (Fir Tree) has also worked with LGBT+ colleagues in different professional capacities. Anne (Oak Tree) and Liam (Ash Tree) both had friends who identified as LGBT+.

The focus group data made clear that collectively LGBT+ students felt ostracised within their schools. Some students identified particular teachers/staff who they felt were negative about LGBT+ issues. There were, however, specific individual members of staff (many of whom willing to be interviewed for this study) who were strong advocates for LGBT+ students. There was universal praise for these staff, who in many cases were seen to have made a significant difference to the lives of these students. In some schools, like Oak Tree, there were many members of staff who openly identified as LGBT+, and would actually attend the school's LGBT+ support group. The presence of such visible role models clearly had a positive impact on the students at this school. In other schools, however, it seems few staff were willing to be open about their sexual or gender identity, such as at Ash Tree, where almost a third of staff claimed to know *nobody* in their lives that identified as LGBT+, much less the two self-identifying staff members surveyed.

There was an added complexity to students' willingness to report concerns, which appears unacknowledged in school policy documents and by those interviewed. A significant number of the students in the focus groups were either not completely out at home or in school. This was a significant barrier for some in reporting any incidents, given their concern that their LGBT+ status might become common knowledge, and fear that this would be communicated home. This highlights that many students experience a significant sense of isolation in school. Even support groups, designed to create a safe space for students, often ended up being problematic in the sense that there was a certain stigma and vulnerability surrounding attendance to these groups. Ironically, these support groups, founded so that students would have a safe space where they were not judged, ended up being just the opposite for many. Students feared attending in case they were unwillingly 'outed'. At two of the schools, where support groups were initially held in windowed rooms visible to the

students during recess, LGBT+ students felt that some of their peers would look in just to identify who was in attendance to use it as fuel for bullying later.

Curriculum

As curriculum can shape a schools culture, but is also part of the way students experience climate, we present these results in a separate section in that it reflects both. By educating all students about LGBT+ matters the teachers interviewed felt the general situation would improve in their schools. Those interviewed were supportive of making the curriculum inclusive, although LGBT+ content would have to fit in naturally rather than being 'shoe-horned' in; this however does mean any inclusion of content would be at the individual teacher's discretion and restricted by their knowledge and understanding of LGBT+ issues. Interviewees differed in their experiences of curriculum integration. Tom (Fir Tree) admitted that staff had received no training in teaching these materials and were expected to familiarise themselves on their own, but optimistically voiced: 'we're given plenty of material to study and everything, in order for us to be able to confidently run that'. In contrast at Rowan Tree, Mary explained that such issues were taught by a specialist trained team, but this seems the exception. Others admitted that LGBT+ matters are discussed as a one-off topic, i.e., once a year in PSHE. Two others spoke about how they personally incorporated LGBT+ examples into their teaching –but as a reflection of their own personal experiences as part of the LGBT+ community and their own desire to 'normalise' LGBT+ matters. Although it is encouraging to see LGBT+ matters being covered in the curriculum there is a concern that these are largely confined to one area of the curriculum or to specific out teachers and not 'normalised' throughout.

While qualitative teacher input on curriculum integration was generally positive, contrarily, feedback from the student focus groups all highlighted significant concerns. Students claimed LGBT+ topics were largely absent from the curriculum. Rowan Tree

students noticed attempts to bring more LGBT+ content into the Citizenship curriculum, but generally felt it was not enough. Students were only able to recall occasional LGBT+ content– usually citing one or two examples per year. Where subject areas had tried to incorporate LGBT+ content into the curriculum this was not always properly considered, e.g., in Elm Tree the history department had included persecution of homosexuals when teaching about Nazi persecution of the Jews, but as the students observed this merely presented them as victims. A few students felt LGBT+-related content was integrated in their A levels and would have appreciated this during their compulsory education.

Many students also highlighted the heteronormative and cisgendered perspective of RSE (Relationships and Sex Education), compulsory in UK secondary schools. Students in Rowan Tree felt the situation was improving in RSE and they were having input into the curriculum to address this. In the teacher interviews all the staff indicated *if* they were aware of this as a complaint raised by LGBT+ students they would be willing to take this further, showing they would react positively. However, they seemed unaware that LGBT+ students were unhappy. This suggests teachers are taking a reactive rather than proactive stance, and their ignorance of student concerns meant little would be likely to change; reflecting a heteronormative and cisgendered culture, where staff are not questioning cultural norms and the status quo.

Discussion

Analysis of the data highlights two largely-interconnected issues. The first is around the surprising disconnect between student experiences and the views that teachers have of these, and the second, of a deeper school culture reflecting a heteronormative and cisgendered set of norms and associated challenges .

Disconnect between student experiences and the views that teachers have of these

One of the grave concerns emerging from the data is the difference in perception of teaching staff and LGBT+ students at some schools. An example in point is the perspective of Tom, a teacher at Fir Tree, on the effectiveness of the student-led 'equalities council'. This contrasts with the lack of awareness of many of the LGTB+ students in Fir Tree's focus group of the existence of this support group, meaning that its effectiveness for most of these particular individuals up to that point was nil.

Other differences in teacher and student perceptions were even more worrisome. Fir Tree teachers surveyed mostly felt that their students were "never" or "very rarely" the victims of verbal or physical abuse. However, the student focus group participants referenced treatment of peers described as "scary" and "distressing to watch" and most of the student participants from this school were too frightened to be out at school. Fir Tree teachers seem unaware of this extended fear as this was the school whose staff collectively perceived the lowest level of bullying.

Similarly, some of the students spoke about the daily abuse they have faced, and many were critical of the way the school had often failed to make them feel safe. Also, according to students, as found in Smith and Smith (1998), teachers in most schools had difficulties "hearing" verbal abuse. Many students however did acknowledge that the situation was improving, somewhat in line with Stonewall's (2017) findings; this was largely due to the efforts of individual teachers and the development of support groups (with the caveats noted earlier). The data presented here does not, however, support the view found in some research (e.g., McCormack and Anderson 2010; White, et al. 2018), which argues there has been a significant shift in attitudes and that homophobia, rather than homosexuality, was stigmatised. The issue may be that these studies have focused more specifically on the experience of homosexual and bisexual males; seemingly these are currently 'more

acceptable' ways of being LGBT+. Some LGBT+ students revealed relatively positive experiences in school – and claimed to experience comparative 'privilege', as one student put it, evidencing that some forms of being LGBT+ are less socially acceptable than others.

Teachers likewise seem unaware of a strong sense of isolation that many LGBT+ students suffer, especially in the case of those students who are not yet out at home and/or at school. Several students spoke of becoming aware of their LGBT+ identity in primary school and felt unable to confide in friends or family until a few years later in secondary school. Having to come to terms with an identity that does not comfortably fit into a heteronormative and cisgendered culture is a significant challenge for young people. Being unable to talk about this to peers or staff because of a prevailing culture furthers this sense of isolation. As Goodenow et al. (2006, 585) write "adolescents may be reluctant to report even the most severe victimization if they perceive school authorities as unsympathetic, unapproachable, and unwilling to intervene on their behalf." Suffering verbal and physical bullying and harassment is unsettling and generates a sense of fear, and can lead to LGBT+ students self-policing their actions, again further exacerbating any sense of segregation.

The mismatch in perceptions was also regarding the curriculum. In most schools where teachers spoke of the way LGBT+ matters were being addressed in the curriculum, modifications were seen as trivial by many of the students. Overall there was a general perception from the students that, although things were improving and that the situation is some schools was better than others, collectively the staff body were largely uninterested in supporting them as LGBT+ students. This is at odds with the survey data which showed that nearly all teachers felt it was their responsibility to address LGBT+ matters. However, it is important to note that an estimated 32% of teachers / staff filled out most of the survey, this likely including a higher portion of supportive teachers willing to dedicate over 30 minutes to sharing their views on LGBT+ matters in their schools.

Climate vs. culture concerns

Importantly, all teachers interviewed felt that ignorance of students was at the heart of any troubles experienced by their LGBT+ peers, seemingly placing the blame of issues faced on individual students and their families. This is in line with Rawlings (2019) and Payne and Smith (2013) dealing with individuals who transgress and engage in bullying actions is emphasized without taking action to change the school culture as a whole. As Formby (2015, 267) argues, policy discourse also tends to position LGBT+ youth as victims, which 'may have a distancing or numbing effect, preventing practitioners from understanding their own potential role in contributing to heteronormative school environments.' The danger is that the institutional focus is on the 'victims' and the 'bullies' and by addressing this institutions feel they are fulfilling their duties to these young people, whereas they ought to be questioning the prevailing normative assumptions that govern relationships within the school environment. Our quantitative data do show one area where student and teacher perceptions match: schools have not created a culture where students feel comfortable disclosing that they are LGBT+ or are proud to identify as LGBT+ at their school. Contrarily, also in the quantitative data we identified schools where even staff seemingly did not feel comfortable coming out to colleagues.

As mentioned earlier, this study makes clear that some students experience less harassment and bullying than others. Those who tend to be 'quiet' about advertising their sexuality or who appear as more 'normal' than others seem to experience less harassment. Those who are more overt about their sexuality, who express pride in their identity and/or are gender fluid or transgendered appear to be the focus of more negative attention. This requires a more systemic critique of the way schools operate if being LGBT+ is to be normalised and therefore not seen as 'other'.

The issues around the curriculum are reminiscent of the debates around minority ethnic groups and their marginalisation in the curriculum documented elsewhere (see Epstein 2009; Harris and Reynolds 2014; Wilkinson 2014). The same case can be made for LGBT+ youth, whose experiences are not reflected in the curriculum. Although there is a move towards including LGBT+ issues in the new Relationship and Sex Education guidelines (DfE 2019), many students in this study experienced a largely heteronormative sex education and where LGBT+ issues were encountered these tended to be one-off sessions, which is expressly counter to what the guidelines recommend (DfE 2019, 15).

Although individual teachers mentioned how they looked to include LGBT+ examples in their teaching, this has largely gone unnoticed by student participants. This matters for two reasons. Firstly, those students who identify as LGBT+ fail to encounter any relevant examples or role models in the curriculum relating to their sense of identity serving to emphasise their difference. Secondly, non-LGBT+ students do not encounter LGBT+ examples in their studies and therefore are unlikely to see LGBT+ issues as normal. In both instances the impact is likely to heighten LGBT+ marginalisation.

The data presented here highlight that introducing recommended solutions, such as support groups, can be in some ways counterproductive given the prevailing heteronormative and cisgendered cultures at the schools. The literature (e.g., Cohen et al. 2009; Gower et al. 2018; Kosciw et al. 2013) presents the existence of such groups as uniformly positive and fails to acknowledge some of the concerns around such groups encountered in this study. A number of focus group participants were scared to attend such groups as they feared their participation would out them to the wider school community. The location of these groups also was problematic, with meetings held in particularly visible places seen as leading to further harassment for those who attended. These groups, created with the best intentions to act as 'safe' spaces (e.g., Russell et al. 2016) were consequently often seen as the opposite.

On the one hand these groups are important, as the students who join them find them a valuable source of support. They receive affirmation from peers within the group and those teachers associated with the groups. Yet, joining a group is a commitment to coming out and therefore becoming the potential target of abuse. Comfort in joining such a group seems in part determined by the prevailing heteronormative and cisgendered culture in schools. A failure to address these and to normalise LGBT+ issues more widely means the existence of these groups reinforces a sense of 'otherness', for both those in and outside the group.

At the heart of any change is a focus on the school culture and a critiquing of heteronormative and cisgendered norms (Payne and Smith 2013; Rawlings 2019; Robinson, and Espelage). Teacher/staff awareness of student experiences, as well as critical awareness of existing heteronormative and cisgendered norms in their schools is crucial. However, without a thorough and careful understanding of how to normalise being LGBT+ and ensuring this becomes part of the culture of the institution, other interventions (although helpful) are unlikely to make a significant difference to the experiences of young people who identify as LGBT+.

Disclosure statement

No potential conflict of interest was reported by the authors.

Data availability statement

Data are available upon request to the corresponding author.

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Appendix

Indicative questions for interviews with teachers

Background information – has the teacher any personal connection/experience of the LGBT+ community
What does the school do to support students who identify as LGBT+? How well do you think this is working? Please give examples.
What support have the staff been given to support students/teach about LGBT+ issues? Are staff given clear guidelines/support/training in relation to LGBT+ issues. Please give examples.
Have you ever had to teach a student who was part of the LGBT+ community? Are you aware of any particular issues that faced that student (if so what did you do personally or what did the school do to support that individual)?
What do you teach about LGBT+ issues in your curriculum area/PSHE? How confident/comfortable do you feel teaching this? What else do you think you could do to include LGBT+ issues in your teaching? (your subject area and/or PSHE)
Prompts – personal experience of LGBT+, prior training (what sort, where, when …)
Please tell me about how comfortable you feel addressing LGBT+ issues within the curriculum (your subject area and/or PSHE)
Prompts – personal experience of LGBT+, prior training (what sort, where, when …)
What else do you think the school could/should do to support its LGBT+ student body?

Scenarios

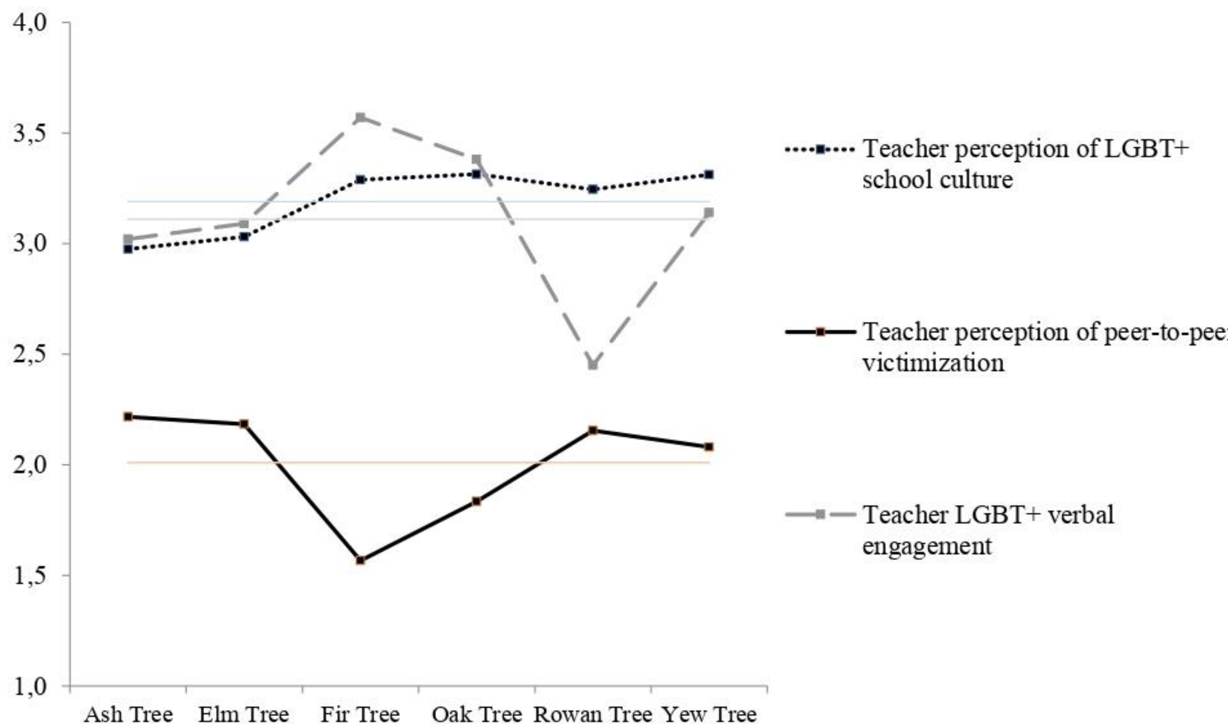
Your department is discussing whether they ought to adapt the curriculum taught to make it more 'inclusive' of LGBT+ issues – one colleague feels it isn't appropriate as it doesn't easily fit in with the curriculum, another colleague feels it is just 'political correctness'. Where do you stand and what would you argue for?
Imagine you teach in a single sex school and one of the students indicates that they wish to transition to the opposite gender but want to stay in the school. Should they be allowed to stay in the school. If not, why not and what should happen; if yes, why, and what should be done to accommodate the student in the school.
It is LGBT+ history month and there are some displays about LGBT+ issues around the school. At a parents' evening a parent expresses disquiet about young people being 'exposed' to LGBT+ issues – what would you say to the parent?
A student who identifies as gay/lesbian complains to you that the sex education they have had in school is purely about heterosexual sex. What would you say to the student? Would you take this any further in the school?
You are in a rush to get to a class. On the way you overhear in the corridor a student say to another student 'that's so gay' – do you ignore it because you may be late for your class and the language isn't that offensive.
A student has come out as transgendered but has yet to start any medical treatment to support their transition. However they want to be called by their preferred name; the school has no gender neutral toilets so the student wants to use the toilets of their preferred gender and the changing rooms for their preferred gender; they also wish to take part in sports teams for their preferred gender. What do you think should happen?

Table 1. Characteristics of participating schools

	Pupils on roll*	% females/males	% Special needs students	% of English is an additional language students (EAL)	% of students who claim free school meals
Oak Tree	1100	49/51	12	12	14
Yew Tree	1150	51/49	9	23	10
Elm Tree	1000	50/50	17	43	16
Ash Tree	1100	46/54	7	19	12
Rowan Tree	1000	49/51	7	12	7
Fir Tree	450	15/85	15	17	7
National average		50/50	11	17	14

Note. *The number of pupils is rounded to the nearest 50. Data drawn from DfE (2019) www.gov.uk/school-performance-tables.

Figure 1. Teacher's perceptions of LGBT+ school culture, peer-to-peer victimization, and their LGBT+ verbal engagement at school.



Note. Teacher perception of peer-to-peer victimization showed significant variability across schools [F(5, 132) = 3.718, p = .004]. Mean perception differences comparing LGBT+ verbal engagement to peer-to-peer LGBT+ victimization perceptions were also significant across schools [F(5, 115) = 2.927, p = .016]. However, Teacher LGBT+ verbal engagement [F(5, 118) = 1.877, p = .103] and Teacher perception of LGBT+ school culture [F(5, 134) = 1.568, p = .173] were not.

Chapter V
CONCLUSIONS

5.1. Brief summaries of central findings related to the area of *Didàctica de les Ciències Socials*

5.1.A1. Article A1.

In Wilson-Daily et al. (2018, Article A1), the multilevel analyses suggested that the role of the school was not relevant in determining lower or higher levels of xenophobia, appreciation of diversity, or attitudes toward immigrant rights. This is alarming to given that a side goal of this study was to identify schools and/or social studies teachers, whose best practices might potentially lower xenophobic attitudes. These findings suggest a lack of best teaching practices in the 30 schools studied in reducing xenophobia, increasing appreciation for diversity and positive attitudes toward immigrant rights. This is in line with the work of Carrasco et al. (2009), Carrasco (2019), and Deusdad (2009) who through their qualitative, smaller-scale work claim that teachers in Catalonia do little to combat xenophobia in their classrooms and, in fact, are part of the problem. Article A1 confirms this finding of these authors but on a macro level. This lack of school variability and the high instance of xenophobia and other negative attitudes toward immigrants and diversity found in the study makes it clear that schools, teachers and teacher trainers (DSC - us!) have much work to do on this front.

5.1.A2. Article A2.

In Wilson-Daily and Kemmelmeier (2019, Article A1), the multilevel analyses suggested that the role of the social studies teacher *was* relevant in higher intention to vote across

all election types considered in the survey (potential referendum, municipal, Catalan Parliamentary, Spanish Congressional, and European). Nevertheless, this effect was significant at the individual level and *not* the school level. This likely means that, overall, students who felt that *their* opinion was welcome and encouraged to be shared in the classroom were more likely to report that their social studies classroom teacher was open to debate. Students perhaps with more outlying, unpopular views or opinions that contrasted with the teacher in question were less likely to report that their social studies classroom a space in which they felt encouraged to voice their political opinions. Secondary school socials studies teachers need to be aware that students might not feel comfortable expressing these unconventional or highly-contrasting or conflictive views in the classroom and teachers need to find alternative ways, such as simulations or debate about fictitious opinions in order to create a space for these opposing, less popular opinions (see Barriga-Ubed et al., 2017; *Aprenem a votar 2014: Eleccions al Parlament Europeu*, 2014). Nevertheless, the results suggest that the school climate and teachers play an important role in the development of civic orientation regarding election importance, a crucial area for future qualitative-based study. Future research should address the dynamics underlying this finding, and concretely explore why the same teacher invites a greater sense of political openness in some students, but a limited sense in others.

5.1.A3. Article A3.

In Wilson-Daily et al. (2020, Article A3), the multilevel analyses suggested that the role of the school was not relevant in determining student national (Catalan/Spanish) identity constructions, in contrast to Hierro (2015). Results show that, overall, the social studies curriculum, content and teaching do not influence student identifications in this regard in native or immigrant background student populations. The influences are at the individual (e.g., family, peer) level. Whether this is a positive or negative aspect of social studies teaching and learning in Catalan secondary schools one must argue is in the eyes of the beholder.

5.1.B1. Article B1.

This study provides a relatively psychometrically sound instrument relevant not only for in the area of Social Studies Teaching and Learning (DCS) but also among all areas of *didàctica*. Preliminary findings at the University of Barcelona's Faculty of Education show that those students that had a higher opinion of a competencially-based curriculum were also those who understood it less. The authors argue that this instrument should be used Faculties of Education and other teacher trainer entities in order to diagnose potential training missteps regarding to what extent teachers understand key competencies, agree with current competencially-based education policy, and feel comfortable applying a evaluating them in the classroom either as student teachers in a practicum or professional teachers. Future studies could use this instrument in the near future longitudinally or in multilevel modeling; however, these should also aim at the continued improvement of its psychometric properties.

5.1.B2. Article B2.

Primary teacher trainees surveyed in *Didàctica de la Història* (Course code: 361705) at the University of Barcelona largely feel that the university professors that have given them classes over the last three years have been unsuccessful in adequately explaining how to apply a competencially-based curriculum to the primary classroom. They claim that, they, as future teachers on the brink of entering the classroom as teachers themselves, have little idea of how to evaluate future primary students competencially. They also complain that their university professors themselves often fail to teach though competencies; some suspect that many of their teacher trainers lack of understating of what competencies are themselves and thus avoid the topic, leaving it to their students to teach themselves through documents how to apply key competencies to the classroom. These complaints apply not only to DCS professors, but also to (most) professors of other areas in the UB's Faculty of Education, with some non-DCS exceptions.

5.1.C1. Article C1.

Our data showed that LGBT+ matters are seldom integrated in school social studies curriculums, and when they are, this is often done in a problematic or superficial way,

further exacerbating students' feelings of isolation. Understanding how schools (unwittingly) contribute to LGBT+ students' sense of isolation potentially provides a means to identify more specific ways schools could address this issue. This article outlines other was that school unwittingly isolate LGBT+ student in and out of the social studies classroom and suggests a curricular and policy-oriented overhaul regarding true LGBT+ inclusivity. This study was carried out in the UK, however, in Spain, as far as educational legislation is concerned, the integration and/or inclusion of LGBT+ topics is not mandatory in Spanish schools and are rarely covered (see Martxueta & Etxeberria, 2014; Parker et al., 2009). Student social and emotional development is supposed to be integrated in a interdisciplinary manner, but this is so broad that LGBT+ matters and topics are rarely integrated (Martxueta & Etxeberria, 2014; Parker et al., 2009). Furthermore, teachers in Spain often feel inadequately prepared to support LGBT+ students and to cover and integrate LGBT+-related content (Penna & Sánchez, 2015). This UK data has served as an impetus to apply for funding to carry out related research in Catalonia especially related to the potential of the social studies classroom and the role that social studies teachers can play in creating more inclusive cultures (see section 5.2. Future directions).

5.1.C2. Article C2.

Comparing teacher and student perceptions of the social studies curriculum we found that teachers and students can hold radically different views regarding the inclusion of LGBT+ issues and matters. In most schools where teachers spoke of the way LGBT+ matters were being addressed in the curriculum, modifications (as seen in article C1) were seen as minor by many students. Overall there was a general student perception that, although things were improving and that the situation is some schools was better than others, collectively teachers were largely uninterested in supporting LGBT+ students. We also found a surprising disconnect between student bullying / victimization experiences and the views that teachers have of these. Importantly, all teachers interviewed felt that ignorance of students was at the heart of any troubles experienced by their LGBT+ peers, seemingly placing the blame of issues faced on individual students and their families, in line with Rawlings (2019) and Payne and Smith (2013). It is easy to blame students and their families for shortcomings in Social-Studies-related areas, and

a much harder task to ask ourselves as Social Studies educators actions we may take to spur change.

As with C1, this study was carried out in the UK; however, in Spain, we hypothesize that this disconnect between secondary school experiences of LGBT+ students from their teachers' perspectives may also exist. Despite a policy shifts aiming for greater acceptance of the LGBT+ community in Spain (see Montalbán et al., 2014), studies of young people in Spanish secondary schools (e.g., Elipe et al., 2018; Grupo Educación COGAM, 2013; Martxueta & Etxeberria, 2014; Moliner et al., 2018), including studies carried out in Catalonia (Mérida, 2018; Sadurní & Pujol, 2015) highlight significant levels of LGBT+ student victimization, marginalization and misunderstanding. This is likely the result of a failure to ensure that LGBT+ students are supported in schools. It is important as social studies teacher trainers that we ask ourselves what we can do to aid our students in supporting the LGBT+ student community. Non-LGBT+ students would also benefit from a more inclusive, equal culture, less-binary conceptions of gender, and greater understanding of their peers (see Shane, 2020; Underhill, 2013). One possible first step is comparing teacher and student perspectives in Spanish secondary school contexts (see section 5.2. Future directions).

5.2. Future directions

My future research interests related to my teaching experience within the in *Didàctica de les Ciències Socials* at the UB with Anti-bias ECE and primary teacher trainee education based on the work of Derman-Sparks and Olsen Edwards (2010; 2020) and the Western European DECET (Diversity in Early Childhood Education and Training) network (e.g., Vandenbroeck et al., 2011). More and more I realize the need to study and identify best practices that help students identify and critically analyze intuitional oppression, their own stereotypes, those of others, and how these affect the world we in which we live. I would like to focus on identifying *and* disseminating best practices; an applying those to improving teacher training courses so that teachers feel inspired and prepared to integrate similar practices in their classrooms in a bottom-up way and though the voices of active teachers, themselves already implementing these practices.

For example I just applied as project leader, along with DIDPATRI research group members and Dr. Harris, Dr. Kemmelmeier and others, for a grant through “la Caixa”, specifically, their Social Research 2020 Grant program. Out of an initial 767 proposed projects, ours (SR20-00210), was chosen for a final interview phase (see “la Caixa” Foundation, 2020). This proposal hypothesized that secondary schools in Spain vary greatly in the ways they address LGBT+-specific bullying and bullying in general (school climate) and the cultural norms that predominate school power structures (school culture). If we eventually receive a grant, through “la Caixa” or another entity, we aim to study such variation concerning school actions (e.g., social studies curricular focus, policies and classroom promotion and understanding of gender-neutral bathrooms, classroom initiatives that pay attention to cyberbullying, targeted teacher training, etc.) through multi-level modelling that highlights structural social aspects, like one’s school, classroom, or family, as hierarchical elements that in themselves are interesting units of study. This project would produce a complex, evidence-based assessment of school factors related to LGBT+ school climate and culture, providing a base outline of potential good teaching and school practices for dissemination and scaling-up to a wider range of schools within Spain and elsewhere.

This macro view of quantitative and cross-sectional data would will aid in determining which schools would be the best methodological fit for later research team qualitative ethnographic studies, intervention-based studies, and other future mixed-methods studies thus combining, to an extent, the methodological focus of the Chapter II articles (A1, A2, and A3) with the content focus of Chapter IV articles (C1 and C2).

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