



Diversity at College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University-Erbil: Lecturers' Awareness and Attitude

ID No. 1863

(PP 239 - 253)

<https://doi.org/10.21271/zjhs.23.2.16>**Saman A. Abdullah**

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Received: 29/11/2018**Accepted: 26/11/2018****Published: 20/04/2019**

Abstract

This research studies lecturers' awareness and attitude in teaching-with-diversity at College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University. The main idea of this study is to make an investigation into the lecturers' background of diversity education, the way they approach diverse classes and the extent of correspondence of lecturers' treatment to the diversity education principles. The research data were collected through a questionnaire of seven categories, each of which addressing a different area of dealing with diversity, namely *general strategies; communicating and fostering respect; pedagogical approaches; course content and material; class discussion; assignments and exams; advising, monitoring, and out-of-class activities*. The study analyzes and reports the results elicited from the lecturers to arrive at the extent of matches or mismatches between their pedagogy and the popular opinions and knowledge regarding teaching diverse classes. All in all, certain differences are noticed between the lecturers' teaching practices and the commonly accepted beliefs and guidelines for teaching-with-diversity. The study has come up with the conclusion that if the teaching practices at College of Basic Education are to be more effective and tolerant, the lecturers need to consider the adaptations in the course materials and the enrichment of their pedagogical approaches with diversity-friendly ideas and strategies.

Key words: Diversity, Education, Lecturers' Attitude.

1. Introduction

General Background

Immigration has been the main cause behind the demographic change in the whole world in general, and in educational settings in specific because the children of immigrants make up a great portion of the population of schools and higher education institutes (Cole, 2008, pp. 219-220).

The demographic change has resulted in differences in different contexts, like countries, societies, organizations and business companies. The term 'diversity' has been used to embody these differences. 'Richness' is another figurative interpretation used for the term 'diversity' in the way that differences can bring about various ideas and powers. Diversity is usually used to refer to the biological, cultural, and linguistic differences (Quaiser-Pohl, Ruthsats and Endepohs-Ulpe, 2013, p. 9).

Quaiser-Pohl, Ruthsats and Endepohs-Ulpe have also made a reference to the ancient and recent times in the history of diversity management in the USA and European countries. According to them, managing diversity as a political concern started in the 1960s in the USA by the Grass-roots Movement whose main concentration was on equality at work and in



society, women's rights and civil rights. Ending the segregation of different races in schools was one of the very significant targets of the movement. The focus on differences and discrimination in schools can be regarded as the point at which diversity discussion and diversity management entered the field of Education. In 2000, the European Union Charter of Fundamental Rights were issued by the European Parliament according to which "discrimination because of diversity characteristics – like cultural or ethnical origin, religion values, gender, age, physical handicaps and sexual identity is illegal". The issue of this charter is attributed to the very beginning of increasing desire in diversity management in Europe.

As it appears, diversity is an interdisciplinary phenomenon found in various contexts, which needs to be managed in a way that its positive side and meaning be discovered and benefited from. Due to its nature and aims, this study tends to deal with diversity in education and teacher education for diversity.

Diversity in education has become a livelier topic of discussion recently compared to the diversity discussion in other contexts because in education, in addition to the characteristics mentioned above, the varying abilities, individual differences, and different learning styles are considered as important aspects of diversity as well. As Swenenn (2009, p. 117) explains, the 21st century teachers have to be able and prepared to cater for a good quality of education for diverse classes. This is because classrooms are changing and becoming diverse.

According to Swenenn, the diversity dimensions in education do not include only socio-economic status, ethnicity, language, religion, disability, sexuality and special education, but also differing abilities. These dimensions are needed to be cared for because they are needs that are to be satisfied, not because of the matter of minority characteristics in the classroom.

Diversity in education concerns both student teachers and teacher educators, considering that it is first the responsibility of the educators to inspire the student teachers to handle the issue of diversity subtly. Swenenn (2009, p. 118) states that "All teacher educators, whether engaged in theoretical approaches such as psychology, philosophy, or sociology of education, or as general or subject-specific pedagogy experts, have to consider how to respond to diversity in their teacher education. Teacher educators also have to consider the diverse needs of an increasingly diverse student teacher population."

Concerning the role of colleges of education, Irvine (2003, p. 16) believes that in line with being academically careful and selective in the process of student admissions, the colleges of education have to pay closer attention to diversity matters than ever. To attain this goal, Irvine thinks that the multicultural teacher education programs need to be formally and officially recognized and practiced in educational institutions. And this change in the curricula can be best achieved through being accompanied by creating a diversity-friendly culture and atmosphere.

According to Gollnick and Chinn (2002 cited in Verma, Bagley and Jha, 2007, p. 23), diversity education is not only a demand that is imposed on schools and higher education settings, but is also a set of values which need to be reflected in social institutions too. They assert that the way of implementing such type of education is "the recognition and acceptance of the right of different cultural groups to exist and share equally in the differential rewards of social institutions".



The idea behind diversity education is to avoid disadvantaging students because of their linguistic, cultural, ethnic, racial, religious, socio-economic status, and physical ability differences. Here comes up the term “inclusion” which goes in line with diversity. As Reid (2005, p. 99) explains, the main idea of inclusion is standing against separating out the student with special educational needs. Inclusion focuses on the high-quality education in which the needs of all learners are met. And there are three main factors for an educational institute to be successful in the process of inclusion, these factors are an inclusive culture, inclusive policies and inclusive practices. Here, one can understand that the issues of diversity education and inclusion is not solely the duty of teachers and teacher educators. It need the management and policy makers to have a hand in supporting the process to be successful. Reid sees that these three factors are also considerably relevant to learning styles since each of these factors contribute in meeting individual needs and diagnosing individual preferences for learning within an inclusive educational setting (p.100).

Diversity Education in the Kurdish Context

Kurdistan is the federal region which lies to the north of Iraq. The people of Kurdistan have an autonomous government now which resulted from their uprising against the regime of Ba’th ruled by the former Iraqi president Saddam Hussein. Since its own history, Kurdistan has been a place for people of different ethnicity and religion. Kurds form the majority of the population of Kurdistan. There are also Turkman, Assyrian, Yzidi and Arab minorities living in the region together.

As far as the education setting in Kurdistan is concerned, it is worthwhile to mention that the Kurdistan Region Government has given religious and ethnic minorities the right of education in their native languages in school. In other words, all minorities have schools in their native language from kindergarten to grade 12; they have been free to go to Kurdish schools as well. Having separate schools in different languages to be responsive to the religious and ethnic needs and differences has resulted in producing less diverse education settings.

Unlike the primary and secondary schools, the tertiary education in Kurdistan brings all the students who graduate from school together, without separation. That’s, the students from every different religion, ethnicity, culture and society need to join the same higher education institution for their university study. Thus, colleges and universities have become a good example for diverse education setting; therefore, the concern of this research is studying the phenomenon of diversity at the tertiary level in which the college lecturers’ awareness and attitude are investigated. Lecturers are chosen to be central in this study since they first need manage their students’ diverse community, second, they, as teacher educators, prepare the student teachers for diversity in schools.

Diversity issues in relation to the classroom

Verma (1993 cited in Verma, Bagley and Jha, 2007, p..23) has identified two major strategies in the planning and provision of multicultural education in a diverse society, the philosophy and providing for educational needs. The first strategy is that schools and higher education institutions’ mission need to be supported and strengthened by a philosophy. The second strategy deals with how to provide an education that meets the educational needs of children and young people from different ethnic minorities.



Davidman and Davidman (1994, p. 90) highlight the complexity of diversity education in that it takes different forms in its goals, outcomes, and types. They have identified six goals for diversity education. They are “educational equity, empowerment of learners, cultural pluralism in society, intercultural/ interethnic/intergroup understanding and harmony in classrooms and communities, an expanded knowledge of various cultural and ethnic groups, and the development of learners and stakeholders whose thoughts and actions are guided by an informed and inquisitive multicultural perspective”.

To avoid making students feel unwelcome or alienated, both students and instructors need to be aware of their behavior and comments; that is, any act of bias and discrimination or any insensitivity towards students may result in developing the sense of detachment (Davis, 2009, P. 57). Davis has adapted certain questions (from the work of some authors) by which instructors can make an investigation into their own attitude and conduct. The content of the questions addressed by him, can be condensed into the points below:

- Having double standard in interaction with men and women
- Undervaluing comments made by speakers whose accent is like your (instructor’s) accent
- Considering the need of additional help for the students of some racial and ethnic groups
- Being comfortable around people whose racial, ethnic, or sexual identity differs from your own
- Being comfortable disclosing your knowledge of and experiences with diversity
- Dealing with your suspicions and uncertainty regarding multicultural issues

Furthermore, an inclusive set of ideas concerning various diversity and inclusion issues in the classroom has been developed by Davis (2009) for instructors through which they can deal with their diverse classes in an effective way. These ideas have been explored through having a close look at teaching practices and are built on current research. The table below summarizes the major categories of these ideas and their main components. The full description and road map for putting the ideas into practice are not embedded here within this work due to its little space, yet the details have been considered in designing the research data collection tool, the lecturers’ questionnaire.

No.	Categories	Ideas
1.	General Strategies	Become aware of any biases or stereotypes you may have absorbed. Treat each student as an individual. Monitor the climate in your classroom. Introduce discussions of diversity at department meetings. Recognize the complexity of diversity.
2.	Communicating and fostering respect	Be attentive to terminology. Learn about groups other than your own. Convey the same level of confidence in the abilities of all your students. Don’t try to protect any group of students. Be evenhanded in acknowledging students’ accomplishments. Be aware of possible misinterpretations of students’ nonverbal behaviors.



3.	Pedagogical approaches	Use inclusive language and examples. Learn to correctly pronounce students' names. Look for opportunities to give personal attention and validation to students. Cultivate an inclusive classroom. Recognize your own culture - bound assumptions. Assign group work and collaborative learning activities.
4.	Course content and material	Try to select texts and readings whose language is gender neutral and free of stereotypes. Aim for an inclusive curriculum. Do not assume that all students will recognize cultural, literary, or historical references familiar to you. Bring in guest lecturers.
5.	Class discussion	Emphasize the importance of considering different approaches. Make it clear that you value all comments. Balance openness and safety. Encourage all students to participate in class discussion. Monitor your behavior in responding to students. Speak up if a student makes a distasteful remark — even jokingly. Defuse heated remarks. Do not treat students as spokespersons for their demographic group.
6.	Assignments and exams	Be sensitive to students whose first language is not the language of the medium of instruction. Help students form study teams. Give assignments and exams that recognize students' diverse backgrounds and special interests. Use a variety of names in classroom examples and test questions.
7.	Advising, Monitoring, and Out-of-Class Activities	Meet with students informally. Involve students in your research and scholarly activities. Help students establish departmental organizations. Encourage students to join school organizations. Direct students to relevant campus resources.

(Adapted from Davis, 2009, pp. 58-68)

2. Purpose

College of Basic Education is one of the two colleges for teacher education in the Kurdistan Region. College of Basic Education is specialized for preparing school teachers for grades 1 to 9. So, it is the graduates of this college who will be teaching children at schools, and it is the lecturers of this college whose duty is to educate and prepare those graduates for this sensitive and significant teaching mission.

Here, the issue of diversity management comes up whose importance and necessity has become inevitable in the field of education for both teacher educators and student teachers. As for the College of Basic Education, the discussion of diversity is quite new. It



was only in October, 2016, a delegation from the college participated in the program 'Capacity Building in Teacher Education and Research' at the Faculty of Education of Fredrich Alexander University (FAU) in Nurnberg, Germany. Right after their return to Kurdistan, the delegation started implementing the drawn plans of the program concerning 'diversity education' at College of Basic Education. As the starting point, a subject entitled 'Diversity Education and Inclusion in Schools' was added to the curriculum of three departments of the college to be studied by junior and senior students. Three lecturers who had been trained during the programme were assigned to teach the diversity subject at the three departments of English, Kurdish, and Kindergarten. In addition to this, a number of seminars by the members of the delegation were held to the college students and lectures in the purpose of spreading the awareness and significance of diversity education, especially at this time of demographic change in the area due to the political and military turmoil in the region in general which has caused the displacement of a lot of people in the neighboring countries.

This research aims at making an investigation into the lecturers' awareness and attitude towards diversity education at College of Basic Education. To the researchers' best knowledge, before the year 2016, the lecturers' main concern was delivering the knowledge content subjects as well as a few education-based psychology and methodology subjects; that is, no information or knowledge on diversity were consciously shared the with the students, and diversity education had not been a topic of discussion until before the year 2016. So, having one year passed over over working on diversity education through teaching it as a subject and holding seminars about it, it is good to know how much awareness they have absorbed about diversity and what are the attitudes and practices conducted on the part of the lecturers in dealing with the diversity of their own class population and in preparing the student teachers for schools. This research also attempts to discover what has changed in terms of tolerance, valuing differences, and responding to the students of different needs.

For collecting the necessary data to arrive at these aims, this study makes use of the comprehensive set of ideas for teaching with diversity, which was introduced in the previous section as model. All main categories of the set of ideas are taken into consideration in designing the research tool. In other words, each of the major aspects of diversity management in the classroom, which are listed below, is investigated in the study.

- General Strategies
- Communicating and fostering respect
- Pedagogical approaches
- Course content and material
- Class discussion
- Assignments and exams
- Advising, Monitoring, and Out-of-Class Activities

It is expected that diversity has become a familiar topic among both populations of faculty members and students, and the lecturers are now well aware of diversity issues and its dimensions, thus they work with sensitivity in interaction with their students in order not to disadvantage any group of students based on their differences with some other groups. It is also believed that the concepts of tolerance, acceptance and valuing differences are being embodied more than ever before. Regarding familiarizing the student teachers with the idea and practice of diversity education for after graduation when teaching at school, the researchers foresee that, except for those whose who teach psychology, methodology, and education-based subjects, the others have not considered the issue of diversity and have not incorporated its discussion and education of it into their instruction and curriculum.



3. Research Design

Depending on the aims of this study and the type of data needed to be collected to reach at those aims, this research makes use of a questionnaire consisting of twenty close-ended and one open-ended questions. These questions were developed basing on the seven main categories of diversity issues which have been proposed by Davis (2009) for lecturers teaching at higher education institutions. The breakdown of those issues is shown in the first section, but just as a matter of recalling their main categories in which the items of the questionnaire fit, they are being mentioned here one more time below. They are *General Strategies*; *Communicating and fostering respect*; *Pedagogical approaches*; *Course content and material*; *Class discussion*; *Assignments and exams*; and *Advising, Monitoring, and Out-of-Class Activities*.

The questionnaire was designed to be answered by lecturers from College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University-Erbil. This is to see how aware the teaching staff members of this college are to those important issues and how they respond to them. Including all the six of its departments, the college has about 139 permanent teaching staff members. The aim was to have all of them respond to the questionnaire, but we could only have the answers of 115 of them. This is because a number of lecturers were on summer holiday and not available. The questionnaire was distributed to the participants through a ‘google form’ link, but we needed to give the questionnaire to some of the participants by hand because they do not usually go on the internet.

As mentioned before, the question items were derived from Davis’s model for diversity education matters that have to be addressed by the lecturers to best respond to diverse groups in and outside the classroom. So, did not have any validity worries regarding the effectiveness of the items since they have been discovered and proposed by research and through practice. The worth-mentioning issue here is the translation of the items into the participants’ language because not all of them speak or understand English very well. Therefore, the translated version of the questionnaire was shown to two high qualified lecturers from the English department who are specialized in in translation in order to verify that the items have not lost their validity and sense in the language they were translated to. After they wrote their notes on the translated version and recommended some style-related modifications, the changes were made to the questionnaire and then it was distributed to the participants.

4. Results and Discussions

Tables 1 – 7 present the results of the questionnaire.

Table 1
Responses to Items related to “General Strategies”

Item 1: What do you think diversity should include apart from gender, age, religion, ethnicity, and race? Please list in points if you think there are any more.

Responses	Frequency of responses
Economic background / financial status	9
Culture / customs and traditions	9
Geographical region	8
Social Class and status	8
Individual differences	7
Language	7



Family / home education	7
Nothing else (that is all)	6
Opinions and world view	6
Political views	6
Different intelligence	5
Physical ability / shape	5
Critical thinking	4
Students with special needs / disabilities	4
Social intelligence	3
Sexual orientation	2
Total Responses	96

The first item is the only open-ended question among 21 questions. The reason behind putting such a question on the questionnaire was to elicit as many responses as possible from the respondents regarding the different aspects of diversity. This was to realize how deep they have understood the term diversity and its complex structure in education.

Cuseo (2015) presents a wider range of personal characteristics and background experiences that play a vital role in the success of the students who come to college, that's, apart from the diversity aspects (or characteristics) mentioned in introduction section, such as *socioeconomic status, race/ethnicity, national citizenship, culture, gender, chronological age, religious orientation*, Cuseo adds certain dimensions for diversity to be considered by educational institutions and educators. They are *generation* (historical period in which the person grew up), *learning style, geographical location, sexual orientation, academic preparedness, family history of college experience, residential status* (commuting or living on campus), *risk of attrition* (based on above characteristics or other characteristics at college entry).

One thing to be mentioned here is that not all the participants have answered this question, that is, as one can see from the stats, 96 responses have been obtained. Fortunately, almost all the aspects introduced by Cuseo have been mentioned in the lecturers' responses, but not every participant has mentioned all at once. One of the most significant aspects of diversity in education is missing in the participants' answers which is *learning style*. The most frequent answers relate to culture and socio-economic background, whereas *sexual orientation* is mentioned least of all.

Table 1 (cont.)

Items	Oftentimes	Sometimes	Never
Item 2: Have you ever introduced discussions of diversity at department meetings?	27 23.5%	50 43.5%	38 33%
Item 3: Have you ever been aware of any stereotypes you had about one group of students and have mended it?	6 5.2%	63 54.8%	46 40%
Item 4: Have you ever felt of any biases you had against one group of students and have mended it?	6 5.2%	33 28.7%	76 66.1%

Clauss-Ehlers (2006, p.3) states that “teaching for diversity means the teaching relationship occurs in a classroom where educators are responsive to the diverse needs of all students”. Similarly, as Sue (1998, cited in Clauss-Ehlers, 2006) has stressed, in order to be effective with a heterogenous classroom, it is crucial for lecturers (or teachers) to be first aware of their own cultural background.



The three items above relate to the general guidelines for lecturers and educators to address the diversity matters. As for the first one, although there is a great number of lecturers who have positive responses, half of the participants have marked ‘sometimes’ choice and a good number have said ‘never’. Concerning the items three and four, the majority of the answers go for the last two choices by which they tend to communicate that they seldom had stereotypes and bias against a particular group., but these answers cannot always have a positive implication in favor of the participants because it might as well indicate that they have not been aware of such phenomena in themselves to mend.

Table 2
Responses to Items related to “Communicating and Fostering Respect”

Items	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Item 5: Lecturers have to be cautious and careful to the terminology use in the classroom in order not to hurt students’ feelings?	97 84.3%	7 6.1%	11 9.6%
Item 6: Lecturers need to learn about groups (of different culture and background) other than their own?	72 62.6%	27 23.5%	16 13.9%
Item 7: It is something normal if lecturers try to protect a group of students (for some reasons or incentives)?	29 25.2%	22 19.1%	64 55.7%

As far as the items 5 and 6 are considered, one can read from the answers that the respondents are very diversity-friendly in that they communicate sensitively and value cultures other than their own. The last item from this category on communication and respect refers to that only over a quarter of the lecturers tend to protect a group of students if they see it as necessary. They may believe that by this action they are implementing a humanistic duty for their, while this might disadvantage some others at the time.

Table 3
Responses to Items related to “Pedagogical Approaches”

Items	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Item 8: Lecturers have to look for opportunities to give personal attention and validation to students.	58 50.4%	22 19.1%	35 30.4%
Item 9: Lecturers have to cultivate an inclusive classroom through using different approaches for multicultural classes?	97 84.3%	13 11.3%	5 4.3%

Items	Yes	I do not know	No
Item 10: Do group work and collaborative learning activities cater for the students’ differences, needs and interests.	69 60.0%	29 25.2%	17 14.8%



Item 11: Do you think that lecturers need to learn to correctly pronounce all students' names?	79 68.7%	7 6.1%	29 25.2%
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Speaking of the sophisticated nature of diversity in education, Growe, Schmersahl, Kurt, and Henry (2000 cited in Bierema, 2010) have also discussed a number of areas within which diversity education forms can be embodied. The areas are the following:

- **Content integration** (including examples and content from a variety of cultures)
- **Knowledge construction** (methods and activities used to help learners understand, investigate, and determine cultural assumptions, frames of reference, perspective, and bias operating in knowledge construction)
- **Equity pedagogy** (when educators use techniques that promote cooperative learning about the culture of diverse groups)
- **Generating a common or shared culture** (creating an environment that promotes an equal education for all).

Pedagogical approaches have a lot of things to do with diversity in education since they do not only influence the delivery of the course content, but also shape the treatment between the lecturers and their students. Therefore, this aspect has received a much focus of the questionnaire.

Varying degrees of responses have been obtained for the four items. According to the results of the first item about half of the lecturers (30.4 disagree; 19.1 neutral) do not attach importance to the personal attention to students. In the second item, most of the answers confirm the necessity of inclusion of diverse classes. It is perceptible, from the items 8 and 9, that the lecturers are rather concerned with dealing with the class as a whole than individual students. Calling the students by their own names are thought to be very effective in establishing a rapport between the lecturer and students, but because the classes of College of Basic Education have 45 – 50 students in them, some lecturers may find it difficult to memorize and pronounce all the students name correctly.

Table 4
Responses to Items related to the “Course Content and Material”

Items	Always	Sometimes	Never (no need to do so)
Item 12: Lecturers should try to select texts and readings whose language is gender neutral and free of stereotypes	64 55.7%	29 25.2%	22 19.1%
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Item 13: Should lecturers aim for an inclusive curriculum in which all the students can find themselves in it.	87 75.7%	19 16.5%	9 7.8%
Item 14: Lecturers should bring in guest lecturers.	45 39.1%	27 23.5%	43 37.4%

Looking at the results of item 12, about half of the lecturers do not seem interested in caring very much about the gender issue in the language of the course materials they teach.



This might be because they are more concerned about the content than the inclusive instructional strategies and individual needs. In their responses to item 13, the participants convey the truth that they would very much like to design the curriculum of the subjects they teach for involving all the students with various backgrounds, and is probably due to the challenges that face them when it comes to curriculum adaptation of the courses imposed on them (materials which have not been designed or selected by themselves). Inviting guest lecturers plays a significant role in setting a refreshing class atmosphere for both lecturers and students. Lecturers are very likely to get some new instructional tips, and it is definitely motivating for students in that they take a break from one-lecturer style. Nevertheless, only less than half of the respondents have showed their awareness of the importance and fertility of guest lecturers.

Table 5
Responses to Items related to “Class discussion”

Items	Oftentimes	Sometimes	Never
Item 15: How often is it true and right to regard students as samples and representatives of their demographic groups.	65 56.5%	15 13%	35 30.4%
	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Item 16: Lecturers have to speak up if a student makes a distasteful remark — even jokingly.	56 48.7%	11 9.6%	48 41.7%
	Yes	No	I do not know
Item 17: Do lecturers have to value all comments in the class discussion?	62 53.9%	45 39.1%	8 7%
Item 18: Are lecturers responsible for encouraging all students to participate in class discussion?	97 84.3%	9 7.8%	9 7.8%

The results of the first three items regarding the discussions held in the classroom between the lecturer and students are not fascinating and satisfactory. The results tell us that students are regarded as samples of their demographic groups by more than half of the respondents, more than 50 percent of the lecturers seem to show no deterrent attitude in response to distasteful remarks, and again around half of the lecturers do not think that all students’ comments need to be valued. Unlike these three questions, the last question which is about involving the students in the class discussions, the majority of respondents attribute this responsibility to themselves.

Table 6
Responses to Items related to “Assignments and Exams”

Items	Agree	Neutral	Disagree
Item 19: Lecturers have to be helpful and responsive to the students whose first language is not the language of the medium of instruction when it comes to the assignments and exams.	65 56.5%	20 17.4%	30 26.1%
Item 20: Lecturers should give assignments and exams that recognize students’ diverse backgrounds and special interests	59 51.3%	20 17.4%	36 31.3%



The above two questions belong to the idea of staying in the centre with the same distance from all students, that is, helping the group of students, whose native languages and backgrounds are different, with examinations and assignments so that they are not disadvantaged because of misunderstanding and exclusion feelings. Despite having a little over 50 percent of those who have shown their positive attitudes concerning the content of the questions, the other some 50 percentage of the negative answers should not be overlooked. Such extent of negative responses by the lecturers may belong to their sincerity for their profession in that they might believe that if they help certain group of students, this may automatically disadvantage other groups and adversely influence their academic integrity.

Table 7
Responses to Items related to “Advising, Monitoring, and Out-of-Class Activities”

Items	Yes	No	I do not know
Item 21: Is meeting with students informally a part of lecturers’ out- of-class activities to complete the picture of the lecturers’ professional identity.	73 63.5%	17 14.8%	25 21.7%
	Oftentimes	Sometimes	Never
If yes, how often have done so?	23 23.7%	63 64.9%	11 11.3%

Not all the students are alike in perceiving their courses and their learning settings. Some can have problems or confusions for which they may need their lecturers’ help. Here, lecturers need to be approachable to their students, and this requires meetings outside the classroom. Out-of-class meetings or activities can also build a positive relationship and better understanding between the students and lecturers. This last item of the questionnaire addresses this matter. As it appears from the results, over 20 percent of the respondents have selected ‘*I do not know*’. This can be regarded as an indication of their uncertainty about whether they do the right thing if they have informal interaction with students outside the classroom.

From the 115 respondents, 17 of them explicitly discourage the idea, and among the 97 respondents who support the idea of informal meeting with students, 11 of the have never done so. All in all, the results show lecturers’ positive awareness and attitude towards the issue.

This section has analyzed, organized, and reported the data elicited from the respondents. The next section, which is the last, presents the perceptible conclusions and implications inferred from the discussions based on the results obtained from the respondents of the questionnaire.

5. Conclusion and Implications

Relying on the reviewed literature on diversity in education and having considered the results of the study, it is concluded that the lecturers from College of Basic Education, Salahaddin University are generally familiar with the concept and idea behind diversity education, and they are more or less responsive to the issues that arise due to the students’ culture and background variety, but there are slight setbacks and misconceptions on the part



of lecturers when it comes to the specific dimensions and components of diversity in real teaching practices and contact with students.

With reference to the agreed upon truth regarding the complexity of diversity, the lecturers have proved that they are to a good extent aware of the various aspects of diversity in education setting, yet the amount of the importance they attach to diversity differs from one aspect to another. In other words, there are a few important aspects to which they have not made reference, such as *learning style diversity*. In addition, there are a few other aspects that they pay little or no attention, including *sexual orientation*, and this can be linked with the nature of the Kurdish society in which sexual orientation is not **a big enough issue**, and with the fact that few cases regarding having a different orientation than the two traditional ones, which has not become a phenomenon yet, is far difficult to become an issue for discussion and attention. But since societies in general are becoming more and more open and get culturally influenced by each other, the lecturers need to be aware of new generation's world view, lifestyle and thinking, that is, lecturers should not take new class of students who come to college for granted to be the same as those they had in the past years.

As it has been explained before in the second section, the formal stating point point of discussion on diversity and how to deal with it at College of Basic Education goes back to the 2016, so since then, good steps have been taken towards making it a part of the department meetings. This can be clearly backed by the results obtained regarding this matter. But these discussions need be made more serious and scheduled, and actions need to be taken by the lectures, department, and even faculty authority to face any potential problems due to the negligence of any issues related to diversity.

Communicating and maintaining respect in the classroom are two useful factors by which lecturers can create a diversity-sensitive atmosphere in which personal varieties of every single student or particular group of students of different backgrounds are acknowledged. In this regard, the lecturers from College of Basic Education have been very successful that they know their students very well and this knowledge on their students' background has paved the way for lecturers to provide students with an environment in which everyone feels secured, valued and included.

When discussing pedagogical approaches, course materials, materials' type of language and personal attention to students, one can say that, considering the results of '*course content*' and '*pedagogical approaches*' categories, the lecturers' approach inclines more to treating the students as a whole. In other words, their method tends to be less individualistic in content delivery and treatment with the students.

Compared to the popular beliefs and the existing knowledge about diversity in education settings, generally, the results of this study discover that the lecturers' attitude in the class discussions is not interesting because firstly, a great number of them treat individual students as a sample of their particular cultural groups and geographical regions - by this, they might think they give each group of students the right treatment based on their own cultures and personal backgrounds, yet this leads to misconceptions and generalizations towards any specific group, Secondly, they seem to show no reaction or do not intervene to stop the one who insults or offends other students by distasteful remarks. Remaining at the class discussion issues, there are still two other areas in which the lecturers' performance are positive enough not to let any student get disadvantaged in that the respondents believe that it is their own



duty to motivate all students to participate in the discussion and that all students' comments and ideas should be respected and valued.

One important part of this study concerned the relationship between the lecturers and their students outside classroom. The implications of the results tell us that the rate and state of the out-of-class activities or informal meetings are good enough to be praised.

Ongoing seminars and workshops on lecturers' diversity awareness raising and course content adaptations to include every possible learning style and students' personal background are the two strong recommendations this research makes for the faculty members and management staff of the College of Basic Education. One last thing would be that teaching with diversity can / need to be, even relatively, shaped by the nature of the target society and education setting since each society holds certain unique differences within itself which have to be addressed differently from the general conventional guidelines. As for the further issues that need to be investigated by research, this study suggests further studies be done on students' perception of diversity and the situation they are experiencing in relation to faculty members' attitude and awareness.

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Appendix: Abstract in Arabic and Kurdish languages.



پوخته

ئەم توۋزىنەۋەيە لە ھۆشيارىي و ھەلۋىستى مامۇستايانى كۆلۈزى پەرۋەردەي بىنەرتى لە زانكۆ سەلاھەددىن دەكۆلۈتتەۋە لە بواری وائەۋتتەۋە لەسەر بىنەماي پەچاۋەردى پەرۋەردەي فرەيى. ئەم توۋزىنەۋەيە ئەو زانىارىيانەي كە لە مامۇستايانى بەدەست ھىناۋە شىدەكاتەۋە و دەخاتەرۋو بۇ ئەۋەي بزائى تا چ ئاستىك شىۋاز وائەۋتتەۋەي مامۇستايان لەگەل بىنەمکانى پەرۋەردەي فرەيى يەكدەگرۈتتەۋە. زانىارىيەكانى ئەم توۋزىنەۋەيە لە رېگاي راپرسىيەكەۋە بەدەستھاتوون كە ھەوت لايەتېكى سەرەكى پەرۋەردەي فرەيى لەخۆي گرتوۋە، ئەۋانېش برىتىن لە: ستراتېيە گشتىيەكانى پەرۋەردەي فرەيى، لەيەكگەپىشتن و ھاندانى رېزگرتن لە يەكدى، رېيازەكانى زانستى وائەۋتتەۋە، كەرستە و ناۋەرۋكى بابەتى خويىندن، ئەرك و تاقىكردنەۋە، لەگەل رېنمايى كردن و چاۋدېرى كردن و ئەنجامدانى چالاکى دەرەۋەي پۆل. لە دەرەنجامى ئەم توۋزىنەۋەيەدا، بە شېۋەيەكى گشتى، چەند جياۋازىيەك ئىبىنى دەكرى لە ئىۋان جۆرى وائەۋتتەۋە و ھەلسوكەۋتى مامۇستايان لەگەل بىنەما و بىروباۋەرە باۋەكانى پەرۋەردەي فرەيى. ئەم توۋزىنەۋەيە گەپشتوۋەتە ئەو راستىيەي كە بۇ ئەۋەي ئەركى وائەۋتتەۋە لە كۆلۈزى پەرۋەردەي بىنەرتى كاريگەرى خۆي ھەب و جىگاي ھەموو جياۋازىيەكانى تىدا بىتتەۋە، ئەۋا پىۋىستە لەسەر مامۇستايان گۆرانكارى و گونجاندىن لە ماددەي خويىندن ئەنجام بدەن بەگۆيرەي بىنەمکانى پەرۋەردەي فرەيى و ھەرۋەھا شىۋاز و رېگاکانى وائەۋتتەۋەي خويان دەۋلەماند و جۆراۋجۆر بىكەن بۇ ئەۋەي لەگەل پىداۋىستى پۆلىكى فرەچەشن و ھەمەرنگ بكونجىت.

ملخص

يدرس هذا البحث وعي وتعامل المحاضرين في مجال التربية التنوعية في كلية التربية الأساسية، جامعة صلاح الدين. تحلل الدراسة النتائج التي تم الحصول عليها من قبل المحاضرين للوصول إلى نسبة التطابق أو عدم التطابق بين تعليمهم والمبادئ المتبعة الشائعة فيما يتعلق بتدريس صفوف متنوعة. تم جمع البيانات لهذا البحث عن طريق استخدام استبيان له سبع فئات، كل منها تناولت مجالا مختلفا من التعامل مع التنوع، وهم "الاستراتيجيات العامة؛ التواصل وتعزيز الاحترام؛ المناهج التربوية؛ محتوى ومواد المادة التدريسية؛ مناقشة في الصف؛ الواجبات والامتحانات؛ تقديم المشورة، والمراقبة، والأنشطة خارج الصف. وقد وصل البحث الى ان هناك فروق معينة تلاحظ بين الممارسات التدريسية للمدرسين والمعتقدات والمبادئ التوجيهية المقبولة عموما في التدريس بالتنوع والتربية التنوعية. توصلت الدراسة أيضا إلى استنتاج مفاده أنه لتكون ممارسات التدريس في كلية التربية الأساسية أكثر فعالية وتسامحاً، يحتاج المحاضرون إلى النظر في التعديلات في المواد الدراسية وإثراء مناهجهم التربوية بأفكار والاستراتيجيات صديقة للتنوع.