CHAPTER

4

Diversity and social justice in education

This chapter should be cited as:

This chapter assesses how education responds to diversity and interconnected inequality, and how these responses work towards human flourishing and social justice. It examines different forms of diversity, namely, race/ethnicity/language, religion, gender, sexuality, social class, disability and neurodiversity (i.e. learning differences); as well as how these intersect. Sexuality and neurodiversity are relatively recent additions to the diversity discussion. While officially advocating for 'equal educational opportunities', governments variously prioritize different forms of diversity, guided by historical, political, social and economic contexts. Measures to address diversity have names such as 'multicultural', 'inclusive', 'human rights' and 'diversity and social justice' education. Policy implementation varies across societies and can be enhanced by effective monitoring, increased funding and relative autonomy of local actors to interpret policies to suit local circumstances. Given the critical role that teachers play, teacher education programmes should prepare culturally responsive educators.

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4.1 Introduction

This chapter aims to assess two topics: (1) how education responds to different forms of diversity and interconnected inequality; and (2) how these responses work towards human flourishing and social justice. Diversity is defined as the factors that make social groups and individuals differ from the majority, or what is perceived as 'normal'. This chapter addresses race/ethnicity/language, religion, gender, sexuality, social class, disability and neurodiversity,

as well as intersectionality among diversity types **(Collins and Blige, 2016)**. It examines diversity, inequality (structural, institutionalized and historically embedded) and oppression (racism, sexism, heterosexism, classism, ableism, etc.), which hinder full human flourishing **(WG1-ch1)** and social justice in pursuit of United Nations (UN) Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) 4.5 and 4.7 **(UN, 2015a)**.

This chapter addresses the following questions and is structured accordingly.

1. How do we best understand diversity, oppression and social justice in education?

2. How has education responded to diverse social groups (race/ethnicity/tribe/language, religion, gender, sexuality, social class, disability, neurodiversity)?

3. How have policies and practices prepared teachers to address diversity?

4. How have these responses addressed (facilitated and hindered) students' human flourishing and social justice? What are the implications and recommendations for policies and practice?

The chapter examines the following sources (evidence): (1) primary and secondary sources of policies and practices for selected countries (national, local and school levels) and the debates on relevant issues; (2) available survey statistics on school participation, achievement and other relevant indicators when available. These sources are examined cautiously, though we acknowledge that the chapter is filtered through the particular knowledge and experiences of the authors and reviewers. Categorizations of diversity groups are socially constructed, and the questions and designs for surveys and studies, and their dissemination, are affected by the political, economic and cultural environment of the research sites, data collection places and institutions.

4.2

How do we best understand diversity, oppression and social justice in education?

4.2 .1

TYPES OF DIVERSITY

This chapter examines several types of diversity: race/ethnicity/ tribe/language, religion, gender, sexuality, social class, disability and neurodiversity (learning difficulties). All of these categories are socially constructed and remain political, fluid and contentious. Categories can be imposed from above (e.g. ethnic groupings in government surveys or approved lists, categories such as 'deaf' assigned as a result of a clinical assessment), or be self-identities that individuals develop often by being influenced by, and internalizing, the dominant society's categorization. Given the nature of diversity group categories, detailed descriptions for individual categories are discussed in respective group

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sections of 4.3. These groups are marginalized not because of their particular group features, but due to their relationship to the dominant group. For example, deaf persons are disadvantaged not because they are deaf, but because the structure and operation of society is based on hearing people as the 'norm'.

4.2 .2

UNDERSTANDING OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND DIVERSITY IN EDUCATION

Social justice seeks both socially just goals and socially just processes. Many different understandings of social justice exist, across societies **(Dien, 1982; Nader and Sursock, 1986)**, all centering on fairness, from diverse academic, cultural and theoretical perspectives **(Reisch, 2014)**. Even within social justice in education there are multiple views **(Ayers, Quinn and Stovall, 2009; Hytten and**

Bettez, 2011). This chapter considers that social justice and diversity in education is best understood as two interconnected elements: (1) distributive justice; and (2) the content of the social good that is distributed (education). The main interest of the former is who gets how much of schooling, that is, equality in distributing the social good (e.g. educational opportunities and rewards). The latter is concerned with differences – how differences play out in deciding on and enacting what schools teach and what students learn at school, and with what consequences.

4.2 .2 .1

DISTRIBUTIVE JUSTICE: OPPORTUNITIES AND PARTICIPATION

Few people question the virtue of distributing education fairly. The system of education is a public asset funded by taxpayers. Individuals can benefit from schooling by gaining qualifications, knowledge and skills, and citizenship qualities,

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Societies can benefit from the promotion of social cohesion and trust in public institutions through education.

enabling them to achieve their potential in adult society. Societies can benefit from the promotion of social cohesion and trust in public institutions through education. Education distribution can be indexed through school participation rates by age and retention rates to higher levels of schooling.

In distributing education, there are three principles to consider: 'simple equality' **(Walzer, 1983)**; prioritizing the needs of the least advantaged; and merit-based distribution. Firstly, the 'simple equality' principle treats everyone in an identical manner in distributing education to a specified group, regardless of individual backgrounds, needs and attributes. This is variously referred to as 'objective equality' **(Eckhoff, 1974)** and the 'equality principle' **(Schwinger, 1980)**. 'A compulsory education for all' derives from this principle.

The second principle, prioritizing the least advantaged **(Rawls, 1972, p. 75)**, acknowledges the special needs of students deriving from their differences (and advantages/disadvantages). This approach is variously termed 'subjective equality' **(Eckhoff, 1974, p. 36)**, 'humanitarian norms' **(Schwartz, 1975, p. 112)**, the 'needs rule' **(Deutsch, 1975, p. 146)** and 'protecting the vulnerable' **(Goodin, 1985)**. Rawls's 'difference principle' **(1972, p. 75)** sums up these approaches by stating that inequalities can be justified only when they advantage the least advantaged. This principle underlies practices of financial assistance and various forms of compensatory education and affirmative action programmes. The principle is linked to the simple equality principle and to merit-based distribution (see below). Without protection of the vulnerable, it would be difficult for all students to complete compulsory schooling. It would also be hard to distribute educational opportunities based on 'merit' or 'achievement' if students in minority groups (e.g. low-income families, ethnic minorities) were disadvantaged at the starting line, 'stamped from the beginning' **(Kendi, 2017)**.

The third principle, merit-based allocation, guides the distribution of slots in higher levels of schooling and universities through the assessment of performance (e.g. academic). The basis of this principle is that opportunities for further study should be given to those who demonstrate the most potential to 'benefit' from them, and that rewards for 'merit' motivate individuals to achieve excellence **(WG2-ch3)**. Merit-based distribution is variously called the 'performance principle' **(Schwinger, 1980, p. 105)**, 'desert' **(Walzer, 1983, p. 24)** and 'equity' **(Deutsch, 1975, p. 143)**. The nature of 'merit' typically includes academic performance and/or personal qualities such as leadership and participation in extra-curricular activities, but is often determined by the dominant group.

Education systems often employ these three principles simultaneously, to varying degrees according to country or locality (such as rural and urban). For example, some nations, often those in the Global South, may put more emphasis on

simple equality of achieving full participation in compulsory schooling, while others emphasize the latter two principles.

4.2 **.2** **.2**

THE CONTENT OF SCHOOLING: THE POLITICS OF DIFFERENCE

Educational experiences entail not only what schools explicitly teach but also what students actually learn – the explicit, implicit, hidden, null, learned, taught, tested curricula **(Eisner 1994, pp. 87–107)**. Eisner posits 'that what is omitted from the school curriculum – what is called the null curriculum – is every bit as important as what is left in' **(1994, p. 81)** – the explicit curriculum that is written, published, often standardized, and tested. An examination of what schools explicitly teach involves lines of philosophical thinking, incorporating 'politics of difference' **(Young, 1990)** or 'cultural recognition' **(Fraser, 1995)**, and cultural identity politics **(Adams, 2016; Adams and Bell, 2016;**

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Bell, 2016; Sensoy and DiAngelo, 2017). Social justice can be evaluated in terms of economic distribution, cultural recognition and political representation (Fraser, 2005, pp. 74–75). The politics of difference and distributive justice can be understood, respectively, as opposing cultural and economic approaches to social justice (Olsen, 2001, p. 6). The economic approach centres on distributing social goods equitably and is satisfied with merit-based allocation with some modifications to assist the disadvantaged; it neither questions the 'neutrality' of assessment nor suspects that the distributed goods are impartial to certain social groups.

Questioning of the content learned in school draws on a range of critical theories and builds on studies of minoritized groups (e.g. classism, ableism, sexism, heterosexism, racism). These critical theory studies argue that mainstream schools tend to provide curricula that reflect the dominant group's worldview, normalize it as universal, and advance the dominant group's interests while marginalizing

minoritized groups (e.g. women, people of colour, the poor, religious minorities, the disabled, non-heterosexuals). For example, in settler anglophone societies like Australia, schools taught the white settler's version of history, until challenged in the 1980s, and normalized the value of the English language and the anglophone worldview above others (e.g. Welch et al., 2013; WG2-ch5 and WG2-ch8). Schools socialize and enculturate students in such a way that they often assume that what they learn at school by interacting with peers and teachers is normal (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1990). Students thus learn that they may have to play by the rules set by the dominant group if they aspire to achieve academically and 'succeed' in mainstream society.

In recognition of diversity and inequality, advocates call for the inclusion of minoritized groups' worldviews in determining the school curriculum, assessment and selection criteria, and pedagogy (in organizing teaching and learning). Connell (1993) proposes 'curricular justice', arguing that minoritized groups' worldviews

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should receive greater weighting in order to counter the existing ascendancy of the dominant group **(see Lea and Helfand, 2006; Stewart, 2019)**. While the above discussion emphasizes structural and cultural forces affecting diversity and related inequality, there remains the potential for individual 'capabilities' (the freedom to achieve what an individual considers valuable), but they are not often evaluated in conventional assessment **(Walker and Unterhalter, 2007; Sen, 2009; Deardorff and Arasaratnam-Smith, 2017)**.

While the distribution of educational opportunities can be indexed by school retention rates, social processes and content in schools are more difficult to measure. The subtle manifestation of the politics of difference (of social groups) in what occurs at school can be elusive and more distant from common assessments of educational outcomes. These manifestations include prejudice (learned pre-judgement and views about members of other social groups based on limited experience with those groups),

discrimination (actions based on prejudice) and oppression (discrimination embedded in and supported by institutional systems, power and ideology, such as racism, sexism, ableism, classism, etc.) in what occurs at school.

Meritocracy is an ideology, often advanced by the dominant group, which sees students as having equal opportunities to succeed through their individual effort, talent or merit **(Young, 1958, 2001)**. From this perspective, each individual 'earns' what they deserve and no one is structurally advantaged, a claim rejected by those who insist on the prevalence of 'white privilege' **(McIntosh, 2001; Wildman, 2006)** or dominant-group privilege. Children of different social groups have unequal access to resources (material, cultural and social) even before starting school. Curricula, learning strategies, language and interaction patterns, and assessments at schools are more familiar to children from dominant group families (e.g. middle/higher class of the dominant, privileged culture) and facilitate these children's learning. A challenge remains in designing

4.3 How has education responded to diverse social groups?

Educational policies and practices provide the context for student learning and flourishing. How has education responded to different forms of diversity, including their intersectionality? Education to address diversities has explored curricula ranging from a liberal approach (spanning assimilation, the celebration of cultural difference and intercultural understanding), to a critical approach (which emphasizes institutionalized and structural marginalization based on cultural differences), to a reclaiming youth approach focused on youth development to counter alienation and connect with traumatized youth **(Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern, 2019)**. Contemporary policies and practices often involve elements of different approaches, depending on specific contexts. These approaches include multicultural education, critical multiculturalism, critical consciousness, anti-racist education, intercultural education, 'inclusive education', 'human rights education' and 'diversity and social justice education' **(Banks, 2004, 2010; Sleeter and Grant, 2008; May and Sleeter, 2010; Grant and Portera, 2011; Adams and Bell, 2016; Gollnick and Chinn, 2016)**, as well as indigeneity and decolonial resistance **(e.g. Battiste**

and Youngblood Henderson, 2000), and anticolonial education (Dei and Demi, 2021) and reclaiming youth (Brendtro, Brokenleg and Van Bockern, 2019). Such programming can extend positive benefits: critical consciousness, for example, addresses the development of social analysis, political agency and social action in students, and has been linked to improved academic outcomes and engagement (Seider and Graves, 2020).

UNESCO's Global Citizenship Education (UNESCO, 2015a) is inclusive of these different approaches mentioned above. Based on human rights, global citizenship education aims 'to be transformative, building the knowledge, skills, values and attitudes that learners need to be able to contribute to a more inclusive, just and peaceful world' (UNESCO, 2015a, p. 15). It involves three interrelated domains of learning, that is, cognitive (informed and critically literate), socio-emotional (socially connected and respectful of diversity) and behavioural (ethically responsible and engaged), in order to advance common objectives of the various approaches. These approaches are applicable in pursing the UN SDGs, a blueprint for peace and prosperity for people and the planet now and in the future (UN, 2015). The goals most relevant to diversity and social justice in education are: no poverty (Goal 1), quality education (Goal 4), gender equality (Goal 5), and peace, justice and strong institutions (Goal 16).

4.3 .1

RACE, ETHNICITY, LANGUAGES (INCLUDING INDIGENOUS PEOPLES IN REMOTE AREAS)

Most countries in the world now include multiple racially, ethnically and linguistically minoritized groups, each having different histories in their

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relationship with mainstream society. Estimated proportions of ethnic minorities range from lower estimates of 1 to 4 per cent (e.g. South Korea, Hungary) **(Sugimoto, 2021, p. 33)** to higher proportions of 50 per cent in Australia **(Australian Bureau of Statistics, 2016)**. How governments respond to diversity in education reveals different priorities in their unique political, social and economic context. While some indigenous peoples now participate in mainstream society, others reside in remote communities. The latter are referred to by different names such as 'Scheduled Tribes' in India and 'remote Indigenous tribes' (suku terasing) in Indonesia **(Chakaravarty, 2001; Joshee and Sihna, 2009)**. Languages (including dialects) are an important property and identifier of ethnic cultures. Other marginalized groups that are considered culturally distinctive include 'Scheduled Castes' in India, descendants of the pre-modern class system (buraku people) in Japan **(Okano and Tsuchiya, 1999)** and Roma, also called Romany (or Gypsies, considered pejorative), an ethnic

group of traditionally itinerant people who originated in northern India and entered Europe by the tenth century CE.

These minority groups share experiences of marginalization in mainstream society and in education, but their experiences vary, at least partially due to the terms and nature of a group's initial contact, and its subsequent historical and contemporary relationship, with the dominant group. The terms of initial contact broadly fall into the categories listed below. Given that these categories are analytical constructs, some groups fall into multiple categories, illuminating intersectionalities across time and contemporaneously. The nature and extent of marginalization varies, with extreme forms involving genocide.

1. Colonization of Indigenous peoples in the land where the settlers continue to be dominant (e.g. United States (US), Canada, Latin America, Australia, New Zealand).

> Ethnic Korean migrants to the USA have moved up in the dominant society quickly in contrast to ethnic Koreans in Japan, who have internalized the long-lasting colonial perception of themselves and their limited life opportunities.

2. Colonization that resulted in the colonized becoming resident in the colonial rulers' home territories (e.g. South Asians in the United Kingdom (UK), Koreans in Japan, Mexicans in the USA).

3. The slave trade, which saw those of African origin as commodities, resulting in their dehumanization and oppression in white settler societies.

4. Conflict or warfare between nations leading to the losers' marginalization.

5. Refugees escaping from oppression in their homelands.

6. A legacy of state policy (e.g. Jews in Europe, back Africans in South Africa, Tutsi in Rwanda).

7. Historical exclusion (e.g. descendants of the Buraku outcastes in Japan, Roma).

8. Recent migrants arriving as guest workers and permanent residents in pursuit of better lives.

These groups became minoritized, not because of particular cultural characteristics, but due to the nature of their relationships with the dominant group in the society. These relationships were initially influenced by the Social Darwinist view of a colour-based hierarchy in the early twentieth century. In explaining variability amongst ethnic minority performance in the dominant schooling and beyond, Ogbu and Simon's **(1998)** ecological model explains that 'voluntary minority groups' (e.g. migrants) are more successful than 'involuntary minorities' (e.g. African-Americans in the USA), because the former enter the host society in pursuit of better life chances for their children, while the latter, due to their long experience of oppression, internalize the dominant perception of their marginalization. The same ethnic group can follow different paths, depending on the nature of contact. Ethnic Korean migrants to the USA have moved up in the dominant society quickly in contrast to ethnic Koreans in Japan, who have internalized the long-lasting colonial perception of themselves and their limited life opportunities.

BOX 1: INDIGENOUS SCHOOLING IN REMOTE PARTS OF INDONESIA

Isolated Indigenous tribes inhabit remote areas of Indonesia, including Baduy in Banten and Dayak in West Kalimantan. In some of these areas, only primary schools exist, with some still lacking government (public) schools. Government schools adopt the national curriculum, but not as closely as in cities. Orang Rimba (people of the jungle) communities only have access to non-governmental organization (NGO) outreach schooling programmes **(Manurung, 2019)**. Teacher absenteeism remains high due to geographic locations, small incentives and/or lack of supervision. Teachers use mixed languages in instruction, namely, the national language (Bahasa Indonesia), and the local language, but those from outside the region use only the former. Students are often absent during harvesting seasons as they help their parents in rice fields or other plantations, with principals reporting that 74 per cent of students attended schools during these times **(World Bank, 2019, p. 32)**. The primary school participation rate in rural areas (98.78 per cent) is comparable to that in urban areas (99.62 per cent), but the gap is greater for secondary schools, with 67 per cent participating in remote areas and 76 per cent in urban areas **(Badan Pusat Statistik, 2019, p. 46)**. Although many parents support children's schooling, some see it as a family burden **(World Bank, 2019)**. Raihani (one of the authors of this chapter who studied the remote area as part of a World Bank project)[1] saw that some school buildings were ruined, and that almost half of schools had no library or staff room.

[1]Raihani was involved as a senior qualitative research consultant in the cited World Bank **(2020)** study leading several groups of researchers conducting qualitative research in remote areas in East Nusatenggara and West Kalimantan, Indonesia, from 2016 to 2018.

Unsealed roads connecting communities and schools are common, making children's access difficult during the rainy season; many surrounding villages had neither electricity nor internet connection. The Indonesian Government has strived to improve education in remote areas, with the support of external funding agencies such as the World Bank and the Australian Government's Department of Foreign Affairs and Trade. One notable initiative provides a financial incentive to remote area teachers (KIAT Guru Program), which aims to enhance teacher attendance and community participation **(Gaduh et al., 2020; World Bank, 2020).**

Most countries officially advocate the goal of equal educational opportunities for all citizens regardless of racial, ethnic and linguistic heritage, at least in their constitutions or in other legislation **(Stevenson and Dworkin, 2019)**. Beyond that, countries display different patterns in formulating specific policies to advance the goal, and in practices at the programme level; we next describe three types.

The first is settler societies where the initial settler institutions (including schooling) continue to be dominant (e.g. US, Canada, Australia and New Zealand).

These societies often include multiple minority groups, indigenous First Nations peoples, voluntary migrants and refugees, and descendants of African heritage resulting from the slave trade (USA). The New Zealand Government prioritizes the indigenous Maori people over other minority groups and has pursued a bilingual and bicultural approach. In Australia, the Federal Government established a national multicultural education policy in order to integrate a large number of post-war migrants of non-Anglo heritage in the 1970s, which by the 1990s saw the academic performance of migrants become

comparable to that of their Anglo peers. Australian Indigenous peoples chose not to be part of the policy push from the beginning by emphasizing their special status as original inhabitants and advocated anti-racism education. Australia's current funding priority is Indigenous peoples' schooling. Canada also includes Indigenous peoples and migrants, while the state of Quebec runs two streams of schooling to cater to francophone and anglophone communities. In the US, research on racism in education has centred on African Americans and migrants from Mexico and Central and South America.

The second pattern is a nation-state built on a former colonial territory that includes many indigenous groups within its borders. The national identity rests with the shared colonial experience of oppression rather than with the shared pre-modern 'traditional' cultural traits of the original inhabitants (e.g. Indonesia, Malaysia, India, francophone countries in Africa). In these cases, national governments advocate unity in diversity (race/ethnicity, languages and religion), and consider schooling as crucial in nation-building projects as a means to foster national identity among people who have long maintained their immediate ethnic group identity. Some of these countries have adopted a local language (from amongst many existing ones) as the medium of instruction, while others continued to rely, to differing degrees, on the colonial languages of the past. After independence, Indonesia adopted Bahasa Indonesia, a local creole, as the national language and the medium of instruction in all schools, and continues to foster multicultural inclusive citizen identity **(Raihani, 2014)**. Malaysia initially adopted English, then Malay, and more recently adjusted to adopting both. India adopts local languages at the primary school level, and adds English and Hindi at the secondary level, with tertiary education conducted in the latter two. Due to a lack of enabling resources, francophone Africa continues to use French in schools, although

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UNESCO recommended the use of local languages **(Alidou, 2009)**. South Africa continues to address the legacy of the apartheid system **(Essack and Hindle, 2019)**. In contrast to the above societies, in the former colonies of Spain and Portugal in Latin America, a substantial proportion of the population are of European origin, which has created a different scenario. Latin America is characterized by significant social and economic inequality based on ethnic origins, namely, European-origin, Indigenous-origin and African-origin. Race and ethnicity are strongly connected with social classes **(Torres, 2001; Carnoy, 2009)**.

The third pattern is where a country has an obvious dominant ethnic group with a relatively small scale of ethnic diversity. These countries also have indigenous peoples and migrants, and have used education as a vehicle to integrate others into the mainstream society defined by the

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dominant culture and language (e.g. Japan, Korea, China, France, Germany and other continental European countries). Some governments (e.g. Korea, Taiwan) have clear national policies on multiculturalism in education, while others (e.g. Japan) have largely left such policies to local governments, with the national curriculum guidelines advising culturally appropriate content (Okano, 2019). Continental European countries use the term 'intercultural education', encouraging mutual understanding of differences in order to promote social cohesion **(Santos-Rego and Perez-Dominguez, 2001; Grant and Portera, 2011)**, but also pursue similar goals to those stated in critical multiculturalism **(Reisel, Hermansen and Kindt, 2019)**.

Many governments initially supported assimilation of minority groups, but later shifted to advocating liberal multicultural policies that celebrate and 'accommodate' differences and 'integrate' diverse populations, by resorting to the rhetoric of 'social cohesion'. In response to minority

groups' demands for equity, the governments provide affirmative action programmes to specific groups (e.g. for Indigenous people in Australia to enter universities) and group-targeted resource assistance to facilitate retention and increase participation in higher levels of schooling. Some policies advocate culturally appropriate schooling for all students by including minorities' perspectives and knowledge in the curriculum. These moves derive at least partially from the increasing number of migrants over the last four decades, heightened awareness of human rights and related debates elsewhere. Approaches have thus moved from assimilation to liberal multicultural education, and then to critical multiculturalism, which questions the taken-for-granted assumptions of mainstream practice.

As seen above, governments have taken different approaches in deciding the language used for the medium of instruction (the dominant language in most cases), often leaving minority
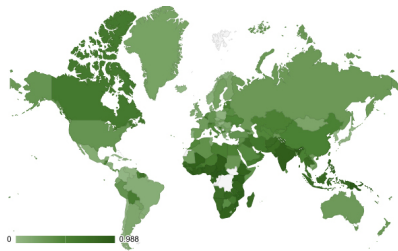
Figure 1: Linguistic diversity index, 2017

Colour scale indicates increasing levels of linguistic diversity with increasing intensity of green.
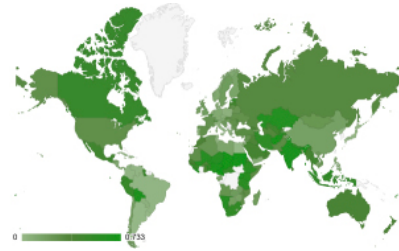
Source: Simons and Fennig (2017)

Figure 2: Cultural diversity index 2003

Colour scale indicates increasing levels of linguistic cultural diversity with increasing intensity of green.

Source: UNESCO (2009)

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languages further marginalized. Policies and practices regarding minority languages in education vary across countries. In Australia and New Zealand, students can learn some minority languages as modern languages or in bilingual programmes in mainstream schools, as well as at community-run heritage language schools outside school hours **(WG2-ch10; WG3-ch6)**.

Quantitative surveys reveal that minority groups' participation in schooling, in terms of retention to higher grades of education, has increased to varying degrees across countries. It is difficult to make cross-national comparisons because of a lack of reliable comparable data (due to differing definitions of groupings and data collection methods) **(Dicks, Dronkers and Levels, 2019)**. In Indonesia and Japan, educational participation and achievement data based on ethnic groups are not collected since this information is considered inappropriate and sensitive **(Okano, 2021)**. The international assessment PISA (Programme for International Student Assessment) reveals that students with a migrant background (first and second generations) underperform compared to those without, except for Australia for both first and second generations, and Israel and Hungary for second generations **(OECD, 2010)**.

4.3 .2

RELIGIOUS DIVERSITY

Education addresses religious diversity via three approaches of religious learning: (1) learning into religion; (2) learning about religions; and (3) learning from religions **(Grimmitt, 1987)**. Learning into religion is confessional in nature, meaning that people learn religion to nurture strong faith and to become committed in the learned religion. Learning about religions means studying religions to gain an understanding of different tenets. Learning from religions involves students learning valuable messages from diverse religions.

In secularized and increasingly diverse countries like many in Western Europe, religious education was initially considered a 'private matter', which led states to refrain from interfering **(Rothgangel, Jackson and Jäggle, 2014)**. Recent developments, however, show that there is a move towards religious education as either compulsory or optional subjects in public schools. This move is underpinned by the cultural argument that 'regardless of the truth or falsity of religious claims, religion is a part of life and culture and therefore should be understood by all citizens as part of their education' **(Jackson, 2014, p. 22)**. It is a shift from confessional approaches to religious education to education about various religions in order to understand the contribution of religions to the development of society. Private schools, however, design religious education to cater to parents' desire to maintain their religious tradition, even though it appears problematic for schools with a religiously heterogeneous student body. In some contexts, therefore, the confessional religious education incorporates an inclusive understanding of religions to promote intercultural or inter-religious dialogue. Private schools generally receive partial funding from the state, even though in a few cases, for example, England, they are fully state

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funded **(Jackson, 2014, p. 43)**.

The Netherlands and Ireland represent two different approaches to religious diversity in Western Europe. In the highly secularized Netherlands, as stated in its Constitution **(Article 23, Clause 3)**, public schools are neutral places, representing respect for every individual's religion and faith, but can opt to provide confessional religious education for children **(Shadid and Koningsveld, 2006, p. 76)**. Denominational schools (e.g. Catholic, Christian, Islamic and Jewish) teach pupils into religion, although in some private Catholic schools, pupils of no religion form the majority and those of non-Catholic faith are largely diverse. In these schools, religious education teachers combine education about and from religion by inviting students to engage in dialogue to learn religious concepts, beliefs and values **(Van Dijk-Groeneboer, 2017)**. Article 23 of the Constitution of the Netherlands also guarantees 'statutory equality' between public (government) and non-government schools; both

types of schools are funded by the government according to identical and equivalent criteria. In practice, however, issues with pupil selection, staff selection and curriculum in religious schools remain a challenge to religious freedom and liberal equality **(Maussen, 2014; Maussen and Vermeulen, 2015)**. The most serious educational disparity is access to quality education for those of immigrant background. In the Netherlands, 'black schools' is a term commonly used to refer to schools established by and for immigrants with at least half of students from immigrant origins **(Shadid and Koningsveld, 2006, p. 77)**. In 2006, migrant students had limited access to secondary and higher education compared to native Dutch: 16 per cent to 24 per cent in HAVO (higher general preparatory education) and 10 per cent to 18 per cent in VWO (preparatory scientific education) **(Shadid and Koningsveld, 2006, p. 77)**. In 2014, students of immigrant background from Islamic schools had lower final test scores than those from public, Catholic and neutral non-public schools **(Dronkers, 2016, p. 11)**.

Religious education is compulsory in countries like Indonesia that view religion as integral to citizenship.

In Ireland, religious education mainly occurs in primary schools, and is publicly funded **(Rothgangel, Jackson and Jäggle, 2014)**. More than 90 per cent of the schools are Catholic denominational, while the rest are mostly affiliated with Protestantism or other minority faiths such as Islam and Judaism **(Faas, Darmody and Sokolowska, 2016)**. Although religion class takes up only half-an-hour per day, Ireland's primary schools are said to be permeated with religious beliefs and values during the school day **(O'Mahony, 2012, p. 162)**. The Constitution and government policy support confessional religious learning, and since Catholicism is imposed in most primary schools, parents of other religions have limited options. More recent policies on religious instruction have accommodated minority students by allowing them to not attend Catholic religion classes **(Ireland Department of Education and Skills, 2018)**, but a gap has existed between such policies and their implementation in schools **(Faas and Fionda, 2019)**. Data are unavailable on educational achievement from different religious backgrounds.

Religious education is compulsory in countries like Indonesia that view religion as integral to citizenship. Indonesia advocates 'unity in diversity' without conferring official-religion status on Islam, although Muslims constitute over 87 per cent of its population **(Indonesia Badan Pusat Statistik, 2010)**. Religion must be taught in all levels of schooling, both public and private, as mandated by the National Education System Law Year 2003. All schools must provide confessional religious instruction in the faith to which students belong, conducted by teachers of the same religion **(Kementrian Pendidikan Nasional, 2003)**. Before its implementation, Christian schools challenged this policy, seeing it as a restriction on religious freedom, but most parents and teachers supported its implementation. Private schools (e.g. Islamic, Catholic, Hindu) were concerned as they considered it incompatible with the confessional mission of their schools and argued that it would be impractical to provide religion teachers for the schools' minority groups **(Hoon, 2013, 2014;**

Raihani, 2014; Birch, 2017). Private schools receive partial funding from the government to cover their operational costs.

Critics argue that the confessional approach to religious education policy is problematic for religious diversity in Indonesia. About 42 per cent of almost 1,000 Islamic student teachers developed an anti-other-religions attitude and about 66 per cent, an anti-Western attitude **(Wildan et al., 2019)**. While no similar survey on non-Muslim student teachers exists, case studies show that some Christian schools display an evangelical tone to encourage students to join Christianity, despite the law prohibiting missionary activities targeting those who already have a religion **(Hoon, 2014; Raihani, 2014)**. In these ways, schools may promote an exclusive understanding of religion amongst students and pose a potential challenge for responding to diversity.

Gender affects individual experience, in combination with other diversities and historical contexts.

4.3 .3

GENDER

Interest in gender and schooling previously focused on girls' disadvantages, with renewed interest in boys' experiences and masculinities since the 1990s **(Skelton, Francis and Smulyan, 2006)** and in non-binary genders. Gender affects individual experience, in combination with other diversities and historical contexts **(Francis, 2006; Villa Lever, 2018)**.

Gender-mainstreaming entered international politics through the actions of NGOs and multilateral agencies in the 1990s. The Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995 raised awareness of international concerns about gender-based discrimination in education, and the goal of providing universal access to, and ensuring the completion of, primary education for girls and boys. The United Nations

Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) set the goal of eliminating gender disparity in primary and secondary education by 2005, and in all levels of education no later than 2015 **(MDG 3)**. While progress has been made globally in achieving both goals, this progress remains geopolitically uneven **(UNESCO, 2015b)**, to a lesser extent beyond primary education. The UN proposed the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development in 2015, which presented in its fourth goal the need to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. The goals are for students to have gender equality in access, retention and learning; for teachers and administrators to adopt gender-responsive curricula, learning materials and teacher training; and gender equality and gender-responsiveness for leadership, governance, operations and financing of the education system itself, including the government, local education groups, school management committees and other interfaces with local

communities **(Global Partnership for Education, 2016)**. Gender equality is also viewed as impacting other SDGs, including economic growth, health, nutrition, agricultural productivity and reduced inequality.

Gender parity in enrolment in primary education has been achieved in two-thirds of the world's countries **(UNICEF, 2020a)**. Global North countries have better indicators regarding gender equality in education, but there remain substantial numbers of primary school-age girls without access to school **(UNICEF, 2020a)**. Educational policy and curricular documents in Iran and Uzbekistan make no reference to gender equality, while those in East Asia, South-East Asia and Central Asia make scarce reference to gender equality **(UNESCO MGIEP, 2017)**.

In the Global South, the development agenda includes reducing gender inequality in schooling, and addressing sociocultural factors that hinder girls' education such as forced child marriage and child and

> **Educational policy and curricular documents in Iran and Uzbekistan make no reference to gender equality, while those in East Asia, South-East Asia and Central Asia make scarce reference to gender equality.**

teenage pregnancy. Every year, 12 million girls are victims of forced marriage **(UNDP, 2019)**, a most acute issue in South Asia, sub-Saharan Africa and parts of Latin America and the Caribbean **(UNFPA, 2020, p. 97)**. Girls' early school leaving often comes just before or after early marriage, or in the wake of pregnancy **(UNESCO, 2019, p. 25)**. In the Dominican Republic, rural women in the poorest quintile with no more than a primary education are more than four times as likely to be child brides as urban women from the richest quintile with a secondary education or higher (67 per cent compared to 16 per cent) **(UNICEF, 2019, pp. 8–9)**. These girls are victims of a human rights violation, are alienated from their families and social networks, are at high risk of experiencing domestic violence and have limited choices because of reduced chances of completing formal schooling **(UNDP, 2019)**. A study of six Latin American and Caribbean countries **(PLAN and UNICEF, 2014)** reveals that poorly educated teenagers are five times more likely to become mothers.

Comprehensive sex education is one measure to raise girls' educational participation, by preventing unwanted teenage pregnancy, forced marriage and other forms of gender violence. But sex education still encounters many obstacles in countries with conservative and religious leaderships, which are not willing to move beyond promoting abstinence and fidelity **(Yankah and Aggleton, 2017)**. There are strong links between religiosity, anti-abortion policies and increased levels of teenage birth rates **(Rasmussen, 2017)**. Globally, conservative reactionary groups have mobilized against what they call 'gender ideology' to oppose sex education in schools, gender identity laws and gender mainstreaming in education **(Correa, 2017; Corredor, 2019; Troncoso and Stutzin, 2020)**.

Worldwide, almost one in four girls between 15 and 19 years of age are neither employed nor in education or training (NEET), compared to one in ten boys of the same age **(UNICEF, 2020b)**. This difference is greater in Africa

> Globally, conservative reactionary groups have mobilized against what they call 'gender ideology' to oppose sex education in schools, gender identity laws and gender mainstreaming in education.

(West, Central and sub-Saharan), South Asia and Latin America and the Caribbean. In Latin America, 22 per cent of girls aged fifteen to nineteen are NEET, as compared to 13 per cent of boys, and the equivalent figures are 33 per cent to 8 per cent in South Asia and 22 per cent to 13 per cent in sub-Saharan Africa **(UNICEF, 2020b)**. This results mainly from gender disparity in reproductive labour and household chores, social expectations for girls such as marrying young and having children, and lower aspirations for education and employment for girls. Heterosexism intersects with patriarchal culture and impacts girls' participation in schooling, because 'within societies that see girls' future solely as wives and mothers and doing domestic labor of caring for families, it makes little sense to send girls to formal school' **(Collins and Bilge, 2016, p. 161)**. UNICEF's statement makes sense in this regard – that quality education guarantees transferable skills for girls (such as critical thinking, communication, and digital skills) for personal and community development while securing access to jobs.

Countries in the Global North have achieved greater degrees of gender equality in educational participation and have now directed attention to the content of education, including gender-inclusive curricula, gender-based violence, teacher training and STEM (science, technology, engineering and mathematics), along with a specific focus on internal differences among populations. In the USA, males are more likely than females to return and achieve a high school diploma or equivalent degree. In a study of urban areas, 42 per cent of males returned to school and graduated, versus only 25 per cent of females **(Dance, 2009, p. 184)**. Changes in curricula have been slower, with continuing different levels of gender stereotypes in school books, teaching manuals and in the hidden curriculum. Sweden and Norway stand out in integrating the gender equality goal in the curricula at all levels of education **(Eurydice, 2010)**.

Female participation in STEM education continues to be a challenge. Studies have pointed

out that sexist views still assume that girls and boys have different innate talents, leading to a gendered wage gap in the labour market. Female students in science continue to face discrimination, and face androcentrism in the production of knowledge **(Harding, 1996)**. A historical imbalance of power still exists at both structural and symbolic levels in STEM education **(Hussénius, 2020, pp. 573–574)**. Sexual harassment and harassment on the basis of sex in schools and universities has emerged as a key issue in the gobal North and Latin America. Studies have shown that cisgender women are at heightened risk of sexual assault compared to cisgender men **(Martin et al., 2011; Cantor et al., 2015; Coulter et al., 2017)**.

Interest in boys' education on these topics has emerged more recently. Education plays a central role in preventing gender violence and sexism when considering the role of boys/men in achieving gender equality **(Connell, 2003; Aguayo et al., 2016; Porter, 2016)**. Men who recognize the feminist movement as a valid movement for social justice can be powerful allies **(hooks, 2000)**.

Global gender parity in higher education was obtained in 2003 **(Carpentier and Unterhalter, 2011, p. 155)**, but differences remain between countries and levels of study. Women's participation is more limited in sub-Saharan Africa and South-East and West Asia **(Ilie and Rose, 2016)**. Although globally women are more likely to attend higher education, this pattern is reversed in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa – the women/men enrolment ratio in South Asia is 81/100 and the figure is 64/100 in sub-Saharan Africa **(UNESCO Institute of Statistics, 2015)**. The 2030 SDGs include a specific target on gender equality of access to higher education **(UN, 2015)**.

Beyond the international development agenda, critical approaches have been exploring how education contributes to gender inequality, including feminist, queer and crip (disability) pedagogies, indigenous and decolonial pedagogies, and

Female students in science continue to face discrimination, and face androcentrism in the production of knowledge.

Figure 3: Gender development index, 2018

Data divided into five groups: 1 = very high, 2 = high, 3 = moderate, 4 = low, 5 = very low

Source: UNDP (2019, p. 312)

Figure 4: Gender Equality Index 2018:

Data divided into 5 groups: 1 = very high, 2 = high, 3 = moderate, 4 = low, 5 = very low

Source: UNDP (2019)

Although globally women are more likely to attend higher education, this pattern is reversed in South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa.

critical race theory. The reach of these approaches into everyday school practices and curricula remains very limited. Some feminist mobilizations have been demanding not only parity in education, but also a non-sexist and feminist education content that dismantles the androcentric gaze that underlies education and knowledge.

4.3 .4

SEXUALITY: LGBTQ+

The extent of the growing acceptance of sexual and gender diversity is not reflected in educational institutions around the globe **(Asquith et al., 2018)**. While education has been

[2]The paper uses 'LGBTQ+' inclusive of all sexualities, although some cited secondary sources used other term such as LGBTQI, LGBTI and LGBT. Where these terms are part of an organization name or the title of a cited publication, they remain as original.

> **Schooling practices are both gendered and sexualized in line with the dominant norms, often covertly.**

identified as a core helper, together with more diverse and positive representations of LGBTQ+[2] (lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer or questioning) people in the media, its potential has not been fully capitalized **(Richardson and Monro, 2012)**.

High levels of hostility, bullying, exclusion and sexual violence towards LGBTQ+ students persist **(UNESCO, 2016)**, even in countries with inclusive education policies regarding gender and sexuality. Schooling practices are both gendered and sexualized in line with the dominant norms, often covertly, when classes talk about human relationships, family, love, work, sports, science, history and economics **(Morgade, 2011; Fields and Payne, 2016, p. 1; Galaz, Troncoso and Morrison, 2016)**. Schools makes explicit gender and sexuality binaries in the curriculum, pedagogy and school culture, and assume that learners identify as heterosexual and embody heteronormative gender expression and expectations **(Francis, 2017, p. 1)**. In this context, formal sex and relationships education is highly inappropriate to sexual and gender diverse (SGD) youth, because their experiences are either actively condemned or discriminated, or totally absent **(Elia and Eliason, 2010; Abbott, Ellis and Abbott, 2015; Grant and Nash, 2018; Formby and Donovan, 2020)**. At school, LGBTQ+ youth experience discrimination, segregation, violence, bullying and exclusion. Even low levels of reported homophobia and cissexism in educational settings can produce a climate of fear of actual or potential exclusion and violence **(Ellis, 2009)**. LGBTQ+ students are more likely to experience such violence at school than at home or in the community **(UNESCO, 2016)**.

Bullying and violence based on sexual orientation and gender identity expression (SOGIE) is a widespread global issue **(UNESCO, 2016)**. Due to absence of worldwide international surveys, there is no comprehensive and comparable data on the prevalence of homophobic and transphobic violence in schools, or on how governments address these issues. Only Europe has

==In Vietnam, 24 per cent of homosexual students reported experiencing homophobic or transphobic violence because of their gender expression.==

conducted a regional survey on homophobic and transphobic violence **(UNESCO, 2016)**. There is no global comparative overview of the concrete measures implemented by governments to address the issue.

The first large-scale study in Africa reported that an estimated 18 per cent to 44 per cent of the responders had experienced sexual and gender diversity related violence across Swaziland, Namibia, Lesotho and Botswana **(UNESCO, 2016)**. Some countries still maintain explicit anti-LGBTQ+ laws and policies. For example, in Nigeria, homosexual acts remain criminalized and most people disapprove of gay lifestyles **(Okanlawon, 2017)**, and the Same-Sex Marriage Prohibition Act has made life conditions much worse for the LGBTQ+ community **(Human Rights Watch, 2016)**.

In Asia, homophobic and transphobic violence exists in schools, with the most common form being psychological bullying, especially via cyber-bullying **(UNESCO, 2016)**. In Vietnam,

24 per cent of homosexual students reported experiencing homophobic or transphobic violence because of their gender expression. Even though Vietnam has been voting in favour of resolutions seeking to protect against SOGIE based violence and discrimination in recent years, there are still major barriers to the right to education for LGBTQ+ **(Human Rights Watch, 2020)**. UNESCO's **(2015)** report on SOGIE in the Asia-Pacific highlights that whole-school programmes are rare and lacking documentation and evaluation. The Philippines is the only country that includes specific reference to SOGIE-based bullying in a national law. Australia and New Zealand have comprehensive guidance on curriculum and resources for teachers, but sexual 'difference' is marginalized and silenced at schools **(Ferfoljia and Hopkins, 2013, p. 311)**. In Australia, 61 per cent of LGBTQ+ young people have experienced psychological and 18 per cent physical violence in school and 17 per cent of LGBTQ+ secondary students are

bullied at least weekly in New Zealand **(UNESCO, 2016)**.

A study of SOGIE in Europe **(Council of Europe and UNESCO, 2018)** reports higher rates of victimization experienced by LGBTQ+ students than their non-LGBTQ+ peers. The most prevalent form is psychological violence **(UNESCO, 2016)**. The International LGBTQ+ Youth and Student Organization (IGLYO), elaborating a European LGBTQ+ Inclusive Education Report **(2018)**, indexed how each country meets the minimum standards for inclusive and supportive education for all LGBTQ+ learners, revealing that even those states with anti-discrimination in education legislation with specific reference to sexual orientation and gender rarely consider variations in sex characteristics (intersexuality). For instance, there is no mandatory teacher training on LGBTQ+ awareness in Belgium, France, the Netherlands, Spain or the UK, and there is no systematic data collection on bullying and harassment in Belgium, Malta, Norway, Spain and the UK.

Despite government policies, SOGIE affects 23 per cent of LGBTQ+ students in Belgium and 48 per cent of gay students in Norway, and between 20 per cent and 55 per cent of LGBTQ+ students experienced bullying in the UK **(UNESCO, 2016)**.

In Latin America and the Caribbean, the most prevalent forms of homophobic violence are verbal, physical and exclusionary, perpetrated by other students, teachers and staff. At least 40 per cent of homosexual people and 65 per cent of transsexuals in Latin America have experienced homo- and transphobic violence in school **(Red Iberoamericana de Educación LGBTI, 2016)**. The same study reveals that 74 per cent of the trans community does not complete secondary school in Argentina; 77 per cent of students stated that sexual diversity was never mentioned in relation to sexual education in Chile; 67 per cent of lesbian and gay students feel insecure due to their sexual orientation in Colombia; and 70 per cent of the gender and sexuality-based discrimination

At least 40 per cent of homosexual people and 65 per cent of transsexuals in Latin America have experienced homo- and transphobic violence in school

cases reported by students were perpetrated by teachers and 30 per cent by students in Bolivia **(Red Iberoamericana de Educación LGBTI, 2016)**. Argentina has the most comprehensive policy regarding gender recognition, anti-discrimination law and policies for the LGBTQ+ population, a national law of integral sexual education and policies for school violence that include sexual and gender diversity **(UNESCO, 2015)**. In Canada, 55 per cent of transgender students were bullied at least once during their schooling and 70 per cent of students heard homophobic comments daily. In the US, 85 per cent of LGBTQ+ students were verbally harassed in the year prior to the study **(UNESCO, 2016)**.

All forms of school violence are a barrier to achieving the SDGs, particularly SDG 4's target of 'safe, non-violent, inclusive and effective learning environments for all'. SOGIE-based violence affects not only self-identified LGBTQ+ students, but also those who are perceived by others as not conforming to gender norms. UNESCO **(2016)** has recommended an integral approach to address SOGIE, which includes the implementation of (1) national policies or action plans, (2) inclusive curricula and learning materials, (3) training for educational staff, (4) support for students and families, (5) partnerships with civil society organizations and (6) monitoring discrimination and evaluating the executed measures.

SOGIE-based violence affects not only self-identified LGBTQ+ students, but also those who are perceived by others as not conforming to gender norms.

BOX 2: FEMINIST TSUNAMI IN CHILEAN SCHOOLS

In 2019, the Chilean feminist anthem 'Un violador en tu camino' ('A rapist in your path') created by the Chilean feminist collective Las Tesis went global. Las Tesis was then named as one of the most influential people of 2020 by *Time Magazine*. Over the last ten years, young women, feminists and LGBTQ+ students have been problematizing the gender and sexuality-based discrimination and violence that they confront in their institutions and political organizations. 'Non-sexist education' became a rallying cry in marches and assemblies. In 2015,the Ministry of Education created a gender unit, which designed measures to address gender and LGBTQ+ inclusion despite facing fierce resistance from conservative religious sectors of Chilean society. Conservative rights and religious groups were united to oppose what they call 'gender ideology' in advancing political agendas **(Troncoso and Stutzin, 2020)**. In May 2018, the so called 'feminist tsunami' unleashed massive protests across the country, and occupied schools and university campuses. In 2018, anti-sexual harassment and non-sexist education protocols and politics were developed, but many demands still need to be addressed.

> **... children with disabilities, especially in countries of the Global South, are less likely to enter school and have lower school completion rates compared to their peers.**

BOX 3: THE UN CONVENTION

Article 24 of the UN Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CDRP) **(UN, 2006)** stipulates that countries must recognize the right to education for persons with disabilities and take steps to ensure access to an inclusive, quality and free primary and secondary education on an equal basis with others in the communities in which they live.

4.3 .5

DISABILITY

Disability inclusive education presents a particular lens on inclusion by focusing specifically on the educational opportunities of children with disabilities **(WG3-ch6)**. According to the UN CRPD **(UN, 2006, p. 4)** persons with disabilities include 'those who have long-term physical, mental, intellectual or sensory impairments which in interaction with various barriers may hinder their full and effective participation in society on an equal basis with others'. As evidenced by the large number of countries that are signatories to the CRPD **(UN, 2016)** and those that agreed to the 2030 SDGs **(UN, 2015a)**, governments around the world are committed to providing quality education services for all. Yet, children with disabilities, especially in countries of the Global South, are less likely to enter school and have lower school completion rates compared

to their peers **(UNESCO, 2018a)**. According to UNESCO **(2020, p. 10)**, children with a disability are '2.5 times more likely to have never been in school as their peers without disabilities'.

Inclusive education policies provide insight into the legal basis underpinning the rights of children to education in public schools and help to clarify expectations regarding education access, curriculum accommodations, support and resource availability. Such policies also outline the relevant implementation and accountability mechanisms to help narrow the gap between policy and practice. Even where disability inclusive education policies exist, there are barriers to children with disabilities equally participating in school. Research to date suggests that there are gaps in the implementation and monitoring of policies **(Polat, 2011; Malle, Pirttimaa and Saloviita, 2015; Hackett et al., 2016; Poernomo, 2016)**, sociocultural barriers **(Stone-MacDonald, 2012; UNICEF, 2013; Gebrewold et al., 2016)**,

gaps in teacher preparation and support **(Ojok and Wormnaes, 2013; Hettiarachchi and Das, 2014; Myanmar Education Consortium, 2015; UNICEF Viet Nam, 2015; Westbrook and Croft, 2015; Franck and Joshi, 2016; Muega, 2016; Kamenopoulou and Dukpa, 2018)** and a lack of resources including affordable assistive tools **(Mullick, Deppeler and Sharma, 2012; Bhatnagar and Das, 2014; Hofman and Kilimo, 2014; Okongo et al., 2015)** contributing to this challenge. Intersectionality, or the overlap of two or more characteristics such as gender and disability, can compound the divergence in education experiences for children. Recognizing this, agencies such as USAID (United States Agency for International Development) have developed specific guidelines for gender equality and disability inclusion in the education programmes they support, for example in the design and development of teaching and learning materials **(RTI International, 2015)**.

The availability and use of data on the education outcomes of persons with disabilities determines whether the goals of inclusion

Intersectionality, or the overlap of two or more characteristics such as gender and disability, can compound the divergence in education experiences for children.

==Education indicators for primary and secondary levels among persons with disabilities are limited, which hinders informed and effective policy-making to close gaps in access and learning.==

('all means all') are achieved. Agreement on a valid measure of disability has been difficult to achieve. After decades of effort, in 2006 the Washington Group on Disability Statistics released a short set of six questions based on critical functional domains and activities, with adult respondents indicating the level of difficulty for each **(Washington Group on Disability Statistics, 2020a)**. The approach was updated to accommodate the particular needs of children in 2006 and includes questions for primary caregivers about the vision, hearing, mobility, communication, learning, remembering and several other behavioural indicators of the children in their care **(Washington Group on Disability Statistics, 2020b)**.

Education indicators, including enrolment rates, learning levels and completion rates for primary and secondary levels among persons with disabilities are limited, which hinders informed and effective policy-making to close gaps in access and learning. In its 2020 Global Education Monitoring Report, UNESCO

(2020) also highlight a lack of data to inform inclusive education policies, strategies and practices. In the past five years, over 40 per cent of countries worldwide did not collect some of the most critical data, including on prevalence and school attendance and completion, to inform inclusive education strategies and interventions **(UNESCO, 2020)**. The data that are available indicate that persons with disabilities are significantly less likely to complete primary school, and even less so secondary school, compared to their peers without disabilities. Available data from some low- and middle-income countries indicate a 15 percentage-point gap for girls and an 18 percentage-point gap for boys in primary school completion rates of children with and without disabilities **(UNESCO, 2018a)**.

4.3 **.6**

NEURODIVERSITY (LEARNING DIFFERENCES)

... standardized assessment', is developed in a specific society (Western industrialized countries), which can impact its applicablity to other settings.

The concept of neurodiversity focuses on those diverging from what the 'experts' consider neurotypical development in various ways that can impact performance in school. Although the concept of neurodiversity includes many different types of brain variability, it grew from a focus on autism **(Jaarsma and Welin, 2011)** to describing the experiences of other variabilities in learning such as dyslexia **(WG3-ch6)**. Dyslexia describes reading disability that impacts the ability to read words accurately and/or fluently. The idea that neurodiversity represents opportunities, as well as difficulties, in achievement is embraced by some **(Shaywitz, 2005; Saltz, 2017)**. The concept of 'normative development' in associated skills is often determined by child development-based specialists using standardized assessments of skills to identify skills that render a student as vulnerable in learning. Importantly, 'standardized assessment', is developed in a specific society (the Western industrialized countries), which can impact its applicablity to other settings.

The present review focuses particularly on learning differences in core skills with attention to differences that result in 'learning difficulties' such as dyslexia (problems with word reading), attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD), dysgraphia (difficulties in word writing) and dyscalculia (specific difficulties with mathematics skills). Rates of these difficulties across countries are difficult to evaluate precisely because definitions of difficulties in learning are very much influenced by societal variability **(Grünke and Cavendish, 2016; McBride, 2019; UNESCO, 2018b)**.

Given such variability, the concept of neurodiversity may be considered in relation to a normal distribution (in the statistical sense) of a particular skill. Most learners are relatively average in mathematics or word reading achievement, but some are very skilled, and some are very unskilled. In a basic sense, worldwide, we can consider those with particular difficulties in a given skill-set such as mathematics or word reading to have a disability, with the lowest achievers having the most difficulties (e.g.

Given there are multiple biological and environmental factors interacting in every individual, it is most appropriate to consider a so-called 'multiple deficits model' to understand neurodiversity.

bottom 1 per cent or bottom 5 per cent). With this definition, one can conceptualize populations in various countries as roughly all showing equivalent patterns of difficulties and rates of recognized learning difficulties following patterns according to available societal resources. For example, developmental dyslexia affects 3 per cent to 20 per cent of English-speaking children of school age in anglophone countries **(Parrila and Protopapas, 2017)**, about 1 per cent in Japan and China and about 33 per cent in Venezuela **(Tarnopol and Tarnopol, 1981)**, with these rates likely reflecting the interplay of both language structure as well as how societies perceive dyslexia **(Grigorenko, 2001)**.

It is well known that learning differences and other aspects of neurodiversity (e.g. socio-emotional diversity) often overlap. When students are impacted by multiple challenges, this is referred to as comorbidity. For example, there is an overlap of between 25 and 40 per cent between ADHD and dyslexia **(McBride, 2019)**, and overlaps in

different learning difficulties are common across cultures **(Moll, Göbel and Snowling, 2014; Landerl and Moll, 2020)**. Overlaps in difficulties between mathematics and literacy skills are often relatively broad given that mathematics operations typically make use of some verbal skills **(Moll et al., 2014)**. Given there are multiple biological and environmental factors interacting in every individual, it is most appropriate to consider a so-called 'multiple deficits model' to understand neurodiversity **(Pennington, 2006; Moll, Snowling and Hulme, 2020)**. In a 'multiple deficits model', multiple neurological and environmental aspects influence the child's behavioural and learning outcomes. Examples of neurological risk factors might include difficulties in working memory and phonological sensitivity **(McBride, 2019)**, among others. One of the greatest environmental risk factors for learning difficulties is poverty **(UNESCO, 2018b; Winzer and Mazurek, 2015)**.

Indeed, recent research highlights differences in neurocognitive

development, brain functioning and even brain structure for those from lower socio-economic backgrounds; some of the clearest manifestations of associated disadvantages emerge in the area of learning variability **(Hackman and Kraemer, 2020)**. Subtle differences in brain structure, connectivity or volume are sometimes implicated in different areas of diversity such as dyslexia **(for a review, see Tong and McBride-Chang, 2020)**, mathematics processing **(e.g. de Smedt, 2020)**, autism **(Riddle, Cascio and Woodward, 2017)**, attention deficit disorders **(Samea et al., 2019)** and others, but these effects are often small and difficult to pin down. While neuroscience techniques are sometimes useful in predicting variability in learning, these predictions are most effective when combined with additional information. This information might be parental characteristics (i.e. genetics) **(e.g. Guttorm et al., 2010)** or behavioural skills **(e.g. Hoeft et al., 2007)**, for example, in understanding reading variability. Multiple risk factors are relatively consistently better than individual variables in explaining

developmental disorders **(Pennington, 2006)**.

Although the 'multiple deficits model' currently is the best representation of researchers' understanding of learning difficulties, this model also brings with it some diagnostic ambiguity **(Moll, Snowling and Hulme, 2020)**. The fact that difficulties typically represent the bottom of the normal distribution of behaviours means that cut-off criteria that posit a given score on a given test as determining whether the child has a certain disorder is not reliable **(Moll, Snowling and Hulme, 2020)**. Across cultures, with different scripts, languages, educational policies and teaching practices all interacting to influence children's learning **(Daniels and Share, 2018)**, a clear definition of dyslexia by society is difficult to establish given local concepts **(McBride, 2019)**. While a number of resources highlight basic skills to consider in conceptualizing neurodiversity across cultures, the basic cognitive and linguistic skills contributing to this diversity are universal,

One of the greatest environmental risk factors for learning difficulties is poverty.

though weighted differently in different contexts **(McBride, 2016, 2019; Nag and Snowling, 2012)**.

There are few systematic reviews of the education of students manifesting various kinds of neurodiversity worldwide. One recent review of policies for children with learning difficulties across ten countries highlighted some important trends **(Agrawal et al., 2019)**, most notably that how these students are assessed, identified and educated varies widely at the international scale, comparing North America, Asia and Europe. Most of these countries were reported to integrate children with learning difficulties into mainstream classrooms for most school hours, with some devoting additional hours for these children to work with learning specialists **(e.g. Denmark, Germany, Singapore, Taiwan, UK)**. Some countries, such as Mexico **(UNESCO, 2018b)**, the Philippines and Zambia **(McBride, 2019)** simply lack funding to help those with learning difficulties. In other places, regardless of laws or rules, some teachers and school

officials purport not to 'believe' in the learning difficulty and, consequently, minimize their support of children with learning disabilities **(Nag and Snowling, 2012; Barkley, 2017; McBride, 2019)**. For example, according to UNESCO **(2018b)**, most countries surveyed have policies that acknowledge that those with special learning needs have the right to an education, but most are also relatively vague on the precise definitions or parameters of these rights or the learning challenges to which they refer.

4.3 .7

CLASS AND INTERSECTIONALITY

Social class refers to a relative social ranking based on assets (wealth), income and associated social capital, power and influence. Although class is often thought of in terms of categories such as wealthy, middle, working, low socio-economic and poor, class is

Educational achievement of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds is relatively poor across grades, a trend that exists globally.

best conceived as being situated along a continuum, specific to a society, that is used for specific purposes (e.g. census) by those in positions of influence. Class confers individual and group identities, and status (a degree of prestige). Class is also about cultures (norms, lifestyles, language use, aspirations, values, tastes and ways of perceiving social worlds) and social networks (relatives, friends, professional), and confers 'cultural capital' and 'social capital', respectively, to privileged groups **(e.g. Bourdieu, 1984)**.

Educational achievement of children from lower socio-economic backgrounds is relatively poor across grades, a trend that exists globally. Data capturing this challenge for education comes from the Global North, including the US and Canada **(Ferguson, Bovaird and Mueller, 2007; Kincheloe and Steinberg, 2007)**, Japan **(Mimizuka and Hamano, 2014)** and participants in PISA **(OECD, 2010)** and in the Global South **(Tshabangu, 2018)**.

Numerous studies have identified the process of how children from lower ranked classes are marginalized. While earlier studies explained poor educational achievement in terms of individual 'deficit' (e.g. language skills, 'school readiness'), the current widely accepted view emphasizes the structural mechanisms whereby mainstream schools operate via the dominant culture (e.g. the language of instruction, the school curriculum, interpersonal interaction patterns, certain worldviews), undervaluing 'others' and disadvantaging their children. In some regions there are resource differences at disadvantaged schools, stereotypes and differentiated guidance (based on stereotypes and assumed 'deficit').

In developing countries, governments have more vigorously adopted a human capital approach (functionalist approach in sociology) in addressing poverty **(WG2-ch3)**. This approach claims that investment in education leads to higher participation in schooling, national development

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When a difference is not valued and is discriminated against, it leads to its holder's marginalization and oppression, culturally, socially and economically in the mainstream society.

and alleviation of poverty, partly influenced by external donor agencies. The approach has not produced the desired outcomes and is now questioned. Studies in sub-Saharan Africa reveal that the measures based on this approach have produced wider educational inequalities, extreme poverty, low participation in schooling and over-reliance on donors **(Tshabangu, 2018)**. The approach does not consider and address contextual factors such as conflicts and internal wars in the region that resulted in refugees, limited access to health care, separation from families and child prostitution **(WG2-ch5)**. It is estimated that 50 per cent of children in sub-Saharan Africa and 36 per cent in South Asia are living in extreme poverty **(World Bank, 2016)**. Consideration of contextual differences at national and local levels is essential to determine how policies can be effectively implemented (Colclough, 2012). Schooling alone is likely to have a limited impact without addressing the political, economic and cultural environments that surround education.

While this chapter has examined forms of diversity independently, it is important to stress that these forms intersect with one another and that this is most conspicuously observed in relation to social class. Intersectionality is the idea that a full understanding of identity and inequality/ oppression requires a multi-axis framework (class, race, ethnicity, language, gender, sexuality, disability and other identities). Among working class students, females and males differ in their experience of schooling. When a difference is not valued and is discriminated against, it leads to its holder's marginalization and oppression, culturally, socially and economically in the mainstream society. Individuals with difference subsequently are more likely to face economic hardship or poverty. Individuals carry some form of diversity as an advantage and simultaneously other forms of diversity as a disadvantage, creating multi-layered identities and marginalization. Multiple forms of diversity operate together, not only with social class, but with other forms, in

> **Women of colour are likely to receive lower wages than their male counterparts and white females, and also face higher levels of sexual abuse or harassment.**

mutually reinforcing disadvantage and oppression, and/or in simultaneously conferring advantages and disadvantages on an individual **(Crenshaw, 1991)**.

Additional examples of intersectionality abound. Racial minority groups, facing discrimination in the labour market, are more likely to live in poverty, which in turn affects children's school performance and forces them to leave school early. 'White privilege' enables the exploitation of non-white workers. Women of colour are likely to receive lower wages than their male counterparts and white females, and also face higher levels of sexual abuse or harassment. LGBTQ+ people are more likely to live in poverty **(Adams, Hopkins and Shlasko, 2016)** since they are less likely to receive economic, social and emotional support from their families who may reject them, and they also face discrimination in employment. They have limited access to institutional benefits (e.g. tax, dependent allowance) when institutions do not recognize same-sex marriage.

In the world's poorest countries, class and gender intersect, as seen in the expansion in higher education. Wider gaps in access exist between the rich and poor, and between male and female, benefiting the elite **(Ilie and Rose, 2016, p. 437)**. For instance, in Guinea the enrolment rate for poor young women is 0.1 per cent compared to 1.1 per cent for poor young men **(Ilia and Rose, 2016)**. To be effective, investment in programmes for girls' education needs to be matched by overall improvements in education systems and investment in other forms of gender equality, as well as in other sectors such as health and the labour market **(Subrahmanian, 2007)**. Goals, measures and programmes would benefit from moving beyond the binaries of girls and boys, global and local, education and economic inequities, in order to produce more nuanced and complex interventions **(De Jaeghere, Parkes and Unterhalter, 2013)**.

4.4 Teacher Education

Teacher education, through policies and training practices, can prepare teachers to address diversity in support of human flourishing and social justice. We discuss three aspects: recruitment and admission to teacher education programmes; content of teacher education; and appointment. Teachers are critical to ensuring the learning needs of all children – across diversity types – are met, and how teachers inhabit their roles has direct implications for children's learning.

4.4 .1

RECRUITMENT AND ADMISSION

An early point of influence is in the recruitment of teacher candidates and their admission to teacher education programmes, including affirmative action, incentives, indigenous scholarship and career guidance. Entry to pre-service teacher education

> **Educators can offer culturally competent instruction by establishing important knowledge bases that they can carry into their practice to address diversity.**

programmes can facilitate access for students with minority backgrounds, and potentially counter their under-representation in the teaching workforce as well as counter potential barriers to entering graduate study for careers in education.

4.4 .2

PROFESSIONAL KNOWLEDGE BASES FOR DIVERSITY

Educators can offer culturally competent instruction by establishing important knowledge bases that they can carry into their practice to address diversity. One summary of these areas of knowledge is captured in categories that span multicultural education, sociocultural context and the impact on subject-specific learning, interaction styles and learning approaches of students from marginalized cultures, cultural competence

in assessment/teaching practices and materials, types and impact of racism (e.g. structural and institutional), gender and sexual orientation, experiential knowledge, working with students with special needs, and international and global education **(Smith, 1998, 2000)**. Please refer to further discussion of this topic in the chapter addressing teachers **(WG2-ch10)**.

4.4 .3

CONTENT OF TEACHER EDUCATION

The content of teacher education programmes includes curriculum, pedagogical approach and practicum placements. Most teacher education programmes require students to undergo courses on diversity and social justice related issues, covering all the forms of diversity that this chapter addresses, with varying names such as 'multicultural', 'inclusive' and 'human rights'

At the core, the critical approach invites students to examine the mechanisms that reproduce social inequality based on diversity.

education, as well as 'diversity and social justice'. Some institutions have made addressing diversity a feature across the whole curriculum, rather than requiring a specific subject as part of the course **(Mills, 2013)**.

The 'critical approach' has more recently been used to address diversity and social justice, beside liberal and conservative approaches to teacher education **(Freire, 1970 Ellis and Maguire, 2017; Vavrus, 2017)**. At the core, the critical approach invites students to examine the mechanisms that reproduce social inequality based on diversity. The critical approach's concrete strategies include an autobiography where students are required to reflect on their own past and consider how their social identities were developed and how others might have different perspectives from such identities **(Kramer, 2020)**. Student teachers then look at how the process of identity perspectives contributes to marginalization and injustices in society and consider ways to challenge the domination of certain groups over marginalized

people **(Kramer, 2020)**. Another strategy is to incorporate critical and culturally responsive teaching in classrooms where different social groups are represented and respected **(Thieman, 2016)**. The critical approach shares many features with an integrated social justice pedagogy model **(Enns and Sinacore, 2005)**. The latter highlights the following dimensions in a learning process that considers knowledge acquisition and experiential learning central to student development: '(1) empowerment and social change, (2) knowledge and the knower, (3) oppression and privilege, and (4) self-reflexivity and self-awareness' **(Kassan, Sinacore and Green, 2019)**.

One notable concrete initiative is the development of modules for religious teacher training initiated by the European Wergeland Centre (EWC) **(Jackson, 2019; Jackson and O'Grady, 2019)**. This module contains a list of signposts to tackle pedagogical and conceptual issues of religious education and diversity. While the interpretive and religious studies approach is more prevalent

in religious teacher education programmes **(Everington, 2013; Chita, 2018)**, some continue with the confessional religious education approach. Even when some teacher education programmes demonstrate the positive sign of incorporating religious diversity issues in the curriculum **(Raihani, 2018)**, if deliberate structural concerns with religious diversity are absent, programmes become more focused on efforts to teach student teachers to become confessional messengers **(Wildan et al., 2019)**.

Visibility of diversity type is an issue that has been addressed regarding sexual diversity. It is important not to homogenize LGBTQ+ students, making them less visible in education **(Galaz et al., 2018)**. Spade (**2011**) gives some

advice on making education more accessible for trans students and rethinking how we talk about gendered bodies, considering the increasing demands of trans people to access education. Spade invites us to consider certain tips 'for addressing obstacles to trans students' classroom participation and for avoiding unintentional exclusionary practices' **(p. 57)**. He recommends that teachers give students the chance to state what they prefer to be called, and what pronouns they prefer, avoiding making assumptions based on appearances or the class roster.

There are attempts to strengthen teacher training for quality inclusive education in relation to disability, including in the Global South. While some studies find prevailing negative or, at most, moderately positive attitudes towards inclusive education for children with disabilities among teachers or teacher trainees **(Emam amd Mohamed, 2011; Restuti Maulida, Nandya Atika and Kawai, 2020)**, there are also interventions positively affecting attitudes, stigma and discrimination **(Lautenback and**

Heyder, 2019). Teacher self-efficacy in meeting the needs of children with disabilities in their general education classrooms improves inclusive practice (Sharma and Jacobs, 2016; RTI International, 2017); and increases when explicitly trained and supported in adopting inclusive instructional practices and creating welcoming classroom climates **(Carew et al., 2018)**. Yet, the content, format and duration of teacher education programmes affect the degree to which teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy, behavioural intentions or practices improve **(Lancaster and Bain, 2018)**. This association is demonstrated by studies of in-service teacher education intervention programmes designed to improve inclusive education in Kenya **(Carew et al., 2018)**, Colombia **(Baldiris Navarro et al., 2016)** and Ethiopia **(RTI International, 2018)**.

Teachers working with children with learning difficulties may have had very little or no special training in the nature of learning difficulties **(UNESCO, 2018b; Agrawal et al., 2019; McBride, 2019)**. Their

... the content, format and duration of teacher education programmes affect the degree to which teachers' attitudes, self-efficacy, behavioural intentions or practices improve.

Teachers working with children with learning difficulties may have had very little or no special training in the nature of learning difficulties.

basic knowledge of the science of reading could be improved **(Berninger and Joshi, 2016; Schiff and Joshi, 2016; Tristani and Bassett-Gunter, 2019; Seidenberg, Borkenhagen and Kearns, 2020).** Some efforts in teacher training from NGOs worldwide can be helpful in this regard **(World Learning, 2019)**. Once in a classroom setting, teachers can employ practices to enhance students' learning experiences. Considering disability, the right to reasonable accommodations might include a prioritized seating arrangement (e.g. close to the teacher) when attention is a particular challenge for the student **(e.g. Bulat et al., 2017)**, or access to assistive technologies such as text-to-speech devices for those with dyslexia and often more time to complete given assignments when needed. Maximizing resources available for those with learning difficulties is especially important **(UNESCO, 2017)**.

At a global level, it is important to note the increasing popularity of the response to intervention (RTI) movement in relation to neurodiversity. Because the

multiple deficits model of learning difficulties represents a confluence of biological and environmental factors and because early intervention tends to be most effective in helping children to overcome a variety of difficulties, researchers have increasingly rejected a strict cut-off definition **(Preston, Wood, and Stecker, 2016)**. Such definitions have sometimes been described as 'wait to fail' models in which children are only diagnosed and, thus, given extra help with learning difficulties once they have had difficulties for a sufficiently long time **(Nag and Snowling, 2012; Preston, Wood, and Stecker, 2016)**. Instead, teachers are encouraged to observe children periodically and target their particular difficulties in various ways that support their optimal learning **(Nag and Snowling, 2012; Preston, Wood, and Stecker, 2016; McBride, 2019)**.

What are some appropriate models for remediation of difficulties in learning worldwide? As a general framework for learning, the Universal Design for Learning (UDL) approach has

been embraced in many settings **(CAST, 2018; King-Sears, 2020)**. This method advocates teaching with multiple methods for engagement, representation, and action and expression **(CAST, 2018)**. With more specific reference to literacy, researchers **(Nag and Snowling, 2012; Daniels and Share, 2017; McBride, 2019; Seidenberg, Cooper Borkenhagen and Kearns, 2020)** have identified skills related to sound, meaning and print that apply at different levels across scripts and languages. Teachers should conceptualize children's literacy learning as language by ear, by eye, by hand and by mouth for maximum efficacy **(Berninger and Joshi, 2016)**.

> Criticisms in Australia point to teacher placement practices that provide limited experiences for student teachers to develop a more complex conception of diversity and social justice.

4.4 .4

TEACHER EMPLOYMENT

A limitation preceding employment, but related to it, is the teacher placement opportunities available. Criticisms in Australia point to teacher placement practices that provide limited experiences for student teachers to develop a more complex conception of diversity and social justice. The dominance of the Anglo-white background of the pre-service teacher body limits the exposure of the students to the diversity they will face in future workplaces **(Reid and Sriprakash, 2012; Mills, 2013)**.

To secure a teaching position, the pipeline following teacher education programmes varies. Some communities include external examinations. In Japan, local education boards provide assessments to those who have completed the requirement for a teaching certificate and appoint successful candidates to local schools under its jurisdiction. In Australia, candidates who complete a Bachelor of Education, or an undergraduate degree/ Master of Teaching, register with the relevant state department of education and individually apply to respective schools. The extent to which diversity/social justice training is addressed in these assessments will impact on the content of teacher education programmes. To fill teacher slots in selected communities, incentive programmes have been established to bring teachers to, for example, rural areas, as seen earlier in Indonesia's remote Indigenous schools.

4.5 How have these responses to diversity addressed (facilitated and hindered) students' human flourishing and social justice? What are the implications for policies and practice?

We have examined selected forms of diversity, namely, race/ethnicity/language/tribes, religion, gender, sexuality, disability and neurodiversity, and the intersectionality of these diversities. Below we outline key findings and implications for stakeholders, parents, teachers and learners, schools of education and academia, funders, and policy- and decision-makers and ministries of education.

<div style="background:#f5c6b8; padding:8px">**4.5** .1</div>

KEY FINDINGS

- Diversity categories are socially constructed and remain political, fluid and contentious, and affect the identities that students develop. Different forms of diversity intersect in affecting students' school experience. Class intersects all forms, leaving minority groups in the lower socio-economic strata of society. The extent of diversity and marginalization varies across localities, and these variations

also impact how individuals of different forms of diversity experience schooling.

- Student learning occurs under the structural and external constraints of the political, institutional, social and cultural environment that students inhabit. Individuals possess capabilities and the space to exercise agency in pursuing what they desire, under these constraints. This is demonstrated by active civil movements, as well as students' and teachers' interpretation and pushback of the boundaries.

- Policies to address diversity and social justice exist at the national, local or school levels, often under the headings of 'multicultural education', 'inclusive education', 'human rights education' and 'diversity and social justice education'. These policies are tightly coupled with political, social and economic contexts. Most governments officially advocate for the goal of 'equal educational opportunities' via

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Insights from cognitive neuroscience indicate the universal features learners share despite diversity, as well as group differences among subgroups that are characterized by distinct neural signatures (e.g. for dyslexia).

constitutions and legislation; but beyond that variously prioritize different forms of diversity (race/ethnicity/language/tribes, religion, gender, sexuality, class, disability and neurodiversity), guided by political, social and economic contexts. Sexuality and neurodiversity (learning differences) are relatively new additions to the diversity discussion in some countries.

- *Approaches to address diversity have shifted from assimilation to celebrating differences, and then to a critical approach whereby all students understand their own unconscious bias and mechanisms of oppression in schooling.* These changes derive at least partially from equity demands from minority groups and their advocates in the form of civil activism, which confirms that individuals possess 'capabilities' and agency to pursue what they desire. In many contexts, policies increasingly address the intersectionality of different forms of diversity and inequality, such as socio-economic class and race/ethnicity/religion.

- *Educational measures to address diversity include*: (1) group-targeted programmes (affirmative action, special courses, provision of resources); and (2) culturally responsive learning approaches. Recently, there has been increasing interest in (2) in addition to continued investment in group-targeted programmes.

- *The extent and nature of policy implementation vary across societies,* due to the political, economic and cultural environment of localities, the level of monitoring, funding levels and the extent of relative autonomy space for agency, which allows varying interpretations by local practitioners and teachers.

- *Insights from cognitive neuroscience indicate the universal features learners share despite diversity, as well as group differences among subgroups that are characterized by distinct neural signatures (e.g. for dyslexia)*. Such findings offer an understanding of difference based on brain differences for learners and bring a shared vision

of universal learning features that transcend other diversity forms such as race/ethnicity, religion, gender and sexuality.

- The crucial role of teachers is widely acknowledged. A more recent approach to teacher education is called the 'critical approach', which urges education students to reflect on their own experiences and understand systemic mechanisms of marginalization, and also prepares trainee teachers for inclusive education by addressing all forms of diversity students bring to school.

4.5 **.2**

IMPLICATIONS

The implications of these findings extend to parents, teachers and learners, schools of education and academia, funders (private sector, foundations, departments of education), policy- and decision-makers, and ministries of education.

- In formulating and implementing policies to address diversity and social justice, it is crucial to consider locally specific political, economic and social contexts of diversity, and to involve practitioners on the ground.

- Communities and institutions advocate the general goal of equal opportunity and human rights but may not have developed concrete policies and measures to counter the disadvantages that children of diverse backgrounds experience at school, and to advance the learning of all students by capitalizing on learner diversity. This can result in a limited impact in support of human flourishing and social justice. Measures can target one specific form of diversity or address various forms of diversity in combination. The former enables more focused measures for a specific diversity, while the latter has the potential to address the intersections of multi-forms of diversity simultaneously.

The implications of these findings extend to parents, teachers and learners, schools of education and academia, funders (private sector, foundations, departments of education), policy- and decision-makers, and ministries of education.

4

CHAPTER

Systematic and regular appraisal of policy and measure implementation is likely to increase effectiveness and impact.

- *Policy-makers and educational practitioners are challenged with striking a balance between group-specific targeted programmes* (e.g. learning assistance for migrants) and those for all students (e.g. social justice education across the curriculum). It is important to consider specific local contexts since there is not one form that will fit all.

- *Systematic and regular appraisal of policy and measure implementation is likely to increase effectiveness and impact.* Such efforts can enhance understanding of parity differences, for example, across diversity subgroups. However, there is a dilemma in trying to collect data about group-specific academic achievement, while seeking to minimize the potential for such data to stigmatize the group. Some countries have not collected such data.

- *Teacher education is critical for equipping future teachers to manage diversity and social justice in classrooms.* The skills required for teachers go beyond addressing peer group discrimination, harassment and bullying, and include offering culturally responsive learning and nurturing critical and self-reflexive understanding of diversity among all students. This can be achieved either by requiring students to undertake specific subjects on diversity and social justice (in the name of multicultural or inclusive or human rights education), by including diversity and social justice across the whole teacher education curriculum, or both. Individual teacher education institutions are best equipped to develop their own approach and content, to best suit the local environment. The effectiveness of such programmes will be enhanced by diversity amongst teacher educators.

- *The right to an inclusive education is one value that is widely shared* (e.g. Arduin, 2015; Hayes and Bulat, 2017). Those with differences in learning can benefit greatly from access to additional support, individualized education plans, and teachers who have some knowledge and understanding of

Diversity is a concept that permeates educational settings cross-nationally and is often complicated by intersectionality among diversity types and with inequality and oppression, which hinders full human flourishing and social justice.

neurodiversity; as well as through receiving respect as a whole person **(e.g. Hayes and Bulat, 2017)**. Respect for the whole person involves understanding an individual in their totality, including emotions, social goals and ways of learning, as well as identities based on diversity. Such understanding contributes to a more harmonious classroom environment and helps students to pinpoint their strengths and weaknesses. Since a student may be weak in some of these skills and strong in others, grading an assignment based only on a single criterion can particularly isolate and discourage a child with a learning difficulty **(McBride, 2019)**. The implications of literacy policies are that there are both universal and specific aspects of learning to read and to write. It is possible to have difficulties in reading in one script but not in another, but there are also clear overlaps in reading across languages and scripts **(McBride, 2019)**. Teachers can consider the

requirements of the script as they plan how best to teach students in each language and script **(Daniels and Share, 2017)**.

This chapter has assessed education's response to diversities, interconnected inequality and their intersectionality, and how these responses relate to human flourishing and social justice. Diversity is a concept that permeates educational settings cross-nationally and is often complicated by intersectionality among diversity types and with inequality and oppression, which hinders full human flourishing and social justice. However, there are ways for education to respond to diversity through policies and practices, as well as teacher preparation programmes to address diversity, which provide an opportunity to acknowledge human difference while capturing the overall universality of human experience.

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