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At Crossroads

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Disrupted and reshaped by a global pandemic, education, like many other social institutions, is at a crossroads. The Covid-19 crisis has exposed the fault lines of normal times, and educators confront systemic inequities of which education is often a part (rather than a solution). Those who have access to material resource, educational support, and political capital are not just less affected by the global crisis than their peers; they have even thrived academically and professionally during the pandemic. My family and I belong in the group whose privileges were more pronounced during the pandemic, in spite of all the panic and a few inconveniences. Public education is unlikely to see greater investment in the public interest; instead, increasing privatization within public institutions is likely going to be one of the responses. More of the same.

Student demographics are going to change, both among domestic students and international students, as academic institutions respond to the impacts of the pandemic. Their needs and challenges are likely to require different approaches than formalized systems are used to. Are we willing and ready to change and adapt to mobilize our energies and privileges as educators for our students and for society? As "work life" balance and boundaries blur, so will the nature of work and the value of educational preparation for professional careers for our students. Resistance to change will clash again with shiny new fads in response to change for its own sake. How are we going to respond to the conflicting impulses left behind

by the pandemic (behind in the sense that most countries will be vaccinated by the end of this year)? What new agenda of research, approaches in pedagogy, and commitments to service will we adopt and advance—based on the lessons we learned from the global crisis?

In the community outside, we are witnessing a global moral crisis where rich countries are vaccinating their citizens while other countries with less resources are waiting their uncertain turn as dead bodies pile up. There is no serious collaborative global effort to curb a mutated virus that might render the current vaccines ineffective; even the pragmatic possibility of vaccinated countries having to start at square one does not seem to prompt sufficient action beyond the nationalistic frame of mind. Even a pandemic that killed millions in an era of vast scientific advancements and information access did not make the world consider adding layers to the way the human world is organized.

And it is amidst a global moral crisis that we are working as educators, much more aware and sensitive that we too are implicated in the organization of the human world, whether it is of education where we work or life and community where we are divided by rich and poor countries, by borders that are irrelevant to the cause of saving human lives against a deadly virus. How are we going to pursue a more ethical/moral, just, and equitable practices within academe?

The authors in this issue have grappled with the above condition and questions as they focus on a range of important topics about higher education. Writing from Turkey, Ghana, Nepal, India, the US, and the UK, they share perspectives from their contexts and disciplines. With their contribution, this journal has grown further in reach and rigor.

As editor, I am grateful to the many reviewers who have selflessly supported the journal by providing thoughtful critique and suggestions to the authors. Members of the editorial team, as well as advisors, also deserve much respect for their time and dedication (in spite of the tough times).

I hope that readers will find one or more articles in this issue worth a careful read. I hope you will also share the articles and consider submitting your own manuscript for future issues. Thank you!

Examining Attitudes of Medical Students toward Individuals with Disabilities

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Abstract
Attitudes of future health professionals is critical to provide inclusive healthcare services. The purpose of this study is to examine attitudes of medical school students toward individuals with disabilities. This study included both quantitative and qualitative analysis of 153 medical school students in Turkey. Results showed that medical students' comfort levels were significantly more positive toward a patient without apparent disability. The relationship between attitudes and comfort levels for a patient with apparent disability was slightly higher than the relationship between attitudes and comfort levels for a patient without apparent disability. Content analysis of open-ended questions indicated the need of disability education in medical school. Exploration of the attitudes of medical school students toward individuals with disabilities provided both practical and theoretical implications into the field.

Keywords: attitudes, disability, medical students

Individuals with disabilities require frequent visits to healthcare institutions (Moscoso-Porras & Alvarado, 2018). Healthcare professionals may have misconceptions, limited experience, and/or inadequate knowledge about disabilities (Byron et al., 2005). This, in turn can influence quality of the services provided to individuals with disabilities

(Dorji & Solomon, 2009), refrain these people from seeking medical care (Moscoso-Porras & Alvarado, 2018), and influence diagnosis and treatment processes (Al-Abdulwahab & Al-Gain, 2003). Attitudes of healthcare professionals are related to how patients with disabilities feel about themselves (Al-Abdulwahab & Al-Gain, 2003). Disability-based discrimination negatively influences psychological wellbeing of individuals, which may result in health inequalities in the society (Krnjacki et al., 2018) and reduced healthcare-seeking behavior (Moscoso-Porras & Alvarado, 2018). As health services are expected to be met by doctors, especially in Turkey, it is crucial to examine the attitudes of medical students toward individuals with disabilities.

Attitudes of medical students toward individuals with disabilities have been widely examined in international context. For example, Sahin and Akyol (2010) examined attitudes of medical and nursing students toward individuals with intellectual disabilities in Turkey. Whilst no difference existed in the attitudes of medical students and nursing students, previous contact and prior knowledge was found to be related to positive attitudes toward individuals with intellectual disabilities. Likewise, Kritsotakis et al. (2017) compared attitudes of nursing, medical, and social work students about physical and intellectual disabilities in Greece. Results indicated medical students had more positive attitudes toward physical disabilities than nursing and social work students did. Although researchers stated attitudes of healthcare professionals might be related to many factors including age, gender, education, training, knowledge, and prior experience; knowledge was the only consistent indicator of positive attitudes about intellectual disabilities in their research (Kritsotakis et al., 2017). Tervo et al. (2004) conducted a cross sectional study with medical students in US and Canada and found that students who had positive attitudes toward individuals with disabilities felt more comfortable in managing rehabilitation situations. In addition, comfort level in managing situations increased by disability related experience. In another study, Paris (1993) examined attitudes of the first-year medical students, the fourth-year medical school students, and health care professionals toward individuals with physical disabilities. Researchers found that fourth-year medical students had more positive attitudes than the first-year medical students did; however, the difference between medical students and healthcare professionals remained unsettled (Paris, 1993).

Negative attitudes influence how individuals handle a difficult situation (Bandura, 1977). In the context of healthcare, previous studies also indicated that healthcare professionals feel uncomfortable in providing services to patients with disabilities (Satchidanand et al., 2012). Likewise, limited knowledge of healthcare professionals may lead to insufficient diagnostic, preventative, and supportive services for individuals with disabilities (Iezzoni & Long-Bellil, 2012). Many physicians indicated that they do not feel comfortable to take care of individuals with disabilities (Larson McNeal et al., 2002; Crane et al., 2021).

It is believed that factors influencing attitudes of healthcare professionals are varied by cultural values, contexts, and populations. Among healthcare professionals, medical doctors play a vital role in delivering services as a result of state health policies in Turkey. Limited research conducted in Turkey to examine medical students' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities (Sahin & Akyol, 2010; Sahin & Gedik, 2020). Specifically, (1) What is the perceived level of attitudes and comfort levels of medical students toward individuals with disabilities? (2) What is the relationship between attitudes and comfort levels of medical students toward individuals with disabilities? are the main research question behind this study. The current study will address the gap in the literature by answering those two research questions and examining medical students' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities.

Materials and Methods

Research Design

A mixed-methods research was used to address the research questions about medical students' comfort levels and attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. A survey that solicits responses through multiple types of questions (i.e. open-ended questions and fixed-choice questions) can be an example of how quantitative measurement and qualitative inquiry are integrated in a research (Patton, 2003). While quantitative data were collected through the Medical Students' Attitudes toward People with Disabilities Instrument (Symons et al., 2012), and Turkish Version of the Multidimensional Attitudes toward Persons with Disabilities (Yelpaze & Türküm, 2018), qualitative data were obtained through open-ended questions in the Disability Background Questionnaire.

Sampling

A purposeful sampling method was used in this study. The sample included 153 medical school students, 66% for females and 34% for males from a private university in Turkey. The mean age of participants was 19.81, ranging from 18 years to 24 years. The majority of the students (57.5%) were freshman, 32% sophomores, and 10.5% juniors. There were no seniors at the university when the study was conducted.

Procedures and Instruments

Before data collection, ethical approval was obtained from the university institutional review board. The researcher arranged the study location in collaboration with the program coordinator of the department. Medical school students received a consent letter, a demographic information and disability background questionnaire, the Medical Students' Attitudes toward People with Disabilities Instrument (Symons et al., 2012), and Turkish Version of the Multidimensional Attitudes toward Persons with Disabilities (Yelpaze & Türküm, 2018). Students' completion of the questionnaire was voluntary and confidential. The written permission for the adaptation of the Medical Students' Attitudes toward People with Disabilities Instrument was obtained from the researchers (Symons et al., 2012) and for the use of the scale (Yelpaze & Türküm, 2018).

Disability Background Questionnaire

Disability Background Questionnaire included questions pertaining to participants' disability status, their interaction with individuals with disabilities, and three open-ended questions about attitudes of medical students about patients with disabilities. Open-ended questions are considered as a way of understanding opinions and attitudes (Fraenkel & Wallen, 2003). The questions asked to medical students were: (1) Do you find difficult to conduct a medical exam on a patient with a disability? If so, why? (2) What information about individuals with disabilities would help you before starting your internship? (3) Which type of disability training do you need before starting your internship?

Medical Students' Attitudes toward People with Disabilities Instrument

The Medical Students' Attitudes toward People with Disabilities Instrument (MSDI), developed by Symons et al. (2012), consists of three parts. The first part includes two close-ended questions regarding personal and professional experience with individuals with disabilities. The second

part includes 18 items on a 4-point Likert scale (from 1 = strongly disagree to 4 = strongly agree) related to attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. The third part includes two clinical scenarios (one scenario with a patient without an apparent disability, other scenario with a patient with an apparent disability). Each scenario was followed by three 4-point Likert scale items related to the comfort level in managing the situation. Only the third part with 4-point Likert-scale items (Item 22, 23, 24, 26, 27, and 28 in the original instrument) was used in this present study.

In developing Turkish version of the T-MSDI, a back-translation technique was used as suggested by Peña (2007), which is common in cross-cultural research. I translated the original English version of the MSDI into target language (Turkish). An independent translator translated the target version back to source language (English) without having seen the original version. The translations were compared and the minor differences between the original version and the translated version were corrected. I worked with the independent translator to ensure the compatibility of the translation. Lastly, a bilingual professor who is familiar with the cultural and educational context of Turkey independently compared the Turkish version with the original version to verify that the T-MSDI was accurate.

Turkish Version of the Multidimensional Attitudes toward Persons with Disabilities (T-MAS)

The MAS originally was developed to measure individuals' attitudes toward people with disabilities by Findler et al. (2007), which has a total of 34 items on a 5-point Likert scale ranging from 1 (not at all) to 5 (very much). The MAS consists of three subscales: Affection (16 items), Cognition (10 items), and Behavior (6 items). The internal reliabilities were .90, .83, and .88 for the Affection, the Cognition, and the Behavior subscales, respectively (Findler et al, 2007). Many researchers adapted the MAS into different languages including Korean (Kim et al., 2015), French (Dachez et al., 2015), and Turkish (Yelpaze & Türküm, 2018). For the adaptation of Turkish version of the MAS, Yelpaze and Turküm (2008) established internal consistency reliability and convergent validity of the scale and employed confirmatory factor analysis. Results indicated the T-MAS has a consistent factor structure with the original scale, except for three items, (Items 15 and 16 in the Affection Subscale, and Item 1 in the Cognition Subscale) accounting for % 49.19 of total variance (Yelpaze & Türküm, 2018). Researchers indicated Cronbach's Alpha at .90, .88, and

.84 for the Affection, the Cognition, and the Behavior subscales, respectively. Overall, Yelpaze and Türküm (2018) indicated the T-MAS has an acceptable reliability and validity.

Data Analysis

The methods utilized for the analysis were as follows: The descriptive statistical analysis included frequency *(f)*, percentage *(%)*, mean, and standard deviation. An exploratory factor analysis was employed to examine the underlying structure of the T-MSDI and the T-MAS. A Pearson Moments correlation analysis was employed to examine the correlations between each item and the total score of the T-MSDI and the T-MAS. The Cronbach's alpha was used for reliability analysis. A paired sample t-test was used to examine whether medical students' responses to each scenario were different.

Attitudes of medical students were gathered via a Likert-type questionnaire; thereby, the dependent variable was continuous, and the observations were independent. Skewness and kurtosis were used to test the normality of the data. The skewness and kurtosis between -2 and +2 are acceptable values for normal distribution (George & Mallery, 2010). It was found that medical students' attitudes were normally distributed, with skewness of -.562 (*SE* = .196) and kurtosis of .957 (*SE* = .390) for the T-MSDI and with skewness of -.006 (*SE* = .196) and kurtosis of -.326 (*SE* = .390) for the T-MAS.

With respect to the analysis of open-ended questions, a content analysis was chosen as the methodology to analyze the individual's responses and identify themes. A content analysis can include both numeric and interpretive data analysis (Schwandt, 1997). Results are presented in numeric and interpretative forms in this study. While a description of each theme, in conjunction with representative quotations from participants would provide conceptual interpretation of data, a quantified approach that presents a simple count of each theme would help to gain a sense of how common a particular view is emerged from the data (Seale & Silverman, 2010). Following steps were taken for data analysis: (1) participants' responses to each question were recorded on an Excel spreadsheet, (2) each response was read to become familiar with data, (3) each response was read more thoroughly and simply coded, (4) initial codes of themes were reviewed, multiple coding was performed, and themes were re-identified. To establish reliability and validity, a faculty member experienced in qualitative research recoded the open-ended

questions. The interrater reliability was calculated to be 86%. An interrater agreement of 80% is the acceptable threshold (Miles & Huberman, 1994), thus, present study meets the criterion.

Results

The T-MSDI was used to measure medical students' comfort level about disability. The internal consistency was obtained by employing two methods. First, correlations between each item and total score were calculated. Correlations between six items and the total score ranged from .770 to .814, indicating items were significantly correlated with the total score. Second, the Cronbach's alpha was used as a measure of internal consistency reliability. The Cronbach's alpha was at .89 which can be considered as good. Analysis of corrected item-total correlations indicated all items appeared to be important as shown in Table 1.

Table 1
Corrected item-total correlations

Items	Corrected item-total correlation	Cronbach's alpha if item deleted
1	.661	.870
2	.722	.860
3	.704	.863
4	.693	.865
5	.714	.862
6	.691	.866

$N = 153$.

An exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to examine the structure of the T-MSDI. The Kaiser-Meyer-Olkin (KMO) and Bartlett's Test of Sphericity were employed to test the suitability of the data for factor analysis for the six items. A KMO greater than .70 and a statistically significant result of Bartlett's test was used as criteria for exploratory factor analysis (Hair et al., 1998). The KMO was .811 which can be considered as an adequate sample for factor analysis. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was .000 indicating exploratory factor analysis was appropriate to use in this study (Hair et al., 1998). Using the "eigenvalues of 1.00 or greater" criterion, the factor analysis accounted for one factor indicating 63.5 % of the total variance for the six items. As in the original instrument, Factor 1 consisted of six items related to working with

individuals with disabilities, which was named as "working" as in the original version of the scale. All of the items were used for data analysis. Factor loadings are shown in Table 2.

Table 2

Factor loadings for the T-MSDI

Items	Factor loadings	Mean	Standard deviation	% of Variance	Cronbach Alpha
1	.771	3.14	.76	63.5	.89
2	.818	3.24	.76		
3	.801	3.20	.73		
4	.792	3.14	.73		
5	.809	3.02	.82		
6	.790	2.99	.83		

$N = 153$.

The mean score of the T-MSDI was 3.12 ($SD = .61$) indicating a positive level of comfort in managing the situation in both scenarios. A paired sample t-test was employed to examine whether medical students' responses to each scenario differ. The mean score of the first scenario ($M = 3.19$, $SD = .64$) was greater than the mean score of the second scenario ($M = 3.05$, SD = .67), t (152) = 4.02, $p < .001$. This result suggests that medical students' comfort levels were more positive toward a patient without apparent disability.

In addition, the T-MAS was used to examine attitudes of medical students toward individuals with disabilities. Correlations between 34 items and the total score ranged from .31 to .59, indicating most of the items were significantly correlated with the total score. There were a few exceptions (Item 16, Item 17, and Item 30); thus, removal of these items were considered. Second, the Cronbach's alpha was used as a measure of internal consistency reliability. The Cronbach's alpha was at .87, which can be considered as good. Corrected item-total correlations indicated all items are important. An exploratory factor analysis with varimax rotation was used to analyze the structure of the T-MAS for 31 items. The KMO was .801 which can be considered as an adequate sample for factor analysis. The Bartlett's Test of Sphericity was .000 indicating exploratory factor analysis was appropriate to use in this study. The factor analysis accounted for three factors indicating 47.30 % of the total variance for the 31 items. As shown in Table 3, all factor loadings were above .40, except for two items (Item 14 and 15). Thus, these two items were removed.

Remaining 29 items were used for data analysis. Factor loadings are shown in Table 2.

Table 3

Factor loadings for the T-MAS

|	Items	Factor loadings	Mean	Standard deviation	% of Variance	Cronbach Alpha
A f f e c t i o n	A1	.729	2.78	1.13	19.17	.89
	A2	.762	2.74	1.11		
	A3	.716	3.25	1.33		
	A4	.535	4.15	1.26		
	A5	.684	2.59	1.41		
	A6	.669	2.43	1.13		
	A7	.615	2.49	1.27		
	A8	.611	2.80	1.28		
	A9	.562	3.85	1.25		
	A10	.510	3.75	1.26		
	A11	.647	2.73	1.36		
	A12	.698	3.40	1.46		
	A13	.679	3.55	1.41		
C o g n i t i o n	C2	.585	3.96	1.10	17.28	.89
	C3	.700	4.40	.80		
	C4	.727	4.30	.93		
	C5	.721	4.01	1.18		
	C6	.781	4.02	.97		
	C7	.760	4.23	.93		
	C8	.738	4.18	.95		
	C9	.693	4.32	.99		
	C10	.778	4.14	1.05		
	B7	.467	3.60	1.23		
	B8	.500	3.76	1.16		
B e h a v i	B1	.718	4.18	1.08	10.57	.84
	B2	.766	4.25	1.02		
	B3	.809	4.00	1.21		
	B5	.751	4.07	1.19		
	B6	.667	4.49	1.04		

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$N = 153$.

The mean score of the T-MAS was 3.67 with a standard deviation of .54 indicating positive attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. The mean scores of each factor were 3.11, 4.09, and 4.20 for the Affection, the Cognition, and the Behavior, respectively.

A Pearson correlation analysis was used to examine the association between the T-MSDI and the T-MAS. Results indicated that there was a significant positive correlation between T-MSDI and T-MAS ($r = .276$, $p < .001$). Further investigation indicated that the relationship between medical students' attitudes and their comfort levels for a patient with apparent disability was slightly higher ($r = .291$, $p < .001$) than the relationship between their attitudes and their comfort levels for a patient without apparent disability ($r = .225$, $p < .001$).

Qualitative Data

Three core themes were identified from the analysis of the open-ended questions. It is important to clarify that some of the participants did not respond to the open-ended questions, so the number of participants responding to each open-ended question varied. Content analysis in numeric and interpretative forms with example quotations were presented for each theme and sub-theme below.
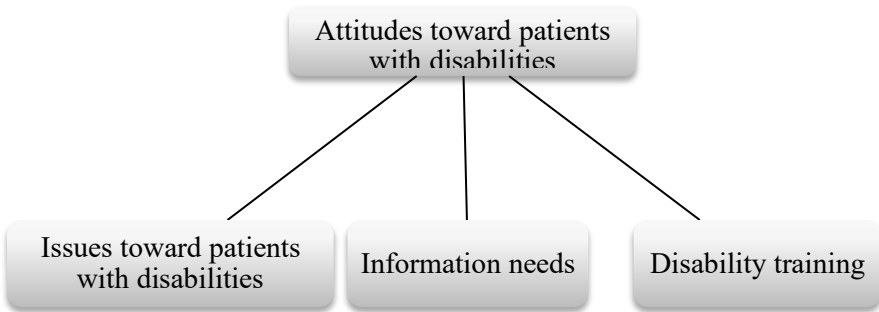
Theme 1: Issues toward Patients with Disabilities

Among 153 students, 100 participants (65.4%) opted to "difficult" to conduct a medical exam on a patient with a disability. Only 26 of them responded to the open-ended question about why they found difficult to

perform a medical exam on a patient with a disability. Three sub-themes identified in the analysis of 26 students' responses were "communication issues", "medical issues", and "behavioral and psychological issues". The first sub-theme named as "communication issues" includes students' comments about the probability of communication issues with patients with disabilities ($n = 21$). As one student described, "it is difficult to communicate with them and explain procedures related to their health". The second sub-theme coded as "medical issues" imply students' concerns in taking anamnesis of patients with disabilities ($n = 4$). As one student reported, "it is difficult to understand them, thus, taking anamnesis might be difficult". Lastly, "behavioral and psychological issues" sub-theme emerged from data implies difficulties in managing patients' behaviors, and understanding patients' psychology ($n = 2$). The following quotation illustrated this theme, "it is difficult to manage patients with disabilities behaviors and understand their psychology".

Theme 2: Information Needs

Medical students expressed their needs about individuals with disabilities before starting their intern. Three sub-themes were identified in the analysis of 92 students. These themes were "disability education", "effective communication", and "direct experience". Each sub-theme was presented below.

The first sub-theme named as "disability education" encapsulates the necessity of education about individuals with disabilities, particularly about symptoms and characteristics of certain types of disabilities ($n = 31$). One participant stressed, "I would like to learn the type of disability as well as its characteristics and I need to learn how to approach patients with disabilities". Another participant reported, "I would like to learn what patients with disabilities like or dislike". In addition, one participant noted, "I think it would be more beneficial if disability awareness training is provided for the disabilities that are more prevalent in our country".

The second sub-theme named as "effective communication" captures participants' needs to communicate effectively with individuals with disabilities ($n = 55$). For example, one participant stated, "How to communicate effectively with patients with disabilities? I would like to be informed about the words and behaviors that they are sensitive while communicating". Another participant valued taking a communication skills course. The following quotation also illustrated this sub-theme, "I am not sure about whether we would have much experience with patients

with disabilities, I find it beneficial to take communication skills courses."
One participant highlighted, "If effective communication ways are taught,
we would not have any issues to perform medical exam". Overall, the
majority of the participants expressed the importance of effective
communication with patients with disabilities.

The third sub-theme named "direct experience" highlights the
importance of experience with patients with disabilities ($n = 6$). While
most of the participants valued the importance of knowledge about
individuals with disabilities in the above paragraph, some of them stressed
first-hand experience". One participant stated, "we need to gain direct
experience with patients with disabilities". Another participant stressed,
"not only theoretical information we need but also practical experience".
One participant wrote, "in addition to the clinical experience, an
opportunity should have provided us to spend time with people with
disabilities in other places, this in turn allows us to gain experience".

Theme 3: Disability Awareness Training

Medical students expressed training needs in certain types of
disabilities before starting their intern. Eight types of disabilities were
identified in the analysis of 77 students' responses. Without any
distinction, seven students reported all. For example, one student made a
clear statement with respect to his preference about training: "Obviously, I
would like to be educated about all types of disabilities, because each type
has its own challenges". Another expressed, "Each disability is unique in
itself and we need more information about all of them". In addition, the
majority of the participants indicated intellectual disabilities ($n = 39$). For
example, one participant wrote, "I need more information about
intellectual disabilities". Some participants expressed their willingness to
receive training about hearing impairments ($n = 14$). One participant
highlights the importance of sign language as follows, "In order to
facilitate communication with individuals with hearing impairments in
clinical settings, I need to learn sign language at least for basic situations".
The other participants simply reported the specific types such as
communication disorders ($n = 4$), orthopedic impairment ($n = 6$), visual
impairments ($n = 8$), speech and language impairment ($n = 4$). Moreover,
students ($n = 2$) mentioned that training should be offered for the most
common types of disabilities.

Discussion

This study explored the attitudes of medical students toward individuals with disabilities. Two instruments were used for the study. First, the mean score of the T-MSDI was 3.12 on a 4-point Likert scale indicating well above the average level of comfort in managing situations in two scenarios. It is important to consider that the sample included only medical students who may not have sufficient experience in interacting with patients with disabilities. The lack of experience may lead students to overestimate their comfort levels in the given scenarios. Further examination indicated medical students' comfort levels were less positive toward the situation with the patient with apparent disability. This finding is not surprising as students may have prejudice toward disabilities. Second, the mean score of the T-MAS was 3.67 indicating positive attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. While this score was relatively higher from international context (Findler et al., 2007; Kim et al., 2015), it is consistent with national context (Sahin & Akyol, 2010, Sahin & Gedik, 2020). This finding may be explained by social-cultural perspectives toward disabilities.

Lastly, medical students' comfort levels were positively related with attitudes toward individuals with disabilities. In addition, the relationship between attitudes and comfort levels for a patient with apparent disability was slightly higher than the relationship between attitudes and comfort levels for a patient without apparent disability. This finding is expected and compatible with what literature has indicated (Berry, et al., 1995).

With respect to qualitative analysis, the results imply disability related issues and needs of disability education/training of medical students. During the analysis, it was noticed that the majority of the students did not use person-first language in their responses. For instance, the term "mental retardation" was replaced with "intellectual disabilities" in this study. In addition to the students' acknowledgement in their responses, the lack of person-first language in students' responses proves the necessity of disability education for medical students. Lastly, the majority of the participants acknowledged the necessity of training for certain types of disabilities. The present study clarifies the need of courses designed to introduce individuals with disabilities in medical schools to ameliorate students' attitudes and alleviate their discomfort in communicating and performing medical exam. These results have implications for medical school curriculum.

This study provides practical implications by adaptation of one part of an instrument, T-MSDI. This study also provides theoretical implications by shedding light on medical students' attitudes through qualitative data and exploring the relationship between medical students' attitudes and comfort levels through quantitative data. It is important for medical students to develop positive attitudes toward individuals with disabilities in early years of their education to prevent health inequalities in the society and to increase healthcare-seeking behaviors of individuals with disabilities. For this purpose, future research on interventions aiming to improve medical students' attitudes toward individuals with disabilities should be conducted.

A number of limitations exist in this research. One of the limitations is that the data were obtained from one university in a province of Turkey. The sample was homogeneous in nature, which is leading to limited generalizability of the findings. Future research should be extended to more universities. Additional research should be conducted with medical doctors to provide further evidence to the literature. One of the important limitations of present study was the lack of responses to the open-ended questions. Although a combination of qualitative and quantitative research was used in this study, a qualitative research with semi-structured interview should be a way of unearthing discourses, assumptions, and ideas influencing attitudes and comfort levels toward individuals with disabilities, this in turn yield more comprehensive data.

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Peer Reviewed Article

Text and Context: Classroom as a Site of Contention

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Abstract
This article presents pedagogical reflections on the experience of teaching fiction about the partition of India with Pakistan and Bangladesh and its long-lasting effects on local communities, especially along the borders. It shows how the long drawn out political movement for identity and territory, including the violence and social divisions it perpetuates, plays out in the classroom where students affected by the vestigial effects of partition encounter literature as a lived history. Using teaching strategies in this condition as a case in point, the article argues that the literature classroom can become a site of recovery and renewal, conflict and negotiation, and memory and uncovering of silenced history. The broader implications of this pedagogy for literary interpretation and classroom engagement with larger issues are further discussed.

Keywords: Students, classroom, migration, partition, literature, borders, conflict

Especially in the global south, English literature and literary theories in particular tend to be dominated by non-local texts and contexts. The tendency of English studies as a discipline of study in universities and other educational institutions is to find texts from and also to situate the discussion in a different and distant time and space. Even when the textual context is more or less familiar, the textual context receives a lot more attention than the context of the readers--how they face the issues of study

in their own lives, how they perceive the contents of study, or what they might do by learning about the issue at all. This article reports and discusses the experiences of using local, historical or social contexts and, more importantly, recognizing the salience of the histories or societies that students bring into the classroom allows the ensuing encounters to become educationally productive. It presents the experiences of teaching partition fiction viz. *Ice-Candy-Man* to master's degree students of the department of English, Bodoland University. The University is strategic to its location as it came into existence as a result of the struggle for identity of the Bodo community and has been a symbol of the long standing demand for progress and sustainable development in the BTAD (Bodoland Territorial Area Districts) region, now BTR (Bodoland Territorial Region) of Assam. The sense of othering and neglect by the state and central governments continues to be a sore point in the consciousness of the people of the region. The University is located in the precincts of Debargaon, Kokrajhar, the capital of the BTR region and has been witness to a series of violent incidents and ethnic conflicts, illegal migration being one of the core issues. In light of this unique context for the teaching of historical fiction, the article argues that when literature engages students' own set of lived experiences as a part of the reading context, the positional aspect of their reading contributes to the production of meaning in the classroom. The broader implication of the classroom encounters of my students with the sample text that I discuss in this article is that literature isn't, or shouldn't be, just about intellectual and theoretical representations of society; literature serves its educational goals best when the students we educate and the texts we teach them are paid sufficient attention.

By showing the engagement of the stories read with a greater focus on the students reading them, the article argues that foregrounding the local context and the local reader can help to highlight hitherto silenced or marginalized aspects of complex social issues in a literature classroom. The article foregrounds the necessity of paying scholarly attention to the impact of the intellectual issue on the physical/social lives of the people of marginalized or oppressed communities, especially if the power dynamic continues and is overlooked in mainstream society or education. And the article does so by bringing into focus the responses of students to a historical novel viz. *Ice-Candy-Man. Ice-Candy-Man* as a novel reflects the historical period of partition and Independence in the Indian subcontinent. The novel interrogates the efficacy of drawing boundaries for the sake of creating new nation-states based on religious

fundamentalism. While the novel is a fictional representation of partition and its bloody aftermath before and during 1947, the discussion of such events unleashes a whole lot of uneasy conversations as the students bring to light their own experiences of facing the impact of conflicts which can be traced to the event of partition.

The article also brings to light how engaging complex social issues through fiction allows students to encounter and explore complex and even difficult social issues educationally and more meaningfully. In the case of partition issues in my class, the discussions move from borders and borderlessness to issues of migration, or from the abstract and intellectual to the social and personal. While migrants are seen as a minority and conjure an image of powerlessness in dominant postcolonial discourses, exploring the issues through fiction allows students to interrogate how migrants may also assume agency and power by outnumbering mainstream society with their mobility in large numbers[1]. The article shows how reading fiction against lived experiences exposes the pitfalls of homogenous understanding of complex and contentious social issues as it might involve a contrary set of values as opposed to the dominant rhetoric on the issue. Confronting issues that are often turned into abstractions into matters of life and community helps students engage with history and society with greater agency.

Interrogating Partition Discourse

The teaching of partition as a historical event in the Indian subcontinent entails a whole lot of discussion on the various socio-political movements which resulted in the creation of new separate independent nation-states. The rise of various religious nationalist imaginations which prompted the creation of borders brought in its wake the outbreak of massive violence and large-scale transfer of populations. The teaching of partition thus involves highlighting the serious problems vis-á-vis the creation of borders. The issue of national boundaries which ushered in ideas of citizenship and freedom from colonial rule also witnessed the spurt in issues of migrant and refugee crises. Such issues of migrant crisis not only characterised the moment of Independence but it also got spilled over the postcolonial times, the repercussions of which can be felt even today. Hence the teaching of *Ice-Candy-Man* as a partition novel is done keeping in mind the complex tapestry of history and politics

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[1]See ACHR Report. Also in Monjib Mochahari's article.

associated with the event of partition and subsequent creation of independent nation-states. Apart from the literature written on partition there is a vast body of scholarship on partition of the Indian sub-continent which aids in teaching partition literature. However, the classroom discussions unfold the limitations of Partition Studies in dealing with the issues of partition in an inclusive and sufficient manner. The deliberations of prominent partition scholars like Urvashi Butalia, Sukeshi Kamra, Kamla Bhasin and Ritu Menon, Ayesha Jalal, David Gilmartin, Ian Talbot, Joya Chatterjee, Kavita Daiya, etcetera is mostly centred around the understanding of partition in relation to Punjab and Bengal. While Butalia's celebrated work *The Other Side of Silence* is important in showing the gendered aspect of partition by recuperating the silenced narratives of women survivors of the partition trauma, she herself acknowledges the major lack in her work and mentions it as " . . one-sided; it relates only to one aspect of Partition – that is, the partition of Punjab" (Butalia 22). Sukeshi Kamra (2003) also analyzes the meaning it had for people who witnessed the end of colonial rule and survived the partition – the partition of Punjab. Ritu Menon (1998) justifies the choice of Punjab being the field of research for collecting oral testimonies of women refugees as both "personal and historical" (Menon and Bhasin 12). Such justifications point to the focus on Punjab attributed by partition scholars. Similarly, Ayesha Jalal (2000) offers a close study on partition where she revisits the crucial relationship between nation, region and religion "with special reference to Punjab" (Jalal 2013, 11). Again the titles of David Gilmartin's book on partition, *Empire and Islam: Punjab and the Making of Pakistan* and Ian Talbot's *Region and Partition: Bengal, Punjab and the Partition* is itself suggestive of the understanding of partition limited to regions of Punjab and Bengal. Kavita Daiya (2008) examines the partition violence and transfer of populations through the representations of postcolonial Indian and South Asian literatures, mostly based on the impact of partition in Punjab. A fair deal of work has also been done particularly on Bengal partition. In this connection mention may be made of Joya Chatterjee (1994) who has extensively dealt with Bengal partition, traces the trajectory of Hindu communalism, the demand for a separate Hindu homeland. She (2007) studies the disastrous aftermath of partition in relation to migration, diaspora and politics in the context of Bengal. Bashabi Fraser (2006) looks at the partition of Bengal through the prism of literature. Again Jashodhara Bagchi and Subhoranjan

Dasgupta (2003) draw on interviews of women who faced and survived the onslaughts of partition in the context of eastern India, that is Bengal.

The onus of partition scholarship has always been veered towards Punjab and Bengal. Willem van Schendel (2005) criticizes the tendency of Partition Studies to focus only on Punjab. With increasing scholarship being done on the Bengal partition he points to the lack of scholarly attention being received by places like Assam and "marginalized in accounts of Partition" (Schendel 28). However, some amount of work in recent years has also been done on the impact of partition on Northeast India in general and Assam in particular. Apart from Schendel, mention may be made of Sanjib Baruah (1999), Sanjoy Hazarika (1994, 2018), Chandan Nandy (2005), Madhumita Sarma (2015), Udayon Mishra (2014), etcetera who presented a well documented research on the history of partition and its impact on Assam with critical analysis being made on the nature and politics involved with illegal migration in the state. These writers also showed how the historical roots of partition are invariably connected to the various insurgency movements and identity politics concerning the Northeast.

Classroom engagements with partition bring in the realisation that although some attention has been given to Northeast with Assam facing the onslaughts of partition even much later but not much is mentioned about how specific borderlands are worse affected and do not get the scholarly attention they deserve and instead get subsumed in the larger debates on partition generated conflicts of a state or a larger territorial entity like the Northeast. The teaching of partition literature opens up possibilities for tracing and understanding the nature of conflicts afflicting the less discussed borderlands otherwise not featuring in dominant scholarly discourses. The location of the literature classroom provides scope to unsettle and revisit partition and bring in the awareness that it is not only about Punjab and Bengal, that scholarship on the impact of partition on Assam also needs to shift attention to borderlands like Kokrajhar which still bears the burden in a huge way. Teaching literature especially in the specific context offers the opportunity to address lingering history of violence and discrimination that the place and its people have been facing and as such carries the potential of producing knowledge regarding such historical events in an unprecedented way. The reading context thus lays bare the inconsistencies present in the textual contexts and opens up possibilities to interrogate the homogenous discourses unwittingly disseminated by texts.

While there has been some research done in order to highlight the impact of partition on Assam, there is very little scholarship available on the BTR region. Although this region is marked with ethnic riots and conflicts and is rife with issues concerning identity politics owing to the legacies of partition, the serious scholarly attention accorded to this region is very less. In spite of the fact that the region has faced a lot of backlash as a result of the infiltration of illegal migrants and is one of the fragile borderlands of the state of Assam, the place hardly received the spotlight in Partition Studies. Mention may be made of Udayon Mishra (2014) who in his book examines the rise of the Bodo Movement and showed how the identity struggle of the Bodo tribal community is a corollary of the burden of the history of partition. Again Hazarika (1994) charts out the grievances of the Bodos along with various other indigenous tribal groups over the policies of the Assam Accord on the status of migrants. The identity politics in Assam from the pre-partition days to the days following the partition which gave rise to the discomfiture within indigenous tribal communities like the Bodos, is well examined by Hazarika. Sanjib Baruah (1999) in his chapter "We are Bodos, Not Assamese: Contesting a Subnational Narrative" discusses the complexities involved in the sentiments of separation developed among the Bodos against Assamese subnationalism. The chapter on Bodos is preceded by the chapters on the demographic transformation of Assam before and after partition and the politics of illegal migration that accompanied herewith. There has been a number of researches done on the ethnic riots as a direct outcome of illegal migration but what is lacking is the fact that serious research needs to be conducted on the social history of the region from the perspective of partition which is still afflicting the region. It is the teaching-learning exercise of a partition novel which unfolded the bitter truth that border areas of Assam like Kokrajhar does not find enough space in partition scholarship in spite of the fact that the disturbances in the region can be traced back to partition which is responsible for the outbreak of ethnic riots and conflicts until very recently. The classroom as a site brings home the need for intervention in Partition Studies to look into the lesser known area of BTR and its repercussions of partition.

Borders or Borderlessness?

Whereas partition and Independence in the Indian sub-continent necessitated the significance of borders as an entity which was inevitable for ensuring the territorial integrity of nationhood, post-colonial writers

articulated their wariness over the changes which came along with the drawing of boundaries, the boundaries which produced conflicts thereby creating demarcations between cultures and national identities. The postcolonial writers examine the contours of nationhood manifested through the legitimisation of borders which stimulated conditions of marginalisation and creation of national 'others'. These writers employ this very status of marginality imposed onto the status of a migrant or the national 'other' by arguing about the position of borderlessness of the migrant in favourable terms, inducing it as a situation generating artistic consciousness. While *Ice-Candy-Man* as a novel is set in the backdrop of partition on the eve of Independence in the Indian subcontinent, around the time of 1947; the students' own time and space introduces questions about not only partition scholarship, it also poses challenge against the theoretical precepts of borderless universe advocated by key postcolonial writers like Homi Bhabha, Salman Rushdie and Amitav Ghosh which is otherwise widely celebrated in English Studies. Discussing the novel as a postcolonial text on the interrogation of borders invariably brings into focus the theoretical premises of these postcolonial writers. The readers not only resist the ideological dimensions of the text, but they also put under scrutiny the hallowed status given to the concepts of postmodern migrancy formulated by these writers which champions the position of a migrant. Bhabha celebrates the notions of hybridity and liminality closely associated with the condition of migrancy. He attaches importance to the status of ambivalence represented by the migrant when he states that "the truest eye may now belong to the migrant's double vision"(Bhabha 5). Such a statement not only implies the crossing of borders as an agency for cultural production but it is also suggestive of the migrant as a minority. He privileges the condition of the migrant when he mentions the interstitial identity of the migrant as a mode of challenging and remaking the borders. As John McLeod observes about Bhabha that it was ". . . part of his wider attempt to shape progressive epistemological possibilities from the experiential terrain of cross-border passage, "transnational histories, migrants, . . . or political refugees"(5). So the migrant according to Bhabha's contentions assumes a position of privilege on account of his condition of hybridity and marginality. Although the postcolonial concerns of Bhabha on hybridity and migrancy is aimed at destabilising the binary between the colonial and the colonised, between the centre and the margin and addresses the cause of minorities in an alien culture, the question arises as to what if the host population faces the threat of being a

minority as a result of migrancy? Similarly, Salman Rushdie (1981) also celebrates the migrant's position when he claims, "The migrant suspects reality: having experienced several ways of being, he understands their illusory nature. To see things plainly, you have to cross a frontier" (125). This implies that the concept of borders is seen with suspicion and the crossing of borders is invested with a sense of power which allows the migrant to see beyond hegemonic bordered identities. However, such oppositional structure portraying the migrant pitted against a dominant majority may not always hold true for all times and places. Revathi Krishnaswamy critiques Rushdie's emphasis on cross-border experience of a migrant when she states:

> . . .indeed, it is precisely along the border that Rushdie in an explicit gesture of exclusion opposes the migrant to the non-migrant, privileging the former over the latter . . Although fractured, the migrant imagination is an imperializing consciousness imposing itself upon the world (136-137).

As Krishnaswamy pointed out, Rushdie's explicit favouring of the migrant's positionality carries within it the possibility of a migrant's perspective as imperialistic, imposing itself upon the world. The postcolonial tendency of considering the migrant occupying the periphery does not fit well with the apprehensions of the students who form part of a landscape repudiating such interpretations. Amitav Ghosh is yet another writer whose works contributed sufficiently to the rhetoric of a borderless world. Particularly, mention may be made of his novel *The Shadow Lines* which inevitably gets conjured in the classroom discussions on partition and the notion of borders. The novel is also a critique on partition and shows how the power of imagination can transcend borders and cartographic spaces in a seamless manner. The huge amount of research articles and books addressing this aspect of borderlessness as reflected in Ghosh's text contributes to the larger postcolonial discourses on the borderless world. For instance, research articles like "Borderless Spaces and Cartographic Places in Amitav Ghosh's The Shadow Lines" by K. Guejalatchoumy, "Imagined Communities: Questioning the Border" by Rituparna Roy, Subham Ganguly's "A Close Study of Amitav Ghosh's *The Shadow Lines*: Problematizing the Concept of Home and Nation" etcetera, dwell on the idea of borderlessness based on Ghosh's novel. The emphasis on borderless existence in these articles points to the critique of borders and national lines and implies a fascination for the situation of migrancy largely influenced by Ghosh's novel.

These writers' penchant for a borderless reality can very well be located in their own migrant condition which became conducive for their act of writing. Such a condition which propelled their artistic developments is nevertheless different from the image of a migrant in the reading context with an alternative meaning quite different from such fanciful terms. Although the invocation of a globalized, borderless world has become popular in the postcolonial arena, the grim realities associated with the concepts of border and migrancy in a borderland like Kokrajhar poses a challenge to such discourses.

The classroom deliberations initiated by the novel brings in the awareness that there is a clear disjunct between the expressed need for borders in the region and the critique of the idea of boundaries in the texts. Whereas postcolonial intellectuals emphasize on borderlessness, the region is a strong reminder of the serious demand for borders. The region is characterised with ethnic riots and conflicts mostly concentrated on the issue of borders, firstly, as a result of the bitter consequences of partition which is still afflicting the region and the people in the name of illegal migrant population and, secondly, the demand for separation from the state of Assam and the creation of a new state of Bodoland. The history of the rise of Bodo sub-nationalism and its subsequent trajectory has been well recorded by Sanjoy Hazarika. According to Hazarika (1994), the Bodos felt they were being treated as the 'other' and viewed the mainstream Assamese community as "essentially colonialists, a powerful community that had settled in Brahmaputra valley several centuries ago by ousting their forefathers. To them, the Assamese caste Hindu or Assamese Muslim was as much an interloper as a Bangladeshi" (Hazarika 1994, 151-152). The Bodo movement during the post-Independence period is marked by strong reaction against the imposition of Assamese as the official language. The resentments of the Bodos gained momentum, marks Hazarika, also as a result of the apathy shown by the then Assamese leadership and which led to the demand of the Bodos for a separate state for themselves by dividing Assam into half. The fear of getting assimilated into the larger Assamese tradition and losing their own identity and culture gave rise to the movement of Bodoland[2]. This attitude of resentment and a consequent demand for drawing borders is something that continued until recently. Time and again, there were road blockades or rail 'aborodh'

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[2]Mwshahary (2017) mentions this concerning the father of the Bodos Upendranath Brahma: "He made out the point that for protection of Bodo people from the animical Assamese people and their State Government a separate State is must for them" (3).

(blockade) by the ABSU (All Bodo Students' Union) for a separate state of Bodoland and the road from the Kokrajhar town leading to the University had signs with slogans of 'DIVIDE ASSAM 50-50'.

Over and above the issue of demand for separate borders from the state of Assam was that of illegal infiltration from Bangladesh as a result of the porous India-Bangladesh border through which the illegal migrants entered. The series of ethnic conflicts between the local Bodo population and the illegal Muslim migrant communities occupying large portions of the BTR region took place as a result of the historical error of partition. The ethnic Bodos perceived the encroachment of the illegal Muslim population as a threat to their respective land and unique identity[3]. Hence, teaching a class mostly populated by students from the dominant Bodo community, the task of discussing partition literature is not without its complexities. To explain the critique of borders and boundaries as a part of the nation building process that is outlined by Sidhwa through the perspective of the eight year old Lenny is challenging, especially to a group of students whose minds are perhaps pulled in several directions by the rhetoric of territorial demarcations and state apathy that they are exposed to. The students with their own sense of location which still bears the burden of partition resist the current scholarship on migration and hybridity which more or less emphasizes on a borderless universe.

Interestingly, the students respond to the discussion on partition by telling their own tales of woe and horror of conflicts and the naked realities relating to illegal migration. For example, the students particularly relate their experiences of facing such repercussions like losing their majority status in their own neighbourhood, because of the crossing of borders by these Bangladeshi migrants and gradually occupying and outnumbering the ethnic tribal people from certain areas of BTR. Whereas Sidhwa as a novelist questions the creation of borders in various parts of the novel, the students most of the time, express the need to maintain the borders effectively for the safety and security of the local population. As Nandana Dutta (2008) in her essay states:

> . . the hallowed conditions of marginality, migrancy and liminality, . . are not only the conditions of the migrant. It is often the recipient community that is already marginalized and views this influx into its

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[3]The ACHR Report, Jason Overdorf's report in GlobalPost, Basharat Peer's article in The New Yorker, R Jagannathan's article in The Firstpost and Monjib Mochahari's research paper, etcetera mentions the illegal migration as the cause of riots in Kokrajhar.

spaces as a more or less result of its marginality, of a center/nation-state's neglect or lack of concern, and its willingness to use this area and people distant from itself to play out a cynical politics of numbers and votes (83).

Dutta mentions the actual reality associated with migration and how crossing of borders is different from the postmodern condition of migrancy and marginality. According to her it is more often the recipient community which considers themselves as marginalised owing to the influx of the population of migrants. Although her essay addresses the larger Assamese community and its sentiments of otherness vis-à-vis the contours of nation and nationalism, nevertheless her argument on the reality of border states as contrary to the celebrated postmodern conditions of liminality and transcendence of borders can be read in this particular context as well. While the students listen to the experiences of violence as a corollary to the creation of borders, they however express that since so much of blood has already been shed in the name of nation-building and protection of national identity, it is all the more necessary to keep intact the national boundaries. The middle part of the novel (chapter 16, 18) presents the displacement and uprooting of the neighbours of Lenny's household during the time of partition, to which the students raised the point that such stories of displacement are still witnessed in the contemporary times where the influx of immigrants compels the local people to abandon their places of origin in fear of getting surrounded and marginalised by the outsiders. Another discussion worth mentioning here is when a student responded to the plot of the novel where Ayah and her group of friends discuss the political scenario of their times and the manner in which their harmless discussions gave way to heated debate centring communal hatred and violence. The student brought up the issue of the increase in the number of immigrants which led to the ethnic riots in 2012 but he argued how the entire incident was given a communal colour and the focus shifted to the news of violence against the Muslim community only. The Muslim fundamentalists retaliated by threatening the people from Northeast living in other parts of the country like Bangalore, Delhi, etcetera and as a result they were forced to flee from there for fear of persecution. According to him, the onus shifted from the crisis faced as a result of the immigrants and took a whole new different turn and began to be understood as Muslim versus the Hindus in the rest of

India[4]. Whereas writers like Bhabha, Rushdie, Ghosh through their various writings fantasizes the notion of hybrid diasporic writer who believes in a borderless world or a movement along borders in a seamless way, the students raises the importance of borders as contrary to the ideological debates by these writers as a result of their lived experiences.

Locating Conflict: Text and Context

Teaching a partition text helps in bringing the realities of its history closer home, contrary to the dominant ways of dealing with historical periods situated in a different time and a different space. It becomes an interesting educational experience where reading context confronts and resists the domain as reflected in the context of the texts under study. *Ice-Candy-Man* as a novel is replete with images of large scale destruction owing to the historical event of partition. The novel offers a poignant description of the horrifying impact it had on the lives of the common people with terrifying acts of violence, displacements, and rampant loss of innocent lives and property all around. The novel is a portrayal of a particular time, the hour of Independence and place, Lahore, Punjab. Teaching the text by helping students interpret it through the lens of their own ongoing history and impact of partition takes the text out of the domain of literary ideas and the dead past into the domain of life and society, emotion and empathy, identity and dignity. In fact, my students learn to trace the ongoing conflicts in BTR to the time of partition and examine the manner in which stories of violence and displacements are still being carried out albeit in varied forms and manner. They learn to notice and understand how systemic violence in their own community works, how partition continues to shape that violence, and how they might address it in real life. Research works point to the traumatic experiences and gruesome realities of the people suffering in the ethnic riots of the BTR region. For instance, S. Tiwari and G. Ghosh offers a detailed analysis of the plight of the people who got displaced during the crisis of conflict and the manner in which they survive in harsh conditions in the relief camps for quite a long time. Their article problematizes the issues of

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[4]Monjib Mochahari (2013) provides a statistical analysis of the bias in media representation surrounding the ethnic conflicts. He argues that the riots were given a communal colour excluding "pertinent issues like *unchecked infiltration from the neighbouring countries, demographic change, encroachment of tribal lands*"(44). The aspect of communalising the riots is also addressed in ACHR Report.

conflict and points to the various aspects regarding illegal immigrants and local people who are displaced from their homes owing to events of conflict and violence. Again, Pathak (2017), provides a statistical study of the livelihood crisis faced by the people suffering in the aftermath of riots. As mentioned:

> Hundreds of houses belonging to people of both the communities were burnt rendering thousands of people homeless. The conflict that started on 19th July 2012 was a clash between the indigenous Bodo community and the immigrant Muslims. More than 100 lives were lost and almost 400000 people were rendered homeless (139).

The article also mentions how the livelihood crisis of families affected in the BTR riots led to the increased sense of violence especially on women and children and they became easy victims of trafficking, sexual abuse and molestation even in the relief camps. Sidhwa's rendering of Ranna's account of the horror of partition as a child survivor, his experiences in the pathetic condition of the refugee camps filled with numerous hapless people like him parallels the condition of the women and children affected by the conflicts in BTR, forced to live in relief camps where sometimes their own families became perpetrators of violence and at times were responsible for their trafficking. Whereas Sidhwa's novel addresses the position of women caught in the turmoil of etching borders and boundaries for the formation of new nations, the legacy of drawing borders still bears resonance at the expense of women in this part of India. In the context of conflict in the BTR region the organisations like NERSWN (North East Research & Social Work Networking) and ABWWF (All Bodo Women Welfare Federation) works for the development and wellbeing of the people victimised in the ethnic riots, especially women and children, and these organisations also have to deal with the traumatized state of individuals affected by the trauma of violence in the riots. The need for more such NGO's in this region point to the gendered nature of violence and that the idea of fragmentation giving rise to conflicts still claims the life and security of women and children in a tremendous way.

Again, the divisive conflicts in BTR are being written at the expense of women and children as women and children mostly bear the bitter consequences of such events. In the conflict affected part of the

region, the girl child is often given off for early marriage to protect them from sexual exploitation and violence.[5]

Students respond by sharing similar realities corresponding to the present circumstances of the female children in the region by relating to the incident of Muccho committing violence against Papoo because of her being a girl child and later marrying her off to a much older person in the pre-Independence period. Hence, the situations of conflict as addressed in the novel is diverse in range but the deliberations still garner interesting responses from the students situated in the background of ethno-nationalistic demands for a separate state culminating into series of violent ethnic riots now and then.

Conclusion

The article presented the manner in which discussions in a literature classroom paved the path to unravel the lived experiences of the students and the place they belong to. The classroom emerged as a site which helped to introduce meaningful educational experience by shifting attention to readers (in this case the students) and exploring their local history and the significance of the text in relation to the readers. The reading context brought to light that although partition texts forms part of the University syllabus and the fact that the location of the University is a place which is marked with conflicts as a result of the burden of partition in the form of porous borders and illegal migration, there is not sufficient scholarship addressing this issue.

The literature classroom opened up possibilities of realising how the context of the readers is often neglected in the teaching-learning process and that it is the textual context mostly situated in a different time and place which gets more priority over the readers' context. Thus, the classroom discussions not only pointed to the scope of extending the scholarship on partition by shifting attention to the less highlighted borderlands such as Kokrajhar, but it also interestingly contributed to the pedagogy of understanding the local context as it may carry the potential to recuperate the memories associated with the hidden aspect of socio-cultural, political history of the place and its people.

My classroom became witness to the confluence of the textual context and the reading context and such a confluence led to the

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[5] Pathak (2017) mentions the problems faced by the survivors in the aftermath of violence and focuses on the worst affected condition of women and children living in relief camps (145).

understanding that scholarship on partition has always been inclined towards 'heartland' India in depicting the realities of partition. That the scholarship on partition has excluded the repercussions of partition on this region just like the nationalist historian was accused of providing an uncertain place to the history of partition in nationalist historiographies. The interaction with the students surrounding the question of borders also revealed the fact that concepts such as borders and migrant have the ability to produce different connotations depending on the geographical location, quite contrary to institutionalized knowledge on such terms. The article discussed the issue of migrancy and borderlessness in relation to the postcolonial discourses mainly concentrated on the three writers viz. Bhabha, Rushdie and Ghosh and their reception in the said location, keeping in mind their works in the syllabus and hence the students' familiarity with the theoretical frameworks generated by them. The article mainly tried to highlight the dialogue between the context as part of the text and the context of the students which produced a symbiosis of resistance towards the texts at times and realisation that there is a need to revisit discourses on partition, migrants and borders. Thus, the article argued that the classroom can become a site of contention, where the students' own time and place carries within it the possibility to challenge the discourses disseminated by universally acclaimed texts and open up scope for retrieving and recuperating otherwise repressed truths.

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Exploring the Information and Communication Technology (ICT) integrated Pedagogy: A Contextual Study in Tribhuvan University, Nepal

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Abstract

The integrated information and communication technology (ICT) as the pedagogical content has led to great opportunities and challenges in the educational ideas and practices. This study explores the contextual use of the ICT integrated pedagogy in Tribhuvan University. The detail analysis has been made on the basis of primary and secondary data collected from the respondents, and literature respectively. The qualitative approach, phenomenological design, constructive paradigm, descriptive methodology and inductive data analysis system have been applied for this study. The ICT technique that teachers apply as a tool or as pedagogy in the classes are analyzed. On the basis of it, the shortcomings, improvements and possible recommendations for the improvement of the existing scenario have been presented.

Information and communication technology (ICT) refers to technology used to do tasks. ICT incorporates wireless networks and antiquated technologies such as landline telephones, radio and television broadcast, etc. (Lupak, Kopotun, Hamza, Albul, Panova, 2019). In Nepal, the School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) has envisioned the implementation and expansion of ICT assisted teaching-learning processes in all schools (UNESCO, 2020) to eradicate poverty by 2030 through 17 sustainable development goals of UNESCO. Plan is to ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all. Education is UNESCO's top priority because it is a basic human right and foundation on which peace and sustainable development can be built (UNESDOC, 2020).

There is an integrated relationship among ICT education, cohesive pedagogy and national policy to the development of education. In the present world ICT itself and ICT in education greatly revolutionized the thinking style, working skills and even attitudes of a person which makes significant impacts in daily lives and to change human existence (Acharya, U. & Upadhyaya, P. R., 2076 B. S.). So, teachers and students are benefited due to the sophisticated development of technologies like high-speed computers, mobiles and internet, and advanced software. It has become one of the vital technologies to carry out the activities including teaching and learning. The knowledge and ideas among teachers, students, classmates and other needy people are easily shared. The sharing process has enhanced the large numbers of opportunities in various fields and to cope such opportunities became one of the challenges of the 21st century (Hamza, Alhalabi, Marcovitz, 2000) (Jude, & Dhankaro, 2012). To enhance all, educators need to acquire ICT skills and competencies like ICT operation and concepts, planning and designing, learning environments and experiences, teaching-learning and the curriculum, assessment and evaluation, productivity and professional practices and social, ethical, legal and human issues surrounding the use of ICT in instruction (Kop, 2011). However, to make every educator under the access of ICT is a great challenge.

Due to the unexpected circumstances created by COVID-19, many teachers forcefully entered the ICT world. As the whole country was shut down to prevent the spread of COVID-19, teachers and students from different parts of the country, especially city areas, continued their teaching-learning activities. TU has also launched online classes in its

campuses and departments throughout the country. But, there is a deficiency of skilled human resources and infrastructure related to ICT integrated pedagogy. Similarly, frequent electricity cuts, weak networks, etc. are the common problems of the country.

Many researchers have done extensive work in the field of integration of ICT tools into pedagogy. (Díaz et al, 2020, Cabrera et al, 2019 and Amhag *et al.*, 2019, Zhang *et al.*, 2020). However, the limited data has been used in those researches. This motivated us to collect the data from the primary source i.e. teachers from different disciplines and study in detail about them again. As a result, we decided to study the opportunities and challenges of using ICT in pedagogy for the targeted community at the university level.

The Tribhuvan University (TU) is one of the largest universities in Nepal. It has 60 constituent campuses and more than 1040 affiliated colleges. Similarly, there are more than 7592 teaching staff and more than 335,126 students. Teacher-students' ratio is 1: 44.14. (U G C, 2017) and more than 7,000 non-teaching staffs are working together throughout the nation. Due to being massive, teaching-learning activities have become tough in this university.

Methodology and materials

There are multiple realities, individuals' experiences and consciousness; thus, qualitative approach, phenomenological design and descriptive methods are applied in this study. It has been done with the constructive point of view to recommend some effective measures to the development of ICT integrated pedagogy in the classrooms (Kothari, 1990) (Criswell, 2003). In the context of curriculum related to chalk and board, ICT replaces digital white boards, e-readers, etc. They have to use zoom, Google meet, team, etc. software apps on various electronic devices like laptops, tablets, smart phones, etc. In this respect they need computer-guided instructions and interactive learning activities in the class (Learning Portal, 2020). This will enhance the research activities and innovative skills. These effects ultimately will come to the society so that lifestyles of people will be changed.

In this respect, ICT education and pedagogy are deeply related with each other. It needs an active classroom, effective teaching with the use of modern technology etc. (Shaikh, & Algannawar, 2019; Hamzeh, 2014). To interlink all technological activities, we must rethink the activities of supervisors, teachers, researchers and students starting from

the classroom to individual tackling of modern technology in different levels (Kop, 2011).

Connective theory focuses on the networking process. Connected learning is a new term emerged due to the rapidly evolving digital technology to education. It is an approach to education that is socially embedded, interest-driven, and oriented towards educational, economic, or political opportunity through Massive Open Online Course (MOOC) (Kop, 2011). This study has been based on connectivism theory.

Information and data were collected from primary as well as secondary sources. Primary data were gathered filling open ended questionnaires sent via email. The key respondents for the primary sources were chosen through purposive sampling. Two-two teachers from twelve institutes of sciences, humanities and social sciences, education and management under TU were selected for the purpose of this study. The researchers' personal experiences are also included in the data. The secondary data were assembled from different literatures.

Questionnaires were prepared and sent to the respondents via email. The questions used for the collection of the data are given below:
1. What do teachers mean by integration of ICT in education?
2. What are the ICT tools that teachers apply in their pedagogy in the classes?
3. How are the teachers applying ICT tools in their classes?
4. What are the effective measures of applying the ICT tools in the classes?
5. What are the suggestions to improve pedagogy using ICT?

Similarly, some of the researchers and experts were interviewed individually to get their views and reflections. After collection, the raw data were analyzed and interpreted using an inductive approach by closely reading the text, creating the categories, removing the overlapping and summarizing into different segments, continuing revision and refining the category system (Thomas, 2003). The analysis was based on fusion of theoretical as well as practical based techniques. Finally, on the basis of this analysis and interpretations, findings, discussion and conclusion are made.

Results

Regarding the question related to understanding the integration of ICT in education, teachers from the different disciplines have different perspectives. Most of the teachers from Science background told that ICT

is an integrated approach of delivering lectures through computer-based equipment using several software tools in order to make better understanding of the subject matter. It helps to produce, store, manipulate, communicate or disseminate information that learners need or require. Experimentation and software are interlinked with each other by means of animations as well as advanced developed and underdeveloped tools for them. Likewise, humanities and social science background teachers have understood the ICT as a part of teaching-learning practice to make more effective use of technology seamlessly for educational processes like transacting curricular content and students working on technology to do authentic tasks. ICT has a huge range of functions in education such as communication, learning tools, administration, information sources and distance learning. ICT has, therefore, a positive impact on education, for instance, the National Curriculum has made plans to teach computers in secondary and higher education to make them able to adopt in utilizing applications' software. In the same way, for the teachers in education, integration of ICT means change in traditional methods of teaching and learning to produce market-oriented manpower as per the globalization of education in this scientific era. The technologies which are used for collecting, storing, processing, researching, transferring and unloading of information directed to teaching-learning activities, all lie within ICT. It can also be used for educational planning, curriculum construction, construction of learning materials etc. Furthermore, it is directly related with convergence of electronics, computing, and telecommunications and it provides access to information through telecommunications. This includes the internet, wireless networks, cell phones, and other communication mediums. It can be done through the network of computers, creating original web pages, producing videos digitally, designing computer systems, selling products on the Internet, 3-D artwork, administering an institution's database, coding software, providing technical support, managing projects and budgets, writing technical documentation, etc. In education, it is used to support, enhance, and optimize the delivery of information in the classroom. Moreover, management background teachers observe integrating ICT as the coordination of all IT tools. They also told that modern techniques useful for any circumstances are directly linked with the researcher and planners to strengthen the nation and strengthen the economy through national media. This is true with ICT education as well. It receives and shares or imports and exports information or data by using computer and other

supported software and hardware equipment in an easy, faster and cost worthy way. ICT tools are integrated in the school management system to make easy, cheap and fast teaching-learning processes visible or observable. It helps to access information through communication technologies.

Regarding the ICT tools used in the classroom, most of the science background teachers said that they are applying PowerPoint presentations with drawings and other relevant chemical bonding in addition to statistical tools. They are also applying telecommunication equipment through video conferencing, teleconference, telephone and modems. According to them, integration of ICT depends on the content and aim of the course. They use ICT as a part of classroom pedagogy including multimedia, sending reading materials or assignments through group emails and google docs, Facebook for group communication and information sharing, using online resources, telephone/mobile and SMS reminder, videos/lectures or other materials on YouTube, uploading own videos and live presentation as well, using free blogs to share materials and personal writings by both teachers and students. Desktop computer, laptop, projector, digital camera, printer, iPods, tablets and audio books are generally used devices in the classroom. Similarly, science teachers focused their area towards reactions, mathematical expressions and practices like electronics and magnetism related problems. Likewise, the faculty of education focuses on explanation of curriculum, lesson plan and teaching methodology implementation. They also used similar ICT devices to access and share the information. Among them video conferencing is the most useful tool for indirect teaching and multimedia is a useful tool for direct teaching. In the same way, teachers from management focus pedagogical tools to link research, publications and actions, like homework, practices etc. related to economic sectors. Teachers use Lithograph Machine, Overhead Projector (OHP), Computer-floppy disc drives, etc. to display files. Similarly, they use Internet-digital technology to acquire information and perform more actions at once. In network environment (online) classes, distance education systems' experts or teachers deliver Massive Open Online Courses (MOOC) using modern ICT-interactive board, notebook pad, tablet, personal computer, software and electronic learning materials, e-Learning portals, websites, electronic learning materials, e-Books etc. The educational software has brought drastic change in the teaching-learning. Facebook, Viber, Instagram,

Google drive and other apps etc. are also being used as tools in the classrooms.

The application procedure of ICT tools also differs depending on faculties. The teachers from science background said that they apply ICT tools in their classroom to transfer knowledge and skill by using computer-based technology, digital imaging, internet, file servers, data storage devices, networking infrastructure, desktop, laptop and broadcasting technologies such as radio and television and telephone as an instructional tool. For practical purposes, they use different software and codes for numerical purposes. Likewise, teachers from education, humanities and social sciences replied that most often, they used ICT as an interactive tool. They encourage students to open a free email account and use it to post assignments through google docs or blogs. They infuse technology and digital devices into many interest areas in the classroom and offer them as choices with clear objectives. The management teachers' and experts' replies were more or less similar. However, dealing styles, focusing areas and applying methods are different in their faculty. In general, teachers use conventional methods as integrating ICT tools, interactive, collaborative and networking strategies, applying online forums, blogs, Facebook and Wiki, virtual labs, Moodle learning platform, Padlet, Google classroom etc. to create an effective learning environment. Furthermore, they are shifting from conventional methods like drill and practice to computer-based learning i.e. internet-based learning or e-learning using software and PowerPoint presentation with enough discussion. These free and open contents have changed the learning methods as well as mindset of the learners.

In the question of effective measures (changes) of applying ICT tools in the class, the teachers from the faculty of science are found different from other faculties. The science teachers said that the use of ICT tools in the classroom do not give satisfactory results compared to chalk/board teaching. Similarly, in the case of practical classes, ICT is useful only for simple techniques like visualizing magnetic lines of forces, Brownian motions of electrons etc., and has failed to build hand to hand problems, circuit diagrams etc. It provides a good understanding of theory but fails to provide mathematical derivations. Under such circumstances, an optimal use of ICT as well as thorough discussion on the matter using moderate time is a must. Otherwise, ICT used at the present scenario by teachers, just to finish appreciable volume of course content within limited time would be just limiting the students at a junk situation. Teachers from

humanities and social science, education and management said that multi-channel learning is a useful concept. The understanding ability drastically changed, students and teachers were equally satisfied and the presence of students in classes were also found to be increased after the use of ICT. Students were always interested and they performed cooperative behavior. Teachers assess students to check their understanding and provide feedback to them. Feedback from the computer during the use of test material improves student performance in later use of the same test material. Paper presentation, classroom presentation, preparing materials, drawing charts, pictures, graphs, diagrams, tables, mapping lines, distance, areas, locations, skills of students to use ICT tools, online class etc. are used in formative measures and online written test, online oral test, computer-based exam, final presentation by ICT tools, assignment work by ICT tools etc. are used in summative measures. Regarding the use of ICT tools, learners and teachers both are satisfactory. These tools support development of professional capacity, making teaching-learning environments enjoyable. It is easier to check whether students collaborate with peers and experts across the country and around the world or not. We can also check whether students search their answers through the internet or not, whether they have understood or not, how they manipulate the information and modify according to their needs and how they link their ideas with theory and experiments, etc.

In the question of suggestions to improve pedagogy using ICT, most of the teachers from science background replied that they are using old pedagogical tools in research, training and teaching activities. Nations, universities and respective departments should be aware of new technology. Therefore, a new highly equipped lab with a full modern facility is required for the practical purpose. They suggested that students, teachers and researchers should be trained to use technology in the classes. Similarly, humanities and social sciences teachers said that most of the classrooms, where they teach, are not ICT friendly. There should be availability of multimedia devices with internet facility for the teachers/students in the classrooms. Similarly, Teachers and students who do not have basic knowledge in handling ICT devices and programmes should be provided training. Training is equally required for updating teachers on new ways of integrating ICT in the pedagogy as well. So, Experts in the related field may be hired to coach about these things. In the same way, there should be the support system for teachers/students (like computer labs in the college/departments where students can access online

contents or prepare their PowerPoint presentations or reply to their emails). Likewise, informants from education wrote that integration of ICT is necessary to make education market oriented and time relevant, effective, qualitative and lifelong to make it modest and accessible to meet the millennium challenge. In this regard, ICT makes class more interactive, which is essential in the 21st century. It also promotes the student centred teaching-learning activities creating interest and developing capability for self-search and group work. As ICT is the new emerging technique in the classroom teaching for developing and less developed countries like Nepal, the classrooms should be made ICT friendly. Teachers from management viewed that it is necessary to follow all ICT measures to make teaching-learning effective. However, misuse of the internet by the students, motivating the college to invest in ICT, and protecting the ICT resources of the institutions, etc. are the challenges. Digitalization in universities and colleges with high-speed internet facilities and modern quality technology, awareness of using ICT by stakeholders and maximum utilization of ICT may be further consideration towards improving our teaching-learning pedagogy in higher education institutions in Nepal. As pedagogy differs from discipline to discipline, possible requirements should be given priority as per the subject and department. For instance, statistical tools for quantitative estimation may be more important for one subject/department but not for others. However, we need to find an amicable (agreeable/friendly) and optimal (best/ideal) situation prior to its effective implementation. It needs a limited number of student-teacher ratios and ICT literate quality students and teachers. Attitudes of both teachers and students should be positive towards it to achieve its goal.

Experts and researchers also said that the use of ICT improves the pedagogical style of the institution. The standard of students, thinking style and use of ICT as well as pedagogical techniques also change accordingly. We have to update and improve our ICT classrooms so that it can interlink theory and practice/experiment, teachers' thinking and students' thinking patterns. As a result, both will enjoy teaching-learning activities by the use of it.

Discussion

Based on primary and secondary data, it can be said that the people from all disciplines and faculties believed that ICT is modern technological tools used by students, teachers, researchers and experts.

The means of ICT depends upon the materials used by teachers, trainers and experts in their respective fields. The most used tools in today's classrooms are desktop computer, laptop and mobile phone. Similarly, the use of advanced and equipped laboratory etc. enhance and improve quality of teaching, training and make the environment learning friendly. The students of all levels have positive thoughts on the use of modern technologies.

Most of the teachers try to use available resources, like PowerPoint presentations, explanations through smart boards, telecommunications etc. personally. However, due to the lower level capacity of students in ICT and lack of ICT equipped classrooms, the teachers and students are not benefited completely. Even teachers and experts need more training on it so that they can motivate the students, researchers and even parents towards the use of it. For this, they have to be motivated towards the use of modern technology. Moreover, the role of ICT is important in each and every step of life. They are also equally important to agriculture, planning, teaching, research activities etc. In this condition, people either from rural or town areas are frequently using laptop, mobile, tablet, computer, etc. but they don't have adequate knowledge about the advantages and disadvantages of it.

Teachers are mostly using computer PowerPoint, smart boards, flies, etc. They are interlinked with old techniques, which are teachers-centered. This has to be shifted to students-oriented, but most of the teachers fail to do so because of the multiple difficulties which are directly linked with the level of students, thinking of society etc. However, interested students and researchers have started to make groups to discuss, and learn from each other using mobile apps, laptop, team, zoom etc.

From the use of ICT techniques, the thinking level of students and researchers were found broadened. They are more excited to learn new things. This has facilitated them to be more creative. Institutions are also being well equipped forcefully. As a cause, this will contribute to the development of the society and nation. However, there is a necessity of making them aware of advantages and disadvantages of using it. As being the oldest university of the nation, Tribhuvan University can help in the policy making, implementation of pedagogy replacing traditional chalk and talk method in the classrooms.

Conclusions and recommendations

ICT means receiving and sharing information, interactive processes by using computer and other supported hardware and software equipment in an easy, fast and cost worthy way. Integrating ICT in education denotes the use of ICT tools in the school management system as well as inside and outside the classrooms. There should be better teachers' understanding of the integrated approach of delivering lectures through computer-based hardware and software tools to impart information and knowledge to the learners. Integrating ICT also facilitates administrators to produce, manipulate and communicate the information. It helps in collecting, storing, processing, researching, transferring and uploading the information connected to the teaching and learning process as well as planning to enhance the quality education. It equally helps in creating an enjoyable teaching-learning environment as well.

Entering the classroom, taking laptop or desktop, connecting to the internet, multimedia projector, presenting the slides and sharing their instructional materials are common practices of the teachers. They use websites, e-library, YouTube, social media to collect and deliver the information. It has been easy to collaborate in learning with their peers and assess their students transparently. This multi-channel learning concept has made students interactive. Virtual teaching-learning along with the mechanism of providing assignments and assessment system has become more formative. Critical thinking and creativity within the students also have been enhanced.

Literature and answers of the teachers reveal that teachers are aware of ICT tools and are applying them in their pedagogy in their best manner. While applying ICT in their teaching-learning process, they have also suggested some constraints, however, they are discipline and faculty oriented. The most common constraints depend upon teacher-student ratio, quality of students, amicable and optimal situation prior to its effective implementation, attitude of the teacher and students to achieve the goal. But most of the classrooms are not resourceful in terms of ICT. Many teachers and most of the students do not have even basic skills of handling ICT devices. There is a need to alert them about misuse and violation of cyber law as well. Moreover, digitalization of every material of university and colleges with high-speed internet facilities and modern quality technology is the most important step for integrating ICT in the education process.

In short, by the use of ICT, the thinking styles and living standards of people are changing rapidly. Institutions are becoming ICT friendly. Students are becoming able to access learning resources in a better way. This ultimately strengthens the institutions. But that is not complete. For further, there should be plan of making it better So, following recommendations are made regarding human resources and making ICT friendly environment,

1. Users should be familiarized with ICT tools like mobile downloading apps, computers and hardware and software skills etc. They should have fundamental knowledge of operating systems.
2. Institutions or experts should integrate the learning and methodological guidelines; Learning principles, teaching methods, teaching activities, collaborative work, ICT resources, etc.
3. Teachers or experts must have the knowledge and skills of the latest digital tools and resources to guide the students/respondents to achieve required standards.
4. Institutions should promote functional learning through ICT, including linguistic components, skills and communicative and learning strategies in an integrated way.
5. They should form Organization's Intersectoral Platform for ICT in education focusing on the issues through the joint work of three sectors: Communication & Information, Education and Science
6. Teachers are applying zoom, team, google meet and other software apps for interactive purposes. They are facing problems in preparing teaching-learning materials, sharing them with the students, giving and checking assignments. There is also a problem in assessing students' work. Thus, intensive and refresher trainings are required.

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Community Ecology Model of Socio-academic Integration: Understanding Interactions of Racially Minoritized Students at Four HSIs in the Southwest

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Abstract

In this article, we use Pichon's (2019) Community Ecology Model of Socio-academic Integration (CEMSAI) as a framework to conduct an environmental scan at four Hispanic Serving Institutions(HSIs): two community colleges and two research institutions. Special attention was given to how this model can help educational leaders understand how minoritized students (native or non-native to the campus) interact within these ecosystems, especially as it relates to the serving role of the institutions. The CEMSAI framework allowed us to: (a) know student profile; (b) understand the historical and cultural context of the institution; (c) determine how students use resources and space on campus; (d) observe how students develop and grow on campus (what is changing?);(e) assess the use of resources on college student change and development; and (f) systematically document changes as it relates to structural/space, curricular and co-curricular, climate, and strategic initiatives to address student success. Specifically, we learned what it is

like to be the dominant minority student at an HSI: What is it like to be a majority on campus and in the community and not always see that culture reflected within the ecosystem? This could be connected to the service role of the institution. Serving institutions, which tend to be closer to Mexico, appeared to be more socio-academically integrated..

As institutions of higher education become more diverse, educational leaders have to become more attuned to how their students are striving and thriving on their campuses while making sure that they are providing services to meet their students' needs. This paper uses community ecology theory to shed light on how minoritized students at Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) demonstrate integration within the ecosystem of their campuses. It is important for educational leadership to understand the nuanced experiences of their students and how it impacts retention, diversity, graduation, campus climate, and other indicators of success. This paper reports the findings of several organizational scans using Pichon's (2019) Community Ecology Model of Socio-academic Integration (CEMSAI) as a framework to understand what is going on within the ecosystem. Specifically, we used the framework to answer the following questions:
1. What is the student body profile?
2. How are the students interacting within the unique ecosystems?
3. How do these interactions impact students' socio-academic integration?
Findings suggest that more work has to be done to better understand the dominant minority students' experiences at HSIs, specifically, what it is like to be a majority on campus and in the community and not always see that culture reflected within the ecosystem.

Background

The number of Hispanic Serving Institutions (HSIs) is expected to rise significantly over the next half-century, yet little is known about how the environment impacts socio-academic integration, especially for those

students who are racially minoritized[6]. HSIs are colleges, universities, or systems/districts in which the Hispanic student enrollment is at least 25% of the total enrollment (Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities [HACU] n.d.). According to data reported by HACU, many of these institutions are within the Southwest region of the country. Research (Arana et al., 2011; Borden & Sharpe, 2015; Flores & Park, 2015; Santiago, 2008) suggests that HSIs provide a more fertile ground for academic success of racially minoritized students than predominantly/historically White Institutions (P/HWIs). National data trends show that the percentage of baccalaureates awarded to minorities attending HSIs continue to outnumber those of other P/HWIs (regardless of institutional types) with HBCUs graduating the most minorities (88% of their degrees were conferred to minorities; Borden & Sharpe, 2015; Li, 2007). From 1984 to 2004, HSIs enrolled 50% of the Latino students, 19% of the Asian students, 13% of the American Indian students, and 11% of the African American students (Li, 2007). In 2013, HSIs conferred 58% of their degrees to minorities; more specifically, eight percent were conferred to African Americans/Blacks while 39% were conferred to Hispanics (Borden & Sharpe, 2015). Because HSIs are a major point of access to higher education for minoritized students, Garcia et al. (2019) urge leaders to be more intentional in developing support structures that facilitate student success because these students oftentimes face challenges with integration in higher education (e.g., Bazana, & Mogotsi, 2017; Davidson & Wilson, 2012; Maestas et al., 2007; Rienties et al., 2012; Severiens & Wolff, 2008; Soria et al., 2013; Stewart, 2013; Woodford & Kulick, 2015). This may be especially true if the HSIs are struggling with their serving roles (Garcia, 2017). Garcia identifies and defines these roles accordingly: "producing" (high outcomes/low culture), "serving" (high

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[6]. Stewart (2013) defines racially minoritized students as Asian American, Black, Latino, Bi/multiracial, and American Indian while Vacarro and Newman (2016) broadened the definition beyond racially minoritized individuals to also include "…members of other historically oppressed social identity groups (e.g., people with disabilities, LGBT people, people with low socioeconomic status, or individuals whose religious or spiritual background is not Christian)…" (pp. 925-926). Thus, *minoritized students* refer to individuals who are not the majority population on campus based on race, ability, sexual orientation, income, religion, and other memberships.

outcomes/high culture), "enrolling" (low outcomes/low culture), and "enhancing" (low outcomes/high culture). However, these serving roles are not easily recognized and require intentional observation. Environmental scans can assist leaders understand their institutions' role in socio-academic integration and how their students are interacting within the institution.

Environmental scans originated as a business tool to gather organizational data as it relates to internal and external threats and opportunities for decision making (Aguilar, 1967; Morrison, 1992). These scans are usually initiated within the first few months or first year of accepting a new position, taking on a new initiative, realigning resources and priorities with changing needs, and just trying to understand what is going on. More than any other factor, the environment is a central feature that affects structure, processes, and decision making (Duncan, 1972; Salancik & Pfeffer, 1978). Environmental influences impact both the organization and leadership within. An organization's existence is contingent on its ability to adapt and act in a way that is consistent with the environment (DiMaggio & Powell, 1983; Meyer & Rowan, 1977; Tolbert, 1985). Environmental scanning in business is a method by which observation of events and occurrences are examined for in-depth consideration by high-level management (Culnan, 1983; Daft et al., 1988; Hambrick, 1981). Scanning allows for the structured collection of information that aides in the organization's ability to acclimate to the external environment (Choo, 2001). By utilizing an environmental scan, organizations can be better equipped to advance and modify a strategic plan founded on information that has been obtained (Lapin, 2004; Salinas & Lozano, 2017). Therefore, careful examination of the environment is extremely useful to encourage organizational success and is extremely necessary in higher education.

In this paper, we use Pichon's (2019) Community Ecology Model of Socio-academic Integration (CEMSAI) as a framework to conduct an environmental scan at four HSIs: two community colleges and two research institutions. Special attention is given to how this model can help educational leaders understand how racially minoritized students (as native or non-native inhabitants to the campus) interact within these ecosystems, taking into consideration the serving role of the institutions. Based on the findings, the authors provide suggestions for using the CEMSAI framework and practices.

Theoretical Framework

      For this paper, Pichon's (2019) Community Ecological Model of Socio-academic Integration (CEMSAI)[7] was used to describe observed experiences of racially minoritized students at HSIs. Using the CEMSAI as a theoretical framework for the environmental scan allowed us to answer three key questions: (1) What is the student body profile? (2) How are the students interacting within the unique ecosystems? (3) How do these interactions impact students' socio-academic integration? This model combines theoretical concepts from community ecology (Raven et al., 2017) and socio-academic integration (Deil-Amen, 2011). The model began with understanding the student body profile and/or membership indicators (e.g., race/ethnicity, gender, income, major, sexual orientation, religion), which allowed us to determine if persons were native or non-native inhabitants within the ecosystem. Then, it allowed us to understand the students' experiences within the ecological system at a particular institution, especially as it related to socio-academic integration. Attention was given to community ecology theory in higher education and socio-academic integration—the key components of CEMSAI.

Community Ecology Theory in Higher Education

      Community ecology theory provides an excellent framework to explain what is going on within higher education. Different types of institutions (e.g., Community College, Hispanic Serving Institution, Historical or Predominantly Black, Research University, Liberal Arts, Seminary) are likely to have unique ecosystems based on their different characteristics and student body profiles. For this model, we used three cyclical components of community ecology theory: intergroup interactions, adaptation, succession. That is, intergroup interactions impact adaptation, adaptation impacts succession, and succession impacts intergroup interactions.

      Intergroup interactions in higher education. Intergroup interaction concerning community ecology theory consists of competitive exclusion (i.e., "driving out" of one of the competitors), resource partitioning (i.e., limit their use of certain resources or use divergent resources), realized niche (i.e., patterns of how inhabitants actually use the physical space and resources available within the environment to survive), and cooperation

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[7] Excerpts used to explain the model appear in another publication.

(i.e., the give-and-take relationship between inhabitants over time; Raven et al., 2017). When applying notions of intergroup interaction in higher education, we focus on how students use the space on campus: how students arrive on campus and compete with others (e.g., peers, faculty, staff, administrators) within that space for limited resources (e.g., classes, academic support, food, residence halls). Reyes (2013) examined ecocultural niches for students of color to explain individual and social factors that impact their adjustment to college. He found that the role of "in-group ethnic affiliations or enclaves can play in supporting the higher educational experiences of students of color" (p. 47). That is, students tend to spend time with others like themselves.

When resources are limited on campus, students have to become more creative in how they compete for resources. Effectively competing for resources may include using certain resources at different times or simply not using them at all. For example, students may attend tutoring centers at a time when other students are less likely to be in the space because they believe they may not be able to compete with the other students for time with the tutors. Specifically, students (less prepared or new to the community) may use the Academic Center from 3:00 to 5:00 because they may believe they may have a better chance of getting their questions answered. Subsequently, this may also be a time when tutors are less available--physically and/or mentally--to provide the best services. Because of these multiple limitations related to the use of space (not feeling as though they can compete for time with tutors and not getting good services when present), students may also use different resources not being used by others either within the university community or outside of the community. For example, Bonner et al. (2015) found that African American students at an HSI were more likely to seek tutorial assistance from other programs that catered to their specific needs (e.g., TRIO, Student Athletics, peers, supervisors, counselors) or within their external communities (e.g., teachers from high school, church members, family, friends) than from the campus-sponsored services.

Concerning cooperation, campus personnel oftentimes struggle to create mutually symbiotic relationships and environments in which both students and personnel can benefit. They are more likely to engage in commensalistic and parasitic relationships. In such relationships, one member is the benefactor and the other member contributes to the success of the other member and is either not rewarded for it (i.e., commensalistic) or is harmed in the process (i.e., parasitic). Either way, the member leaves

the relationship and/or the campus feeling ignored, devalued, unappreciated, or stymied. Therefore, these symbiotic relationships are important, and administrators need to focus more on mutually symbiotic relationships than commensalistic or parasitic ones. Students benefit from the environment on campus, and the institution benefits from the students. An example of this could be when institutions qualify for certain federal funding for "serving" specific student populations but then there is a perception that they do little to ensure that those students benefit from the status or the resources generated because of their presence. If these relationships are more commensalism or parasitic, campus administrators have to consider how to make them more mutualistic relationships.

   Adaptation in higher education. As inhabitants seek to survive and thrive within the community, they acquire adaptations as a means of reducing the impact of intergroup interactions that threaten their existence and survival (Raven et al., 2017). When applying these notions of community ecology within higher education settings, students adapt to survive among other students much in the same way. For example, if students perceive a threat to their studies, they will adapt by developing a form of mimicry or camouflaging. Mimicry in students could manifest itself in being extra prepared (i.e., high performing in academic and social settings) or taking on behaviors of the majority culture (even to the detriment of those who look like them) while camouflage is when the students will try to blend into the landscape. Patterson (2004) noted that the "…higher education environment selects the organisms that have the best 'fit,' those which most successfully compete for their ecological niche survival" (p. 72). Students who apply the most appropriate survivalist adaptations to fit into the environment are more likely to persist.

   It may appear that students who employ mimicry and camouflage strategies are doing well because there is no real disruption to the observed expectations. However, this may not be true. Students who engage in mimicry behaviors may do so even if the behaviors are less welcoming to others who look like them. Furthermore, students who engage in camouflaging are less likely to interact with other students who look like them for fear of being detected by others. This may be an unrecognized hiding-in-plain-sight phenomenon at play (Raven et al., 2017). Although it appears that these students may be well adapted to the environment, persistence or retention rates may shed light on whether or not these adaptive strategies are truly effective. Strange and Banning (2015) argued

that if students are not engaging within the space, then the environment is not conducive to learning.

       Succession in higher education. Thus, research on succession is promising in predicting the success of inhabitants within higher education. *Succession*, a critical piece to understanding ecology, focuses on environmental changes over time through disturbance of the environment and/or community (Emery, 2010; Klitching, 2013; Kneitel, 2010; Prior et al., 2015; Raven et al., 2017). The act of disturbances in higher education can open niches that allow all students to flourish (i.e., causing competitors to change behavior; creating a new habitat that is more conducive to the non-native inhabitants) creating a new and hopefully improved form of diversity in which all inhabitants can exist, survive, and thrive. Specifically, the disturbance in higher education results in a more diverse student body and campus. Usually, diversity can be observed through attendance at events, classrooms, walking across campus, use of resources, types of events offered, and degrees awarded.

       In using succession to understand what is going on, there are several questions that have to be addressed: How has the environment changed because of the presence of these diverse students? How tolerant, facilitative, and inhibitous is the environment to these diverse students? The students change because of their experiences on campus and the campus environment changes because the students are there. The longer diverse students attend institutions, the more likely they are to impact the environment, making it a more conducive environment for success for those that come after them. If it appears that there are no visible changes to the environment, then one is cautioned to review other qualitative and quantifiable data. There are additional questions that can be addressed: What is the retention rate of these students? What is the graduation rate? How much do they participate in governance of the institution? Do we have a culturally responsive curriculum? What policy changes are made? What menu changes are made?

Socio-academic Integration

       Interactions within the ecological system can lead to socio-academic integration, which is critical for students to persist. Scholars (e.g., Bensimon, 2007; Deil-Amen, 2011; Napoli & Wortman, 1998; Strauss & Volkwein, 2004; Tinto, 1993) have asserted that both social and academic integration are needed for students to persist. In Tinto's (1993)

Longitudinal Model of Institution Departure, he posited that the more academically and socially integrated students are within the institution, the more likely they are to commit to that institution and ultimately persist. Deil-Amen (2011) coined the term *socio-academic integration*, which refers to the symbiotic relationship between academic (i.e., interactions faculty, staff, and peers within the classroom) and social (i.e., interactions with faculty, staff, and peers outside of the classroom) experiences. Soria et al. (2013) added other indicators of academic integration (e.g., engagement with studies, academic involvement and initiative, time spent on academic activities) and social integration (e.g., satisfaction with educational experiences, sense of belonging and satisfaction, campus climate for diversity). Students who have good experiences in- and out-side of the classroom are more likely to stay while students who do not have good experiences become less committed to attending that institution and will ultimately leave prematurely..

The ability for minoritized students to compete with other students, secure resources, enjoy communal spaces, develop healthy adaptations, and exist within a diverse setting, the more likely the student is going to become socio-academically integrated within the institution system. If these students are not able to do these things, they are less likely to become integrated and are likely to leave prematurely. The longer the students are in the community, the more likely they are to impact the environment, thus, making it more conducive for success for those who come after.
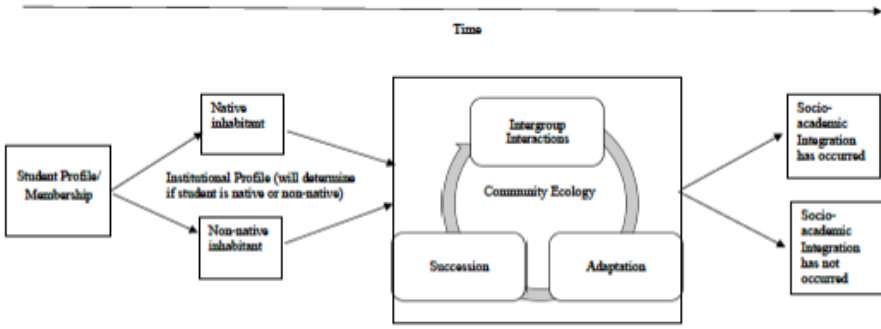

Figure 1. Community Ecological Model of Socio-academic Integration (CEMSAI) for Minoritized Students in Higher Education

CEMSAI as a Framework for an Environmental Scan at Four HSIs

Pichon's (2019) CEMSAI was used as a framework to conduct environmental scans at four HSIs. It allowed us to understand what was going on, through observations. Glesne (2006) noted that through observations, "…you learn firsthand how the actions of research participants correspond to their words; see patterns of behavior; experience the unexpected, as well as the expected…" (p. 49). These observations were the key method for understanding what is going on. We used the CEMSAI framework at four different HSIs: two community colleges and two research institutions. The institutions will be referred to as Community College 1 (CC1), Community College 2 (CC2), Research University 1 (RU1), and Research University 2 (RU2). Using the CEMSAI framework allowed for the following questions to be answered:

1. What is the student body profile?
2. How are the students interacting within the unique ecosystems?
3. How do these interactions impact students' socio-academic integration?

What is the student body profile?

Using the CEMSAI as a framework for an environmental scan helped us identify and contextualize who is operating within each institution's unique ecosystem. To do so, we were able to review institutional historical data, i.e., Institutional Fact Books, National Center for Education Statistics Integrated Postsecondary Education Data (IPEDS), National Survey of Student Engagement (NSSE), Exit/Alumni Survey, Student Surveys. This helped to identify trends in enrollment patterns, especially as it related to race/ethnicity, gender, college/division, first-generation status, Pell Grant eligibility, graduation and completion rates, institutional characteristics, or any specified data assessed by the institution. Since all institutions did not capture all of the same data and in the same ways, it was important to get "eyes on the situation" (i.e., does what you see in the data match what you see on campus?).

The four HSIs using the CEMSAI had unique student bodies that may provide insight into how students navigate the ecosystem and become socio-academically integrated. For example, CC1 enrolled approximately 30,000 students. Of those numbers, 85% of the students were Hispanic/Latino, 7% were Caucasian/White, 2% were African American/Black, and 1% was Asian. Females made up the majority of the

student body (57%), and the average age was 20. First-generation college students made up 44% of the student body. Only 12% are enrolled in vocational/tech programs. CC2 enrolled approximately 11,000 students. Of that number, 73% of the students were Hispanic/Latino, 17% were Caucasian/White, 3% were African American/Black, 1% was Asian, .02% were Native American/American Indian. Females made up the majority of the student body (54%), and traditional age (18-24) students made up 54% of the student body. Also, 57% of the students were first-generation college students, and 64% are Pell Grant eligible. Approximately 30% were in non-degree seeking programs.

The research institutions were similar to the community college. RU1 is a public research university that enrolled approximately 25,000 students. Of those numbers, 80% of the students were Hispanic/Latino, 9% were Caucasian/White, 3% were African American/Black, and 1% were Asian. Females made up the majority of the students (57%), and the average age was 23. Also, 50% of the students were first-generation college students. RU2 enrolled approximately 20,000. Of those numbers, 43% of the students were Hispanic/Latino, 35% were Caucasian/White, 5.2% were Native American/American Indian, 4% were Asian, and 2.4% were African American/Black. Females made up the majority of the students (63%) and the age range from 18-25. Forty percent of the freshmen class is first generation college students.

Native and non-native inhabitants. Reviewing the data regarding the student body through the CEMSAI framework, we were able to determine the focus on native and non-native inhabitants. Although all four HSIs had a majority Hispanic/Latino student students, we quickly learned that the historical backdrop associated with HSIs, as it relates to being H/PWIs, created some dissonance with correlations between native and majority populations. Even though these HSIs were in a high Hispanic/Latino area, many of them retained their Eurocentric/White culture. This nuance forced us to rely heavily on Garcia's (2017) typologies of HSIs--producing (high outcomes/low culture), serving (high outcomes/high culture), enrolling (low outcomes/low culture), and enhancing (low outcomes/high culture)—to understand what was going on.

Specifically, CC1 and RU1 had an extremely large Hispanic/Latino student body and appeared to provide a more Hispanic/Latino culture taking into consideration the proximity to the U.S.-Mexico border. These institutions were considered "serving" based

on Garcia's (2017) typologies. They had high outcomes and high culture. Many signs were in both Spanish and English, and students conversed with one another and with faculty and staff in both Spanish and English, sometimes in the same conversations. Remaining true to the understanding of who the students are, institutional leadership addressed head-on many of the issues Mexican Nationals faced regarding border restrictions, delays, and stress. The student body and organizations promoted solidarity by passing out literature, holding immigration forums, and providing resources to their peers. A feeling of oneness with the U.S.-Mexico border and being one with the campus surroundings was a noticeable quality and appeared to play into the inhabitant's ability to connect with and utilize the environment. This connectedness was displayed through active student participation, calmness, and a sense of belonging, further preserving the unique atmosphere.

However, the HSIs further away from the U.S.-Mexico Border, although high in numbers, appeared to have a less Hispanic/Latino culture. CC2 would be considered "enrolling," low outcomes/low culture, while RU2 would be considered "producing," high outcomes/high culture, based on Garcia's (2017) typologies. Both institutions had little dominant majority student culture present on campus; CC2 also had low outcomes while RU2 was able to have high outcomes. This visual piece is interwoven into the scenery, people, activities, and most all of campus life. These institutions appeared to be less intentional about incorporating Hispanic/Latin culture into what appeared to be more of an H/PWI culture that just happened to have a large Hispanic student body. Historically, students on those campuses had often complained about the lack of Hispanic/Latino culture within these spaces (e.g., leadership, faculty and staff, curriculum, guest speakers), based fliers for forums, testimonios, and platicas. The CEMSAI framework allowed us to distinguish who were the dominant students on each campus. So, although the Hispanic/Latino students were the majoritymembers on all four campuses, they were not the native student body. The use of the CEMSAI framework as an environmental scan highlighted this chasm.

How are the students interacting within the unique ecosystems?
Using the CEMSAI framework for the environmental scan at the four HSIs helped us understand how students (native and non-native) interacted within, adapted to, and made an impact on the ecosystem, i.e., campus—what is going on? If students can create meaningful and/or

lasting relationships, compete for resources, use space to meet their needs, they can adapt behaviors that allow themselves and other students to be successful.

Intergroup interactions. In observing the intergroup interactions of students at the four HSIs, we were able to triangulate preliminary findings based on historical student data and cultural nuances within the ecosystem. Overall, all four institutions showed all students competing for and using resources on campus (lounges, dining halls, computer labs, class labs, technology outlets). The campuses were always busy; people were constantly moving inside and outside of the buildings. There were moderate to high levels of conversation taking place all over, depending on locations. This illustrated the use of meaningful resources and communal spaces in which students could come together.

In using the CEMSAI framework, we were able to recognize realized niched spaces that were not equally shared by all students, especially those minoritized on campus. This was especially evident at RU2 in which student groups appeared to create realized niches in which their members used mainly. Although Caucasian/White students appeared to use all resources and be a part of all realized niches. Minoritized students on campus, including Hispanic/Latino students, found areas on campus in which more students who looked like them, were present; students congregated in areas of interests per race/ethnicity, gender, sexual orientation, religion, etcetera. For example, on most occasions, African American/Black students could be observed taking food from the dining hall and going to the Ethnic Studies Office to eat it. Like many of the African American students, the dining hall appeared to be a utilitarian area (get food) for them versus an area to hang out (social integration). Although the Asian students made up 4% and Native Americans/American Indians made up 5% of the student body, they were rarely observed in the main dining hall. This raised issues regarding dietary concerns; where the dining halls serving culturally diverse foods? Large numbers of Asian and Caucasian/White students on campus were mostly found in the medical/health buildings. Nuances such as these were more difficult to observe at CC1 since over 80% of the students were Hispanic/Latino. Although the minoritized students were active on campus, their numbers were extremely small. At several of the other institutions (RU1 and CC2), faculty and staff were observed collaborating with students in particular spaces. That was less obvious at CC1. At that institution, resources and realized niches tended to vary depending on age

and nationality. Traditional age college students tended to use campus resources (i.e., student organization office, student centers, lounges) while non-traditional were more likely to be observed using student business service offices (i.e., Financial Aid, Bursar, Advising). Additionally, Mexican Nationals tended to create smaller social groups in the space. For example, if eating together in the cafeteria, they sat at the table until everyone had eaten before leaving for class. They could be observed studying together in designated areas that appeared to be common spots on campus, usually off the beaten paths, for them to gather. Rarely did they speak English in those spaces; they spoke Spanish.

Adaptations. In observing the adaptations of students at the four HSIs, we were to determine how they employed strategies to survive. On the surface, there was a lot of mimicry and camouflaging that occurred on the campuses. That is, for the most part, students looked, dressed, and acted like those around them. This happens at most institutions all the time. However, at RU1 and RU2, students were wearing casual attire with shorts and t-shirts, backpacks and drinks or food in hand. Many students were gathered near the medical/health building wearing scrubs that display the school logos and colors. At RU2, white lab coats appeared to be the highest form of mimicry as the students moved through space with confidence, enunciating distinctly, walking tall, and usually in small groups engaged in conversation. It also became apparent that the white jackets appeared to be at the top of the hierarchy.

Additionally, at RU1, the labs in the engineering building were full of students working on projects with the students wearing white coats and working on hands-on projects. Students were gathered in the aerospace computer lab engaged with one another and the tasks with others in a lab wearing white coats working on moldings. At other HSIs, isolation through camouflaging was the main form of adaptation. At these four institutions, moving in packs, or small groups, was more commonplace for minoritized students. These packs varied based on the distance to the U.S.-Mexico border: institutions closer to the border were more likely to work in packs. At RU1, minoritized students sat with one another and engaged in conversations, walked to classes, and lounged in the common areas. Waiting for classes they engaged with one another. When they were not in small groups of two or more, they sat or stood alone looking at their mobile phones oftentimes with headphones plugged into their ears and not engaging with the outside world. Students at CC1 were more likely to be

arranged in groups based on age and nationality, especially within the Hispanic/Latino culture.

Moving further from the U.S.-Mexico border, there appeared to be fewer packs visible throughout campus. Instead, those were mostly in designated areas of space. For example, RU2 has a moderate Muslim student body, and on several occasions, female students with hijabs were oftentimes observed. Additionally, Native American students were observed sitting together in the student center. Another group often seen clustered together were student-athletes. They usually represented the varying genders and race/ethnicity, major, and other memberships. When visiting student business services at CC1, traditional-age college students tended to travel with two or more other persons, usually of their same interests and many times of the same ethnicity. A few of the other groups observed appeared to be more diverse and usually were a bit larger than the groups that were not as diverse. Trends of isolation continued at CC2, students. The only two groups that appeared to move in packs were Caucasian/White and Hispanic/Latino. The students "clustered" by racial lines in the lounge and eatery. Minoritized students appeared to travel alone, walking with earbuds or headphones in, preoccupied with smartphones or tablets, or focused on getting to their destination.

Although students in isolation were observed at all four HSIs, it appeared to be more prevalent at the institutions further from the U.S.-Mexico border. This may speak to students' reliance on camouflaging, that is, hiding in plain sight. Institutions closer to the border and more open to celebrating the culture of the region engaged in more pack behavior. The CEMSAI allowed us to observe successful strategies for blending into the environment.

Succession. Succession is a snapshot created as an amalgamation of intergroup interactions and adaptations over time within the space. As the students change within the space, the space yields to accommodate the students. Examples of succession were plentiful throughout the HSIs. At RU1, native art and natural murals surrounded the outdoor spaces. The campus was kept in pristine condition with groomed gardens and grassy areas all of which were occupied over the day. One of the most notable features was the diversity of the student body. Minoritized students, especially Hispanic/Latino, could be seen at every venue. They engaged with each other and throughout their campus. English and Spanish could be heard among the conversations. Walking into the eateries, lounges, and classrooms, they were occupied with students of multiple races and

ethnicities. This was not only evident among the student body but as well within the staff and faculty populations. Academic buildings were decorated with pictures of diverse students showing off their accomplishments. There were research projects on display, pictures of students working in labs, students competing in athletics as well as a show of students working within the community on projects. The campus website also displayed diversity, highlighting institutional awards for commitment to Hispanic/Latino students and Border Scholars working on binational solutions and multiple faculty accomplishments. At RU2, succession appeared to be most evident in academic areas more so than social settings. For example, medical/health faculty appeared to be engaged with all students in the communal space within the building. All students, regardless of membership, were present on campus and engaging, to some extent, with regard to socio-academic integration. Additionally, although there was not a lot of intermingling among the varying student groups, the institution provided space for growth and development.

Succession at the community colleges was for different reasons. At CC1, you could see the impact of the Hispanic/Latino students' impact. Students regularly engaged in conversations in Spanish and English. Signs could be observed in both Spanish and English. The cafeterias prepared food that mirrored that of the community. It was noted that there were even accommodations for Mexican Nationals who had different needs from some of the Mexican-Americans. For example, there were signs providing directions to students for requiring emergency accommodations within the city due to border closings. These students could still be observed using the outside tables/benches to collaborate with one other. It was noted that the outdoor space allowed for peer-to-peer collaborations. At CC2, succession was more difficult to detect. But for the visual representation of diversity on campus of students moving through the buildings, the building spaces were not as intentional about celebrating diversity and/or recognizing the culture of the dominant student body. Other than pictures of university administration and a few bilingual fliers strategically placed in several different buildings, the space was culturally neutral. Of the four institutions, CC2, even though 70% of the student body was Hispanic/Latino, it had fewer indications of succession.

Using the CEMSAI framework, we learned how all students are impacting the institution. Indicators included both visual representations as well as historical data. HSIs strongly connected to traditional P/HWIs

have a more difficult time accepting new cultural realities of their dominant student body. HSIs accepting of their designation and the culturally rich histories and new traditions that come along with it, appear to create a more fertile ground for diversity to flourish.

What are indicators of student socio-academic integration?
      Using the CEMSAI framework for an environmental scan at four HSIs allowed us to make connections between what we observed within the ecosystem and what it says about socio-academic integration. To develop socio-academic integration, minoritized students have to compete with other students, secure resources, enjoy communal spaces, develop healthy defensive strategies, and exist within a diverse setting. If these students are not able to do these things, they are less likely to become socio-academically integrated and are more likely to leave. This illuminated how the four HSIs utilized their rich campus resources and environments to embody genuine fulfillment and create a distinctive campus culture. We found that there were purposeful, culturally rich, institutional features that influence engagement, participation, and success. To understand if socio-academic integration has occurred, institutional leaders need to be able to access student data.
      We learned that native and dominant students within a space can create environments that allow other student groups to become more socio-academically integrated at these four HSIs. The lack of engagement among non-native and/or minoritized students sheds light on whether or not these students are being integrated. This absence of interaction, especially at RU2 (producing) and CC2 (enrolling) institutions, demonstrated a lack of socio-academic integration. This could be confirmed by examining retention rates at these institutions (and by race/ethnicity) during that same time. However, retention data per race/ethnicity were not easily accessible due to new federal reporting guidelines. However, "serving" institutions (RU1 and CC1) appeared to allow for more socio-academically integration. When celebrating the institutions' rich culture at HSIs, it leaves opportunity for socio-integration to flourish among minoritized students, especially when walking and talking together in common spaces such as the library, classrooms, public areas, and dining areas. In these venues, students of multiple races and ethnicities were seen with one another as well as campus staff. These interactions encompassed casual gatherings, socio-academic interactions,

and displayed active engagement and intellectual assignments with the exploration of new and diverse experiences.

Discussion

In this paper, we used the Community Ecology Model for Socio-academic Integration (CEMSAI) as a framework for an environmental scan at four HSIs. Understanding who is on campus and what is going on within the ecosystem allowed us to identify key interactions that may influence socio-academic integration. Drawing from the underlying principles of community ecology, we too gave attention to the process by which interactions between the organization and the environment can foster mutual adaptation (Bubolz & Sontag, 1993). Further, the principles of CEMSI ensured a broader conceptualization of the subcultures that existed on campus which could enhance minoritized student success in these environments. Scholarship on college environments underscores the significance of ecological and/or environmental factors which are important to understanding campus environments (Banning & Bryner, 2001). Scanning the environment allowed for a holistic understanding of imperative influences that played into student success (Choo, 2001; Sutton, 1998).

For HSIs, student profile was an extremely important characteristic to assess. Because of the location of the institution (Southwest), as well as the HSI designation, it was imperative to assess if the "serving" role accurately reflected the institution per Garcia's (2017) model: producing (high outcomes/low culture), serving (high outcomes/high culture), enrolling (low outcomes/low culture), and enhancing (low outcomes/high culture). Also, the information gained through observation of intergroup interactions, adaptation, and succession which allowed for the comprehension of social interactions among members was extremely useful in helping us learn what is going on. Socio-academic integration within the ecosystem exposed meaningful engagement activities on campus. Lastly, in understanding the student profile, leaders can offer services that speak to students' preparedness, learning, engagement, and on-campus behaviors. Thus, leaders can utilize this model to select and filter through data about students within their ecosystem.

Overall, the CEMSI was a beneficial tool for identifying and analyzing the environment for a greater knowledge of interactions. Slaughter (1999) explained that scans are used as a foundational framework that allows leaders to choose what to look for and what

information would yield useful information for making future decisions to improve student success. The CEMSAI framework can do just that; it allowed educational leaders to:

1. know student profile;
2. understand the historical and cultural context of the institution;
3. determine how students use resources and space on campus;
4. observe how students develop and grow on campus (what is changing?);
5. assess the use of resources on college student change and development; and
6. systematically document changes as it relates to structural/space, curricular and co-curricular, climate, and strategic initiatives to address student success.

More importantly, the use of the CEMSAI as a framework for an environmental scan prompted a discussion about dominant and native student populations: are they the same? The CEMSAI allowed us to examine what it is like to be a dominant minority at an HSI. Specifically, it allowed us to observe what it is like to be a majority on campus and in the community and not always see that culture reflected within the ecosystem. This was especially true the further away from the U.S.-Mexico border. In many ways, students who used realized niches were less likely to compete for resources, and engaged in camouflaging adaptation strategies—which is commonly observed in non-dominant/non-native populations within an ecosystem (Bonner et al., 2015; Patterson, 2004; Raven et al., 2017; Reyes, 2013). Thus, HSIs truly have to determine which role they wish to play per Garcia's (2017) typologies: producing (high outcomes/low culture), serving (high outcomes/high culture), enrolling (low outcomes/low culture), and enhancing (low outcomes/high culture). This could give some HSIs much needed purpose and mission that better reflect their student body.

Implications

The CEMSAI as a framework for an environmental scan for HSIs calls for educational leaders to know their students. One, because HSIs tend to mirror the city populations, it is important for leaders to know who is on their campus. In knowing who is on campus, leaders will be better able to develop engaging programming that matches who is on campus now as opposed to who was once on campus. There needs to be more intentional programming that better reflects the student body. Two, HSIs

can use historical, observational, and cultural data to develop a snapshot of who is on campus and the identity of the institution. Leaders need to know if they are enrolling, enhancing, producing, or serving their students, and more importantly, which culture is dominating or serving as a native ground for socio-academic integration to how students negotiate the system. There needs to be more intentional programming to improve outcomes for students. Three, HSIs will be able to determine how students are using the resources. Because students may not feel as comfortable using resources on campus (relegating themselves to smaller realized niches), they are likely to look for those resources in the community. Which students are using which resources will identify issues related to climate and culture. Therefore, it is important for HSIs to also develop partnerships within the community that benefit students' overall success. Four, HSIs can determine how the use of these specific resources impact college student growth and development. By examining retention and graduation rates, institutions will be better able to determine if students are using resources designed to assist them. There needs to be more targeted research that seeks to improve student success. More attention should focus on institutional barriers. Finally, to ensure that students can become more socio-academically integrated within the institutions, HSIs have to determine the impact of resources on students and how they are changing over time, and more importantly, how development and growth are measured within the ecosystem. Institutions have to observe and note changes in the environment. This includes checking in with students to see how they changed during their time within the ecosystem.

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Emotional intelligence in educational leadership doctoral students: Examining association based on gender and age

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Abstract

This study examined differences between females and males in emotional intelligence (EI). The researchers conducted a test of association between EI and sex and on age in a sample of educational leadership doctoral students. Using a survey, the principal investigator collected measures on EI and other demographic information from the participants. The sample was made up of 36 educational leadership students (24 women and 12 men) attending a regional university located in the southern region of the United States. EI was evaluated by the Schutte Self-Report EI Test (Schutte et al., 1998), which evaluates four subscales (Perception of Emotion, Utilization of Emotion, Managing own Emotions, and Managing Others' Emotions). When the researchers examined EI as a trait, they were unable to detect differences in EI based on gender and based on age. Additional research is needed to further understand EI in educational leadership doctoral students.

Keywords: emotional intelligence, educational leadership doctoral students, gender differences

A person with high Emotional Intelligence (EI) is expected not only to be capable of describing, explaining, and managing their emotions but also, they should be able to read the emotions of others. Parveen et al. (2012) defined EI as the innate potential to feel, use, communicate, recognize, remember, describe, identify, learn from, manage, understand, and explain emotions. Parveen et al. (2012) posited that these innate characteristics can be corrupted and skewed through interactions with others. Goleman (2011) suggested that good counselors, group leaders, and teachers have emotional empathy because of their ability to sense how others are reacting. As such, programs that prepare students to enter educational leadership careers should be aware of the role of EI within the educational milieu. Academic leaders have identified empathy as an important trait (Parrish, 2015), and researchers suggest a strong relationship between EI, resilience, and leadership success (Maulding et al., 2012). University students in leadership training fields should understand EI. In the past decade or two, we have witnessed a growing body of research regarding the importance of EI for successful school leadership (Carmeli, 2003; Jamli & Salim, 2020; MacCann et al., 2020).

Phenomenon of interest

EI can be traced to discussions in social intelligence (Thorndike, 1920; Crowne, 2009) and multiple intelligence (Gardner, 2003). EI is a relatively new and growing area of behavioral research. EI has caught the imagination of the general public, the commercial world, and the scientific community (Zeidner et al., 2004). EI connects with several cutting-edge areas of psychological science, including the neuroscience of emotion, self-regulation theory, studies of metacognition, and the search for human cognitive abilities beyond "traditional" academic intelligence (Zeidner, 2004).

EI has its four generic domains: self-awareness, self-management, social awareness, and relationship management (Goleman, 2011). Self-awareness, which is called Emotional Self-awareness extends to a person's understanding of his or her values and goals (Goleman, 2011). Self-aware people know and are comfortable talking about their limitations and strengths, and they often demonstrate a thirst for constructive criticism (Goleman, 2011). Self-awareness can help people identify their own strengths and weaknesses. Hence, people should have an awareness of their values, thoughts, and goals. Self-management is to create an environment of trust and fairness via control of the feelings of others,

which can help students to build up relationships to achieve their organizational goals; however, they could not improve themselves well in some aspects (Goleman, 2011). Social awareness involves empathy, organizational awareness, and service (Goleman, 2011). Leaders with empathy can attune to a wide range of emotional signals, letting them sense the felt, but unspoken emotions in a person or group (Goleman, 2011). Leaders with empathy can better understand their employees' real situations in their work and in their lives. Moreover, a leader with a keen social awareness can be politically astute, able to detect crucial social networks, and read key power relationships (Goleman, 2011). However, power has some negative impacts. Powerful people often misjudge, misunderstand, and even derogate their subordinates within organizations (Forsyth, 2018).

As aspiring successful educational leaders, doctoral students should understand the importance of social awareness. Managing relationships among team members is the ability to inspire and influence others (Goleman, 2011), but it may be difficult to master for some educational leaders and students. For Fida et al. (2018), university education is a terminal stage when young people are ready to enter the job arena and they are expected to be emotionally sound. Some researchers have conceptualized EI as a set of mental abilities concerned with emotions and the processing of emotional information (Goleman, 1995; Mayer & Salovey, 1997; Mayer et al., 1999; Palmer et al., 2005). Models have included motivation and social functioning (Bar-On, 1997; Bar-On, 2006). Conceptualizations of EI have led to different measurement scales. EI as a trait rather than an ability differentiates two constructs. Self-reported questionnaires measure EI as a trait, and maximal performance tests measure EI as an ability (Jonker & Vosloo, 2008; MacCann et al., 2020). Researchers distinguish these two different constructs of EI (Petrides et al., 2007). Personality Trait EI concerns emotion-related dispositions and self-perceptions measured via self-report, whilst ability EI concerns emotion-related cognitive abilities that ought to be measured via maximum-performance tests (Petrides et al., 2007).

The more established and well utilized measurement scales relating to EI use different constructs to measure emotion-related dispositions and emotion-related cognitive abilities. For instance, the Schutte Self-Report EI Test (SSEIT), developed by Schutte et al. (1998), measures the ability to have a positive effect, recognize the emotions of others, have happy emotions, manage one's own emotions, recognize non-verbal emotions,

and be effective at emotional management (Schutte et al., 2009; Vadivel & Kate, 2019). The SSEIT sub-scales are *Perception of Emotion*, *Managing Own Emotions*, *Managing Others' Emotions*, and *Utilization of Emotion*.

Law et al. (2004) investigated the validity of their EI construct. These researchers suggested a four-dimensional construct: the ability to understand one's own and others' emotions, the ability to regulate one's emotions, and the ability to use one's emotions. Law et al. (2004) also showed that EI might be a good predictor of job performance and life satisfaction. Sterrett (2000) identified six constructs—self-awareness, self-confidence, self-control, empathy, motivation, and social-competency. Bar-On (1997) identified a 15-self report measure that includes scales such as self-regard, emotional awareness, assertiveness, emotional self-expression, independence, empathy, and social responsibility.

Prior studies have investigated gender and its association with EI. For instance, Joseph and Newman (2010) using a meta-analysis concluded that women obtained higher scores than men on all EI dimensions (Effect Size ranging from .29 to .49).

Age can be another factor that influences EI. Johnson and Christensen (2019) explored the EI of senior student affairs officers by examining their management of emotions. The results indicated that age, gender, education level, and years of experience did not statistically impact the participants ability to manage their emotions (Johnson & Christensen, 2019). However, Chen (2016) found that older adults may use EI to enhance their subjective well-being.

Problem statement

Little to no research exists that relates to measuring EI among doctoral students in educational leadership. Because EI has been theorized to be desirable for school counselors, group leaders, and teachers (Goleman, 2011), studies need to empirically investigate levels of EI in doctoral students that relate to behaviors, attitudes, and performance at school. In order to understand and estimate doctoral students' levels of EI, we need to build a research agenda to examine and test EI as a phenomenon in the population of educational leadership doctoral students. In addition, outcomes can provide researchers and practitioners with a better understanding of EI among educational leaders. Further, based on these research studies, doctoral programs can find ways to help students continuously improve and develop their levels of EI. Therefore, this study fills a gap in the extant literature.

Purpose
       The purpose of this study was to investigate EI in educational leadership doctoral students. Specifically, the researchers examined the differences in EI between females and males; the relationship between gender and EI, and the relationship between age and EI. The investigation was exploratory in nature because factors relating the EI among educational leadership doctoral students is not fully understood. The researchers were guided by three research questions.

Research Questions
RQ1: Is there a significant difference in levels of EI between males and females among educational leadership doctoral students?

RQ2: What is the strength of the relationship between gender and EI?
RQ3: What is the extent of the relationship between students' age and their levels of EI?

<h3 style="text-align:center">Literature Review</h3>
       Studies have found differences in measures of EI between genders. In a sample of Pakistani university students, females were found to be more emotionally intelligent than males (Bibi et al., 2016). However, male medical students in India and in Qatar (Taher et al., 2020) have been found to have higher EI than female medical students. Female University students in the humanities and in sciences being higher on stress than males were not significantly different in EI (Goel & Bardhan, 2016). Among university volleyball players, EI has been found to be higher in females than males, and EI can be an important predictor of sportspersonship orientation (Can, 2016). There has been found a statistical significance difference between male and female Kuwait university students in quality of life and EI in favor of female students (AI-Huwailah, 2017). Among graduate students, Thompson (2011) found no relationship between EI and satisfaction with overall academic experience. Huerta et al. (2017) found that EI is not a significant predictor of writing anxiety, but it has a moderate effect with first language.
       Since little to no studies exist that we found relating specifically to EI among educational leadership doctoral students, this literature review highlights the study of the phenomenon of EI among students in

leadership preparation in academic fields such as nursing, business, and in education among teachers and administrators.

Nursing

Nurses are strongly associated with care, compassion, and empathy. Şenyuva et al. (2014) used a Self-Compassion Scale and Emotional Intelligence Assessment Scale with a sample of 571 nursing undergraduates. These researchers found a correlation between self-compassion and EI, which includes the individual perceiving one's emotions and using the knowledge one gained to function while directing thoughts, actions, and professional applications. It is not surprising that EI among nurses has gained the attention of many researchers worldwide. In Sloveni, Štiglic et al. (2018) investigated EI between undergraduate nursing students with and without previous caring experience and engineering students. These researchers found no differences in EI between these groups. These researchers did not examine length of service providing care or age as a factor relating to EI.

One study that included gender and age was conducted among Nigerian nursing students (Uzonwanne, 2016). In this study, there was no difference in EI between genders, but female nurses were found to be significantly higher in the subscale measure of appraisal of others' emotions. Unzonwanne also found that the age ranges of 18-30 and 31-40 expressed the "highest manifestation" of EI (p. 7801).

Zoromski (2017) found a positive correlation between older adults and higher levels of EI. Zoromski's study is informative because among nursing students with self-awareness, they can identify their own strengths in caring for their patients, but sometimes these students have challenges knowing themselves well and may suffer from anxiety (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2008). Anxiety is a common phenomenon that constitutes a universal cause of poor academic performance among students worldwide. A study among 277 female nurses attending university in the Middle East found that most experienced high levels of test anxiety during final exams even though their marks were good throughout the semester (Dawood et al., 2016). These researchers found that test anxiety scores decreased with participants' age, but there was no significant relationship.

EI is associated with positive empowerment processes as well as positive organizational outcomes (Akerjordet & Severinsson, 2008). Some researchers have found that nurse leaders who exhibit EI enhance organizational, staff, and patient outcomes. Young nursing students

usually spend some time improving their attitudes and behaviors in taking care of their patients in the hospital because they understand that higher EI can help them to achieve organizational goals and outcomes. For instance, Cheng Jiang is a nurse student who works as an intern with infected patients in Wuhan, China (Mo et al., 2020). She knows she must protect her patients. She exhibits self-awareness and can identify her own strengths in caring for her patients. Her self-management is to create an environment of trust and fairness via control of the feelings of others (Goleman, 2011). For many experienced nurses, managing relationships among team members is the ability to inspire and influence others (Goleman, 2011).

In medicine, EI awareness is needed not only among nurses. Thousands of forefront medical interns, volunteers, and workers rushed to fight against the COVID-19 epidemic disease in Wuhan, China (Mo et al., 2020). These medical workers needed to rely on positive thoughts, attitudes, and behaviors to treat all of their patients because people with high levels of EI are better able to show empathy and to communicate their ideas with others, for they can use their own emotional energy to influence others (Forsyth, 2018).

A trait measure of EI among medical students in Karnataka, India found no significant differences between males and females (Vadivel & Kate, 2019). However, among other Indian medical students, females were found to have significantly higher EI than male medical students (Shetty et al., 2013), and Ajmal et al. (2017) found males. With these studies, age was not a factor that was considered in the analysis.

In summary, the extant literature suggests that EI among nurses and medical graduate students is of importance to understand. Some studies have found differences. The literature suggests that researchers have focused on gender differences and few have included age as a variable of interest.

Business

Studies relating to EI among graduate students have included business students. EI has caught the attention of business leaders, scholars, and executive development consultants (Pinos et al., 2013). There was a positive impact on academic achievement among MBA graduates in a program that included the development of EI competencies (Joyner & Mann, 2011). MBA students can develop EI crucial to effectiveness as managers and leaders (Boyatzis et al., 2002). Further, students of business

and economics had higher levels of EI, while students of Arts and Humanities had lower levels of EI (Fida et al., 2018). These researchers found that in business students whose teams had a higher EI average score exhibited better team task performance and higher density friendship networks (Zhang et al., 2020). Among American and Chinese accounting students, it was found that there was little variance in EI scores (Margavio et al., 2016). However, the researchers in many of these studies with business students did not examine age.

Age can be the next key factor to think about in examining business students' levels of EI. It is predicted that in 15 years, there may be as much as a 25% increase in demand for 35-45 years old workers while there will be 15% fewer Americans in the 35-45 years old range (Joyner & Mann, 2011). These fundamental, long-term demographic patterns dictate that the demand for talent will continue to increase, and the amount of available talent will continue to decrease (Joyner & Mann, 2011). Because of this decrease, the development of EI competencies was identified as a key developmental leverage point for MBA students (Joyner & Mann, 2011). Among business students, EI was found to be positively associated with work experience, but it was not significantly associated with age (Shipley et al., 2010). However, Margavio et al. (2016) revealed that students' EI scores significantly differ with age, gender, and grade point average.

The studies that included graduate business suggest that gender and age are important variables when investigated in their context with EI. EI competence is a key trait for business leaders. Cavallo and Brienza (2002) found a strong relationship between superior performing leaders and emotional competence. Understanding EI in graduate students training to become leaders is important, even though business leaders may not be known as pursuing helping careers similar to nurses and educators.

Education
Teachers

Scholars and applied researchers recognize that EI empowers educational leaders (Tench, 2016). The value of EI for effective teaching, student achievement, and importance of EI to transformative learning has been discussed (Nelson et al., 2005). EI skills are linked to classroom management performance and teacher retention factors for new and novice teachers (Nelson et al., 2005). Teacher EI influences the management of

discipline in a classroom and is related to gender, academic qualification (e.g., doctorate), and service time (Valente et al., 2019).

No significant difference was found between teacher candidates' EI levels and communication skills regarding gender and department (Ozkaral & Ustu, 2019). It was also found that EI did not differ according to gender and grade level, but it had a significant difference according to age and department variables (Akyol & Akdemir, 2019).

One study examined the correlations of EI, academic help-seeking behavior, and psychological help-seeking behavior on students' academic achievement in Woldia College of Teacher Education (WCTE), Woldia, Ethiopia (Astatke, 2018). This study suggests that gender differences in academic help-seeking behavior and academic achievement were not statistically significant. Astatke recommends that parents, instructors, counselors, and administrative bodies should work on promoting students' EI and developing students' help-seeking behaviors—academic and psychological help-seeking behaviors—to enhance academic achievement of students.

Administrators

Some educational administrators (e.g., Dean of Students, Assistant Head of School, Head of School, and Instructional Coach) are analogous to teachers. Their levels of EI should also be considered since they are agents within the academic milieu. In context, administrators need to have awareness of their EI when they provide feedback to build teachers' self-efficacy and provide instructional feedback to teachers (Gutierrez, 2018). Furthermore, principals should receive additional professional development opportunities targeting EI and feedback types (Gutierrez, 2018). EI serves as a possible skillset for academic deans to utilize in navigating between their administrative duties and serving as leaders for their staff and faculty. Tabors (2019) focused on determining whether academic deans' EI levels are related to their leadership effectiveness, age, gender, and position duration.

School leaders must be cognizant of the opportunities and direction afforded by research associated with EI (McDowelle & Bell, 1997). This is consistent with Parrish (2015) who used a multi-modal case study and found that participants overwhelmingly agreed that leaders in higher education who were more sensitive and responsive not only gained more respect by peers, but they also performed more effectively. A mixed-methods study to determine the relationship between EI and resilience and

leadership success found a strong positive correlation between a school leader's EI, resilience, and leadership capacity (Maulding et al., 2012). In a study of two educational leadership doctoral programs in upstate New York, Caminos (2015) suggested that cohort-model as well as non-cohort programs train candidates in EI. University administrators should have high levels of EI.

Summary

Since little to no studies that we know of addressed EI among graduate level students in educational leadership, we explored the literature that included other graduate fields specifically in medicine and business. We identified these graduate programs not only because they prepare students in careers that require high levels of EI, but also, we recognize growth patterns in careers away from stereotypical gender roles. The findings from studies suggest that many studies fail to support conclusions that there is a difference in EI between genders among graduate students in medicine, business, and education. Additionally, when age is examined with respect to its correlation with levels of EI, many studies suggest a positive but not a significant relationship. The findings suggest that among graduate students in helping professions, EI is not significant as it relates to gender and age.

Method

Sample

The study employs quantitative methodology. More specifically, the study employs a survey method design. The researchers used a convenience sample ($N = 36$; 24 females, 12 males) from the Educational Leadership Doctoral students attending a regional university located in the southern region of the United States. The selection criteria included all doctoral students identified as currently enrolled, dropped-out, or graduated. All genders and program concentrations were also included. Program concentrations reported were Organizational Leadership (47.3%), Postsecondary Leadership (31.6%), and P-12 Leadership (10.5%). A greater portion of participants (36.11%) reported having already taken more than 49 credit hours. Each participant provided informed consent. Participation was voluntary and anonymous.

Instrument and Measures

The researchers selected the SSEIT because of its high internal consistency. Developed by Schutte et al. (1998) as a self-reported tool of data collection and measurement of an individual's emotional intelligence, the SSEIT measures traits as the ability to have a positive effect, recognize the emotions of others, have happy emotions, manage one' own emotions, recognize non-verbal emotions, and be effective at emotional management.

Sub-scales are *Perception of Emotion* (items 5, 9, 15, 18, 19, 22, 25, 29, 32, 33), *Managing Own Emotions* (items 2, 3,10, 12, 14, 21, 23, 28, 31), *Managing Others' Emotions* (items 1, 4, 11, 13, 16,24, 26, 30), and *Utilization of Emotion* (items 6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 27). Reverse coding items 5, 28 and 33, and then summing all items provides a total score that can range from 33 to 165. Higher scores indicate a characteristic of greater emotional intelligence (Schutte et al., 2009). Each item is rated using a Likert type scale (1 = *strongly disagree* to 5 = *strongly agree*).

High internal consistency of the SSEIT has been found. Schutte et al. (1998) found the SSEIT a Cronbach's α of 0.90 for the 33-item scale and a Flesch-Kincaid grade level = 5.68, and Ciarrochi et al. (2001) found a Cronbach's α = 0.84, while Saklofske et al. (2003) found a Cronbach α = 0.89. As Streiner and Kottner (2014) specified, "Cronbach's α is regarded as the measures of the interrelatedness of item scores constituting one instrument or test" (p. 1927). From studies that have been found to have higher than a .80 (Cronbach α), they affirm that the 33-item scale can be used to identify an individual's overall EI score within reliable and valid measurements (Jonker & Vosloo, 2008; Schutte et al., 2009). In our study, we found a Cronbach α = 0.91, which indicates a high reliability index. The SSEIT has been used across a diverse range of populations including nurses in Slovenia (Štiglic et al., 2018), internet addiction among youths in Iran (Far et al., 2014), and teacher trainees in Turkey (Karahan et al., 2019). Schutte et al. (1998) provided the instrument as well as additional validity measures.

Procedures

After the principal researcher obtained permission from the author of the SSEIT to use the instrument, permission was applied for institution permission from the program director (PD) and IRB. After these approvals, the researchers used Qualtrics to replicate the questionnaire in electronic form with an accessible link. Once the link was established it

was tested for readability and ease of use. The PD who maintains the student listserv sent the link of the questionnaire to each student. The PD sent a letter of introduction, which served as an endorsement of the study. Students were also provided instructions that they could withdraw from the study and how to respond to each statement on the instrument. Once users acknowledged consent, they proceeded to answer the SSEIT questions which were then followed by questions to collect demographic data. The response rate was 30%. There were no incentives offered for participation. Two questionnaires were incomplete, and they were not included in the final analysis.

Data Analysis

The researchers used three statistical tests—Mann-Whitney U, point biserial, and Kendall's τ_b. Considered as nonparametric tests, the Mann-Whitney U and Kendall's τ_b are deployed when assumptions of normality and homoscedasticity used for parametric tests are violated (Siegel, 1957). The Mann-Whitney U was used to test the difference in means between independent samples when normality of the data is suspect (Nachar, 2008; Siegel, 1957). Next, the point biserial was used to answer the second research question, which was to test the strength of the relationship between gender and EI. The point biserial is used to test an association between a discrete variable coded as 0 and 1and a continuous random variable (Tate, 1954). Finally, Kendall's τ_b was used to investigate the third research question, which was to examine the strength of the association between age and EI. Since age was measured at the ordinal level and the sample did not meet the assumptions for a parametric test, Kendall's τ_b was used (Siegel, 1957). For computations, we relied on computer software, STATA 15.1.

Results

The means and standard deviations of the most important variables in this study are provided (see Table 1). In addition, the frequency distribution for the age variable in this study is displayed in Table 2. Most of the students were in age range 30- to 39-years old.

Table 1
Descriptive statistics corresponding to the variables of interest in this study

Variables	M (SD)	Range

Sex	0.31 (0.47)	0-1
Perception of emotions	36.54 (5.40)	22-45
Managing own emotions	37.66 (4.64)	25-45
Managing others' emotions	32.26 (3.48)	25-40
Utilization of emotion	24.54 (3.08)	18-30
Total EI score	131.00 (13.30)	92-157

Table 2
Frequency distribution of age ranges

Age	Frequency (*f*)	Percentage	Cumulative Percentage
50 - 59	5	13.9%	100.0%
40 - 49	10	27.8%	86.1%
30 - 39	18	50.0%.	58.3%
20 – 29	3	8.3%	8.3%
0 – 19	0	0.0%	0.0%
	N = 36	100.0%	

To answer the research question about whether there is a significant difference in levels of EI between males and females among educational leadership doctoral students, the Mann-Whitney U test detected no difference. Although it was found that males ($M = 131.82$, $SD = 12.20$) had a higher holistic EI score than females ($M = 130.62$, $SD = 13.49$), this difference was not statistically significant ($U = 181.5$, p-value $= 0.426$). Based on these results, the null hypothesis was retained. On the SSEIT subscales, females had higher mean scores for *Perception of Emotion* and *Utilization of Emotion*, and males had higher mean scores for *Managing own emotions* and *Managing others' emotions*. Additional analysis on the subscales revealed that no differences exist between males and females (see Table 3).

Table 3
Gender difference in SSEIT component traits

SSEIT Component traits	SSEIT statement	Female *M (SD)*	Male *M (SD)*	*p*
TOTAL EI score	1 - 33	130.63 (13.49)	131.82 (12.20)	.426

Perception of Emotion	5, 9, 15, 18, 19, 22, 25, 29, 32, 33	36.92 (5.07)	35.73 (5.74)	.605
Managing own emotions	2, 3,10, 12, 14, 21, 23, 28, 31	37.38 (4.69)	38.27 (4.24)	.694
Managing others' emotions	1, 4, 11, 13, 16,24, 26, 30	31.75 (3.13)	33.36 (3.77)	.292
Utilization of Emotion	6, 7, 8, 17, 20, 27	24.58 (3.01)	24.45 (3.09)	.844

Next, to answer the research question relating to the strength of the relationship between gender and EI among doctoral students, the point-biserial test was used. The point-biserial analysis showed that there was no significant correlation between gender and EI score (r_{pb} = 0.042, 95% CI [-.358, .287]). These findings suggested that there was no statistical difference between gender and levels of EI.

To test the extent of the relationship between students' age and their levels of EI, Kendall's tau-b was used. A positive correlation was found between age and the level of EI score. However, this was a weak correlation, and it was not statistically significant (τ_b = .049, p = .731). From these results, the null hypothesis that there is no significant correlation between students' age and their levels of EI is retained.

Discussion

The purpose of this study was to investigate EI in educational leadership doctoral students. Specifically, the researchers examined the differences in EI between females and males; the relationship between genders in EI, and the relationship between age and EI. Three research questions guided the study 1) Is there is a significant difference in levels of EI between males and females among educational leadership doctoral students, 2) What is the strength of the relationship between gender and EI, and 3) What is the extent of the relationship between students' age and their levels of emotional intelligence?

In this sample of educational leadership doctoral students, the results revealed that no significant differences in levels of EI existed between females and males, there was no significant relationship between males and females in EI, and no significant relationship between age and levels of EI. Although the sample size was small, the use of non-parametric tests supported the analytical technique (Siegel, 1957). The results support the argument that educational leaders should have high EI (Goleman, 2011; Maulding et al., 2012). It is well to hypothesize that educators have equal levels of EI. Empathy is subsumed into EI, and academic leaders have identified empathy as the most significant EI trait (Parrish, 2015). Among educational administrators, EI has been found to be positively correlated with job performance (Mahdinezhad et al., 2017). Studies that used samples of educators suggest that between gender differences on EI may not exist. For example, Ozkaral and Ustu (2019) found no significant difference between genders in university students' emotional understanding. Our findings were similar.

The extent of the relationship between age and levels of EI was found to be positive but weak. The findings are supported by numerous studies. Unzonwanne (2016) who found that age ranges 31-40 expressed the "highest manifestation" of EI (p. 7801); Chen et al. (2016) found that EI mediated age and well-being in older adults; and, Akyol and Akdemir (2019) found that teacher candidates' levels of EI and problem-solving skills did not differ according to gender and the class level, but EI had a significant difference according to age and department variables. However, another study indicates that students' EI levels differed significantly in terms of sex, academic grades and academic departments but not in terms of type of high school, sportive branch, and age (Bahadir, 2018).

These findings suggest that when age is considered to examine students' levels of EI, other factors could be related. However, one study found that students who have similar hobbies regarding developing design had higher EI score, but there is no significant difference in students' EI scores in terms of age and gender (Tekerek & Tekerek, 2017). In the sample of educational leadership doctoral students in the present study, age was not significantly correlated with EI. Taken together, although there seems to be no significant correlation between sex and EI among educators, the age EI relationship needs additional study.

Implications

Academic leaders have identified empathy as the most significant EI trait (Parrish, 2015). The relationship between gender, age and EI of doctoral students in educational leadership is important to understand because EI among students plays a key role in their lifetime character building (Mudiono, 2019). Although educators are in the helping profession and expected to have as well as to maintain high levels of EI, this does not preclude programs from ensuring that students understand the role of EI especially as doctoral programs continue to attract mid-career professionals. The present study adds to the EI discussion and should be encouraging to other researchers interested in EI as a phenomenon among not only graduate students but specifically educational leadership doctoral students. Doctoral study demands significant time, energy, financial, and emotional commitment to complete (Hill & Conceição, 2020). Gender and age can be among many factors that have an impact on EI among university students. Because educational leadership doctoral programs will continue to attract older students, programs that prepare students to enter educational leadership careers should be aware of the role of EI within the educational milieu. Researchers should pay attention to these students because as programs evolve and become more competitive, those students recruited into these programs need to work with and engage high, holistic levels of EI.

Limitations

Some limitations of this study exist. These findings are limited to the current case in the present study. In addition, the researchers chose to support EI as a trait-based measure. The SSEIT as a self-reporting mechanism is a trait-based measure of EI. Researchers have measured EI as a trait using questionnaires and as an ability based on maximal performance tests (Jonker & Vosloo, 2008; MacCann et al., 2020).

Another limitation to highlight is the sample size. The study was conducted using a convenience sample of doctoral students in one educational leadership program located in the southern region of the US. This sample is limited because not all respondents in the population of educational leadership doctoral students had an equal chance for selection into the sample. Nevertheless, this is only one of many possible samples, and convenience sampling is among one of many sampling techniques used by educational researchers.

Recommendations

One area for additional research is for other researchers to continue to select samples from among the population of doctoral students in educational leadership. We recommend additional researchers test EI among doctoral students in different program configurations.

In addition, because EI is measured as a trait and as an ability, in order to understand EI among doctoral students in education, future researchers should continue to measure EI as a trait in educational leadership doctoral students. Researchers need to investigate not only age and gender but also other covariates such as academic performance, grit, persistence, and self-efficacy. Research results and discussions will provide future researchers and practitioners with a better understanding of EI among educational leadership doctoral students. Academic performance as measured by writing (Huerta et al., 2017), overall graduate grade point average (Grehan et al., 2011), and assertiveness (Niyogi et al., 2020) are factors for inclusion. For researchers, additional studies from various educational leadership doctoral programs are grounds for investigation. Recent concerns relating to the Carnegie Project on the Education Doctorate model (https://www.cpedinitiative.org/) and on-line programs where isolation, and cohort models will also require students to engage high levels of EI.

Conclusion

From our model, we concluded that no significant difference exists in EI between females and male in educational leadership doctoral students. There was also no significant relationship between gender and EI, and between age and EI. However, although these findings were not significant, investigation of EI among educational leadership doctoral students needs to explore additional factors. Programs that continue to attract educational leaders need to know that these students are attuned with their own emotions as well as others. Students seeking careers in educational leadership may already have similar levels of EI since this helping profession may be attractive to those who have high perception of emotion, are able to utilize their emotions, and to manage their own as well as other emotions, but we still need to know factors associated with these constructs.

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Pathways to Teacher Leadership among English as Foreign Language Teachers in Nepal's Public Schools

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Abstract
Studies on teacher leadership have stressed the need for democratic and motivating environment in school, professional development opportunities, reflection and peer observation, and learning environment as preconditions for leadership development. However, teachers are deprived of such professional development scenarios in the context of Nepal. Despite this, some of the teachers have performed exceptionally well in Nepal. Hence, this qualitative study analyzed the lived experience of three English language teachers from Nepal employing activity theory envisioned by Engestrom as a research lens to explore their professional development journey. The study discovered that to become a successful teacher leader, communication and instructional competence is must because it provides visibility of prospective teacher leaders among colleagues and the wider community initially. Further, reflection and sharing among colleagues, we found, were instrumental in the development process of teacher leaders. This article reveals that leadership is the manifestation of co-construction of an individual in a complex ecosystem of learning communities and hence the notion of leadership is emergent and fluid.

Key Words: teacher leadership, activity theory, leadership development framework, teacher development, pathways to teacher leadership

Teacher as a Leader

The notion of teacher leadership is inconsistent as the area is fluid and emerging; however, we find two major pathways to teacher leadership: formal and informal. Formal leadership entails administrative positions like coordinator, department head, subject committee chair, and they are entitled to the payment for additional services, whereas informal leaders try to fill the void in the classroom, plan, initiate, and lead different activities in school. Sometimes teacher leadership may be requested to perform quasi-administrative roles such as communicating messages from the administration, initiating meetings, providing emergency substitute of teachers, and sharing ideas and materials with fellow teachers among others (Baecher, 2012; Anfara & Angelle, 2007; Cheung, Reinhardt, Stone, & Little, 2018). School leadership may consult with teacher leaders on different issues like scheduling, choosing textbooks and instructional materials, setting standards for students' behaviors, designing teacher development programs, evaluating teachers' performance to selecting new teachers and administrators (Cranston, 2000; Watson, 2014; Barth, 2001). Recent development has expanded both traditional dichotomies of confining teacher leaders within classroom boundaries as well as positional roles and has incorporated leadership even at the level of teachers (Anfara & Angelle, 2007). As teacher leaders are expected with a multiplex of responsibility, leadership is also about understanding broader forces shaping their work, resisting domestication, and not being dominated by outside authorities (Gunter, McGregor & Gunter, 2001). Though all the teachers have potential to grow as a leader, only 25% of the total number of the faculty members constituted teacher leaders. If choices are made many teachers prefer teaching to lead (Barth, 2001). Most of the teachers perceive leadership as taking positional roles and exercising power, though classroom teaching itself is a very "complex risk-taking, and highly political setting" (Gunter et al., 2001, p. 27) as they generate and use knowledge and a lot of persuasions and shaping subjectivity is involved.

The characteristic features that define leadership range from humility, trust, healing, empathy, creativity, perseverance, calmness, and desire to serve (Anfara & Angelle, 2007). Most importantly, they prove their ability to perform in the classroom, earn trust and respect of their colleagues, and then rise from their classroom responsibility to take up new responsibilities (Baecher, 2012; Watson, 2014). Some other defining

characteristics lead to the creation of ideas for the enhancement of quality of life of the community in long-term, and include modeling trust and sincerity, confronting barriers, building networks, and nurturing good culture for transformation of the organization as well as larger communities as a whole (Cranston, 2000). Thus, collaboration and cooperation are other defining characteristics of a teacher leader.

Collaboration and communication with colleagues, being open to opportunities, setting learning targets, and meeting students' requirements are the major qualities frequently found in leadership (Anfara & Angelle, 2007; Watson, 2014). Teacher leaders also support their colleagues by giving feedback, providing training, observation, demonstration, and feedback among others. Likewise, they also provide a bridge between faculties and the management by taking up some responsibility in the school.

Teachers should also have expertise in their discipline "including instructional planning and delivery, classroom management and culture, content and content pedagogy, and learning theory" (Wetzler, 2010, p. 29) which enables them to receive respect from their colleagues (Anfara & Angelle, 2007). Further, necessary skills and abilities help them to act as change agents by educating citizens for the future development of the country (Iordanoglou, 2007). These leaders should also set an example and model the way to develop and practice so that other leaders can follow the trail developed. Further, such leaders also create a very encouraging and motivating classroom culture to "capitalize on the excitement and urgency of the big goal to emphasize the connection between hard work and achievement" (Wetzler, 2010, p. 27), and their achievement is assessed regularly and the game plan is adjusted accordingly.

In this framework, the traditional leaders and followers dichotomy does not work (Cranston, 2000). To perform this role effectively and act as change agents, teacher leaders should possess certain skills and abilities (Iordanoglou, 2007). In such cases, teacher leaders can influence beyond school premises as they can also be effective in influencing policy outside their school through publications and presentations; though this kind of contribution is very subtle, it's very reliable (Anfara & Angelle, 2007; Barth, 2001). Such leaders not only positively contribute to and influence the wider community but also at the same time attain personal and professional satisfaction.

Teacher Leadership Development Process

However, to demonstrate such leadership qualities, even teachers require a motivating and supportive environment as well as strong determination and commitment to grow as a leader. Teacher leadership flourishes the most in a democratic environment, and schools can leverage from teacher leaders. Acknowledging and supporting teacher leaders ultimately result in the success of both the principal as well as the school. In such an environment, teachers develop confidence and professionalism, and their sense of agency within the organization may also increase which will ultimately develop a perception that they have the means to accomplish goals and a shared purpose (Anfara & Angelle, 2007). When someone starts taking up leadership roles other seniors give feedback, guidance, support, and encouragement (Watson, 2014; Lieberman, 2015; Baecher, 2012). Such environments can be fertile ground for leadership development for novice teachers.

However, Barth (2001) argues that it's tough to find such schools that perform democratically with a positive environment for leadership development. Most of the schools' meetings are akin to dictatorship where neither teachers nor students can experience freedom when they could take on important school-wide responsibilities and take a huge step in transforming their schools. Very few principals regard that teacher leadership is essential for good health of the school and provide an environment to flourish teacher leadership.

In such environment, teachers work with high enthusiasm. However, they will have to struggle in balancing their leadership roles with classroom obligations and personal life. Further, constraints of time, resources, and unfriendliness of the colleagues due to jealousy and blaming them as willing to hold power and control over others and subsequent ostracism can badly affect them (Anfara & Angelle, 2007; Barth, 2001). Even amidst adversities, those teachers whose commitment to their cause is stronger than difficulties they encounter emerge as a leader irrespective of the hurdles they face.

As leadership is a process, teacher leaders often reflect on their activities and redefine their strategies. They continuously observe other teachers, reflect, and have conversations to refine their practices by adopting the most effective methods (Wetzler, 2010; Anfara & Angelle, 2007). In other words, teacher leaders are reflective practitioners and action researchers who inquire into their practices and try to transform their teaching-learning (Anfara & Angelle 2007; Lieberman & Miller,

2005). This means that if teachers are motivated to participate in these development activities, their growth is inevitable.

From the review of all these researches, we can infer that pathways to teacher leadership are the thriving area in the global context at present; hence, multiple pathways to teacher leadership are mapped. In addition to that, Baecher (2012) by using a survey and in-depth interview of the self-identified teacher leaders explored the nature of the professional development activities they conducted and received, which brought them into the role of teacher leader in their first three years of teaching in the United States. She argues that aspiring teachers should be provided with multiple teacher leadership options such as schools should provide inductions at the beginning of their career for making their transition smooth and make them mentor and cooperate with teachers, and assist them in conducting professional development for colleagues.

Similarly, Wetzler (2010) brings the story of Markita Harris, a Teach for America fellow who joined teaching after being inspired by her friend's story and by observation of her class. She reveals that training opportunities and role models to follow at the beginning of Markarita's career were instrumental in her success. Further, she argues that practical knowledge building and the "foundation of core knowledge is required in several areas, including instructional planning and delivery, classroom management and culture, content and content pedagogy, and learning theory" (p. 29). Her exploration is that community of shared purposes, pre-service and in-service support and development, good learning environment, and reflection of outcomes, and continuous improvement is the key to leadership development. Even Watson (2014) concludes that "collaborating with your colleagues, being open to opportunities and leading in your classroom will allow you to discover your passions and guide your future as a teacher leader" (p. 30). All these pieces of literature on teacher leadership justify the growing interest in pathways to teacher leadership in American and western contexts; however, the area is unchartered territory in the context of Nepal.

One comparative study of headteachers from high and low performing schools by Singh and Allison (2016) explored that leadership understandings and performance of higher-performing school's headteachers aligned with six major leadership qualities like visioning and goal setting, building positive school culture, supporting teachers and students to improve learning, cultivating leadership qualities in others, managing school resources and operations, and leading for continuous

improvement while headteachers from lower-performing schools lack such qualities. With this Allison and Singh concluded that the government should enhance leadership opportunities that promise to increase competitiveness. Also, the selection of headteachers should be made competitive instead of just selecting one from the existing teachers in schools, and the headteachers should be provided with autonomy.

In another qualitative case study of technical schools in Kathmandu, Chauhan (2017) discovered that the nature of the leadership practiced in technical schools in the valley somehow aligns with key leadership theories, approaches, and styles. The most prominent leadership style is behavioral one where top leaders were found to practice autocratic leadership strategies whereas mid-level leaders were democratic. However, the leaders lack transformational and authentic leadership qualities. Though Singh and Allison (2016) and Chauhan (2017) highlight the perception and practice of teacher leadership, pathways to teacher leadership have remained unexplored. Hence, the objective of the study is to explore the lived experiences of English language teachers from Nepal's public schools to fill the gap.

The article presents the process of leadership development through the categorical assumptions of activity theory, such as *subject*, *object*, *outcome*, *rules*, *community,* and *division of labor*. It explores the practices and situational responses made during exercising leadership as a headteacher, especially constructive measures of the leadership process by connecting the subject's past, present, and future assumptions and the changes or pathways they embrace during their interaction with their ecosystem. In this line of explanation, the article focuses on both upper levels as well as the lower level of activity theory categories to concentrate on reflective as well as pragmatic approaches to administer and regulate actions. Analysis of transcribed interview data with the lens of activity theory emerged with two major themes: reflection, collaboration and transformation, and network as net-worth. Finally, based on the findings, the article is summed up with a figure of a pathway to teacher leadership development in the context of Nepal.

Activity Theory as a Theoretical Referent

As activity theory has its root in constructivism it primarily believes in the "communicative and socially determined construction of truth" and "renounces monolithic and universal notion of reality" (Gedera & Williams, 2015, p. 163). Engestrom (1999) argues that activity theory

focuses on activeness as opposed to passivity, and the activity it concentrates on is object-oriented and socio-culturally mediated. This notion of activity theory was possible due to the contribution of "proponents of the cultural-historical school who repeatedly point out that communication, often multifaceted, is an inherent aspect of all object-related activities" (Engeström, 1999, p. 24). He further reiterates that by virtue "human activity is endlessly multifaceted, mobile, and rich in variations of content and form. It is perfectly understandable and probably necessary that the theory of activity should reflect that richness and mobility" (p. 20). Additionally, such multivoiced theory should celebrate internal contradictions and debates as essential features of the theory instead of considering them as shortcomings of the system. As the research explores how teachers develop themselves in their interaction with multiple stakeholders, activity theory becomes pertinent.

Engestrom's notion of activity theory is constituted of *subject*, *object*, *tools*, *community*, *rules*, and *division of labor* (Gedera & Williams, 2015). In the expansive cycle of the activity system, multivoiced formation of the activity system through different participants with multiple viewpoints is reorchestrated. These fundamental societal relations and contradictions potentially lead to change in the activity system. "In this sense, it might be useful to try to look at society more as a multilayered network of interconnected activity systems and less as a pyramidic rigid structure dependent on a single center of power" (Engeström, 1999, p. 36). In other words, the agency is distributed across individuals, institutions, networks, and organizations in activity systems. Additionally, although individuals experience dilemmas, contradictions, and performance shortcomings of the system, solutions are possible only through collective efforts. Through different mediating factors variously located agencies come into spontaneous communication and improvisation of the system's activity. Hence, internal inherent contradictions and shortcomings of the system play the role of catalyst in bringing transformation.

Nevertheless, many novice users of activity theory find the object of an activity system complex as objects of activity need to be understood as a simultaneously given, socially constructed, contested, and emergent phenomenon. Object of activity also provides the basis for theorizing motivation, a point clearly captured by Engestrom, when he notes that object of activity is best regarded as a project under construction, moving from potential raw material to a meaningful shape and a result or outcome.

In activity systems, the previous object disappears and a new object is formulated by the contradiction and communication between various components (Blackler, 2009; Taylor et al., 2019). Hence, the theory is applied to see how teachers develop from novices to teacher leaders with their interaction with different *subjects*, *object*s, *tool*s, *communit*ies, *rules*, and *division of labor* in their activity system. According to Engestrom (1999), these six components mentioned earlier can be summed up into three major steps in analysis using activity theory that includes exploring the viable options of modeling the structure and dynamic relations between the elements of activity systems, taking full account of diversity and multiplicity within the system, and lastly presenting interaction in a hierarchical framework in terms of the influence of different categories.

Participants, Data Generation, and Meaning Making Process

Three English teacher leaders, two male and one female, from public schools in Nepal, particularly Kathmandu valley, are purposively selected as they have demonstrated considerable leadership skills and their leadership journey from teacher to teacher leadership will be of significance. As schools led by all three participants have noticeably performed better and as these teachers are also leading the learning community, their narratives are worth considering.

And to explore the lived experiences, we conducted an in-depth interview and informal conversation with research participants on multiple phases. We audio-recorded the interviews on mobile with the permission of participants and later the recorded interviews were transcribed and translated into English as participants code-switched between Nepali and English languages during the interview. All three face-to-face interviews were completed within half an hours' duration.

Then we conducted tabulation of those transcription, coding, and theme generation as proposed by Josselson (2011) as it was most appropriate to analyze, categorize and develop themes out of collected data. The whole phase of data analysis primarily involved "construction, deconstruction and reconstruction" (p. 224) of stories in short; however, detailed stages of the analysis process were completed in five steps from data transcribing, translating, coding the significant data, categorizing, and ultimately theme development. Finally, compelling extracts from transcribed interviews were used to support the themes developed to address the research issue.

Reflection, Collaboration, and Transformation

Rigorous analysis of the data revealed some commonalities among all the participants as subjects. As outstanding performers, they got several opportunities in teaching from the very initial phases. Further, they were selected in teaching through a nationwide examination of the Teaching Service Commission on a competitive basis. They have an attitude of continuous development and a kind of passion and zeal for education and consequently have excelled in their profession. For example, participant three used to teach students of different levels from primary to master in institutional schools and colleges before he joined a public school. Similarly, participant two has a set record of the first female secondary teacher in the district, has scored high in School Leaving Certificate (SLC), and started teaching right after completion of her intermediate education. As there were no other English teachers available, she had to start teaching at a young age upon the request of the community, though she wanted to finish her education first.

As public schools were competing with institutional schools, public schools had mounting pressure to use English as a medium of instruction; hence, naturally, they had the privilege of being an English teacher. Their privilege further extended the opportunity to conduct different programs in English such as extempore, quizzes, and debates among others which provided visibility among the colleagues. The first opportunity that participant one received in school was to lead a quiz program. He utilized that responsibility in building relationships with colleagues during the formulation of quiz questions and conducting discussions by convincing them all to support him to make the program a grand success.

Similarly, the privilege of being an English teacher is shared by participant three as well. He was offered the school principal's position keeping aside other seniors and master's degree holders because as an English teacher he had the advantage of communication skills. He could conduct different programs, maintain an English environment in school, and lead co-curricular and extracurricular activities among others. As he says, "*During my career in institutional schools, I used to conduct assembly in English, deal politely with everyone so that I had counseling responsibility and gradually I was given Vice Principal and Principal's position.*" He further reiterates:

> *When I reflect I feel that I was given the responsibility to lead assembly and other different activities due to my fluent English*

communication skills as an English teacher which enhanced my
visibility and ultimately paved my way to leadership from Vice
Principal to Principal.

Thus communication in English played a pivotal role in attaining the leadership position. Apart from fluency in English and conducting different activities, strategic communication skill is another tool that makes one successful in coordinating and making activity systems functional. Participant one mentioned when he finds his colleagues disappointed with him or complained against him, he does not directly approach them rather he provides them enough cooling time, asks other teachers about their problem, and after a few hours or days talks to them and addresses the issue. Such strategy has helped him avoid any untoward incidents.

Due to his strategic communication style and tactfulness he was able to handle a major crisis that emerged in the school during the exit of a preceding headteacher. Due to a blunder of the former headteacher, the whole community came to school to take action against him. During that time, he handled the situation coordinating with the community, representatives of different political parties, parents, members of the community, and colleagues. His proactive function in settling the issue influenced members of the community, representatives of political parties, colleagues, and members of the school management committee. Similarly, participant two also states that her "*approach to dealing with colleagues is coordination, cooperation, and mutual respect.*" Her tendency of taking everyone's feedback, opinions, and suggestions before making any crucial decision has been a major strategy due to which her decisions are never questioned. She believes that lack of good communication strategy can be disastrous. As said by Blacker (2009), agency is distributed across distinct activities, individuals and colleagues of an activity system which she understands well and applies this while dealing with colleagues and as a result, she is successful in her endeavors.

Apart from competence in English and strategic communication, another major factor that became instrumental in enhancing opportunity, visibility, and trust is their instructional activities, the additional effort put to enhance quality and good result. Participant three believes:
To be visible and receive appreciation from the community one
should be able to give results otherwise they start questioning. So
keeping this in mind we have been providing extra-class to

students taking help from alumni. Further, we are also maximizing the use of ICT to make teaching-learning effective.

Further, his emergent insight is that instead of controlling teachers, he should focus on creating development opportunities. So he encourages his teachers for training and development. He has also provided facilitator opportunities to his colleagues in some of the training programs due to which his colleagues are happy with him. Instead of controlling, he is creating opportunities for them to grow, and that has helped both school as well as himself personally. This training and development opportunity that he provided has motivated them positively and its resultant impact is reflected in the teaching-learning environment of the school.

They have not only provided training opportunities to their fellow members but at the same time, they are participating to update themselves. Participant two, for example, grabbed a US embassy-funded 45 days-long training opportunity titled Teaching Excellence Award (TEA Fellow) to visit the US that brought a paradigm shift in her perspective on teaching-learning which resulted in the modernization of the educational environment of the school. After witnessing the environment in the US schools, she connected high-speed internet and equipped her school with a sophisticated computer lab. Even old and traditional teachers were trained and made capable of using computers. She notes:

From the beginning of the lockdown caused by the pandemic, teachers are engaged in different training programs so that we can start online classes soon. Even those teachers lacking social media profiles like Facebook, Twitter, and email addresses are learning to use Zoom, and exploring possibilities to conduct classes during the pandemic. We are also regularly communicating with students. My effort to develop myself through training and networking has also benefited the entire team.

Likewise, participant two received an opportunity to attend a program in the US titled Teaching English for Teenagers (TET) which enabled him to understand the psychology of teenagers and deal with them accordingly. Additionally, he also understood ways of developing language skills in them. He considers this training as a game-changer opportunity. Moreover, he also keeps on providing training to colleagues through Nepal English Language Teachers' Association (NELTA) forum that has given a great milestone in bringing a paradigm shift in the teaching-learning environment. This transformation can be perceived as Blackler (2009) argues that there is transformation of *the object* in activity systems

due to communication and interaction between various components of the activity system where the old *object* disappears and new object emerges.

Thus, with the use of communication competence and optimization of instructional practices through training and self-reflection, these teachers can transform the teaching-learning environment in school. Reflecting on his teaching, participant one admits that his strictness, loudness, rigidity, and corporeal punishment to students had detached him from students. Now he regrets his approach in dealing with students and says, *I should have been soft, polite, and student-friendly so that they could feel comfortable to come to me and ask questions.* Learning from his own mistakes and from different opportunities that he received, he has initiated a sharing and reflection tradition on each Friday that has helped to reinforce the quality of teaching-learning in the school. Similarly, participant two is able to receive a project worth ten million rupees for modernizing the school with a smart classroom, a wide and safe playground, and neat and tidy toilets. The school which looked like a jail in the beginning has turned into a sophisticated school with a well-equipped computer lab and science lab. The teaching-learning environment as an object has completely transformed as Blacker (2009) states that with the communication and contradiction between various components, a new object appears in the activity system. All this achievement and transformation, both physical as well as mental, is possible due to the untiring effort and widespread support of the community of interest.

The analysis of data using Engestrom's notion of activity theory revealed how headteachers as a *subject* in the initial phase of their career and at present with the choice of certain *tools* have impacted the teaching-learning environment as *object* is discussed as presented in figure 1.
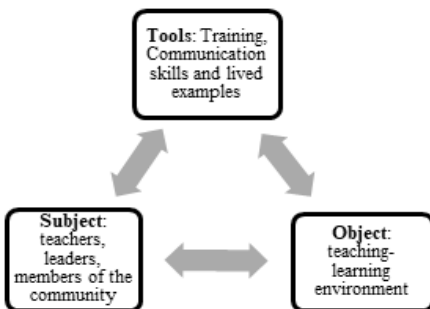

Figure 1: Interaction between upper layer components of activity system

It is evident in their interaction with fellow members of the school that the participants have undergone several rounds of self-reflection and reflection among colleagues as *subject.* They have also learned to utilize lived examples, training, and communication skills as *tools,* and thereby fostered improvement in the teaching-learning environment, interpersonal relation and behavior as *object*. As stated by Engestrom (1999) the multifaceted communication, among different elements of activity systems in object-related activity is evident. And as depicted in figure 2 there has been a two-way influence among these categories. There is also influence among subjects through encouragement and support for the development of their colleagues for the transformation of educational environment in school. During their effort to transform the educational environment in the school, transformation in their leadership style as an outcome is evident.

Network as Net-Worth
As envisioned by Engestrom (1999) a huge influence in the co-construction of an activity system is evident from a larger community where various viewpoints from the expansive cycle are reorchestrated, and these societal relations and interruptions have led to change in the activity systems. In the line of Engestrom, participants are engaged with different professional networking organizations and other communities of mutual interest influencing positive transformation of teaching-learning activity as shown in Figure 2.
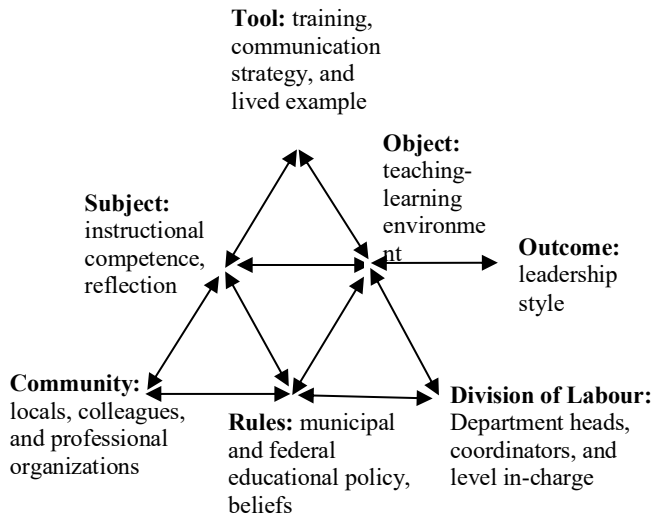
Figure 2: Interaction between different components of activity systems

These organizations and communities range from vertical organizations formed by the municipality to horizontal organizations like different learning communities of colleagues that provide a lot of learning opportunities from reflection and feedback to seminars and training. Reiterating the benefits of different networking organizations, participant three states:

> *I'm involved in different professional networking organizations that have developed feedback, encouragement, and sharing culture. These organizations range from headteachers network in the municipality, NELTA, district-level teachers union, and Leadership Learning Community among others. These networking organizations also provide training, conference, and seminar opportunities that have brought paradigm shifts in dealing with teachers. I also encourage teachers to participate in such organizations and training opportunities. The network has been a net worth.*

Even participant two believes that for development and growth one should come out of his comfort zone and explore different areas. She has joined professional organizations like NELTA that provides her opportunity to participate in conferences and seminars which have been instrumental in enhancing instructional practices. Further, she also joined a forum of female headteachers, the School Management Society, Society of Head Teachers, and Leadership Learning Community, and in some of them she is an executive member. In such forums, they discuss different issues and their practices to explore possibilities to handle them and refine leadership as well as instructional practices. Additionally, international exposure and networking developed dynamism and further possibilities. She states, "*Large network of TEA Fellow also opened up other opportunities. I visited Bangladesh and the Philippines to participate in conferences. Due to all these international exposures, dynamism has developed.*"

Additionally, vertical communities like municipality, school management committee, and local communities have also direct influence in different roles and opportunities for teachers. The community has the privilege to either support or oppose teachers in certain roles. Participant three mentioned that after he joined the school, the local community wanted him to take a lead to see his leadership abilities. The previous headteacher had to offer the position to him as per the request of the community.

As noted by Engestrom (1999) societal relations and internal contradictions in the system cause transformation in the activity system which is also evident in the context of Nepal. Likewise, any interruption or contradiction in the internal community should also be taken into account and considered in the decision-making process for progressive transformation of the activity system. Highlighting the importance of this, participant three reiterates that when opinions of other stakeholders are acknowledged, it's easy to garner support. He feels that it's essential to consider everyone and respect their opinion as all of them are sailing in the same boat. If the boat drowns, all of them will drown. So, with honest effort and communication strategies, he is able to convince his colleagues so far.

All the participants have made a solid effort in bringing their colleagues together though some instances of friction and contradiction are also manifested. By acknowledging the importance of multiple voices and equal participation of all the stakeholders to make decisions sustainable and gain widespread support, they have created different posts and bestowed them with responsibility so that the school runs smoothly. Participant two explains that for smooth functioning and sharing the responsibility, she has created different leadership positions like level in-charges, school in-charge, assistant headteacher, department heads, class teachers, and subject heads to make sure teaching-learning, question-setting, examinations, and other activities meet expected standards. Yet, they also recall friction that occurred due to unilateral decision making and imposition of such decisions upon colleagues. Participant three argued:

> *In the past, I used to make decisions unilaterally and instruct them to do things. However, as that didn't work well and I didn't find support from colleagues or even some ignored, now I have started making decisions in a group. I get ideas from them. Even small issues like organizing a picnic or educational tour or buying a computer, we discuss in a group. So they take ownership and responsibility.*

These contradictions and friction that occurred in the system have led the school towards inclusion and appreciation of multiple voices, eradicated trust deficit among colleagues to some extent, and have positively impacted the working environment. The initial authoritative, aggressive, reactive, and quick decision-making approach has shifted into a very collegial environment accommodating as many voices as possible in

critical decision making. However, some people still keep grumbling. Restating the lines of Mother Teressa, participant three argues that "*some people come as a blessing while others teach lessons*." He further opines, "*There can be people who make mountains out of molehills, but I don't answer them instantly*." He perceives them as lessons, refines himself, and moves ahead taking all the grumblings and dissatisfactions positively.

Apart from that, the traditional mindset of the people, poor infrastructure, lack of proper government policy, unsupportive social environment, parents' educational awareness, and other socio-cultural aspects erode quality education in public schools in Nepal. Recalling her struggle during initial days of headship, participant two argues that a major challenge she faced during her journey to headship was the patriarchal attitude and traditional mindset of administrators and colleagues. She remembers concerned authority doubting her potential by asking, "*During the time of crisis will you be able to handle school*?" Similarly, "*for some of the male teachers working under the leadership of a female was a kind of humiliation and suffocation. So they created a problem in the beginning*." However, she answered them all through her performance, so now everything is intact. Similarly, some senior teachers' denial to change has posed a great challenge in smooth functioning of the school. They lack computer skills as well as English communication skills. Their grumbling attitude and unwillingness to grow have posed a threat to their effort to enhance quality in school. Some teachers deny reflecting on their performance and their communication skills but simply blame students for their inability.

Likewise, poor infrastructure and lack of ownership of school premises are other hurdles in improving the teaching-learning environment in most of the public schools; so, school headteachers with the collaboration of their colleagues, community, and other stakeholders are crowd-funding and receiving aid from donor agencies for infrastructure development. Participant two recalls her initial days:

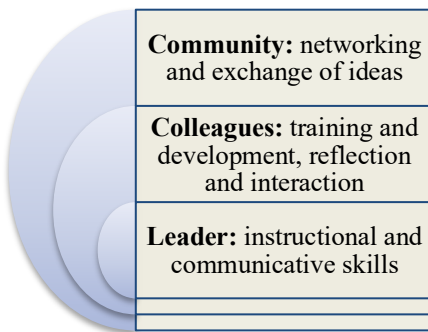> *After the devastating earthquake of 2015, maintaining a physical facility was my major challenge. Further, the challenge was added by the lack of registration of land in the school's name so that we could not apply for big donors like ADB or World Bank who could provide a large amount of money for reconstruction. So I had to collect money from different small donors in different phases and make building phase-wise accordingly.*

Thus, modernization of infrastructure and advancement of teaching-learning environment was possible due to the unified effort of all the stakeholders. Improvement of quality is substantiated by increasing number of students and even city dwellers, particularly the chairperson of the ward, admitting his daughter in the public school. Internal contradictions and challenges have been instrumental to the enhancement of the educational environment. Honesty, commitment, self-restraint, and professional ethics displayed by the participants and collaborative effort of municipality, community, and other stakeholders have made the transformation possible.

Pathways to Teacher Leadership and its Implication

During this process of transformation of three different schools' teaching-learning environment, there is co-construction of leadership through the interaction of multiple categories of an activity system as an *outcome* in Engestrom's formulation. Therefore, the whole interaction process of an activity system itself is the process of leadership development or a leadership development framework in an EFL context like Nepal.

As represented in Figure 3, a preliminary requirement for leadership development is continuous learning attitude in prospective leaders which is also reflected in better communication skills and instructional competence that provides visibility among colleagues and the community. All the research participants are intrinsically motivated to learn. For example, participants two and three as outstanding performers in different levels have untiring learning attitudes and passion for knowledge which has made it possible to diligently take numerous degrees and engage in diverse training and seminars.

Community: networking and exchange of ideas

Colleagues: training and development, reflection and interaction

Leader: instructional and communicative skills

Figure 3: Leadership development process in Nepali context

This zeal for education that leads one to employ different tools can be another contributing factor to leadership development. For instance, participant one believes that the opportunity that he received for participating in a TET training program in the US was a milestone for his leadership development. Such tools bear potential not only for self-development but at the same time for the development of colleagues. For example, participant three believes that instead of monitoring and controlling colleagues, headteachers can provide training and other multiple development opportunities that keep them contented and motivated.

Next, continuous interaction and reflection among colleagues to exchange ideas and navigate challenges further sharpen their competence in diverse areas. They can reflect on their practices and learn from the best practices among their colleagues. Considering the importance of this, participant one has initiated sharing and reflection sessions on Fridays being inspired by such diverse opportunities he received, which has contributed to strengthening teaching-learning quality as well as his leadership skills.

Finally, both vertical communities like society, the municipality, and the school management committee as well as horizontal communities like NELTA and Head Teachers Forum among many influence leadership in multiple ways. Horizontal communities are the best platforms for the exchange of ideas through seminars and conferences which enables them to inherit best practices and keep updated with the latest developments in their discipline. This further opens up networking and development possibilities.

Summing up, leadership is an inter-subjective, emergent and fluid concept, and a relentless process of interaction with multiple stakeholders in its ecosystem. However, the major and immediate influencers of the leadership development process are leaders' fervor for knowledge and continuous learning attitude, training and development opportunities, immediate community of colleagues, and a larger community. All these elements of an ecosystem interact constantly with potential to influence each other and grow altogether as presented in figure 3. The study implies that a proper learning environment in the early phase, culture of reflection and interaction among peers, training and development opportunities from the school, and construction of a networking platform for teachers should be created for professional development and the development of teacher leadership. Though the study is limited to three participants from Nepal,

pathways to teacher leadership developed in the article can be equally
applicable to other similar contexts.

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COVID-19 and Informal Education:
Considerations for Informal Learning During the Pandemic

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Abstract

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has impacted non-formal education, which includes children's informal learning and social development. Due to the required closings of many informal learning spaces, children have been left without methods to construct their learning physically and socially. This essay discusses how informal learning benefits children, how COVID-19 has interrupted children's receipt of those advantages, and ways in which children, families, educators, and communities can compensate for the temporary closings of informal learning spaces.

Keywords: COVID-19, development, formal learning, informal learning, learning, non-formal learning, social

The coronavirus disease 2019 (COVID-19) pandemic has overwhelmingly impacted international activities, particularly in education. Across the globe, schools were forced to close and prematurely end the school year, standardized testing was abandoned without concrete outcomes, and teachers, children, and families were left to find methods to transition, manage continuing education and the stress of COVID-19 not just in their immediate families, but in their communities, including worsening mental illness and wellbeing, child hunger, and increasing the learning gap in

children from low socioeconomic backgrounds (Lee, 2020; Van Lancker & Parolin, 2020). However, COVID-19's impact on non-formal education has been just as significant as its impact on formal learning. Non-formal education serves the community in countless capacities, such as uniting communities and offering social outlets that reinforces traditional learning concepts through fun and engaging nontraditional learning models. These practices often provide new and challenging ways for children to learn, for families to engage with and take part in their children's learning, and informs and influences teacher practices (Kyndtet al., 2016; Song et al., 2017). During a time of extensive quarantine and social distancing, institutions that promote non-formal learning are significantly impacted by their inability to operate fully, and their absence is felt by children, families, and educators in the communities they serve.

Non-formal education, also referred to as informal learning, occurs outside of school settings and allows individuals to construct knowledge through their experiences, skills, and choices (Marsick & Volpe, 1999). Organizations that support informal learning, such as libraries and children's museums, are referred to as informal learning spaces. They provide educational resources that are often not found in traditional education spaces or provide more extensive resources than schools are able to offer. For example, libraries provide wide-ranging literary resources that exceed what schools can provide. Children's museums deliver the physical space and resources to socially engage children in alternative learning experiences by using academic and developmental skills to learn through and about their environment in ways that cannot be replicated in a classroom. Non-formal education serves as a means of support to formal learning, as well as an opportunity for students and other individuals to expand their knowledge and increase their developmental skills.

Under normal circumstances, non-formal education is available during times when formal education is not, usually through extended daytime and weekend hours. However, COVID-19 has affected this, closing all buildings and public spaces that are considered nonessential for an unspecified period, which includes informal learning spaces. This has significantly impacted children and families who previously relied on social interactions to help navigate their learning and development, as they are now confined to their homes with minimal to no social interaction, which can negatively impact children (Kong, 2020). Even as some nonessential businesses begin to reopen, they are operating at reduced

capacities, meaning they are required to function under personal protective equipment and maximum occupancy restrictions not previously applicable. This has not only impacted the community outreach of informal learning, but each community's access to informal learning spaces. During this time, non-formal education has been unable to provide the social and educational outlets that communities need, especially at critical junctions where communities are transitioning out of quarantine, but still need to maintain a certain level of social distancing (Kong, 2020). Prior to the COVID-19 pandemic, children were already at risk of encountering issues that are detrimental to their well-being that are associated with a sedentary lifestyle. In comparison between the regular school year and summer break, it has been shown that the structure provided during the school year that includes physical, social, and cognitive engagement helps moderate child obesity and sleep patterns, whereas children are more likely to experience weight gain and negative changes in sleep patterns during the summer when they are less active (Brazendale et al., 2017). These same concerns are applicable to a time of pandemic.

As many states across the country enter some phase of reopening, and some states pause reopening or even consider closing again due to increases in COVID-19 cases, non-formal education is in a state of conflict. While some informal learning spaces have reopened at reduced capacities, others are open only to staff, all while weighing the consequences to public safety. As long as there is no cure or vaccine for COVID-19, the possibility remains for the virus to spread as society reopens. Informal learning spaces now face the dilemma of safe accessibility and service to their communities (Kahn, 2020).

Although informal learning spaces currently face a level of uncertainty for the foreseeable future, informal learning itself is not entirely lost. This is the time to advocate for all forms of informal learning, specifically online learning, for the educational community to help all those affected to maintain a source of learning. Through this pandemic, online or virtual learning has been brought to the forefront and has been a valuable resource in non-formal education. While the physical benefits of informal learning have been halted and are slowly returning to operational status, the focus should remain on creating virtual outlets to maintain a source of learning for students. Considerations for addressing this issue is the use of virtual formats, such as computer-generated museum exhibitions and cyber-schooling, which provide opportunities for

students to actively and safely construct their knowledge while also nurturing their social development by virtually interacting with their peers (Cohen, 2020; Kahn, 2020). Such alternatives serve great purpose in children's social development during a time of quarantine and social distancing.

First, virtual learning alternatives maintain a sense of community (Nikiforos et al., 2020). During a time of pandemic where many people are left to practice isolation, threats to mental health, such as such as depression, anxiety, stress, and nostalgia can increase due to not being able to partake in what was once considered the normal practices of social engagement (Salari et al., 2020; Wang, et al., 2020). Fullana et al. (2020) reported sixty-five percent of their study participants as having reported symptoms of depression and anxiety and showing a need for coping behaviors. It is important to have virtual learning opportunities to give students a continuum of learning and sharing with others.

Second, virtual learning formats serve as both learning and coping strategies that provide students with the opportunity to interact with their peers while using learning concepts they have already gained to learn and master other learning concepts. This was shown to be effective in Indonesia through the development of My Buddy School System, which is a virtual learning community that addresses the needs of living in rural and urban areas through peer learning (Hidayat et al., 2020). This program was created for peers to share and learn life skills with one another while developing a sense of empathy for one another through virtual interactions. Although this system was tested on just twenty-two junior high students, it was shown to be effective and can be used in the future with improvements.

Lastly, virtual alternatives can be used to promote physical fitness and quality time between children and families. There is a program called Virtual Reality Exergaming (VR), which is a virtual program designed to promote physical fitness among adolescents (McMichael, et al., 2020). Designed with an interventional approach, VR enlists parental involvement to promote the use of virtual exercise games and use them to assess parents' perspectives on gaming and connect children and families through exercise. While these considerations cannot take the place of in-person engagements with peers and the environment, they can serve as a way to fill in the gap during this unprecedented time.

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Brief Peer Reviewed Article

Inequalities in British University League Tables: The Covid-19 Pandemic and Halo Effects

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Abstract
This essay explores the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the position of British universities in league tables. We argue that the pandemic has increased the inequalities between them. Through the analysis of the three core functions of universities – internationalization, research, and teaching, we predict that the gap between top-tier and second-tier universities will widen, mainly due to the former's halo effect.

Keywords: British universities, Covid-19, halo effect, league tables

In the Higher Education (HE) sector, league tables are perceived by many as a measure of quality. They shape university actions by directing institutional resources to valued research and the recruitment of higher tuition students (Voigt, 2020). In Britain, the Covid-19 pandemic has forced universities to cope with significant changes – hybrid teaching styles, shifts in research funding priorities and a potential loss of international students. The exogenous shock of the pandemic should have a knock-on effect on all league table standings. However, that is unlikely to occur. In this brief essay, we argue that the halo effect shields top-tier

universities, protecting them from fluctuations in league tables. As a result, we are likely to see the already existing gap between top-tier and non-top tier HE Institutions (HEIs) widen. The differing effects of the pandemic on universities' positions in league tables call into question the validity of ranking systems as a measure of quality and lead us to wonder if they are better characterized as a measure of reputation, legacy, and financial stability.

The halo effect, well-known in critiques of league tables (Clarke, 2002), can provide a useful frame to understand how the pandemic might influence league tables. The halo effect can take two forms. Firstly, it can be a hurdle faced by 'newer' institutions, who have to prove themselves against more established ones. For example, in their analysis of the 1995 National Research Council's study of programmes leading to a doctorate by research, Graham and Diamond (1997) illustrated how younger and smaller universities in the US had little chance against Ivy League universities to gain top league positions. This hurdle is a combination of internal forces, including institutional limitations such as financial capabilities, and external forces associated with ranking-related effects, such as the positive relationship between previously published rankings and future reputation surveys (Bastedo and Bowman, 2010). Secondly, the halo effect reflects the biases of those completing reputation surveys, which form indicators of quality in ranking systems such as *Times Higher Education (THE)* and *Quacquarelli Symonds (QS)*. For instance, Webster (1981) showed that academic 'experts' ranked Princeton's non-existing law school highly. The US National Research Council (2003) noted similar effects for programmes leading to a doctorate by research. As scholars generally lack the information necessary to evaluate the continuously changing programmes in their disciplines at other universities, their responses often positively elevate weaker courses at well-known institutions. This bias skewed ratings benefiting historically well-regarded universities. Therefore, the halo effect helps top-tier universities stay at the top regardless of changes in quality or performance (Usher and Savino, 2006). Both forms of the halo effect play a part in how the Covid-19 pandemic will affect universities' abilities to recover from the shock and their opportunities to achieve higher league table positions. We explore this by examining the likely impact of the pandemic on the three core functions of HEIs – internationalization, research, and teaching – across British universities.

In Britain, across commonly cited league tables, membership of the Russell Group (roughly equivalent to Ivy League universities) correlates strongly with top league table positions. According to the *THE, QS, Academic Ranking of World Universities (ARWU), Complete University Guide* and *Guardian University Guide* 2020 league tables, all but two (St Andrews and Lancaster) of the British institutions in the top quartile (Q1) of league tables are Russell Group universities. These institutions were all founded pre-1992, are well-established, research-intensive and offer a wide spectrum of subjects. The second quartile (Q2) consists mostly of pre-1992 but non-Russell Group universities and some post-1992 institutions, along with the three remaining Russell Group universities – Cardiff, Queen's University Belfast and Newcastle. The characteristics of Q2 HEIs include a mixture of ages and research strengths; some are specialized while others are non-specialized.

Among the three core functions of HEIs, internationalization – most often associated with the proportion of international to national student numbers – has received the most attention. In preparation for the 2020/21 academic year, universities were particularly worried about their international student numbers, as international students' fees and accommodation rentals are key income sources. Financial losses in the British HE sector during the pandemic, related to changes in international student enrolment, were predicted to range from £1.4-4.3 billion (Drayton & Waltmann, 2020). A key shortfall in income was predicted by the British Council to stem from 14,000 fewer new enrolments from East Asian countries, totaling over £450 million (British Council, 2020). While total enrolment numbers for the academic year 2020/21 are not yet available, Universities and Colleges Admissions Service's (UCAS) undergraduate admission numbers indicate a different reality to the predictions: non-EU international numbers rose by 9% to a new record high of 44,300, with most of this increase concentrated in Q1 HEIs. This contrasts with the initial predictions from the Institute for Fiscal Studies which suggested Q1 HEIs would suffer proportionately more losses in total international student intakes compared to Q2 HEIs (Drayton & Waltmann, 2020). Instead, according to the UCAS undergraduate admission numbers, Russell Group universities experienced on average a 20% increase in non-EU international students, with a high of up to 67% at the University College London (UCL), while almost two-thirds of Q2 universities experienced a decline, with the University of Strathclyde being hit the worst with a drop of 45%.

While public attention has focused on the financial impact of lower international student numbers, this is unlikely to have a significant effect on ranking positions as international student ratios account for as little as 2.5-5% in the total score. As already indicated by the UCAS undergraduate admission numbers, Q1 universities' haloes are strong enough to attract international students even amid a global pandemic. In addition, Q1 universities benefit from being able to absorb students from Q2 institutions. Therefore, we predict that if there is a drop in international student numbers, Q1 HEIs are likely to lose proportionately fewer students compared to Q2 institutions.

Research quality, the second function of HEIs, receives the most weight in international rankings such as *THE*, *QS* and *ARWU*, contributing up to 60% of the overall score. Common indicators include reputation surveys, citations per faculty member, and research income. Similarly to the internationalization function, relative to Q2 institutions, Q1 universities suffer less and benefit more from the global pandemic in terms of research support. 88% of Russell Group universities have received national government funding or are partners in research projects on Covid-19. The largest funding amounts were received by the golden triangle – Oxford, Cambridge, and UCL – and two Scottish HEIs – Edinburgh and Glasgow – with amounts ranging from £3-10 million. While most of the attention and funding concentrates on Q1 HEIs, 54% of Q2 institutions also received funding, yet the highest amount was just over £1 million. This funding can be expected to enhance the league table positions of universities in Q1. Firstly, it improves indicators measuring research income and productivity. Secondly, it contributes to the haloes of Q1 HEIs. For example, Oxford and Cambridge have received considerable media attention as key research centers for a Covid-19 vaccine, potentially increasing scores in reputation surveys conducted by *QS* and *THE*. Similarly, the number of research papers published, and the number of citations as measured respectively in *ARWU* and in *THE* and *QS* will be driven by this funding. As the pandemic is a worldwide phenomenon, articles resulting from the Covid-19 related research are more likely to be highly cited. Hence, we expect Q1 institutions' lead with respect to research indicators in league tables to expand over those in Q2.

Finally, we anticipate similar changes in measures of teaching quality. Common indicators include reputation surveys, student-staff ratios, and expenditure per student/facility. Like the reputation surveys for research quality, those on teaching quality are biased towards Q1 HEIs

due to the halo effects. During the pandemic, student-staff ratios have experienced two waves of significant changes. Initially, British HEIs were concerned about low student enrolment and significant losses in fees. Therefore, Q1 and Q2 universities were under similar pressure to look at ways to reduce costs, most easily achieved through closing departments, cutting pay, and offering voluntary redundancies. Among the 20 British HEIs financially most at risk, only Nottingham is a Q1, Russell Group university. A further four are Q2 HEIs – Heriot-Watt, Dundee, Leicester, and Reading – and the remaining 15 are Q3s, Q4s or unranked institutions (Frontier Economics, as cited in Smith, 2020). Secondly, nationally run school exams (whose results determine university entry) were cancelled due to the pandemic. After a botched government attempt to statistically recalibrate exam results and significant pushback from pupils on the biased results, students were awarded mostly higher final grades, based on teacher estimates. The increased number of national students achieving their admission targets means that student numbers are now exceeding expectations. While the initial grim outlook forced some HEIs to look at reducing staff numbers, Q1s were probably able to hold off on voluntary redundancies for longer than Q2s. This results in lower student-staff ratios and strengthened league table leadership for Q1s.

In all three areas measured by ranking systems – internationalization, research, and teaching – Q1 universities are protected by their haloes and are benefiting from the ripple effects of the pandemic. While lower tier universities feel the adverse effects, haloes – projecting reputation, legacy, and financial sustainability – lead Q1 universities to increase their already disproportionate share of resources. Mirroring and building on Graham and Diamond's (1997) findings, the pandemic exacerbates the hurdle faced by the largely younger and smaller Q2 HEIs making it even more difficult for them to catch up. During pre-pandemic times, league tables were already quite static at the top and movement between ranks was only common towards the lower half (Bastedo & Bowman 2010, Usher & Savino, 2006). We suggest that even a global pandemic may not be enough to shake up the pecking order of British universities.

Quality may be the ultimate aim for universities, but the pandemic and subsequent results make it clear that that is not what ranking systems are capturing. League tables are annual reminders of the prestige and continuing legacy of the aristocracy of universities, rather than a responsive and meaningful tool to assess educational quality.

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Navigating Pandemic Teaching via Individualized Faculty Professional Development

Christy Goldsmith

Abstract

As the universities across the country shifted to online instruction in March 2020, faculty development program administrators faced challenges in providing authentic and useful pedagogical resources to their already overwhelmed instructors. This one-person case study explores a mode of professional development which engages a faculty member in sustained, personal communications to support his disciplinary writing online course development. Both trauma-informed and relationship-centered, this alternative professional development model featured real-time reflection which resulted in high quality pedagogical adjustments to one disciplinary literacy instructor's newly online course.

Keywords: faculty development, online pivot, pandemic pedagogy, Writing Across the Curriculum

Like so many other colleges around the country, at 5 pm on March 11, 2020, my large research university transformed to fully online instruction to protect our community from the newly emerging coronavirus pandemic. In many ways, this historic move leveled the pedagogical playing field as seasoned professors and novices alike were forced to navigate a confluence of traumas—the global pandemic, sudden online instruction for their university classes, virtual education for their own children, and, sometimes, a loss of income. Somehow, it seemed like we were all

simultaneously experiencing this trauma together while also being totally isolated in our own homes.

As a Writing Across the Curriculum program assistant administrator, I am no stranger to urgent requests for help or resources, but this moment was like no other. As soon as the online pivot was announced, my unit began cranking out resources to support online writing instruction and assessment. Early on, though, it felt like we were throwing resources into the void. It seemed every major university quickly comprised lists of resources to support the abrupt changes in instruction; these long web pages contained links to campus health resources, articles about navigating the social and emotional effect of isolation and quarantine (*Stanford University*, 2020), and resources for faculty resilience (*University of Massachusetts Amherst*, 2020). Articles quickly emerged to provide instructional strategies for faculty to develop their emergency online classes (Bao, 2020). But when we were just trying to stay afloat, these resource listings—while necessary—seemed to add to our ever-growing To Do lists and reinforce the feelings of imposter phenomenon (Hutchins, 2015) as faculty tried to teach in what was, for most, an entirely new format.

While I navigated these challenges in my faculty development work, facilitated virtual workshops to support online writing instruction, and shifted the graduate course I was teaching to an online synchronous format, an email arrived in my inbox. Just three days after our university's pivot, Arthur (pseudonym to protect anonymity), a faculty member in the sciences with whom I was already acquainted from a previous faculty development event, reached out. The first line of his email declared, "I am in trouble." This simple statement began a months-long correspondence that served as a reset, allowing me to rethink the mode, manner, and aims of faculty professional development.

A short story in emails

The data for this one-person case study emerged in the form of 31 emails between March 14, 2020 and the end of the spring semester in mid-May. Below, I recreate the highlights of this email correspondence with Arthur's messages appearing on the left and mine on the right.

"I am in trouble. I cannot stand the thought of being on camera talking my students through a lab. I would rather have a root canal."

Arthur, March 14, 2020

"I would rather throw myself off a mountain than watch myself on video. So I get it! Don't feel like you have to put on a massive dog and pony show for the whole class. Rather, focus on giving individual students really quality feedback."
Christy, March 14, 2020

"Being raised as I was[,] in these times I think of Aeschylus and his words about wisdom coming to us in our own despair. Hoping [the] wisdom part of that finds me soon."
Arthur, March 14, 2020

"Such a beautiful way to approach this situation. . . I have no idea if it's true, but I read this tweet this morning, and I was struck by the cultural connection, the compassion, and the art.
Christy, March 14, 2020

Mohamad Safa
@mhdksafa

China sent medical masks to Italy, & wrote on the quote of a Roman poem: "We are waves from the sea"

Japan had donated supplies to China, & wrote on boxes a quote of a Chinese poem: "We have diff mountains & rivers, but we share the same sun, sky."

6:22 AM · Mar 14, 2020 · Twitter for iPhone

1.2K Retweets   3.5K Likes

"How's the day going? [I've] been thinking of you."
Christy, March 16, 2020

"I am really having trouble wrapping my head around what I should be doing. I guess we will see."
Arthur, March 16, 2020

"Thanks for allowing me to chat this way. It really helps."
Arthur, March 17, 2020

"How perfect that you are checking in with [students] individually . . . This is absolutely the best practice of online teaching—and of any teaching really. Students don't care about the flashy technology."
Christy, March 18, 2020

"I was just grading a paper about heat stress in dairy cattle and it somehow made me think of you. . . Just wanted to make sure you're chugging along and all is well."
Christy, April 14, 2020

"[I have] been thinking about those [writing] tool boxes [sic] again and wonder[ing] what they would look like . . . One needs to introduce the students to the parts [of scientific writing] systematically and then through trial and error bring the pieces to the whole. I am . . . wondering if I can use that very approach especially online for the next iteration of [my course]. Something to think about."
Arthur, April 29, 2020

"We could very easily think about creating a toolbox with 'drawers' that represent the technical communication, and scientific skills you expect of students as they enter your course . . . More thoughts to ponder."
Christy, April 29, 2020

"I am tired of COVID-19 isolation. Scientifically I get it. I [am] trained in infectious diseases so it is obvious. Spiritually, however, I am ready to throw off the spleen and move on . . . Doing my final [exam] again . . . And

from the depths of being bumbed [sic] about not teaching in person comes the following gem from a student. Comments like [the one below] make it all worth it.

'[Dear Arthur,] I have learned a lot about myself throughout this essay's completion. And as a final conclusion, I want to thank you for being a great professor. . . You showed me that it's okay to do some things without needing to be a perfectionist, that I can trust my scientific instincts, and that I can believe in myself when things get tough.'"
Arthur, May 12, 2020

Implications of this model

These brief excerpts of emails between Arthur and I exemplify the very real challenges of the COVID-19 situation—challenges which we are still navigating. One challenge is woven into the academic fabric, painting a picture of faculty as people who are always the experts in the room. Another exists in creating and maintaining relationships with prolonged social distancing measures. The online pivot in March 2020 unmoored us all, making the outside world exist only on our computer screens. As we drift through these long days and short weeks with so many pressures placed on our time, many faculty desire a "how to" guide to effective online teaching in a pandemic. Of course, such a guide doesn't exist and, if it did, it would lack transferability between disciplines, contexts, and universities.

However, perhaps the key to building relationships with online disciplinary writing course instructors (a legitimate challenge) isn't found in Zoom workshops, in fancy PowerPoint-driven seminars, or via pre-packaged online teaching courses. Instead, these emails present another option to faculty development. Maybe effective and sustainable professional development experiences in these times aim for a combination of the following: A recognition of our shared trauma, being vulnerable about how we are feeling in any given moment, and individualized, real-time suggestions for teaching moves. Rather than a procedural guide, the individualized communications in our email exchanges exemplify "practicing what we preach" in the classroom.

Students joke about Zoom University (Lorenz, Griffith, and Isaac, 2020) and social media is awash with posts questioning the quality of online higher education, but lost in these memes is the fact that educators, like their students, are humans just trying to navigate the collective trauma while keeping their families safe and their classes afloat.

In his book exploring the connections between writing and trauma, Roy Fox (2016) states, "The language most often used for critical thinking, as well as 'healing' is, you guessed it, expressive language, the very 'Dear Diary Trash' we love to hate" (p. 25). Fox then details other language practices used to simultaneously work through problems and heal from trauma events including "speculating, hypothesizing . . . expressions of doubt and qualification, litany or listing, and metaphor" (p. 25). The sort of individualized faculty development exemplified throughout this essay includes just these trauma-informed elements. If you were to wade through the rest of our emails, you'd see mentions of birthday dinners, bike rides, book recommendations, partners, and surprises from old friends. You'd find Moby Dick metaphors used to help grapple with the unsureness of waiting. You'd find a few suggestions I made for Arthur's online writing instruction. But you'd also see many instances of Arthur asking and answering his own pedagogical questions. You'd see him being reflective about his teaching and his students and coming up with small adjustments to increase the impact of his courses.

Among the positive outcomes of the spring 2020 semester is a shift in emphasis for faculty development units like mine; we have been provided the opportunity to reflect on the goals of professional development and to consider the appropriate modes for achieving those goals. In doing so, we have been reminded of the very real teaching benefits that are created when we focus our time on sustained faculty-to-faculty, person-to-person professional development. These lessons can, of course, transfer to faculty-student relationships as well, and we can only hope that the gentleness with which we have treated our faculty colleagues and our students continues long past the end of this pandemic. In one of his final messages of the semester, Arthur writes, "I have to work on getting better at this gig as I know caring, sharing, and time spent is not enough." But maybe these things *are* enough, for students and faculty learners alike.

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Brief Peer Reviewed Article

Lessons from the Field: Understanding Philanthropy's Role in Supporting Higher Education's Recovery from the Pandemic

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Abstract
The coronavirus has magnified existing racial injustices and educational inequities. Philanthropy will play a key role in facilitating higher education's recovery from the pandemic, but its relationship with the field needs to evolve to enact a more equitable and sustainable future. Informed by survey responses from 30 grantee partners (e.g., college leaders, scholars, research organizations, and community-based nonprofits), one foundation is on a journey to ensure that its relationships with the field are grounded in a deep understanding of partners' needs and continued service to America's most marginalized college students during the pandemic. This essay features what the foundation has learned as a result of its grantees' persistence and the actions it will undertake to further support educational equity.

Keywords: College access and success; educational equity; education philanthropy.

COVID-19 and the Exacerbation of Inequities in the US

The global pandemic has highlighted ways in which systemic racism destroys lives and livelihoods. Black, Indigenous, and Latinx communities in the United States have been ravaged by COVID-19 and its associated economic fallout (Brown, 2020). The aftermath is not accidental; the virus and economic shutdown exacerbated longstanding societal ills, replicated and created new barriers to social mobility, and increased health disparities. Postsecondary education is ground zero for the pandemic's perniciousness, reflecting society's gross inequities while being brutalized by its impacts. Yet, community-based organizations and mission-oriented universities remain committed to making the higher education sector more just, equitable, and student-centered.

This essay analyzes survey responses from 30 grantees supported by a private, nonprofit philanthropic organization to understand how they have adapted their programming, modified organizational infrastructures, and maximized varied forms of capital to ensure college students' continued progress. Our analysis suggests that although these organizations face tremendous challenges exacerbated by the pandemic, they remain committed to serving higher education's most vulnerable populations. Most are finding creative solutions to support students and their families by leveraging collaborations that develop emergency aid programs, create one-stop informational hubs, and facilitate reliable Wi-Fi and broadband access. Education philanthropy must draw inspiration from their persistence and evolve to become a better racial justice partner. Otherwise, philanthropy's recent rhetoric around dismantling systemic racism will remain empty.

Impacts of COVID-19 on Marginalized U.S. College Students

America's most marginalized college students (e.g., students of color, those with low incomes, post-traditional learners) have felt the brunt of COVID-19's effects. For example, an April 2020 survey revealed that 41% of college students of color would not return to campus or found it "too soon to say" due to changes in family resources. In contrast, only 24% of their White counterparts expressed the same uncertainty (SimpsonScarborough, 2020). Moreover, while nearly all colleges needed to transition from face-to-face activities to virtual platforms, impacts on students have been disparate. Auxier and Anderson (2020) found that Latinx and Black students reported higher rates of inconsistent access to the internet, buttressing a recent finding that 34% of Black and 42% of

Latinx households lack high-speed internet and, together, 33% lack personal computers (Perrin & Turner, 2019).

Concomitantly, many will continue to experience unmet basic needs (e.g., shelter, food, income) and heightened emotional distress. Brown (2020) observed that more than 45% of Black and Latinx families experienced food insecurity or the inability to pay their mortgage or rent – nearly double the share of White families. Food and housing insecurity is also pervasive among students attending Tribal Colleges: Twenty-nine percent of respondents to a 2019 survey revealed that they were homeless; 69% had faced housing insecurity at some point in the prior 12 months; and 62% had been food insecure in the prior 30 days (Hope Center for Community, College, and Justice, 2020b). These rates have increased during the pandemic (Hope Center for Community, College, and Justice, 2020a).

These challenges will make it extraordinarily difficult for many students of color to enroll in or return to college. They will also compound existing racialized and income-based disparities in student persistence and degree completion. In March 2020, the U.S. Congress passed the Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security Act (CARES Act), providing over $14 billion to offset financial losses experienced by postsecondary students and institutions. But student subsidies contained exclusionary provisions, such as restricting emergency aid to those who were eligible for Title IV federal student financial aid, which locked out undocumented and DACA-recipient students and many student veterans. Moreover, some scholars estimated that private, for-profit colleges received the highest per-student allocation, compounding shortfalls experienced by community colleges and Minority-Serving Institutions (Hillman, 2020).

Description of Questionnaire, Respondents, and Responses

To develop a richer understanding of COVID-19's impacts on postsecondary students and organizations, a private, nonprofit philanthropic organization distributed an open-ended survey to its grantee partners. The survey sought to understand how the pandemic and associated economic uncertainty impacted its partners' work with students and how they responded to these challenges. Thirty grantees responded, including leaders of colleges and universities, organizations that provide direct college-going services to young people and adults, research firms, and policy advocacy organizations. The mission of the foundation's

education program is to increase college access and degree attainment for underserved students (e.g., Asian and Pacific Islander Americans, Black, Latinx, and Indigenous students, those from low-income backgrounds) and to support the adoption of federal, state, and institutional policies to improve their outcomes. Hence, the grantees who responded have a primary focus of serving low-income and historically marginalized students. As a result, the responses grantees provided focus on these students.

The three-question survey was disseminated at the end of March 2020 and fielded between April and May. Thus, responses did not capture perspectives on the unrest that transpired following the murders of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor. Nevertheless, this analysis uncovers justice-oriented themes that protesters have called for in the wake of their deaths.

Description of Grantees' Insights

The survey revealed that all of the organizations reacted swiftly, protecting the health of their employees and those they served by closing offices and requiring staff to work from home, readjusting operations, and finding ways to continue serving their communities. All reported canceling or rescheduling in-person events and travel. These adjustments allowed respondents to survive the pandemic's initial disruptions, keeping them in contact with students and staff. However, several ($n = 11$) disclosed budget concerns because a large portion of their funds are usually raised through in-person convenings, conferences, and fundraising events.

Most direct service providers reported that the pandemic magnified existing race- and income-based inequities in food insecurity, mental health concerns, economic constraints, loss of income, and transportation and housing needs ($n = 15$). Unsurprisingly, many reported that lack of technology and bandwidth was the most immediate need for their students ($n = 11$). They also reported a lack of funds to return home after colleges closed, and healthcare and childcare needs. Grantees also worried about student attrition and decreasing rates of FAFSA completion, fearing current students would not return and large numbers of high school seniors would decide not to enroll ($n = 8$).

Grantees developed innovative solutions to address students' most pressing challenges. They redirected existing resources toward emergency aid to cover students' basic needs and loss of income ($n = 5$). Policy organizations readjusted their focus to advocate for students by meeting

with federal and state policymakers to maximize stimulus funding and direct it toward covering students' basic needs ($n = 6$). Others built COVID-19 virtual hubs with information related to mental health, student loans, standardized testing, and college admissions ($n = 10$). Leveraging strategic partnerships, grantees developed collaborations to secure funding and resources for students and designed strategies to jointly advocate for students' needs ($n = 7$). All respondents reported increasing their use of online platforms as they shifted to providing virtual services, including telehealth, webinars, meeting with legislators online, and hosting virtual campus tours.

Responses provided a glimpse of students' COVID-19-related hurdles, but they also revealed that college access organizations and mission-oriented universities are at the forefront of responding to community needs and stewarding resources to support students. Grantees are making internal adjustments, refocusing short- and long-term goals to foster better outcomes for students, finding creative ways to continue serving them, and forming collaborations to strategically advocate for their needs. Perhaps one of the most important insights is that these organizations remain committed to serving vulnerable populations historically marginalized by racism, unjust policies, and government disinvestment. Grantees rapidly responded to students' obstacles even when facing their own challenges, including organizational budget constraints, caring for children and family members at home, and shortcomings in technology.

Steps Philanthropy Can take to Support Racial Equity in Higher Education

Given disparities in student experiences and outcomes, we see these innovations as a part of a greater movement to eliminate educational inequities. Even when organizations operate with limited resources and staff capacity, they have been able to disrupt norms and step outside their comfort zones to meet the needs of vulnerable communities. As philanthropists, we need to reimagine ourselves outside the constraints of bureaucratic red tape; we cannot remain on the benches and watch as the pandemic destroys the progress these organizations helped accomplish. At the onset of the pandemic, many foundations offered flexible grant terms and targeted funding to support racial equity, but philanthropy needs to commit to these efforts, sustaining these approaches over time. Education inequities are longstanding; one-time fixes will do little to reverse them.

We have the responsibility to disrupt inequitable and unjust systems and ensure that all students can reach their full potential. We assume this with deep respect for students' humanity, and a profound understanding that we can only achieve these ends in partnership with our grantees. We are inspired by the ways our grantee partners have adapted under the current conditions. This moment deepens our commitment to working toward equity and justice in education and beyond, and to helping our grantees build stronger futures for the students they serve.

As foundations, we need to explicitly name racial injustice in our writing, public remarks, and whenever we observe it. We will share our power and privilege by amplifying the voices of scholars and education leaders who pursue its eradication and attack its driving forces. Additionally, we will refine the ways we learn from the field, expanding our network of informants and storytellers and becoming more attentive to organizations that serve communities of color. We will continue this journey and welcome other funders to also consider strengthening their relationships with postsecondary education.

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Brief Peer Reviewed Article

COVID-19 and Higher Education in Ghana: The Case of a Public Higher Education Institution

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Abstract

This paper examines the ability of a public higher education in Ghana to adapt to changes in teaching and learning in the midst of COVID-19 pandemic. Measures taken to ensure uninterrupted migration to online teaching and learning included a regular monthly supply of data bundle from an internet service provider to faculty members, select support staff and students in addition to regular training in the effective use of the SAKAI Learning Management System. Challenges encountered include inadequate internet access, occasional network interruptions during online classes and oversubscription of Zoom time slots at the departmental level. Despite these challenges, this public higher education institution was able to complete the 2019/2020 academic year fairly well.

Keywords: COVID-19, Ghana, learning, public higher education institution, teaching

Globally, higher education institutions have regularly used online platforms to engage students when there were sudden interruptions in academic activities either through natural disasters or otherwise. In South Africa for example, higher education institutions went online with teaching and learning when there were student demonstrations leading to university closures between 2015 and 2017 (Czerniewicz, 2020). In December 2019, an outbreak of COVID-19 in Wuhan, Hubei province, in China led to a

declaration of a public health emergency by the World Health Organization on 30th January 2020 (Sohrabi et al., 2020). This virus changed the normal activities of every country leading to border closures, movement restrictions across borders and sensitization of citizenry on preventive measures that needed to be put in place to halt its spread (WHO, 2020).

Since the outbreak of the pandemic, educational institutions globally, have shifted teaching and learning engagements with students from face to face and blended modes to the online mode and Ghana is no exception. However, these shifts have not been without challenges. Ghana confirmed its first case of the virus on March 12, 2020 (ghanahealthservice.org/covid19/) and as the positive cases increased, all educational institutions were closed on March 15, 2020 as well as restrictions and suspensions placed on mass gatherings. This initial closure had an impact on the higher education sector as institutions had to adjust their teaching and learning modes in response. Invariably, the academic calendars of both private and public higher education institutions were affected. It is significant to note that Ghana's positive case count then was six. Currently, the cumulative case count is 92,562, with 1,587 active cases and 779 total recorded deaths for an estimated population of about 30 million (ghanahealthservice.org/covid19/). Consequent to the closures, Ghanaian higher education institutions had to adapt new ways of teaching and learning to stimulate student engagement and complete the academic year.

On the continental level, African countries needed alternative innovative learning platforms in the education sector so that its youth do not become further disadvantaged after the pandemic (African Union, 2020; Mohammed, 2020). The Ghanaian public and private higher education sector sought innovative ways to engage their students in teaching and learning to enable the completion of the academic calendar. Using the University of Ghana as a case, this paper examined how it successfully adapted to change during the pandemic and completed its academic calendar. This paper will delineate on the methods that this higher institution employed to engage students in online teaching and learning.

The University of Ghana is a public higher education institution in the West African country of Ghana. It was established in 1948 by the then British colonial government (Ofori-Attah, 2006) and has been ranked in the 151-200 band of 2020 *Times Higher Education's* Golden Age University Ranking for the second year in succession. Its current student population is over 38,000 (ug.edu.gh/about/overview). This public higher education

institution in Ghana is purposively selected for this paper for three reasons. It stands out from other public institutions in similar categories because first, the Noguchi Memorial Institute for Medical Research (NMIMR), a leading biomedical research facility which began initial testing of COVID-19 samples, is part of the University of Ghana. Second, the university has a well-equipped Medical Centre of comparable status to any international health facility which serves as an avenue for treating critically ill COVID-19 patients. Third, it is one of the first public higher education institutions in Ghana to have a student, who had returned from abroad test positive for COVID-19. Thus, these three reasons enabled the selection of this higher education institution as to how it adapted to change during the COVID-19 pandemic and successfully completed its 2019/2020 academic calendar.

Change management is the "process of continually renewing an organization's direction, structure, and capabilities to serve the ever-changing needs of external and internal customers…' (Moran & Brightman, 2001, p.14). Given the preceding definition of change management, the University of Ghana swiftly responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by modifying its instructional structures to benefit students. It leveraged on the learning management system that it had in place so that teaching and learning were not unduly interrupted. In response to the pandemic, the University of Ghana migrated all teaching and learning activities online for the remaining seven weeks of the second semester through an increased use of the SAKAI Learning Management System (LMS) and other virtual learning platforms. The migration was primarily in consonance with a communique issued by the National Council for Tertiary Education of Ghana that higher education institutions should continue online educational engagement with students and restrict face to face learning activities. To enable this online arrangement, the university provided a free internet data package for students, a select support staff and faculty members. Among others, the university also rolled out Zoom and Google classroom as alternative platforms to the SAKAI LMS. Vodafone Ghana, a noted internet service provider, agreed to zero rate access to SAKAI LMS for all students, support staff and faculty members using its network. The university also arranged for virtual training (a novel initiative) for faculty members and students who required it, as well as developed self-guide manuals and videos on the effective use of the SAKAI LMS. Faculty members, with help from instructional technologists, converted their teaching notes to online easy-to-access materials. The university emphasized asynchronous mode of teaching as against the synchronous mode so that students can have access

to recorded versions of the class (University of Ghana [UG] Newsfile-SE/001, 2020).

During the transition to online teaching and learning, both faculty members and students encountered a number of challenges. Initially faculty members were unable to obtain extended Zoom time slots when using departmental access as they were oversubscribed. To address this challenge faculty had to reschedule classes, and finding a suitable time for all students was sometimes a hassle. Second, there were issues with bandwidth as network interruptions occasionally occurred during virtual online classes. Moreover, the home locations of some students could not accommodate virtual learning as they had problems with internet access. Consequently, some students could not take part in the virtual online real time classes. Another challenge was that both faculty members and students sometimes ran out of data provided and had to buy additional data at their own expense. Internet access worked better at certain times of the day, especially in the late evenings, even though that was not a convenient time for classes for some students. To counteract the problem of unstable internet, faculty members recorded their classes and used the asynchronous mode of teaching instead of synchronous (Shaw, 2020). However, this was done sometimes, at an added cost to the faculty member. The perfect environment for uninterrupted teaching was also a challenge. Constantly, getting a quiet environment for smooth teaching became a luxury as some faculty members had to deal with some level of noise and background interruptions from family when working from a home location.

After the ease of restrictions in the country in May 2020, the institution initially made provision for final year students who were not able to take part in the online teaching and learning to relocate safely to campus to enable their completion of academic work and eventual graduation. Further, libraries, computer laboratories and staff provided the needed support to final year students who returned to campus while abiding strictly by the COVID-19 safety protocols. As a result, the university held its first virtual graduation on July 30, 2020. The institution also provided an opportunity to continuing students (who formed about ten per cent of the student population) and were unable to participate in its online teaching and learning programs to return to campus and complete the second semester of 2019/2020 academic year in person. (UG Reopening Notice-CL.16, 2020). In relation to the 2020/2021 academic year, the university is running an online modular system of teaching and learning, with very limited face to face interaction for programs demanding that type of engagement due to the

unpredictable nature of the COVID-19 virus (UG Proposals for Re-opening-CL.16, 2020).

Ultimately, the onset of COVID-19 pandemic has shown how a public higher education institution in Ghana can adapt to change. This university has evolved from an institution that emphasizes face-to-face meeting to one that now holds majority of its teaching and learning activities online. The university has leveraged on existing technological infrastructure to accommodate the surge in online teaching and learning. The pandemic has obliged faculty members and support staff to explore and utilize alternative platforms thus ensuring that students complete their programs within a specified timeframe. Online teaching and learning have become intertwined with the institution's outreach program to its clientele. Invariably, faculty members and support staff will require regular training in the usage of technology in order to keep skills current and up-to-date while engaging students and teaching effectively online. An innovative way has to be found to resolve the challenges of students who are unable to participate in the online teaching and learning programs of the university successfully due to technological challenges. A more in-depth paper could explore how distinct departmental programs have fared during the university's migration to online teaching and learning.

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Brief Peer Reviewed Article

Turning into the wind:
COVID-19 as a catalyst for creativity in higher education

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Abstract
In this short essay, the author addresses challenges facing higher education in the COVID-19 era and how creativity may serve to transform its future.

Keywords: creativity, higher education, COVID-19, teaching, learning

It seems that a perfect storm has been brewing in American higher education over the past decade. Institutions have seen peak enrollments, hired additional administrative staff, and built bigger and more opulent residence halls, recreation facilities, and campus venues to enhance students' college experience. Yet at the same time many campuses were busily expanding, population statistics pointed toward an inevitable downward trend of high school graduates available to enroll in postsecondary programs in the near future—the future in which we now find ourselves. Realizing that this downturn was drawing near, many universities launched efforts to augment admissions by recruiting international students and creating new certificate, graduate, and adult education programs. Such stopgap measures often proved disappointing, however, since overseas governments reduced funding, and many working adults were (and are) still struggling to make ends meet from a turbulent economy. Battling plummeting enrollments, increasingly aggressive admissions tactics to compete for students, and decreasing government

support, administrators frequently found themselves forced to make major changes. Some announced significant budget cuts, some chose to merge their institutions, and some had to shutter their schools altogether. As if those challenges were not enough to occupy professionals working in higher education, COVID-19 would magnify the trials exponentially. In the early months of 2020, as word spread about the highly contagious virus, campus leaders were thrust into circumstances that required urgent action, not the usual steady, measured pace of the academy. Suddenly, universities became more "human" than ever before—students witnessed top university officials shrugging their shoulders and asking for patience as they frantically went about seeking information and making decisions. News and plans shifted, sometimes drastically, often daily (if not hourly). Across institutional types and regions, anxiety and confusion were widespread, communication was vague, and everyone was looking to each other for answers that did not exist. After all, how many times has this unique constellation of issues plagued higher education?

Although many might lament the current state of disarray in countless college contexts, as a former university administrator and current higher education program faculty member whose research centers on creativity and human development, I take a slightly different view. Could this be the moment for which educators have been waiting to catalyze much-needed change in higher education? What if we shifted our focus to the *opportunities* that reside at the nexus of these challenges?

Creativity: Not just any port in a storm

I have been studying creativity—specifically, how individuals define creativity and what I have come to call one's "creative identity," or how one views one's own creative capacity (Welkener, 2000; 2004; 2011; 2021) for over 25 years. The first college courses I taught were art (often to non-art majors) and I noticed a pattern to my first interactions with students. They were frequently quick to share that they were "not good at this kind of thing," or "not very creative" before we even had a chance to get started. This repeated claim piqued my curiosity; I began to wonder how they must be defining creativity to be so certain that they were outside of its bounds. Interdisciplinary doctoral studies in higher education allowed me to pursue these ideas and for my research to stand at the intersection of creativity, learning, and human development; I quickly discovered that the three are inextricably linked. In fact, Maslow, known for his psychological work on human needs, is quoted as saying (as cited

in Dacey & Lennon, 1998), "the concept of creativeness and the concept of the healthy, self-actualizing, fully human person seem to be coming closer and closer together, and may perhaps turn out to be the same thing" (p. 137).

However, while countless university, corporate, and other organizational mission statements proudly place creativity at the top of their priorities, many researchers and educators suggest that we are losing ground when it comes to developing individuals' creative acumen by the time they leave our educational institutions (Bronson & Merryman, 2010; IBM Global Business Services, 2012; Kim, 2011; Robinson, 2011; Welkener, 2004). Trends commonly point toward a decline in creative disposition and performance over time, age, and schooling. Clearly, there is a disconnect between organizations' aspirations and outcomes when individuals have lost, rather than gained, confidence in their creative potential.

The span of my qualitative research with college students, faculty, and administrators in the U.S. and Europe has consistently shown that one's creative identity is shaped early and externally, by important others' influence (Welkener, 2000; 2021). Thus, those significant people, the context of their exchanges, and the expectations of creativity (explicit and implicit) embedded in their experiences have lingering impact. Holly, an American undergraduate student in my original dissertation study (Welkener, 2000) who rated herself low in creativity (three on a 10-point scale where 10 was considered highly creative), provides a powerful example. When asked how she arrived at this assessment of her creative identity, she very easily pointed to a specific encounter with her third grade art teacher—her recall of the situation was stunning in its vivid detail given that it would have taken place over a dozen years prior to our conversation. She remembered how proud she was of a unique spaceship drawing she was making when her teacher came over to inspect the work. Her delight was quickly deflated when the teacher said "what is *that*?" and told her that what she was producing was incorrect; that it should not "look like that at all." Holly identified that as the defining moment that shaped her creative self-view, one that she never questioned again until sitting with me for our research interview. While her story is perhaps an extreme case, research participants from various inquiries I have conducted over the years have named teachers, family members, and friends who helped to define their creative identities (for better or for worse). Especially in examples from the U.S., as students moved from

high school into college, they frequently reported abandoning creative risk-taking in order to satisfy the teacher and "get the grade," feeling that creativity was viewed as less "professional" or not as "intellectual" as they advanced in their careers. While many did not feel creatively encouraged in post-secondary schooling contexts, those in arts-related fields had the opposite experience since expectations for creativity were emphasized as essential to their discipline(s). Those students reported being regularly challenged to develop their creative capacity, and were able to find some success given the support to do so. An interesting difference between narratives from my American and European participants (Welkener, 2021) has been in the different ways that the arts appear to be identified and integrated into everyday life, or normalized, by the culture. While both American and European respondents commonly associated being creative with being artistic in some fashion, the American meaning of "art" and "artist" seems to restrict who can acknowledge their creative capabilities. In contrast, European culture embraces a more inclusive use of the terms; consequently, individuals may be more likely to define themselves as having some "artistic" or creative competence.

Solutions and resolutions: Ways to soar

Clearly, findings that suggest some individuals do not feel capable of creative contributions are problematic, particularly at a time when it could be argued that the "ability to solve problems, especially new and unique ones…[is a] critical competency for the twenty-first century" (Beghetto & Plucker, 2016, p. 85). However, perhaps this particular point in history, when the world is experiencing more conflict and uncertainty than ever before, is precisely when we can make the changes needed to bolster individuals' creative identities. After all, humans do not tend to develop when they are content; it is when we are in the midst of discomfort and questioning what we think we know that true growth occurs (Kegan, 1994). COVID-19 and other present-day challenges such as racial tensions, political divides, and economic disparities offer "ill-structured problems" (King & Kitchener, 1994)— dilemmas that do not have simple solutions. Developmental educators often employ such problematizing methods in their teaching to invite students into a rich dialogue about possibilities; indeed it can be empowering for learners to consider that there are no clear answers, and myriad perspectives could be acceptable, even celebrated. When trials are great, risk-taking may seem less daunting and rewards appear more attainable. Viewed in this way, the

difficulties, rather than being paralyzing, can act as a propellant toward new assumptions, new methods, new solutions, In other words, creative identities can be given space to flourish if given the proper scaffolding. Higher education is uniquely situated to facilitate this transformation for its constituents, as well as potentially benefit by being changed in the process itself.

For instance, consider the developmental growth that could come from students watching their mentors wrestle with vexing problems such as those the pandemic has wrought; or better yet, being invited into "learning partnerships" (Baxter Magolda, 2012) in the intentional design of complex solutions. Imagine the widespread impact of work performed by faculty, staff, and students from various fields if universities turned their attention to addressing the most pressing needs of the time; if each assignment in each class aimed at using the content of the course to tackle tangible human concerns in need of resolution, no matter how large or small. Students and faculty alike would be able to model and learn how to exercise creativity in all kinds of disciplines, contesting the notion that it is only for the arts.

The university community has already shown promise in coming together around the online delivery of curricula and services. When students were sent home to study as COVID-19 first made its way across the country, faculty and staff worked together (across disciplines and even institutions) to move courses, programs, and events online within a matter of days, a herculean feat. Social media served as a platform for swiftly sharing strategies and support, a practice that is continuing as weeks of experience with distance learning stretch into months and new modalities settle in as permanent features in higher education. Creativity can be found at every turn, especially as individuals reach the limits of technological tools available to them and are forced to find new ways to accomplish learning objectives.

When I think about the ever-changing, stormy higher education landscape produced by COVID-19 and other circumstances of late, I am reminded of a quote attributed to Henry Ford, that "when everything seems to be going against you, remember that the airplane takes off against the wind, not with it." While it seems counterintuitive to those of us not trained in aeronautics, in order for a plane to have the necessary "lift" to leave the ground, it faces *into* the wind. It has been quite a while since the American college/university system has seen significant transformation. Then again, for many years it has not endured momentous

hardships, nor benefited from the creative triumph that emerges from the process. Perhaps now is the time for higher education to turn into the wind in order to create the proper conditions to soar creative heights.

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Teacher education in the time of COVID: Recommendations for praxis

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Abstract
The current health crisis has brought into relief the gap in teacher training regarding online teaching and effective online pedagogies. To address this issue moving forward, the author recommends online field experience in teacher education, effective professional development to that end for in-service teachers, and intentional work on building social connectedness in existing online classroom environments.

Keywords: field experience, online education, online pedagogy, professional development, teacher education

With the realities of coronavirus, schools around the globe have moved their learning to online systems. In the U.S. alone, 124,000 public and private schools have closed their physical campuses, which has affected at least 55.1 million students (Education Week, 2020). This shift brings with it struggles for both students and teachers. Teachers feel unprepared and overwhelmed with teaching their students online (Perper, 2020). Students, in some districts more than half of the school population, are not participating in the online learning (Goldstein, Popescu, & Hannah-Jones, 2020) and are experiencing significantly higher instances of learning loss,

perhaps up to 70% higher than a typical year (Kuhfeld & Tarasawa, 2020). In light of these struggles, the time is ripe to include online teaching field experiences in teacher education programs.

Online teaching requires significantly different skills than traditional, face-to-face teaching. Online teaching pedagogies vary from in-person practices (Dixson, 2010; Martin, 2019; Draus et al., 2014; Griffiths & Graham, 2009; Korkut et al., 2015), and many contemporary teachers feel so unprepared and overwhelmed with implementing them that they feel "anxious," angry, and "extremely checked out" as a result of a lack of preparation for the realities of online teaching (Perper, 2020, para. 8). This tension carries over into student perceptions. Students similarly struggle with poorly designed online education, which can become stale and repetitive, causing students to feel isolated and disinterested without an emotional connection to course content (Martin, 2019).

One potential solution to this dissatisfaction is intentional relationship building. Building relationships positively affects student learning and can be harder in an online environment. Student-teacher relationships are the building blocks of all classroom activities (Marzano et al., 2003). For students, satisfaction with their learning experiences and feelings of social connectedness are highly correlated (Daves & Roberts, 2010). Furthermore, students whose instructors were not trained in teaching online reporting a lack of interest, a lower quality of work, and less overall satisfaction (Martin, 2019). Getting students involved in the learning creates greater gains (Griffiths & Graham, 2009). Effective online teaching consists of some intentional components, such as being explicit in course expectations, giving video tutorials, providing an outlet for students to share their lives, and asking questions and soliciting student interests (Martin, 2019). Making personalized videos for students has been shown repeatedly to aid in relationship building in online courses (Draus et al., 2014; Griffiths & Graham, 2009; Korkut et al., 2015). The most natural place for teachers to learn these skills is where they most traditionally learn skills: field experience and professional development.

Field experience and professional development are the two key ways that preservice and in-service teachers gain skills. Field experiences serves as a broad foundational form of professional development for preservice teachers and are a vital part of teacher education (Aiken & Day, 1999; Buck, Morsink, Griffin, Hines, & Lenk, 1992; Harlin, 1999; Joyce, Yarger, Howey, Harbeck, & Kluwin, 1977; Wiggins & Follo, 1999), and only 1.3% of the 522 teacher education program respondents self-reported

in an online survey that they include field experiences in virtual schools; the remaining 98.7% had no online component (Kennedy & Archambault, 2012). This trend remains true even in online programs. Harrell and Harris (2006) found that the vast majority of online teacher education programs can be more accurately described as "web-supported, rather than delivered completely online" (p. 758) and still contain face-to-face student teaching field experiences. Effective training programs for online teaching see the highest gains when instructors are comfortable with the hardware involved, are trained in the course delivery system, have ongoing support from their schools and administration, and are motivated to work in the new environment (Wolf, 2006).

After entering the classroom as in-service teachers, new learning largely happens through professional development, either through the school district or sought out from a professional organization. Professional development, defined as "structured professional learning that results in changes to teacher knowledge and practices, and improvements in student learning outcomes" (Darling-Hammond, Hyler, & Gardner, 2017, p. 2), is the most common method teachers use in order to gain access to new teaching strategies and might hold the key to training those teachers who are already in the field.

Another notable consideration is the future of K–12 school modalities. While some might argue that as vaccination rates rise and infection rates fall, schools will move away from online modalities in a rush back to normal, pre-coronavirus practices and environments, the fact remains that the changes in virtual schooling, remote working, and public health closures remain unlikely to materially disappear any time soon. For instance, many universities plan to continue more robust online course offerings into the next fall and spring semesters and beyond (Kreidler, 2021), and K–12 virtual options are following suit (Singer, 2021; Superville, 2020). The focus then must shift to determine how teacher education and pedagogies can move intentionally toward effective practices in light of these shifts.

With purposeful work toward shifting teaching methodologies rather than moving face-to-face classes online with no restructuring, teachers and students alike can feel more successful. With this challenge in mind, a few key changes in practice might be useful at all levels of education, from university and alternative teacher education to the teachers working with students of all ages each day.

As preservice and in-service teachers alike gain valuable experience in online modalities, an intentional path forward emerges in which experienced educators can guide novices through the demands of online teaching. The novel nature of the coronavirus school closures led to teacher educators and administrators with minimal—if any—experience teaching online training and supporting their preservice and in-service teachers in the uncharted territory of virtual schooling. One year in, the waters, while more charted, still leave much unknown. While many schools are back teaching face-to-face, many also retain virtual and hybrid options, demonstrating that schools will likely feel the impacts of these changes for years to come.

Addressing this problem retroactively is impossible, but creating new practice for moving forward is not. To that end, teacher education programs and school administrators should make moves to change teacher education in the following four ways. First, teacher education programs traditional and alternative certification alike should move to add online field experience to teacher education programs. Second, schools and education service centers should create professional development for in-service teachers on effective online teaching. Third, teachers must continue to prioritize relationships and relationship building regardless of class modality in order to meet student needs and increase student learning. Finally, educators at all levels should explore methods for building social connectedness among students and teachers using online pedagogies.

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An Episode in Allyship Responding to the Uprising

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Abstract
In the midst of dual pandemics, the racial justice uprising and Coronavirus pandemic, I, a Black associate professor of education, took on the challenge of having my White colleague as an apprentice for racial justice work. While co-teaching a critical diversity course, I decided to strategically engage our College of Education in a robust conversation on racial equity and reconciliation. An unanticipated event in that process was that my apprentice would become an effective ally and co-conspirator. I share this insight of our process in hopes that aspiring allies might improve their effort.

Keywords: apprentice model, black humanity, dual pandemics, racial ally

In the midst of dual pandemics, the racial justice uprising and Covid-19 pandemic, Katie and I started co-teaching a course titled Culturally Responsive Pedagogy & Classroom Management (CRPCM) to 75 newly admitted online Master of Arts in Teaching (MAT) students. Katie Brkich is a White woman and I am Black. We are both tenured associate professors and transplants to the area. I am a veteran critical multicultural educator and Katie is a veteran science educator. As colleagues, we have worked for years to design and develop a MAT program focused on cultures and communities. I am the program director and part of my responsibilities include making suggestions to the chair for who should be

assigned specific courses. Against my recommendation, Katie was assigned to teach the CRPCM course which is beyond her professional expertise. Frustrated, I believe appointing a science educator to teach a diversity course undermines the credibility of social justice expertise and the overall rigor of the course. Still, our rapport allowed us to strategize a plan (namely co-teaching with an apprenticeship model) to survive the summer 2020 semester and honor the integrity of the course. What follows is a retelling about how the murder of George Floyd sparked an episode of strategic allyship in the backdrop of us co-teaching. This strategic allyship involves instances where a person uses their privilege (tangible & intangible) to the advantage of a marginalized community; champions proposals that structurally reduce/eliminate oppression; works in community while led by marginalized experts/leaders.

In the wake of George Floyd's murder and the subsequent uprising, many "allies" and bystanders were awakened to the pandemic of systemic racism and anti-Blackness. At work, in the College of Education, this enlightenment prompted a college wide internal discussion on how to do better. When our White dean sent out a college wide email naming "systemic anti-Black racism", I felt validated but also distrusting, angry, and already defeated. These mixed emotions stemmed from centuries long denial or deference to Black oppression and a history of performative reactions after a major incident that quickly dissipates. Our university sits less than 100 miles from the site of the Charleston Church Massacre and I vividly remember the audible silence in our college in the aftermath. In 2014, when I chose to work in a southern predominantly White institution (PWI), I understood that I, a Black woman with a leftist social justice orientation, would be lonely in my experiences and perceptions. But I didn't realize that I'd also be alone in my humanization of Black people.

Dylan's Roof's murder of nine worshippers during bible study seemed so heinous and explicit that I expected my colleagues to publicly acknowledge anti-Blackness and denounce White supremacy. That conversation never happened—at least never in my presence. So, five years later and with the killings of many other Black people at the hands of police and White supremacists, I was disenchanted with the college but also emboldened by my rage. As Baldwin frames it,

> To be a Negro in this country and to be relatively conscious is to be in a state of rage almost, almost all of the time — and in one's work. And part of the rage is this: It isn't only what is happening to you. But it's what's happening all around you and all of the time in

the face of the most extraordinary and criminal indifference, indifference of most White people in this country, and their ignorance. (Baldwin, 1961)

As a critical multicultural educator and a Black feminist, I'm often too conscious for my own mental wellness. I'm in a state of palatable rage almost, almost all of the time- especially in my work.

When the dean stated, "Please share your thoughts and ideas on how we can 'turn our thin words into thick actions,'" I waited to see if and how others—namely non-Black colleagues—would take up the call. When a few did respond with the equivalent of "thoughts and prayers" but no tangible commitments to change or accountability, the trauma of working amongst friendly adversaries who justify their silence as politeness and non-confrontational was amplified. Enraged, I wrote to our college listserv:

Dear Dean X and our administration team,
I appreciate the gesture of this message and I'm excited about the possibilities for accountability and systemic change inherent in it. Below, I've sketched out a few college-wide changes that I think would advance the mission of mitigating racialized educational disparities in the college:

- *Anti-racist, and anti-Blackness training for faculty, staff, and admin*
- *Racial battle fatigue support groups for Black folks led by mental health professionals*
- *Revised curriculums, especially in teacher preparation, that explicitly address racism, anti-Blackness, systemic oppression, etc.*
- *Imbed at least one critical diversity course in all degree programs*
- *A sincere apology for how Black faculty, students, and staff have been socially and systemically marginalized and tokenized in the college*
- *Scholarship for students experiencing marginalization across intersecting identities (Black & low income, queer & Latinx, etc.)*
- *An authentic valuing of faculty expertise on these matters instead of an emphasis on generalists*

I look forward to hearing your thoughts.

What followed was a constellation of people affirming my sentiments, passively or aggressively resisting my ideas, and adding other

actionable suggestions. As always, there were a few who self-congratulated their "allyship." I also received a few private emails from colleagues and administrators seeking clarity about my suggestions, affirming my thoughts, or defending me.

Immediately after sending my email, I panicked. Because we had been working closely on the CRPCM course, I called Katie to unpack my feelings. When I agreed to mentor Katie, I hadn't anticipated current events dominating and impacting our course content and pedagogy. In both my engagement with the CRPCM course and with the college, I sought validation while assessing if my mentorship was fruitful. I questioned, was I jeopardizing my career? Was I challenging our students too much? Was I too bold or rude or demanding? Was I unprofessional and showing up as a stereotypical angry Black woman? Katie validated me then and continued to do so after each colleague responded. She did so by mostly listening, paraphrasing my sentiments, situating my practices in the literature I exposed her to, and never undermining my sanity or my professionalism. She also agreed to let me lead her through the process of being a strategic ally.

Throughout the following months, I had countless meetings with administrators and faculty to discuss my ideas. Some students actively resisted my pedagogy citing that All Lives Matter. Repeatedly, I was asked to do unpaid emotional and intellectual labor of defending my ideas and humanity. Together, Katie and I strategized how to address or not address commentary, requests, assignments, and responses from colleagues. Katie, with her cultural lens of Whiteness and better knowledge of the university stakeholders, was able to provide invaluable context to some expressed dispositions. I, as both an active mourner confronted with the systemic oppression of anti-Blackness and with my history of work in anti-Blackness, found a safe professional place to grieve and exhibit frustration and hurt without my humanity and professionalism being questioned.

In our CRPCM course, we pivoted to center anti-Blackness and Black feminism because Breonna Taylor and other Black womxn weren't being centered alongside George Floyd. Katie followed my lead and willingly championed my proposals to structurally reduce and eliminate oppression in classrooms. For the first time in my career, I felt like I had a space to emotionally process the trauma of being Black in America at work and in the work.

Concretely, Katie humanized me, or—as Zora Neal Hurston (2020) might put it—she treated me White. Although I had to coach her through the process, she allowed me to. When I was paranoid about my experiences of microaggressions, she provided real examples of microaggressions. When I was anxious, she did not minimize my experience. Instead, she listened, echoed my concerns, and asked "What can I do to help you?" When I was overwhelmed, she lessened my workload. Periodically, I received cards of encouragement in the mail. Not once did she question my professionalism or my humanity. When I wanted to make a statement at our weekly faculty meetings that failed to even acknowledge the uprising, she made me a "Stop Killing Black People" t-shirt that I designed and expedited the shipping to my home. When students in our CRPCM course were being racist, she addressed them so I wouldn't have to. In so doing, she used her privilege (tangible & intangible) to my advantage as a person from a marginalized community.

I was in crisis and Katie created space for me to navigate that human experience in private while still maintaining professionalism in public. Black women don't have the luxury of being both professional and human, but Katie's allyship allowed me to find balance. She treated me as one would any White colleague experiencing trauma. I could drop the ball, take a break, cry, be angry, or experience the trauma in all sorts of manners without my intellectual capacity being questioned. In essence, I could show up with the complexity of my humanity.

This is not to suggest that Katie's allyship is perfect or without burden to folks of color. While I was thankful that Katie didn't use me to validate her "wokeness" or demonstrate how superior and different she was to known White supremacists, she still fumbled. Navigating one's White privilege and White fragility in a culture of White supremacy is purposefully exigent. I vividly remember the disappointment I felt when Katie went on social media advertising her plans to attend a Black Lives Matter rally and asked her friends for ideas of what to put on her sign. That allyship was performative and counter to the apprenticeship work we'd been doing because her declaration centered herself rather than the marginalized. Still, what motivated me was her commitment to growth and the space she helped cultivate between us that I could address the issue in real time. Immediately, she owned the indiscretion, reaffirmed her commitment to social justice, and we were able to move forward. Missteps occur when we're growing, but our accountability and humility in response to those experiences can make the difference in establishing trust

with vulnerable groups. I approached Katie's performative allyship from the perspective of a colleague with expertise in the matter, not a personal friend who has the advantage of rapport, because she was still being mentored. She responded accordingly. When we talk about allyship, if it requires friendship or charity for a privileged person to be held accountable, supportive, or to remain committed, then it isn't an allyship.

From the many calls to co-process how to interpret the replies from our colleagues to our scheduled zoom meetings to co-process how we would modify the CRPCM course or address students, at each step of the way we were deliberate and intentional in how we engaged or chose not to engage. This iteration of our strategic allyship lasted from the initial email I sent on June 12, 2020 and culminated at our college wide panel discussion on Allyship and Advocacy on September 10, 2020. There, Katie and I exposed our co-conspiracy and distinguished it from friendship and charity. We made explicit our intentionality—both in amplifying my voice and minimizing the presence of hers. We shared how Katie, throughout the process of humanizing me, owned her mistakes, maintained a professional rapport and leveraged her privilege to support me navigating my activism, teaching, and basic survival. At that panel, and also here, we tried to demonstrate the radical potentials of humanizing Others (Said, 1978) without having to personally be connected to marginalized communities or benefit from that humanization. When I say Katie treated me White, I am saying that she treated me like a human- which is what all communities, especially the marginalized, deserve and are demanding when we proclaim Black Lives Matter

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Managing My White Fragility: It's Not About Me

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Abstract
White privilege, white fragility, and white systems of oppression, both in the workplace and in everyday life, function to cause white people desiring a more just society to stumble, even when they're aware of these obstacles. In this essay, I discuss my experiences, during the dual pandemics of 2020, in trying to manage my white privilege and my white fragility when thrust into a role for which I felt I was not qualified—teaching Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Classroom Management—alongside a Black colleague who is an expert in social justice education. Contextualized partly in the police killings of Black people, I explore how white people like myself need to work consciously to always humanize people of color, especially when claiming racial justice allyship.

Keywords: apprenticeship model, co-conspirator, racial ally, white fragility

I am not an expert in social justice. I am an elementary science educator, with a focus on social justice within elementary science teaching and learning. I am a faculty member, in a College of Education, who has an awareness of my white privilege, of my white fragility (DiAngelo, 2018), and of the systems of oppression at work in my job and in my everyday life. But as a white person, trying to be a racial ally, one can get to a point where one recognizes and accepts that they have white privilege,

experience white fragility, and benefit from white supremacy, but become suspended in a state of inaction in that recognition.

I don't think I am naturally a good ally. Knowing when to speak and when to stay silent, knowing what to say when I speak, and knowing how to control my emotions either when I speak or refrain from speaking—none of these vital skills for effective allyship come easily to me. These are behaviors I am working on consistently and on which I am improving through practice, but I do so knowing I will fail again. I often cast myself as the leader—the first into battle to be seen and to take the hit, one of the loudest, most emotional, and most adamant and persuasive voices in the room, willing to act as a shield for those who need it. Acknowledging the thoroughly systemic nature of my overlapping layers of privilege as a White cisgender heterosexual woman with socioeconomic security, I try to wield my privileges as a weapon in the fight against social injustice. I am comfortable in that role.

However, this past summer I was cast into a role I was neither qualified to fill nor comfortable filling. I was assigned as an instructor in a course on Culturally Relevant Pedagogy and Classroom Management. I was assigned to teach one section of the course with Dr. Chelda Smith, a colleague of color who is an expert in social justice work. My being assigned to teach this course, which she had personally designed and taught previously, was an offense to her areas of expertise and an affront to her as the one now responsible for not only teaching her two sections of students, but also teaching me, her white colleague, what and how to teach my section of students. I felt like a burden placed on her without compensation or recognition of her role in supporting and educating me.

In preparing for and in teaching the course, we tried to take on an apprenticeship model for how I engaged. We chose this model as it was a useful metaphor for the asymmetrical relationship between Dr. Smith, one who has mastered the skills of the trade, and myself, one who is learning those same skills. This approach recognized that it was not just knowledge she would be helping me gain, but also skills, values, and dispositions that would allow me to help our students. Further, it required that I recognize that I was being educated, mentored, and scaffolded by an expert colleague who was willing to take on the work that was me.

I knew conceptually that the real work for systemic change is not done by coming to understand the systems of oppression from which you benefit, but rather what you do with that knowledge. But what does that look like in action? For me, it looked like me learning to manage my white

fragility and practicing treating Dr. Smith, as Zora Neal Hurston (2020) might put it, like she was white.

The course started on May 18, 2020. During our second live synchronous meeting with our students on May 25th, as we were discussing the murder of Ahmaud Abrey and Breanna Taylor earlier that year, Dr. Smith received a personal message that another Black man had been killed at the hands of police, this time in Minneapolis—a man we would soon learn was named George Floyd.

Following the egregious police killing of George Floyd, the Dean of our College dispatched an email entitled "Transforming Words into Actions". It had been more than ten days since Mr. Floyd's murder, with no comment made on the situation from either our University or College, so I worried about how my colleagues of color would experience both the email itself and the faculty's lack of response. As I mentioned before, I am usually one of the loudest, emotional and most adamant and persuasive voices in the room. Over time, that disposition has caused me to establish within our college a biased reputation that can undermine my efforts. Moreover, my reputation as one of the few non-Black champions for racial justice often left me as the sole voice speaking on the matter, absolving others from accountability. Therefore, when the call for "solutions" came from the dean's office, I had to balance my inclination with my reputation—in other words, my intent with the potential impact.

Under the advisement of my peers of color, I maintained my silence in the broader audience—as a means of not recentering the discussion on my words or experiences, but rather getting behind those who were being marginalized, listening to their voices and ideas, validating their existence as human beings and as professionals who belong in academia, and conspiring with them to plan an impactful response. Due to the global pandemic, and in the absence of direct opportunities to engage my colleagues of color face to face, I chose to demonstrate my support of them by giving them space to breath and feel. I suppressed the urge to reach out and overwhelm them with yet another call from a white person asking for validation through a veiled "how are you?" Instead, I sent cards that communicated that I was available but not requiring or requesting anything.

With my colleague Dr. Chelda Smith, I tried to be sensitive to the possibility that as a black woman who does social justice work, she was likely inundated with requests from white folks to be validated and affirmed. Therefore, when we connected, I focused on anticipating her

professional needs instead of pretending I could possibly be a safe haven for her racialized turmoil. As a result of my participation in this co-conspiracy, I have learned that part of being an ally is always humanizing people of color—especially in professional spaces, which are a historical and pervasive site of disenfranchisement and delegitimization (read "affirmative action hires" and tokenization). I imagine that the last thing a human needs during a time of crisis and trauma is to be invalidated for what they have rightfully earned and what they know. Additionally, I have learned that in working as a white ally, the very nature of my allyship is privileged. Challenging other white people—be they family, friends, professional colleagues, or students—poses the very real risk of damaging those relationships, possibly irreparably. This is not to say that I avoid these challenges. Rather, the process of deconstructing my own white privilege has made me fully aware that deciding when (or when not) to exercise this white privilege in challenging systemic racism at the cost of my own discomfort is in itself a privilege—indicative of the layered nature of systemic oppression. Allyship for white people like myself is akin to a jacket or a hat, it can be worn or removed with varying levels of ease or pain. In contrast, people of color do not have the privilege of this choice. Constant consciousness of this nature of allyship is needed to recognize the depths of my privilege as a member of a privileged group (Bishop, 2015).

I am learning to apply lessons from this one experience of humanizing my colleague of color by decentering myself to help other colleagues of color. I am trying to be an ally when I provide context regarding situations where I have insider experience and use that experience to provide affirmation for what they have chosen to do or validation for what they are experiencing. I am trying to be an ally when I meet individually with colleagues of color and co-conspire with them to better their situation or the broader systems. I have also worked to do this for my students of color. I am trying to be an ally when I listen to them when they simply want someone to know how hard what they are going through is and using that knowledge to leverage my privilege for others. I am trying to be an ally when I offer to provide deadline extensions and extra early feedback on assignments to those who might not have the privilege or agency to ask for it. I am trying to be an ally when I humanize both colleagues and students of color and account for their lived experiences, rather than expecting them to fit a one-size-fits-all box or holding them to traditional white standards of professionalism.

I am learning that the true value of doing this work is not about being seen doing the work. It's not about being recognized for doing the work. And it's certainly not about being thanked for doing the work. Showing up is a necessary but not sufficient condition. We need to stand behind people being marginalized, to listen to their voices and ideas, to validate their existence as human beings, and to conspire with them to disrupt and eventually dismantle white supremacy.

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College Student Satisfaction with Online Learning during COVID-19: A review and implications

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Abstract
The purpose of this research is to summarize the studies examining college student satisfaction with online learning, with a focus on the studies investigating the elements of the online courses designed by the instructors who moved face-to-face courses to online during the COVID-19 pandemic. Research that describes the elements of online course design is included. Previous reviews pointed out that due to individual differences, students differed in their online learning outcomes This review discusses how asynchronous and synchronous components of online learning contribute to student online learning satisfaction despite student individual differences, and suggests that instructors can proactively help student online learning by modifying elements in online courses.

Keywords: synchronous, asynchronous, online learning, learning satisfaction, college students

Recently, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, face-to-face courses have been suddenly changed to online courses (Means & Neisler, 2020). Researchers found that online learning and face-to-face learning could achieve

equivalent learning outcomes (Garratt-Reed, Roberts & Heritage, 2016; Paul & Jefferson, 2019), According to the equivalence theory (Simonson, Smaldino, Albright, & Zvacek, 2011), student learning outcomes can be similar despite the differences in the course formats, face-to-face and online, if the learning activities are comparable.. While student learning outcomes can be made equivalent between online and face-to-face courses through the design of learning activities (Simonson et al., 2011), how can online learning be satisfying for students??

Student learning satisfaction is important because it is related to student academic performance (Dhaqane, 2016), retention and continued effort in learning (Edwards & Water, 1982; He, Xu & Kruck, 2014). As Cole, Shelley, and Swartz (2014, p. 1) pointed out,

> Acknowledging that learning outcomes are equivalent, the question of how satisfied students are with their experiences with e-learning persists. This is important from the standpoint of student retention which is, of course, relevant to enrollment and maintaining institutional revenue streams. Also, analysis of student satisfaction may point to improvements in e-learning practices which in turn could improve outcomes.

Student satisfaction is important for universities (Green, Hood, & Neumann, 2015; Douglas, Douglas, McClelland, & Davies, 2015) and faculties (Dhaqane & Afrah, 2016; Rothman, Romeo, Brennan & Mitchell, 2011). Student satisfaction with an online course is typically a part of course evaluations (Rothman et al., 2011). While people agree that growth of online courses is incredible fast, concerns about the success of online courses still exist (Brewer & Brewer, 2015; Cole, Shelley, & Swartz, 2014; Tanner, Noser & Totaro, 2009; Mandernach, Mason, Forrest, & Hackathron, 2012). Opinions differ concerning appropriateness of online courses. As Mandernach et al. (2012, p. 203) pointed out,

> Faculty favoring virtual education claim there is more interaction online than in face-to-face classes and that online students are more actively immersed in the course content. Opponents counter that online course creation is too time intensive and that there is limited contact among online students compared to face-to-face learners. When it comes to the topic of online versus face-to-face classes, almost everyone has an opinion.

This study summarizes recent research on student online learning satisfaction , focusing on the research examining college student satisfaction with online learning during the COVID pandemic. Previous

review research (e.g., Green, Hood, & Neumann, 2015; Kauffman,2015) summarized research that compared student learning outcomes and satisfaction in face-to-face and online context emphasizing student individual differences, and pointed out that because of individual differences, online learning may benefit some students more than others. This study intends to summarize findings of the research on online course elements that influence student online learning satisfaction to inform online course design to benefit student online learning in spite of individual differences. Only research, which describes elements of online courses that influence student learning satisfaction, are included in the study.

Research of Student Online Learning Satisfaction

Student online learning satisfaction has been examined by comparing student online learning satisfaction with student face-to-face learning satisfaction in the lecture courses. Research findings have not been consistent, with some research showing similarity in student satisfaction between the online course and the face-to-face course (e.g., Garratt-Reed, Roberts, & Heritage, 2016; Yen, Lo, Lee, & Enriquez, 2018) and other research indicating that students are more satisfied with a face-to-face course than an online course (e.g., Dinh & Nguyen, 2020; Tratnik, Urh, & Jereb, 2019). When students are not satisfied with an online course, it is important to understand what elements in the online course contribute to student dissatisfaction..

Some research examined student satisfaction with online courses and face-to-face courses without providing specific information about the elements of the online courses , which influenced student online learning satisfaction. For example, Dinh and Nguyen (2020) compared college student satisfaction with online courses and face-to-face courses in the following aspects:content knowledge, learning activities, teaching pedagogy, interactions of students, interactions of students and instructors, methods for assessing student learning, and overall course satisfaction. The participants were college students majoring in social works in Vietnam, who answered the survey questions posted online. The participants indicated that there were few difficulties in internet connection or problems in internet quality, but they were more satisfied with face-to-face courses.While the study contributed to the literature about student satisfaction with different aspects of learning, the study did not further describe what the content was taught, what the learning

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activities were, how students interacted, how students and their instructor interacted, and how the student learning was assessed in the face-to-face courses and in the online courses, and why there were differences in student satisfaction with online learning and face-to-face learning..   . Because of the limit of one single study for identifying different elements in online learning that contribute to student satisfaction, it is important to summarize different studies to provide more information about how elements of online learning influence student online learning satisfaction to inform the design of more satisfying online courses.

Elements in the Design of Online Courses during COVID-19

Online courses have been quickly developed during the COVID-19 pandemic to meet the need for maintaining social distancing ((Means & Neisler, 2020). Studies have been conducted recently during COVID-19 pandemic to examine student learning satisfaction (e.g., Amir, Tanti, Maharani, Wimardhani, Julia, Sulijaya, & Puspitawati, 2020; Baber, 2020; Basuony, EmadEldeen, Farghaly, El-Bassiouny, & Mohamed, 2020; Chung, Subramaniam, & Dass, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020; Nambiar, 2020; Nugroho, Basari, Suryaningtyas, and Cahyono, 2020; Hussein, Daoud, Alrabaiah & Badawi, 2020; Ramo, Lin, Hald, & Huang-Saad, 2020). The studies suggest two broad themes in discussing how the elements in online learning influence college student online learning satisfaction, the synchronous component and the asynchronous component..

In terms of the synchronous component, students like synchronous meetings, which offer the opportunity for real-time discussion, questioning, feedback and reflections, which has a positive effect on student online learning satisfaction (Wart, Ni, Ready, Shayo, & Court, 2020). Synchronous online meetings are used to give a match to the learning process in the face-to-face meetings (Amir, Tanti, Maharani, Wimardhani, Julia, Sulijaya, & Puspitawati, 2020;Basuony, EmadEldeen, Farghaly, El-Bassiouny, & Mohamed, 2020; Chung, Subramaniam, & Dass, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020; Nambiar, 2020; Ramo et al., 2020; Nugroho, Basari, Suryaningtyas, & Cahyono, 2020). Students consider in-class interactions important for learning (Amir et al., 2020). Synchronous meetings via web applications, such as Zoom meetings, allow for immediate feedback and interactions in a way similar to face-to-face meetings. The similarities between synchronous meetings and face-to-face meetings are important for students to feel satisfied as students tend to think the instructors are less supportive and feel less satisfied when there

are no face-to-face interactions (Paul & Jefferson, 2019). Quality of synchronous meetings is essential considering that student learning satisfaction is negatively affected by the low quality of synchronous online meetings (Fatani, 2020).

Students also like the asynchronous part of online learning (Chung, Subramaniam & Dass, 2020; Dinh & Nguyen, 2020; Gillis & Krull, 2020; Ramo, Lin, Hald & Huang-Saad, 2020; Nugroho, Basari, Suryaningtyas, and Cahyono, 2020). Specifically, students like the easy access to the learning materials and videos online. In fact, students are not as satisfied if there are only online synchronous video conferences (Nugroho, Basari, Suryaningtyas, and Cahyono, 2020). College students show a negative attitude towards Zoom meetings (Serhan, 2020) due to the student perception that they do not learn well, and the learning materials are missing. Student online learning satisfaction is negatively affected by the absence of certain content (Garris & Fleck, 2020), difficulties in understanding learning materials (Chung et al., 2020), and difficulties in technology, such as internet connection, sound quality (Chung et al., 2020; Dinh & Nguyen, 2020), devices (Hussein, Daoud, Alrabaiah, & Badawi, 2020) or supportive software (Chung et a., 2020).

Examples of Online Courses Integrating Synchronous and Asynchronous Components

Amir, Tanti, Maharani, Wimardhani, Julia, Sulijaya, & Puspitawati (2020) described how the face-to-face courses weres quickly transitioned to online during the COVID-19 pandemic with the course content and structure remaining the same. The asynchronous component includes the syllabus and course materials posted online. The asynchronous part was the same before the courses were moved to online during COVID-19. The group discussions in the face-to-face classrooms, which implemented the collaborative learning, and question-based and problem-based learning, and the lectures for clarification in the face-to-face classrooms, were moved to online synchronous meetings,using the software, such as Microsoft Teams, Google Meets, or Zoom. . Videos and online presentations were used for hands-on practices and training skills. Most students agreed that they had more time for studying learning materials before participating in the class discussions and more time to review the learning materials in the online courses. About a little more than half of the students (55.81%)) disagreed that they liked online courses more than face-to-face courses.A little more than half of the students (59.80%)

disagreed that the communication was easier in online learning. More than half students (61.79%) indicated that they were motivated to study the learning materials before class discussions by the online learning.

In the study by Ramo, Lin, Hald, & Huang-Saad (2020), the biomechanics course was re-designed into 3 online sections to meet the faculty's need to move to another country. The 1st section of the course was delivered in a combination of synchronous format and asynchronous format. The 2nd section of the course was delivered in a single synchronous format. The 3rd section of the course was delivered in sole asynchronous format. Students' answers to the survey items showed that most students liked the online instruction that had both synchronous and asynchronous format. A small number of students liked the sole synchronous instruction.

In the study by Chung, Subramaniam and Dass (2020), both synchronous and asynchronous components were included in the online course. Besides the synchronous video conferences, which allowed for immediate questioning and feedback, students had access to the asynchronous   online learning materials, such as PowerPoint slides with voice-over and YouTube videos. Students liked the asynchronous part more than other methods. As Chung et al. (2020, p. 53) point out,

> This could probably be that this method gives them time to listen to the lecture before their classes. Besides, for students who face internet connectivity issues, when their lectures are pre-recorded, it helps them to prepare before attending class just in case the connectivity drops while the lesson is on. This method also enables students to replay the recorded lectures again and again to gain better understanding of the content. This could also help them better prepare for quizzes, tests and final assessments.

The association between the availability of video recordings and student satisfaction was shown in the study that investigated online learning satisfaction of the undergraduate computer and software engineering students (Girary,2021). While the students rated their overall satisfaction with e-learning below the mid-point on a 5-point Likert scale, a large portion of the students liked to use the video recordings of lectures and had a high positive opinion towards the video recordings of the lectures,suggesting that the video recordings of lectures supported a satisfying online learning experience.   In addition to lecture courses, many classes, particularly those in the STEM and technical fields, have a laboratory component in which students participate in hands-on learning

and experimentation. Prior research has shown that the quality of lab equipment, clarity of laboratory activities, are among the most critical factors in student satisfaction (Nikolic, Vial, Ros, & Stirling, 2015). Orlowski, Mejia, Back, and Fridrich (2021) investigated undergraduate student satisfaction with culinary and beverage labs in a university hospitality program. In terms of asynchronous part of learning, besides online assessments and discussions, the virtual lab portion contained PowerPoint lectures with voice-overs as well as cooking demonstrations and a virtual tasting where the instructors described the sensory components of alcoholic beverages along with recommendations, both of which were video-recorded .The synchronou Zoom meeting was optional and basically for greeting each other. Students were satisfied with the online course, thinking the asynchronous lab learning videos, which allowed for multiple access and flexibility in learning, were useful and enjoyable, although they considered it better to have tactile experience in social context. **Suggestions for Online Course Design**

It contributes to online learning satisfaction to include both synchronous and asynchronous components in online courses based on the literature (e.g., Amir et al., 2020; Baker & Cavin ato, 2020; Chung, Subramaniam, & Dass, 2020; Dickinson & Gronseth, 2020; Fatani, 2020; Gills & Krull, 2020; Girary, 2021; Jamieson, 2020; Tratnik, Urh, & Jereb, 2019; Yen, Lo, Lee, & Enriquez, 2018). For example, Dickinson and Gronseth (2020) discussed challenges to student learning in the absence of in-person experiences in operating rooms and face-to-face meetings in surgical operation courses. They considered asynchronous learning with pictures, images, recordings, and videos, as well as synchronous meetings, helpful in terms of maintaining social connections when learning surgical skills in online courses. We propose further ideas that emphasize connections and mutual facilitations of synchronous and asynchronous components, which can be applied in online course design to support satisfying learning.

1) Using asynchronous communications to prepare for synchronous communications

2) Connecting synchronous learning activities and asynchronous learning activities

3) Using synchronous meetings to motivate and pace asynchronous learning 4) Providing matched asynchronous learning activities for students who cannot attend a synchronous meeting

5) Making the video-records of the synchronous meetings another source ofasynchronous learning materials
6) Offering additional synchronous meetings to help students who have difficulties in learning asynchronous materials
7) Providing synchronous meetings for addressing questions related to asynchronous learning materials
8)Using student performances on asynchronous learning activities to informthe learning in the synchronous meetings
9) Using asynchronous discussions to support the interactions in synchronous meetings

Conclusion

This review focuses on the literature about the elements of nline course designs in terms of how the elements of the online course designs affect student online learning satisfaction during the COVID-19 pandemic, when face-to-face courses are quickly moved to online (e.g., (e.g., Amir, Tanti, Maharani, Wimardhani, Julia, Sulijaya, & Puspitawati, 2020; Baber, 2020; Basuony, EmadEldeen, Farghaly, El-Bassiouny, & Mohamed, 2020; Chung, Subramaniam, & Dass, 2020; Demuyakor, 2020; Nambiar, 2020; Fatani, 2020; Ramo et al., 2020). Students are more satisfied with online courses, which include both asynchronous and synchronous components for the following two broad reasons.

Firstly, the asynchronous component of learning includes reading materials, instructor's lectures in Power-Point slides, videos, recorded synchronous meetings, and other online links. Students can review the learning materials as much as they need. Students like the flexibility of viewing asynchronous materials (Baker & Cavinto, 2020; Jamieson, 2020) and participating in asynchronous discussions (Dickinson & Gronseth, 2020). The quality of the asynchronous component is important. The learning materials should be carefully selected to increase comprehension and decrease student frustration as difficulty in learning materials has a negative effect on student online learning satisfaction (Chung et al., 2020). It is also important to make the access to online learning materials easy (Chung et al., 2020). Furthermore, it supports learning satisfaction to add pictures, images, recorded synchronous meetings and/or videos to asynchronous learning activities (Dickinson & & Gronseth, 2020).

Secondly, synchronous meetings, such as those through Zoom, where instructors facilitate discussions, ask questions, give students feedback in real-time, are important for students to feel satisfied as they

increase cognitive presence   (Wart, Ni, Ready, Shayo, & Court, 2020). The synchronous meetings also allow for instructor facilitation of peer collaborations in groups. They add to the social presence, which is also important for students to feel satisfied in online learning (Wart, Ni, Ready, Shayo, & Court, 2020). However, quality of synchronous meetings is essential (e.g., Fatani, 2020).

Research shows that it supports student online learning satisfaction to include both asynchronous and synchronous components , (e.g., Amir et al., 2020; Dickinson & Gronseth, 2020). Based on the studies reviewed, ideas that emphasize the connections of asynchronous online learning and synchronous online learning are further proposed in this study for designing online courses to support online learning. Students differ in various ways, and student individual differences affect online learning (Kauffman, 2015).. In spite of the student individual differences, instructors can actively support student learning satisfaction through modifying elements in online courses.

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