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The Antagonism Between
Digital Development and Social Progress

Project
„EXTENSION of HUMAN RIGHTS to EDUCATION"
a special democratic experience for the humankind

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Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi - INDIA

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One can, therefore, verily raise questions about the relevance of this paternalistic right of parents in this context. To conclude, it can be said that in the light of challenges posed by the Covid 19 pandemic, it would be prudent for United Nation to reexamine and revise Article 26.
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GERMANY

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The "POJECT EXTENSION of HUMAN RIGHTS to EDUCATION" invites you to join

a special democratic experience for the humankind

GLOBAL INVITATIONS
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The Project "Extension of Human Rights to Education" has been conceptualized as a COUNCIL. Various social actors involved in the extension of human rights to education will work out different aspects of this matter with the aim of formulating a "Declaration on the Extension of Human Rights to Education" to the UN for voting. The project focuses on Article 26 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights which is to be modified/supplemented in the sense of a progressive enlargement.

The project is designed to take on board concerns of affected and interested parties around the world, and to meet needs that are new or neglected.

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TÜRKISCHE ZEITUNG

VEREIN für ALLSEITIGE
BILDUNG e.V.
Postfach 25 03 48
40092 Düsseldorf

ÇOKYÖNLÜ EĞİTİM DERNEĞİ e.V.

VEREIN für ALLSEITIGE
BILDUNG e.V.
Postfach 25 03 48
40092 Düsseldorf

UDHR
DRAFTING COMMITTEE 1948

PROJECT
„EXTENSION of HUMAN RIGHTS to EDUCATION"

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FIRST
PRESS STATEMENTS

More than fifty organizations have now joined progressive forces worldwide to advocate for an extension of the human right to education. Teachers, educators, students and pupils, universities and trade unions are in dialogue with each other to give the human right to education greater weight than this has so far been the case. Although politics and business are never tired of emphasizing the importance of education, it has become clear – and not just since Corona – that families, schools and even universities quickly take a back seat when it comes down to it. After all, while education is seen as highly significant for economic development, and by some as useful for economic wealth, there is more at stake, namely giving people back the education that is virtually vital for their lives and for developing a democratic society.

The Project "Extension of Human Rights to Education" has been conceptualized as a proposal to the UN. Various social actors involved in the extension of human rights to education will work out different aspects of this matter with the aim of formulating a "Declaration on the Extension of Human Rights to Education" to the UN for voting. The project focuses on Article 26 of the UN Declaration of Human Rights which is to be modified/ supplemented in the sense of a progressive enlargement.

The goal of extension Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights while developing a broad base of legitimacy will be a meaningful experience for all people excluded from democratic structures. This is an interesting relevant perspective, a vision, because there is rarely time for humanity to act as legislators and articulate its undistorted interests from the outside.

We all as project partners would like to draft a declaration together, based on the legitimacy of our international engagement, for submission to the UN General Assembly for the vote of UN members.

This will make it possible to bring together progress that is stalled at the national level through our project at the international level. The concrete goal of extending Article 26 allows us to interact permanently and plan joint activities.

Our current phase and awaiting duties

In general terms, our project is in a turning point of ground breaking works. These ground breaking works will be considered as completed according to the project participation of a specific number of countries, or regions in which significant amount of world population reside. In other words, when the participants of the project will have a common view regarding sufficient legitimacy of the upcoming declaration, the ground breaking works will be regarded as completed.

At the moment, 59 partners in 37 countries from 4 continents are represented in the project officially, one fourth of the world population live in these countries.

In the first phase of the project, the partners support to extend the number of partnerships to many other protagonist in different countries. For this goal, our project dossier has already been translated into 8 languages: English, French, Spanish, Arabic, Portuguese, Russian, German and Turkish. The links to the project dossier in 8 languages follows here:

ENGLISH: http://politeknik.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PROJECT_DOSSIE_EN.pdf
SPANISH: http://politeknik.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PROJECT_DOSSIER_ESP.pdf

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VEREIN für ALLSEITIGE
BILDUNG e.V.
Postfach 25 03 48
40092 Düsseldorf

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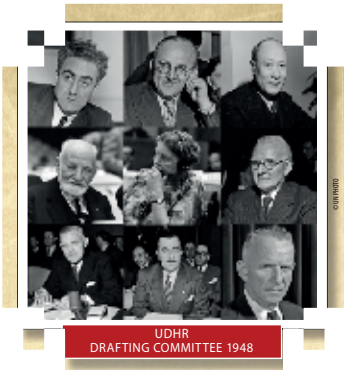
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40092 Düsseldorf

FRENCH: http://politeknik.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/07/PROJECT-DOSSIER-FR.pdf
RUSSIAN: http://politeknik.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PROJECT_DOSSIER_RUS.pdf
ARABIC: http://politeknik.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PROJECT_DOSSIER_ARB.pdf
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GERMAN: http://politeknik.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PROJECT_DOSSIER_DE.pdf
TURKISH: http://politeknik.de/wp-content/uploads/2021/06/PROJECT_DOSSIER_TR.pdf

This voluntarily organized project and the efforts of the volunteers supported by their own financial and immaterial possibilities bring a high prestige to our engagement. Obviously, a great surplus has been created thanks to this endeavor. Along with the increasing participants and volunteers, extraordinary opportunities would emerge.

In our current phase, after establishing legitimacy and building coordination units, it can be started to constitute academic advisory boards. The academic advisory boards will prepare proposal catalogues for the formulation of joint declaration. Of course, now all of our members can decide themselves. If conditions of their countries and their resources are sufficient, they can begin to establish academic advisory boards, moreover this step can serve as a model. This decision is up to the partners.

A memory
When we came up with an idea for extending the Article 26 of UN Declaration of Human Rights in 2015/16, we shared it with our close circle; and one of our friends said that; "Yes, this Article can be amended, but only after a great battle!"

Anything can come to an end anytime, and everyone or everything may have to start and set out it again from our current point. Humanity, in any case, will live and learn whether it adopt human rights permanently, after or before a big disaster, through a conscious activity based on its free will.

In this essential time-course, we prefer to leave audience grandstand; and this move indicates a tremendously dynamic situation: We have no doubt that in this project, there is a quality of life which emerges thanks to an engagement occurred in an optimist manner and in harmony with social nature of human. Therefore, cooperating with you in this project is a great pleasure for us.

PROJECT PARTNERS
(59 INSTUTIONS/ORGANISATIONS/EXPERTS from 37 COUNTRIES)

• **GERMANY**
- Newspaper PoliTeknik
- Association: Verein für Allseitige Bildung e.V.
- Research Centre Childhoods.Societies (Cooperation partner, University of Wuppertal)
• **INDIA**
- All India Primary Teachers' Federation (AIPTF)
- The Brihanmumbai Association of Heads of Secondary and Higher Secondary School
- Prof. Santoshi Halder (University of Calcutta)
• **BRAZIL**
- Paraiba Federal University Dept. of Education Methodology
- National Confederation of Workers in Education (CNTE)
- Center for Advanced Studies in Public Policy and Governance (CEAPPG)
• **UGANDA** Uganda Liberal Teachers' Union, (ULITU)
• **BOSNIA and HERZEGOVINA** Independent Trade Union of Primary Schools Education of The Federation of Bosnia and Herzegovina
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- Seminari İtaca d'Educació Crítica (SIEC)
- Unió Sindical dels Treballadors d'Ensenyament de Catalunya (USTEC)
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• **CYPRUS** Cyprus Turkish Teachers' Trade Union (KTOS)
• **SRI LANKA**
- Union of Sri Lanka Teachers Solidarity (USLTS)
- All Ceylon Union of Teachers (ACUT)
• **IRAQ** Kurdistan Teachers Union (KTU)
• **BENIN**
- Organisation Béninoise des Spécialistes de la Petite Enfance (OBSPE)
- Syndicat National des Enseignants des Ecoles Maternelles du Bénin (SYNAEM)
- Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Primaire Public du Bénin (SNEP)
- Syndicat National des Instituteurs Acteurs du Développement pour une Education de Qualité au Bénin (SYNIADEQ)
- Syndicat National de l'Enseignement Secondaire Public du Bénin (SYNESP)
- Association pour la Survie en l'Entraide des Personnes Handicapées, les Enfants Démunis et les Orphelins (ASEPHEDO)

• **HAITI**
- Union Nationale des Normaliens-Normaliennes et Éducateurs-Educatrices d'Haïti (UNNOEH)
- The Queensland University (UQ) Human Rights Training Center
• **ITALY**
- Department of Humanistic Studies (University of Calabria)
- Italian Association of Psychology (AIP)
• **IRAN** Cooperative Council of Iranian Teachers Trade Associations (CCITTA)
• **LIBERIA** Consortium of Education Defenders of Liberia (COEDEL)
• **MADAGASKAR** University of Toliara
• **CAMEROON** Cameroonian Federation of Education Unions (FECASE)
• **USA** Prof. Dr. Ángel Martínez (from the CUNY)
• **PORTUGAL** Prof. Ana Pedro (from the University of Aveiro)
• **COLOMBIA** Prof. Dr. María Isabel Villa Montoya (from the University of EAFIT)
• **LESOTHO** Teachers Trade Union (LTTU)
• **NIGER**
- Syndicat National des Agents de la Formation et de l'Education du Niger (SYNAFEN)
- Syndicat national des Travailleurs de l'Education du Niger (SYNTEN)
- Alliance Globale Pour l'éducation Et Le Developpement (AGEDE)
• **CAMBODIA** Dr. Or Siem (from General Department of Education of the Ministry of Education, Youth and Sports)
• **KENYA**
- Kenya Union of Domestic, Hotels, Educational Institutions, Hospitals and Allied Workers (KUDHEIHA)
- Kenya Building, Construction, Timber, Furniture and Industries Employees Union (KBCFTA)
• **TUNISIA** Syndicat Général des Inspecteurs de l'Enseignement Primaire (SGIEP)
• **ZAMBIA** Professional Teachers Union of Zambia (PROTUZ-Zambia)
• **SENEGAL** Union Démocratique des Enseignantes et des Enseignants du Sénégal (UDEN)
• **IVORY COAST** Syndicat National des Enseignants du Second Degré de Côte D'ivoire (SYNESCI)
• **MAURITANIA** Union des Travailleurs de Mauritanie (UTM)
• **NAMIBIA** Teachers Union of Namibia
• **EGYPT**
- Egyptian Center for Education Rights (ECER)
- Independent Teachers Union of Egypt (ISTT)
• **NEPAL** Nepal National Teachers' Association (NNTA)
• **SOMALIA** Somalia National Union of Teachers (SNUT)
• **CHAD** Syndicat des Enseignants du Tchad (SET)
• **MALAWI**
- Private Schools Employees Union of Malawi (PSEUM)
- Malawi national Students Union (MANASU)

Dama Mosweunyane (PhD)
University of Botswana - Faculty of Education

A Kakistocracy characterised by moral erosion and misappropriation: Botswana descending political and economic splendour.

An American poet James Russell Lowell once asked, "Is ours a government of the people, by the people, for the people," or a Kakistocracy rather for the benefit of knaves at the cost of fools? This question was raised against USA, which is believed to be ahead of countries in upholding democratic values. When John O. Brennan in 2018 tweeted thus, "our kakistocracy is collapsing after its lamentable journey". These words were directed at the former President of the USA His Excellency Donald Trump, who during his stay in power proved that USA is just like any other capitalist country. It is important to note that these words will find relevance when Botswana Democratic Party finally collapses. Batswana will be justified to celebrate the collapse of the regime that has ruled the country since its independence because that will be the fall of a kakistocracy.

Botswana is a country that has for years been glorified for its democracy and prudence, but clearly what obtains at the moment clearly presents a defeat of these qualities. The Southern African country, which has a population of less than three million, is experiencing unprecedented plundering of resources by those in leadership positions. The citizenry has lost confidence in the ruling class that violates the principles of democracy, in which consultation and accountability are fundamental. When slavery in the USA was abolished and apartheid in the Republic of South Africa got defeated, Botswana imported the heinous political and economic systems. The ruling party is responsible for masterminding regimentation of the nation. The members of the opposition parties are dehumanised as they are ostracised and demonised for their ideas. Those in political leadership positions lack gallantry, patriotism and abhorrence of institutionalised corruption.

The level of bureaucracy in the country denies the citizenry services, which in most instances negatively affects those who do not have the means, who due to poverty cannot afford to pay for services offered by the private sector. The country has not formulated stipulates within which services can be rendered to the people. Botswana does not have a prescribed period within which people can receive services from the public service and parastatals, which is partly responsible for abysmal poverty amongst the citizens. It is within the discretion of those in power to decide if they should respond to complaints from members of the public or not.

The white farmers own farms in which the poor are enslaved and appear only as handlers of livestock, whilst the ownership of such livestock is monopolised by white farmers and their black sycophants. Some farms in Botswana are owned by the remnants of white colonialists who occupied them since the close of the nineteenth century. It is worth noting that some westernised cattle barons have joined white farmers and denied poor Batswana the benefits from their land. The leaders have designed neo colonial legislations that favour the white colonialists and their black bootlickers, such as grazing of their livestock in both their farms and communal areas. The farm owners can look for their livestock outside their farms, but the peasants cannot get in their farms to look for their stray livestock. This is what qualifies as modernised and unconstitutional apartheid.

Botswana is governed by Eurocentric and Americentric men and women who are without moral virtue and are controlled by their gargantuan desire for self-enrichment. They demonstrate no commitment to accountability towards the poverty stricken. The economically disadvantaged citizens are heavily taxed for the rich to line their pockets. The avoidance of taxes that target the haves, such as wealth tax and inheritance tax are axiomatically circumvented. The poor are further disempowered economically and disqualified from decision making structures, only to receive laws that are pushed down their throats.

The poor citizens of Botswana are subjected to wanton atrocities and despondency under the laws that do not empower them to recall their underperforming political representatives. The President of Botswana is constitutionally empowered to appoint specially elected Members of Parliament (MPs), councillors and members of the landboards, despite having more educated citizens who get elected to serve as parliamentarians and counsellors by the people. The ruling party has often abused the provision, as people who are nominated in majority of cases do not have special attributes, but are loyalists of the ruling party. The deployment of personnel on diplomatic missions as ambassadors is also often done to benefit the activists of the ruling party, some of them having lost either party primary or national elections. This venality has often denied the country the best opportunities that could benefit the underprivileged as resources are expended to remunerate undeserving ruling party appointees.

The corrupt government of Botswana is paying exorbitant prices for bogus services and products, which is meant to enrich a few individuals who finance the ruling party in a country that does not provide political party funding. This arrangement has placed the ruling party that has influence over the allocation of resources due to incumbency, at an advantage over its competitors. It is apt to conclude that Botswana is witnessing the worst epoch that is characterised by economic ruin and defiance of democratic values. The political leaders in Botswana do not take heed of the words of great men such as, The former President of the USA Barack Obama, who stated that, "we are reminded that, in the fleeting time we have on this Earth, what matters is not wealth, or status, or power, or fame, but rather how well we have loved and what small part we have played in making the lives of other people better".

The citizens of Botswana have witnessed the annexation of their land and its use by foreigners for ages, without plans to get it back without compensation, owing to a number of years those in its possession have profited from it. What Batswana are left with is the meaningless elections that take place every five years, the melodic singing of the national anthem, reverence of the flag and veneration of the coat of arms. Botswana has allowed the dumping of corpses of foreigners in the country, who are protected through exotic legislations that the colonial masters imposed upon their departure from what they thought was barren land. Botswana is besieged by worst Asian muggers, who have successfully captured the leaders upon their arrival in the continent. It is clear that the country is under neo-imperialists who pay local workers slave wages for working torturous hours. The political leaders in Botswana as elsewhere in the continent, have sold the poor citizens to squalor, exploitation, desolation, unemployment, malnourishment, shortened life expectancy and poverty. Despite the atrocities committed against the citizens of Botswana, they have remained peaceful and hopeful, partly because of the indoctrinating and palliative education system that mentally stultifies.

It is worthy to note that Ralph Bunche, who participated in the founding of the United Nations said, "Peace is no mere matter of men fighting or not fighting. Peace, to have meaning for many who have known only suffering in both peace and war, must be translated into bread or rice, shelter, health, and education, as well as freedom and human dignity - a steadily better life".

Batswana under the diamond decorated democracy are subjected to nepotism, tribalism, racism, regionalism and corporate incest by a regime that is worse than apartheid.

Botswana is yearning for democratic and industrious leadership, which most importantly has conscious. The people of Botswana should fully participate in the affairs of their beloved country, so as not to find reason to relocate to countries where they are discriminated and terrorised.

Dr. Ayesha Gautam
Assistant Professor, Department of Philosophy, University of Delhi - INDIA

Re-examination of the concept of the Right to Education in the context of challenges posed by the pandemic

The concept of 'human rights' pertains to all men at all times without distinction of any kind, such as race, color, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth, or other status. According to the renowned legal jurist Wesley Newcomb Hohfeld, right can be understood as a claim or entitlement or as liberty, power, or immunity. Since this write-up is on the right to education, it is pertinent to note that education is to be seen explicitly as a claim or entitlement rather than as liberty, power, or immunity. Rights are not to be understood as privileges that accrue to some odd people but are to be understood as an entitlement meant for one and all. Further, it is to be noted that the word 'right' by definition means not only lawful entitlement but also just entitlement. Rights to education as a human right is thus a just entitlement that is intended for securing a dignified life for one and all. This right is also meant to pave the way for securing socio, political, economic justice, and epistemic justice.

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights(UDHR), which was adopted in 1948, happens to be the first international legal instrument that recognized education as a human right. Article 26 of UDHR states:
1. Everyone has the right to education. Education shall be free, at least in the elementary and fundamental stages. Elementary education shall be compulsory. Technical and professional education shall be made generally available, and higher education shall be equally accessible to all on the basis of merit.
2. Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms. It shall promote understanding, tolerance, and friendship among all nations, racial or religious groups, and shall further the activities of the United Nations for the maintenance of peace.
3. Parents have a prior right to choose the kind of education that shall be given to their children' [United Nations. 1948. *Universal declaration of human rights*.https://www.humanrights.com/course/lesson/articles-26-30/read-article-26.html]

There are three aspects of education that seem to be the focus of Article 26 of UDHR(Universal Declaration of Human Rights). The first section of the article focuses on the level of education. The second section is concerning the goals of the right to education. And the third and the last section is about the paternalistic control over children's education, which parents have, especially at the preliminary level. In light of challenges thrown to us by the current pandemic (Covid 19), which the entire world is going through, it becomes incumbent to have a relook at each section of Article 26 conceptually and from the point of view of its practical ramification. In the passages which follow, I will try to delve into each of these.

The first section of Article 26, which is about the level of education, emphasizes upon the importance of elementary and fundamental education. It endeavors to guarantee elementary and fundamental education such as basic literacy, numeracy, and other essential skills. The onus of implementing this right is on the State, and it fulfills its responsibility by erecting institutions of learning (schools) and by rendering elementary education free of cost. Here it is important to note that justice is not justice until its realized. As far as the policies (niti in Amartya Sen's terminology) are concerned, most nations and States seem to have excelled in this job. The real problem is with the procedural (nyaya aspect in Amartya Sen's terminology) aspect. There are schools but a scarcity of teachers in developing and underdeveloped countries.

Further, there is an epistemic injustice that the less privileged ones end up facing on account of linguistic, cultural barriers and barriers that come from the mode of teaching-learning. The advent of Covid 19 has changed the very meaning of schooling. The change is marked by the shift in teaching-learning processes in terms of its being conducted in the virtual mode rather than offline mode, and this has further broadened the divide between haves and haves not. In places where people find it difficult even to manage two meals, they are being expected to have gadgets via which they can access their right to free education. Even if parents manage to avail these gadgets, the right to free education remains a distant dream because of the lack of technical education required to handle these gadgets. The right to free elementary education would remain an abstract right that is there but is meaningless to talk about until and unless the barriers preventing one from availing these rights are done away with. Further, some queries can be raised about the reasons because of which the mandatory right to free education has been only limited to elementary education. Employment opportunities get limited if the candidates cannot avail technical, professional, or higher education because of the impediment one faces on the grounds of financial and other discriminatory barriers.

Section 2 of Article 26, which is about the aims of education, claims that it is the full development of the human personality and strengthening respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms that Human right aims at. As far as the goal of full development of human personality is concerned, there is no clarity in UDHR about what is meant by that. If by full development of human personality is meant the enhancement of quality of life, then one may very well say that it cannot be achieved by only focusing on elementary education. If by full development of human personality, however, is meant the enhancement of one's capabilities, then it may be noted that this enhancement can be brought about only by providing such a learning environment to the kids in which they can manifest their full capabilities in true sense. Providing free elementary education alone is not enough; the focus should also be on improvising the teaching-learning environment. In this context, it is worth noting that the teaching-learning environment which has been provided in the form of virtual online mode is somehow preventing the kids who come from less privileged backgrounds from manifesting their full capabilities not because they are less talented but because of lack of resources in the form of electronic gadgets and good internet connection. Full development of human personality would remain a distant dream until and unless efforts are made to do away with these hindrances, which prevent people from realizing their full capabilities.

When one takes a closer look at these aims of the right to education which UDHR speaks about, then the inherent contradictions in the conceptual schema become pretty apparent. The objective of the right to education as per UDHR is to cater to the interest of the individual agents by giving them the liberty to exercise their freedom and by making the State undertake the obligation to fulfill the interest of respective agents without hampering the general welfare and well-being of everyone. Very often, the interest of individuals in terms of the kind of education they want for their children may not conform with the type of education that the State believes is good for the general welfare of the masses. In some circumstances, the conflict becomes unsurmountable, and there is a deadlock. Should there be a uniform policy about the right to education which the State should enforce? If State is conferred the right to decide about the kind of education a child should be getting, then what about the freedom which the right to education confers on individuals. UDHR has somehow not suggested a way to come out of this impasse.

The third and last section of Article 26, which is about the prior right of parents to choose the kind of education that should be given to their children, also raises some concerns about the conceptual schema of the right to education as it appears in UDHR. The objectives enshrined in the 2nd section of UDHR obliges the State to provide education to everyone, while the 3rd section of Article 26 obliges them to refrain from imposing or restricting choices of forms of education which people want for their children. With the advent of Covid 19, parents' choice to decide about the kind of education they want for their children has somehow got restricted. Irrespective of whether parents are well equipped to handle technology or are willing to let their kids have education in online mode, they are being forced to switch to online mode. One can, therefore, verily raise questions about the relevance of this paternalistic right of parents in this context. To conclude, it can be said that in the light of challenges posed by the Covid 19 pandemic, it would be prudent for United Nation to reexamine and revise Article 26.

Angela Wijesinghe
President, All Ceylon Union of teachers (ACUT) - SRI LANKA

Online Learning
Is it Widening Inequalities in Education?

These are invariably difficult times all over the world, with the covid 19 pandemic affecting every aspect of people's lives and the resultant destructive effect on the economies of almost all countries.

However our main concern as teachers and educacational personnel, is the effect of it on the education and welfare of our children, our greatest treasure. In this regard I would like to focus on one aspect which is affecting equal opportunities in education for all, of which we are highly concerned.

Online Learnng – Is it widening educational inequalities ?
It is acknowledged that a number of benefits can be accrued through online learning. In addition, in the absence of a viable alternative, governments are compelled to resort to this method to continue the education of children uninterrupted.

However our worry is that it might lead to further inequalities in educational opportunities. This is specially so for disadvantaged children in under-developed as well as developing states, including Sri Lanka.

Education system in Sri Lanka has been providing education for all children from Grade 1 upto the 1st University Degree, free of charge from as far back as 1945.

Still, because of the worsening Covid 19 pandemic situation, the government has been compelled to close down schools and other educational institutes for relatively long periods of time and resort to online education as an alternative. However, our concern is that the following issues are now affecting just and fair educational opportunies for most of our children.

• At the heart of free public education system operational in Sri Lanka is the traditional classroom which has functioned as a leveller to some extent, bringing students from different economic and cultural backgrounds to a common shared space.

• But the recent introduction of online education has shifted a significant portion of learning to the student's home, inspite of the fact that many of our students do not have a learning environment within their homes that is free of disturbance from other members of their families.

• Further the online teaching excludes students who do not have the economic wherewithal to purchase the equipment and internet data necessary to connect with their peers and teachers.

• Also the children find online education much more stressful, in addition to the loss of joyful relationships with their peer groups. Hence teachers complain that in a class of about 35-40 children only about 15-20 join the online classes regularly

• These realities do not seem to have been taken into consideration when hurriedly shifting to online education.

• It must be emphasised that the shift to online education should not lead to aggravating the inequalities already entrenched in our educational settings.

• With this shift towards online learning, teachers are also often shamed for not having aquired new technological skills.

• Basic to the Philosophy of free public education is that, under no circumstance, should education become a marketable commodity that can be exploited to make commercial profits.

• Also opting for online learning may pave the way for commercial interests to enter the free public education space, introducing a dependency on businesses for educational activities and curtailing its academic autonomy.

• The pressure by the world lending organisations to open up the education sector for foreign investments will also be intensified specially in developing states, further aggravating the situation.
• Embracing online learning platforms can also make it easier for the State to justify its future decisions to reduce spending on education, using it as a cost-cutting measure.

Rethinking free public education

• No online platform can ever replace the vibrant classrooms.

• The classroom is not just a space for learning, but is also a site where students interact with one another across the social and cultural boundaries that separate them and build lasting bonds, friendships and solidarities.

• The universities in Sri Lanka, have seen many legitimate struggles, where for eg. students and teachers have powerfully raised their voices against privatisation of education, which has so far pevented to a large extent that shift in Sri Lanka

• The measures taken today to address the challenges caused by the pandemic should in no way damage this shared physical space that have nourished ideas and conversations over the decades.

• Hence free education will not be truly transformative, unless the State takes robust measures to ensure that students do not find themselves in unequal situations in all spaces that they occupy.

• Hence, just as much, right to life is a human right, the right to free public quality education for every child also must be declared as a human right that no government should violate. It is towards this end that those concerned world organisations should be directing their efforts which hopefully will bear fruit in the near future, to ensure that justice is done to every child born into this world.

Marius Melzer
GERMANY

Do digitalization and the Internet have a democratizing effect?

The Internet is not simply a new medium of communication, as was the case with radio and television at their time. Internet's interactive functions are changing our common life in a way that no traditional media has ever been able to before.

This paper is intended to examine how the Internet has an impact on democracy and democratization. It aims to focus on the following main characteristic of democracy: Sovereignty belongs to the nation. For the proper functioning of a democratic state, firstly, the citizens must be able to access information independently so that they can shape their own views. Secondly, it is indispensable for citizens to be able to freely express their points of view and exchange opinions so that they can shape an opinion within the community. Thirdly, it becomes necessary for citizens to influence the state with their own opinions based on the best circumstances.

1. Informed citizens

At the core of a functioning democracy is the level of citizens' knowledge about social and political events and their causes[1]. Until the spread of the Internet, access to information was limited to content published for distribution, such as newspapers, books or radio. On the other hand, the Internet is the first

communication medium that provides users the opportunity to be not only consumers of a global media, but also potential producers of content. This media offers an unfiltered opportunity to access experts in many different fields even though not all Internet users disseminate information of extraordinary social importance. It is already possible for scientists, whistleblowers and activists to disseminate information and their predictions in podcasts, blogs or social networks without the obligation to follow the official rules of political or traditional media. Data from official institutions, such as government practices and records, are available for the first time to a large community of users. At this point, there is an important contribution from laws regulating the dissemination of information[2] and transparency (https://transparenzranking.de).

Actually, for traditional media also the ability to use the media was important, i.e., the competence of determining whether a source is reliable and competent, but for the Internet as an unfiltered environment, this is a much more important competence.

First of all, it is necessary to mention especially fake news. The technology called deepfake[3], enables the falsification of videos and audios with a mastery identical to the originals. Ob-

viously, informed users are capable of distinguishing fake news with the help of sources, because fake news is mainly spread from the same source[4]. It would constitute a good technical barrier for platforms to automatically detect fake news and deepfakes and cross them out or remove them publicly.

Secondly, tracking and microtargeting is an attack on the development of ideas. Through tracking, Internet users are tracked as they browse the Internet and a profile is created about them. This allows abuse, especially for microtargeting. This makes it possible to differentiate small groups or individual users from each other in a planned way by means of their created profiles or character features, and to show them targeted content. Facebook's Camebridge Analytica scandal is an example[5]. There are many possibilities to protect against tracking on the Internet, we can use the Disconnect browser extension (https://disconnect.me) as an example.

Thirdly, it is necessary to mention the danger of filter bubbles. Social networks foster the creation of groups of like-minded users. It is possible for fake news to spread in certain filter bubbles without obstacles and without criticism. One can clearly see this in right-wing and far-right populist circles[6].

Fourthly, it is necessary that technical processes, data processing and algorithms are transparent and understandable to the ordinary user[7].

2. Expressing opinions and the formation of social opinion.

In order to carry out a public debate on political issues there are two preconditions: The first one is the possibility of expressing one's own or the group's point of view within certain limits agreed upon, and the second one is the possibility of discussing this opinion with others and thus elaborating a collective opinion. In the past, both of these have occurred through the traditional media, which transmitted and defended what was socially convenient for debate. New forms of exchanging opinions without the need for intermediaries have emerged through the use of websites, blogs, podcasts and social networks on the Internet.

During the "Green Revolution" in Iran in 2009 and the "Arab Spring" in the following years we have seen the significant influence of the Internet on the democratic movement. Despite the fact that governments have tried to control and censor opinions on the Internet, this effort has not been completely successful in the past, especially because of the huge amount of information circulating on social networks.

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However, it is possible that artificial intelligence-based censorship mechanisms will make this possible. The simple measure to prevent this is the introduction of anonymization services that are widely used in autocratic states, e.g. "Tor" (https://torproject.org).

In addition to censorship, the control is a threat because it also leads to self-censorship. A study conducted in the USA[8] revealed, following Snowden's publications in 2013[9], that journalists tended more to self-censorship, limiting or ceasing their activities on social networks, and ceasing to discuss certain topics on the phone or in email correspondence.

Another negative consequence of digital progress is that generalized and arbitrary control of each individual is technically possible. To avoid this, all communication must be encrypted, preferably with "end-to-end" encryption, which protects the entire communication path from sender to receiver. Examples are "Gnu Privacy Guard" (GPG) for end-to-end encrypted communication, for email communication (https://gnupg.org), Signal for text messaging (https://signal.org), the Matrix communication network (https://matrix.org) or the video chat platform palava (https://palava.tv).

The metadata are more difficult to preserve. Metadata includes location and movement data, contact data and dates. They can be used to draw conclusions about specific information, such as religious affiliation, business connections, friendships, romantic relationships or diseases, and can also be easily analyzed automatically. Anonymization services also provide protection for metadata. But it is more practical to use services that store little or no metadata. For a comprehensive list of alternatives for data protection against Facebook, Google etc., can be found in "Digitale Gesellschaft"[10].

3. Opportunities to influence the state

Despite the fact that there are some democracy models without elections[11], the elections are part of the de facto standard for citizens to influence the state. In democracies, elections must be secret, but also transparent. Except for many practical issues, such as security and the suitability of voting computers, the point of current science is that electronic elections, called eVoting, can be secret or convenient, but never both at the same time [12]. As a result, it is not suitable for traditional elections. Nevertheless, when secrecy does not play an important role, as in the case of an anonymous referendum or a vote on the citizens' wishes, electronic elections can be applied. The free program "Liquid Democracy" (https://liqd.net) presented an interesting concept that was tested in the Pirate Party. In this case, the political course of the party was determined on the basis of the majority. Members were able to vote on certain issues, depending on their field, to experts or to people they trusted. However, this attempt at "Liquid Democracy" in the Pirate Party failed very soon due to data security problems.

Obstacles to direct communication with political representatives are also reduced through the use of digital communication tools. Platforms such as "Ask the State", in which citizens' questions and their answers are documented online and accessible to everyone, represent an important element here.

4. Summary

Essentially, the Internet offers opportunities for democracy. It improves the main conditions for citizens to become informed individuals and develop ideas. It increases the availability of information and the means of direct communication with experts and decision-makers. It also provides new possibilities for organization and influence in the state. Aspects that pose a threat to democracy (censorship, monitoring, fake news, microtargeting, etc.) can be addressed with a social effort, technical solutions or legal regulations. The great opportunities of the Internet can be widely exploited if a government demonstrates digital transparency, effectively protects whistleblowers, mitigates the negative effects of social networks through regulation, and supports software, algorithms and services that are free, secure and private.

For the full version of this text, see: Handbuch Kindheit, Technik und das Digitale (2021, Braches-Chyrek, Moran-Ellis, Röhner, Sünker)

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Mariana Ramos Soares Beselga
University of Coimbra, PORTUGAL

João Pedro Freitas Gomes
University of São Paulo, BRAZIL

The ecological and socio-humanitarian crisis of century:

discussing the role of the Environmental Economy and Governance in Latin America and Caribe

Introduction

The Stern Review: The Economics of Climate Change (2006) was a milestone around the promotion of environmental policies aimed at mitigating climate change in international organizations and at the domestic level of nation-states, given that the ecological crisis will directly affect the economy globally, being considered by many experts as the biggest market failure (Stern & Stiglitz, 2021). The report showed that the effects of environmental collapse can have strong impacts on production and human life, especially in underdeveloped countries, which according to the study will be the ones that will suffer most from these results, due to the history of forced development and environmental injustice in recent decades, becoming an issue of threat to peace on the globe (Stern & McFall, 2008). Thus, within the Latin American and Caribbean reality, there is a need not only for cooperation to promote environmental policies, due to ethnic-racial groups and biodiversity, which resist socio-ecological barbarism, but also for redistributive policies, which work to reduce social inequality throughout the region.

In light of the nature of the issues raised, this article focuses on the investigation of how green economic policies can be palliative measures in combating inequality and in affecting socio-cultural integration in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Therefore, this paper aims to identify how the economy's decarbonization policies would promote greater income redistribution and the association of this convergence to the interests of transnational actors in the region, within a model of participatory environmental governance. To achieve this, the distributive impacts of the carbon tax in the Latin American and Caribbean context will be evaluated. In addition, the role of governmental and non-governmental actors and their points of convergence for promoting sustainable development and building peace was diagnosed.

Accordingly, the relevance of this scientific observation lies in the focus of analysis, which associates the conjunction between the effects of policies, with regard to the mitigation of social inequality in the regions, and a multilateral agenda which enables human rights activism and Cooperation for Development.

Issues related to decarbonization development and policies

Foremost, it is necessary to discuss the relation between pollution and development, especially in the context of developing countries. The Environmental Kuznets Curve was one of the first models that tried to understand this relationship. It proposed that, in the context of poor countries, economic development comes with an increasing environmental degradation (Stern & Stiglitz, 2021). This concept was popularized by a 1992 World Bank report which argued the following: "The view that greater economic activity inevitably hurts the environment is based on static assumptions about technology, tastes and environmental investments' and "As incomes rise, the demand for improvements in environmental quality will increase, as will the resources available for investment". This position was expanded and defended by several other economists in recent years, including Beckerman (1992) and Lomborg (2001). However, the only strong empirical conclusion of the EZC literature is that concentrations of pollutants may decline from middle income levels and that there is a direct correlation between income and levels of pollution, nevertheless, due to the properties of the model, it is not possible to use the EZC to get conclusions regarding additional variables, like trade (Dietz et al., 2007).

From a theoretical point of view, the EZC is also flawed. Arrow (1995) states that the EZC model, as presented in the aforementioned report, assumes that environmental damage does not impact economic activity (Stern, 2015). That is, it assumes that the economy is sustainable. However, if environmental degradation grows with the stage of economic development, trying to grow fast may be counterproductive. Besides that, Arrow also argues that a EZC kind of relationship may be a consequence of trade, not economic development, since rich countries may export more polluting activities to poorer countries, due to their relative abundance of labor and natural resources and looser regulations on environmental issues (Stern, 2009). The key conclu-

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sion of this debate is that there is not an intrinsic relationship between level of economic development and environmental degradation, therefore, it is possible to build green economies while fostering growth in developing countries.

The importance of social inclusion for Environmental Governance in Latin America and the Caribbean

Nonetheless, inequality must be considered when evaluating green policies, especially in the Latin-American and Caribbean contexts. The importance of unfairness in this policy analysis is multidimensional, since the status quo regarding inequality is high, leading to a demand for bigger redistributive policies (Klein, 2014). Furthermore, in order to address Environmental Governance in Latin America and the Caribbean, it is necessary not only to talk about States, but also about non-State actors, who have an importance in bottom-up changes (Castro et al., 2016).

This Environmental Governance Process comes from a broad perspective, which encompasses multifaceted issues, not exclusively the agents' interest in a new green economic model, which focuses not only on environmental conservation, but also on policies that combine the eradication of poverty and issues that guide social inclusion in the regions (Castro et al., 2016). Consequently, combating ine-

quality is also correlated with greater democratic participation, leading to greater humanitarian social mobilization within the territories (Honorato, 2021).

Thus, Ecological Governance can be defined within a base and dispute process that will configure the control, access and use of natural resources between different actors in terms of security and regionalism (Castro et al., 2016). It can be said that the participatory model of governance emerged recently, being fundamentally antagonistic to the monolithic models that were proposed in the past, as it requires greater interaction with civil society, especially social movements, in a community way to address issues in around social justice, racism and equity, similar to interventions by a radicalized Green New Deal (Aronoff et al., 2019).

Conclusion

In this way, Latin American and Caribbean governance encompasses the participation of transactional social movements, environmentalists and other spheres in proportion to solutions on climate change and other environmental issues, such as carbon emission reduction targets, Agenda 21 and the Agreement on Biological Diversity (Castro et al., 2016). The Forum of Environment Ministers of Latin America and the Caribbean was created in 1982 and is the oldest and most relevant oversight body in the entire region, and the high com-

missioners constantly point out the importance of transnational activists for environmental preservation and peace promotion, tangent to their significance for the pressure for decarbonization policies and greater income redistribution in emerging countries ("Fórum discutiu desafios de defensores ambientais na América do Sul | Notícias | Comissão Econômica para a América Latina e o Caribe", 2021).

Finally, one possible design for these policies is a carbon tax, which is inherently regressive, since it is a consumption tax, therefore, the revenue from that tax must be used to fund and expand distributive policies, in order to improve the distribution of income. An example of this kind of distributive policy in the Latin context is the Bolsa Família, a program that provides financial aid to poor families in Brazil, the revenue from a possible carbon tax could be used to expand this program, hence, reducing inequality (Marques et al., 2020).

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John Steinbeck

The Grapes of Wrath

April 2014 marks the 75th anniversary of the first Viking hardcover publication of Steinbeck's crowning literary achievement

First published in 1939, Steinbeck's Pulitzer Prize–winning epic of the Great Depression chronicles the Dust Bowl migration of the 1930s and tells the story of one Oklahoma farm family, the Joads, driven from their homestead and forced to travel west to the promised land of California. Out of their trials and their repeated collisions against the hard realities of an America divided into haves and have-nots evolves a drama that is intensely human yet majestic in its scale and moral vision, elemental yet plainspoken, tragic but ultimately stirring in its human dignity.
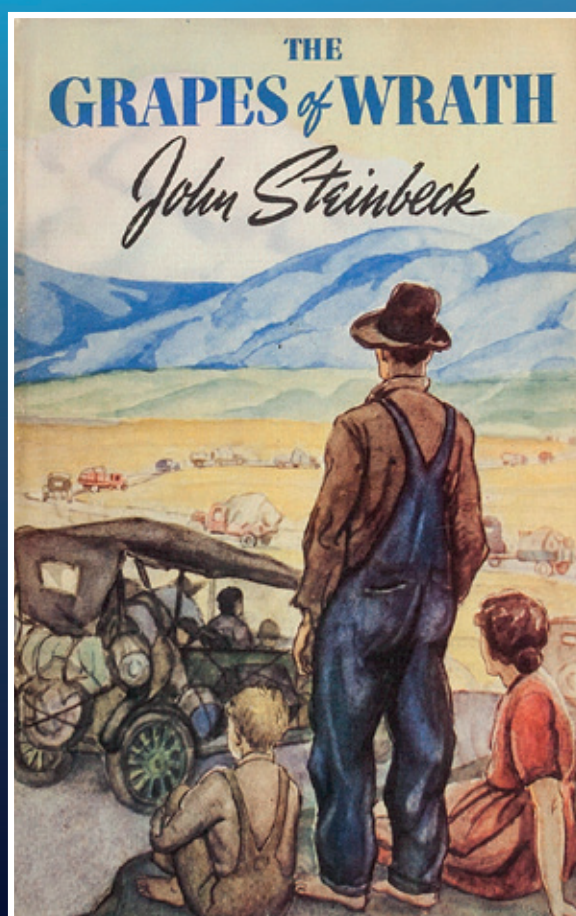
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A portrait of the conflict between the powerful and the powerless, of one man's fierce reaction to injustice, and of one woman's stoical strength, the novel captures the horrors of the Great Depression and probes the very nature of equality and justice in America. As Don DeLillo has claimed, Steinbeck "shaped a geography of conscience" with this novel where "there is something at stake in every sentence." Beyond that—for emotional urgency, evocative power, sustained impact, prophetic reach, and continued controversy—*The Grapes of Wrath* is perhaps the most American of American classics.

To commemorate the book's 75th anniversary, this volume is modeled on the first edition, featuring the original cover illustration by Elmer Hader and specially designed endpapers by Michael Schwab.

Prof. Sanjoy Roy
Department of Social Work - University of Delhi - New Delhi - INDIA

Primary & Higher Secondary Education in India:
Conditions and Reality

Nelson Mandela had said "*Education is the most powerful weapon which you can use to change the world.*" Closer to home, First Prime minister of India, Pandit Nehru emphasized that only through right education can a better order of society be built up. When the Indian constitution was laid down in 1949, it was stated that by 1960 Universal compulsory education must be provided for all children up to the age of 14. The Right to Free and Compulsory Education Act (RTE) was eventually enacted in 2009 making education a fundamental right for the age group of 6 years to 14 years old children, along with specifying minimum norms for elementary schools[1]. It also lays down provisions for reservation in private schools, surveying of school's performances and facilities for children with disabilities.

Education is a subject in the concurrent list of the Indian constitution, i.e. both centre and the states can legislate on the issue[2]. The act lays down responsibilities of centre, states and local bodies in implementing it. By 2010, 8.1 million children[3] (6-14 years old) were out of school, and the number has reached 32 million[4] as per the 2011 census. Hence, despite the legal safeguards of empowering the education system of India, there are bottlenecks in the implementation and delivery of the provisions.

The present education system in India mainly comprises primary education, secondary education, higher secondary education and higher education. Elementary education consists of eight years of education. Each secondary and higher secondary education consists of two years of education. Included in the secondary education is the pre-vocational education.

Secondary education is the essential bridge between primary and higher education. Previous studies argue that among all levels of education, secondary education has the strongest bearing on economic growth, income inequality reduction and in improving health indicators[5]. A policy paper published by the UNESCO and Global Education Monitoring claimed that world poverty could be cut in half if all adults completed secondary education[6]. It is the secondary level which influences a student's choice on further education.

In India, the authorities face grave challenges in retaining students to complete their full school education cycle, given that the government has

fewer resources per child and a larger number of vulnerable children[7].

Grim reality of the primary and secondary education India
• Low enrolment ratio

With 21% of its population in the age group of 10 to 19, India has the largest adolescent population in the world[8]. However, only one third of secondary school age children are currently in school. This impedes the country's journey to achieve target 4.1 of the Sustainable Development Goal (SDG) which is universal primary and secondary education[9]. UDISE reveals that almost 40 percent of the eligible student population is not enrolled in secondary school. Moreover, while initially absent, a gender gap emerges as children get older, with more girls dropping out than boys. This is not surprising given there are only 14 secondary schools for every 100 elementary schools.

Large distances increase the cost of education as well as concerns around safety, especially for girls. The pandemic has prompted a shift to online education and this is likely to further impact these trends. The ASER 2020 report revealed that 5.3 percent of rural children aged 6-10 years have not enrolled in school this year, compared to 1.8 percent in 2018[10].

•Concern over learning outcomes

As per academic year 2018-19[11]

Total number of schools	Total government schools	Total number of students	Total number of teachers
15.5 Lakhs	10.8 lakhs	24.8 crore	94.3 lakhs

Over the last decade, learning outcomes for children in India have steadily declined. This is despite an increase in budgeted expenditure on education, from INR 3.6 lakh crore to INR 4.6 lakh crore over a 10-year period (2006-2016).

Without a very strong foundational knowledge, students are bound to struggle in higher grades. A telling insight from a majority of the reports around school dropout is that most of the students cite 'lack of interest in studies' as a major reason for discontinuing their studies[12]. This is largely because after the completion of their elementary and primary cycle they come out with a very weak foundational knowledge. The Na-

tional Achievement Survey reports show that in many districts, students in class 8 scored less than 30-40% in Math. This finding is also validated by ASER which reports that even after completion of the full elementary education cycle students struggle to apply basic literacy and numeracy skills to everyday tasks. ASER early year survey reports that only 16 percent of Grade 1 students can read their grade level text book- and of those, a majority are 7-8 years old with the younger children in the class lagging behind.

The 2030 Skills Scorecard by the Global Business Coalition for Education warns that by 2030, India will have the highest number of high school graduates in South Asia but almost half of them will lack the skills to enter the job market[13].

• Growth in Private Schools
While the policy framework around bringing a reform in the education sector rests on taking quality education to low income students through the government system, the reality speaks something else. Recent trends suggest that many low and middle income Indian families are seeking private school alternatives. Nearly 50% of all students in India are enrolled today in the 4.5 lakh privately managed schools across the country[14]. The government schools' enrolment has come down to 52.2% in 2017 from that of 74.1% in 1978. However, the report suggests that this trend has nothing to do with increasing the learning level of the students. 35% of the rural private school students in class 5 cannot read a basic class 2 level paragraph while only 39.8% class 5 students in private schools can divide a three-digit number by a single unit. The private schools have a long way to go in terms of achieving the desired learning outcome.

Government's intervention through New Education Policy NEP 2020[15]
In March 2020 the Union cabinet of India cleared the new National Educational Policy (NEP) overhauling school and Higher education system in India.

After the National Education policy of 1968 and 1986 this is the third education policy to guide the development of education in the country.

The NEP,1986 advocated for 10+2 structure of education whereas the new NEP has proposed for a '5+3+3+4' design corresponding to the age groups 3-8 years (foundational stage), 8-11 (preparatory), 11-14 (middle), and 14-18 (secondary). This way the early childhood education for children of the ages 3-5 is brought under the ambit of formal schooling in order to make the grade 1 student's school ready.

Looking at the learning crisis our country is going through for decades, the new NEP is focused to enhance the ability of students to read and write and perform basic operations with numbers. This has taken a form of national mission under the NEW 2020 to achieve universal foundational literacy and numeracy in primary school by 2025.

To build back the credibility of the government schools and minimize the school dropouts particularly at the secondary level, the NEP 2020 aims to provide effective and sufficient infrastructure to all the students, particularly practical conveyances and hotels for the girl children.

The NEP provides for a holistic, multidisciplinary and broad-based undergraduate education with flexible study plans. Now more options will be there in choosing the subjects, including and focusing more on vocational education and more flexibility to enter and exit the course with authorized certification. Undergraduate students will now get the option to choose the number of years as per their requirement ranging from 1-4 years with appropriate certification. Such as, certificate after 1 year, advanced diploma after 2 years, license after 3 years and research license after 4 years.

The focal point of NEP will be now on promoting equality among all. Special concentration will be given to the SEDG (Socially and Economically Disadvantaged) group. This norm of the policy will work on the following:

• Gender Inclusion Fund
• Disadvantaged regions will have Special Education Zones (SEZ).
• Disabled students will be allowed for regular schooling with the help of teachers specialized for disable students and training, accommodations, appropriate technology, etc will be provided to disabled students taking up regular schooling.
• States/districts are advised to set up day-boarding schools – "Bal Bhavans" for participation in extra activities that will be career and play related.

Therefore, the pedagogy of teaching in each subject and the focus shall be upon the transforming as experiential learning shall be the standard assessment based on competency. The purpose of the test shall be to check higher order skills such as clarity, analysis and conceptual clarity.

The recent times have witnessed a trend of Public Private Partnership in the education sector, especially by the state governments, with the objective of overcoming the administrative and management hindrances faced by the sector. Some of notable examples here could be:

• Rajasthan and International Innovation Corps[16]
The Department of Education (Rajasthan) collaborated with the International Innovation Corps in developing approximately 10,000 model secondary schools with proper infrastructure and emphasis on staffing under the *Adarsh Programme[17]*. The programme reduced teachers vacancies from 50% to 19% in 4 years. It resulted in reverse migration of students from private to government schools, defying the national trend. The Board results and the National Achievement Survey showed a resultant improvement in secondary school outcomes.

• Saksham Haryana Programme[18]
The programme is an initiative of the state's education department to assess and accordingly improve the learning outcomes of the government school students. Under it, blocks are

credited with the "Saksham" tag, where more than 80% students score over 50% marks in the exam conducted by the programme.

Conclusion
The primary and secondary education system in India has come a long way in empowering children with their fundamental right and human rights to education. However, there is a massive scope for improvement by efficiently implementing the relevant laws, applying alternate strategies to overcome hurdles with the performance and running regular assessment to monitor back lags. Between 2011 to 2021, the budget allocation to the education sector has increased at an average rate of 9%[19]. The need of the hour is to channelize the allocated resources optimally and judiciously, only then the value of education will reach to all. Time will speak.

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Rama Kant Rai
National Coalition for Education - INDIA

Sustainable Development Goal 4 (QUALITY EDUCATION) and Covid-19 in India

"Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all"

The Sustainable Development targets for 2030 calls for ensuring the completion of primary and secondary education by all boys and girls, and guaranteeing equal access to opportunities for access to quality technical and vocational education for all. Policy interventions will require improving access and improving quality, as well addressing relevant obstacles which include gender inequalities, food insecurity, and armed conflict. The most challenging concern is provisioning of adequate funding to achieve SDG goal 4.

The SDG Agenda for Sustainable Development Goal 4 – '*Ensure inclusive and equitable quality education and promote lifelong learning opportunities for all*' (hereafter referred to as "Education 2030") – and its associated targets, to be achieved by 2030.

Needless to reiterate that SDG 4 goals are beyond school education, rather they cover technical, tertiary, University Education and lifelong learning for all. Every effort must be made to guarantee that this time the goal and targets are achieved. This requires strong political will, clear strategies, indicators, programme and resources from state.

After signing this ambitious covenant more than five years have lapsed and the progress is still sluggish in terms of policies and budgetary resources from government.

I. Progress of school education as indicated by NITI AAYOG

National Institution for Transforming India (NITI Aayog), the nodal body mandated to oversee the progress on the 2030 Agenda, has been monitoring the progress of SDG in India. NITI AYOG has prepared index of performance of SDG 4. To measure India's performance towards the Goal of Quality Education, eleven national level indicators have been identified,

which capture six out of the ten SDG targets for 2030 outlined under this Goal. These indicators have been selected based on the availability of data to ensure comparability across States and UTs.

The following table presents the composite scores of the States and UTs on this Goal. It also shows a breakdown of the States and UTs by indicator. Goal 4 Index Score SDG Index Score for Goal 4 ranges between 29 and 80 for States and between 49 and 79 for UTs. Kerala and Chandigarh are the top performers among the States and the UTs, respectively. Five States and three UTs bagged a position in the category of Front Runners (score range between 65 and 99, including both). However, nine States and two UTs fell behind in the Aspirants category (with Index scores less than 50).

II. The challenges ahead!

(1) Inadequate Education Budget 2021-22: The budget requirement to achieve SDG 4 was supposed to be in accordance with the targets and sub-targets for next 15 years. According to the report prepared by Technology and Action for Rural Advancement (TARA- An organization assigned to make assessment of resources for SDG by UNDP) The total funds needed for India to reach SDG-4 by 2030 is

USD 2,258 billion, means from 2017 to 2030 averages USD 173 billion per year (12110 billion INR), whereas current govt budget of 992.24 billion Rupees (2021-22) is too less.

Source:1. (Ecebook_forweb.pdf (avpn.asia)
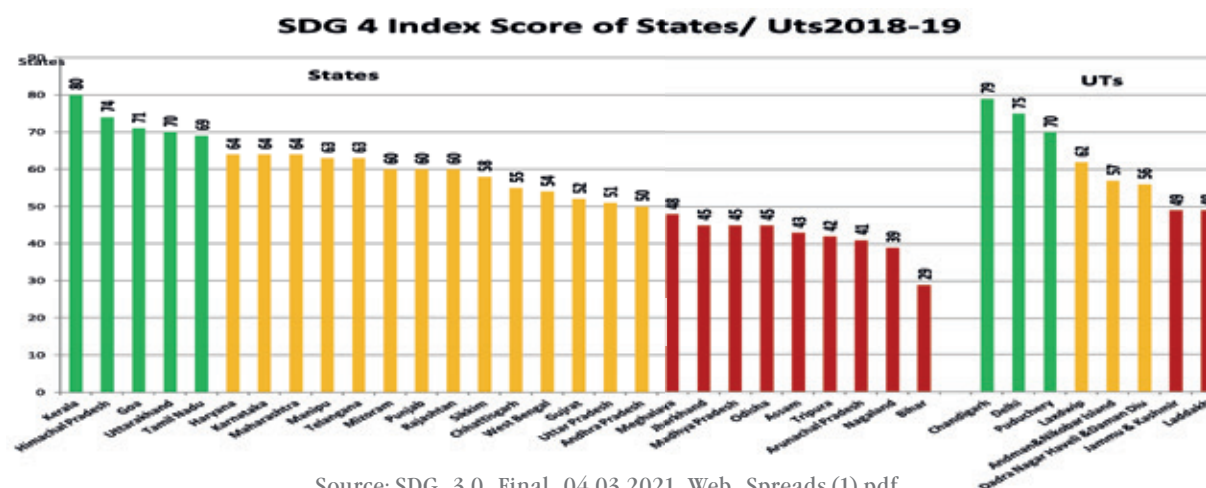2. Funding education with impact | India Development Review (idronline.org)

(2) The MHRD's budget is continuously declining. A similar trend is seen in terms of GDP. The total allocation to school and higher education in 2021-22 budget is Rs 93,2240 million against last year budget of Rs 99,3110 million in 2020-21 (BE) which was revised to Rs 85,0890 million. Thus, there is a reduction of Rs 6,0870 million from the 2020-21 budgets (BE). Thus there was a 6.1 percent decline in the allocation for education sector in today's budget announcement.

(3) The Samagra Shiksha scheme, being the main scheme for implementing the Right to Education (RTE) Act, has faced a massive cut in the budget. While last year the scheme was allocated Rs 38,7500 million (BE), this year, it has received Rs 31,0500 million. Thus a 20% cut in the BE Budget. This cut in Samagra Shiksha

budget will be counterproductive for the poor children under Right to Education Act provision.

(4) Also the National Scheme of Incentive to Girls for Secondary Education, which covers girls of SC/ST communities who pass Class VIII and enroll in Class IX in government and government-aided schools, faces a drastic cut from Rs 1100 million last year (2020-21) to just Rs 10 million in present budget.

III.Progress recorded by UDISE (Unified District Information on school education) Report 2019-20

• A total of 26.45 crore (264 Million) students were enrolled in school education from pre-primary to higher secondary in 2019-20, higher by 4.23 million compared to 2018-19. The enrolment of girls increased at all levels of school education in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19. The increase was highest in pre-primary (14.2 %). The UDISE+ 2019-20 stated that in 2019-20, total students in school education from primary to higher secondary is a little above 250.9 million. This is higher by 2.63 million compared to 2018-19. There is a net addition of 4.23 million students in school education in the year 2019-20 compared to 2018-19 which is higher by 1.6%.

SDG 4 Index Score of States/ Uts2018-19

Source: SDG_3.0_Final_04.03.2021_Web_Spreads (1).pdf

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• The number of teachers in school education increased by 2.72% in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19. In 2019-20, 9.69 million teachers were engaged in school education, about 0.26 million higher compared to the statistics in 2018-19.

• The report has pointed out that the Gross Enrolment Ratio (GER) at all levels of school education had improved in 2019-20 compared to 2018-19.

• "The GER increased to 89.7% pc (from 87.7%) at Upper Primary level, 97.8% (from 96.1%) at Elementary Level, 77.9% (from 76.9%) at Secondary Level and 51.4 % (from 50.1%) at Higher Secondary Level in 2019-20 (from 2018-19),".

• Between 2012-13 and 2019-20, the GER for girls at both secondary and higher secondary level has increased more than that of the boys. GER for girls at secondary level has gone up by 9.6% to reach 77.8% in 2019-20, it was 68.2% in 2012-13.

• In the infrastructure facility the report noted that more than 90% schools in India had hand-wash facilities in 2019-20. This is a major improvement, as this percentage was only 36.3 pc in 2012-13. Though there has been marked improvement in the last seven years (2012-13) when close to a quarter of the school didn't have electricity, at present 83.4% (an improvement by almost 7% from 2018-19) does have electricity.

• DISE+ report indicates that the schools are far from disable friendly as the majority of the schools don't have ramps with hand rails or toilets for children with special needs (CWSN).

• More than 82% schools conducted medical check-ups of students in 2019-20, an improvement by more than 4% over the previous year, 2018-19. In 2012-13, about 61.1% of schools conducted medical check-ups for students.

• About 38.5% schools in India had computers in 2019-20, an improvement by more than 4% over the previous year and an improvement from 22.2% seven years ago, the base year cited by the report. Internet connectivity too is low at 22.3%, though a significant jump from 18.7% in 2012-13.

IV.Some more challenging picture: Only 39 per cent schools in the country had computers while only 22 per cent had an internet connection in 2019-20, according to the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+).

The report also said that more than 90 per cent schools had hand-wash facility in 2019-20, a major improvement from 2012-13 when it was just 36.3 per cent.

"About 39 pc schools in India had computers in 2019-20, an improvement by more than 6 pc over the previous year. More than 22 pc schools in India had internet connectivity in 2019-20, an improvement of more than 3.5 pc over the previous year," the report said. During the period, more than 83 per cent schools had electricity in 2019-20, an improvement by almost 7 per cent over the previous year, 2018-19. "In 2012-13, about 54.6 pc schools had electricity. More than 84 pc schools in India had a library/reading room/reading corner in 2019-20, an improvement of nearly 4 pc compared to the previous year. In 2012-13, about 69.2 pc schools had library/ reading room/ reading corner," it said. Unified District Information on School Education (UDISE), initiated in 2012-13 by the Ministry of Education by integrating DISE for elementary education and SEMIS for secondary education, is one of the largest Management Information Systems on school education covering more than 1.5 million schools, 8.5 million teachers and 250 million children.

Only 39 per cent schools in the country had computers while only 22 per cent had an internet connection in 2019-20, according to the Unified District Information System for Education Plus (UDISE+) report released on Tuesday. The report also said that more than 90 per cent schools had hand-wash facility in 2019-20, a major improvement from 2012-13 when it was just 36.3 per cent.

V.Now online/ digital education is being promoted: What does this mean for India and its people?

India has the world's second-largest school system, after China. Shutting schools to maintain social distancing amidst the COVID-19 crisis was the most logical solution to avoid community transmission. However, this prolonged closure has a disproportionately negative impact on the most vulnerable students. The pandemic has not only caused the wide rift in educational inequality to balloon but also exacerbated existing disparities.

A total of 320 million learners in India have been adversely affected and transitioned to the e-learning industry, which comprises a network of 1.5 million schools. An NSSO 2014 report highlights that 32 million children were already out of school before the pandemic — the majority of them belonging to the socially disadvantaged class in the country.While the government endorses India as the flag-bearer of the digital revolution and acknowledges that it is a diverse and multi-lingual country, as supported by the recently drafted new education policy, e-learning platforms cannot replicate the various dialects, varied contexts and different lived experiences that are brought together by physical classrooms. If e-learning is the "new normal", the policy must go further to

address the feasibility of digitalization to ensure equity and quality in education.

• A total of 320 million learners in India have been adversely affected by the COVID-19 pandemic and have transitioned to e-learning;

• With huge regional and household disparities in access to the internet and technology, this transition has not been possible for all students and educators;

• The rapid shift to e-learning prompted by the pandemic has resurfaced long-standing issues of inequality and a digital divide in India that must be addressed by future economic, education and digitalization policies.

However, In a recent 2017-18 survey, the Ministry of Rural Development found that only 47% of Indian households receive more than 12 hours of electricity and more than 36% of schools in India operate without electricity. This suggests that while students from families with better means of living can easily bridge the transition to remote learning, students from underprivileged backgrounds are likely to succumb to inefficiency and a lack of adaptation, either because of the inaccessibility of the technology or the low education of their parents to guide them through tech-savvy applications.

Aside from the stresses of access and affordability, a daunting task for a student is to keep up with their studies and peers. Unlike an active classroom setting, e-learning does not accommodate one-to-one discussions or problem solving with tutors. Reports emphasize that the receivers (students) are not the only ones struggling – teachers are too. Teachers and institutions are not always trained and equipped to transition to online teaching. Many teachers are unqualified when it comes to using new technologies and interfaces.

Some disturbing facts from NSSO data:

• Only 4% of households own a computer in rural India.

• 23.4% of households own a computer in urban India.

• Less than 15% of rural Indian households have internet access.

• 42% of urban Indian households have internet access.

Source: National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) 2017-18 report

• Lack of resources and skilled teachers in rural India: Now let's focus on the infrastructure, resources and educators in rural India; the only answer we would get is the inefficiency and lack of adaptation among the educators themselves. If the teachers are not ready, then how would they prepare students?

• Increased e-learning platforms could be efficient in urban India, but still, it is far away from communicating the various dialects, varied contexts and different moral lessons that are executed in physical classrooms in an efficient way. Besides, there is a little scope for building an emotional bonding between students and educators on the e-learning platform.

• Increased screen-time is becoming a genuine threat to the physical and psychological health of the students.

• Education does not only mean learning through pen and paper mode, but education also contains sports, extracurricular activities which are not possible under the electronic platform.

E-learning is efficient to a limited extent but it should be noted that E-learning can never be the medium of the universal pursuit of knowledge. Intellectual socialization is also being compromised under E-learning.

According to the Key Indicators of Household Social Consumption on Education in India report,

Based on the 2017-18 NSSO, fewer than 15% of rural Indian households have internet access (as opposed to 42% urban Indian households). A mere 13% of people surveyed (aged above five) in rural areas — just 8.5% of females — could use the internet. Girls in vulnerable households face increased domestic duties inducing their inability to access online education either because of inadequate access to the internet and gadgets or because the male child and his teaching are prioritized. This silent exclusion of children belonging to families in distress may cause child labour and child marriage. Covid-19 fallout: The impact on education in India (msn.com)

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VI. Covid-19 fallout: The impact on education in India, (India Today)
- Over 1.5 million schools across India closed down due to the pandemic
- Only 24 per cent house-holds have access to the internet, according to a 2019 government survey.
- In rural India, the numbers are far lower, with only 4 per cent households having access.
- The education ministry's budget for digital e-learning was slashed to Rs 4690 million in 2020-21—the year Covid struck—from Rs 6040 million the previous year

VII. Extreme poverty compels marginalized children to go for bread earning:

The poverty is one of the detrimental factors affecting the school education in marginalized and unorganized sector families. Here is a case which is self explanatory. In one of the govt aided schools in Allahabad district children were supposed to attend digital learning classes. While I asked the teacher as to how the digital learning is going one. She said," Children are not able to attend the digital classes as they either don't have smart phones or cannot afford the internet data connection.

Ashok Bind Mohan, Ramesh, Rahul (names changed) and 10 others from Daraganj (Baxi Khurd), Prayag Raj (Allahabad),UP are all between 10 to 15 years age group and are enrolled in elementary education(Grade5 to 8). Their school got closed due to lockdown from 13th March 2020. They were asked to attend digital learning from home with smart phones. They are extremely poor and parents have no job during lockdown. They don't have smart phones and those who have cannot afford net pack (internet connectivity)

When the teacher asked as to why they are not attending the digital classes they replied," Mam, we get up early in the morning around 3 to 4 am and in a group we rush to river for fishing. By 5 pm we collected the fishes and rush to local market and sell the fish. From the sales proceeds we purchase rice and kitchen provisions. We also bring some unsold fishes to our home. Then our mother cooks the fish and rice for entire family. By the time we eat we are too tired and go to sleep .For us digital learning is a dream which is difficult to come true."

VII. Challenge of gender gap and out of school children and SDG 4:

The UNESCO published Global Education Monitoring Report, 2014 (GEM) states that 37% of the world's non-literate individuals are in India. The report also suggests that 280 millions of these are just women. Literacy rates among the marginalized sections of the society are abysmally low. The lit-

eracy rate of 15+ years of rural women among Muslim women is 47.25%, 43% for SC women and a mere 37.05% for ST women. These children need special attention in school education.

Also UNESCO's reports that shutting down of schools due to the Covid-19 pandemic comes with a warning of "potential for increased drop-out rates which will disproportionately affect adolescent girls, further entrench gender gaps in education and lead to increased risk of sexual exploitation, early pregnancy and early and forced marriage".

UNESCO has called for policy-makers and practitioners to look into lessons from the past crises to address the challenges faced by girls as the governments of various counties prepare for "indefinite" school closures.

As per Ms Protiva Kundu's article "The gender divide in internet usage is also stark." As per the Internet and Mobile Association of India report, in 2019, while 67% men had access to internet, this figure was only at 33% for women. The disparity is more prominent in rural India, where the figures are 72% and 28% for men and women, respectively"

VIII. Adverse effects marring education of poor children:

Mobile addiction to behaviour change: Effects of lockdown on children (jagran.com).The survey reveals that as high as 65.2 per cent students reported physical problems, 23.40% gained weight, 26.90% suffered headache/ irritability and 22.40% had reported eye pain and itching.(Publish Date: Sun, 05 Jul 2020)

Effects of lockdown on children are surely manifesting in a very ugly and unpleasant way. A recent sample survey reveals that around 65% children were found to be addicted to their devices, mostly mobile phones. When asked to leave their devices these children expressed anger, cried, didn't listen to their parents, showed irritable behaviour. They were unable to stay away from the device even for half an hour.

A study was carried out by physicians at JK Lone Hospital in Jaipur on 203 children to study the impact of the COVID-19 lockdown. It was conceived by Dr Ashok Gupta, Medical Superintendent & Senior Professor, Department of Pediatrics.

The survey reveals that as high as 65.2 per cent students reported physical problems, 23.40% gained weight, 26.90% suffered headache/ irritability and 22.40% had reported eye pain and itching. 70.70% students with high screen exposure during the lockdown days have behavioural problems,

23.90% skipped their daily routines, 20.90 per cent became careless, 36.80 per cent became stubborn and 17.40% reported a reduced attention span. It was concluded that after the lockdown almost all the children had a screen time increase of 2-3 times (5 hours/day from 2 hours/day) which reduced their physical activity.

About 50% of these children had difficulty in sleeping after going to bed for 20 to 60 minutes and 17% of the children wake up in the middle of their sleep at night and take 20 to 30 minutes to get back to sleep. They also suffered daytime sleepiness, daytime tiredness, headache and irritability, weight gain, change in body and back pain and changed toilet habits. See the graphic below:

IX. Effect on Unorganized sector:

COVID-19 crisis can push 40 crore informal sector workers in India deeper into poverty: ILO - The Economic Times (indiatimes.com)

COVID-19 crisis can push 400 Million informal sector workers in India deeper into poverty: ILO

Vovid-19 has badly affected the informal sector in India."The COVID-19 crisis has the potential to push around 40 crore informal sector workers in India deeper into poverty, with the lockdown and other containment measures affecting jobs and earnings, an International Labour Organisation (ILO) report .

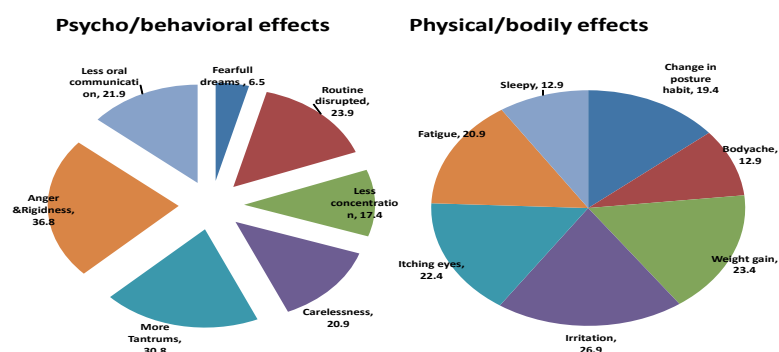"COVID-19 is already affecting tens of millions of informal workers In India.

"In India, with a share of almost 90 per cent of people working in the informal economy, about 400 million workers in the informal economy are at risk of falling deeper into poverty during the crisis.

"Current lockdown measures in India, which are at the high end of the University of Oxford's COVID-19 Government Response Stringency Index, have impacted these workers significantly, forcing many of them to return to rural areas," it said.

"They are less equipped to prepare for and respond to COVID-19 as access to basic services, especially health and sanitation, is limited; decent work, social protection and safety at work are not a given; their institutions are weak; and social dialogue is impaired or absent," it added.

Recommendations:

1. SDG4 and Education for all should remain the sole and final responsibility of the governments and should not be given to private sector.

2. The online education will not be able to be an alternative of regular schooling and should not be an instrument to school closure.

3. There should be open consultations with teachers Unions, Civil society organizations, media and academicians regarding the FDI and ECB govt decision to open education for profit.

4. The role of govt should be to strengthen our public education system rather than handing over the governance to private and overseas players as in case of STARS project.

5. Remove the proposal for piloting engagement of non-state actors in education including handing over of government schools, outsourcing of services, engagement of management firms and school vouchers since many of these measures have been attempted in the past and failed.

6. Prioritize developing State capacity and innovation within the public sector in order for change to be sustainable. This requires (a) less reliance on non-state actors, (b) freedom and untied funds for SCERTS, DIETs, etc., (c) sufficient human resources

7. Include a strong focus on equity and focus on Dalit, Adivasi, poor, dropout and child labour girls, and Minority communities to redress age old inequality and discrimination.

8. Strengthen social accountability in education through building clear

JKLone Hospital Jaipur study of ill effects of online classes on children in 20 cities (55% boys 45 girls) during lockdown

Psycho/behavioral effects
- Less oral communication, 21.9
- Fearfull dreams, 6.5
- Routine disrupted, 23.9
- Less concentration, 17.4
- Carelessness, 20.9
- More Tantrums, 30.8
- Anger &Rigidness, 36.8

Physical/bodily effects
- Sleepy, 12.9
- Change in posture habit, 19.4
- Bodyache, 12.9
- Weight gain, 23.4
- Irritation, 26.9
- Itching eyes, 22.4
- Fatigue, 20.9

mechanisms for strengthening the voice of parents, statutory structures for community participation (SMCs) and local self-governance structures.

9. No outsourced private agency should be assigned the school and teachers assessment.

The author can be contacted at cosar.lko@gmail.com, +91 7011255324

Santo Di Nuovo & Rossana Smeriglio
University of Catania - ITALY

Distance learning and scholastic success in times of pandemic:

a study on the predictors of online achievement of Italian upper secondary school students

The *Didactic at Distance* (DaD) aims at fostering students' learning experience and effectiveness in terms of the achievement outcome (Davis & Wong, 2007). Due to pandemics, Dad shifted from *additional to unique* means for teaching and learning. During the worldwide lockdown, higher educational institutions had to switch their activities from the classroom to a virtual space. This was the only alternative to a complete impossibility to perform the usual activities (Crawford & al., 2020; Kamarianos & al. 2020). The phenomenon started during the COVID-19 pandemic in the spring-summer 2020 semester, lasting till the second semester of 2021.

DaD can foster achievement and academic success, depending on several technical and contextual variables:

- Acceptability of distance learning methods and their motivations.
- Usability of the technological means, developing adequate skills and competencies.
- Development of appropriate online instruments for the assessment and evaluation of achievement.
- Use of non-verbal communication, centered more on the face and less

on the whole body (i.e, gestures, proxemics).
- Management of emotions: they should be encoded and decoded through a screen.
- Restructuring of relations, less based on proxemics and direct contacts.

How DaD can be effective in enhancing students' achievement during pandemics? The benefits of e-learning have been evaluated in researches precedent to COVID pandemics. But so far, there is no shared consensus on whether the outputs of e-learning are more effective than those of traditional learning formats (Dell & al., 2020; Siddiquei, & Khalid, 2017; Visser & al. 2012).

The most frequently stated benefits are: flexibility (in terms of time and place), cost efficiency, saving time to travel, easy access to learning materials, and for a longer period, the potential to offer personalized learning according to the learner's specific needs (Al-Qahtani & Higgins, 2013: Paechter, & Maier, 2010; Welsh & al., 2003),

A meta-analysis published by Mothibi (2015), based on a sample of 15

research studies conducted between 2010 and 2013, reported that DaD has a statistically significant positive impact on students' academic achievements (overall d=0.78). But other studies have demonstrated that there are no significant differences between the work submitted by online and face-to-face students and that methods of instruction and characteristics of learners are more important than the delivery platform (Paulsen, & McCormick, 2020).

Recently, Abu Talib & al. (2021) presented a systematic literature review based on 47 studies, aimed at exploring the transition, in the context of the pandemic, from traditional education that involves face-to-face interaction in physical classrooms to online distance education (in many different fields). The review presents suggestions to alleviate the negative impact of lockdown on education and promote a smoother transition to online learning. In particular, it was found that DaD was thought to enhance attention and efficiency, and help in the learning process. Although students expressed sentiments of missing peer-to-peer interaction, the majority were open to DaD and some even preferred

it to conventional learning. This may be due to the flexibility, convenience, and low cost of online learning. But some students reported feelings of stress in coping with the pandemic situation, and in adapting to the new learning modalities. To reach more generalized conclusions, more data are needed from a broader range of situations and contexts.

Other authors reported that online environments enhance student-centred activities as well as engagement and active processing. A face-to-face setting is preferred for communication purposes, whereas an online setting is preferred when self-regulated work is required. From this point of view, online learning opens up new ways of experiencing school, but at the same time reduces direct and stimulating participation. Regarding motivation, online learners compared to face-to-face learners reported more benefits in terms of perceived academic challenge, learning gains, satisfaction, and better study habits. Instead, face-to-face learners reported higher levels of environmental support, collaborative learning, and social interaction (Adedoyin, & Soykan, 2020; Pokhrel, & Chhetri, 2021).

Distance learning and scholastic success in times of pandemic: a study on the predictors of online achievement of Italian upper secondary school students

Undoubtedly, technology-mediated learning lacks direct social interaction and can negatively influence social aspects of learning processes, e.g., the development of learners' communication skills. Dad changes relational conditions, including lack of social and cognitive presence and teacher's involvement, less feedback using cues, and reduced non-verbal support by observing the interactions of others. Technology-mediated teaching and learning require self-directed learning, time management, and autonomous organization skills of learners (Al-Qahtani & Higgins, 2013).

These requirements arise from the conditions of social isolation and lack of direct social interaction, which means that the learner must have a relatively stronger self-motivation to contrast this effect.

Specific technical obstacles most reported are many distractions and difficulties to concentrate; too much screen-time; shortage of logistical infrastructure; non-adequate learning environment at home; more workload; loss of labs and practical activities (Owusu-Fordjour & al., 2020).

Emotional aspects involved in the relation between e-learning and achievement, e.g., a general influence of anxiety in online students have been described in empirical research. Students' feelings of anxiety are negatively associated with their satisfaction with online learning. A negative relationship was found between test anxiety and computerized testing performance, more than in exams in presence (Abdous, 2009).

These emotional aspects can reflect on the performance in the scholastic tasks and examinations.

Moreover, other variables can influence the effects of the learning at distance: personality factors (Farsides, 2003: Laidra, & al., 2007; Poropat, 2009); Emotional Intelligence (Barchard, 2003; Elias & al., 1997; Parker & al., 2004; Petrides & al., 2004; Salovey & Skluyter, 1997); demographic factors (e.g., residence, gender). About the latter variable, it is a constant in the literature that women report worse mental health outcomes as a consequence of prolonged stressors. Even during the period of the COVID-19 pandemic, the first data collected by the researchers highlighted this trend, manifesting more anxiety and depression in women (Casagrande & al., 2020). But the lockdown and pandemic conditions due to COVID-19 seem to have reduced the gender differences in the perception of happiness and mental health, while they seem to have increased the perception of loneliness

experienced by males compared to the pre-pandemic condition. The recent data show that now men and women had similar and significantly lower emotional coping than in the pre-pandemic condition (Rania & Coppola, 2021).

The research
Our study aimed at assessing which variables mainly affect scholastic performance and its variations following the Didactic at Distance (DaD) during the pandemic and the forced isolation.

The upper secondary school was chosen for the study, where the DaD was introduced in a generalized way and maintained for longer than the other levels during the phases of the pandemics.

The main aim of the research was to verify some possible predictors of the academic achievement (or its decrease) of upper secondary school students, following the introduction of distance learning, evaluating two phases:

1) The period during the first lockdown phase (March-June 2020), following the first semester of the 2019-2020 school year which was carried out face-to-face, and the e-learning was considered only a transitory phase;

2) the first semester of the school year 2020-'21, carried out entirely in DaD and with the uncertainty of whether to continue in the same modality for the entire school year.

Specific aims of the study were to correlate the changes in achievement with demographic variables (gender, place of residence: city or provincial town), and the type of school attended; and to consider some predictors of the variations in achievement over time following the prolonged use of the Dad, i.e.: the attitude towards distance learning; the perception of the change in one's own situation as a student following didactic changes; personality factors; emotional intelligence; the perception of stress related to the school context; symptoms of anxiety and depression, related in general to the pandemic situation.

Method: Instruments and sample
The following instruments were devised for the assessment of the target variables.

- A questionnaire for the detection of the various personal data (age, gender, place of residence) and school address, and the marks obtained in Italian, Mathematics and Science in 2020 and in 2021. The questionnaire also asked for an evaluation of the *distance learn-*

ing experience (on a 5-level scale from "very positive" to "very negative", and of the *perception of the student general status during the pandemic* (changed for the better / not substantially / slightly worsened / very worsened).
- The *Self-Report Emotional Intelligence Test* (SREIT) by Schutte et al. (1998).
- The short version of the *Big Five Factors* questionnaire (*Ten Item Personality Inventory* - TIPI; Gosling, Rentfrow, & Swann, 2003) for assessing personality variables: agreeableness, conscientiousness, emotional stability, extraversion, open-mindedness.
- Items adapted for high-school students from the *Perception of Academic Stress* (PAS) (Bedewy & Gabriel, 2015) for the evaluation of school stress.
- The *Depression, Anxiety, Stress Scale* (DASS, Henry & Crawford, 2005) for the evaluation of the levels of anxiety and depression referred to the period of distancing due to the pandemics.

The questionnaires were preceded by a request for informed consent, ensuring full anonymity and the possibility to withdraw at any time during the compilation.

The questionnaires were administered to an overall sample of 312 upper secondary school students, 175 males and 137 females, average age 16.15 years, st. dev. 1.61; divided as follows based on demographic variables: 132 residents in a city, 180 in provincial small towns; 65 attending scientific high school, 247 technical or professional institutes.

Results
The difference in the achievement level between the two phases was computed for each student, computing the mean of grades for the main matters of study. Near two thirds of the students (65%) obtained lower average marks in the second phase of DaD, while in the 35% of students the average marks were equal or improved. No difference in the three disciplines considered was found.

The mean difference was highly reduced in 2021 compared with 2020 (mean 2021=6.80; mean 2020=7.20, mean difference -0.40, standard deviation of the difference 0.68; paired t=-10.52, d.f. 311, p<0.001).

The worsening of the scholastic grades was greater in scientific high schools and in small towns. No significant differences were found by gender (table 1).

Table 1 - Comparison of the differences in mean achievement grades 2020-2021 for gender, residence, and type of school.

	Gender		Residence		Type of
	M (n=175)	F (n=137)	City (n=132)	Small Town (n=180)	Tecn./Prof. (n=247)
Mean	-0.39	-0.42	-0.27	-0.50	-0.32
St. dev.	0.72	0.63	0.71	0.64	0.67
$t_{(310)}$	0.31		3.04***		4.66

*** p<0,001

The overall differences in the scholastic performances are non-significant related to the perception of DaD (mean difference: 0.15, t=1.05, p>.05), while they were highly significant related to the perception of change in the overall student situation (mean difference: 0.44, t=4.11, p<0.001). This result demonstrated that is not so much the "technical instrument" that causes the differences in the achievement, but the perception that over time the general condition of the student has worsened substantially with the prolonged social distancing, no longer experienced as contingent and temporary as in the first stage of the pandemics.

As for emotional intelligence (EI), the results were different than those expected: the group whose academic performance deteriorates had a higher average score in EI. This difference does not reach statistical significance (t=1,77, d.f. 310, p=.08), but the trend indicates clearly that more emotionally sensitive students are more prone to worsening academic performance.

This trend is confirmed by the comparison results relating to personality factors: school performance worsens in students with greater agreeableness and open-mindedness (table 2).

Table 2 - Comparison of personality factors between the students who have worsened performance (<) and those who have kept it the same or improved (=/>)

|	Agreeableness		Consciousness		Emot.stability		Ex
	<	=/>	<	=/>	<	=/>	<
Mean	**6.67**	**6.22**	6.80	6.73	5.34	5.49	6.9
St. dev.	1.51	1.71	1.68	1.68	2.06	2.07	1.7
t (df 310)	2.42*		0.38		-0.63		

* p<.05

Comparing the change in profit with the variables of anxiety and depression, we found that these stressful aspects of distancing are more difficult to manage in students whose performance has worsened with prolonged lockdown (t=2.31, d.f. 310, p=0.02).

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These aspects - related to the general way of managing the stress behavior of the pandemic - seem to have an additional impact on the general deterioration of scholastic performance, regardless of gender (differences among males and females in the relation between emotional variables and achievement are not significant).

To evaluate the interaction between the categorized variables, a multiple correspondence analysis was performed, simultaneously correlating the gender of the students, the type of school, the change in achievement, the perception of the change in student status, and the attitude towards DaD. The results are shown graphically in fig. 1.

Fig. 1 – Multiple correspondences analysis (total inertia of the model: 1.40)
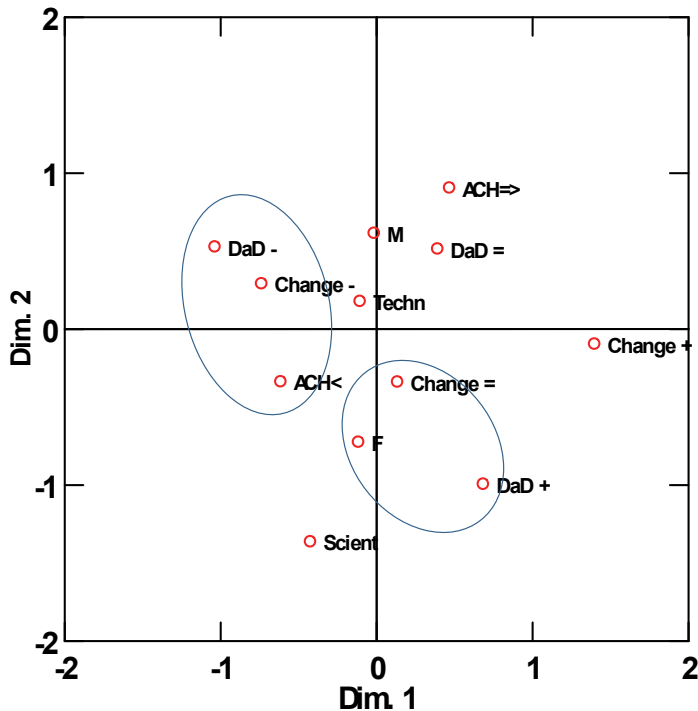
Legend (number of subjects for each category are shown in parenthesis):
Ach => Achievement improved or unchanged (110) / *Ach*< Achievement worsened (202)
Change + / = / - : perception of the change in student status: + improved (64) / = unchanged (131) / - worsened (117)
Dad + / = / - : evaluation of the Didactic at Distance: + positive (117) / = indifferent (94) / - negative (101)
School: **S**cientific high School (65) / **Tech**nical-professional high School (247)
Gender: **M** = Male (175) / **F** = Female (137)

Examining the graph, dimension 1 represents at the negative pole (left) the worsening both in the condition of the student and in DaD perception, while at the opposite pole (right) the

unchanged or even improved perception of changes is represented. Dimension 2 has unchanged or improved learning at the positive pole (at the top of the figure), but this outcome is not related to the attitude towards the DaD; while at the negative pole (lower) we find the worsening of profit - also not associated to the DaD, but rather to the type of school (scientific high school).

Crossing the two dimensions, the worsening of learning in the second year of DaD is associated with the perception of a negative change in the condition of the student and DaD. Female students seem to perceive changes less, and experience DaD more positively.

Conclusion

The effects of DaD on academic performance are not generalizable but depend on specific cognitive and emotional factors. A worsening in academic achievement after distancing in learning is mainly linked to the perception of change in the condition of the student, presumably associated with increased tension and a reduced possibility of experiencing positive emotions.

Not only students who show symptoms of anxiety and depression - without relevant gender differences - are most affected, but also those with greater emotional intelligence, more inclined to agreeableness, open-mindedness, and interpersonal and social relationships. These students experience the consequences of the pandemic as more penalizing about their student life.

Beyond the symptoms induced by stress, also some personality traits - generally favorable to cooperative learning success, but now com-

pressed by isolation - have negative consequences in academic achievement that cannot be adequately compensated by distance learning activities.

■

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Sibiya Thandeka Patience
PhD Candidate, Faculty of Psychology and Education, Eotvos Lorand University, Budapest
Email: thandumuntu@yahoo.com - HUNGARY / SOUTH AFRICA

Higher Education and Teaching quality:

Challenges and perspectives in teacher education, training, and diversity in South Africa.

Introduction

This article emerges from a lacuna relating to teacher education and teaching for cultural diversity by higher education, with a particular reference to South Africa. Teacher education appears to remain one of the least funded areas in higher education, yet teachers are expected to fit into the societal life of society and enhance their obligations to the national agenda and among other things, teachers are expected to be intelligently and professionally prepared for the classroom and to be ready to acclimatize to the changing faces of education, not only in the context of their countries, but for the purposes of globalisation, as well. Literature suggests that, this phenomenon cuts across Southern Africa. This alleged neglection has a potential to negatively affect the prospects of learners meaningfully gaining from education. It goes without saying that the quality of teacher education plays a significant role in valuable and efficient education attainment. The Sustainable Development Goals 2030 (SDGs) explicitly highlight this consequentiality, particularly SDG 4, stresses on empowerment of people with knowledge, skills, and values to live in dignity, build their lives and contribute to their societies (UNESCO). This article seeks to examine one of the central roles of teacher education, that of training teachers to be change agents within the complex process of education as a tool to transform society, embrace diversity, implement sustainable development

goals, address prejudice and bigotry and other forms of injustice, with a long tern agenda to eliminate social vices, for good. The article ends by recommending the Critical Race Theory as one of the solutions to address diversity in education. This subject is explored from different geographical context, to inform the perspectives on South Africa.

What does teacher education and diversity mean?

The underpinning rationale is the conceivable fact that education is a pillar of society, support for development (Sinclair, 2001) alongside that, education is a basic human right, enshrined in the Convention of the Rights of the Child, and in the constitutions of many countries, like the Constitution of South Africa of 1996, as one of the basic human rights. Appreciating human rights means overhauling the current institutional model of teacher education that is still grounded on the colonial, western and apartheid legacy, which is outdated considering the evolutions that the country has experienced. Thomas Grenham in his reflection of teacher education among the Turkana nomads of Kenya, profoundly explores the subject of diversity, Griffin, (2012). He acknowledges that he was a cultural outsider or stranger, as he puts it, in an African context. Through the lens of Paulo Freire, he examines the process of intercultural education within the context of the concept of teacher formation, which he terms, *intercul-

turation*. He explains that this is a process of education that envisions humanisation as a two-way process of interpretation and cooperation between diverse cultures to awaken consciousness. But his description further goes on to say that interculturation is a respectful way by a teacher to acknowledge the dignity of the learner within a particular cultural world view.

According to Collin Brock, in (Griffin, 2012) any formal education programme to be considered effective, should have the ability to take time to discover the fundamental additional non-formal and informal learning content of each student that is relevant to the syllabus. Based on this rationale, teacher education should be cognisance of teacher previous or background formal knowledge or experiences, prior non-formal education and acquired or accumulated informal learning. This is significant because teachers possess deep-seated conceptions that are connected to their experiences of teachers, socialisation, social context, and time at which they are preparing to become teachers.

While having conceptions about certain things, people, or phenomenon, is a normal occurrence, these conceptions sometimes can be misguided, and become fallacies. When pre-service teachers entre teacher education, do not leave these myths at the door, in some way, their training and formation will be influenced by such, hence it is crucial that teacher education curriculum is designed in a manner that

challenges, stereotypes, prejudices and other forms of intolerance. However, this seldom happens, which eventually leads to these ideas infiltrating the classroom during in-service. Literature suggests that there are similar trends between teacher education, school curriculum and teacher misconceptions; they all subscribe to political ideology. It is for this reason that educational foundations such as History, Philosophy, Economics, Politics and Sociology of education, should be placed at the heart of teacher education. According to scholars in this discipline, western democracies like England, where society is increasingly becoming instrumental, technical, and managerial in the way education is conducted, educational foundations appear to be neglected and absent from the teacher training curriculum. Accompanied with this approach, is the priority that is put on examinations and management, which disregards cross-cutting issues such as gender, home language, multiculturalism, and special learning among other out of the classroom issues.

The ability of teachers and other educators to approach education from a broader and wider scope, is a discussion that has gained a lot of attention and momentum in the education realms, particularly in countries where there are immigrants. According to (Turner & Figueroa, 2019), the urgency to speak about immigration and its policies, and how they have impacted the lives of pupils, parents, and teachers, has not been more important. Even though, the gravity of this subject has been identified, but education theories and teach-

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er behaviour remain incongruent with reality. In the case of the United States of America, (USA), the recent and continued xenophobic, anti-immigration attacks, which are also present in South Africa, which gained popularity from the 2016 presidential election campaign, has placed teachers in the USA in a practical dilemma, because they are not trained to educate and care for pupils who are victims of anti-Muslin, anti-immigrant, or racist rhetoric.

In situations like these, it is worth noting that immigrants' experiences are attached to the attitudes of the host society, or contexts of reception, (Turner and Figueroa, 2019). This could be from a classroom mediated interaction, school systems and how society is structured in terms of the distribution of equality and opportunities (Portes & Rumbaut, 2006). Therefore, this could mean lifetime experiences unfolding and rippling across their school lives and society. It is for this reason that some teachers in the USA have committed themselves to proactively intervene in the situation, by creating inclusive learning environments, by leveraging on pupils' language and culture. These efforts have even extended to collaborating with civil society and law expects to assist undocumented immigrants, particularly for the victims of family separations and detentions.

Teacher Education in South Africa
The case of South Africa is described as an authoritarian approach, guilty of perpetuating traditional, unreflective and teacher centred pedagogy, yet education reforms post 1994, were designed to challenge this approach. Teacher education is blamed to be an authoritarian and reproductive preparation platform for school educators. Harger, (2001) blames this attitude on the prevalence of neo-liberal influences. Post-apartheid has seen tremendous transformations to create democratic forms of education to develop a political culture which would be supportive of the newly acquired democracy and construction, (Harger, 2001). The education reforms have been deliberate in their commitment to educate for democracy. The Manifesto on Values, Education and Democracy envisions a teacher who plays more other roles apart from teaching, for example, citizenship, pastoral, community roles and that who practises and promotes a critical and committed and ethical attitude towards developing a sese of respect and responsibility towards others, (Department of Education, 2001, p28). However, in practice, these expectations are farfetched. One of the contributing factors according to Schweisfurth, (2002a) is the personal identity crisis and protection. He argues that teachers

are experiencing a dilemma as their personal and professional identities formed under apartheid seem to be under attack under the new democratic dispensation.

While change is good and inevitable, but consequentially, it can also be a nightmare if not managed properly. Scott, (2013) claims that there is an interwoven set of social, demographic, economic, technological, environmental, and political winds of change, that are responsible for the challenges facing higher education, in South Africa. In reference to this claim, it is understandable that teacher education will also get a knock since it is a part of higher education. By nature, higher education is expected is expected to fulfil cutting edge expectations and knowledge development. However, this move is associated with a risk of neglecting the diversity and multiplicity of the nation, which is important when recruiting for higher education realm. Diversity is undeniably one of the key aspects of higher education and ultimately teacher education, however, its conceptualisation and implementation remains questionable.

South Africa exists in a wider context of the African continent. This therefore stimulates the rational that higher education in South Africa should adopt a curriculum and syllabi that ensures that teaching and learning is responsive to the realities and context of life in Africa, according to (Letseka, 2013). Waghid, (2014) argues that this can be achieved by evoking the spirit of *Ubuntu*, an African philosophy, loosely translated as "I am because you are, and you are because I am." In a country with close to 5% of immigrant population, it is critical that South African teachers are academically trained to have the ability to transcend pupil's individual realities and to display empathy.

While teacher education is expected to fulfil certain roles, by being flexible among other actions, it is however, not realistic, because according to (Harber, & Serf, 2006), there is a disjuncture between policy and practice. The department of education policy documents spell out content that is in full support of democracy, and diversity is one of the characteristics of a democratic society. However, studies reveal that there are gaps between what initial teacher education and what teachers teach, it is not in unison. Research reveals that teacher educators avoid controversial topics during lectures, which makes it difficult for in-service teachers to address provocative matter in the classroom.

How can teacher education conceptualise diversity?
South Africa is refutably faced with rapidly changing demographics. This suggests that higher education needs to reform and transform its practices, and research to heed to the call to ad-

dress issues pertaining to diversity and multiculturism in the country. To conceptualising diversity, teacher education can emulate the approach suggested for social work education in the USA. The recommendation proposes that diversity should be addressed from a broad social outlook, that includes established or structural arrangements, in the process, appreciate the interwovenness of several identities, and integrate an explicit social justice approach. In response to this need, the Critical Race Theory, (CRT) appears to a practical lens to critique and enhance the way the subject of diversity in teacher education is conceptualised and implemented in the curriculum, in the faculty itself, and all the way to the school classroom. The idea is not to design a symbolic curriculum, and recruitment of a mosaic of different faculty staff, just to adhere to the requirements, but a meaningful engagement with the subject, for example, integrating it with the overall ethos of its host institution, and not teach it in isolation as a individual initiative, because diversity speaks to a wider societal context, that in the case of South Africa, includes race, culture, sexual orientation, and social status among others, which also includes immigrants. Hence, the need to teach diversity content in a way that will be beneficial to the institution, students, schools, and pupils.

Through its nature, the CRT is able present itself as a structural approach to addressing challenges that characterise a diverse society, and not just a justice and access seeking approach. It is against this setting that CTR accepts race as a social construct, that does not have a fixed or inherent unbiassed definition, but instead exists primarily to categorise people for purposes of separation and stratification, argues (Ortiz & Jani, 2010). South Africa is a society founded on past racially dominated fallacies, and their legacy still haunts the nation, hence the need to employ such theories to challenge race-based ideologies that are woven in the societal fabric.

Conclusion
Higher education in South Africa is fraught with many challenges, most emanating from the legacy of apartheid. Its rigid structure does not make the process of transformation to be implemented and if it is, it is not conducted in a meaningful way. This becomes a stumbling block for most faculties, especially teacher education. Teacher education in many parts of the world does not play an esteemed role in higher education because of its little contribution to research, hence it being the least funded. It is such shortfalls in its character that contribute to its curriculum being

questionable in terns of equipping teachers with the necessary skills to face a society that is characterised by diversity. While teachers are expected to be knowledgeable and professionally equipped to address such natters for purposes of nation building and transformation, the truth is that there is a wide gap between what they learn at university and what they practically face in the classroom. The authoritarian nature of teacher education, imported from the apartheid state, is held responsible for the insufficient curriculum offered by teacher education and teacher educators. It is therefore crucial that teacher education transforms and designs curriculums that integrate theories that dissect theories of race, for purposes of addressing diversity.

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Pape Mawade Sylla
PhD in English Literature, Faculty of Arts - Cheikh Anta Diop University - SENEGAL

Recapturing Cultural Loss with Music in the English and Irish Literary Traditions

Introduction

Folk music is present in the cultural tradition of Britain. It appears in many forms of literature – in poetry, in drama, etc. – and in the cinema. The Irish writer, poet and lyricist Thomas Moore (1779-1852) composed his *Irish Melodies* (1807), a collection of 124 poems intended to be sung in Irish air, wholly romantic but at the same time nationalist. Folk music in poetry has many advantages in the sense that it emphasizes the synthetic and symbolic dimension of literature.

This article is an attempt to unveil the place of folk music in English and Irish poetry. Many writers and poets wanted to popularize the sense of cultural loss; to touch the people, they combined it with traditional ballads. The Anglo-Irish decline that writers and poets such as Thomas Moore, William B. Yeats, Percy Scholes, etc., wanted to recapture will be the main issue of this work. It was not only a way of recapturing the sense of cultural identity, but also of reimagining a new way of life.

Recapturing Cultural Loss with Music

Published in 1765, the *Reliques of Ancient English Poetry* is a collection of ballads and popular songs collected by Bishop Thomas Percy, it evokes the recapturing of a new ideal by bringing back stylish folk tradition. The late 18th century in Ireland coincide with the emergence of the Romantic Movement. In his *Irish Melodies*, the Romantic Irish writer Thomas Moore depicts an unspoilt dream world of monsters and landscapes. The rock and the bran (Irish harp) are two Irish nationalist symbols powerful in the Irish nationalist expression. The rock symbolizes resistance, and hardness, whereas the harp symbolizes sensuality[1]. Moore wanted to popularize the sense of cultural loss in correlation with ballads to touch people's nationalist sensitiveness.

Irish Melodies is Thomas Moore's collections of 124 poems; set to traditional Irish tunes and published in ten volumes between 1808 and 1834. It is a reflection of Thomas Moore's belief in the close connection between Irish music and national identity. For that reason, Moore considered his work in combining words in English to the "*truly national*" Irish melodies (143). His letter illustrates this fact by saying that the *Irish Melodies*:

Appears too plainly in the tone of sorrow and depression which characterizes most of our early songs [...] The poet [...] must feel and understand that rapid fluctuation of spirits, that unaccountable mixture of gloom and levity, which composes the character of my countrymen, and has deeply tinged their music (143)[2]

Moore's The Meeting of the Waters was first published in 1808, and by the end of the century it had become one of the best known of his *Irish Melodies*, along with The Harp that Once Through Tara's Halls, The Minstrel Boy, and especially The Last Rose of Summer. These poems raise mostly the issue of nationalism and sentimentalization. Irish history is defined by two key struggles: external struggle, the conflict between Ireland and the invader; and internal struggle, the conflict between the Irish themselves. The contradiction often rests upon such questions as who is "really" Irish, who should rule Ireland, and especially who belongs to the true, authentic Irish tradition. These questions are still very alive today. At the background of these two struggles, a number of heroes and key events have emerged, providing a kind of historical mythology that parallels and often overlaps with traditional Irish mythology.

There is clearly a certain sentimentalism in Thomas Moore's famous *Irish Melodies*. These were enormously popular poems – at least as popular in England as in Ireland – that Moore set to music in the early 1800s. The poems, or songs, are marked by sentimental images of the Irish landscape and culture ("The Harp", "The Minstrel", "The Bard", "The Island of Sorrow", "The Last Rose of Summer"), and seem on the surface to romanticize and embellish the realities of Irish life. Yet, beneath the surface, one can see many impulses of national dignity and pride, even rebellion, as in such songs as Dear Harp of my Country! and The Harp that Once Through Tara's Halls (which Joyce puts to powerful use in his short story "Two Gallants"). In reading Moore, one must attend to the ways in which the surface meaning might rub against the hidden one, and the ways in which Moore employs apparently stock devices in unusual manners[3].

In a footnote to the first printing of the songs, Moore wrote that The Meeting of the Waters forms a part of that beautiful scenery which lies between Rathdrum and Arklow, in the county of Wicklow, and these lines were suggested by a visit to that romantic spot, in the summer of the year 1807. The prayer for peace in the last line was probably also in the mind of James Power, Moore's London publisher, when he declared that Irish Melodies 'will do more ... towards producing that brotherhood of sentiment which it is so much our interest to cherish, than could ever be effected by the arguments of wise, but uninteresting, politicians'[4].

As many writers, George G. Byron (1788-1824) is among those who said of Thomas Moore: he is the poet of all circle and an idol of his own (278), that is why The Meeting of the Waters is played in a very sentimental manner: green valleys, pure crystal streams, friends departed. It reveals the sentimentalization of a powerful feeling of loss. Moore's combination of poetry and music brought his work to a wider audience in Ireland than any previous English-language poet in Ireland had enjoyed. His Melodies became "the secular hymn-book of Irish nationalism" (Sullivan 1960: 7) in the nineteenth century. As Thomas Kinsella (1986) has noted, Moore was regarded by many as *Ireland's national poet* (xxvi) during his lifetime, and his *Irish Melodies* was: *possibly the most popular book ever produced in Ireland* (xxvi). Furthermore, Liam de Paor (1994) suggests that Moore was "*one of the most significant figures of the transition at the point where Anglicization was beginning to be fully effected*" (338)[5]. Moore represents the beginnings of the articulation of Irish identity and culture, on a national scale, in the English language.

William B Yeats is another eminent figure of poetry who harped on the strings of folk music in his poetry to recapture the Anglo-Irish decline. Yeats' Celtic Twilight Movement is a movement characterized by anti-Wordsworthian feelings. Imagined countries where peasants live in an Ireland. He satirizes rationalism, as well as bourgeois philistines. He is anxious about Anglo-Irish decline. The Celtic mythology in decline, this is what he wanted to recapture. It needed, he thought, to be reworked into the present. So he does it with a dose of Celtic mysticism. Down by the Sally Garden , published in *The Wanderings of Oisin and Other Poems* (1889) means the willows: in a footnote, Yeats says he reconstructs an old song as remembered by an old woman in the village of Ballisodare. He uses his artistic ability to rework it. Down by the Sally Garden , originally Rambling Boys of Pleasure , is a simple poem that describes a speaker's past and how it failed.

The two stanzas of the poem are quite similar in form. Yeats repeats parts of the same lines twice in order to maintain the song-like qualities of the first three lines that he could remember. The speaker's relationship failed in so far as, despite his love's urgings, he did not take life or love easy. Perhaps he rushed into things too quickly or made decisions that she didn't approve of. Either way, it ended

in tears. In the first stanza the speaker begins by making use of the line that later came to be used as the title of the poem. He describes how there was a place, in the "sally gardens," where he used to meet his love. The language in this poem is quite simple and musical. This makes a great deal of sense since Yeats took the lines from his memory of a song sung by an old woman he used to pass.

James Joyce's short stories, his only book of short stories, *Dubliners* (1914), provides snap-shots of turn-of-the-century Ireland and epiphanies of youth and adulthood. Many of them number among the most admired works of short fiction: "Araby," "Clay," "A Little Cloud," and especially the concluding story, "The Dead." It is set in Christmas time; musical imagery is used to map out the underground part of the psyche. Musical imageries convey masks and psycho-drama: "*bronchitis laughter*", a narrative sub-text which means laughing in musical echo. Death is used as a metaphor. Monks in a monastery, sleeping in their coffins to atone for their sins. The musicality in the poetry reflects a difference or contradiction existing between the West of Ireland and the West of Britain, Ireland's dependence upon Britain, rather than upon itself; "*Sinn Fein*" evokes mental health matters.

In a nutshell folk music in the English literary tradition played an important role in literature particularly in poetry. Through sentimentalization, the poets had established or tried to reconstruct a New Ireland to touch the people.

Conclusion

Traditional folk music has had important overt influences on contemporary poets. It has also had significant covert influences. This includes poets' choices of performance as a means of transmitting their poetry; their incorporation of elements from other poems into their work; the language they use in their poetry, which may not necessarily allude to music but is nonetheless influenced by the context in which traditional music is performed.

Finally, the issues of tradition and community are persistent concerns, which have also informed the historical relationship between music and literature in Ireland. This music may be a therapy and salvation for the younger generation and establish a new world order.

Note

[1] Whatever its origins, the harp was adopted as the symbol of the new Kingdom of Ireland, established by Henry VIII, in 1541. Upon the secession of the Irish Free State from the United Kingdom in 1922, the harp was taken as the emblem of the independent Irish state.
[2] Indeed, the major political figure in Ireland in the early nineteenth century, Daniel O'Connell, found a great deal to praise in

Moore's work attributing "much of the present state of feeling, and the desire for liberty in Ireland to the works of that immortal man [Moore] — he has brought patriotism into the private circles of domestic life". However, this development itself, particularly as it applied to the embrace by women of Moore's music, was criticised by later commentators such as Charles Gavan Duffy, who described Moore as the "pet of petticoats" [Howard Mumford Jones, The Harp That Once-: A Chronicle of the Life of Thomas Moore (New York: H. Holt and Company, 1937), p. 292, Charles Gavan Duffy, "Thomas Moore", The Field Day Anthology of Irish Writing, Vol. 1, ed. by Seamus Deane et al (Derry: Field Day Publications; London: Faber and Faber (distributors), 1991), p. 1251].
[3] See Irish Lecture: http://ireland.wlu.edu/lecture/ch3_6.htm, retrieved on 14/11/2020.
[4] See John Barrell 'The Meeting of the Waters', https://www.lrb.co.uk/the-paper/v39/n15/john-barrell/the-meeting-of-the-waters, Vol. 39 No. 15 · 27 July 2017.
[5] Quoted in Michael Ó Suilleabháin, 1994, 'All Our Central Fire': Music, Mediation, and the Irish Psyche, Irish Journal of Psychology 15.2 and 3: 338.

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Dr. Madhurima Chowdhury
Assistant Professor, Department of South and Southeast Asian Studies, University of Calcutta - INDIA

Human Right to Education and its Policy Implications

Policies are mostly needed for any kind of change. They give the framework of basic laws, regulations and rights which help in for decision making processes and future improvements. The world is experiencing changes in the field of education and to make educational policies effective it needs to consider and examine different possibilities. Thus, it is very important just not to follow only the principles of human rights taken from United Nations' documents. Any edu-

cational policies adopted must focus on the issues and target areas of the particular country. With the different historical background, marginalisation and underrepresented groups, it is very important to understand the basic educational necessities and not just the Right to Education of UDHR or SDG 4 of 2030 Agenda which has been initiated by the western world. Right to Education is a fundamental right in most of the countries, however it has been mostly distorted according to

the country and its political scenario. Education is necessary for all human beings and the Constitution has a duty to provide basic education to their citizens. It is a fundamental duty of the country to teach basic human rights starting from school level as Right to Education is a fundamental right which would help in countries growth. It is very important to understand that different South and Southeast Asian nations have different philosophies and objectives which might not

match with the western world. Thus, if the policies are compelled to other nations then it cannot be achieved to its fullest. Educational policies must be framed keeping in my mind the different resources, culture, potential, equity and opportunities in the long run. Educational policies must be made understanding the sustainability and making it into a dynamic knowledgeable society and mostly the practicability of the policy helping in the right to education process.

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