

## The Erosion of the International Law and Human Rights in the last 20 Years

Kritika Shekhawat  
Jaipur, Rajasthan - INDIA

### Erosion of the International Law and Human Rights

Global reports suggest that schools have constantly been the epicentre of various human rights violations and also have become a breeding ground for insurgency. Millions of children living in countries which are at a constant state of internal conflict or external aggression such as in the Central African Republic, Nigeria, and South Sudan have had their education constantly jeopardized.

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City University of New York

### Struggles for Job Security and Rights Continue at City University of New York Amid Triple Crisis

Only in the US there is already a double pandemic, the dreaded respiratory disease preceded for two centuries by a pandemic tragically characterized now by breath-stealing chokeholds. Two pandemics that raise havoc on the lungs.

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## GLOBAL INVITATION



## These are the topics

- Education and Human Rights
- Employees, Migration and Refugees
- History
- Opinions of Students
- International Politics
- Philosophy
- Child Labor
- Colonialism
- Economy

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**PoliTeknik first editions!**

## IMPRESSUM

**PoliTeknik International**  
every 4 months  
ISSN 2628-0833

**Publisher**  
Verein für Allseitige Bildung e.V.  
(Germany)

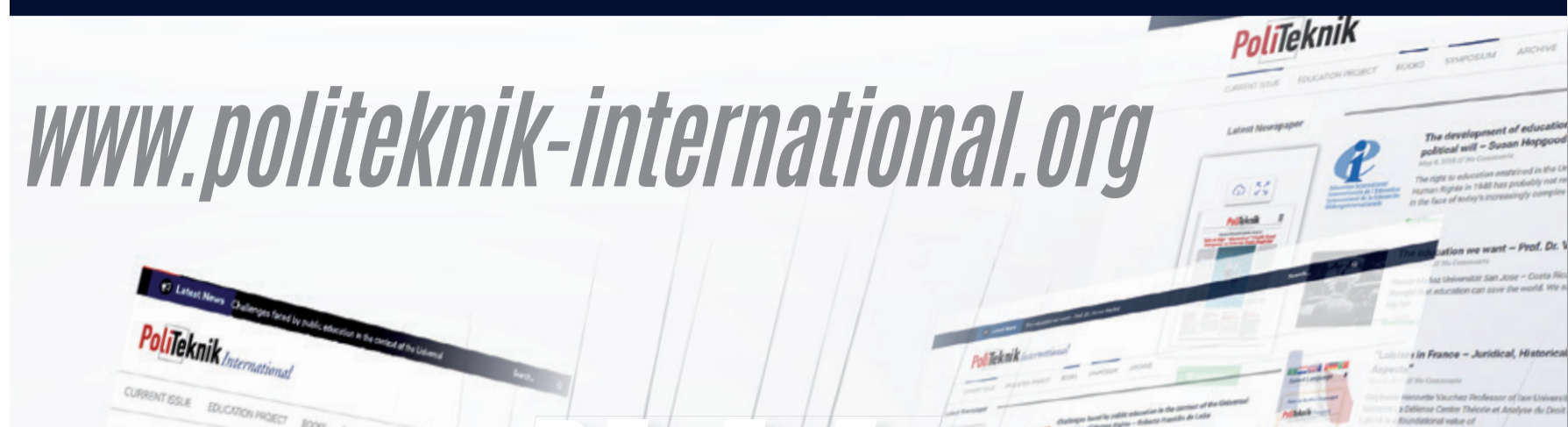
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## GLOBAL INVITATION



Dear Authors,

**PoliTeknik** has been in circulation in **Turkish and German** since 2014 and now, with the support of participants from all over the world, it has also been published in **English, Spanish and Portuguese**. This is the second edition of the year 2020, in which authors share their ideas and suggestions regarding the extension of the human right to education contained in **Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.

To this end, a group of volunteers from **Brazil, South Africa, Great Britain, India, Sri Lanka, Costa Rica, Colombia, Germany, Turkey, etc.**, join forces at **PoliTeknik United** as part of a joint editorial board. Therefore, one can follow the electronic addresses below to access the magazines:

**English:** <http://politechnik-international.org>

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By this same letter, the editorial board invites you to join our initiative with an article for the next issues of 2020. The deadline for the submission of articles is the end of September with a desired extension of **1,200 words**. Feel free to write your articles in **English, Spanish, Portuguese, French, etc.**

#### Thematic areas:

- Human Rights Education
- Human Right to Education
- Student Protagonism and Child Labor
- Workers, Migrants, Refugees and Social Movements
- International Policy
- Colonialism
- History

- Philosophy
- Economy

#### Topics:

- The dysfunction of international law as a result of real (economic) policy;
- The guarantee of the implementation of the Right to Education as a Human Right;
- Poverty in developed countries;
- International economic policy and the determination of different definitions of "human" and their rights;
- Access and continuance of students from the lower classes in basic and higher education;
- The Human Right to Education and teacher training in Portuguese speaking countries;
- Higher education and teaching quality: challenges and perspectives;
- Financing of public school education (primary, secondary and higher);
- War or education: The situation in conflict zones;
- Neoliberalism and the Human Right to Education;
- The Right to Education for children and adolescents in extreme poverty;
- The Human Right to Education in school and non-school spaces;
- The role of social movements in the fight for the human right to education;
- The process of privatization of education and its impacts on public education;
- Child labour in urban, agricultural and forestry regions
- Educational Policy and the Human Right to Education;
- Education systems destroyed through humanitarian interventions
- Social Work and the Human Right to Education

#### Special topics:

- Impact of global pandemic like CoVID-19 on access to education.

- Necessary infrastructure to facilitate transition to learning from home, keeping in mind equal opportunity and accessibility to all.
- Free Healthcare as a Human Right
- Covid-19 Pandemic as a global test for the democracy
- World between Solidarity or nationalism
- Life on the economic abyss

This initiative will allow people from different parts of the world to express their opinions on common issues, to get in touch with each other, and will provide a platform to engage in a productive process in line with a common goal in the context of the project **„Extension of Human Rights to Education”** that we have been conducting for 4 years.

The project aims to update **Article 26 of the UN Universal Declaration of Human Rights** on the right to education, with a joint declaration where everyone can participate in the preparation process (**for more information, please visit [http://politechnik-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/PROJECT-DOSSIER\\_EN.pdf](http://politechnik-international.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/02/PROJECT-DOSSIER_EN.pdf)**)

If you have any suggestions or new ideas for our publications, even if you want to have an interview as part of our training project, do not hesitate to contact us.

Kind regards,

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AN EXCEPTIONAL  
DEMOCRATIC EXPERIENCE

**PoliTeknik International**

MAY-JUNE 2020 | Edition: No. 1



### The Long Way to the Independence a View on Historical Experiences

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**Understanding South Through Politics in India**  
The national movement, led by Gandhi, for freedom and social justice, marked a significant milestone in the history of human rights movements in India.

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Giuseppe Lipari

Organising Bureau of European School Student Unions – OBESSU

# A Learner's perspective on post-pandemic politics



## OBESSU

Organising Bureau of  
European School Student Unions

The current CoVID-19 pandemic, enveloping the planet since January, was an unexpected scenario that is radically changing our lifestyle and politics. With an unprecedented economic crisis, the dangers of a social collapse are getting clear in different parts of the world; while the post Washington Consensus policies show the weakness in granting economic growth, social security, and Hope for huge percentages of the population even in the “most developed” countries.

The Governments, around the globe, somehow reaffirmed the leading role of politics in public matters. The need for an answer was concretely perceived, even though with slight timing differences between different states, with an attempt to centralize the pandemic management at the national level even in federal states. The extreme urgency of the situation seemed to require a strengthened action by the Executive power, cutting the parliamentary debate and the consultations with social stakeholders. While the object of this policy was the limitation of freedoms and rights, with an increased role of police control, it can be easily understood how relevant the risk was for authoritarian escalation, with momentarily suspended checks and balances.

The temporary reduction of intermediation, key element in representative democracy, polarised even more the political debate while the space for civic participation and engagement was being substantially shrunk. In this complicated situation, with limited exceptions, the student

representative organisations had to recognise a limited power of influence on processes that were radically changing the life of learners at all levels. Young people were accused to be main diffusers of the virus, making

said is not even in the plans for some Governments and the risk of an authoritarian evolution of centralized politics is still concrete. An example could be Hungary, where after the CoVID-19 pandemic the Government

▼  
FROM OUR PERSPECTIVE, THE RESPECT OF HUMAN RIGHTS IS A PRIORITY TO  
KEEP DEMOCRACY STRONG AND ACCOUNTABLE.

the political arena even more hostile to our claims. Schools and Universities got immediately closed without clear plans for the future, especially in the most affected countries. All the human aspects related to the main occupation of the youngest were just underrated, also ignoring the differences of means for learners, producing weak policies and making education even more exclusive and discriminatory.

got special powers from the Parliament, without time limit, and used its renewed strength to reduce rights of transgender people by law. After the peak of the pandemic is over in Central Europe, now the same government is planning a heavy militarisation of schools, sending the police to 500 schools, with the right to arrest 12 year old children, in the poorest areas of the country.

▼  
THE EXCLUSION AND SEGREGATION AFFECTING THE BLACK COMMUNITIES  
HAS LED PEOPLE TO AN INCREDIBLE RESPONSE WITH DEMONSTRATIONS  
EVERYWHERE IN THE COUNTRY.

We are still dealing with these policies from the last months. A renewed role of learners and civil society representatives is needed to shape the new policies in the after-emergency situation, while politics comes back to more balanced and inclusive procedures. Unfortunately what I just

From our perspective, the respect of Human Rights is a priority to keep democracy strong and accountable. Arbitrary politics are a concrete danger for pluralism and for both civil and social rights. Learners have the right to express themselves and deserve an active role in decision making. Active participation is also a

key point in the creation of concrete support measures, especially in the countries with low welfare, to avoid or reduce the terrible social costs of this crisis. Repression can't be considered an answer, and what's happening in the U.S. is a concrete example of that. The exclusion and segregation affecting the black communities has led people to an incredible response with demonstrations everywhere in the country. Students are an active part of these movements, because neither educational institutions nor the youngest are free from racist discriminations.

Inclusive politics and policies could be a solution, to resist the crisis and to create a better society after the crisis, but a clear political will of engaged is needed, on both sides.

Learners are ready for that.

*Giuseppe Lipari*

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# Higher education and the conflict in the horn of Africa: The case of Kenya

## Introduction

A 2018 UNHCR report encourages host countries to integrate children seeking refugee in their countries into their national education systems at all levels (UNHCR, 2018a). Educating refugee seekers at higher levels especially has been found to equip the learners with requisite skills to rebuild their home countries even as it helps them to heal from the trauma of displacement. The 1951 Refugee Convention defines a refugee as someone who 'owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to, or owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country'.

The push to have refugees educated is informed by the realisation that education enables individuals to thrive (ONE, 2016). Citing Filippo Grandi, the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, "Refugees have skills, ideas, hopes and dreams, are resilient and creative, with the energy and drive to shape their own destinies, given a chance" (UNHCR, 2016a).

## Educating refugees in a developing country

It is estimated that about 30% of the world's refugees are housed in the world's least developed countries. Many countries in the Horn of Africa are experiencing some form of conflict which has led to displacements and a rise in the number of people seeking refugee status in the neighbouring countries. Kenya is one such country that hosts refugees from neighbouring Somalia, South Sudan and Ethiopia (UNHCR, 2016a). As a refugee host, the country is 10th largest in the world and comes at number 4 in Africa - after Uganda, Ethiopia, and the Democratic Republic of Congo (<https://reliefweb.int/report/kenya/refugee-economies-kenya>). The number of refugees in Kenya is approximately 475 412, out of which 259 100 persons come from Somalia. Note that this number has fallen since 2015, at which time the number of refugees from Somalia stood at 418 913. South Sudan contributes 116 172, the Democratic Republic of Congo 41 784, and Ethiopia 27 857. Of these, 209 979 are based in Dadaab, while 188 513 refugees are housed at Kakuma camp. The rest have been integrated into the urban centres across the country.

It is no doubt that refugees face several challenges in their quest for education and these challenges are more pronounced for those who are hosted in developing countries. These refugees certainly require more as they progress through levels of education, and the higher they move, the more luxurious it becomes even for the nationals to access due to resource constraints (UNHCR, 2018b). This is notwithstanding the numerous benefits of refugee education that include opportunities to become leaders in their communities back home, to create businesses and social enterprises when they return, and build infrastructure that will almost certainly be non-existent on the return, and to act as peace ambassadors. The possibility of bringing lasting peace in the region through university education has been recognised as one of the weapons that universities can use (Sawahel, 2019).

## Refugee education in Kenya

Kenya's neighboring countries - Somalia and South Sudan, two countries that have seen years of conflict, positions it as a host of refugees in the region. More than half of those fleeing conflict in the horn of Africa, and seeking refugee in Kenya are within 0-18-year age bracket and thus requiring learning opportunities. The country, working with the UNHCR and various partners, is providing both basic and tertiary education to these young refugees within her borders. Tertiary education is provided through one centre in Kakuma and four centres in Dadaab, the biggest of the two refugee camps (<https://www.unhcr.org/ke/education>).

Additionally, the country has a dedicated university campus in Dadaab refugee camp. The campus was established by Kenyatta University, one of the largest public universities in Kenya. Establishment of the campus was motivated by the country's position as a host to a considerable number of school-going age refugees. The move to open the university campus was lauded by a section of stakeholders among them the UNHCR. During the official opening of the campus, UNHCR's head of operations, Dominik Bartsch pointed out that the campus stood a chance to "serve as an incentive for refugee children to complete school and proceed to obtain higher qualifications" (UNHCR, 2012). He affirmed that a university degree for ref-

ugees provided them with opportunities to help rebuild their countries once they returned, and to play the role of peace ambassadors. The Kenyatta University Daadab Campus targets mainly the refugees at the camp, as well as the local students.

The targeted refugees who have had a chance to acquire basic education and are seeking to further their education welcomed the opening of the campus, which they saw as an opportunity to achieve their dreams. One prospective student who had been seeking an opportunity to access higher education, Mohamed Bashir Sheik, a Somali refugee in Daadab camp expressed his joy at the opening of the campus saying that he planned to apply for admission. In his words, 'I'm a journalist, and I've never attended a single training [session] or workshop ... I want to go to Kenyatta University and study mass communications. I'm going to register'.

Other institutions offering higher education at the camp include Borderless Higher Education for Refugees (BHER) which delivers programmes in collaboration with academic institutions drawn from Kenya and Canada. In Kakuma, Strathmore University and Masinde Muliro University of Science and Technology offer training through e-learning and face-to-face delivery modes (UNHCR, 2016b).

The emergence of internationalisation of education and particularly regionalisation, where more and more students now study in countries that share borders means that some of the students in Kenyan universities come from the neighbouring countries. A recent study on students academic mobility in Africa that is yet to be published shows that many of the 'international students in Kenyan universities come from Somalia and South Sudan. These students, even though not refugees at the refugee camps, seek education in Kenya partly because of conflict that has affected the development of education in their home countries. For instance, one of the students from South Sudan, taking a bachelors degree at Kenyatta University main campus said that 'I chose to study in Kenya because of poor educational development in my home country for so many years, and I had been doing my studies in Kenya since the class (grade) eight up to now'. Again some of the students had previously gone

through the Kenyan education system at basic levels when they were refugees. One international student from Somalia explained his choice and reasons for studying in Kenya as follows 'I chose KU because I lived in Kenya as a child due to conflict at home so studying here feels like home. ... I want to learn here so that I can also improve my country.

## Conclusion

Investment in refugee education in Kenya certainly follows the advice of UNHCR's 'it is vital that governments and higher education institutions provide more schemes allowing refugees to attend universities under the same conditions as nationals' (UNHCR, 2016a, p.39). Establishment of Daadab campus, for instance, allows refugees an opportunity to acquire a higher education degree that would prepare them for life back home. The refugees in Kenya are integrated in the Kenya education system right from basic to higher levels. With enhanced partnerships, refugees in the horn of Africa could acquire higher education that would help them rebuild their countries and develop infrastructure that has been ruined over the years due to conflict.

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# Covid-19 Pandemic

## A Global Test for the Democracy

"A heavy load on the world's head for the pillows to bear." Covid-19 brought about by the Corona virus is a dreadful storm that has swept across the entire globe. First confirmed in Wuhan, a city in China in December 2019, the fire spread the smoke all over to the European continent. By the end of February, the WHO had declared it a global pandemic. The African continent started receiving its share within no time. The rate at which COVID-19 is spreading is alarming. This is manifested by high levels of person to person contact emanating from improved technology, especially in transport.

As we tighten our belts to fight harder and overcome the pandemic, its effects on the entire world are rapidly increasing. The global economy has faced a backlash, education has been halted and worse still temples of worship have also been closed.

COVID-19 that just started as a mere disease in Wuhan is now a global pandemic which has also posed a test on the global democracy. Democracy that can be literally defined as "the rule of law" has overwhelmingly been crashed.

We are in a situation where the governments in power have taken it as a golden privilege to put a halt at the elections which in most of the countries are not yet even not to be held. For instance, USA has cancelled its presidential primary elections over the pandemic. In Uganda, the legislators were already discussing the postponing on the 2021 general elections few weeks after the confirmation of few coronavirus cases in the country. The very Legislators have been clashing over 10bn Ug shillings approx. 2.7 million USD to give out relief to the voters in their respective constituencies to show relevancy. To the contrary this is the executive's duty in democratic governance. This has been away of bribing voters to earn themselves more support in the forthcoming elections which is against constitutional rule.

People are now living in pieces instead of peace. The situation has turned into a reign of terror. Those that are against their presidents' measures are being criticized and so far, some of them have been hospi-

talized. In Lebanon, protestors have been injured by security officials having turned violent as currency value halves. In Uganda, the Mityana legislator Hon. Zaake Francis has been arrested and brutally tortured due to fact that he tried giving out relief aid to his voters against presidential directive of social distancing. The Jinja RDC (president's representative at district), Eric Sakwa has also been charged with manslaughter after he

This is putting Tanzania itself and her neighbors at a big threat. For instance, recently increasing COVID-19 rates in Uganda are from the Tanzanian cargo truck drivers. His failure to declare lockdown and implement social distancing has earned him distrust from citizens.

However, there's light at the end of the tunnel. Countries are feeling a test of democracy.



allegedly terrorized and beat citizens to death on allegation that they refused to close business during lockdown. Those that would have been custodians of the law are now tormentors. People's rights have been trampled on over mere disagreements.

In the US, citizens are at loggerheads with their president Donald Trump who has proved to be more dictatorial amidst the situation at hand. He has gone overhead to mislead his own people. He recently suggested that medics should start injecting people with sanitizers in a bid to curb the virus spread. He is now shifting the blame to WHO for conspiracy with China to shift balance of power from

In most countries the opposition groups have come to some understanding with regimes in power. The pandemic has proved a threat to everyone and that's why people have come to unite as one. In Uganda, the Hon. Robert Kyagulanyi aka Bobi Wine -a Ugandan pop star musician turned into politician and one of Museveni challengers in the 2021 elections is now working hand in hand with the government in the coronavirus fight. He recently responded to President Museveni's call for relief aid by distributing tons of food to the National COVID-19 Task Force. He also composed a COVID-19 sensitization song.

THE PUNCTURES CAN BE REPAIRED, AND WE CAN ALL TOGETHER BECOME VICTORIOUS OVER THE CORONAVIRUS WITH OUR DEMOCRACY NOT NECESSARILY BEING DISMANTLED.

the USA. The Americans have lost confidence in him despite being at the forefront of fighting the pandemic.

In Tanzania, John Magufuri, the president is still hesitant to declare a lockdown against the virus spread.

The COVID-19 pandemic has driven citizens to a realization that they can be of help to their governments. This is a situation where everyone has been affected. People have thus come up to help their governments. Churches and religious leaders that have

been the recipients from governments are instead the ones donating to people through the government. We have too seen individuals including low income earners (taxi drivers, cyclists etc.) contributing money, vehicles, food and PPEs. In Uganda, approximately 2 Million USD have been raised in cash. The spirit of nationalism is on the rise.

Many countries have also learned self-reliance. They have provided their citizens with the essential health services they have always yearned for. For instance, Uganda is building a fleet of 10 medical vehicles per district compared to the previous about two vehicles. Every country is building enough medical personnel, enough equipment in hospitals Inter alia. Doctors salaries have too been increased to motivate frontline medical personnel.

The UN, the biggest international body has risen to help the people world over in the Coronavirus fight. Indeed, as the saying, "however big a tree is it will never be a forest". This is the time need UN than before. It has sensitized the masses, offered financial and medical support to many via its agency, WHO. China, South Africa, Italy, and most African countries among others have benefitted. The international body has also imparted hope among people across the globe, reassuring them that the pandemic will soon be over, and everything will come back to normal.

Though the global democracy has to a larger extent been put to test and at a verge of almost collapsing it can still be retrieved. The COVID-19 pandemic should not erode us of the trust we had in our governments. I strongly believe that if the governments worldwide cooperate with their citizens, we can escape the fangs of this deadly monster and become masters of own destiny. The punctures can be repaired, and we can all together become victorious over the coronavirus with our democracy not necessarily being dismantled.

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# Education of Children: an Emergency in conflicts and crisis zones



## Introduction

Maintaining and strengthening quality education is essential to combat humanitarian crises. Education is not given enough priority by humanitarian interventions and emergencies (wars, epidemics, natural disasters...). Emergency education must be a pillar of humanitarian aid.

Also beyond learning, education supports some of the overarching goals of humanitarian aid such as protection, support, social services and familiarity.

Thus, Inter Agency Emergency Network is gathering non-governmental organizations, governments and United Nations' agencies work together to ensure the right to education in emergencies and in the early stages of construction, food, housing, health etc. However, it is recognized that humanitarian aid should consider the overall well-being of human beings.

On September 02, 1990, twenty states marked the vigor of the International Convention on the Rights of the child, adopted on July 11 by the Organization of the African Unity which became the African Union (the African Charters of Rights and Welfare). However, it remains to apply it, to transform words into actions, to make words a reality.

Safe Schools Declaration's Commitments has limits, since *"one in 10 lives in a country or zone affected by armed conflict are children, and one in four of these children do not go to school"* (unicef.fr), temporary learning schools are to be welcomed and encouraged given that education allows a return to normality and instills hope in the future.

## Chapter I: Recognition of Children's Rights

The Global Partnership for Education works for more than 65 developing countries to strengthen their education systems, so that all children, regardless of economic status, gender, disability or wherever they live, can go to school and benefit from learning. However, more than 260 million children are out of school and two-thirds of school children will finish primary school without knowing how to read.

The main issues facing children are:  
**The war**

In armed conflicts, children are often deliberately targeted or not adequately protected. In Mali, children have suffered greatly from the crisis due to the displacement, violence, sexual abuse, loss of or separation from family members and their recruitment into armed forces or groups. Among other traumatic events and stressors is the deprivation of the right to education by certain actors. And if education is under attack, UNICEF should be:

"on the frontlines in conflict-affected countries to develop school safety plans, get children back to learning by providing psycho-social and informal learning opportunities, training teachers, rehabilitating schools and distributing supplies for teaching and learning" (unicef.org).

All of these are factors of hopelessness, demoralization, anxiety and general psychological distress.

In addition, sexual violence against civilian populations has become a feature of conflicts. The fear of such violence, which increases when the perpetrators are not held accountable for their actions, has the effect of weakening vulnerable populations. This can restrict the mobility of girls and women and may induce them to stay at home and avoid going to school.

## Education

Schools can be seen as an embodiment of state authority; therefore, they are considered legitimate military targets by non-state actors.

## Poverty and Child Labor

The international trade sanctions imposed because of anti-regime protests have had a significant negative impact on the socio-economic situation of the civilian population. These sanctions limit state revenues, further limiting the resources available to pay public sector workers. This causes a significant reduction in the income of several families.

Child labor is generally a neglected issue in humanitarian crises. Working children, especially those involved in the worst forms of child labor, are often invisible and excluded from humanitarian assistance.

## Chapter II: Safe Schools Declaration

To protect schools and universities, the Safe Schools Declaration was initiated in 2015 in Geneva. It urges signatory states (56) to follow the following recommendations:

- Refrain from using schools and universities in their military efforts,
- Do not seek to destroy or damage schools or universities,
- Use force only as a last resort and consider all alternatives. (unicef.fr)

We do not know this enough but schools do not enjoy the same level of protection as those granted to hospitals and international humanitarian assistance: if the international conventions do indeed prohibit deliberately attacking a school...they do not prohibit that it be occupied by armed forces.

However, a school used for military purposes not only deprives children of their fundamental right to education...but even becomes a *"target"* for attacks.

This is why UNICEF France had asked Francois Hollande and the French government to commit to signing this text (2017) - and thus become the first member of the United Nations Security Council to do so. The Haitian scholar Lefabson Sully even suggested that *"a course of rights and duties of children must be included in the curriculum offered by the ministries of education"* (www.washingtonpost.com)

In Syria and its neighbouring countries, Syrian children have been forced to become "breadwinners" of their families. Education systems have been the target of attacks in Syria, as armed groups have seen military strategies targeting schools, school children and teachers.

In 2016, UNICEF reported that 2.1 million children in Syria and 700 000 Syrian refugee children do not have access to education. Among Syrian refugee children in Jordan in 2016, more than 80 000 were out of school (Human Rights Watch).

## Chapter III: Temporary Learning species

During the Ebola crisis in Sierra Leone, the Ministry of Education was able to continue teaching during radio program while the schools were closed

for almost a year. In Afghanistan, the state has recognized that commuting to school is often dangerous in times of crises and has therefore established community schools.

Nevertheless, the organization of the space must allow flexibility of use during these different periods and these different times. The space must respond to the evolution of the use of premises, over time. Based on the words of Helena Murseli who believes that: *"the process of setting up temporary learning spaces consist first of all identifying the places, in or near displacement camps, then proceeding to the opening of these spaces, conditioned on the supply of materials."* (unicef.org)

An environment which is a support for learning and production, in which pedagogy centered on the learner is set up, must, in its very conception, reflect and value the diversity of origins and cultures; promote respect and facilitate the link between teachers and students.

The comfort of the environment remains an important criterion in the design of buildings: species must provide comfort, good air quality and good lighting. In some countries, especially those affected by natural disasters such as earthquakes, schools are seen as a natural refuge for the local community.

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# Post CoVID-19

## Impact on African Political Economy



This is an analysis paper of post-COVID-19 impact on African political economy and is indebted to the conversation the author had with Siphenathi Khunyana, and Siwaphiwe Potelwa in our self-isolation at Primavera, Brackenfell, Cape Town in South Africa during the *Lockdown* period.

COVID-19 manifestation is a predicament to postmodernists and furthermore a call for them [postmodernists] to be critical in their approach. Postmodernists diachronic approach and appraisal of how modernism assaulted its subjects through the denial of their ontologies, makes it reach its limitations.

For modernists to deny the *Oth-ered* subjects their ontologies for not embracing their *telos, qua* universal ontologies, in one way or another, engendered and at the same time rendered postmodernists to be critical not in their approach in their quest to rehumanize their subjects. For instance, there are certain animals in the world, regardless of religious reasons, are considered to be wild animals because they have deemed them undesirable to be domesticated and to be eaten, be it for health reasons, hazard or other reasons. However, guided

by a particular logic, if a certain ethnic group and/or race, for reasons peculiar to them, decide out of their own volition to domesticate and eat particular wild animal/s, postmodernists would defend such ethnic group from being condemned for eating that particular wild animal claiming its their ontology. Postmodernists need to be critical in their approach and begin to encourage their subjects to also be critical to avoid the outbreaks of pandemic emanating from eating certain wild animals deemed not desirable to be eaten, be it for either health reasons or any other hazard they might pose for human consumption.

History informs us that the world has witnessed many pandemics emerging from certain animals and the turbulence they caused to world economy and this nullifies any disconcerting attempts to ascribe CoVID-19 to any particular nation and/or race. Nevertheless, here in this paper we are not going to be diachronic like postmodernists, rather- we delve in our analysis of post CoVID-19 pandemic impact on African economy and by and large to her people.

Many people are losing their lives in particular in Italy, China and United States of America and that is going to have grave and dire effects to their economies and the world at large and that is going to necessitate a salient need for cheap human capital for economic recovery. China has relatively recently ensued their brain drain

endeavors and/or plunder of Africa through employing African graduates and because of high unemployment rate in Africa, China brain drain has been embraced by the young African graduates. Nonetheless, China might defend itself that it offers bursaries to young Africans albeit such gesture by China can be said to be *mutatis mutandis*. The less is said about the Europe brain drain history of Africa, more time is saved and the quicker we reach our argument; *post CoVID-19 impact on Africa political economy*.

Given CoVID-19 phenomenon and many people losing their lives in Italy and elsewhere pandemic is prevalent, these countries will need human capital for the sustainability of their economies. Nevertheless, they might face obstacles in sustaining their economies and such obstacles will emanate from the phenomenon that CoVID-19 pandemic claimed many lives *notwithstanding* that the virus mostly claimed old people.

For China, Italy and other countries where CoVID-19 pandemic claimed many lives, Africa with cheap human capital would be a preferred continent to get labor for the sustainability of their economies. Nevertheless, one might argue that the populations worse affected are the senior citizens therefore assertions that these mostly affected countries won't be shaken, thus the previous point is to be discarded. However, during this pandemic the normal economic activities are

interrupted because of the lockdown, then the business sectors will target low income countries' human capital to maximize their profits. With high unemployment rates in Africa, such plunder of its human capital by China, Italy and other countries, worst affected by CoVID-19, such human capital plunder would be met with no resistance by the populace.

Prior to putting the pen to rest, it is worthy to highlight CoVID-19, in one way or another, can be comparable to a "*non sequitur*" to the raising populist anti-immigrants' wave in certain European countries and elsewhere in the world. This is because for world economic recovery economic nationalism, we have witnessed advocated by the President of the United States of America, and the uneven international system, needs to be respectively waived and marginalized by the world leaders and the private sector, and simultaneously level the uneven international system.

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*selection of themes...*

## - Free Healthcare as a Human Right

## - Covid-19 Pandemic as a global test for the democracy

## - World between solidarity or nationalism

## - Life on the economic abyss

The very selection of themes for this edition of Politeknik illustrates perhaps better than anything else could the point we have reached in our political discussions, and what we expect of our leaders, and institutions, in terms of preserving human life itself. Turning these topics into questions seems the best way to keep our discussion fresh.

So: does everyone have a right to health care? When battling a disease that has killed or infected millions, can we preserve and support democracy? Is nationalism our most powerful unifying force in testing times? Can we sustain the way of life we have come to expect or aspire to, or will millions even in wealthy countries depend on food banks and other charity? Will that kind of basic need diminish our force and creativity, sorely needed to solve challenges like climate change?

Each question posed above cannot be weighed in isolation. But writing as I do from New York, the self-proclaimed media capital of the world, the city that never sleeps that is right now living through a nighttime curfew, I will focus on the most fundamental: can we preserve democracy?

If the measure of freedom is one's ability to speak truth to power without getting locked up, then the United States and its 300 million people are still well off. I am writing days after President Donald Trump called on America's governors not to be "weak," but to "dominate" following protests and violence in scores of communities, triggered by the unspeakable end of George Floyd, an unarmed black man killed by four police officers in Minneapolis.

The president himself led a handful of his top advisers to a church near the White House, apparently for a photo op with a Bible – with his path cleared by police acting on the Administration's orders. The reaction was swift; current and former military commanders and civilians at the Pentagon closed ranks and vowed to defend their institution – America's most respected, according to opinion

polls – against what The New York Times columnist Paul Krugman suggested was the "weaponization" of racism. Jim Mattis, Mr. Trump's first secretary of defense, issued a withering attack on the president, saying that "Donald Trump is the first president in my lifetime who does not try to unite the American people – does not even pretend to try." Instead, "he tries to divide us. We are witnessing the consequences of three years of this deliberate effort. We are witnessing the consequences of three years without mature leadership."

Around the world, there are many countries where such criticism of the powers-that-be would lead to instant incarceration, or worse. But Americans measure their freedom by their own standards, the fruit of almost 250 years of rule by law, and not by use of the military to uphold law and order. Indeed, there were also hopeful signs emerging from the tumult that convulsed many US communities after the killing of Mr. Floyd. In New York, for instance, the most senior uniformed police officer, Terence Monahan, knelt with leaders of the protest against Mr. Floyd's killing – a genuflection that mayor Bill de Blasio labeled a "significant moment of change" in relations between the cops and the communities they patrol and work with.

It will take many more such efforts to heal the deep wounds left by 400 years of racism. But New York had already shown its ability to prevail over adversity by its response to the colossal challenge of the pandemic. Covid-19 is a worldwide scourge, against which scientists, politicians, business people and billions of others must unite if they are to devise a treatment, a vaccine, a cure. The disease arrived in the United States rather quietly. Perhaps because the first reports from China of a new, unidentified lungy came as much of the world was celebrating Christmas and then New Year, there was little fanfare, or sense of shock and peril, at first.

The now familiar timeline of the disease spreading to Europe and the western United States and then

to the East Coast meant that even as late as the end of February, alarm was still somewhat muted. But then the full force of what was needed to battle this difficult new enemy became clear. It involved basically shutting down life as routinely lived in much of the world. Systems we imagined were built for the ages turned out to be fragile in the face of disease. Human beings were resourceful and resilient – how else would the heroic health workers of hospitals worldwide have succeeded in flattening the curve? – but rearranging life to make it truly sustainable will require many more efforts than those we have seen to date.

Where do we go from here, in fact? It has been instructive to watch the response of communities large and small. Even within medium-sized towns, they often differ. One big test for democracy in this age of Covid-19 will be the ability to unite in a sustained fashion. It will involve also adjusting to the warp speed of technology vs. the much slower pace at which human beings absorb and act on new information.

The big debate over the future of tech is only now unfurling in its true, enormous, dimensions. While the Mark Zuckerbergs and Jack Dorseys of this world wrangle with governments and the ordinary people who control and consume tech, social media will be already deployed to create the next protest, or political demand, in ways that lie outside the framework we have built to manage our affairs to date. Who will judge, or verify, which of these structures is suitable for the challenges ahead? How will we determine that any new political frameworks are workable, or fair?

All these questions form the legacy today's young people – the most numerous ever – are inheriting. How will we frame the communication between this new generation and the older grayhairs scorned by the likes of teenage activist Greta Thunberg? Aside from the question of age, what are the measuring sticks of a successful discussion and development of absolutely new ways of working and

organizing? How much importance should we continue to attach, for instance, to the nation state as a sensible form of human activity?

Almost every analyst of the current situation mentions the need for international cooperation if we are to extricate ourselves from our current plight. Yet the record of such cooperative efforts falls far short of the lofty aims articulated by their founders. The United Nations is much maligned, indeed neglected, by its founding members if they perceive no collaborative success or individual advantage in using the organization for the purposes for which it was established. Which leaves the UN looking often slightly quaint, a kindly aunt offering wise but outdated counsel as the new Masters of the Universe proceed to invent new tasks in a virtual world that poses questions you never knew existed, let alone needed to be solved.

Which returns us to our original question: can we preserve democracy and at the same time advance? The United States has always answered in the affirmative. But the United States has also come up short in recent years, and is now arguably broken. As the eruption over George Floyd's murder showed, American racism bears many distinctive characteristics, but there is an even broader anger at work. In threatening the wealth and well being of Americans, it could paralyze America at a time when its vitality is a prerequisite for pulling together. If America is no longer available to lead the world, we must all keep watch on who enters the void that remains. China, as the #2 world economy, is usually identified at this stage as the likely candidate for domination. Yet while determined and rapid, China's rise is still far from matching America's strength. The United States is powerful yet. Its friends (and even its foes) can only hope that it decides to rekindle alliances and associations in time to fight what James Baldwin so eloquently called "The Fire Next Time."

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# Erosion of the International Law and Human Rights

The havoc of World War II induced the nations to unite in order to uphold human rights. In 1948, the international community formally committed itself to worldwide protection of human rights by the adoption of Universal Declaration of Human Rights in the United Nations General Assembly. In more than six decades of its existence, the UDHR has shielded human rights but the violations in the last decade are growing at an alarming rate as has been reflected by various reports published by Amnesty International<sup>1</sup>, The World Justice Project<sup>2</sup>. The Rule of Law Index, 2019 reports a significant diminishing of human rights in more than two-thirds of the 113 countries surveyed. Various rights ensured to people including right to life, liberty and security of person<sup>3</sup> are threatened time and again by the recurring armed conflicts. Globalisation has also added to the slow erosion of human rights as nations are now constantly at war due to innumerable reasons.

Dr. Justice A.S. Anand, Chairperson of the National Human Rights Commission, India stated that the cult of terrorism has been continuously striking at the very root of human rights of innocent people and the ruthless, barbaric and inhumane killing of innocent people are being carried out with a view not only to challenge the authority of the Government but to pose formidable challenge to the enjoyment of human rights<sup>4</sup>. Threatening of political and civil rights includes a massive danger to the right to education. All human rights are interrelated and interdependent; the enjoyment of one particular human right relies on the enjoyment of other right(s). This means that the right to education is necessary for the realization of various other human rights, such as the right to work, rights to freedom of expression and of association, and to access health services.

Global reports suggest that schools have constantly been the epicentre of various human rights violations and have also become a breeding ground for insurgency. Millions of children living in countries which are at a constant state of internal conflict or external aggression such as in the Central African Republic, Nigeria, and South Sudan have had their education constantly jeopardized. Many are drawn into fighting as soldiers or forced to support armed groups<sup>5</sup>.

Attacks on schools are one of the

most easily quantifiable ways of gauging the effect of a conflict on education. During 2001, for instance, Israeli soldiers shot at nearly 100 schools in the Occupied Territories, using rubber bullets, live ammunition and tear gas. Another 71 schools came under attack through tank shelling or rockets fired from helicopters (DCI, 2002). In East Timor, the violence of September 1999 destroyed between 80% and 90% of school buildings and related infrastructure (UNDP, 2002).<sup>6</sup> Human Rights Watch documented over 126 attacks and armed threats against education professionals, students and schools in the year 2019. In Jammu and Kashmir, India in the year 2016, within 3 months 26 schools were under attack thus affecting over 4000 children.<sup>7</sup> Children living in countries at war have come under direct attack, have been used as human shields,

purposes, such as polling station during national or state elections. Armed forces and armed groups view educational institutions as convenient places to recruit children as combatants. These attacks become an easy way to perpetrate sexual violence among children, and along the route to and from, schools or universities as part of broader patterns of conflict-related sexual violence.<sup>9</sup>

Attacks on schools, teachers and students result in fear and causes students to drop out and deprive them of basic right to education. The importance of education can be no less emphasised. Education can break generational cycles of poverty by enabling children to gain life skills and knowledge needed to cope with today's challenges. Education is strongly linked to concrete improvements in health and

ing a significant part of their young population, as well as a failure to provide adequate or timely protection to which children are entitled under the Convention on the Rights of the Child. In recent years, many countries have been a part of international and regional political drives to ensure that all children have access to quality and continued education in the countries that lag behind the most. Such efforts have had some success, with tens of millions entering primary education, and more girls staying in school and pursuing secondary education, improving gender parity in more countries.<sup>10</sup> Thus, a constant unified solemn effort needs to be taken globally in order to provide education to all, which will help in turning the human rights dream into reality.



**The Erosion of the International Law and Human Rights in the last 20 Years**

killed, maimed or recruited to fight. Rape, forced marriage and abduction have become standard tactics in conflicts from Syria to Yemen, and from the Democratic Republic of the Congo to Nigeria, South Sudan and Myanmar.<sup>8</sup> The groups have killed, beaten, abducted, and threatened education professionals; intimidated students; terrorized parents into keeping children out of school; and damaged, destroyed, and looted schools.

The various reasons enumerated by experts for attacks on schools are, opposition to the school curriculum including language, subjects, values, or culture that the armed group rejects, educating women and girls, or if the school is being used for political

nutrition, improving children's very chances for survival. It empowers children to be full and active participants in society, able to exercise their rights and engage in civil and political life. It also acts as a powerful protection factor: children who are in school are less likely to come into conflict with the law and much less vulnerable to rampant forms of child exploitation, including child labour, trafficking, and recruitment into armed groups and forces.

In the new era of sustainable development, where all countries are expected to implement a universal development agenda, all governments need to be held accountable for ongoing human rights abuses affect-

<sup>1</sup><https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/research/2018/02/annual-report-201718/#:~:text=Amnesty%20International's%20report%2C%20The%20State,rights%20in%20the%20world%20today.>

<sup>2</sup><https://worldjusticeproject.org/our-work/research-and-data/wjp-rule-law-index-2019>

<sup>3</sup> Article 3, Universal Declaration of Human Rights

<sup>4</sup><https://nhrc.nic.in/press-release/human-rights-violations-root-cause-conflicts-terrorism-justice-anand#:~:text=The%20ever%20growing%20fundamentalism%20in,the%20very%20fabric%20of%20democracy.>

<sup>5</sup> Report by Human Rights Watch, The Education Deficit, Failures to protect and fulfil the right to Education through Development Agendas.

<sup>6</sup>[http://www.monitor.upeace.org/innerpg.cfm?id\\_article=927](http://www.monitor.upeace.org/innerpg.cfm?id_article=927)

<sup>7</sup><https://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2016/11/burning-kashmir-schools-161102102009566.html>

<sup>8</sup><https://www.unicef.org/press-releases/world-has-failed-protect-children-conflict-2018-unicef>

<sup>9</sup> Education under Attack, 2018 by Global Coalition to protect Education from Attack (GCPEA)

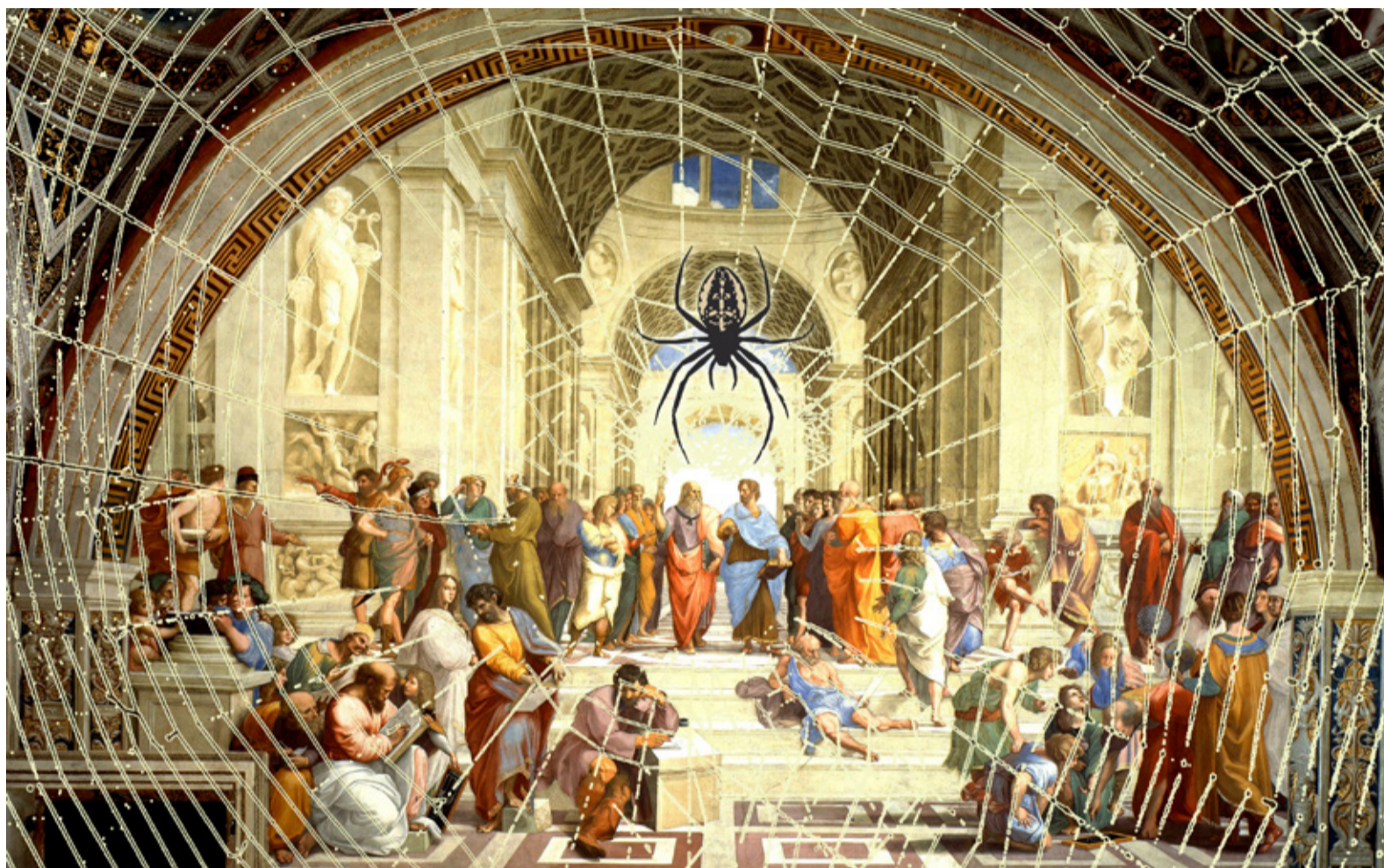
<sup>10</sup> Achieving Sustainable Development and Promoting Development Cooperation, Dialogues at ECOSOC

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was born, brought up and completed her school education in Jaipur, Rajasthan, the largest state in India, by area. Thereafter, she pursued a five year law course from ILS Law College, Pune, Maharashtra. During her law school, she was associated with various organisations which are dedicated to working at the grass root level in order to provide education to everyone. After graduating, she appeared for the Judicial Services Examination and was selected as a judge in the state of Rajasthan. She looks forward to be a part of the justice delivery system and ensuring better implementation of all laws.

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# Struggles for Job Security and Rights Continue at City University of New York Amid Triple Crisis



COVID 19, police brutality, and traumatic economic decline are the stage for a preparation for a fight back at the City University of New York (CUNY) to be led by its union of education workers - Professional Staff Congress (PSC-CUNY). The three-headed monster of crises have sharpened the contradictions facing attempts by the State of New York to continue imposition of its austerity regime on CUNY, a university for the working class of New York City, a COVID 19 epicenter. In the New York State budget for 2020, Governor Andrew Cuomo announces no new funding for CUNY and more cuts coupled with that unpleasant news.

Coupled already with economic decline that had long been visible yet only more aggravated by the pandemic, the risk of job loss and even full-time status is in jeopardy at CUNY.

Part of the budget-slashing normal that continues to threaten many academics with precarity is the norm of adjunctification, as CUNY has witnessed along with most institutions of higher education in the US and many more outside of the country. Only in the US there is already a double pandemic, the dreaded respiratory disease preceded for two centuries by a pandemic tragically characterized now by breath-stealing choke-

holds. Two pandemics that raise havoc on the lungs.

Adjunctification compounds this by replacing, over the last few decades, a majority full-time faculty with benefits and job protections with an enormous pool of "part time" and contingent faculty, with benefits that are not immediately accessible and without job protections. This is the higher education system's contribution to the rampant "gig economy" that is fueling US economic collapse. In CUNY, as a result, most courses are now taught by faculty in a state of perpetual precarity, who may teach as little as one course at an hourly wage. Even an adjunct teaching the maximum of courses makes much less than a full-time faculty, now a shrinking minority, would be paid with a similar courseload.

As for full-time faculty, the switch to online resulted in a disruption that was also very severe: uncertainty about how upcoming tenure and promotion processes were to be continued.

PSC represents many titles: full and part time educational workers, teaching and non-teaching. They are all facing struggles against budget decimation even under the most severe conditions. The union has responded in opposition to austerity through protests, lobbying, and agitating

for benefits and job security. Also, it called on New York State to "make billionaires pay" to fund CUNY.

These conditions may become more severe come the Fall semester. In addition to the ongoing adjunctification, the colleges in the CUNY system are planning collectively to lay off what may be thousands of contingent workers as well as possibly reduce course offerings by up to one-third. Given that the CUNY student body is in its majority comprised of oppressed nationalities, this is inextricably linked to current struggles against racism linked to both protests against drastic cuts in public universities' funding, against police misconduct, and the lack of resources to fight COVID.

For adjunct faculty who have taught enough courses to qualify for health insurance, no work means no health care. PSC is struggling to keep employed as many adjuncts as possible, especially where that could result in loss of insurance. In a pandemic, the fear of the loss itself is catastrophic. Furthermore, the Union is agitating for transparency in its budget so it can be informed for challenging proposed cuts as well as in how CUNY will implement the federal Coronavirus Aid, Relief, and Economic Security (CARES) Act which allocated funds to the university, which must in part

be used to keep workers employed.

A campaign throughout the Summer will focus on these and other issues that the union is currently negotiating with CUNY management. Socially distant caravans, online town halls, and educating members about matters such as how contingent academic workers can receive unemployment insurance are some key facets of this campaign.

The hashtags for PSC's social media campaign reflect the deep dissatisfaction with New York State's policy responses: #CutCOVIDNotCUNY, #SummerOfStruggle, #SaveLives-SaveJobsSaveCUNY and, very much showing the mood, #makebillionairespay.

The goals remain for PSC, among other demands, to fully fund CUNY, to save jobs, and have a plan for all workers to work safely. Constant agitation has been key to meeting demands so far and to force the CUNY administration to negotiate further with the union.

What will bring Cuomo and the CUNY administration to concede is PSC's campaign for its demands to protect both workers and jobs, students and classes, without cuts and layoffs? Truly, a fully-funded public university is necessary for the economic health of the communities they are mandated to serve.

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# Higher Education and Teaching Quality: Challenges and Perspectives In The Wake Of Covid-19

*The COVID-19 Pandemic brought about educational halt in Kenya disrupting nearly 17 million learners countrywide. The institutions of higher learning have been forced to switch to learning mediated through ed-tech which has remained out of reach for many disadvantaged children not only due to inaccessibility, but also due to connectivity challenges.*

*Key words: Human rights to education, COVID-19, human resource and disadvantaged learners.*

Basic education to all school going children is a global predominant right. This inalienable human right of education is articulated in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, article 26 (UN, 1948). (Jomtien Declaration (The World Conference on Education for All), advocates for basic education accessible to all (EFA). All children with or without disabilities need equal access and integral education (UNESCO, 1990). The Dakar Framework of Action requires member nations not only to ensure that EFA goals and targets are attained, but also sustained within individual countries (UNESCO, 2000). UNESCO, (2015) reiterated that guaranteeing education for all should ensure inclusive, equitable and quality education thereby committed nations towards a 2030 target of lifelong learning for all.

Education for all has been echoed in the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) of 2000 in order to reinforce the effort to ensure the Universal Declaration of Human Right to education. Goal 2 which proposes that by 2015, member nations should have guaranteed Universal Primary Education (UPE) to every child. Every child either from difficult circumstances or belonging to ethnic minorities should complete a full course of primary schooling without any form of judgment (UNESCO, 2000). Unfortunately, in the target year (2015). UPE was not achieved which lead to aspirations carried forward to Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). Goal

4 of the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). SDGs-Goal 4 recommit member nations to offer inclusive and equitable quality education as well as promote life-long learning opportunities to all children (UN, 2015).

African Charter on Human and Peoples Rights, article 17(1) pledges the right to education. Article 2 similarly demands the enjoyment of the right without favoritism. Further, article 18 (4), postulates that persons with disabilities should be accorded special education, protection measures in reference to their physical and moral needs (OAU, 1981). Additionally, article 3(a) of the African Charter on the Rights and Welfare of the Child contends that every individual child has an alienable right to education. Section 3(e) of the same charter further urge state parties to take special measures in respect to female, gifted and disadvantaged children by safeguarding equal access to education (OAU, 1990). All learners irrespective of their disability have the right to access basic education from any institution of their choice (GOK, 2009; GOK, 2013).

International Labour Organization ILO (2012) claims that improvements in the social and career prospects of teachers are the best means of overcoming any existing shortage of competent and experienced teachers. Sufficient quantity should be closely associated with maintaining, improving teacher quality by planning

pre-service and in-service teacher training and continuing Professional development (CPD) Further, a key to retaining well-qualified teachers is to offer clear career paths and genuine career development options. IAU (2020) coauthored the article "Universities must help shape the post-COVID-19 world" with Ira Harkavy (Netter Center for Community Partnerships, University of Pennsylvania), Sjur Bergan (Council of Europe) and Tony Gallagher (QUB, Belfast). The article argues that, a better post-COVID-19 world "requires democratic civic universities dedicated to producing knowledge and educating ethical, empathetic students for just and sustainable democratic societies". In the same article, SDG Education 2030 Steering Committee equally calls on all governments and partners to respect the policy recommendations in their response to COVID 19 and World Bank policy paper: "COVID-19 Crisis Response by supporting tertiary education for continuity, adaptation, and innovation".

According to Aseev (2020), most activities in Africa from social, political and economic stalled due to COVID-19 outbreak. This prompted the African Union CDC officials to state that the coronavirus epidemic is an "existential war for the continent". In the education sector, the situation may never be the same with over 1, 268,164,088 (72%) of learners out of their institutions in over 177 countries in April 2020. The institutional closures,

in conjunction with hash tags like, #lockdown, #social distancing and #stay at home requires new innovative approaches to be conceptualized. Some of the strategies and approaches which are being used in availing education to the learners have been through homeschooling, radio, the television, remote learning, online learning, virtual learning, blended learning and gasification.

Genvieve (2017), postulates that competent teachers should be produced in tandem with the needs of modern society. School teachers should be competent to initiate and pioneer technological development for instruction. Only teachers who are competent in instructional media technology can guide and equip learners with skills of modern technology. This is possible because instructional media technology is inherent of practical manipulations which are reminiscent of other engineering technological fields like Information and Communication Technology. Technology defines the man of the day (Kamau-Kang'ethe, 2020).

In Kenya, the quest for promoting the quality of preparing school teachers is articulated in sessional paper number 2 of 2002. It called for improvement of quality in Teacher education Programme. The paper expressed was of the opinion that without putting in place modernized Teacher education programme, Kenya may not be able to fully participate

## Clifford Otieno Owino and Rachel W. Kamau-Kang'ethe

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in modern international developments. The sessional paper number 2 of 2002 called urgent reformation to over-haul the existing Teacher education programme to prepare and produce competent teachers of 21st century for industrialization process (GoK, 2002). Unfortunately, the recommendations of this sessional paper were never implemented. FKE (2015) revealed that in 2012, the Commission for Higher Education realized the mismatch between the graduates and their competence at the job place and contends that all the Kenyan university lecturers should undergo pedagogical induction (GOK, 2012). FKE (2015) co-incite the findings of CUE that there has been an increased trend in skill mismatch among employees in the Labour market resulting to employers spending extra resources to induct the new employees each year.

According to the 2010/2011 National Manpower Survey Basic Report (NMSBR) as cited in FKE (2015), each year, our education and training institutions churn out tens of thousands of graduates who end up in careers for which they were not trained. This anomaly describes dire skills mismatch by Labour economists, leads to wastage and impedes Kenya's global competitiveness.

On 15 March 2020 University World News (2020) the Kenyan government closed schools, colleges and universities nationwide in response to COVID-19 invasion. The abrupt closure of schools disrupted nearly 17 million learners countrywide. Since schools closed in Kenya, the ministry of education and other agencies has indicated that learners should undertake online learning or technology-mediated learning on TV, radio, ed-tech apps, and mobile phones. While such learning may take place in urban areas, for many marginalized children in remote villages including—children in refugee camps as well as those living with various disabilities—learning during school closures is a deep challenge. In more clear terms, the social and economic costs cannot be compared and have devastating consequences. This is the case for learners in rural and marginalized communities like the Maasai, Samburu, Turkana, Pokot, Marakwet, and Sabaot, and in coastal regions. Refugee children in areas like Kakuma and Dadaab refugee camps; and children with disabilities are adversely affected (Parsitau and Jepkemei, 2020).

'May be to quote, I have been meditating about what we have learned from Katrina and how life will change—especially how schools will change. 'After Hurricane Katrina, the state of Louisiana took over almost all traditional public schools in New Orleans and eventually replaced them

with charter schools that have autonomy over their budget and resource allocation. The resulting governance structure creates autonomy, performance-based accountability, and competition at the school level' BUEGER and HARRIS, 2017).

The instructor's perspectives of remote learning is influenced with untold number of challenges including lack of well-defined infrastructure-systems, lack of adequate preparation for the sudden change, having both students and instructors at home at the same time, lack of internet con-



nectivity, students preparedness, cost of teaching and preparation for online teaching, online assessment and evaluation nightmare (Aseey, 2020).

### Conclusion

Learning mediated through ed-tech remains out of reach for many disadvantaged children like learners living with disability due to accessibility and connectivity challenges. In remote parts of Kenya like Kajiado, Narok, Samburu, Turkana, and Kilifi counties, electricity has not reach households, excluding children from online learning. Students on the other hand have developed negative attitude towards use of technology which must be change. Furthermore, they lack reasonable and relevant devices to facilitate the learning process but they do not have the required knowledge and skills to use them. Some are from nomadic communities who notably are in one place during scheduled classes, students with disabilities lose in the online process due to lack of proper model of accessibility to computers and internet connectivity in rural areas. To make matters worse, no preparation on migration from face to face to online learning since the change caught institutions unawares. Institutions further face multiple challenges due to the move from school to remote learning like cost, policies to implement it, structures and facilities, staff training, relevant and available resources, student's diversity and online examination issues.

### Recommendations

In adapting and adopting the new learning and teaching paradigms as the new normal brought by COVID-19, the traditional public schools in New Kenya and the world at large should

be replaced with charter schools that have autonomy. Education sector has to control the assets of home-based learning as instructors stay and work from home, rather than trying to recreate school of the past conception. All the institutions must expand their capacity and embrace the remote mode of learning by registering all their learners for the mode, which is capable of bringing private meaningful learning experiences that can connect to learners' home environment, interest and local identities and also use the available devices in the home environment. Since the instructor is not immediately present in front of

the class as learners in Kenya are used to, some necessary adjustments must be done by the education institutions and the learners (pupils/students) to ensure its effectiveness especially to vulnerable and children with disability.

The educational institutions have to weather the storm of the pandemic by coming up with a policy that will guide meeting the demands of enhanced teaching and learning by use of an array of devices and systems in changing the education system in the country for years to come with learners simply utilizing and appreciating the value of digital devices they have in their hands like mobile phone, smart phones, laptops, tablets among others.

For institutions, the whole process of learning and teaching should be drastically changed to incorporate new inventions and innovations which will aid and enhance in offering quality, relevant and competitive education. All the instructors must undergo compulsory refresher training in digital technology. This will go alongside in helping in achieving the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) for all including persons with special needs wherever and whenever they are during the new times.

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# Hold On to inclusion!

## Reflections on School Crisis Management Amidst Pandemic and Its Impact on Vulnerable Pupils.



Social inequality characterizes every society in the world: life conditions and the access to resources vary among the citizens of any country (Alvaredo et al. 2019). Access to quality education is considered a key condition to allow the youngest members of a society to climb up the social ladder (UNESCOa 2020). Decreasing the education equity gap is therefore a central challenge, a challenge which even in Germany, one of the richest countries of the world, has not been overcome yet (Baader & Freytag 2017). A massive quantity of empirical studies show how the German education system produces and reproduces social classes, freezing societal lines of exclusion (ibid.). Though since the introduction of the Inclusion paradigm a decade ago, efforts have been made to rethink the education system and its pedagogic tradition to make the school a place for all (BMBF 2016). In this article, I sketch the inclusive turn and argue that holding on to it would soften the negative impact of lockdown on youth.

The introduction of the principle of inclusion aims to give life to the principle of equality on which democracy grounds. In the federal guidelines for the realization of the inclusive school, it is put in evidence that its central aims must be: 1. leading every single pupil to the best possible academic achievement; 2. supporting their participation and relatedness; 3. avoiding any discrimination. (KMK & HRK 2015a, p. 1). School is recognized today as an institution which must do more than solely transferring propositional knowledge, school needs to be a safe space for children and adolescents growing

up. Daily interactions at school with peers and adults play a central role in their identity development (Verhoeven et al. 2019). In order to support a positive psychosocial development of all children and adolescents, the Standing Conference of the Ministers of Education and Cultural Affairs of the Länder (ACR: KMK) promotes the creation of multiprofessional teams (KMK & HRK 2015a, p. 3) – ideally composed of: teachers, educators, social workers and psychologists. Through the integration of their competences, perspectives and networks of external institutions and organizations, they are in the position of monitoring and influencing the environment in which vulnerable children and adolescents are embedded in, inside and outside the school. In the same key document, the KMK recommends a pedagogical transformation which the HRK (German Rector's Conference) aims to realize through adequate teacher training. Giving different instructions to learners with different needs (individualization) or doing it on the base of their learning preferences (differentiation) are recognized as central strategies to foster the development of the different pupils

on the base of their own peculiarity (KMK&HRK 2015b, p.9). Popular is the adoption of collaborative and cooperative learning schemes: all pupils participate actively and get motivated to engage for a common learning goal (Borsch 2018). This kind of learning processes are moderated and supervised by teachers who supposedly leave their role as instructor and take over the role of facilitator. If teachers succeed in considering not just the needs and preferences of the pupils but also their interests and manage to bring their knowledge and abilities to expression, they transform diversity into a resource for the whole class (Conti 2020). Settings in which pupils feel considered and taken seriously and in which they can have a meaningful impact on the common

learning process are empowering for all pupils, specifically for the vulnerable ones (Kumpulainen & Lipponen 2012). To support teachers in making inclusion a reality, intercultural competence (e.g. antiracism) and strategies of multilingualism are slowly introduced in teacher trainings (Hoch & Wildemann 2019). Higher risk of exclusion are pupils with migratory background (DESTATIS 2018a) and in particular, the ones without high proficiency in the German language (Dirim 2010).

In this context of slow innovation led by the principle of Inclusion, schools went on lockdown because of the pandemic COVID-19. Children and adolescents have therefore been prevented for several weeks so far to meet anyone but the people they live with. At the present moment, school has gone back to its old format, losing its social function: now it is just an institution to transmit knowledge, though there is no teaching, there are just digital commands such as 'learn it yourself'. While it is certain that COVID-19 for the youngest generation is generally harmless, and it is still uncertain that how much locking down schools has a real impact towards saving lives (Fretheim 2020), it is absolutely evident that school lockdowns are harming children and adolescents – above all, the vulnerable ones –, and reinforcing social inequality (Armitage & Nellums 2020).

Around 17,5% of the children in Germany live in poverty (DESTATIS 2018b), pandemic hit their families the most: no savings and no contact with their supportive network raise the stress level which increases the risk of higher alcohol and drug consumption and domestic violence (UNICEF 2020). Many children and adolescents cope with conditions in which it is not possible to concentrate, e.g. because of overcrowding (DESTATIS 2020) or hunger (Tophoven et al. 2017, p. 36). At the moment, the welfare system is not paying enough to

compensate the lunch the children would have if they were at school (Hacker 2020). 17% of children under 12 are during the lockdown of schools left home alone (Petersen 2020), a condition that demands an enormous amount of self-discipline and causes a higher exposure to other risks. Most of them are children of educationally disadvantaged parents who have most likely jobs which cannot be transferred into home-office.

Parents with low education level have tendentially less pedagogic resources to support home schooling (Geis & Schröder 2016), parents with low economic means have difficulties to make digital school a real possibility for their children. Digitalization is indeed not a reality of our entire society, the digital gap between lower-income and higher-income households (STATISTA 2019) reflects into the level of digitalization of the different schools, which in Germany make up a very segregated landscape. Just a small minority of schools have offered digital schooling, going beyond giving homework by e-mail, whatsapp or even mail (Olbrisch 2020).

Amidst pandemic, a crisis in which the social function of school becomes particularly important, schools have stopped executing it. There seems to be neither structures nor strategies to allow pupils from home to join an inclusive learning process or support mechanisms to protect the vulnerable ones. Just the personal motivation of some isolated teachers and social workers guarantee to some fortunate pupils a partly fulfillment of their rights which are otherwise blocked. By holding on the inclusive principle, the schools could have a great, positive impact on children and adolescents amidst pandemic. Their multiprofessional-team could strengthen the cooperation with pedagogists working e.g. in the local after-school care-club or youth centre and plan with them individual strategies of

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regular contact, deciding stable people who are responsible for each pupil. These people could choose the adequate channel (window talks, e-mail, et cetera) to reach their different pupils, they could facilitate the regular contact among pupils and encourage self-directed collaborative learning processes. In this way, they could support their psycho-social and cognitive development in this potentially traumatic phase of their life. More important than ever are inclusive strategies during as well as after the lockdown: when schools will re-open, all students will be at a very different start-positions. By applying the inclusive approach, they could manage to welcome every one of them in an adequate way, giving them the emotional and cognitive support needed. Though a rapid change of course is necessary, and time is running out. If we are serious about being a community engaged in saving all possible lives, we cannot ignore the one of our youngsters. Eventually, all lives should matter.

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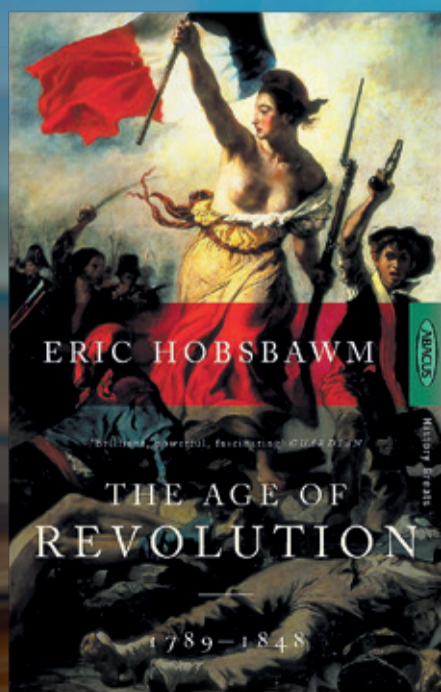
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### THE AGE OF REVOLUTION

E. J. Hobsbawm

Eric Hobsbawm traces with brilliant analytical clarity the transformation brought about in every sphere of European life by the Dual revolution - the 1789 French revolution and the Industrial Revolution that originated in Britain. This enthralling and original account highlights the significant sixty years when industrial capitalism established itself in Western Europe and when Europe established the domination over the rest of the world it was to hold for half a century.



### FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS

Ernest Hemingway

ISBN: 9780099289821

High in the pine forests of the Spanish Sierra, a guerrilla band prepares to blow up a vital bridge. Robert Jordan, a young American volunteer, has been sent to handle the dynamiting. There, in the mountains and the intense comradeship of war. And there he discovers Maria, a young woman who has escaped from Franco's rebels. FOR WHOM THE BELL TOLLS is Ernest Hemingway's finest novel, a passionate evocation of the pride and the tragedy of the Civil War that tore Spain apart.

## Project Extension of Human Rights to Education

The Project “**Extension of Human Rights to Education**” has been conceptualised as a council 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 original deadline for submitting the **Declaration** to the UN was **10th December 2018**, the **70th anniversary of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**. This date is considered by management to be the time to fully develop the project, which is expected to take several years.

Since the UN General Assembly of 1948 proclaimed the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights** in resolution 217(A), several international agreements, conventions and declarations have been adopted which seek to provide new ways of approaching the human right to education. On the basis of the concrete experience with these subsequent agreements, and in light of an expanded and deepened conception of education, Article 26 of the UDHR will be re-examined and reformulated by a council, participation in which is open to all the democratic forces of the world. This is the outstanding feature of the project “**Extension of Human Rights to Education**”.

The series of articles published in **PoliTeknik** under the theme “**Thoughts and Recommendations on Extending Education Rights in UN Declaration of Human Rights**” since September 2015, have highlighted the global need for the project.

This series drew participation from education unions, scientists and students from **Germany, Turkey, Switzerland, United States of America, Cuba, India, Australia, Greece, Chile, Brazil, Spain and Costa Rica**. The ideas and suggestions presented in the articles are diverse and wideranging. The contributors focus on the content, quality, funding, duration, implementation, target groups, and sponsors of education, engage theoretically with definitions of education, and are broadly critical of **Article 26 of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights**.

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.



### Project Extension of Human Rights to Education

#### Universal Declaration of Human Rights – Article 26

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.

<http://www.udhr.org/EN/UDHR/Pages/Languages.aspx?Lang=Eng>

Проект  
Расширение прав на образование

Projekt  
Erweiterung des Menschenrechts  
auf Bildung

Proje  
Eğitim Haklarının Genişletilmesi

مشروع  
توسعة ضمانات الحق في  
التعليم

Projeto  
Extensão do Direito Humano  
à Educação

Projecto  
Extensión del Derecho Humano  
a la Educación

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# From Pandemic to Dictatorship: Why Brazil still has to deal with “some” Bolsonaro today?



The Covid-19 pandemic was able to expose, even more, the necropolitical<sup>1</sup> tendencies of Brazil's current President of Republic. His government has neglected almost 30 thousand deaths due to the Coronavirus and has prescribed, with no medical endorsement, a certain drug, called hydrochloroquine. In the last sixty days, Brazilian people have watched two health ministers quit the job because they couldn't fulfill the impossible mission of combining government's actions, based on no scientific evidence, and actual policy to fight Covid-19 nationally. Currently, national ministry of health is headed by a military chief. Brazilian national government, through its ministries and fanatic followers, have ignored the sanitation needs of the country and have continued to implement an agenda based on hate and threatening democratic institutions, featuring a national political scenery marked by authoritarianism, hate speeches and the outrage against Republic itself.

In this moment, when the sanitation crisis meets the political and economic crisis, entire world asks: how a leader out of the democratic spectrum like Bolsonaro was capable of reaching the post of Brazil's President of Republic? Any answer to this question has to face some of the history of consolidation of Brazilian democracy.

Between the years of 1964 and 1985, Brazil was under the rule of a military dictatorship that secretly killed and tortured men, women, children, students, artists, journalists, intellectuals, among other professionals; censored painfully arts, the press and other liberties of expression, consolidating a *status quo* based on “peace” that was just silence. It is estimated that, at least 8,300 indigenous people were killed by the regime and there

are evidences of 434 others who were murdered due to state's crimes in the period.

We all know that Bolsonaro has, on several occasions, made a point of expressing his nostalgia for the period of the military dictatorship, having even honored publicly, in the National Congress, the torturer and murderer Carlos Alberto Brilhante Ustra<sup>2</sup> in 2016. Even though Bolsonaro introduces himself as a fighter “against ideologies” (which is an obtuse idea itself), historically, his figure represents the continuity of ideologies that gave support to Brazilian dictatorship, such as the use of means that violate Human Rights to control society; the persecution of divergent thoughts and beliefs; the totalitarianism, the conservatism, the xenophobic nationalism, among other hate based ideologies.

The point is that Brazil reaches 2020 as a country that has not settled its account with its dictatorship past, whereas other Latin American democracies have done more or less well, such as Argentina and Chile (TORELLY, 2016, p. 135-142), or even post-Nazi Germany. These Latin American nations have condemned torturers, killers, genocidal dictators and other state crime committers, according to the Global Rule of Individual Responsibility (TORELLY, 2013, p. 298). In post-Nazi Germany, in addition to the criminal actions against these political actors, there was also an exclusion of what the authoritarian regime represented, such as street names, squares and public places and the Nazi supporters were expelled from public office. While in Brazil, those who committed state crimes had the opportunity to remain on public posts even after the democratic opening of the country, like Brilhante Ustra did, the torturer who was honored by Brazil's current president. Ustra was a military attaché to José Sarney's government (1985-1990).

The 1979 Brazilian Amnesty Law enacted during the “lead years”, worked as a self-amnesty to the agents of authoritarianism. According to Torelly

(2016, p. 144), “the Brazilian Amnesty Law was considered incompatible with the duties assumed by Brazilian state when it ratified the American Convention of Human Rights” in 1992.

However, Brazilian Supreme Court, in the year of 2010, judged Brazilian Amnesty Law constitutional, disregarding the **International Law of Human Rights** (TORELLY, 2016, p. 145). Nowadays, the same Supreme Court that endorsed the legal source of ‘un’punishment called Amnesty Law is facing institutional threats arising from a government taken by totalitarian ideologies and actors, and it's judges are being personally threatened (them and their families) with physical violence and death by fanatic Bolsonaro followers.

History repeats as fraud in our country. We can't fail to mention that, beyond representing the permanence of Brazilian totalitarianism, Bolsonaro had used fake news at a large scale to win elections back in 2018 and his election is less an expression of Brazilian democracy than the kidnapping of Brazilian people's suffrages, that were taken away by unfair and illegal means, and it has been tolerated so far by the authorities that should do something about it.

Until Brazil faces the task of “washing the dirty clothes” of military dictatorship, holding those who committed torture accountable (according to current Brazilian law, the crime of torture is imprescriptible) and other human rights violations, among other actions that guarantee the Human Right to Memory and Truth, Brazilian people will be vulnerable to abuse of authority, police violence, hate speeches carried out by these heirs of authoritarianism, a group which the president is part of. Brazilian dictatorship delayed the country's economic growth, increased the income concentration and generalized poverty, preventing the basic reforms that previous democratic tradition in Brazil was longing to implement. Today, Bolsonaro's necropolitics follows the same steps and we watch social regressions in the range

of 40 years, with increasing hunger, misery, unemployment, countryside violence and large deforestation.

Brazil is a Latin American country with continental dimensions and it congregates historical diasporas of diverse people. So, the nation must defend the uplifting of its democracy and the reduction of social inequalities. The reversal of progress in Brazil means the reversal of progress of the world and it cannot be allowed.

We hope that the shadow of authoritarianism will be, by constitutional means, banished from power in our country and we can start a new tomorrow with historical changes that will ensure the guarantee of Human Rights in Brazil and worldwide.

<sup>1</sup> Necropolitics is a concept elaborated by philosopher Achille Mbembe (MBEMBE, 2016) to define the power that states and constituted powers have to decide “who shall live and who shall die”

<sup>2</sup> Brilhante Ustra was a colonel from National Army, responsible for the organ of political repression known as Doi-Codi in the State of São Paulo. He was the first torturer of Brazilian dictatorship period to be recognized responsible (2008) by torture. His condemnation, however, was only in the civil jurisdiction, not being condemned in the criminal jurisdiction until his death in 2015.

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# The challenges of digital learning in school during COVID 19 led lockdown in India



Lucknow

India declared nationwide lockdown on March 24, 2020 and at the time of writing is still continuing in three phases till 31st May 2020, to contain the spread of the virus. As per the latest reports the Covid-19<sup>1</sup> has infected globally 5.8 Million people as confirmed infected cases and also claimed the lives of over .352 million people as on 27th May 2020. India too is facing the challenge of Covid-19 drastically. By latest reports the confirmed infected cases in India has reached to 158 K out of which 67692 cases have recovered and 4531 cases died due to Covid 19 till 28th May 2020<sup>2</sup>.

It is assumed that India is not likely to lift its nationwide Covid-19 lockdown on even on 31st May 2020; rather the restriction could be extended further, according to a new study by American consulting firm Boston Consulting Group (BCG). As per the BCG report India will start lifting COVID-19 lockdown only between the fourth week of June and the second week of September.

The delay in lifting the restrictions was attributed to challenges faced by India in terms of health system preparedness and record of public policy effectiveness. The report also suggested that India might witness a peak in the number of coronavirus cases by the third week of June.

Although India is helping more than 90 countries by medical supplies and other help and has been honoured the top rank in containing the Covid 19 menace by an American company yet everything is not out of doubt to cope up the challenge of school education for marginalized children of India<sup>3</sup>.

## The challenges of digital learning for children of marginalized sector during lockdown

Like many countries in the world started lockdown due to Covid-19,

India also has closed all educational institutions, to contain the spread Covid-19 virus as a consequence of which, learners ranging from school going children to postgraduate students, are being adversely affected. The uncertainties surrounding the lockdown situation are likely to affect more than 320 million children in India. *(UNESCO estimates that about 320 Million students are affected in India, including those in schools and colleges.)*

Govt of India, Ministry of Home Affairs issued a notification on April 15, 2020, with guidelines to be followed during the lockdown period. As a result India started moving towards developing an online mode of education – a stop-gap arrangement. National online education platform SWAYAM and other digital initiatives have been introduced. The education portals of NCERT like Diksha, e-pathshala, NROER and NIOS and other ICT initiatives like online education, Videos like SWAYAM Prabha, DTH TV channels are introduced for online teaching purposes. And this initiative is not out of challenges for marginalized children of India.

India is also considered to be the biggest market for Massive Open Online Course (MOOCs) in the world after the USA. Since the population of India is huge, massive open online course (MOOC) is said to open gateways for lot of private companies to invest in digital education under MOOC in the name of distant education for Indian children. And this is likely to deprive the children from conventional school education programme and Right to Education.

## (1) Digital learning a distant dream, for marginalized children in India.

As per the Economic Survey of 2019, 93 percent of the total workforce of the country is from the employed in the unorganized sector. However, government think tank NITI Aayog, (replacement of earlier Planning Commission) in a report released in 2018 said that 85 percent of the total workforce was a part of the unorganized sector. The Periodic Labour Force Survey 2017-18 showed that 71 percent of the regular / salaried employees in the informal sector (non-agriculture) do not have

a written job contract. 49.6 percent of them do not even apply for social security schemes and 54.2 percent do not get paid leave.

A halted business with no guarantee of a quick revival after the lockdown stares many in the face. Wedding planners, florists, tailors, washer men, fishermen, coal loaders, security guards, folk artistes, salon owners, among other small business owners and artisans, and those in seasonal employment are bracing themselves for the impact of the pause in their livelihoods.

The 75th report of the National Sample Survey Office (NSSO) for 2017-18 highlights some of the major issues that this new model would have to address. All India percentage of households having internet facilities stands at 23.8% with rural availability at 14.9% and urban at 42%.

In most of these unorganized sector workers the children are accompanied with their parents for some seasonal employment for more than six months. While the parents work in the unorganized units their children take care of new born siblings or do some supporting work.

In case where such children are enrolled in local private schools become drop out, once their parents go back to their native place. There no facility for such children to suit their schooling requirements as they are migrants. Thus a massive number of such children remain out of schools and are deprived of Right to Education. So the option of digital learning becomes a distant dream for them.

## (2) Access of power supply and Internet connection:

The NSSO survey, quoted highlighted that 26.1% of the population above 15 years of age are 'not literate', more-over 18.9% have attended formal education up till primary school, 16.2% each have attended middle (Class V) and secondary (until Class VIII). This constitutes a whopping 77.4% of total India's population – who may not have the adequate level of education needed to teach children in the house. The situation at the rural level is even direr, with 69.6 % of the population being in the spectrum of 'not-literate' to 'middle school'.

The Parliamentary Standing Committee of the Ministry of Electronics and Information Technology in its 2019 report suggested that the much-acclaimed digital literacy drive had touched only 1.67 per cent of the population even though at least three major flagship programmes were being run together.

Simply having smart phone or laptop doesn't mean that children have access to internet. The percentage of people who were able to use the internet (all-India) stood at 20.1% with rural at 13% and urban at 37.1%. Additionally, only 10.8% of people in India had used the internet in the last 30 days. It is important to note that these statistics vary vastly among different states across the country.

## (3) Lack of digital infrastructure in schools:

The digital divide is evident across class, gender, region or place of residence. Among the poorest 20% households, only 2.7% have access to a computer and 8.9% to internet facilities. In case of the top 20% households, the proportions are 27.6% and 50.5%. Despite initiatives from the Central and state governments, there has not been enough expenditure on improving the digital infrastructure for remote learning. In fact, in 2020-'21, the Ministry of Human Resource Development budget for digital e-learning was reduced to Rs 4690 Million from Rs 6040 Million in 2019-'20<sup>4</sup>.

## (4) Preparedness of teachers:

The teachers training and orientation in most of the public schools is for conventional teaching. The schools have hardly sufficient infrastructure to extent the digital teaching and learning by teachers. All of sudden the instructions were executed among teaches to follow the digital classes. The teachers without proper training and orientation find it difficult to teach in digital mode.

The much awaited the government's Saubhagya scheme to provide electricity to every households shows that almost 99.9% of homes India have a power connection, the picture is less luminous if we look at the quality of electricity and the number of hours for which it is available every day.

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Mission Antyodaya, a nationwide survey of villages conducted by the Ministry of Rural Development in 2017-'18, showed that 16% of India's households received one to eight hours of electricity daily, 33% received 9-12 hours, and only 47% received more than 12 hours a day.

While a computer would be preferable for online classes, a smart phone could also serve the purpose. However, the phone might be convenient for apps, but not for carrying out lengthy assignments or research. While 24% Indians own a smart phone, only 11% of households possess any type of computer, which could include desktop computers, laptops, notebooks, netbooks, palmtops or tablets.

Even the penetration of digital technologies in India has been haphazard and exclusionary. In fact, only 8% of all households with members aged between five and 24 have both a computer and an internet connection. It is also useful to note that as per the National Sample Survey definition, a household with a device or internet facility does not necessarily imply that the connection and devices are owned by the household.

**(5) Digital learning mars the very basic purpose of social values**

The National Education Policy talks; (4.23.) *students must have a large amount of flexibility in choosing their individual curricula, certain subjects and skills should be learned by all students to become good, successful, innovative, adaptable, and productive human beings in today's rapidly-changing world. .... skills include.... physical education, wellness, fitness and sports; collaboration and teamwork; problem solving and logical reasoning; vocational exposure and skills; digital literacy, coding and computational thinking; ethical and moral reasoning; including knowledge and practice of human and Constitutional values gender sensitization; etc.*

*It also talks to avoid rote learning of students.*

These objectives are mostly activity based and peer group learning with socialization and interaction with other children from different class and social background. The digital learning in present context is nothing but rote learning.

Simply initiating the digital education from class room education would mar the social value based learning of collective togetherness among students. One-to-one interactions among peers and teachers are very important for learning. On a digital platform, how students learn and communicate with others is largely dependent on the readiness of both teachers and

students to accept digital learning. In the case of distance education, the onus of learning is more on students, which requires discipline.

**(6) 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

*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 (Grade 5 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."*

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.

**(7) 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 literacy 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 Stefania Giannini<sup>5</sup>, UNESCO's Assistant Director-General for Education, told PTI in an interview 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"<sup>6</sup>:

## What is the way out?

1. It is a pity the unorganized migrant workers and their children (mostly out of schools) are neither enumerated in their home state nor in the working state. Hence, no one knows as to how many children of migrant nature are out of school that need education. The policy makers should immediately and strictly adhere to the provision of identification of such children with age wise, sex wise and disability wise data for the enrollment of such children in schools.

2. Management of a local database on children possibly maintained at the Panchayat level and cross-verified with the school would help greatly in tracking children's school participation.

3. Related to the above, birth registration records need to be strictly maintained. Registering births must be made mandatory and Panchayat officials charged with updating their records.

4. Education as a Human Rights and the right to education should remain at the centre of all COVID19 crisis response and recovery plans.

5. The UN System should promote gender and rights sensitive crisis and post-crisis evaluation plans looking closely at the role that education plays during and after emergencies.

6. The UN System should play its role in organizing a global response to the COVID19 crisis, including supporting mitigation measures, financing, social and economic re-organization, in partnership with governments and civil society.

7. My Education My Right- Even in times of crisis, education must remain free for all and no additional fees should be introduced for school materials, lunch, or transport.

**8. No Going Backwards** Governments should plan now for the safe reopening of schools and university systems with a focus on groups at higher risks of not returning, including girls and children with disabilities.

9. During the COVID19 crisis, governments should guarantee the continued provision of school services, including meal distribution, and ensure protection from violence and abuse to out-of-school children.

<sup>1</sup>covid19india.org 28 May2020

<sup>2</sup>medicalnewstoday.com, 27 May 2020

<sup>3</sup><https://www.businesstoday.in/current/economy-politics/when-india-lift-coronavirus-lockdown-bcg-report-restriction-extended-sept/story/400111.html>

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# COVID19 will open a new global era in human life, society, and education



We are certainly in unprecedented times since one tiny organism suddenly transformed our world and lives as we knew it. Despite our wishes to go back to normalcy and how things were before, one thing is for sure. The new era will not look like the past, even after the epidemic is under control. Based on the new ways of thinking and seeing life akin to a post-war experience, here are some of my predictive analysis on how we will do education and social interactions post-COVID19 era and how this may also be the time to envision possibilities.

**The era of compassion and humanity:** The epidemic and the enormous impact it will have on global health may move people to mobilize to support one another, and it may increase global awareness for fighting with inequalities, human rights violations, corporate greed, and expanding social supports for individuals, families, and communities. Global movements for social justice may allow communities to be united to transform the functions of government and regulatory bodies to have human dignity and well-being at the center and put less emphasis on money, power and capital as fundamental motives for systems.

**The era of sustainability:** Faced with changing life priorities and financial difficulties, we will likely move away from taking pleasure in owning, spending, and indulging and begin to embrace a sense of conservation, valuing the limited resources, saving and Do-It-Yourself habits. With this, we may see a mainstream movement towards second-hand purchases, and trading networks where items get exchanged for another item to save the resources and the environment. Disposable items such as napkins, covers, diapers may be replaced with reusable products. Different fabrics that last longer and more durable might be adopted with help of nanotech-

nology and organic textiles such as silk, bamboo, cotton and wool might be preferred more as a way to reduce spending on clothing, foster minimalism, and provide comfort and ease.

**The era of environmental sensibility:** Climate change and other environmental issues may attract global attention, as the natural resources such as water, minerals, forests, animals, plants, and organic farm lands will become even more precious. Alternative energy sources may become more popular as a way to reduce cost and help preserve resources. We might see zoning regulations loosen up to allow small animals such as chickens and rabbits in backyards, as well as urban community gardens to support families.

**The era of social technology:** Technology may be increasingly be used as a way to connect socially and emotionally. Virtual reality, simulations, and other 3D experiences will likely be used by wider public and engage more senses such as smell and touch to connect people. Networking apps like Nextdoor, Slack, Shapr, Facebook may evolve to have more in-person-like virtual platforms and opportunities. Supporting social and emotional connections might be a selling point and a target for any technology.

**The era of smaller in-person gatherings:** Larger gatherings and social groups will likely decrease in numbers due to some persisting concerns such as health and safety and different approaches to networking might be adopted. Local and smaller long-lasting friendship circles will likely become more popular as a way to support personal, spiritual, and social growth. The larger gatherings such as conventions might rather be more prominent in virtual environments.

**The era of digital and hybrid modes of learning in higher education:** As it

was common in higher education for non-traditional students, a variety of combinations for learning including a few day long meetings followed by online classes and peer or small group meetings may increase, instead of all-online versus all in-person forms of higher education. The scrutiny on all online institutions may continue, as the regulations for quality will become even more important, especially for for-profit institutions of higher education. Quality standards and rating for online learning will be an important focus, through which consumers will make their choices for learning. With that, free or highly low cost options for higher education may increase, with businesses and government supporting higher subsidies.

**How may the new area transform how children grow and learn?**

**The desegregation of young children, youth and adults:** The contemporary culture of nuclear family mandated children to be placed with the same age group, which was a break from the traditional society where cultural practices are learned in communities and adult activities are shared with children. In the new era of more fluid and dynamic school, home and work practices, the idea of segregating children from adults may be challenged; stronger social and financial supports for new parents, such as paid leave, child incentives, and child care subsidy may be available to bring up infants, toddlers, with family-based child-rearing practices including the contribution of each individual at home including other children, youth and adults.

**The era of kinship and family child care:** Child care centers may become more standardized and regulated even at infant and toddler level. With lessons learned on supporting health families, universal government subsidized care may become the popular approach to support each child from

birth to age 5, which may allow some child care centers to serve a large number of children to be cared for in urban areas. However, many other child care centers may also need to shift towards a loose federation of smaller care centers in a local area. In that case, the world around young children may mimic the local and smaller social circles the adults are participating with several smaller groups of child care providers in the same area. The regulations and quality for home-based child care as well as center based care will be supported, encouraged, and increased by government funds, and quality rating and improvement systems will become more widespread to oversee the standard quality measures.

**The era of flexible schedules and project based learning at 6-12:** Families may push for a longer school day for younger children that includes holistic child development, where play and physical activity are integrated as essential parts of the day, while for older children, flexible schedules, self-initiated learning such as project-based learning, and use of more technology might be preferred modes. Middle and high school students may have more opportunities to pursue specialized interests within any field as young apprentices doing actual field work and internships alongside adults, while completing their secondary education.

Whatever the future holds for us, human and family centered systems, and fluid and dynamic regulations might be on the horizon to deal with challenges and utilize new opportunities. Think some of the ways you already think differently in 2020 compared to 2019. It is a new era.

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