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Exploring equity gaps in education: Toward unity, not uniformity

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Research and practice in education and development has, in recent decades, been consumed with equity gaps. From World Bank reports about "Closing the gap" (De Ferranti et al, 2003) to calls from UNICEF (2010) about "Narrowing the gaps," to national explorations of achievement gaps (Bohrnstedt, Kitmitto, Ogut, Sherman, & Chan, 2015), it seems organizational bodies, institutions, and individuals are consumed by reducing gaps in education. But what are gaps? Gaps necessarily signify a divide, a rift or a space between entities; conceptualization of the gap itself influences both the ends and the means of research and action, in terms of how it might be bridged, filled, or simply recognized in education research, policy, and practice. And who defines the gaps? Who is involved in the production and reproduction of the gaps? Who is most affected by the gaps? These and other questions serve as meaningful prompts, albeit at times in competition, for broader debates about the purposes and assumptions of schooling and learning around the world.

Adding further complexity, "reducing gaps" may not always yield positive outcomes. Eisner (2003) questions the implicit assumption that "the aim of schooling is to get all students to the same place at about the same time" (p. 650). He posits that this increased standardization denies the broad spectrum of talents and skills that students possess, but may not be valued by school norms and encourages massification of results. While all students may reach the desired benchmark(s), thus seemingly reducing the gap, does this genuinely promote the true capabilities of all students? Moreover, renewed attention to deficit thinking in schools and educational research reminds us to consider deeply the ingrained cultural funds of knowledge so often ignored in efforts to reduce gaps (Gonzalez, Moll, & Amanti, 2005; Snyder & Nieuwenhuysen, 2010; Thaman, 2012). Indeed, the conceptualization of a "gap" is most often itself deployed in a deficit sense: to be bridged, to be closed, or to be minded. However, some gaps may be seen as desirable, even necessary, spaces from which we can step back from, and take stock of, familiar as well as new or "strange" approaches and tensions.

As globalized forms of education continue to deepen and extend, the 2016 Oceania Comparative and International Education Society (OCIES) conference provided a unique opportunity to consider, from various vantage points, the wealth of gaps in achievement, funding, quality, policy, teaching, systems, and beyond. Educators and scholars in Oceania, and the OCIES society, have long explored these relationships and spaces and continue to navigate common and diverse perspectives and practices (Sanga, 2012; Thaman 1993, 2012; Welch 2016). The 2016 OCIES conference built upon these foundations and extended the exploration of gaps, what they do or do not signify, how or if they should be solved, the consequences of creating, maintaining, or reducing gaps, etc.

This special issue of the *International Education Journal: Comparative Perspectives* includes several papers from the 2016 conference submitted to the journal. Each paper explores one or more gaps pertaining to the field of education. Broadly advancing research and practice toward the twin goals of equity and unity, the papers interact with gaps in achievement, gaps in research, gaps in educational provision, gaps in theory, gaps in methodology, and more. Combined, the special issue also aims to reduce the gap between more senior researchers and their junior colleagues. The issue's first paper is from a senior scholar—one of the keynote speakers—and the remainder of the issue is comprised of papers from more junior scholars, including many early career researchers. This range represents ongoing work, begun in recent years, by members of OCIES, toward broader inclusivity and diversity. These characteristics constitute a recurring theme in all of the articles that comprise this special issue.

The first paper, based on a keynote address from the 2016 OCIES conference by Professor Frances Vavrus, critically questions the discourse of gaps themselves. She argues that the language used to describe educational gaps limits our imaginations of both the causes and solutions for reducing the gaps we deem problematic. Vavrus builds on work by Ladson-Billings (2006), who posits that the conceptualization of "education debt" more appropriately acknowledges the histories of exclusion and oppression—and the concomitant need for educational repatriation—than the metaphor of education gaps. She then draws on longitudinal research from Tanzania to examine the multi-scalar debts that accrue across international, national, and individual levels, and to explore the ways in which we, as a community invested in comparative and international education, may "declare our object and offense to them, and work with organizations addressing the historical, political, spatial, and semiotic relations that produced and maintained them." The article concludes with a powerful call for us as educators, practitioners, and researchers to pursue equity and unity in Oceania and beyond.

Mousumi Mukherjee's paper examines theoretical perspectives of the concept of inclusive education. More specifically, the paper makes a case for particularly engaging with Rabindranath Tagore's "Southern Theory" of Inclusive Education for contextual meaning-making. Mukherjee does so in order to "draw on indigenous historic and cultural traditions to identify a commitment towards inclusivity, as a way of broadening meaning-making of inclusive education within the Indian context", noting that "Tagore was on principle opposed to any kind of segregation based on nationality, class, caste, race, religion, ethnicity, gender and other markers of social difference." Mukherjee exhorts us to engage with this "opportunity for deeper understanding of pedagogic issues related to inclusive education," and, ultimately, to "generate possible solutions to educational problems within the context, rather than just ideological critique of the concept of inclusive education as hegemonic Western imposition."

Brent Edwards Jr and Inga Storen offer in their paper an original examination of the work of the World Bank in education policy reform in Indonesia over two decades. The authors adopt a perspective of "critical international political economy" to balance "a focus on material and ideational factors" in their incisive and succinct analysis of key areas of the World Bank's influential work in Indonesia. In their analysis of four key phases of World Bank education work—the community governance program; sector-scale-up; government reaction/increased funding; and non-financial influence—Edwards and Storen take us beyond consideration of the realm of material influence. The work takes up core issues of injustice, as manifest in exacerbated inequity and inequitable

distributions of power between influential actors in education and development with resonance well beyond the Indonesian context of their article.

Finally, the paper by Ritesh Shah, Alexandra McCormick, and Matthew Thomas takes a reflective turn, and reports on analysis that explored the pedagogies and structures of comparative and international education in two universities of the greater Oceanic region. The authors locate their trio-ethnographic pilot study of CIE teaching within the context of recent changes to the OCIES society, and within the greater Australia, New Zealand and Pacific islands in the Oceanic region. In this article, they consider some implications for their own teaching in CIE and, potentially, for moving toward reconciling regional understandings of CIE pedagogy. The authors offer comparative evidence from their curricula, pedagogy, and students, and posit their aims, hopes, and possibilities for extended future work that may contribute to existing decolonizing movements in the Pacific and, ideally, beyond.

Together these papers serve as a critical call to question the nature of gaps themselves, and to continue to work in spaces that could serve to bridge divides that are both perceived and real. Diverse in scope, analysis, and geography, the papers are united collectively by their concern for equity and their exploration of salient questions about how gaps are framed, addressed, measured, produced, and reproduced. This special issue seeks to make a modest contribution to recent research on equity gaps in education towards the creation of powerful, transformative, and tailored learning experiences for all.

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From gap to debt: Rethinking equity metaphors in education

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This article draws upon my keynote address delivered at the 44th Oceania and Comparative and International Education Society (OCIES) Conference held at the University of Sydney. It examines how metaphors and other forms of symbolic language used to describe educational dilemmas shape the responses that are imaginable in addressing them. In particular, it argues for a shift from the metaphor of equity gaps to one of education debt so as to recognize more fully the political, temporal, and spatial dimensions of inequity and inequality. The article uses examples from the US and Tanzania but suggests that the metaphor of debt has relevance for countries across Oceania and in other world regions.

Keywords: Achievement gaps; debt; equity; ideology; metaphor; race; Tanzania; United States

INTRODUCTION

The 44th OCIES (previously ANZCIES) Conference brings together students and scholars united by our mutual enmeshment in Oceania and by our common concern with equity gaps—the conference theme—across the Pacific and beyond. The subtheme of the conference, "toward unity, not uniformity," speaks to our interdependence and to our differences in relation to the historical forces that produce inequities in the first place.

In this article,[1] I expand upon these themes by critically examining the language we use to describe social inequities because these concepts and metaphors make intelligible our experiences, interpretations, and practices as educational researchers and activists (Popkewitz, 2013). I begin by considering the terms *equity* and *gaps* as governing signifiers in contemporary social life and then discuss an alternative metaphor—the *education debt*—proposed by US education scholar Gloria Ladson-Billings (2006). I will explore this metaphor and the ideologies to which it is associated, as well as how it could be applied at different scales—the international, national, and individual—with the US and Tanzania as illustrations. Bringing these different elements together, I seek to make a two-fold argument: first, the metaphors and other forms of symbolic language we use to describe educational dilemmas shape the responses that are imaginable in addressing them; second, studies of equity and gaps need to attend to political, temporal, and spatial dimensions of analysis. Taken together, I am arguing for analyses of equity and, crucially,

[1] The title of this article, and its inspiration, comes from the 2006 American Educational Research Association (AERA) Presidential Address delivered by Dr. Gloria Ladson-Billings, whose address was entitled *From the achievement gap to the education debt: Understanding achievement in U.S. schools* (Ladson-Billings, 2006).

inequity, which attend to their semiotic, political, historical, and spatial dimensions. My goal is to present a way of thinking about educational equity that might be useful across Oceania and in other world regions because there is considerable unity in our concerns about equity gaps and in how they might be addressed.

EQUITY AND GAPS

The terms *equality* and *equity* are often used interchangeably, even though they are not synonymous. When they are distinguished, equality is typically taken to be the state of being equal, as in equal pay for equal work or equal resources for every child in a school. Equity, by contrast, usually focuses on fairness and inclusion rather than sameness or uniformity (OECD, 2012). However, education scholars who study equity offer a more complex definition (Espinoza, 2007; Smith & Gorard, 2006). For instance, Unterhalter (2009) identifies three different meanings ascribed to the term: *equity from above*, *equity from below*, and *equity from the middle*. The first meaning has to do with rules, laws, and obligations aimed at establishing fairness and enforced by legislative or judicial bodies; the second sense of equity emphasizes "considerate and fair relationships" that foster agency among marginalized individuals and groups (p. 417); and the third usage, which Unterhalter links to capital markets, can be applied to education to mean "the movement of ideas, time, money, skill, organization or artefacts that facilitates 'investments' in . . . learning" (p. 421).

In Figure 1, the obligation of equality means every child receives a box with the same dimensions to help them see over the fence and watch the sporting event on the other side. Yet the image illustrates why equal treatment is problematic: Due to differences in ability status and developmental differences, the child in the wheelchair is completely excluded as a spectator, and the girl's ability to view the game is compromised because the standard-sized box is not sufficient for her needs. In other words, these three children need different kinds of "investments" to enable all of them to watch the game; there is a disparity in the children's access when rules obligate the provision of the same support—the standard-issue box—because it is not adequate for all of them.

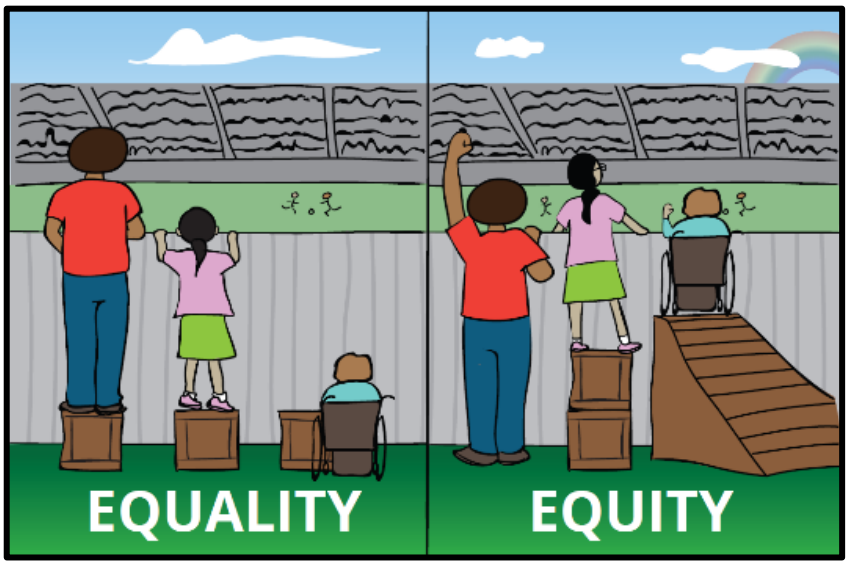

Figure 1: Equality versus equity

Therefore, a focus on fairness would not lead to equal treatment but rather to differential allocation of resources. If one starts with the assertion that every child should be able to watch a sporting event, or participate in the classroom, then it will necessitate different types of support and to different degrees to ensure this occurs. For children to have equality of access, there must be equity in the process of supporting them to gain it.

This image also helps us to think about the different sources of inequity in society and in our schools, and it is a very long list indeed. Disability, gender, race, ethnicity, religious affiliation, socioeconomic background, linguistic ability, parental education, gender identity, and school programs and policies themselves are but some of the many sources of disparity that can lead to differences in how students experience schooling and perform in the classroom. A recent OECD report (2012) on equity and quality in education states: "Equity in education means that personal or social circumstances such as gender, ethnic origin or family background, are not obstacles to achieving educational potential (fairness) and that that all individuals reach at least a basic minimum level of skills (inclusion)" (p. 9). The report goes on to note: "Increasingly, it is no longer seen as adequate to provide equal access to the same 'one size fits all' educational opportunity. More and more, the focus is shifting towards providing education that promotes equity by recognising and meeting different educational needs" (p. 17).

While this stance by the OECD is important, it does not fully acknowledge the historical conditions that have led certain "personal or social circumstances" to become obstacles in the first place (Esmail, Pitre, & Aragon, 2017). The same is true of the image of the boxes, which could be read as individual problems that need to be compensated, locating the problem in the children rather than in historically-situated social relationships. How, for example, did gender become a barrier to women's access to higher education in Tanzania? Why would having a physical disability obstruct advancement through schooling in the US? In other words, why do certain circumstances and identities endure as obstacles to educational opportunity in a way that is profoundly unfair?

If the term *equity* captures the notions of fairness and inclusion, then the word *gap* describes the gulf itself between those for whom the educational system seems fair and inclusive, and those who are marginalized by or excluded from it. Few of us want to hear that there is a gap in our knowledge, a gap on our resume, or, more tangibly, a gap in our sweater or in the seat of our pants. In short, the term *gap* directs our attention to a deficit or abnormality—a lack of awareness of important literature or a consistently low pattern of performance on educational assessments.

There are different ways we might think about our response to *the gap* as one of the most important, if not *the* defining metaphor in educational discourses around the world today. Playing with the phrase "mind the gap," we can discern at least three semantic forms owing to different definitions of the verb *to mind*:

1) To object or to take offense, as in "Mind if I smoke?"
2) To pay attention to a crack or opening, as the cautious voice on the subway reminds us as we step across the breach from the subway platform onto the train.
3) To keep a careful eye on someone or something, as in "Will you mind the children while I run to the store?"

Taking each of these expressions in turn, we might consider, in the first example, a response to the question, "Do you mind if I perpetuate equity gaps in my classroom?" Most educators would respond with a resounding "yes"—"*yes, I do mind* that no

additional support is provided for students with disabilities or minority language students so that they have the means to succeed." Yet this is the question that goes unspoken by many government leaders who nonetheless allocate tax dollars to support policies that chronically underfund schools and social programs in communities with the highest percentages of minoritized students.

In the U.S., for example, many states and districts rely on property taxes to fund public schooling, and this means that districts where wealthy families reside receive more money for education than districts with poor families. Illinois, for instance, has the most unequal school funding system in the country with districts serving the highest numbers of low-income students receiving almost 20% *less* in state and district funds than wealthier districts (Kadner, 2015). The neoliberal response to such a situation might be *choice*: If parents want their children to attend better schools, they should move to those districts.

What this response ignores, besides the obvious problem that low-wage workers rarely have money saved for a hefty mortgage, is the history of redlining in cities like Chicago, Illinois. Coined by activists in the 1960s in Chicago, the term refers to the practice of employees of home loan associations literally drawing red lines around "questionable areas"—namely, those with large concentrations of African Americans in this case—and refusing to make loans within these areas (Hillier, 2003, p. 139). The term has expanded in its usage to include any systematic discrimination by banks or real estate agents intended to keep certain neighbourhoods homogeneous on the basis of race, ethnicity, or sexual orientation, a practice that is illegal but continues to the present (Badger, 2015).

In the second example of a gap as a fissure, we can imagine parents taking their children to kindergarten on the first day of school and hearing from the loudspeakers in the hallway, "Mind the gap." The parents might look down to see whether there is a crack in the cement flooring they had missed when entering the building. Instead, this is a gap that few American parents will see in kindergarten but will become strikingly hard to miss once national testing begins in 4th grade.

In the most recent analysis of the US National Assessment of Educational Progress (NAEP), often referred to as the "nation's report card," the reading data for 4th graders already reveal striking gaps between Asian/Pacific Islanders and white students, whose average scores range from 232 to 239, and black, Hispanic, and American Indian/Alaskan Native children with scores between 205 and 208 (NAEP, 2016). The gap is still evident among students in 12th grade, with scores for African American students at least 10 points below those for any other group, and declining. Relative to white students, there is now a difference of 29 points on this reading assessment where it had been 24 points in 1992 (NAEP, 2016).

In sharing these data, I fully recognize their incompleteness in terms of students' socioeconomic class, region of the country where they reside, gender, and so forth. However, they do indicate that the warning, *mind the gap*, applies only to some families but not all in the US (and similarly in many other countries of Oceania). For white, middle-class parents whose children have no known disabilities and are cisgendered, they might not notice at all the breaches that are likely to grow from slight fissures in kindergarten to full-blown gaps by the end of the high school.

Turning to the third example of "mind the gap," it is here that we might take some comfort in the many equity gaps that have been reduced over the years owing to the watchful eye of community activists, parents, teachers, and committed policymakers. In Tanzania, for

instance, the gender gap in primary school enrolment has been eliminated (Ministry of Education and Vocational Training, 2010), and the government's plan to use Swahili, the lingua franca of the nation, as the medium of instruction throughout primary and secondary schooling will undoubtedly help to address educational disparities linked to differences in English proficiency that have a strong class basis (Brock-Utne, 2012). Yet there is also a sense that many long-standing educational gaps in the country, such as those based on region, religious affiliation, and class, persist without much action being taken to remedy them. Moreover, the plan to use Swahili at the secondary level may actually increase class distinctions because parents who can afford to do so are likely to send their children to private, English-medium schools (Mtesigwa, 2001; Vavrus, 2002). Thus, we see some equity gaps remaining stagnant or even growing over time even though policymakers are minding them, and often taking some steps to reduce them.

METAPHOR AND IDEOLOGY

I contend that, cyclical boosts in funding notwithstanding, there is a tacit acceptance of many equity gaps, especially those in education, because *gap* stands in metaphorically for difference and inferiority. In their research on metaphor, linguists George Lakoff and Mark Johnson explain: "The essence of metaphor is understanding and experiencing one kind of thing in terms of another" (2003, p. 6). They argue that dominant metaphors in our society become the way we understand and experience the thing itself. In an extended example of the word *argument* and the conceptual metaphor common in the US, "argument is war," Lakoff and Johnson illustrate with popular phrases like "your argument is indefensible," "I demolished his argument," and "You disagree? Okay, shoot!" (p. 5). They contend that most Americans would not recognize an argument as an argument if it were not confrontational in this way. As they explain, "this is the *ordinary* way of having an argument and talking about one . . . Our conventional ways of talking about arguments presuppose a metaphor we are hardly ever conscious of. The metaphor is not merely in the words we use—it is in our very concept of an argument" (p. 6; emphasis in original).

The study of metaphor is related to the concept of signification, the conveying of meaning. For linguist and literary theorist Roland Barthes (1964), there are two types of signification, the denotative and the connotative. The denotative suggests that there is an objective, value-neutral relationship between certain words, or signs, and what they denote. For example, *gym, gymnasium, recreation center* all denote the same space in a school where sports are played. There is some kind of objective or literal relationship between this space in a school that we can see and these signifiers of that space. However, this space may take on additional meaning when a new context for its usage arises.

We can consider the example of the term *locker room*, which denotes the portion of a recreation center where one can store and change clothing. Anyone who followed the 2016 US presidential campaign will recall that the term *locker room* took on great connotative significance when Donald Trump dismissed the 2005 *Access Hollywood* recording in which he boasted of sexually assaulting women by using the term "locker-room banter" to characterize, and dismiss the significance of his comments (Burns, Haberman, & Martin, 2016). This, in turn, led to an outpouring of responses from women and men about their own experiences in locker rooms and the kind of banter that is and is not generally deemed permissible, with Trump's violent, misogynistic comments roundly regarded as unacceptable even in such an informal environment. At present in

the US, *locker room* has lost any semblance of value-neutral meaning and, instead, represents an entire value-laden assemblage of patriarchy, privilege, and sexual violence that no longer needs to be spelled out—the phrases "locker-room talk" and "locker-room banter" connote it fully.

Critical media scholars John Fiske and John Hartley suggest that connotations are central to the formation of ideology. They aver: "The way that the varied connotations . . . fit together to form a coherent pattern or sense of wholeness, that is, the way they 'make sense', is evidence of an underlying invisible, organizing principle—ideology" (cited in O'Sullivan, Hartley, Saunders, Montgomery, & Fiske, 1994, p. 287). This process of "making sense" has been studied by numerous cultural and media studies scholars, but Stuart Hall's (1997) work stands out, in my view, because it addresses several aspects of ideology that speak directly to the question of how we represent unfairness in school and society.

A central concern of Hall's (1997) throughout his productive career was the interplay of discourse, power, and representation, particularly but not exclusively as it related to race. In a provocative essay in 1985, Hall delves into the concept of ideology, beginning with the question as to how, in democratic states, "a society *allows* the relative freedom of civil institutions to operate in the ideological field, day after day, without direction or compulsion by the State . . . [and] nevertheless consistently reconstitutes ideology as a 'structure in dominance'" (p. 100). His response suggests that it is through social practices in a variety of overlapping sites, such as schools, cinemas, and worksites, that we come to "recognize" ourselves, often unconsciously, as the "essential subjects" of ideologies, which Hall defines as "systems of representation materialized in practices" (1985, p. 104). He emphasizes the point that "ideas don't just float around in empty space. We know they are there because they are materialized in, they inform, social practice. In that sense, the social is never outside the semiotic" (p. 103).

Hall frequently drew upon his background growing up in Jamaica and then moving to the UK and spending his adult life there. In Jamaica, he and his family were considered "coloured," a category that connoted privilege and status. In contrast, Hall was identified as black by the British with a new set of signifiers used by them to indicate his inferior status (1985). Thus, he interrogated the specific example of the ideologies surrounding the term "black," particularly those related to place and identity, and he made the critical point that history cannot be ignored when seeking to understand how these discursive formations *continue t*o shape social practice: "They leave the traces of their connections, long after the social relations to which they referred have disappeared" (p. 111). I would argue that metaphor, one of the primary building blocks of ideology, is one of the ways by which these traces of social relations are maintained.

SHIFTING METAPHORS: FROM GAP TO DEBT

In her 2006 Presidential Address at the American Educational Research Association, Gloria Ladson-Billings engaged in a compelling analysis of the concept of *gaps* in education that I have long felt warrants more attention by scholars working in other parts of the world where the histories of genocide, slavery, and displacement continue to leave "the traces of their connections" (Hall, 1985, p. 111). In this address, she provides numerous examples of gaps in the US among black, Indigenous, Latinx, and white youth that include test scores but go well beyond into the areas of inequity mentioned earlier that bear on high school drop-out rates, teenage pregnancy, enrollment in advanced

classes, and admission to university. Ladson-Billings points out that many explanations for these differences have been provided over the years, particularly "cultural deficit" arguments that lay blame squarely on the shoulders of those upon whom the label *gap* has been applied.

Rather than the metaphor of the education gap, Ladson-Billings proposes an alternative: the education debt. She explains how the focus on closing achievement gaps, particularly gaps related to test scores, is similar to policymakers concentrating on the federal deficit, an annual concern that does, occasionally, disappear in a given year. In contrast, the federal debt is "the sum of all previously incurred annual federal deficits" (2006, p. 4). Ladson-Billings uses this distinction between a deficit and a debt to argue for a new metaphor:

> I am arguing that our focus on the achievement gap is akin to a focus on the budget deficit, but what is actually happening to African American and Latino students is really more like the national debt. We do not have an achievement gap; we have an education debt . . . I am arguing that the historical, economic, sociopolitical, and moral decisions and policies that characterize our society have created an education debt. (p. 5)

Ladson-Billings has no shortage of examples regarding the historical conditions of inequity that have produced the education debt today in the US. She identifies policies that long denied schooling to blacks, Latinx, and Indigenous children, followed by gross underfunding of segregated schools or the forced relocation to boarding schools; policies that allowed for differences in wages for the same work; the "redlining" of desirable areas in cities and towns that I mentioned earlier; and health and science policies that allowed for such studies as the infamous Tuskegee research program on syphilis that denied the Black men involved access to treatment once one was found (2006).

Ladson-Billings asks a crucial question for educators to consider: "What is it that we might owe to citizens who historically have been excluded from social benefits and opportunities?" (2006, p. 8). She does not provide an answer to this question, but I believe Stuart Hall does. If, as Hall argues, vestigial ideas are materialized in social practice, then it is to these ideas and to their explicit articulation that we should turn to create greater recognition of the "cumulative effect of poor education, poor housing, poor health care, and poor government services" (Ladson-Billings, 2006, p. 10). We should be bold in naming them—slavery, colonialism, internment, patriarchy, Islamophobia, homophobia—and in recognizing that they are both "structure[s] in dominance" (Hall, 1985, p. 100) *and* enduring "systems of representation" (Hall, 1985, p. 104).

TANZANIA: SCALES OF DEBT

The systems of representation in which Tanzania, and the wider continent of Africa, are enmeshed are illustrated by a question posed to me by a US 3rd grader during a presentation in her class about Tanzania. The students were studying different countries and continents, and their teacher asked me to talk about my recent trip to East Africa. Therefore, I assembled items that might spark their interest and give a positive picture of the country and its people, from images of Mt. Kilimanjaro to tall buildings and computers in classrooms as one finds in the US. Nevertheless, at the end of the presentation, a little girl raised her hand and asked, "Why are Africans poor?"

Despite my best efforts to present an image of contemporary Tanzania as economically diverse and culturally wealthy, this nine-year old had already embraced an ideology in which Africa is a homogenous space; a continent that connotes poverty; its people the Other. She had embraced the "single story," a danger perceptively articulated by Nigerian writer Chimamanda Ngozi Adichie (2009). This should not be surprising when most Americans' knowledge of the continent is based on statistics about HIV/AIDS, infant mortality, war, and illiteracy, all of which serve to demarcate the gap between Africa and the West.

This moment in the 3rd grade classroom stayed with me even though my research in Tanzania is not explicitly about ideology or representation, or American children's views on the continent. In my research beginning in 1996, I was interested in gender equity in secondary schooling, where the gap between girls and boys is decreasing but still only 24% of girls are enrolled compared to 31% of boys (UNESCO, 2012; see also Vavrus, 2003). Then, from 2000 to 2012, I carried out a longitudinal study of secondary school-aged youth on Mount Kilimanjaro who were in their final two years of primary school when we began. There were striking gaps among students at the four primary schools in the study in terms of access to sufficient food, decent roads, electricity, and secondary and tertiary education, and these gaps coalesced around spatial aspects of inequity, or, more specifically, around colonial demarcations that determined where schools and missionary stations would be located (Vavrus, 2016).

By way of background, Tanzania, which had been a German colony from 1890 through World War I and then a British Trust Territory from 1920-1961, had, at independence, begun the process of equalizing opportunity for schooling as part of the country's larger socialist restructuring program. The government of President Julius Nyerere radically redirected educational resources away from regions like Kilimanjaro that had a disproportionate number of schools owing to the fertile soil and healthy climate that attracted European missionaries and colonial administrators alike (Vavrus, 2003). For instance, in 1951 in the final decade of colonial rule, approximately 62% of children in Kilimanjaro were enrolled in primary school compared to 30% in the rest of the country during the same period (Samoff, 1979). In the early 1970s, as the redistribution plan was beginning to go into effect, the Kilimanjaro region had approximately 25% of the private secondary schools in the country and some 80% of these students came from the region itself even though the population of the region is less than 5% of the total for the country (Samoff, 1979). Today, the number of primary schools in the region is roughly proportional to the population, but the redistribution of resources at the secondary level had a more limited effect. As of 2010, the Kilimanjaro region had the largest number of secondary schools (public and private combined, O- and A-level institutions) in the country (MOEVT, 2010).

In this longitudinal study, we selected the four primary school sites in relation to where they were located on the mountain, but it turned out that their proximity to the German headquarters mattered more than we initially realized. The Tanzanian research team and I interviewed the parents or guardians of 277 students, and we had the students themselves fill out a questionnaire about their performance in school and aspirations for the future, among other topics. We returned to the same families in 2001, 2006, and 2012, and a smaller number of the youth were interviewed in 2007 and 2012. What we sought to study was the impact of attending secondary school on these young people's lives, even though only about 22% of them did so over the course of the study. However, what we also learned was that vestigial colonial relations had a great deal to do with equity gaps in this

community. For instance, Miti, the school community located closest to the former German headquarters for northern Tanzania, stood out from the other two rural sites of Bonde and Mbali in many ways. First, indicators of household wealth were significantly higher than in the other two rural sites. Families in Miti were much more likely to live in cement homes, have electricity, and always have enough food to eat. Second, youth from Miti were more than three times as likely as students from any of the other sites, including Sokoni, the site in the semi-urban area, to have reached the level of college or university by 2012 (Vavrus, 2016).

There are a number of other examples I could provide, but my point is that the study of equity gaps—in education and other areas of social life—need to attend to spatial and temporal dimensions of analysis. Such analyses are an important counterweight to research on current patterns of inequity and inequality with nary a glance backward. The larger project in Tanzania shows that a critical geography of education would help us to understand how the social production of social space occurs over time and contributes to the formation of educational disparities and their reproduction.

Given this situation, what can one say about the question of education debt? Using the geographic concept of scale, one might consider at the international scale the debt owed to Tanzania by Germany and the UK. Even though colonialism was short-lived in the case of Germany, the Maji-Maji Rebellion of 1905-1907 in response to the imposition of cotton as a cash crop resulted in a famine, still known as the Great Hunger, owing to the burning of Tanzania's land in retaliation by the Germans (Schmidt, 2010). The British did not turn Tanzania into a settler colony as in neighbouring Kenya, where the Mau Mau rebellion against oppressive rule led to extensive incarceration, abuse, and torture, with retributions to those who suffered made only in 2013 (Elkins, 2005, 2013). Nevertheless, the four decades of colonial rule in Tanzania depleted the country of resources it could have used to build an independent nation, and it deprived millions of children of an adequate education.

At the national scale, one could contemplate the debt owed by the Tanzanian government to residents of rural communities like Bonde and Mbali, and those in far less prosperous regions of the country where hundreds of thousands of children do not complete primary school at all as they generally do in the Kilimanjaro region. What would it take for them to receive an equitable allocation of resources—"equity from the middle" as Unterhalter (2009, p. 421) calls it—by allocating *more* resources to enable their students to have equal access to the same quality of schools as their relatively more prosperous neighbours in Miti and Sokoni?

At the smallest of scales, the individual, we might ask ourselves whether we, as researchers, are in debt to the communities where we conduct our studies. Despite the engagement of Tanzanian researchers in this longitudinal project, it is I who has largely benefited from it in terms of prestige and promotions from publishing the requisite number of articles each year to afford an increase in salary. Although I have worked with each of the schools in the study to identify and fund projects deemed important by the community, such as a block of latrines at Mbali and a water tank at Miti, there is also an intellectual debt from sharing knowledge and insights that I have only begun to theorize.

CONCLUSIONS

The equity gaps in our countries and communities are simply too vast for any one of us to imagine closing with his or her actions alone. We need to do more than "mind" them in the sense of watching over them; we need to declare our objection and offense to them, and work with organizations addressing the historical, political, spatial, and semiotic relations that produced and maintain them. This often seems like a daunting task, but we can each find spaces for intervention, especially in our world today where the very concept of equity is under siege.

Our efforts, however small they may seem, should not be seen as isolated islands of action amidst a sea of inequality. Instead, we might recast our work along the lines suggested by Tongan and Fijian writer and anthropologist Epeli Hau'ofa in his beautiful essay, *Our Sea of Islands* (1994). In it, he asks us to dismiss with the vision of Oceania being "islands in a far sea" and to instead to think of it as "a sea of islands." He writes:

> Oceania is vast, Oceania is expanding, Oceania is hospitable and generous, Oceania is humanity rising from the depths of brine and regions of fire deeper still, Oceania is us. We are the sea, we are the ocean, we must wake up to this ancient truth and together use it to overturn all hegemonic views that aim ultimately to confine us again, physically and psychologically, in the tiny spaces that we have resisted accepting as our sole appointed places, and from which we have recently liberated ourselves. We must not allow anyone to belittle us again, and take away our freedom. (1994, p. 160)

May we move in unity to preserve this freedom, recognizing that our countries and communities are not uniform and will require different forms of action to make it so. We share a common sea, and as comparative and international educators, a common commitment to ensuring equity at home and around the world.

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Influence over time: Community-driven development and the changing nature of the World Bank's impact in Indonesia

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Much literature has focused on the influence of the World Bank with regard to policy reform in low-income countries. While this literature has been produced over the course of many decades, the underlying studies have not tended to take a multi-decade approach to examining the way that World Bank influence changes in a given country. Put differently, studies tend to examine specific periods of time rather than looking at influence over time. This article seeks to contribute to scholarship on World Bank influence by looking at a twenty-year period of World Bank engagement in Indonesia. The purpose is (a) to map the nature and influence of the World Bank as it engaged with the government of Indonesia (GOI) around education and development policy, (b) to reflect on how and why that engagement changed over time, and (c) to consider the implications of the study in relation to the broader literature on the evolution and current status of World Bank influence. The focus of this article is in the area of governance, where the World Bank has pushed and experimented with decentralization, community-driven development, and school-based management. While the article focuses on education policy, reforms in this area have been impacted by governance reforms more broadly.

Keywords: education policy; community-driven development; school-based management; governance; World Bank; Indonesia

INTRODUCTION

Much literature has focused on the influence of the World Bank (WB) with regard to policy reform in low-income countries (Edwards & Storen, forthcoming). This literature has been produced over the course of many decades but the underlying studies have not tended to take a multi-decade approach to examining the way the WB influences changes in a given country.[1] Instead, studies tend to examine specific periods of time rather than influence over time. The present article seeks to contribute to scholarship on WB influence by looking at a twenty-year period of WB engagement in Indonesia. In reference to this time horizon, the purpose is (a) to map the nature and influence of the World Bank as it engaged with the government of Indonesia (GOI) around education and

[1] For exceptions, see Bujazan, Hare, La Belle, & Stafford (1987) and Edwards, Victoria and Martin (2015).

development policy, (b) to reflect on how and why that engagement changed over time, and (c) to consider the implications of the study in relation to the broader literature on the evolution and current status of WB influence. As will become clear, the focus of the WB's engagement—and thus the focus of this article—has been in the area of governance, where it has pushed and experimented with decentralization, community-driven development, and school-based management. While the article focuses on education policy, reforms in this area have been impacted by governance reforms more broadly, in ways that will be discussed.

As for key terminology, it is important to be clear: decentralization refers to the shift of responsibilities from the central government to lower levels of government; community-driven development, refers to when communities assume varying degrees of autonomy in the selection and implementation of development projects; and, school-based management refers to the management of various aspects of a school's duties by committees that are made up of parents, teachers, and principals. However, as indicated above in discussing the purpose of this article, the central focus is not these reforms themselves or their implementation in practice but rather the relationship between the WB and GOI over time.

What makes this case particularly interesting is that, in the 2000s, the GOI took steps to alter the dynamics of the relationship between itself and the WB by increasing funding to education. However, as will be shown, while GOI funding has increased and while WB influence has shifted, it is not necessarily the case that the WB is altogether less influential. In the post-2000 period, and in the face of government assertiveness and its desire to increase its influence, WB aid management, technical assistance, research capability, and knowledge dissemination have become more important, if still relatively invisible to the casual observer, with traditional mechanisms related to financing being downplayed publicly – although, arguably, this mechanism continues to play a significant role, as well.

The article begins with a brief note on theory and method before describing the context of Indonesia. A findings section follows in which four distinct phases of WB engagement are addressed. The final section focuses on discussion, connections with the broader literature on WB engagement, and conclusions.

THEORY AND METHOD

Conceptually, the research was conducted from the perspective of what has been labelled "critical international political economy" (Edwards, 2018). In short, this perspective balances a focus on material and ideational factors. It does so by tracing interaction among actors from the WB and the government while taking into account the ways that this interaction is (a) strategically-informed (e.g., by the actors' own calculations), (b) structurally-constrained (e.g., by the political-economic conditions within which the government operates), and (c) ideationally-informed (e.g., by the prevailing reform trends in the realm of international development). In the present article, the focus is to trace the ways that governance-related reforms—both generally and with regard to education—have evolved within the dynamics specified by critical international political economy. Space constraints here prevent a fuller discussion of the foundations of this theoretical perspective; see an extended discussion in Edwards (2018).

The research on which this article is based was conducted during 2014.[2] The research began with a desk review of documents pertaining to the WB's governance-related projects during the 1970s to 2014, including such sources as project appraisal documents, project completion reports, project amendment documents, etc. (see Edwards, 2014). This review was followed by interviews with 25 senior organizational and governmental actors, all with extensive experience and in-depth perspectives on the engagement and influence of the WB in Indonesia when it comes to developing and implementing aid projects. The interviewed actors represented the WB, the US Agency for International Development, the Australian Agency for International Development, the Ministry of Education and Culture (MOEC), and the National Development Planning Agency. The inclusion of interviewees from a range of organizations helped to extend and triangulate the claims made by interviewees from the government and the WB. Interviews were complemented by a review of academic literature on the evolution of foreign aid and education policy in Indonesia. To analyse the data, a variety of methods were purposively selected for their ability to unpack the dynamics of interest—that is, the dynamics of influence between the WB and GOI over time. These methods included: counter-factual analysis (where one reflects, based on an in-depth understanding of a particular case, on what would have happened if the WB had not been involved in education reform and had not acted as it did); process tracing (where one follows the genesis and evolution of policy ideas); and the use of heuristic matrices (i.e., tables) to portray and examine various forms of engagement and influence over time and across "levels" (e.g., international, national). For more on the methods employed to analyse the data, see Edwards (2012b).

In this research, theory and method worked together to produce the insights offered here. That is, the perspective of critical international political economy directed attention to the structural, relational, and ideational aspects of the context in Indonesia while the methods discussed above helped to understand and unpack those same aspects. The theory and method employed here were ideal for the research since it was exploratory in nature, since it sought to characterize and interpret the nature of interaction and the manifestations of influence between the WB and GOI over an extended time horizon—and all in relation to the governance reforms of decentralization, community-driven development, and school-based management. In line with the focus, theory, and methods of the article, the findings presented below are organized according to the phases that emerged and the issues or themes that defined those phases.

CONTEXT

After independence in 1945 and until 1967, the Communist Party of Indonesia, under the autocrat Sukarno, ruled Indonesia. Sukarno's regime was characterized by strict, top-down pathways of authority, a framework that was further embraced when martial law was re-instated in 1959, abandoning the 1950 Constitution aimed at ensuring freedoms of individual citizens (Bjork, 2003). After a bloody coup in 1966, Sukarno lost power to Suharto. Suharto instated a "New Order"—so named to contrast with Sukarno's "Old Order"—and opened up Indonesia to foreign investment. Another important change was Suharto's move to rejoin the WB and the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in 1967, at a time when Indonesia was heavily dependent on foreign aid and assistance (Engel, 2007).

[2] The findings presented here have been adapted from the more extensive write-up in Edwards and Storen (forthcoming).

Sukarno had walked out on both institutions two years prior, partly due to the United Nations (UN) endorsement of the creation of Malaysia (Toussaint, 2008).

In a long-term perspective, between 1968 and 2004, not only did the WB have a strong presence in Indonesia, but this institution also offered over US$30 billion in loans to the country (Engel, 2007). For much of this time (1974-89), the WB was the main source of external funding (Toussaint, 2008). With the introduction of Structural Adjustment Loans (SALs) during the time of Robert McNamara's leadership of the WB (1968–1981), Indonesia saw a stronger commitment to export-oriented policies, privatization, and deregulation (Engel, 2007). Additionally, during the WB's heyday, both this organization and GOI placed emphasis on the idea of decentralization.

Universal primary education was also encouraged as part of the poverty-reduction strategies of the 1980s, but despite the WB applauding Indonesia's achievement of universal primary education in the early 1980s, the quality of national education remained low (Bandur, 2012). Throughout the 1980s, transition rates from primary to secondary school continued to drop and were, in 1986, as low as 64.9% (Bandur, 2012). Attempting to mend some of the short-comings of the national education system, the Indonesian MOEC launched a pilot program on local curriculum integration, called the Local Content Curriculum (LCC) in 1987 (Bjork, 2003, 2005). The program granted authority over schools to provinces, a trend that increased after the unanimous re-election of Suharto in 1988. Suharto's "New Order" had made significant attempts—or at least gestures—to transform Sukarno's top-down authority framework of the 1950s and 60s. Despite the rhetoric of decentralization and community-based decision-making, however, the legacy of authoritative rule still held strong, and lower levels of government remained closely dependent on instruction from the central government (Alatas, Pritchett, & Wetterberg, 2003). Moreover, a custom of foot-dragging in the transfer of power, resistance to the implementation of accountability mechanisms, and corruption (e.g., payments for services, kickbacks, patronage networks, and nepotism in contract allocation, etc.; see "setbacks and struggles" section in Edwards & Storen, 2017) has complicated efforts to implement decentralization policies.

Nevertheless, as with trends in development more generally, both the WB and the Indonesian government would continue to experiment with various forms of decentralization and community-based initiatives in the 1990s (Edwards, 2012a; Edwards & DeMatthews, 2014). This is not surprising, since the WB had referred to decentralization of governmental powers and functions as a "make or break issue" for Indonesia in the period leading up to the string of decentralization projects in the 80s and 90s (Bjork, 2005). The next section characterizes the ways that Indonesia experimented with decentralization and community-based initiatives in the 1990s and 2000s while also explaining the changing role of the WB during that time. As will be shown, in order to understand the trajectory of governance reforms in education, one must first understand reforms outside the education sector.

FINDINGS

Phase 1: World Bank modifies and improves the government's community governance programs

During and prior to the 1990s, the GOI ran programs at the community level in both urban and rural areas that WB would seize upon and further extend. It is essential that we understand the origins of these programs and how they became objects of the WB's

attention. Having this understanding is important because these programs would serve as the basis for future programs at the heart of Indonesia's governance reforms.

The approach to community governance in urban areas can be traced back to the *Kampung* (slum) Improvement Program (KIP). Though KIP was re-launched in Jakarta slums in the early 1990s,[3] government-assisted KIP programs were first implemented in Indonesian urban slums in 1969,[4] with the WB contributing US$483.3 million in funding from 1970 to 1988 (World Bank, 1995, p. 12). From its inception, KIP's goal was to "alleviate poverty by supporting efforts to improve housing services and basic infrastructure in low-income areas known as kampungs [slums]" (World Bank, 1995, p. 6). The KIPs focused on infrastructure, particularly paved roads, school construction, health clinics, and water supply.

In WB documents from the early 1990s, the KIP was referred to as a self-help community program. In contrast with the KIP program from the 1970s and 1980s, when investments were made according to needs identified by the government, in the 1990s, the involvement of community-based organizations in the KIP was believed to ensure participatory development, less wastage, and fund usage that more closely reflected the needs of the communities (Juliman, 2006; World Bank, 1995). Tellingly, the evaluation of the KIP model, as implemented in the 1970s and 1980s, concluded the following:

> Despite . . . the limits reached by a centralized model in meeting urban sector needs, the government remains the dominant decision maker in urban development to this day. Yet difficulties experienced by both the government and the Bank in supervising multi-city projects from Jakarta hastened efforts to devolve project implementation responsibilities to the local level of administration. (World Bank, 1995, p. 8).

The report then went on to suggest that, "future projects should promote working partnerships with community groups and non-governmental organizations" (p. 9). It is, therefore, not surprising that the revised version of KIP in the 1990s gave communities the responsibility of recognizing development needs, and then using the KIP grants to meet them. For an idea of how the revised version of this community-led development model worked, see the description in Box 1 of a sister program (implemented in rural areas). An additional point to note is that the revised version of KIP was run through the WB's own KIP unit within the government's Housing Department, likely a response to the frustration that the WB felt with regard to how the government managed the program (Juliman, 2006).

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[3] Available documents do not indicate in which year the KIP program was re-launched.

[4] On the history of KIP in the pre-WWII period, document review revealed: "The *Kampung* Improvement Program (KIP) was first introduced during the colonial government, when members of the opposition in the Dutch Parliament demanded more "humane" conditions for local populations living in urban areas in the colonies. The establishment of municipal governments early in the century brought about a renewed interest in the topic of kampung improvement. The first period of KIP extended from the 1920s to the beginning of World War II. Surabaya and Semarang started with the improvement of some kampungs in 1924, an effort initiated by the municipal government." (World Bank, 1995, p. 17)

Box 1: Project Identification and Design in Rural Areas through the Kecamantan (sub-district) Development Program

The Kecamantan (sub-district) Development Program (KDP) was an effort to address long-term structural poverty in [rural areas in] Indonesia through targeted, decentralized block grants. The KDP was financed with a World Bank loan of $225 million and $47 million from the government of Indonesia. Its goal was to support village-level investments.

How are these village-level investments identified? A participatory village project identification and planning process prioritizes one or two projects that are then formulated with the help of trained facilitators—often students. Projects can only be submitted by community-based organizations (CBOs) that have existed for at least a year. If more than one project is identified, then one has to come from a woman's CBO. The project has an "almost open" menu of eligible investments (excluding a few options, such as religious buildings and environmentally damaging projects), trusting the poor to select investments that will have the greatest influence on poverty reduction.

The projects are technically appraised by local experts (villagers with relevant skills or experience), in consultation with line agencies in order to seek possible synergies and avoid conflicts with planned agency operations. Proposals that pass these filters are then submitted to the Kecamatan council, which discusses and prioritizes them according to their overall impact, poverty impact, and technical and financial feasibility. Those that are approved are funded.

Source: Dongier et al., 2002, p. 307

There are two key developments to highlight from the above. The first is that, in the early 1990s, while the WB was attracted to the general model of relying on communities to carry out development projects (Edwards, 2012a), it was not comfortable with the fact that community-level projects were chosen by the government. Since the 1980s, it has been common for the WB to criticize government-led development as overly-centralized, bureaucratic, inefficient, and lacking in accountability. In Indonesia, the WB also has a long history of struggling with "leakage" of loan funds—a term employed to refer to misappropriation and corruption. The WB thus saw the KIP program as a response to these challenges. Though already mentioned previously, the second development to highlight is the fact that the WB saw it as necessary to create its own unit within the government in order to manage the revised KIP program in the 1990s. This development not only underscores the extent to which the WB wanted to avoid government control of the program but also marks the beginning of a trend, for the WB would take similar actions with the rural version of KIP.

With regard to rural governance, in the mid-1990s, the WB took the community-driven development model implemented by the government in rural villages (known as the Left-Behind Village program) and created a parallel program that was managed by the WB and funded by its loans (known initially as the Village Infrastructure Project and later as the Kecamatan [sub-district] Development Project). From the perspective of the WB, GOI's own "top-down transfer system [for its rural program] was clumsy and slow," and it suffered from problems of elite capture and political manipulation (World Bank, 2001,

p. 4). For these latter reasons, the WB's rural development program gave block grants directly to the villages, in order to avoid the government's system of transfer across multiple bureaucratic levels. This aspect of the WB's programs represented a significant departure from the highly-centralised nature of the Indonesian government that had been cultivated under President Suharto and the New Order state (World Bank, 2001); it was also a departure that would continue in the late 1990s and 2000s, as explained in the next section.

Phase 2: Crisis, World Bank influence, and scaling up in the education sector

At the brink of the Asian Financial Crisis in 1997, the WB was involved in the funding and support of several projects in Indonesia, as discussed above. Decentralization and block grants funding mechanisms were central. When the economic crisis finally arrived, Indonesia was hit hard. Worsened by the El Niño drought and the drastic drop in rice production, the time period of 1997–98 exacerbated poverty and hunger. Economic growth dropped from a promising +7% in early 1997 to -15% the following year (Bresnan, 1999). The year 1998 brought about political crisis, which, after a "leaderless" revolution[5] and pressure from the US, eventually resulted in Suharto's resignation (Bresnan, 1999). Although the US had suffered criticism for having supported Suharto's dictatorship through continued economic aid, Suharto's fall now "offered a new beginning for US policy in Indonesia" (Bresnan, 1999, p. 105).

The US and the IMF offered bailouts to Indonesia, but after controversial bailouts in Mexico[6] in 1994 the offers made to Indonesia came with a high level of conditionality. Conditionalities included closing heavily indebted banks and cutting government spending. In addition, under the interim presidency of Bacharuddin Jusuf Habibie, decentralization was pushed in all development reforms. During this time of crisis, the interim president may have been more easily influenced by WB's preferred governance models, namely decentralisation in various forms. The WB was in an ideal position to push such reforms, since it already had in progress multiple decentralization projects that it was funding and assisting. At the same time, decentralization was of interest to the central government in order to reduce tensions between itself and the provincial level governments, some of whom were interested in seceding from Indonesia.

The Asian Financial Crisis not only brought about massive reforms in both the political and economic sphere, but also placed Indonesia increasingly under the influence of lending institutions such as the WB and the Asian Development Bank. An urgent need for finances also changed the landscape of development programming. The WB's rural community governance programs (described above) were particularly important during the recession because they provided cash payments to those hired through community grants. This model was seen to be relevant to the WB's education sector programs, in the context of the crisis. According to a senior education specialist associated with the WB for over a decade starting in 1999:

[5] Observers have called the revolution leaderless because of the fact that there was not one single political party or resistance group leading the way; rather, at the time, the mounting political pressure was the culmination of the work of numerous social resistance groups.

[6] The US and IMF bailout in Mexico sparked international criticism. It was believed that the bailout undermined any incentive for the recipient country to uphold macro discipline. Despite the US firmly stating that the Mexico bailout was a special case, and not a model for future crisis, critics were worried that other countries would expect the same International Monetary Fund bailout (Musacchio, 2012).

> Many of the traditional projects (that tend to give funding to the government to focus, e.g., on school construction), which were well under way, were reshaped to release something like six hundred million dollars, which could be then targeted to the massive scholarships and grants programs, which was basically targeted at providing the schools and the kids with enough resources to continue at school and for schools to continue to operate at their current levels (INTACT5).[7]

Moreover, according to the aforementioned WB education specialist, in addition to "great panic that kids would be dropping out of school because they couldn't afford to stay," a side-effect was that "traditional programs never re-entered the scene after (the crisis)" (INTACT5).

A notable lesson from the above is that the crisis provided the opportunity for the WB to adapt its community-driven development model—based on block grants—to the education sector, where it had not yet been introduced. This is exactly what happened. Starting in the late 1990s, block grant programs became a key characteristic of school governance projects—under the label of school-based management—funded by the WB and reforms implemented by the GOI.[8] It also stands out that the crisis provided an opportunity for the WB to extend its influence and its preferred governance models, as is often the case (Edwards, 2015; Klein, 2007).

Phase 3: Government Reaction—Increase Funding

With the surge in WB funding and involvement in the post-Asian Financial Crisis period, it could be challenging to navigate between the regulations stipulated through WB loans and those sent out by the MOEC. According to a veteran within the MOEC, one education project was cancelled due, in part, to issues with WB requirements. At the time of the 2003 *Education Act*, which meant the formal adoption of school-based management for the roughly 216,000 public and private schools in the country (Bengoteku & Heyward, 2007), he remembers asking the WB to make more room for flexibility in their conditionalities. Requests such as these produced tension. The aforementioned-MOEC veteran characterized the interaction in the following way: "[The WB] sometimes, you know, seem like, look down to us . . . Just like, 'you don't know anything . . . about the program.' Even at the time we are just arguing . . . and arguing. 'This is the Bank money, you should follow our regulation.' Yes, I know, that's the Bank money. But you know, this is a loan . . . I paid to the bank, you know" (NATACT3).

As the 2000s progressed, the financial position of the WB became less dominant, due to the 2002 amendment of the *Constitution*, which required all levels of government to allocate 20% of their budget to education (though this requirement would not be met until 2009; Suharti, 2013). Following this move, a specialist with over 15 years of experience in the WB and the Australian Agency for International Development noted this in 2003: "that's when we were getting the first indications that the government was maybe going to move away from borrowing for social sectors . . . They were much more aware of the necessity to borrow less and apply their own funds for education" (INTACT5). The increase in GOI funding—and its desire to depend less on the WB—thus came about as

[7] Interviewee names have been replaced with pseudonyms, such as, INTACT5, in this case.
[8] See Edwards and Storen (2017) for more on the details of school-based management in Indonesia and the ways that it built on existing GOI programs related to scholarships for disadvantaged students and school construction programs.

a reaction to the heightened influence that the WB enjoyed in the years following the Asian Financial Crisis.

Phase 4: The Changing Role of the World Bank? The Importance of Non-Financial Influence.

In the mid-2000s, within and outside the realm of education, GOI sought to increase its independence. Outside education, in the area of governance generally, GOI made plans—or at least expressed an intention—to combine and then for itself to manage the urban and rural community-driven development programs discussed earlier in Phase 1. These programs were brought together under the label of the National Program for Community Empowerment (PNPM, for its acronym in Indonesian). The establishment of PNPM as the lead community-driven development program was also meant to indicate a shift toward increased government leadership and governmental implementation of such initiatives (World Bank, 2012b). As explained in a WB project document, it would work with the government and other development partners to design PNPM during 2007–2009 while simultaneously continuing to scale up existing urban and rural community-driven development programs before working together to "consolidate PNPM management" during 2010–2013, after which point it was anticipated that GOI and its development partners would use PNPM as a platform to launch other "anti-poverty" programs (World Bank, 2007a; World Bank 2012b).

In accordance with GOI's vision of being more independent, it provided significant funding for PNPM. One report from 2012 mentions that, since 2008, GOI provided US$316 million for PNPM Urban (compared with US$442 million from the WB and US$242 from the Islamic Development Bank) and US$2.5 billion for PNPM Rural (compared with US$2.3 billion in loans from the WB) (World Bank, 2012a, p. 19–23). In all, then, during these four years alone, GOI contributed at least US$2.816 billion, about equivalent to the WB-provided funding of at least US$2.742 billion during the same period, with the implication being that the GOI was, at least financially, on a similar level as this institution during this time.

However, in the years after 2006, when plans for PNPM began, there was a clear divergence between intention and reality when it came to leadership more generally. Although various governmental ministries remained, formally, the implementing agencies for the rural and urban community-led development programs, the WB remained integral to program direction in numerous ways. That is, since the birth of the PNPM idea, the WB has been central to the planning, design and implementation of PNPM and the programs that make it up (World Bank, 2007a, p. 4). For example, WB teams from the urban and rural governance projects worked together to prepare operational manuals, project reporting documents, supervision teams, and results monitoring frameworks (World Bank, 2007a). WB loans regularly included funding so that the WB could assist with technical issues, could augment the capacity of the implementing agencies, and could hire and manage teams of consultants.

More generally, the WB oversees the PNPM Support Facility (PSF), which was set up in ~2010 and which is charged with providing effective leadership and management for PNPM programs. Multiple donors use the PSF as a channel to provide funds for specific

programs within PNPM.[9] As the Asian Development Bank describes the PSF "as a multi-donor mechanism" that, "enables donors to provide targeted financial assistance to the government to support [the PNPM program] target areas, as well as high-quality, coordinated technical assistance, planning advice and dialogue" (ADB, 2012, p. 21). From the WB's perspective, the PSF is useful for "improving the quality of PNPM as well as . . . build[ing] Indonesian capacity for large-scale poverty reduction, with the aim of making the program a sustainable operation" (World Bank, 2012b, p. 4). Finally, the facility is used as a means by which development partners can experiment with innovative pilot projects, such as conditional cash transfers. Overall, then, rather than taking over PNPM or consolidating its leadership under the GOI, the design and implementation of PNPM has created additional and broader ways for the WB to institutionalize its own influence and to shape the evolution of Indonesia's community-driven development initiatives.

In the realm of education, the same phenomenon occurred. Starting in the mid-2000s, and in contrast with the 1990s, GOI provided half or more of the funding for new projects developed with the WB, including projects related to school-based management, which continued to make use of the block grant mechanism for providing funds to the local level (Edwards, 2014). However, when it came to technical assistance, there is clear evidence that the MOEC has continued to rely on the WB. This is most clear from the experience of an ironically-named "Basic Education Capacity Project." Begun in 2007, the project was entirely financed by GOI but focused on funding policy-dialogue, research studies, the piloting of innovative programs, the modification of existing program manuals, and building district-level decentralization capacity (see Edwards & Storen, 2017, for more detail). Thus, despite increased funding from GOI, the WB's engagement remained central and very influential within and beyond the education sector in Indonesia. As is discussed further in the next section, the WB's knowledge products and non-financial support have long been key pathways for the influence of this institution.

IMPLICATIONS AND CONCLUSION

The focus of this article has not been on the implementation of either community-driven development or school-based management. Rather, engagement between GOI and the WB around these reforms has provided a window through which to analyse the influence of the latter vis-à-vis the former. To that end, the central point of this short article is that, in spite of increased levels of funding from the GOI in the 2000s for its governance reforms within and outside the realm of education, the WB remained a very influential actor. That is, while the WB's influence changed, it still remained very impactful, albeit in a different way. As explained, the WB's non-financial forms of engagement—which had for decades been a key aspect of their portfolio of services—took on a leading role in development support in Indonesia once the government decided that it wanted to reduce its dependence on WB loans.

Although the GOI has continued to rely on the WB in various, non-financial ways, we should be careful not to underappreciate the fact of GOI's increased financial

[9] Major contributors to PSF are the Government of Australia, US Agency for International Development, the UK Department for International Development, the Danish International Development Agency, and the Canadian International Development Agency, the Netherlands, and the European Union, in addition to the WB (ADB, 2012).

commitments. Indeed, many countries do not have the capacity to decide that they will reduce their dependence on the WB by providing at least 50%t of the funds needed for new development projects. Indonesia was able to do this because of the size of its economy—ranked 16th in the world in 2016 by the IMF (2017)—together with moves to cancel the GOI's domestic fuel subsidies (which freed up US$10 billion), the steady growth of the economy, and declining debt service payments (with these latter two items producing an additional US$5 billion in revenues) (World Bank, 2007b). The case of Indonesia is thus instructive in that it reveals what happens even when a country is in a relatively advantaged economic position.

Thinking broadly, we should not be surprised by the WB's non-financial influence. Not only have scholars long noted the influence of "rational" international organizations (Berman, 1992)—thanks to the widely-held perception that they are credible and valuable sources of expertise (Barnett & Finnemore, 2005)—but scholars have also detailed the forms that such influence can take (Samoff, 2009). Samoff (2009), for example, explains how, outside of financial infusions, the WB can also exert influence through the following pathways: technical assistance (i.e., advice and recommendations), research, general publications, certification (wherein the WB, e.g., provides accolades to a program or projects or otherwise indicates that a reform is viewed positively), management of the aid relationship (by taking care of various administrative functions related to its loans), coordination of foreign aid (e.g., overseeing the provision and use of other agencies' funds), and international events, among others. Indeed, each of these pathways of influence were relevant to the experience of Indonesia, many of which are described in the section above on phase four (for more detailed description, see Edwards & Storen, 2017).

Highlighting the presence of the above-mentioned forms of influence in the case of Indonesia raises a more vexing question. That is, while financial influence is a fairly unambiguous form of influence, and is one that is easy to identify in practice, what is to be done about the intellectual and strategic forms of influence from which the WB benefits. It is true that, in the case of Indonesia, the GOI was concerned exclusively with financial influence. And while we have an answer to what happens when, at least in reference to the current case, a government decides that it wants to reduce reliance on financial infusions from the WB, we are now left to reflect on the form of influence that emerges in its place (or, rather, that is further revealed by the diminished role of financial influence). Put differently, the question becomes: How can interested governments reduce or eliminate their dependence on the WB (or, indeed, similar organizations) when it comes to knowledge dissemination, research and evaluation, policy dialogue, and aid coordination?

The above question is more salient than ever, as the WB itself, since the late 1990s, has emphasized its ability to provide "knowledge for development" (Samoff & Stromquist, 2001) and has continued to move in the direction of underscoring its competitive advantage around policy knowledge and reform expertise (Klees & Edwards, 2014; Mundy & Verger, 2015). Moreover, and just as importantly, it is not simply a matter of the WB projecting its capacity as a knowledge broker; rather, research has shown that the WB's technical and strategic abilities continue to be useful for and continue to be perceived positively (even enviously) by peer organizations (Edwards, Okitsu, da Costa, & Kitamura, forthcoming), bilateral aid agencies (Verger, Edwards, & Kosar-Altinyelken, 2014), and national governments (Edwards & Loucel, 2016; Shajahan, 2016). Thus, while there are no easy answers, both recent scholarship and the present case

of Indonesia speak to the need to further consider how interested governments can escape not only the specific policy advice provided by the WB but also the broader development paradigm represented by this institution. Put differently, what needs to be addressed is not only the effects of WB projects and policies, which often tend to exacerbate inequity (based as they are in market mechanisms) but also the inequitable distribution of power and influence that tends to characterize the relationship between the WB and borrowing governments.[10]

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[10] Note that this article and the conclusions is offers are focused on the engagement of the WB with the GOI around policy-making at the national level. Given space constraints, the paper has focused on general dynamics and the ways that the non-financial forms of the WB's assistance that have become more central over time, as GOI has increased financing. For additional nuance regarding the WB-GOI relationship and for additional discussion of how GOI political interests align in self-serving ways with those of the WB, see Edwards and Storen (2017). Also see Edwards and Storen (2017) for more on the difficulties that have been experienced at the subnational level around the implementation of the reforms of focus in the present article.

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Global Design and Local Histories: Culturally embedded meaning-making for Inclusive Education

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This article provides an account of the recent literature on inclusive education, addressing its meaning and significance for school education in postcolonial India. I engage with the major theoretical debates in the academic literature on inclusive education and examine their historical trajectories globally through policy documents. I then examine the conceptual, political, and practical dilemmas associated with the concept within the local Indian context. Scholars, such as Chakrabarty (2007) and Connell (2007), have argued about the contextual limitations of theoretical accounts arising out of specific historical, social, economic, and political circumstances of Euro-American societies. Drawing on Chakrabarty and Connell's critiques, my discussion attempts to illuminate some of the problematic aspects of the Western "provincial" understandings and theorizing of the concept of inclusive education and its transfer to the global South through narrowly-defined policy texts. In doing so, the paper discusses the work of scholars who argue for the need to examine indigenous historic and cultural traditions to identify a commitment towards inclusivity as a way of broadening meaning-making and theoretical understanding of the concept of inclusive education. This paper makes a case for particularly engaging with Rabindranath Tagore's 'Southern Theory' of Inclusive Education for contextual meaning-making of inclusive education within the Indian context.

Keywords: Southern Theory, Tagore, Philosophy of Education

INTRODUCTION

It is widely argued (for example by Armstrong, Armstrong, & Spandagou, 2010) that, in order to explore the idea of inclusive education, it is important to first examine issues of "exclusion". Therefore, in the second part of this article, I will describe some of the ways in which, within the Indian system of education, with regards to provisions for both private and public school education, children belonging to a specific socioeconomic class, caste, tribe, religion, gender, and different-ability (disability) are systemically "excluded" from receiving the benefits of education. Drawing on Walter D. Mignolo's (2000) concept of "subaltern knowledge" and Raewyn Connell's (2007) concept of "Southern Theory", I argue that an alternative epistemology and ethical understanding of inclusive education in its broadest sense can be found in the humanist educational philosophy and practice of Rabindranath Tagore in his experimental school and university in early 20th Century colonial India. I argue that theoretically engaging with Tagore's humanist philosophy of

education can be most useful in contextually-specific meaning-making of inclusive education within the Indian context.

GLOBAL DEBATES ON INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

What is meant by "Inclusion"?

> The meaning of "inclusion" is by no means clear and, perhaps conveniently, blurs the edges of social policy with a feel-good rhetoric that no one could be opposed to. What does it really mean to have an education system that is "inclusive"? Who is thought to be in need of inclusion and why? If education should be inclusive, then what practices is it contesting, what common values is it advocating, and by what criteria should its successes be judged? (Armstrong et al., 2010, p. 5)

The above questions suggest that, there is a lack of clarity about the meaning of inclusive education. Inclusive education means different things, because experiences of exclusion vary according to context, and can only be adequately understood within the specificities of their history. Yet, inclusive education is often globally framed as an important universal social justice issue, acknowledged alongside other basic human rights as articulated, for example, in the UNESCO *Salamanca Declaration (1994)* states that, inclusive education is "[a] developmental approach seeking to address the learning needs of all children, youth and adults with a specific focus on those who are vulnerable to marginalization and exclusion." Since the publication of these two major declarations, most national governments have adopted this policy characterization.

In recent decades, inclusive education is widely understood to be the inclusion of children with special needs into the mainstream schooling system (Pijl, Meijer, Cor, & Hegarty.1997). Following the *Salamanca Declaration*, research has also become more focused on inclusion of children with "disability". However, much of the research on inclusive education appears to be limited to local policy responses following global policy declarations, including evaluative studies related to the inclusion of children with disability in mainstream schools. Johansson (2014) reviewed some of such studies which were conducted within the Indian context.

Pijl et al. (1997) highlighted the need to move beyond evaluative study of the effect and "how-to" of inclusive education to conducting "qualitative studies with inductive and ethnographic ambitions that can help understand social patterns and subjective experiences" (p. 31). Most research highlights the tension between these universal human rights based policies and local exclusionary practices within schooling contexts (Ainscow, Booth, & Dyson, 2006; Armstrong et al., 2011; Slee, 2011; Walton, 2016). Kiuppis and Peters (2014) have critiqued this trend and urged comparative and international education scholars to advance research on inclusive education with broader conceptual framework following *Education For All* (EFA) and the Millennium Goals (MDGs). They affirm:

> Some children start school with more advantages than others—advantages of wealth and health among the most influential. Children in poverty and children with impairments, and all marginalized students (whether due to language, religion, race, ethnicity, or gender) do not have to be disadvantaged by their treatment in schools or by their exclusion from schools. If children are denied educational opportunities, then it is the lack of education and not their characteristics that limit them. (p. 61).

This belief has also been affirmed by UNESCO's (2014) Global Monitoring Report. Foreman (2008, p. 31) emphasizes that inclusive education is a concept that "extends well beyond students with disability, and encompasses the idea that all schools should strive to provide an optimal learning environment for all their students, regardless of their social, cultural or ethnic background, or their ability or disability." This paper also situates the debate on "inclusive education" within this broader framework of education for social justice, human rights and equity for all students.

According to Kozleski, Artiles, and Waitoller (2011), much of the early theoretical debates on inclusive education within the scholarly community emerged in developed economies of the global North. The Scandinavian countries along with the US, Canada, and England are considered to be pioneers in the field. They comprise the first generation of inclusive education. Beginning in the 1960s, diverse social and political movements in these countries by social minorities, including the feminist movement, civil rights movement of the Black community in the US, movement of persons with disabilities and advocacy groups of parents and activists, led to the emergence of a public discourse on inclusive education. This first generation was followed by the second generation of inclusive education in postcolonial countries of the South in Asia, Africa and Latin America with very different historical trajectories because of their colonial histories and legacy.

Conceptually, the idea of inclusive education is often portrayed as a universal construct––a global utopia based on the principles of social justice, equity and human rights. The idea became popular particularly in the recent years that witnessed increasing mobility of people and ideas and an increase in social and cultural diversity, leading policymakers to realize the importance of inclusive education for social cohesion (Kozleski et al., 2011). It is now no longer limited to developed economies of North America, Europe and Australia, but developing economies and postcolonial nation-states must also make accommodations to implement it following the global policy mandates by organizations, such as UNESCO, as noted by Armstrong et al. (2010) and Pijl et al. (1997).

Loreman, Deppeler, and Harvey (2011) have noted that in much of the early literature and popular discourse, two terms: inclusion and integration, were used synonymously. This is also evident from some of the authors in the edited volume by Pijl et al. (1997), *Inclusive Education: A Global Agenda*, in which the terms integration and inclusion are used interchangeably, referring primarily to the integration of children with disability. In that literature, issues of student disadvantage based on categories, such as linguistic, ethnic, racial, and religious difference are not generally considered. However, the debates on inclusive education have now shifted from this early focus on integration into the mainstream, to a broader focus on creating inclusive social and learning spaces within the mainstream schooling system, mindful of individual learning needs, personal histories, socioeconomic and cultural backgrounds of students. Based on a study of 727 teachers in Hong Kong, who participated in a university level course on inclusive education, Forlin, Sharma, and Loreman (2014) argued that, regardless of demographic diversity of students, better teacher preparation and training for inclusive education coupled with the knowledge of the significance of inclusive policy can improve "teaching efficacy for inclusive practice". Since "exclusion is a relational process", the focus of the debate in recent years is more on pedagogic aspects that help teachers build "restorative relationships" and "address the needs of the whole child" (Razer & Friedman, 2017, p. 148).

Theoretically, most scholars of inclusive education consider it as an ideal, which is hypothetically capable of creating a more inclusive society, helping to curb prejudice and discrimination (Ainscow, 2005; Barton, 1997; Slee, 2006). Walton (2016) also highlights that within the South African context inclusive education is now understood in broader terms. There is now a clearer distinction between the concepts of integration and inclusion, which necessitates attending to the diverse learning needs of students. This has led to a more sophisticated discussion of the idea of inclusive education, consisting of three major aspects for establishing an inclusive school system: inclusive school culture, inclusive school policy, and inclusive schooling practice (Ainscow et al., 2006; Ainscow & Sandill 2010). However, implementing the ideals of creating socially inclusive spaces for all children with diverse learning needs within regular schooling systems is still a major challenge globally. It appears from the research literature that, regardless of the degree of economic development, the dominant norms of school and society still reproduce various structural inequalities within which the schools are embedded. (Johansson, 2014; Singal, 2008; Yates, 2014).

SHIFTING FOCUS OF GLOBAL "POLICYSCAPE"

Parallel to the academic theoretical debates discussed above, in recent times, the neoliberal discourse of market efficiency and cost-effectiveness have entered into the global inclusive education agenda. Scholars argue that the early liberal humanist global policy imperative of inclusive "Education for All" is being increasingly contradicted by the neoliberal economic priorities of competition and choice, which often runs contrary to the values of inclusion (Barton & Slee, 1999). Ainscow, Booth, and Dyson (2007) highlighted the contradiction of "raising standards" and "social inclusion" within the schooling context in the UK, where professionals, parents, and students were found to be moving more towards an inclusive schooling system while "policies for raising standards, such as the emphasis on competition and choice, and the publication of test and examination results, [were] tending to discourage the use of teaching approaches that are responsive to student diversity." Scholars, such as Ainscow (2002), however, have argued that strategies which promote the inclusion of marginalized groups can also improve learning outcomes for all learners.

Hardy and Woodcock (2014) argue that the global neoliberal policy discourse for market efficiency, cost-effectiveness and standardization of curriculum by organizations such as the OECD and the World Bank, which has now been also adopted by UNESCO and UNICEF, further appear to be excluding more and more children from marginalized vulnerable populations from deriving the benefit of an education. This is depriving them from both education's instrumental purpose of gaining employment and also depriving them from education's intrinsic purpose of empowerment for decision-making in life. Without education, the children from marginalized communities are being deprived of their voice to fight against discrimination and injustices in society. They take a critical policy sociology approach by analysing key policy documents in Western settings, like US, Canada, England, and Australia, where there have been a strong public advocacy and support for inclusion, as well as policy documents by global organizations like UNESCO and OECD, to argue how policies can fail to provide adequate provision for diverse learning needs of students. Based on evidence from a wide range of policy documents across these countries, they argue that, inclusion is often constructed in problematic ways in policy documents.

Hardy and Woodcock (2014) further argue that "[r]espect for difference can only be cultivated in educational systems if those responsible for enacting educational practices are supported by consistent and coherent policy messages which value diversity and challenge deficit." (p. 22). A review of the emerging literature on inclusive education, therefore, reveals the inherent contradictions between the policy discourses circulating globally and the theoretical formulation of the philosophical idea of inclusive education. Hardy and Woodcock (2014) also affirm that, "[i]n the realm of public policy, words do matter, and need to be deployed carefully" (p. 22). However, the liberal humanist policy imperatives of inclusive "Education for All" are contradicted by the neoliberal economic priorities of competition and choice in global policy documents, which runs contrary to the values of inclusion and social cohesion. This disjuncture in the discourse of global "policyscape,"[1] is directing the individual nation-states to further decouple and formulate their own policies that are often fractured and disjointed. Therefore, inclusion is construed in problematic ways, as the policy documents at the level of nation-state and local governments include the "politically correct" rhetoric of inclusion without a clear conceptual understanding of the notion of inclusion and little practical guidelines for implementation.

Slee (2006) critiqued the way in which the term "inclusive education" is now being circulated globally through policy documents by intergovernmental organizations (IGOs), non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and governments of individual nation-states by citing Edward Said's "Travelling Theory Revisited". He suggested that the social justice mission driving the movement for inclusive education following social movements of minorities for inclusion (not integration) within the mainstream society has, in many ways, lost its force and "the theory is degraded and subdued" (p. 113). Armstrong, Armstrong, and Spandagou (2011) also argued that, though social policy is dominated by the rhetoric of inclusion, exclusion persists in reality due to poor translation of the concept of inclusion and entrenched practices of exclusion "both in the countries of the North and in the 'developing countries' of postcolonial globalization" (p. 30).

In this context what Pijl et al. (1997) suggested appears to be relevant. They identified the need to move beyond just in-school factors to external factors of society to study inclusive education as a sociological and historical research agenda, since school as an institution operates within the larger society. They highlighted the need to move beyond evaluative study of the effect and "how-to" of inclusive education to conduct more "qualitative studies with inductive and ethnographic ambitions that can help understand social patterns and subjective experiences" (p. 31). While arguing for urgently needed insights for future policy and research on inclusive education that is mindful of equity, Kozleski et al. (2011) also assert that, since inclusive education has "far-reaching equity implications for marginalized groups across the globe, we ought to refine the theoretical formulation of this movement through a culturally and historically situated research program" (p. 9). The following section of this paper will, therefore, reflect on local histories of exclusion in the global South, with particular reference to India as the cultural and historical context of the larger ethnographic case study (examining inclusive policies, practices and school culture) from where this paper has been culled.

[1] I have used the term "policyscape" here as Carney (2011) used the term drawing on Appadurai's (1990) theory of "scapes" representing different global cultural flows

LOCAL HISTORIES OF EXCLUSION IN THE SOUTH

The colonial histories in Southern postcolonial countries make the challenge of conceptualizing and implementing inclusive education even more complex because these nation-states were mostly formed out of the imagery of modern-colonial world systems, as Mignolo (2000) has argued. Prior to their colonial histories, most of these modern Southern nation-states were princely states with diverse linguistic and ethnic heritages. The political borders of the modern nation-states in Latin America, Africa and much of Asia were carved out of the colonial history of these regions. They are sometimes divided by indigenous ethnic (linguistic) groups across religious lines like in South Asia. In much of Latin America and Africa, indigenous ethnic (linguistic) groups are completely ignored and divisions are based on the territorial authority of the dominant language groups of European Nations, thus creating English speaking Nigeria, French speaking Benin, Portuguese speaking Mozambique and Brazil, and Spanish speaking Mexico and Argentina.

Hence, since the formation of independent nation-states, cultural integration for national identity formation through education has been carried out through purposeful state policies in these postcolonial countries. Social inclusion remains a contentious issue in most of these postcolonial modern nation-states because the dominant cultural and ethnic groups try to impose their values on others in order to achieve cultural integration and homogeneity in the name of postcolonial national identity formation. In their drive to assert a postcolonial national identity, which was, ironically, carved out of the colonial history, textbook narratives, curriculum framework, and pedagogy in these postcolonial nations often assert a dominant narrative of national identity undermining the rest as "others". The colonial legacy and local histories in many of the Southern postcolonial countries might work against the ideals of inclusive education within these ethnically diverse communities. For example, the incident of kidnapping over 200 young girls from a school by the "Boko Haram" (which means Western education is sinful, see Peters 2014) nationalist militant group in Nigeria, the postcolonial nationalist education agenda of "us" vs. "them" as evident from textbook narratives and nationalist curriculum framework in the South Asian nation-states (see. Ghosh 2012 and Kamat 2004) show how colonial legacies act against the values of inclusive education.

Within the Indian context, the modern Indian constitution espouses inclusive values, yet exclusion and discrimination continues as part of entrenched cultural practices. Hence, indigenous tribal groups and other marginalized minorities of the society, such as women, Hindu outcasts, that is, "dalits", Muslims and children with disabilities, continue to face major challenges in education. The education of these marginalized groups is often disconnected from their life experiences and learning needs, as analysed by the first India Exclusion (IE) Report 2014 published by the New Delhi-based independent research and advocacy organization, Centre for Equity Studies (2014). This report dedicated an entire chapter on issues of school education and exclusion, drawing on data from various sources in collaboration with researchers within India and abroad. The IE report highlighted that, irrespective of socioeconomic class, large section of girls, Dalits,[2] Adivasis,[3] Muslims, and children with disabilities are excluded from the schooling

[2] Hindu social outcasts

[3] They are the tribal aboriginal people of India, considered as the traditional owners and custodians of land. "Adi" is Sanskrit means ancient and "vasi" means resident.

system. The IE report (2014) portrays a grim picture of exclusion and suggests that the situation is worse for children, who experience layers of exclusion because of the intersectionality of different-abilty, gender, religion, caste and tribal family backgrounds. The process of exclusion of these children from basic education is, therefore, systemic according to the report. A disabled girl belonging to a poor Dalit, Adivasi, or Muslim background will, therefore, experience multiple layers of discrimination within the society and exclusion from the education system.

Public-private divide aggravating exclusion

In addition to exclusion based on social groups, within the Indian system, exclusion is also driven by the public-private divide in the provision and delivery of quality education. Children from upper class backgrounds with "family sponsorship" for education are at an educational advantage and large numbers of children experience "economic apartheid" because they are excluded from access to quality basic elementary education because of their poor socioeconomic backgrounds (Govinda, 2011; Juneja, 2014; Nambissan, 2010). In most cases, students belonging to historically privileged elite families within the Indian context continue to get access to well-resourced, elite, fee-paying private schools built in the model of exclusive British public schools like Harrow and Eton during colonial times (Rizvi, 2015; Srivastava, 1998).

The public sector is handicapped by a paucity of basic infrastructural resources and specialized training to implement inclusive education (Singal & Jeffrey 2011). This paucity of resources, particularly of the public sector, is also systemic, as emphasized by the IE report (2014). Despite the Kothari Commission recommendation in 1966 to allocate 6% of GDP for education, public investment in education has been very low and hovers around 3.5% of GDP even in the 1990s, reducing further below 3% in recent years (Jha, 2008; Srivastava & Noronha 2014; Tilak, 2004). Moreover, the IE report highlights that funds utilization has also decreased over the years and the majority has been allocated to infrastructure development rather than investment in teacher recruitment and teacher education for capacity development to improve student learning experience.

Conceptually inclusive education is, therefore, significant within the postcolonial Indian social and educational context which is characterized by extreme inequality because of its colonial legacy and "exclusion" from receiving the basic benefits of education based on socioeconomic class, caste, tribe, gender, religion and different-ability. However, inclusive education is universally considered as a Euro-American theoretical construct of utopia in academic debates (Kozleski et al., 2011). It is considered to have transferred to the rest of the world through policy documents by IGOs (Evans, 1999). However, within the field of comparative education extensive body of critical literature argue about the problematic nature of such policy transfer and the need to understand the local policy contexts (Beech 2006: Steiner-Khamsi 2004, 2012; Steiner-Khamsi and Quist 2000). A review of the literature on inclusive education from the global South also brings to the fore these problematic aspects. In fact, there is a sense of postcolonial rejection of the concept as neo-colonial imposition in the emerging literature, which will be discussed in the next section.

POSTCOLONIAL CONCEPTUAL DILEMMAS

The emerging literature on inclusive education from the global South reveals that, scholars continue to take a linear development historicist perspective even when they take

a postcolonial approach in critiquing the global agenda for inclusive education. According to these postcolonial scholars, as Johansson (2014) has reviewed, the concept of inclusive education appears to be thrust on developing third world countries like India without any clear policy direction about "how" to implement it. Therefore, scholars researching inclusive education in these countries argue, citing evidence from the field, that these countries are not developmentally ready to implement such a global agenda, especially since these societies lack necessary infrastructural resources for implementation. Bhattacharya (2010) argues that, inclusive education as a concept developed within certain historic and geopolitical context of the Northern/Western countries is not always applicable in the global South.

The problem with such postcolonial critiques of the concept of inclusive education, however, is that these scholars are all responding to the concept as a hegemonic "neo-colonial imposition" of Western ideas on these societies through policy documents of IGOs. These scholars are not looking beyond their specific context and they are not taking into account the fact that successful implementation of inclusive education is a global problem. Even the richer Western nations are struggling to successfully implement this abstract philosophical ideal. Since the arguments of these critical postcolonial scholars are based on development economics and the problems of implementing inclusive education in a low-resource developing world context, their arguments also do not pay much attention to the social and cultural issues which act as barriers to successfully implement inclusive education.

Moreover, since the governments of most of these postcolonial nations, including India, have borrowed the concept from the policy documents of IGOs, such as the UNESCO *Education for All*, and, particularly, the *Salamanca Declaration* for inclusive education focusing on the rights of children with disability as the most excluded group of children in every country; "inclusive education" as a concept has taken a very narrow focus in these countries with regards to the inclusion of children with disability/different-ability. Broader understanding of its pedagogic implications and democratic principles, which necessitates evaluation of excluded communities in need for inclusion within the schooling system is missing. Hence, Singal (2008, 2006) argues that, it is important to generate contextual local meaning and understanding of the concept of inclusive education. However, she also argues her case accepting the premise that inclusive education is understood as an international concept within the Indian context.

Such linear development historicist perspective of theorizing and conceptual thinking about inclusive education does not take into account the possibility that inclusive education might have been thought about and practiced in an "other" language/tongue, as Mignolo (2000) and Arteaga (1994) would argue, elsewhere in the global South prior to or in concurrence with such a movement in the global North. It is even more ironic within the postcolonial context, since this "linear global thinking" is a colonial legacy. Mignolo (2014) writes: "Linear global thinking is the story of how Europe mapped the world for its own benefit and left a fiction that became an ontology: a division of the world into 'East' and 'West', 'South' and 'North', or 'First', 'Second', and 'Third'."[4]

However, a linear Eurocentric historicist thinking is also prevalent in much of academic debates because of the hybrid subjectivities of postcolonial scholars from the global

[4] See: The North of the South and the West of the East: A Provocation to the Question: http://www.ibraaz.org/essays/108#_ftn2

South. Even postcolonial Indian historian, Chakravarty (2007) acknowledges his own debt to European thought as a hybridized postcolonial subject when he utilizes the Heideggerian notion of "worlding" to argue for historical difference and diverse ontological ways of being in the world in "Provincializing Europe: Postcolonial Thought and Historical Difference". Similarly, Spivak (1999), a major cultural critic and scholar working within the postcolonial cannon acknowledges the usefulness of diverse intellectual resources from Kant to Marx as a Europeanist herself, and as someone who pioneered deconstructive criticism by translating Derrida's work. In fact, in *A Critique of Postcolonial Reason*, Spivak (1999) critiqued much of contemporary postcolonial literature and sought to distance herself from the field with which she is most often identified.

Taiwanese critical scholar, Chen (2010), suggested something similar while critiquing postcolonial cultural studies for its "obsessive critique of the West" (p. 1) in his book *Asia as a Method*. Moving beyond just postcolonial ideological critique of the West by highlighting the limits of Western knowledge claims, particularly in the social sciences (see, e.g. Connell, 2007), he emphasized the need to "deimperialize" theory itself:

> The epistemological implication of Asian studies in Asia is clear. If "we" have been doing Asian studies, Europeans, North Americans, Latin Americans, and Africans have also been doing studies in relation to their own living spaces. That is, Martin Heidegger was actually doing European studies, as were Michel Foucault, Pierre Bourdieu, and Jürgen Habermas. European experiences were their system of reference. Once we recognize how extremely limited the current conditions of knowledge are, we learn to be humble about our knowledge claims. The universalist assertions of theory are premature, for theory too must be deimperialized. (Chen, 2010, p. 3)

Therefore, as suggested by some inclusive education scholars, such as Armstrong et al. (2010), Artiles, Kozleski, and Waitoller (2011), and Singal and Jeffrey (2011), who argue for the need to contextualize the meaning of inclusive education, in the following sections of this paper I argue for a distinct tradition of inclusive education within the Indian context.

BEYOND PROVINCIALIZING INCLUSIVE EDUCATION

Moving beyond provincializing inclusive education as a hegemonic Northern theoretical construct and seeking to contextualize the meaning of inclusive education within the Indian context, I draw upon the first IE report (2014) and Singal and Jeffrey's (2011) cultural historicist perspective in examining values of inclusivity embedded in the modern Indian constitution and Indian educational thinkers. I particularly draw upon the philosophical ruminations in the pedagogic ideas and practices of Rabindranath Tagore that resonates with broader conceptual framework of inclusive education.

As a creative artist, Tagore conceptualized his educational ideas and expressed them through his numerous essays, poems, short stories, novels and dance dramas, primarily written in Bengali. Though he became renowned as the first non-European Nobel Prize winning poet, Collins (2011) argues that perhaps his philosophy of education will be seen as his most significant contribution in the future:

> The Bengali poet, writer and philosopher Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941) remains a unique, though still under-recognised genius. Tagore's cultural production was

> vast, covering poetry, prose and plays; an astonishing volume of music which is played and sung throughout Bengal to this day (and includes the national anthems of two countries, India and Bangladesh); internationally acclaimed and exhibited paintings; social, political and philosophical essays; agrarian reform; pioneering environmentalism; the creation of a school and a university. His philosophy of education may yet come to be seen as one of his most significant contributions (online, no page number).

Hence, rather than taking a linear development historicist approach of first generation of inclusive education in Northern/Western countries followed by second generation of inclusive education in the Southern/postcolonial countries as theorized by Kozleski et al. (2011), this paper argues for culturally embedded meaning-making for inclusive education within the Indian context as suggested by Armstrong et al. (2010). The following sections of the paper draws on Mukherjee's (2015, 2017) argument for Tagore's "Southern Theory" (Connell, 2007) of inclusive education drawing on empirical data from ethnographic field research. It offers critical engagement with the "subaltern knowledge" (Mignolo, 2000) about Rabindranath Tagore's humanist philosophy and inclusive educational experiments during early 20th Century colonial British India. Thereafter, the paper argues the significance of this conceptual meaning-making of inclusive education within the contemporary Indian context.

Tagore wrote about his ideas on education in a series of essays written primarily in Bengali from 1892, analysing the many problems of mainstream "factory-model" of Indian education system during colonial times before setting up his own school in Shantiniketan as an alternative model. (Bhattacharya, 2013: Mukherjee, 2013; Tagore, 1892, 1906, 1917). However, Tagore's progressive approach to establish an alternative education system in his school for democratic citizenship, environmental sustainability and inclusive learning for all children has, for some curious reason, remained on the fringes of mainstream Indian society—even after independence from colonial rule. Though, Mukherjee (2013) argues that there has been attempts at the policy level to implement several of his ideas on education post-independence, the mainstream system still follows a colonial "factory- model" of schooling. It is to be noted here that the learner-centric and socially inclusive school Tagore built in rural Shantiniketan was a self-reflexive critical response against indigenous inequalities as well as colonial policies perpetuating segregation and exclusion. Tagore invited not just Indians across ethnic, religious, social class, caste, and gender divide to attend his school but he also invited students and scholars from abroad to his school to study and teach (Dasgupta, 1998).

Dasgupta (2013) argues:

> Rabindranath was seeking a world which has moved on from nationalism, patriotism, statism, and also capitalism- capitalism, because of his insistence on the best technology for Viswa-Bharati without the greed of profit... Indeed, my research on a history of Shantiniketan-Sriniketan-Viswa-Bharati has led me to believe that this education was a vision and an exercise in inclusion and variety, with its driving faith in the idea of a civilizational "meeting" of the world's races for an intercultural dialogue crafted through knowledge of history and the arts. (p. 280-281).

Therefore, engaging with the "subaltern knowledge" (Mignolo, 2000) of Tagore's humanist philosophy of education and experiments during colonial India provides an interesting possibility for exploring "Southern Theory" of inclusive education in its broadest sense.

A number of scholars such as Nussbaum (2006, 2010), O'Connell (2003, 2010); Ghosh, Naseem and Vijh (2010); Guha (2013) and R. Ghosh (2015) have argued that, Tagore's progressive ideas on education are as relevant today as the educational ideas of major Euro-American educational thinkers, such as Socrates, Rousseau, Pestalozzi, Froebel, Alcott, Mann and Dewey. Popkewitz (2000, p. 4) argued that, educational philosophers like John Dewey and Paulo Freire have become "indigenous foreigners" in the postcolonial hybridized societies. Here I would argue that, Rabindranath Tagore, an intellectual contemporary of John Dewey and "intellectual forerunner" of Paulo Freire, as Ghosh et al. (2010) have argued, was an important "indigenous native" intellectual, whose educational work needs to be considered seriously to understand the challenges of inclusive educational reforms even within the contemporary postcolonial Indian context.

However, Tagore's philosophy of education and inclusive model of schooling has been, by and large, neglected in postcolonial India and the Victorian colonial structures are still dominant within the education system and society. Though Tagore is much workshipped as the "*Kabi Guru*" (Poet Teacher) and the author of the Indian national anthem, most of Indian schools still follow a colonial model of "parrot's training" (Tagore, 1917) kind of rigid curriculum and pedagogy, which is detrimental to the free development of a child's mind and inclusive education for all children with diverse learning needs. As Sriprakash (2010), citing evidence based on her research, notes:

> Learning (is) largely understood as knowledge assimilation (the acquisition of the syllabus) rather than knowledge construction... The strong classification of the syllabus, as a significant aspect of the performance-based system which remained in place, [does] not support a more democratic approach to knowledge acquisition. (p. 303)

Within this larger context, Mukherjee (2015, 2017, In Press) has argued in her doctoral thesis and other articles that Tagore's humanist philosophy of education and pedagogic experiments during colonial India provide a fertile ground for extending Southern Theoretical understanding of inclusive education for both analytic and hermeneutic engagement with empirical research data. It provides an opportunity for enhancing broader theoretical understanding of the democratic underpinnings of inclusive education and pedagogic issues, rather than its narrow definition transferred through policy documents.

SIGNIFICANCE OF CONTEXTUAL MEANING-MAKING

Dreze and Sen (2013) begin their discussion of the "uncertain glory of India" with a caveat that there are multiple factors contributing to the economic underdevelopment of India in spite of recent excitement about macro-economic growth in the middle of a global recession. Among several factors, they highlight the centrality of education hindering development by quoting from Rabindranath Tagore, who said: "in my view the imposing tower of misery which today rests on the heart of India has its sole foundation in the absence of education" (p. 107). This is a striking quote from Tagore chosen by the author of the "argumentative Indian" and India's long intellectual and democratic tradition. What did Tagore mean by "absence of education" and why did Dreze and Sen (2013) chose this quote to include in their book which interrogates the underdevelopment of India? I argue, here, that, despite India's long tradition of education, for Tagore this absence of education was the absence of socially inclusive education fostering principles of cooperation and care for the "other", which Hogan (2003) refers to as the "politics of

Otherness" in Tagore based on the values of *sahrdaya* (which means a person with compassionate heart in Sanskrit, Hindi and Bengali). Though Hogan's (2003) and Radice's (2010) reading of Tagore is quite critical, as they discusss ambiguities in his ideas and his own privileged positioning with regards to certain issues, both agree that Tagore was, in principle, opposed to any kind of segregation based on nationality, class, caste, race, religion, ethnicity, gender, and other markers of social difference even within the colonial Indian context increasing disharmony based on racial, religious and national cultural differeces. Razer & Friedman (2017) state that,

> "Today,.. the growing global commitment to inclusive education- as reflected in the 2009 UNESCO World Declaration on Education for All (UNESCO, 2009)- requires teaching approaches that meet the needs of vary diverse populations. The Declaration defines "inclusive education" as "a process of strengthening the capacity of the education system to reach out to all learners" (p.8) especially those who experience exclusion because of socioeconomic level, race, ethnicity, immigration status, health problems, physical handicaps, and other such factors." (p. xvii)

Hence, I have argued that, engaging with Tagore's ideas on eduation and peadgogic practices within the colonial Indian context provides an opportunity for deeper enquiry and understanding of pedagogic issues related to inclusive education in the contemporary Indian context. This is particularly because strong postcolonial sentiments overlap with globalizing economy, global aspirations of middleclass, rising inequality and impatience of the masses for a better life. Engaging with Tagore might help generate possible solutions to serious educational and social problems of exclusion within the context, rather than just ideological critique of the concept of inclusive education as hegemonic Western imposition.

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Shifting tides: Reflecting on regional aspects of our roles as comparative and international educators

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In this paper, we critically interrogate the way in which comparative and international education coursework at two large institutions in Australia and New Zealand embody or challenge teleological, colonial, and Western/Northern-centric perspectives on education and development. Embedded within a broader and introspective examination of our roles as comparative and international educators in these universities, we deconstruct the intent behind our course objectives, readings, lecture content and assessment tasks, and place them into conversation with our own pedagogical self-reflections, observations of practice and student feedback. In doing so, we highlight ways in which we believe we are beginning to prepare a new generation of more critically conscious, and regionally-minded set of teachers, development practitioners and researchers. Specifically, by 'making the familiar strange,' and encouraging our students to co-construct knowledge, we argue we can begin to create actionable spaces which encourage an alternative reading of the world; something colleagues from across Oceania and further afield have long argued for as part of the decolonizing process. We also highlight how this process has led us to better recognize our own positionalities and epistemologies as CIE educators, in hopes that it can lead to an ongoing space for dialogue between educators and researchers within and beyond the region.

Keywords: comparative education, teacher education, decolonial, postcolonial, self-study, actionable space, pedagogy

INTRODUCTION

Students are introduced and exposed to the field of comparative and international education (CIE) in a number of ways, including: as teacher education students; arts-based students in sociology, anthropology, politics or development studies; or as graduate students pursuing individual research projects, among others. In this paper, we posit that students' participation through undergraduate and postgraduate coursework in CIE is a mechanism for shaping and reshaping the field of CIE. We believe this engagement can

(re)constitute enduring understandings about the role and place of education in national and, increasingly, multi-level development efforts. Students' understandings of CIE are then carried with them into the future positions they occupy as educators, international development practitioners, policymakers or scholars. In sum, the conceptualizations of CIE they learn and internalize in CIE coursework have significance beyond the classroom.

To date, however, little research has explored the processes through which CIE coursework aims to cultivate specific understandings of the field. Likewise, scant research has investigated student experiences of the ways that it may do so. Concurrently, there also remains a paucity of scholarly research on the interests, agendas, and backgrounds of those teaching CIE to these individuals. While some work has commenced on charting the history and content of CIE teaching around the world (Bickmore, Hayhoe, Manion, Mundy, & Read, 2017; Crossley & Tickly, 2004; Johansson Fua, 2016; Kubow & Blosser, 2016; Larsen, Majhanovich, & Masemann, 2007; O'Sullivan, Maarman, & Wolhuter, 2008; O'Sullivan, Wolhuter, & Maarman, 2010; Wolhuter, O'Sullivan, Anderson, & Wood, 2011), minimal research has examined how and why CIE is taught as it is within institutions in Oceania. This is particularly important because of the differing epistemologies on which the act of comparison and internationalization within education might be both understood and enacted in the broader Oceanic region (e.g., Coxon & Munce, 2008; Johansson Fua, 2016; Sanga, Niroa, Kalmele, & Crowl, 2004; Smith, 1999; Thaman, 1993, 1999). This article builds on these foundations because it extends research on the pedagogies of practice in the field.

At the 2015 Oceania Comparative and International Education Society (OCIES) conference, we started having conversations about different approaches to teaching comparative and international education, based, in part, on Thomas' (2015) presentation about his own CIE pedagogy in Wisconsin. Through these initial conversations, the idea emerged to collectively explore our own pedagogies and processes. We, therefore, launched a small pilot study wherein we sought to investigate the pedagogical means through which the field of CIE is (re)formed at our respective institutions: the Universities of Sydney and Auckland. Both universities have a long history of engagement with and shaping of aspects of regional and international agendas for CIE, and in developing new generations of CIE scholars throughout the wider Asia-Pacific region (Fox, 2008).

Yet, recent geopolitical shifts, increasing concerns about inequity with/between countries in our near Pacific region, and ongoing dialogue about the tensions between globalization, regional, and national appropriation, establish an urgent need to critically assess our own pedagogical intent behind the teaching of CIE (Kubow & Blosser, 2016). This demand is made even more visible when we read the practice of CIE through postcolonial and decolonising critiques of development and new regionalisms which demand us to think about our (re)presentations of ourselves and others (Fox, 2014; Johansson Fua, 2016; McCormick, 2016; Mignolo, 2007; Takayama, Sriprakash, & Connell, 2017). Due precisely to those histories of colonization and ongoing economic and political dependencies, understandings of what constitutes "our" region have been dynamic and varied, dependent on location, standpoint and time (Hau'ofa, 1993; Johansson Fua, 2016; McCormick, 2017). It is for these reasons that we believe it is important to take time to understand how our own pedagogical intent and enactment shapes and influences our students' thinking and understandings of CIE and what it means for their own work as future educators, development practitioners, policymakers and scholars.

At the outset, we feel it is important to provide a disclaimer for this work. From the start, we were highly conscious that our institutions have particular economic, historical, and political locations, notably as both former colonizing nations of the region and currently, financially dominant, aid-giving nations.[1] Due to the nature of the duo-/trio-ethnographic methodology outlined below, as well as logistical, resource and time constraints, the claims that can be made from of this component of the study are, therefore, so far limited to experiences located in these two institutions, within networks of regional personal and professional relationships. While we attempt to draw from that range of relationships and work, our work cannot and does not claim to be representative of the range of places and voices that constitute our region, including from Pacific Island nations, or anyone born and bred in Australia or New Zealand and, importantly, including indigenous perspectives. That said, this first stage of the research was, from the outset, viewed as an exploratory pilot, from which we hoped we would be able to collaborate with colleagues in the broader region with the aim, ideally, of building deeper understandings and contributing to continual processes of addressing and dismantling contemporary and historical inequities, and long-existing processes of decolonization.

To these ends, this paper explores several aspects of our pedagogy. It is effectively research into our curricular and pedagogical practices, with the aim of us understanding ourselves, as university educators, and the experiences of student learning in dialectic with the intended and enacted curriculum expectations for our CIE courses (Hubball & Gold, 2007). This included an analysis of: (1) our course objectives, readings, lecture content, and assessment tasks—what Tikly and Crossley (2001, p. 564) call the "cannon of CIE"[2] and how they are linked to our aspirations and intentions for our students; and (2) the impact this pedagogical cannon has on the students themselves. Much of these data are read through the challenge put to all CIE educators by Oceanic scholars, of how we might counter the imperialistic and colonial boundaries, which arguably may be reproduced through the pedagogy of CIE itself (Thaman, 2009). Indeed, many senior scholars within the Oceania Comparative and International Education Society (OCIES) have been trained and educated at various institutions of the Pacific Islands, Australia and New Zealand (the contexts included in this analysis), and further abroad.

The paper begins by discussing the approach we undertook in this project, which at its core was a collaborative self-study into our own pedagogical intentions and enactments when it comes to the teaching of CIE in parts of this region (Loughran & Russell, 2002). We then move to discussing some key themes and issues arising out of the data we gathered. Given our particular concern about how we might use CIE to disrupt prevalent tendencies, we give specific attention to the notion of disrupting binaries. We believe that only then can we move our students towards what Fox (2016, p. 70) calls "ethical and actionable spaces" where they open themselves to what the "other" is saying, and

[1] We offer thanks to one reviewer for drawing our attention to the fact that we had not acknowledged and explored this important consideration sufficiently in early drafts of the article, even though it has been a consideration throughout the work.

[2] This canon, according to the authors, includes the major areas of knowledge, issues, axioms, theoretical frameworks, and methodologies that define comparative and international education as a field of study. They acknowledge that the canon is not a fixed entity, is contested, and often reflects particular views of social reality and of human nature that serve to legitimize a range of often competing interests within the academy and in wider society.

recognize another reality for education and development is possible and probable if acted upon in specific ways.

Throughout this analysis, we are particularly drawn to Epeli Hau'ofa's (1993, p. 16) vision of Oceania as a "sea of islands". He claims that "Oceania is vast, Oceania is expanding, Oceania is hospitable and generous, Oceania is humanity rising from the depths of brine and regions of fire deeper still, Oceania is us," and he challenges dominant views that have "taken the Pacific further and further into dependency on powerful nations" (p. 2). While acknowledging Hau'ofa's perspective as a response to deep and long inequities and injustices inflicted upon Pacific island states by regional neighbours and those beyond, we believe that view of Oceania could also extend to how we look at and practice CIE *in* a wider Oceania; namely a broad and encompassing field which tolerates, accepts, and welcome different epistemological and ontological paradigms as per Hau'ofa's vision. It is also one that we have discussed in greater depth in other papers associated with this project, and has been discussed regionally (see Thaman 2009, among many). Thus, at the core of this introspective engagement into our own pedagogy is a broader response and call to those who are members or affiliated with OCIES: As part of conceptualizing and realizing a new vision for CIE in the society, specifically one that is more inclusive and more porous to multiple ways of knowing and being, sits a responsibility to examine our own roles as educators within the Oceanic spaces and places within which we find ourselves.

TOWARDS LOCATING CIE AND CIE PEDAGOGY REGIONALLY

At the outset, we feel it is important to acknowledge our own positionalities and some of the key limitations of this voyage. Importantly, we need to acknowledge that this was a pilot study, and the methodology, time, and resourcing did not afford for the study to extend to other institutions in the region, or other units of study (particularly in the case of Sydney). As noted above, there is an inherent bias and potential reproduction of binaries given that Australia and New Zealand are not fully representative of Oceania's diversity. For this reason, it is important to make clear that we do not intend to lay claim to what the teaching of CIE might mean to our colleagues and peers in other institutions across the region; however, we do hope that this pilot research will contribute to and extend existing conversations about this issue in coming years. Additionally, none of us are 'natives' of Oceania, but rather have transplanted ourselves into the region at various times in the past 10-15 years. We are novices in understanding the full complexity of Oceania as a region.

Yet based on our ongoing teaching of CIE, growing engagement with colleagues, emerging research experiences in the region, and awareness that there exists an extensive body of scholarship that stakes a claim for an Oceanic epistemology that is distinct, we aim to make a further contribution, albeit modest, to the conversation about what CIE is or is not, and how pedagogy itself shapes the field. As those now tasked with educating the next generation of teachers, international development practitioners, and scholars of education and development in the region and beyond, we feel drawn to Johansson Fua's (2016) observation that:

> Hau'ofa's open invitation to an Oceanic space not only encourages the voices of Pacific people in all their complexity and diversity, but also more recent "travellers" who have come to call this region their home. In today's Pacific, the voices are

> diverse, complex and multi-faceted with an increasing blurring of the lines between "insider" and "outsider". (p. 35)

Johansson Fua goes on to offer a cautionary critique of the field, citing Hau'ofa's important "foundation for problematizing reliance on outsiders," in stating that,

> The current conversation regarding the centrality of culture and context to the field remains generally for "outsiders", for researchers, academics and development partners who are external to the context. The question asked here is, if the voice of insiders are included in the conversations about comparative and international educational research, what inferences would this have on research approaches, on methodology and on the knowledge generated? (p. 32)

As educators, researchers, and people from hybrid contexts who aim to recognize these concerns, yet also to variously challenge binaries of "inside" and "out" (see McCormick, 2017 and McNess, Arthur, & Crossley, 2015), we hope future stages emanating from this pilot study and other work can respond to this call.

Scholars like Tikly and Crossley (2001) and McGrath (2010) raise concern about the numerous exclusionary discourses and singular narratives common to CIE, which are then (re)produced in particular pedagogical canons. Specifically, they observe how there is a growing danger that rationalistic and problem-solving narratives within CIE tend to homogenise and decontextualize the local for the purposes of understanding "what works best." This view has more recently been expressed again by Roger Dale (2015), who notes that CIE politically, discursively, theoretically, and methodology has, in large part, been the product of the teleological project of Western modernization. CIE under this banner becomes a model for empirically testing, and then influencing and shaping national, regional, and global education policies under the banner of making knowledge relevant and immediately applicable. Takayama, Sriprakash, and Connell (2017) suggest that the field of CIE has always had colonial legacies, and present examples of this include the mounting power of the Organisation for Economic Co-operation and Development through measures such as Programme for International Student Assessment, and the World Bank through the Systems Approach for Better Education Results (see Robertson, 2012; Robertson & Dale, 2013). This neo-colonial and modernist view of comparison and internationalization, tends to privilege the Northern, English-speaking episteme as Tikly and Crossley (2001) note; in turn "marginalizing" or "othering" alternative viewpoints.

The prevalence of this modernist and rationalist discourse within CIE in some institutions in the region, and its potential to intentionally or inadvertently reproduce universalist ideas on globalization, international development and educational "success," is one about which a number of scholars in our region have voiced concern. Koya Vaka'utu (2016, p. 3), drawing on Baudrillard's (2002, p. 63) notion of the "violence of the global" identifies how the modernist narrative has "conditioned many to believe in its important relative truth and in the bounded rationality that we are only as good as the outside world says we are." In a similar way, Fox (2008, p. 19) describes the inherent tensions which exist between the Western/Northern narratives and values and local constructions of knowledge in our region, driving "the threat of exclusion" and acting as "driving forces behind resistance" towards CIE. Johansson Fua (2016) recognizes that while CIE has always had space in it for recognizing and acknowledging the centrality of culture and

context, what was missing within the CIE society of the region[3] was a space where researchers from the Pacific played an active role in shaping the research agenda, the methodologies, and knowledge generated within the society. Instead, initiatives such as the Rethinking Pacific Education Initiative by Pacific People for Pacific People, the Network of Pacific Education, and the Vaka Pasifiki advanced scholarship and action on what an education agenda for and by Pacific peoples would look like in parallel to the CIE society (see Coxon & Munce, 2008; Manu, Johansson Fua, & Tagivakatini, 2008; Nabobo-Baba, 2012; Sanga, 2016; Taufeulungaki, Pene, & Benson, 2002; Thaman, 2009). While there was occasional cross-fertilization from colleagues who worked across both spaces, there was a general sense that the CIE society, in its former incarnation was not such a welcoming house, with perhaps not as many rooms as was necessary to accommodate the diversity of the region served by it.[4] How this might be overcome through our pedagogy became a particular concern for us as CIE educators at two large institutions in the region.

METHODOLOGY

The two institutions where this research occurred—the Universities of Sydney and Auckland—both teach CIE as explicit courses, but with significant variation. Sydney is one of the few remaining institutions in Australia or New Zealand to have an elective course within its undergraduate teacher education programme on CIE (see Fox, 2008). The course, titled: *Global Poverty and Education*, focuses on exploring relationships between education, poverty and international development in multi-spatial geographical, institutional, and policy contexts (from sub-national levels through to global).[5] It is linked to several of the Australian and New South Wales (NSW) frameworks and teaching standards that reference the diversity of students and their cultural and national backgrounds (NSW Education Standards Authority, 2017) as well as the importance of understanding local and global connections in teacher practice (Commonwealth of Australia, 2009). Additionally, at the postgraduate level, three additional courses—two taught online—are offered at Sydney. One is a *Global Poverty, Social Policy, and Education* unit, which presents to students' various interpretations and contestations on the relationship between education and poverty, and critically analyses policy frameworks (such as EFA and the MDGs) that have been established to address these concerns. Another is a Globalisation *and Education* unit, which affords students opportunities to view educational phenomena through competing theories/viewpoints of globalization, and the third *Development: Communication and Education*, which is located in the Department of Anthropology and more explicitly incorporates linguistics dimensions. At Auckland, just one course is offered on CIE, and only at the postgraduate level. The course, *Education and Development*, is designed for students studying in the

[3] Until 2015, the society was known as the Australia New Zealand Comparative and International Education Society, or ANZCIES. The name change of the society, was prompted by a desire to make the society more inclusive and representative of the region (see Coxon, 2016).

[4] This was discussed by Professor Unaisi Nabobo-Baba, from the University of Guam, in her keynote address at the 2016 OCIES Conference in Sydney.

[5] It should be noted that both instructors of this CIE course are unsatisfied with its name and have requested a change to something that better reflects the nuance of the field and discourses related to "poverty." However, due to levels and systems of bureaucracy at higher education institutions, a more comprehensive name change necessitates a series of proposals and subsequent approvals. In the meantime, the instructors have been able to adjust it to "Global Perspectives, Poverty & Education" from 2018 and recognize changing and multiple understandings of 'poverty', its causes and consequences.

Faculties of Education and Arts, and often includes students coming from both education and development studies backgrounds. This course covers similar content to the postgraduate courses in Sydney but has historically paid significant attention to New Zealand's official development aid (ODA) and the manifestation of education and development issues in the Pacific region (see Table 1). Another key difference in the descriptors alone is a clearer signposting in the Auckland course of the problematic labels of developing/underdeveloped as well as of the concept of development—indicated by the placement of the terms themselves in quotation marks in the course descriptor available to students.

As already noted, the research collaboration between the three of us began with the intention of conducting a trio-ethnography, which we started before receiving seed funding through an OCIES Network and Fellowship Grant in 2016. The grant then enabled us to visit each other's institutions and observe classes/tutorials, as well as virtually collaborate, reflect on, and write together over a period of 12 months. Before the exchanges to each other's institutions, we commenced by writing an auto-ethnographic account of our own understandings of CIE and pedagogical intentions when teaching CIE. These accounts were shared with each other, with each person responding to the other two reflections as we engaged in a trio-ethnography, more details of which can be found in other existing and forthcoming work (McCormick, Shah, & Thomas, 2016). This aspect of the process revealed that while we all teach, research, and supervise in CIE in our respective institutions, our past experiences, backgrounds and entry into academia have been quite varied. This has, in turn, shaped some of our individual pedagogical intents and foci. Interestingly, despite our variegated backgrounds, we shared several common threads in our aspirations as CIE educators in our respective institutions. These are discussed in greater detail in a subsequent section.

Table 1: CIE courses at Auckland and Sydney included in present study

Location	**Auckland**	**Sydney**
Course title	EDUC 705: Education and the Development Process	EDUF 3026: Global Poverty and Education
Students	Postgraduate students in Arts and Education	Undergraduate teacher education students
Course descriptor	Education has been considered a key factor for national development in countries throughout the Global South since the post-WWII emergence of development programmes. A vast array of research literature linking educational ideas, structures and processes with social, cultural and economic change has been produced in the decades since. This course examines the nature and role of education within the 'developing' world, with a particular focus on the region of which New Zealand is part, Oceania. The theoretical content of the course is derived largely from concepts and models of "development" and globalization and how these influence	This unit of study explores relationships between education, poverty and development in international contexts. It acknowledges the importance of a broad-ranging view of international development, including its economic, political, and cultural dimensions. The unit examines key indicators related to poverty and education, and explores the educational implications of global programs including Education for All (EFA), the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) and the Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs). The roles of

	educational policy and practice. A key question that guides this course is whether and how education might contribute to sustainable, equitable and peaceful development for nations (and their citizens) on the 'periphery' of the global economy.	multilateral, bilateral and non-state agencies in educational development are investigated to discuss the multiple actors in global development and the politics of official development aid (ODA).

Following this trio-ethnography and its subsequent analysis, we engaged more substantively in interrogating our pedagogical canon in light of this initial work. This included sharing and reviewing the course outlines, selected lecture materials, and assessment tasks for units taught in 2016, and observing at least one class and/or tutorial session of another of our peers. A total of six observations in two different units, taught in the latter half of 2016, were conducted across our institutions, and each lasted between one to three hours. The three of us agreed to use a peer review model, founded on principles of mutuality and equality, and which would act as a formative and self-reflective exercise for the observer and the observed (see Gosling & O'Connor, 2009). A protocol was developed for the observation which involved: (1) a pre-observation discussion to identify successes and challenges to date of the unit/section under observation and key areas for the observer to focus attention on; (2) the observation itself which involved recording what was occurring at regular intervals, as well as observer reflection on this activity; and (3) a post observation debrief in which the teacher and the observer both discussed what occurred during that particular class, with some discussion of pedagogical strengths and shared agreement on areas for further consideration/reflection (Bell & Cooper, 2013; Bernstein, 2008). The observation notes and subsequent reflection (often in the form of a conversation), were recorded, transcribed and later coded.

From the student experience side, two sources of data were reviewed and analysed. One included summative evaluations of the courses, conducted either externally by academic quality assurance departments within each of our universities, and/or internally by the teaching team itself. In Sydney, 10 students (out of 34 enrolled in EDUF 3026) responded to the online summative survey (USS), and in Auckland, five out of eight students enrolled in EDUC 705 completed the university-administered online summative survey (SET Evaluation). Both surveys asked similar course evaluation questions using a 5-point Likert-scale on aspects such as course structure, organization, assessment utility/relevance, and overall course satisfaction. Room was also provided in both of these online surveys for students to make comment on aspects of the course they found helpful/enjoyed, and areas they would hope to see improvement. All eight students enrolled in EDUC 705 at the University of Auckland completed a separate survey administered in the last class sessions which asked three open ended questions about how their thinking had shifted on understandings of development, education's contribution to development, and the similarity/differences in concerns in education between the "developing" and "developed" world.

Attempts were also made in both institutions to speak to students after the completion of the course/unit and gather in-depth feedback on their experiences. A common semi-structured interview guide, used across both institutions, asked questions about how their ideas about education and development, along with CIE as a field, shifted as a result of the course, as well as what they generally enjoyed most and least about the course. In Sydney, despite multiple attempts to reach out to students completing the undergraduate

unit in Semester 2, 2016, only one student committed to be interviewed. In Auckland, five students agreed to participate in an interview, either in person or through Skype/telephone. These interviews were conducted by a research assistant to retain some level of objectivity, and all interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded inductively.

While an extensive array of data was collected as part of this larger comparative project, we are unable to share all of these data in the limited space available to us in this article. Instead, we focus this article on some thematic strands related to the curriculum of CIE—which we broadly understand in this paper as not only the content of our courses, but also our pedagogic intentions, assessment structures, and student experiences/outcomes. Doing so allows us to explore whether and how the way we approach the teaching of CIE at present addresses the important task of creating more inclusive and, potentially, interactive spaces for CIE in our region.

FINDINGS: EMBRACING THE POSTCOLONIAL AND POST-STRUCTURAL TURNS IN CIE CURRICULUM

Tikly and Crossly (2001) note that sitting alongside the rationalist push within CIE has been a growing counter current—shaped by critical theory along with postmodern, postcolonial, and feminist theories—which aims to decentre some of the universal pretensions of Western thought that have marked CIE. This critical voice specifies the need to question taken for granted assumptions embedded in ideas of "good education practice" and to reveal, rather than mask, the links between the modernist discourse and the power of dominant groups in society. The aim of using feminist and postcolonial theory in CIE is to recover "marginalised voices of the Other and to accept alternative truths and a plurality of ways of knowing the world" (Tikly & Crossly, 2001, p. 571).

Specific to our region, Thaman (1999, 2009) and Nabobo-Baba (2012), for example, have noted that those teaching about and discussing the role of education in the region must constantly ask the question of *education for whom and for what*. For educators, such as ourselves, it means presenting and acknowledging the equal merit of alternative knowledge systems and ways of being, and encouraging students to question the complacency of a unilateral perspective of internationalization, globalization, and development-writ-large (Koya Vaka'utu, 2016). This call to "unleash our global postcolonial consciousness" and to act in an intercultural, actionable, and ethical space, can allow us as CIE educators to avoid the reproduction of symbolic violence, which excludes many of our neighbours and colleagues (Fox, 2016, p. 59). Some examples of how this manifested in our curriculum is described in the following sections, which are organized according to two larger themes that emerged from the data and our goals as CIE educators: 1) making the familiar strange; and 2) co-constructing knowledge. Each of these themes are considered in turn.

Making the familiar strange

All three of us agreed that within our region, which has been irrevocably shaped by colonization, imperialism, and the marginalization of indigenous viewpoints, it was vital to take a transparent and critical look at relationships of power that exist within the enterprises of education and development and, indeed, within this research itself, and to embrace a stronger decolonising and post-development theoretical standpoint (e.g., Escobar, 1995; Esteva, 1998; Latouche, 1993). For example, one of us, in our initial auto-ethnography reflected that "I hope my students leave my courses with an enduring desire

and ability to evaluate their actions and the deeply rooted assumptions in development discourse and practice," with another of us responding to this, "Funny . . . I think I might have written almost the same thing to a tee. Perhaps again this is a commonality that binds us together."

In reviewing the objectives of two of our CIE courses (see Table 2), we identified that there were several common themes that cut across both units: (1) explicit attention to competing meanings and understandings of "international development" as a concept; (2) focus on the dialectic which exists between the local and global, but with clear attention to the tensions and clashes which neoliberal globalization brings about in small-island and developing nations; (3) a strong critique of the current aid architecture and the ways in which it narrows spaces for authentic "partnership"; and (4) critical deconstructions of binaries and taken for granted justificatory narratives, such as that of the relationship between education and "poverty" as well as broader questions of what poverty and underdevelopment mean within education.

We came to realize that a common thread running through the course objective/learning intentions of the course outlines we compared was clear intention to critically unpack some of the commonly held notions of education and its connections to development nationally, regionally, and globally. The rationale for this was expressed by one of us in our initial reflections during the trio-ethnographic component of the study:

> I find that my students come in with quite idealised visions of what role and function education can serve in "development." I want these students to look at this relationship in a more critical light, and understand that underpinning such a linear and universal narrative are actually quite problematic assumptions and theories of causality. For the teachers I work with, it is important that they see their often classroom experiences contextualised within broader global narratives and concerns about accountability, measurement, universality of knowledge, and where and how "education" can take place . . . I want to open up the Pandora's box and get them to see that education can be as much as a problem as a panacea for development concerns and issues, and that there are important questions to be asked about the relationship between education and poverty reduction.

Table 2: Course objectives from the CIE courses at Auckland and Sydney

Course	Course objectives
EDUC 705 (Auckland)	*1.* Identify contestations and debates regarding the role of education towards social, economic and political development for countries in the Global South; *2.* Critically evaluate the "Global Education Agenda"—informed in large part by the Education for All and Millennium Development Goals—and assess its strengths and limitations, as well as the influences it has had on national and international educational policymaking; *3.* Critically analyse processes of globalization and localization and their implications for education policies and practices internationally and/or in a particular context; *4.* Consider the social, cultural, environmental and economic consequences of national and international issues in its relation to education and development. *5.* Develop skills such as discerning and evaluating arguments from academic texts to present this in written form, and working collaborative and constructively with colleagues.

EDUF 3026 (Sydney)	1. Understand major global educational forces impacting on developing countries; 2. Apply knowledge of major models of national development and their implications for educational theory, policy and practice; 3. Apply this knowledge base to a range of policy issues of current concern in many countries internationally; 4. Gain critical understanding of the functions of formal schooling and non-formal education, including early childhood care and education, in countries identified as "developing"; 5. Understand Australia's international relations in education and major multilateral organizations working in education, and appreciate the potential role of course unit graduates in professional and academic work in international and development education; 6. Application of the above skills to: advanced academic research in both individual and group tasks; bibliographic searches of high relevance to content; and advanced academic writing skills.

There was an explicit intention common across all our pedagogical approaches to draw on C. Wright Mills' (1959) idea of the sociological imagination and to connect personal experiences to society at large. As one of us discussed in response to the above reflection,

> I also hope current and future teachers learn to make the familiar strange. I hope their engagement with and exploration of other cultures and educational systems causes them to ask critical questions about the system that is most familiar or comfortable for them . . . [and] consider the broader structural elements.

In essence, without explicitly mentioning Mills (2000[1959]), he hoped that students get outside "the welter of their daily experience" (p. 5) and gain "the capacity to shift from one perspective to another" (p. 7).

At the same time, there was a strong desire to disrupt the "othering" process that is perpetuated in CIE—when we classify countries as developed or developing, Global North/South, fragile/not, or poor. The course in Sydney, for example, asks the critical question of "are we all developing countries now?" before the Sustainable Development Goals made that question a global concern by including all countries in the new development agenda. This then manifests in the course structure, with a lecture that looks at issues of poverty and marginalization in the United States. The objective of the lecture is to challenge students' conceptions of what it means to be "developed" and, by doing so, allow them to move away from teleological, modernist binaries of orthodox development theory. The lecturer noted that,

> …the challenge and opportunity to explore . . . one's own system [is] both difficult and exciting. Yet it's so incredibly important, in my mind . . . for many of my students . . . [who] are overwhelmingly but understandably myopic in their perspective of education.

Indeed, blurring the boundaries between historic notions of development was deemed pivotal to the function of the course and, therefore, influenced the curating of course content.

The disruption of binaries was also visible in practice in other parts of the course. One tutorial session in EDUF 3026 followed up on a lecture on the impacts of decentralization and privatization of education in Indonesia. The lecturer asked students to consider the

parallels between what had been described as occurring in Indonesia and what was occurring in higher education in Australia. Students were quick to identify how the increasing differentiation of qualifications and associated fees with different degrees were a product of a user-pays model of higher degree provision. They also noted how this culture made students "consumers" and shifted the focus towards keeping students happy rather than ensuring students were challenged and learning. Observation notes, taken by one of us documenting this session, record:

> [The lecturer] did an excellent job of weaving the course narrative together—purpose of education as well as question of "whether we are all developing countries" in terms of the common issues and challenges faced across both Australia and Indonesia. [It] provokes students to think beyond critique to action as well as to contextualize their experiences as a student and as future teachers.

This critical lens ideally aims to challenge students to consider the often deeply held assumptions they maintain about their own experiences and perspectives.

Indeed, there was a strong emphasis within the EDUF 3026 course at Sydney to explore in detail the ways in which development thought and practice has maintained assumptions of colonial relations and human capitalist theory. As an example, the lecture, readings and workshops for one week focused on deconstructing and locating the notion of "regions," particularly in how it has been deployed in the architecture and discourse of education and development, with specific focus on Australia and near Pacific contexts. The aim was to relate to students' identities as citizens and educators. The lecture began with positing the question: *(How) do you see (y)our region?* This framing deliberately highlighted that some may or may not consider it a relevant marker, and that those understandings may or may not be shared. In the lecture, the whole group shared their responses, which ranged from sub-national ideas of regional affiliation, to macro-level "Global South/North" identifications. The aim was to encourage students to consider questions of geographical and other scale, personal locations and, importantly, to disrupt potential assumptions of shared understanding in language and terminology, which is a through-line of the unit. The lecturer then brought the focus to the supra-national and considers the differential naming of regional and sub-regional variations in: Asia Pacific, the South Pacific, Oceania, Micronesia, Polynesia and their origins with some, such as Melanesia, originally based on racist identification of physical attributes (see McCormick 2011, among others, for fuller discussion) and how these labels change over time. Within the lecture, histories of colonization of and by Australia, slaving/"black-birding" and institutionalized discrimination in Australia, and the parallel construction of formal schooling systems, were outlined. These aspects are located in critical discussions of conceptions of modernity, those identified as "indigenous" or "traditional" epistemologies and knowledges, language, place and related to differing purposes and types of education. These areas of inquiry were, in turn, contrasted with and related to wider education and international development paradigms and theories, including, for example, liberal capitalist, postcolonial, radical humanist, explored in earlier weeks and assignments (McCowan & Unterhalter, 2015).

All of the above topics are framed within a discussion of contemporary decolonizing movements across inter-related research, pedagogy, policy and "practice" spheres, by and with educators and researchers from Pacific island countries. This includes exploring visual metaphors for Pacific education, research approaches and pedagogies (Sanga, 2013) in Tonga, Vanuatu and the Solomon Islands, examining the Reclaiming Pacific

Education Initiative (Nabobo-Baba, 2012), and the Melanesian Spearhead Group's Alternative Indicators of Development initiative (Malvatumauri National Council of Chiefs 2012), and discussing some of the recent work of the OCIES. The course also explores the regional work of Vanuatu's *Wan Smol Bag* organisation and other collaborations between "internal" and "external" education actors, and ties it to multiple scales and types of education activity and actors. Readings and videos for the week expose students to a range of perspectives and voices, and include the Vanuatu Alternative Indicators pilot report, a Papua New Guinean teacher's auto-ethnography and materials from the Pacific scholars cited above (Reta, 2010). The lecturers for the course also consider and invoke complexities of their own roles as educators and researchers in an Australian institution working in different ways in multi-level contexts. In sum, at Sydney, the course and its instructors actively seek to disrupt assumptions through the approaches and perspectives noted above, as well as others not reported in this paper.

In the case of EDUC 705 in Auckland, the inclusion of concerns of poverty and underdevelopment within Aotearoa/New Zealand was only instituted last year based on inspiration from the structure of the Sydney course. This fact alone highlights the benefits of engaging in collaborative self-study across courses and institutions. In New Zealand, there is mounting concern for the impact which neoliberal policies have had on the social egalitarian foundations of New Zealand society, and particularly on issues such as educational underachievement and its links to child poverty (Boston & Chapple, 2014). In response, at the end of EDUC 705, students are now asked to reflect on what the SDGs mandate that all countries be accountable to the goals means for New Zealand. They are provided data on patterns of educational achievement broken down by ethnicity and wealth quintiles, and also access to the report produced by the UN's Commission on the Rights of the Child (2016). They discuss the implications these data have for New Zealand as having "developing world problems" within its own borders, similar to the Sydney lecture on "development" issues of human wellbeing in the United States. Some of the Auckland students, in their written reflection afterwards noted the following:

> What the data seems to suggest is that perhaps the binary of developed and developing countries no longer serve us well when we look at issues of sustainable development. It blinds us to the fact that inequalities and inequities exist within so-called developed countries.
>
> When we look beyond the statistics of the big picture of the economy such as GDP, CPI, export and import rates and so on, the figure gathered within any country such as poverty, inequality can show how a so-called developed country face developing issues domestically [sic]. In this sense, it is ambiguous to identify who is absolutely developed or developing for sure.

What these reflections from students suggests is awareness of the unhelpful nature of binaries and othering, which has been an unfortunate legacy of development activities in the region. It suggests growing cognisance of students, of the blurring of lines between "insider" and "outsider," which Johansson Fua (2016) notes is a reality of the contemporaneous Oceanic space we commonly inhabit.

These comments also highlight the extent to which the framing and language of the instructor, as well as the course readings curated by the instructor, influence the thinking and language of the students enrolled in the course. For this reason and others, we contend it is vital for course instructors to interrogate their own assumptions about education and development, and to think critically, perhaps with the assistance of critical friends, about

the discourses, images, and perspectives promoted throughout their enactment of the curriculum.

Co-constructing knowledge

What also became clear as we reviewed our pedagogical cannon is that our assessment activities play an important role in shaping students' understandings of their own assumptions, through authentic meaningful tasks that support peer-to-peer learning (Wiggins & McTighe, 1999). In EDUF 3026 at Sydney, students are asked to facilitate workshops with their peers where they extend on the topic of the lecture through case studies, simulated activities, or in-depth policy analysis. Likewise, within EDUC 705 at Auckland, one assignment has students work in groups and take on the role of an NGO, special interest group, or multilateral organization in shaping the specific targets and indicators of SDG4. In setting these tasks, our aim is to provide students with agency and choices in assessment options so they can pursue personal areas of interest, while at the same time encouraging them to take creative or different approaches, widen their own pedagogical pallets, and engage in authentic learning activities. This co-construction of knowledge, we believe, is emblematic of what Hau'ofa (1994) notes as the "relational space" where dialogue and collaborative learning and research activities can begin to occur. Observation notes from the student-led workshops in Sydney record that the,

> [W]orkshops were an excellent opportunity for student led, peer-to-peer discussion and reflection, there was strong evidence of critical engagement, understanding and preparation from the students, and were ample opportunities for students to reflect/extend the readings and think about ideas more broadly within the workshop format.

The importance of students learning and engaging with each other, and forming relationships seemed to be a strength of these CIE courses, because several students commented on this aspect in the feedback they provided. For example, one Sydney student noted the following in the formal course evaluation:

> I thought it was really good how a lot of people came together and you could discuss in sort of a group dynamic about what was going on and there was real back and forth in the class. People [came] from all the different backgrounds in our class that I was in and [there was] a lot of conversation.

Another student, in an interview after the completion of the course remarked how the course format and assessment structure led to a classroom culture where, unlike other courses when "often it is the same or similar persons speaking every class," in EDUF3026, "we all had the opportunity to speak every time." This student's comment is perhaps particularly meaningful given her status as an English language learner.

One of the observations in Auckland was of the SDG4 role-play activity led by the students. Again, one of the observers notes that, "the realities of negotiating from different agency standpoints was really brought home to the students" and "it was really clear how students embodied the organizational ethos and behaviours." Students made similar comments about the effect of their participation in this role-play in their final course evaluation and in interviews that took place with them after. One noted:

> I think the role-play with the SDGs was really interesting, because we were assigned a group with a particular perspective and not all of us necessarily agreed on [this

> position], but we had to fight and justify our cause . . . representing things that [are] not necessarily your own ideas.

These kinds of learning, we argue, cannot be taught through readings or lectures alone.

Important about this pedagogical approach is that it can and does draw students into what Sanga (2016, p. 13) calls "unfamiliar, uncomfortable places" where students may be asked to unsettle common perceptions of development, aid, and education's role within this. This was recognized as both a challenge and a vital aspect of our work as CIE educators in the region. One of us, when discussing our course objectives, noted:

> I can see that the big story I want my students to leave with is one of understanding the complexity of the education endeavour with the development process. There is a strong element of critical inquiry in my approach, which sometimes leads to students feeling a bit despondent as the lectures progress. Balancing that critique with some optimism is something I try to do, but can sometimes become a tough juggle.

For the students' themselves, summative feedback received from them suggests the critical perspective taken in our CIE courses had strong resonance and impact in unsettling some common truths for them. One Sydney student commented: "I have become a lot more critical about education's role to development and discovered how education can promote a certain kind of development that is in the interests of specific groups." In a similar vein, another Sydney student noted: "[The course] made me much more conscious of the whole diversity of views that generally are held towards education and just the values and assumptions that underpin the different educational systems that emerge." For current and future teachers, there was also a cognisance of how the pedagogy itself had shaped their own work as educators. One student in Auckland, who was already working as a teacher noted:

> [T]he course really made me reflect on my students' capability to think critically and I think that, if anything, it couldn't be more important given the . . . time for them which we're living. So just ensuring that my teaching supports . . . critical thought and critical inquiry.

CONCLUSION

Returning back to the concern, identified at the outset, of how we serve the purposes of a more holistic, diverse, and open space within CIE, it is clear to us that the design and enactment of a particular form of CIE curriculum has the potential to move towards this vision. What we began to recognize though this research endeavour, is that as part of unleashing the postcolonial consciousness, which Fox (2016) implores us to work towards, is a need for an introspective look at our own pedagogy. As we progressed through the pilot project, we uncovered the ways in which we are explicitly and implicitly shaping and framing discussions about the act of comparison in ways which serve to challenge what concerns Dale and Robertson (2009) around methodological nationalism, educationalism, and the teleological narrative of modernization within CIE more broadly. But more than just acknowledging these issues, is the ambition we share with some of our Oceanic colleagues to further the decolonizing project by problematizing and disrupting binaries and "othering" processes, and challenging commonly held notions of education's role in development (Coxon & Tolley, 2005; Johansson Fua, 2016; Nabobo-Baba, 2012; Sanga, 2016; Smith, 1999). In doing so, our ambition is to encourage our students, who will go onto being future teachers, policymakers, and development

practitioners to engage in and with, and seek to understand, the Oceanic space differently, and recognize "the interplay of unequal power and different knowledges in [their] context" (Fox, 2016, p. 67). Indeed, we are continuing to pursue this process ourselves, as both researchers and educators.

Moreover, through authentic and meaningful assessment activities, the ambition is for our students to become not only aware, but gain the skills and dispositions to take action and read their world differently. One former student in EDUC 705 acknowledged that her participation in the course, "made me much more conscious of the whole diversity of views that generally are held towards education and . . . the values and assumptions that underpin the different educational systems that emerge." What remains to be seen is how this consciousness then translates into the ethical, actionable space in the activities of these students. Additional longitudinal research on CIE pedagogy and its long-term impacts would be beneficial within the field, and is indeed an under-researched area of investigation.

We recognize that there remains an acute need to work alongside some of our other colleagues from the region to identify how we move beyond a curriculum we believe is still dominated by 'Western' or 'Global' perspectives on education and development; even when they come out of a postcolonial or critical tradition. Our sincere hope is that this pilot project can extend beyond these two universities, which arguably are sites of both considerable privilege and troubled histories, to include other institutions within the broader region. Only then can a full conversation about the pedagogies of CIE and how they influence the conceptualizations of the field for students from within and outside the Pacific occur.

We take particular heed of Thaman's (2009, p. 1) critique of culturally undemocratic forms of pedagogy in our region, and recognize the urgent need to examine whether our CIE pedagogy, "take into consideration the way most Pacific people think, learn and communicate with each other." In a separate piece, she notes that it is critical that we move towards a new philosophy of education that is culturally inclusive and gender sensitive (Thaman, 2008). Embracing Oceanic frameworks of knowing and being into our CIE pedagogy requires strengthened partnerships with those who have developed and are using this approach already in their universities and classrooms, as we have been incrementally doing through work in and on the OCIES society and forthcoming projects. Yet, we fully recognize the inadequacy of our current attempts. Perhaps our collective will for advancing and increasing these approaches can be the longer-term aim of this endeavour.

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