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Comparative and International Education in Turbulent Times 2023 Special Issue

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Editorial introduction: Comparative & International Education in Turbulent Times

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25 years have gone by since CICE's first edition, in 1998. A quarter of a century later the world has changed more than many would have dear to imagine in the late 1990s. Just a year before, Meyer et al., (1997) published their seminal piece on "World Society and the Nation State", claiming that Western values of human rights, scientific rational, and democratic government had prevailed and would produce an inevitable process of global homogeneity. For a long time scholars in Comparative and International Education have debated about these claims, the process of globalization, and the interactions between national and supra-national forces in education. Yet 25 years later, the world faces new and unimagined challenges that have drastically changed our present the future landscape.

From one corner, a feracious financial capitalist system continues to advance at the expense of human well-being and our very subsistence on earth. As brilliantly described by Mark Fisher (2009), the capitalist system has created the illusion that non-alternative is possible. Within it, the neoliberal project has prevailed over other ideas or doctrines, infiltrating almost every sphere of human activity. As a result, we have replaced the idea of solidarity at the expense of competition as the natural regulatory force of human interactions. Women continue to struggle to obtain equal treatment to men, in the context of worsening conditions for workers around the world at the expense of large corporation's profit greed. This logic is also transforming education, which has become subsumed to economic productivity, where teachers' workload has skyrocketed, and their as well as teachers' mental health also suffer from the external demands of the 'knowledge economy'.

At the same time, school systems continue to struggle in the post-pandemic era and millions of students risk becoming a 'lost generation' due to a lack of an appropriate realization of their right to education, Artificial Intelligence is disrupting the classroom but also the labor market. In this mist, the hope of democracy spreading to every country contrasts with a world in which half of them are governed by authoritarian regimes of various degrees (Economist Intelligence Unit, 2023). Not only that, some of the fastest growing economies are examples of the opposite set of values of those projected by 'World Society': multiple violations of human rights, attacks on minorities –LGBTQ+ community, migrants, ethnic groups– (Velasco, 2022). Among them, women are a key target of far-right movements, attacking earned rights such as abortion and actively opposing fights for equal rights. Moreover, forced migration has reached unprecedented numbers due to armed conflicts, authoritarianism, and climate disasters, affecting more than 100 million people around the world. These, among other concerns, have inspired the questions behind this special issue, where we invited authors to think,

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discuss, and engage with these topics by reflecting on what's the role of Comparative and International Education in these turbulent times.

The first section of the special issue presents four articles that tap into these questions and bring new insights and perspectives to look at them. First, **Kelsey A**. **Dalrymple** addresses the increasingly important issue of Socio-Emotional Learning (SEL) in refugee contexts. SEL has been highlighted as one of the key focuses by the OECD after the COVID-19 pandemic, yet it is ever more relevant in refugee contexts due to the unimaginable challenges faced by students and their families. Hence, while SEL is increasingly becoming a key area of intervention in refugee contexts, Dalrymple examines how actors operating in refugee settlements in East Africa understand and make sense of these approaches. In particular, the study looks at the tensions between Westernized views of SEL portrayed by donors or international organizations vis-a-vis local understandings and needs of students, and what implications this has for SEL interventions.

From different angles, **Ruchi Saini** and **Patricia Grillet** address the consequences of the COVID-19 pandemic on women and how it disproportionately affected them in multiple ways. Undoubtedly, India was one of the hardest affected countries during the COVID crisis, which is the setting for **Saini's** study. The author interrogates how women navigated the increased labor demand produced by the pandemic delving deep into the stories of six Indian school teachers. Hence, adopting a qualitative methodology, the piece uses an interesting approach providing an emplotted narrative story of teachers' experiences during the pandemic. Tapping on feminist theories, Saini analyzes female teachers' responses in terms of tactical strategies to resist an increasingly adverse working and domestic environment, and, as 'institutional betrayal' on behalf of schools by exploiting teachers' precarious working conditions while maximizing their profit.

From a different angle, **Patricia Grillet** paid attention to how the international community looked at –or overlooked– women and gender disparities during the pandemic. In particular, Grillet focused on the early stages of the COVID analyzing publications between March 2020 and September 2021, as it signaled the initial focus of international actors, in contrast to later stages where more and more topics were covered. Her findings point to shared challenges of women across regions during the pandemic while pointing to the lack of attention to structural gender disparities from the international community in the most critical phase of the pandemic.

Shizza Fatima's article explores the complex colonial heritages of language policies in Pakistan and how the use of English, as the settler colonial language, or Urdu, one of the many native languages, creates a strong sense of division and segregation in students. The case of Pakistan can act as an example of the dozens of countries in which language policies create a divide not only within schools but also beyond it. This historical dilemma is also augmented In the context of growing forced migration, where the language of instruction has become a highly politized matter as it can operate as a backdrop for equal opportunities among learners. However, as the article shows, students are not passive recipients of such heritage, but actively engage in a process of resistance and decolonial praxis.

The second section of the special issue is composed of two essays and a book review that touches on different burning topics for CIE scholarship. First, **Alexandra Schindel**, **Monica Miles,** and **Kate Haq** bring to the fore that, when teaching about climate change, it is paramount to include a critical racial perspective in it. Using the 2022 Buffalo Blizard as an example, the authors argue that race is inextricably linked to climate change and that it racial injustices are at the core of those populations enduring the worse consequences of it. Later, **Carol Anne Spreen** discusses the present consequences of predatory capitalism and introduces the idea of a contra-hegemonic *third space* of learning. In her essay, Spreen presents some of the key issues raised by her latest book, together with Gary L. Anderson, Dipti Desai, and Ana Inés Heras, where they show how activism, resistance, and collective practices can produce new ways of learning beyond capitalist rationale. Finally, **Whitney Hough** reviews Dr. Khalid Arar's book *School Leadership for Refugees' Education: Social Justice Leadership for Immigrant, Migrants and Refugees*. In her review, Hough highlights the importance of leadership roles in the context of the incredibly challenging conditions of refugee resettlements by breaking down the strengths and areas for further research in Arar's book.

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I would like to take the opportunity in this introduction to celebrate CICE's 25th anniversary by honoring not only the 2022-2023 cohort but also all of the former editors-in-chief, editors, copyeditors and media engagement managers who had worked over the years to make this journal possible. It was and continues to be the work and passion of the student body at Teachers College who envision in CICE the opportunity to engage, discuss, and learn in our field of Comparative and International Education. As a student-led journal, CICE became a reference in the field of Comparative and International Education, publishing pieces from novel scholars, as well as more senior ones. As such, CICE has and continues to fulfill its mission to act as a platform to give voice to scholars from the most diverse backgrounds, locations, and perspectives by following the most rigorous scientific standards in our editorial work.

Over these 25 years, CICE has dedicated issues to a wide range of topics, always *avant-garde* on current issues. From exploring the role of NGOs in 1998, the recurring issue of the impact of technology in education in 2003 and 2018, the role of social movements in 2015, exploring methodological issues in our field to the more recent issue of COVID-19 in 2022. This arbitrary selection of some of the many challenging topics covered by CICE since its inception shows nothing but the intellectual curiosity, open-mindedness, and interests of each of CICE's editorial teams.

In particular, this special issue was born of a collective decision from CICE's editorial board. In my role as editor-in-chief, I considered myself nothing but a *primus-inter-pares*. Therefore, in line with CICE's spirit of being a collective project led by the students of Teachers College, we worked together on deciding our anniversary theme as well as the journal priorities for the year. Without the editorial board's tireless work, commitment, and dedication, this journal would not be possible. We have built not only a work team but a community of colleagues who count on each other and collaborate to grow and learn together.

In this sense, we continue to work to improve our journal, as we are in the process of becoming certified by the Directory of Open Access Journals, a new milestone that will continue to attract talented scholars around the world, while also increasing the outreach of our journal. As part of this process, we have digitalized and gathered under the CICE website hosted by Columbia University Libraries all the prior volumes in these last 25-year years. These efforts build on top of prior important steps taken over these years, such as the automatic submission system or the development of a clear communication strategy with the scientific community.

To conclude, I'd like to particularly thank Professor Regina Cortina, the International Advisory Board the external reviewers, the authors, and everyone who contributed to our journal's growth, consolidation, and expansion over the years. I can do nothing but encourage students to get involved and enjoy this unique and enriching experience, as well as more authors to submit their work to CICE to keep the journal moving forward during the next 25 years.

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Critically Examining Social Emotional Learning with Refugees in East Africa: Tensions, Challenges, and Complex Dynamics

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Social emotional learning (SEL) has become a popular trend in the field of Education in Emergencies (EiE). Many SEL programs targeting refugee learners aim to help individuals develop skills that are necessary for learning and development, as well as mitigate the adverse impacts of crisis and displacement. While nearly half a billion USD has been invested in SEL initiatives for refugee and crisis contexts world-wide, little evidence exists about the impacts of SEL interventions with refugee communities. As 20% of all refugees globally reside in East Africa, and it is estimated that over 152 million African children live in active conflict zones, this study set out to qualitatively examine understandings, implementation, and implications of SEL interventions across actors engaging refugee communities in the region. The results expose tensions, challenges, and complex dynamics related to culture, power, and the complicated reality of implementing refugee education initiatives in East Africa. While further research into this area of inquiry is needed and proposed, these study findings provide a stronger understanding of the refugee education landscape in East Africa and its current insufficiencies through the example of SEL, and serve to inform other topical EiE interventions and the broader uptake of SEL by education systems globally.

Keywords: Socio Emotional Learning, East Africa, Education in Emergencies, crisis context, refugee.

Introduction

Humanitarian crises significantly impact the educational opportunities and experiences of learners globally. Currently, an estimated 224 million crisis-affected school-age children require education support (ECW, 2023). At the end of 2019, one fifth of the world's crisis-affected children lived in Africa, and it was estimated that 152 million African children lived in active conflict zones (ACPF & AMC, 2019). Studies have found that many refugee children and families affected by conflict and crisis suffer extreme trauma, live in inhumane conditions, and often become trapped in a cycle of displacement and poverty for years, and sometimes generations (Brown et al., 2017; Ferris, 2018). Many of the world's refugees living in protracted displacement come from Central and East Africa, with numerous individuals living in displacement for over 20 years (Devictor, 2019; Hyndman & Giles, 2019).

Social Emotional Learning (SEL) is currently positioned by Education in Emergency (EiE) practitioners as a key component of refugee education, as it is believed to help improve academic achievement and support psychosocial wellbeing, trauma-recovery, and resiliency for refugee teachers, students, and communities (INEE, 2018; UNESCO,

2019). SEL is commonly understood, from a Western[1] perspective, to be an educational approach that claims to help children develop the thinking, behavioral, and self-regulatory skills needed for learning (Jones & Doolittle, 2017). Since 2018, nearly half a billion USD has been invested in SEL initiatives for refugee and crisis-affected communities globally, with more pledged for the years to come (ECW, 2018; Renau, 2022). However, little evidence exists about the understandings, implementation approaches, and implications of SEL across actors engaging refugee communities (Sullivan & Simonson, 2016; USAID, 2022).

As 20% of all refugees globally reside in East Africa (UNHCR, 2022b), this article comes from a qualitative study that utilized in-depth structured interviews and document review to answer two research questions: 1) how do EiE actors working with refugee communities in East Africa understand and implement SEL interventions? and 2) what are the implications of these interventions? The study was conducted by myself—the author of this article and the primary Principal Investigator (PI), and Dr. Kassa Michael Weldeyesus[2], who served as the co-PI. We engaged 20 EiE practitioners across 16 national and international Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) and one donor government across East Africa. This included individuals from: Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda. Additionally, while all individuals interviewed identified as EiE practitioners, their positions and SEL interventions sometimes fell within the Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) sector due to funding and/or programming structure.

We examined a broad set of SEL interventions targeting mostly refugee children and youth, though many interview respondents also reported engaging adult stakeholders (i.e. teachers, parents, administrators), supporting host-community children, and working with national governments on integrating SEL into national education systems. While the study intended to serve as a simple landscape review, the results expose much more complex dynamics connected to culture, power, and the complicated reality of implementing refugee education initiatives in East Africa. Findings reveal tensions and challenges related to inconsistencies of understandings about what SEL is and how it should be delivered, siloed implementation approaches leading to uncoordinated and inadequate programming, the use of Western SEL materials with limited contextualization processes, and an absence of refugee involvement in the design and delivery of SEL interventions. Finally, this study illustrates SEL as an example of the lack of follow-through on the part of national governments in East Africa to integrate refugee children into national education systems, despite numerous regional commitments to do so.

However, this article only begins to address the lacuna of qualitative research in the fields of comparative and international education (CIE) and EiE on the complex dynamics of implementing interventions like SEL within the refugee education landscape and proposes further research to better inform these scholarly fields. As SEL is

[1] In this article, 'Western' is conceptualized as largely North American and Euro-centric contexts, cultures, practices, and beliefs.

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one of a number of topical EiE interventions (e.g. gender, protection, inclusion), these study findings serve as an example of the need to critically interrogate these initiatives to better inform EiE work and link to larger issues (i.e. Westernization, cultural imperialism, subaltern epistemicide) within the refugee education landscape. Additionally, as SEL is currently a popular trend being taken up by education systems globally, in both refugee and non-refugee contexts, these study findings may serve to inform CIE scholars exploring SEL and similar global trends.

Refugee Education in East Africa

Due to colonial rule, shifting state borders, inter-communal conflict, and post-colonial power dynamics, East Africa has been a region of significant forced migration for decades and a site of consistent humanitarian intervention (Milner, 2019; Williams, 2020). As a result, refugee education activities have a long history in East Africa, influenced by various global education initiatives, policies, and actors over time (Dryden-Peterson, 2011). As the number of refugees in East Africa has tripled over the last decade (UN News, 2022), with nearly 60% being children (UNICEF, 2019), refugee education efforts have also intensified.

Over the last five years, the refugee education sector in East Africa has been a significant target and test site for various global humanitarian initiatives[3], as well as regional efforts to strengthen refugee education policy and practice; in particular the inclusion of refugee learners into host-country education systems[4]. While these commitments and initiatives have been ratified by national government actors, they have created a vast policyscape (Carney, 2008) comprised of: private, bilateral, and multilateral donors; UN agencies; international and local NGOs; inter-agency working groups and coordination mechanisms; and refugee individuals and communities. The study that informs this article specifically engaged EiE practitioners working with NGOs responsible for implementing SEL programming; many of these individuals also engaged in and/or led inter-agency working groups and coordination mechanisms.

National and international NGOs are largely responsible for the direct implementation of refugee education activities in the region. However, they often liaise and comply with various donors and local/national government, as well as Education Clusters and Working Groups responsible for the coordination of NGO activities. The presence of these myriad actors and mechanisms has increased education programming for refugee learners and brought significant resources to the region. However, millions of refugee children in East Africa remain out of school (UNHCR, 2022c), educational achievement and psychosocial wellbeing among refugee children remains low (Karas, 2019; Piper et al., 2020), and a lack of consistency, coordination, and continuity across this policyscape has contributed to the repetition of siloed and inadequate refugee education practices (The Perspective, 2023; UNHCR, 2016, 2021).

[3] For example, the Comprehensive Refugee Response Framework, the New Ways of Working framework, and the Education Cannot Wait fund.

[4] For example, the Agenda 2063 on Education and the Djibouti Declaration.

SEL in the Refugee Education Landscape

In an effort to improve education for refugee children in East Africa and globally, EiE actors have identified SEL as a promising practice that has the potential to improve academic achievement and support psychosocial wellbeing, trauma-recovery, and resiliency (INEE, 2018; UNESCO, 2019). The Western understanding of SEL as an educational approach that claims to help children develop the thinking, behavioral, and self-regulatory skills needed for learning and later life (Jones & Doolittle, 2017) has been widely taken up by the EiE sector, as well as the CPiE sector, and exported globally to refugee contexts. However, experts acknowledge that SEL is not a modern, Western phenomenon; the basic tenets of contemporary SEL have existed across history and cultures for centuries (Chiu & Huaman, 2020). Additionally, within the refugee education landscape, various actors have included elements of contemporary SEL under other umbrella terms for decades, such as: Life Skills, transferrable skills, soft skills, 21st century skills, and mental health and psychosocial support (MHPSS)[5].

The Inter-agency Network for Education in Emergencies (INEE) and the Alliance for Child Protection in Humanitarian Action (ACPHA) subscribe to the Western conceptualization of SEL and consider it to be one of many interventions falling under the MHPSS umbrella (INEE & ACPHA, 2020). However, some scholars like Brush et al., (2022) argue that SEL and Life Skills in particular differ in that SEL is rooted in theories of learning and developmental psychology and generally targets younger children. Alternatively, Life Skills has traditionally been a multi-disciplinary approach that mostly targets adolescents and young adults and incorporates elements of healthy decision-making related to drug and alcohol use, sexual and reproductive health, vocational training, and women and girls' empowerment. However, as elements of contemporary SEL can be found across all of these terms and approaches, significant confusion exists across EiE and CPiE practitioners about what exactly SEL is and under which sector or umbrella it belongs. Indeed SEL is often conflated or used interchangeably with all of these terms and approaches in the refugee education landscape, resulting in poor coordination, inconsistency, and limited SEL program effectiveness (Gallagher, 2018; Soye & Tauson, 2018).

Problematizing Western SEL

Regardless of which sectoral or terminological umbrella SEL is associated with, experts have demonstrated that the way SEL skills and competencies are conceptualized, prioritize, and displayed are highly tied to culture and societal behavioral standards that shape the way people understand, interpret, and make meaning of their experiences (Brush et al., 2022; Gay, 2018). As a result, scholars have more recently begun to explore non-Western understandings and practices of SEL across various cultures and contexts. Their work has found that concepts and terms used in Western SEL frameworks do not always align with the values and interests of different contexts and cultures, and sometimes do not translate easily or even exist in other languages (Jeong, 2019; Jones et al., 2019; Jukes et al., 2018). However, the Western concept and approach to SEL continues to remain dominant in the EiE and CPiE sectors globally and an assumption

[5] MHPSS is defined in the humanitarian sector as any type of local or outside support that aims to protect or promote psychosocial well-being and/or prevent or treat mental disorder (IASC, 2021).

that SEL competencies found in Western frameworks are universally applicable to all children is pervasive among EiE and CPiE practitioners (INEE, 2016).

As such, SEL is one of a long list of Western educational interventions that have been rolled out across African societies, both displaced and non-displaced, over the last three decades to address perceived deficits within education systems and child development practices. There is an abundance of literature documenting the spread, challenges, potentials, and failures of approaches such as: learner-centered pedagogies (LCP) (Sakata et al., 2021; Vavrus et al., 2011; Vavrus & Bartlett, 2012), early childhood development (ECD) programming (Ng'asike, 2014; Pence & Marfo, 2008; Serpell, 2019), school discipline practices (Ndofirepi et al., 2012; Rampa, 2014; Sibanda & Mpofu, 2017), child rights policies (Bourdillon & Musvosvi, 2014; Maudeni, 2010), and play-based learning (PBL) (Chick, 2010; Lancy, 1996) across African societies and education systems. Those working specifically in refugee contexts have demonstrated that Western assumptions and post-colonial logics about the purpose of education for refugees and the corresponding practices and approaches (i.e. LCP, literacy learning, language of instruction, digital education, higher education, life-long learning) are highly problematic and ineffective. These scholars demonstrate that many of these practices and approaches don't adequately take into account culture or context—and how these are impacted by conflict and displacement, or the realistic futures and needs of refugee learners (Dryden-Peterson et al., 2019; Morrice, 2021; O'Keef & Lovey, 2022; Piper et al., 2020; Reddick & Dryden-Peterson, 2021; Sharif, 2020).

Numerous education and child development scholars who critically examine these trends, as they relate to culture and context, highlight the fact that most of them are, or have been, informed by Western constructions of childhood, standards of learning, and perceptions of what "optimal" child development is, despite the fact that the majority of the world's children to not reside in Western contexts (Mucherah & Mbogori, 2019; Nsamenang, 1995; Viruru, 2001). Some African scholars argue that these initiatives perpetuate the domination of Western perceptions and practices and enact a kind of cultural imperialism, denigrating Africa's rich cultural heritage (Nsamenang, 2011; Rwantabagu, 2010). Similarly, scholars like Tabulawa (2003, 2013) highlight how trends like LCP function as a way of spreading socio-political-economic ideologies throughout the world, engaging in a neocolonial process of Westernization and subaltern epistemicide.

Evidence on the impact of SEL initiatives with refugee communities is significantly lacking (USAID, 2022) and it remains unclear if and how SEL functions as a tool of cultural imperialism, Westernization, or otherwise. As a result, some scholars have attempted to explore the effects of SEL with refugee and crisis-affected communities (Diazgranados Ferráns et al., 2019; D'Sa & Krupar, 2021; Torrente et al., 2019; Tubbs Dolan & Weiss-Yagoda, 2019). However, much of this work is largely quantitative and preoccupied with the measurement of Western SEL skills and academic achievement, rather than the interrogation of the Western assumptions and post-colonial logics that underly many SEL initiatives in refugee and crisis contexts. The qualitative data collected in this study has produced significant findings related to the tensions, challenges, and complicated dynamics of refugee education initiatives like SEL in East Africa that begin to address this gap in the scholarship.

Methodology

This article draws on a qualitative study conducted from February 2022 to April 2022 that aimed to explore how EiE actors working with refugee communities in East Africa understand and implement SEL interventions, and what the implications of those interventions are. To gather in-depth qualitative data on experiences and conceptual understandings, the primary method used for the study was in-depth structured interviews with 20 EiE practitioners[6] across 16 international and national NGOs and one donor government[7] in Ethiopia, Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, South Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda[8]. This study employed a purposive sampling strategy to ensure the inclusion of actors who are currently delivering SEL activities with refugee communities in East Africa, which could not have been obtained through the use of randomized strategies (Maxwell, 2013).

Table 1

Study Participant Breakdown

Participant Demographics	Countries								
Type of participants	Ethiopia	Kenya	Rwanda	Sudan	South Sudan	Tanzania	Uganda	Multi-Country	TOTAL
Interviews	5	2	1	1	1	2	3	2	17
Individual participants	5	2	2	1	3	2	3	2	20
National NGOs	3				1	1			5
International NGOs	2	2	1	1		1	3	1	11
Donor governments								1	1
Directors	1	1			1		1		4
Managers	2		1			1	1	1	6
Advisors	1						1	1	3
Specialists	1		1	1					3
Coordinators					2	1			3
Officers		1							1

Note. In some cases, multiple individuals participated in a single interview.

[6] This number was reached due to the responses from e-mail requests for interviews, as well as our time and availability to conduct data collection. While additional individuals were contacted, we did not pursue interviews with individuals if no response was received after sending an initial e-mail and two follow-up e-mails.

[7] While we contacted individuals working for UN agencies and national and local governmental departments for interview, they either did not respond to our interview requests, or declined and redirected us to NGOs as they felt NGOs were better placed to speak about SEL work in their respective countries.

[8] Individuals working in Burundi, Djibouti, and Somalia were also contacted, though, interviews were not conducted with them as we were either unable to find a suitable time for interview or were unable to identify organizations working specifically on SEL.

Myself and the co-PI identified organizations through both personal acquaintances, as well as contacting Education Cluster and Working Group Co-Chairs in each country. Co-Chairs were identified by contacting the Global Education Cluster HelpDesk and INEE Emergencies HelpDesk to acquire individual contact information. Once Co-Chairs were contacted, they were able to identify and connect us with EiE actors delivering SEL interventions. Additionally, we identified two study participants working on SEL programming in multiple countries across East Africa. Next, we contacted these EiE actors and scheduled virtual interviews with relevant expert individuals.

We conducted interviews in English and all interview participants provided either verbal or written consent to participate. Interviews lasted between thirty minutes to one hour and took place on a variety of virtual platforms. The interview protocol used for each interview asked about: program details (location, timeline, funding, partners, populations served, goals, objectives, activities, and targets); specific SEL frameworks, components, and competencies; challenges with implementation; and availability of programmatic evidence. Additionally, we focused on SEL interventions that were actively running at the time of interview, as well as interventions that had recently concluded or were planned for implementation in the near future. An interview notes template was used to ensure consistency.

We also conducted document review to triangulate the interview data. We identified and reviewed approximately 30 items including: policy briefs, project descriptions, program guides, and training curricula. These documents were obtained directly from interview participants, from personal files, and through general search engines (i.e. Google and Google Scholar) and databases (i.e. Save the Children Resource Centre and INEE Resources). We used QDA Miner Lite and NVivo software to review and analyze all interview notes and documents. Prior to data collection, we created a general list of categories that stemmed from a review of the literature, as well as our professional experiences working in this field. These categories informed the interview protocol, as outlined above, and also supported initial deductive coding. Though, inductive analysis, understood as "discovering patterns, themes, and categories in one's data" (Marshall & Rossman, 2006, p. 159), guided the overall analysis process. We highlighted excerpts and phrases from interview responses that related to the interview protocol topics and grouped them accordingly to identify variations and consistencies across study participants and their agencies. Upon completion of coding, we compared our findings as a validity check and generated the results described in the following sections.

Positionality

As the author of this paper, I identify as a white, North American woman, as well as an EiE practitioner and critical scholar of CIE. Having worked for nearly 15 years in the fields of education and humanitarian response, my experience—as well as my personal and professional social networks—aided in navigating EiE coordination and communication systems to recruit study participants. While I interviewed a variety of individuals with varying self-identifiers (i.e. male, female, European, African) and occupying diverse positions within their agencies (i.e. Advisor, Director, Coordinator, Manager, Officer, Specialist), I believe my perceived position as a white researcher at a U.S.-based university initially attracted individuals to participate in interviews. I also

believe that my experience as an EiE practitioner, having worked with and for many of the agencies that study participants did, in addition to my personal connection to some individuals as friends and colleagues, allowed study participants to feel comfortable to openly share details about their programming. Though, I recognize that my position as a critical scholar may have influenced how I interpreted the data in this study, as I have been academically trained to situate data within larger social and political structures and to identify and challenge structural weaknesses with the goals of improvement, equity, and social justice. I also recognize that my positionality, power, and worldview as a white, North American scholar influences the way I interpret data and frame key findings. Thus, working with the co-PI who identifies as a Black, East African man was an intentional effort to limit my personal influence and bias over the study findings.

Limitations

This study included a range of limitations. First, myself and the co-PI recognize that the small sample size (20 individuals across 17 agencies) does not allow for a full understanding of the experience and perceptions of all actors delivering SEL programming to refugee communities in East Africa, but rather a small slice of the most globally visible actors working in this area. We also recognize that by only involving EiE practitioners as study participants, the perceptions and experiences of refugee-community members are not represented in the data. Therefore, we do not fully understand how SEL interventions are received and experienced at the refugee-community level and further research into this area of inquiry is needed and encouraged to supplement the study findings.

Additionally, interviews were only conducted in English and through virtual platforms. Therefore, it is possible that interviewees were not able to fully express themselves the way they may have if they were able to participate face-to-face and in the language of their choice. It is also possible that this study included an element of social desirability bias and we do not know the extent to which respondents were willing to promote their SEL interventions in order to sustain them. Though, despite these limitations, the study findings help to understand how SEL is conceptualized and implemented among actors working with refugee communities in East Africa and exemplify the numerous tensions and challenges associated with implementing SEL, and other Western education approaches, in non-Western crisis contexts.

Findings

The findings presented here reflect discussions with EiE practitioners about how they understand and implement SEL interventions with refugee communities in East Africa. Responses from practitioners were diverse and produced key findings related to: consistencies across programming related to the use of Western SEL frameworks, implementation challenges, and evidence generation; and variations in understandings and interpretations of SEL and implementation approaches. When referring to numbers of study participants in the sections below, the following terms can be considered as such: majority/most = 15-20; many = 10-14; some = 5-9; few = 4 or less. Finally, all names used in the sections below are pseudonyms to ensure the anonymity and privacy of study participants.

Consistencies

Western materials and cloudy contextualization

The majority of interviewees reported that they are currently using either their own organizational SEL framework and/or programming materials that were developed at the "global" level—meaning headquarter offices based in Western countries—or pre-existing general frameworks like the Collaborative for Academic Social and Emotional Learning (CASEL) framework. For example, Avery, who works across the region, shared that they: "[…]hired a specialist from the U.S. to develop the SEL component of our teacher training, and I believe [they] based the content mostly on the CASEL framework" (Interview, March 1, 2022). Additionally, Casey, who also works on a multi-country project, confirmed that: "We are using the [organizational] framework developed a few years ago at headquarters" (Interview, April 4, 2022).

As indicated by these participants, *global* or Western SEL materials are often used across countries and regions with diverse target communities. Participants from Ethiopia, Rwanda, Sudan, Tanzania, and Uganda, working for the same international NGO in their respective countries, confirmed that their country-specific programs each use internal materials that were developed at their organization's *global* level. When asked if they contextualized the materials for their countries, these participants were not able to recall any such process. When asked the same question, participants working for other NGOs in the region referred to vague contextualization processes, though were not able to detail the extent and quality of these activities. For example, Casey reported that "we say we did 'contextualization', but honestly it was more a of a tick-box exercise" (Interview, April 4, 2022).

While a few respondents reported working to develop *local* SEL frameworks, the processes they described were largely driven by Western advisors and included limited refugee participation or input. For example, Tadele reported developing an SEL framework for use with refugee communities in Ethiopia, though with technical guidance and oversight from their U.S.-based donor. Additionally, Rene who works in Uganda reported that they are currently developing a local SEL framework for use with both refugee and host-country children, but with technical guidance from the Harvard EASEL Lab. No interviewees mentioned working explicitly with refugee communities to develop SEL programming or to build on their existing/local forms of SEL. Tadele did report conducting consultations and an assessment with refugee communities to help inform the contextualization of their SEL content, but did not mention the refugee community's direct involvement in the contextualization process.

These examples do not mean that the other organizations have not, or do not, consult with refugee communities regarding SEL programming. However, many study participants felt that their SEL interventions were largely driven by donor priorities, global best practices, and coordination with education partners, rather than by refugee community requests or expressed need for such programming. This is illustrated by Jonah from Tanzania: "The program materials that were given to us by [the organization], were already developed in line with global standards, so we did not see the need to change them much" (Interview, March 7, 2022). Additionally, Casey shared that when working on a multi-country project:

> "…it is super clear that SEL is something the donor wants baked into the project. I feel like every EiE project you see now-a-days has SEL included in it somehow because it's considered a 'best practice'…every proposal has to mention SEL now just for the sake of it, donors are expecting to see it there. I'm sure refugee parents want their kids to learn these skills in their own way, but I doubt this concept of SEL is a community priority compared to just having enough school rooms, or books, or meeting other basic needs" (Interview, April 4, 2022).

As shown, EiE actors working with refugee communities in East Africa commonly use *global* and/or Western SEL materials, yet do not engage in meaningful contextualization and adaptation processes. A strong case to contextualize SEL programming in refugee and crisis contexts, and to involve community stakeholders in that process, has been made by various scholars and practitioners (Berg et al., 2017; INEE, 2022; USAID, 2021). However, the inability to detail contextualization processes and the lack of involvement of refugee communities demonstrates a clear tension and disconnect between what is recommended in theory and what is happening in reality. Even those developing *local* SEL frameworks are doing so with oversight and guidance from Western technical specialists and there is extremely limited awareness or acknowledgement among EiE practitioners of existing SEL concepts and practices within refugee communities. This directly contradicts the scholarship presented previously and the recognition that SEL concepts and practices are highly based on culture and societal behaviors (Brush et al., 2022). This ignorance within the refugee education landscape in East Africa is likely to render SEL programming ineffective and potentially culturally pernicious.

Lack of follow through: Exclusion of refugee learners from national SEL plans

While the focus of this study was on refugee communities, several interviewees mentioned working with national Ministries of Education to design SEL frameworks for integration into their national education systems. Though, again, this work is informed by significant guidance from Western institutions and technical experts. For example, Nico, who works for a European-based NGO in Kenya, confirmed: "The government wants to integrate SEL elements of our program into the national curriculum, especially since Covid"(Interview, March 18, 2022), while Avery shared that while working across the region they have been: "[…]interacting with Ministries of Education and there have been discussions around integrating SEL into the national teacher training programs" (Interview, March 1, 2022). Though, when engaging with Ministries of Education to develop national SEL frameworks, no respondents mentioned the integration of refugee children into national education systems of their host countries. Despite the existence of numerous regional commitments and policies to integrate refugee children into national education systems (Cole, 2017; Crawford & O'Callaghan, 2019; IGAD Member States, 2017), government enthusiasm for SEL appears to apply mostly to national students and not the refugee students they are hosting. This has larger implications related to the intentions of host-governments to actually integrate refugee communities into national systems. While SEL is just one example, it exposes the tension that these commitments exist mostly in theory and have yet to be realistically executed.

Implementation challenges: Donor priorities, repatriation, and attendance

A major challenge raised by all respondents is the lack of consistent and sustainable funding for SEL programming, and EiE programming in general. All participants

reported being tied to strict funding timelines set by donors with no guarantee of continued funding after their project end dates. Some individuals also highlighted that when a project or grant comes to an end, the associated activities also come to an end, as exemplified by Muhammad from Sudan:

> "Facilitators don't want to play with children and support development; people only do these activities during the program. But once the program ends, the activities stop because the community doesn't value them. Teachers don't want to teach Life Skills, it's not in their job description" (Interview, March 16, 2022).

Additionally, when a new grant or project begins, it often incorporates new activities that may not take into consideration or build upon the activities and approaches that preceded it. This was highlighted by Eli from Tanzania:

> "We have been doing PSS [psychosocial support] activities here for years, but this new [SEL] program is not really taking that into account. The incentive [refugee] workers have been doing similar activities for a long time, but now they are being told to do something that seems new and confusing, but is really very similar to what they were doing before" (Interview, February 23, 2022).

This demonstrates the challenge of donors having their own priorities and not necessarily being interested in funding the continuation of activities and approaches previously funded by other donors. In particular, many interviewees reported that there is a trend of perceiving SEL as something new and innovative that donors are eager to fund, which often generates the development of new materials, waves of trainings, advocacy initiatives, and the hiring of new staff. However, many of these SEL projects do not acknowledge or build upon the existing systems, structures, and previous trainings that refugee communities have already received, as exemplified by Casey:

> "We trained all of the refugee teachers in SEL in 2018 and 2019, though we just didn't explicitly call it SEL at the time. And now this new project is coming in with all of these new staff members and technical experts who don't have the organizational history and it's like that original training never happened. They are re-training [the refugee teachers] and not acknowledging or building on the fact that they have had a ton of PSS and SEL-based training over the years" (Interview, April 4, 2022).

Another challenge mentioned is the issue of repatriation of refugees. While it is the right of refugees to return to their country of origin, it can have numerous ramifications for SEL programming. For example, when a project invests in training a group of teachers or community members to deliver SEL and subsequently some of them repatriate, the project must recruit, onboard, and train new individuals, which they may not necessarily have budgeted or planned for. This is illustrated by Jonah in Tanzania: "Every time we lose a teacher, we lose someone who we have invested time and resources into, knowing that the person who replaces them won't have the level of quality we achieved with the last teacher" (Interview, March 7, 2022). Additionally, when projects aim to reach a certain number of individuals with their programming and there is a steady rate of repatriation over the course of the project, this can cause problems for donor reporting,

and has financial, human resources, and other implications if the target population is decreasing. Often donors will either require projects to scale down, pivot to targeting additional communities and stakeholders, or engage in additional or alternative activities.

Similarly, study participants working in Ethiopia, Sudan, and South Sudan mentioned challenges of delivering SEL to pastoral and nomadic refugee and displaced communities, and specifically communities with repeated student absences. As SEL is commonly defined as an ongoing process, rather than a single-time intervention (CASEL, 2023), these respondents reported that helping children to develop and practice certain social and emotional competencies is difficult when teachers have few contact hours with them in a week or even a month. This is exemplified by Hakim from Ethiopia: "Since the community is largely pastoralist, absence during the afternoon sessions is a challenge" (Interview, March 24, 2022).

Sustainable funding for refugee education and the EiE sector generally has been a persistent challenge for decades. Though, these findings demonstrate that, in addition to a general lack of funds, donors who fund SEL activities within the EiE sector do not acknowledge or take advantage of existing and/or former activities and programs. Not taking these into account is a costly oversight that clearly affects the continuity, capacity, resources, and quality of EiE teams and programming. If donors were committed to sustaining and/or building upon the work of previous projects, grants, and donors, then perhaps EiE teams would have more capacity to address key issues like student absence. Additionally, the challenge of working with pastoral and nomadic refugee and displaced communities is another example of the lack of contextualization and cultural-responsiveness of SEL as described previously; the problem does not lie with the communities and their practices, but rather the Western assumptions and post-colonial logics about what kind of education refugee children *need* and the resulting program design and implementation.

Operating in the dark: The continued lack of evidence

In line with the global dearth of evidence on the impacts of SEL in refugee and crisis contexts discussed previously, no study participant was able to provide explicit data or evidence related to the results of their SEL programming. Some respondents were able to provide data related to their overall EiE activities (e.g. number of students reached, number of teachers trained, attendance rates, etc.), though without any explicit link to the SEL component of their programming. Some participants did mention that they have conducted qualitative interviews, generated case studies, held focus-group discussions, and have had informal conversations with refugee-community members about the overall impact of their SEL programming, which have shown perceived positive results. However, much of this data was only corroborated by interviewees themselves reporting their own observations of positive improvements in refugee communities. This is exemplified by Nico in Kenya: "The kids said they really liked the approach and want to continue with the sessions. They mentioned that the coaches are different from regular teachers, that they care for them and have fun with them"(Interview, March 18, 2022). Additionally, while working across the region, Avery shared: "I have attended a lot of the teacher trainings and I can tell you the teachers really love the PSS and SEL module.

They get really into the mindfulness activities and are really energized to support their students" (Interview, March 1, 2022).

All study participants confirmed that their organizations have not yet completed any formal assessment or evaluation that could illuminate the specific impacts that their SEL programming has had on refugee communities in the region. Though, a few participants reported that their organizations have plans for future research and assessments to help understand the effects and outcomes of their SEL activities. For example, Rene in Uganda mentioned that they are working with national universities on a robust research agenda, which includes studies looking at SEL; though none have been completed yet. Additionally, Casey reported that their multi-country project includes a sophisticated research agenda and monitoring and evaluation framework, specifically intended to generate evidence related to SEL; though this evidence has yet to be produced. This general lack of evidence on the impacts of SEL in refugee contexts in the region serves to reinforce this gap in the CIE and EiE scholarship described earlier. Further, it perpetuates the cycle of EiE practitioners, and donors who invest in SEL for refugee and crisis-contexts, operating on assumptions and post-colonial logics rather than evidence.

Variations

Understandings and objectives of SEL: The influence of sectors and delivery mechanisms

Findings illustrate that perceptions about what SEL is and its larger objectives are tied to the sectors and mechanisms through which it is delivered. SEL for refugee communities in East Africa is delivered through three main mechanisms: 1) integrated into formal schooling under the EiE sector; 2) MHPSS programming, delivered through both formal schooling and out-of-school activities, mainly under the CPiE sector; and 3) Life Skills programming, again delivered through both formal schooling and out-of-school activities, under both the EiE and CPiE sectors[9].

Most respondents described the goals and objectives of their SEL programming as aligned with global rhetoric on the potential benefits of SEL for refugee learners based on perceived or assumed deficits. These include improved academic achievement and psychosocial wellbeing, though programming priorities differ significantly by sector. For example, participants working in formal schools through the EiE sector first prioritized an improvement in academic achievement, followed by school-readiness, support for whole child development, psychosocial wellbeing, and skills for later life. This is exemplified by Amara from Ethiopia who reported that: "Our main goal is to improve children's learning; we just want them to get through school" (Interview, April 11, 2022),

[9] Education in Emergencies (EiE) and Child Protection in Emergencies (CPiE) are two types of programming sectors within humanitarian response. EiE programming is concerned with ensuring all individuals have access to safe and quality learning opportunities during humanitarian emergencies and can included: formal education, non-formal education, accelerated learning, recreational activities, etc. CPiE programming is concerned with preventing and responding to violence, abuse, exploitation, and neglect of children in humanitarian emergencies and can include: setting up and managing referral systems, case management, providing counseling and psychosocial support, positive parenting training, etc. While programming in these two sectors usually have separate funding sources and programming approaches, there is often overlap and coordination across EiE and CPiE activities and child protection is usually mainstreamed through EiE activities.

while Peter from Rwanda shared that they: "[…]have integrated SEL into a pre-existing ECD school-readiness program targeting teachers and school leaders" (Interview, March 9, 2022).

Additionally, practitioners who integrate SEL into formal schooling perceive SEL according to the CASEL definition, a process by which young people and adults learn and apply certain knowledge and skills related to social and emotional domains (CASEL, 2023). These interviewees reported using an SEL framework to guide their programming. In particular, most individuals reported using materials that draw directly on the CASEL framework, which aims to support learners to build competencies in the domains of: self-awareness, self-management, social-awareness, relationship skills, and responsible decision-making. Some participants also reported that their organizations have developed, or draw from, similar frameworks that include alternative or additional domains, including: physical development, cognitive development, creativity, character-building, values, personality, and self-efficacy.

Similarly, practitioners delivering SEL through Life Skills programming also reported using frameworks that include competencies reflective of those used in formal schools. For example, Muhammad in Sudan reported using the CASEL framework, whereas frameworks mentioned by other interviewees focus heavily on skills like: teamwork, communication, collaboration, conflict-resolution, critical thinking, problem-solving, self-confidence, goal-setting, and assertiveness. When asked what the larger goals and objectives of their Life Skills/SEL programming are, participant answers varied from: supporting children to gain skills that will prepare them for adulthood, helping children learn to cope with stress, and supporting children's learning and development outside of formal school spaces. For example, Nico in Kenya shared that they:

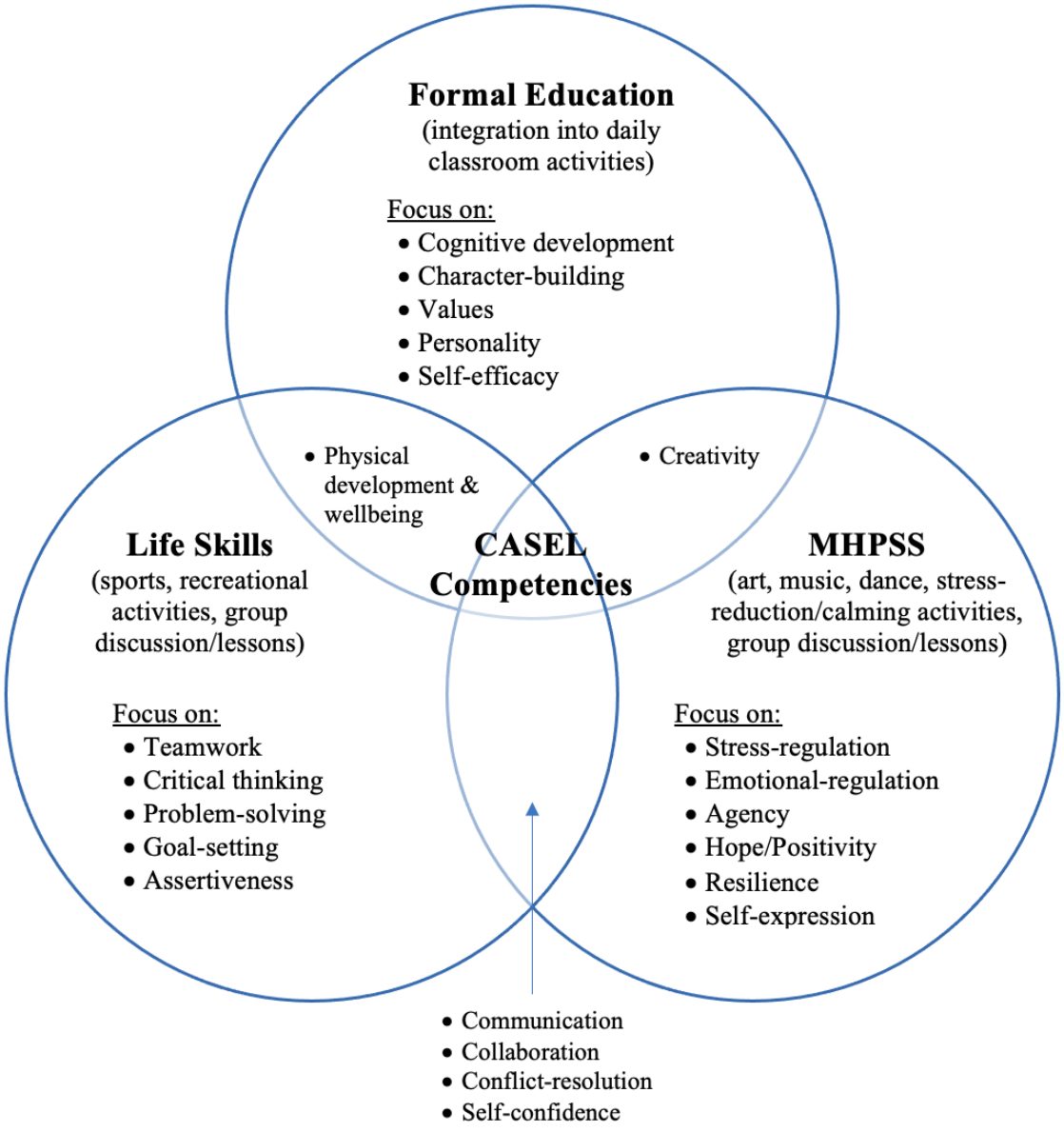
> "[…]deliver social sports sessions made up of games that are designed to teach about specific skills and social topics. For example, how to prevent certain diseases, what are my rights, different forms of violence. The core of our curriculum is resilience" (Interview March 18, 2022).

In contrast, SEL delivered through MHPSS programming, largely supported by the CPiE sector, is often not guided by specific SEL frameworks. Rather, SEL is perceived as a byproduct of the MHPSS activities, as shared by Jessie from Kenya: "Our flagship program is a PSS intervention, so we are supporting children's social and emotional health naturally through that program" (Interview, March 16, 2022). Reported MHPSS activities include art, music, and dance to help focus children's attention and support motor-skill development, as well as a large focus on stress-reduction and coping strategies to support learners and educators to work through and recover from traumatic experiences. These activities aim to support learners to develop competencies and characteristics including: resilience, self-expression, self-regulation, communication, collaboration, cooperation, teamwork, conflict-resolution, creativity, problem-solving, and self-confidence. Additionally, practitioners delivering SEL through MHPSS programming unsurprisingly perceive the main goal to be the psychosocial wellbeing of learners, educators, and their larger communities, as Muhammad from Sudan confirmed: "SEL is part of our child-friendly space services. It helps to mitigate the

impacts of conflict on children, making them calm, providing psychological first aid right after families come to the camp" (Interview, March 16, 2022).

These findings demonstrate that there is both overlap and divergence of SEL intervention objectives, as well as the competencies and behaviors that these interventions aim to help learners develop (see Figure 1). Though, it is clear that the delivery mechanism and associated programming sector highly influence how practitioners think about, design, and implement their SEL interventions. This is illustrated further in the sections below.

Figure 1
SEL Delivery Mechanism Comparison



"It's not new, just different": Refugee community perceptions of SEL

SEL was generally reported as a new term for refugee communities, but not necessarily a new concept. While a few study participants mentioned that refugee communities were aware of the term SEL due to previous programming, many participants reported that refugee communities were familiar with the general tenants of SEL, but did not refer to this kind of learning and development specifically as SEL. This is exemplified by Eddie from Uganda: "When we explain it to them [the refugees] they say 'Ah, it's just a different way of doing what we do'. But they are not explicitly aware of SEL as a term" (Interview, March 24, 2022). Some participants mentioned that traditionally, helping children develop social and emotional competencies is often done in community settings through mechanisms like religious education and by community and religious leaders; sometimes intentionally and sometimes unintentionally, as Jonah from Tanzania shared:

> "[The term] SEL is not well known here. There are some people doing it, but they don't call it SEL activities. Many activities may touch on some [SEL] skills, but they are traditionally learned in the community or at home, not school" (Interview, March 7, 2022).

Many interviewees felt that current SEL programming is not new, but is organized and structured in a more intentional way that brings explicit awareness to the process of learning and development, especially by embedding it in institutions like formal schooling. For example, Yafet from Ethiopia reported that:

> "The [refugee] community had some awareness of the components of SEL in an unstructured manner when we started the program, but what we do is put what the community has in a structured manner. So the program is not completely new, but reorganized in a meaningful way that impacts the awareness and overall practice" (Interview, March 23, 2022).

Additionally, participants using the Life Skills delivery mechanism voiced that refugee communities were more familiar with the concept of Life Skills, which is why SEL is often conflated with such programming and terminology, as shared by Nico from Kenya: "When discussing our work with [refugee] parents and community members we generally use the term Life Skills, not PSS or SEL, because Life Skills has been around forever compared to PSS and SEL" (Interview, March 18, 2022). Alternatively, participants using the MHPSS delivery mechanism generally perceive SEL and PSS as being one in the same, and regularly interchange the terms, as Ibrahim from South Sudan demonstrated: "Our program is focused mainly on PSS and mental health, so we often use SEL and PSS as the same when talking with refugee communities" (Interview, April 21, 2022).

While many respondents conceptualize SEL as an educational approach that can be integrated into formal schooling, others conflate it with Life Skills or MHPSS. Additionally, while some refugee communities may already be familiar with the underlying tenants of SEL, most are not aware of the specific term SEL and its more structured and formalized approach. While I do not argue that a consistent definition and approach for SEL should be developed and adopted by all practitioners and

agencies worldwide, this data highlights clear inconsistencies among practitioners currently working in the East Africa Region. Further, these findings again highlight: 1) the lack of understanding about existing refugee concepts and practices related to SEL; 2) the limited recognition that the term SEL does not exist or even translate in many communities; and 3) no clear intentions to try and address these tensions.

Integration vs. stand-alone: Sectoral influence on implementation approaches

A curriculum and training-based methodology was the most commonly cited way of delivering SEL interventions. This includes developing new and/or utilizing pre-existing training materials to train teachers, parents, coaches, and facilitators to deliver SEL content directly to children, whether through formal schooling, community settings, or recreational activities. This also includes providing curricula, often with sequenced lesson plans and activities, as well as general guidance materials to these adult stakeholders. Some SEL interventions also use a multi-media approach by incorporating radio broadcasts, interactive voice response calling, and tablet-based activities. Though many of these activities either recently emerged as a necessity due to the COVID-19 pandemic, or are still in development and have yet to be officially tested and/or implemented.

Despite these common activities, interviewees reported significant variation regarding perceptions of SEL as a stand-alone intervention versus using an integrated approach. For example, most SEL programs delivered through formal schooling are integrated into daily teaching practices and instructional routine, as exemplified by Avery in their work across the region: "We have tried to train teachers to think of SEL as something that facilitates learning and should always be present in the classroom, not something extra" (Interview, March 1, 2022). Alternatively, many Life Skills and MHPSS programs that include SEL are delivered as stand-alone interventions, as demonstrated by Eli from Tanzania: "This is a specific program delivered in CFSs [child friendly spaces] that targets SEL and PSS skills and doesn't really relate to other programming" (Interview, February 23, 2022).

Whether SEL is integrated into other programming or delivered as a stand-alone intervention is again influenced by which sector SEL programming falls under: EiE or CPiE. For SEL programming falling within the EiE sector, it is often perceived as something that should be integrated into teacher pedagogy, daily practice, and embraced through a whole community approach. SEL through formal schooling is also often connected with other humanitarian activities, social institutions, and supports within a community. However, SEL falling under the CPiE sector usually results in MHPSS or Life Skills programming that is somewhat self-contained, having a very specific and sequenced implementation approach, tied to a finite timeline with clear curricular modules, and with specific indicators for measurement of impact. Indeed, study participants from Kenya, Rwanda, Sudan, and Tanzania shared curricula materials and facilitator guides that outline specific modules designed to be delivered by classroom teachers, sports coaches, and MHPSS counselors within specific timeframes and tied to particular domains and objectives.

While curriculum and training-based strategies are the leading approach, with multi-media interventions gaining popularity, perceptions of whether SEL should be an

integrated versus stand-alone intervention are clearly divided among those working in EiE vs. CPiE. As shown previously, these sectors also influence attitudes about the main objectives of SEL programming. The EiE sector is rooted in philosophies of teaching and learning and child development, whereas CPiE and MHPSS programming is largely rooted in the field of clinical psychology. Despite global guidance encouraging the EiE and CPiE sectors to collaborate through integrated and coordinated approaches in an effort to galvanize multi-sectoral resources, maximize programmatic impact, and better support whole child development (INEE & ACPHA, 2020), SEL implementation with refugees in East Africa continues to be siloed and limited by humanitarian sector norms, philosophies, and the theoretical fields that inform them.

Not just for younger children: Target groups of SEL

Target groups of SEL programming also varied significantly by sector. Most formal-school programming targets refugee children either at the primary-school-age level (ages 6-12) or children in the early childhood age range (3-5), or in rare cases both. SEL programming at the secondary-school level was only reported by two respondents, as illustrated by Avery in their work across the region: "We don't see SEL for secondary school students, so that is why our program is targeting that age range; they need it too. It's not just for younger children" (Interview, March 1, 2022).

SEL activities delivered through MHPSS and Life Skills programming reportedly target refugee children as young as three and as old as eighteen, though often breaking children up into appropriate age groupings (i.e. 3-6; 7-10; 11-14; 15-18). A number of programs also target host-community learners, over-age learners (i.e. those in accelerated learning programs), out-of-school children (i.e. orphans and street children), and children in non-school settings, for example through sports and recreational activities, as Nico from Kenya confirmed: "We target mostly primary school-age children, but some of them are a bit older because they've missed some schooling. We also work with older siblings of these children, so youth I guess" (Interview, March 18, 2022). Many interviewees also mentioned including educators, parents/caregivers, and community members as participants in trainings that aim to prepare adults to deliver SEL activities directly to children and, in-so-doing, helping to build SEL competencies, and particularly stress-reduction skills, for these adult stakeholders. Mustafa from South Sudan shared that: "[Refugee] communities were skeptical of SEL at first because they didn't want to share the difficulties they were going through, but they are embracing it now; [the training] has really improved psychosocial wellbeing for them, especially the parents" (Interview, April 21, 2022).

While SEL delivered through MHPSS and Life Skills programming targets stakeholders of a wider age range, many SEL activities delivered through formal schooling target mostly children at the early childhood or primary school levels, despite global rhetoric that SEL is a life-long process and should target individuals of all ages. This could indicate: 1) limited funds and/or capacity to reach a wider age range; 2) that donors and/or implementors feel SEL is mostly beneficial for younger ages; or 3) that donors and/or implementors perceive SEL as a one-time intervention, rather than an ongoing life-long process. While probing into these conjectures was beyond the scope of this study, this highlights a gap of knowledge and practice within the EiE field and further research into this area of inquiry is encouraged.

Discussion

While this study set out to explore how EiE actors understand and implement SEL interventions with refugee communities in East Africa, and the implications of those interventions, the findings reveal significant tensions related to issues of culture, power, and the complicated reality of implementing refugee education initiatives in the region. One such finding is that understandings and perceptions of what SEL is and how it should be delivered vary significantly within and between NGOs and practitioners. Actors continue to interchange the terms SEL, PSS, and Life Skills and use them inconsistently. As outlined by in the scholarship discussed earlier (Gallagher, 2018; Soye & Tauson, 2018), this inconsistency causes significant confusion across EiE and CPiE practitioners about what exactly SEL is, how it should be delivered, and what its main objectives are. This confusion perpetuates poor coordination and siloed approaches between the EiE and CPiE sectors, resulting in the limited effectiveness of SEL interventions.

Additionally, definitions and approaches to SEL are heavily influenced by what sector and type of programming SEL is delivered through, as well as the theoretical foundations of these sectors and approaches. Those working through the EiE sector understand SEL as an educational approach, rooted in child development theories, that should be integrated into daily teaching practices and other routine education activities. However, those working through the CPiE sector perceive SEL as a targeted stand-alone approach that contributes to larger MHPSS objectives, rooted in clinical psychology. As mentioned above, existing scholarship has demonstrated the confusion, inconsistency, and limited program effectiveness that these differing sectoral perceptions and approaches have caused for some time. As a result, global guidance has been developed by EiE and CPiE actors, which emphasizes the need to integrate SEL across EiE and CPiE activities in a coordinated and cohesive manner. However, study findings demonstrate that SEL implementation with refugees in East Africa remains siloed. These siloed approaches appear to be common practice as they can be found in numerous past and present refugee SEL initiatives globally (Save the Children, 2023; Shah, 2017; Torrente et al., 2019). Yet, this practice serves to perpetuate disjointed, repetitive, and inadequate programming, rather than collaborative and maximized efforts that could potentially reach more refugee children and improve the perceived and assumed academic and psychosocial deficits among refugee learners.

Despite these differences of understanding and implementation, it is clear that SEL delivered through both sectors is heavily influenced by Western frameworks, materials, and standards developed at the *global* level. Whether using open-source frameworks like CASEL, organization-specific materials, or developing *local* SEL frameworks, the foundational content, domains, and competencies that all SEL interventions (examined in this study) utilize are rooted in and guided by the Western conceptualization of SEL. In line with the scholarship presented earlier (Brush et al., 2022; Gay, 2018; Jeong, 2019; Jones et al., 2019; Jukes et al., 2018), study findings demonstrate that this more structured and explicit approach to SEL does not align with how some refugee communities and cultures understand, teach, and learn social and emotional competencies. This contributes to discourse that problematizes the imposition of Western SEL interventions in refugee contexts, as well as other Western educational interventions (e.g. LCP, ECD, PBL, literacy, life-long learning, etc.), and the fact that they may be limited or

unsuccessful due to a lack of refugee community understanding and buy-in. Additionally, without understanding and building upon existing refugee conceptualizations and practices of SEL, Western approaches could potentially enact forms of cultural imperialism and subaltern epistemicide, as argued by Nsamenang (2011) and Tabulawa (2013), that undermine or erase existing practices and conceptualizations of SEL in non-Western refugee contexts. These consequences could negatively impact continued investment—by donors, NGOs, and other actors—in SEL for refugees in the East Africa region, and globally, if it proves to be ineffective or culturally pernicious.

In order to avoid these potential consequences, global guidance has been issued on the crucial need to contextualize and adapt Western and "global" SEL materials for refugee and crisis contexts, and involve community stakeholders in that process (Berg et al., 2017; INEE, 2022; USAID, 2021). However, most interviewees either did not engage in a contextualization process or were unable to recall the extent, depth, and quality of the process. Actors also reported little or no engagement with refugee communities when designing and delivering their SEL interventions. Those who detailed some form of contextualization and/or community engagement made clear that it was a performative and "tick-box" action, rather than genuine or meaningful engagement. This not only demonstrates a clear tension and disconnect between what is recommended in theory and what is happening in reality, but also illustrates the unequal power dynamics between implementing actors and refugee communities. NGOs appear to hold much of the decision-making power related to educational programming like SEL for refugee communities in East Africa, thus replicating the common and historical practice of stripping refugee communities of their agency and self-determination (Agier, 2011; Harrell-Bond, 1986; Krause, 2021; Malkki, 1996).

These unequal power dynamics are also fortified by the fact that SEL programming in East Africa is largely driven by donor priorities, global best practices, and coordination mechanisms, not by refugee communities. As demonstrated above, scholars and practitioners recognize that SEL is not new, but rather a particularly structured way of supporting individuals to learn certain skills and competencies. However, donors continue to insist that NGOs utilize Western SEL approaches, based on "global best practice", rather than building on existing or previous SEL, or SEL-adjacent, practices and programming in refugee contexts. This not only reinforces the inequity of power between donors, NGOs, and refugee communities, but also results in repetitive and ineffective programming. As SEL is considered to be an on-going, life-long process, and the potential benefits of SEL take time to manifest (CASEL, 2023), this lack of continuity in programming will especially perpetuate the limited success and impact of SEL—and similar EiE interventions, with refugee communities in the region.

A final key tension identified through this study relates to the integration of refugee children into national education systems. When engaging with Ministries of Education in East Africa to develop national SEL frameworks, no study participants mentioned the integration of refugee and displaced children into national education systems of their host countries. Despite the existence of numerous regional commitments towards this goal, SEL appears to function as an indicator that these commitments exist mostly in theory and have yet to be realistically executed. If national governments, donors, and

relevant agencies continue to delay meaningful processes of refugee integration, they will only perpetuate the protracted nature of many refugee communities in the region, thus subjecting refugee learners to the repetitive, inadequate, and ineffective education programming that has plagued them for decades.

Conclusion

The tensions, challenges, and complex dynamics related to culture and power identified through this examination of SEL with refugees in East Africa are not unique to SEL or refugee education for that matter. Rather, the findings speak to broader Western educational trends and topical EiE interventions globally (e.g. gender, protection, inclusion) and the fact that many of these interventions are: 1) rooted in Western concepts, philosophies, and approaches; 2) NGO and donor-driven; and 3) repetitive and inadequate. I acknowledge the hard work and positive intentions of the study participants and do not discourage EiE actors from continuing to uphold the right to education for refugees and endeavoring to improve EiE programming globally. However, the EiE field must first acknowledge the existing challenges and tensions in the field, like those presented in this article, in order to meaningfully address them and uphold the humanitarian principle of *do no harm*.

This article begins to address the qualitative and critical gap in CIE and EiE scholarship on SEL in refugee contexts, however more research is needed to fully understand how refugee communities in East Africa—and globally, receive and experience SEL interventions and what the deeper impacts of these interventions are. Additionally, research on why SEL interventions delivered through formal schooling target mostly younger refugee children, and not older refugee learners, could help to inform EiE practices and donor policies to align with the concept of SEL as a life-long process and ensure older refugee students also reap the perceived benefits of SEL. Finally, examination of SEL contextualization processes—and the development of *local* SEL frameworks, as well as to what extent refugees retain and travel with learned SEL knowledge, and the cultural and behavior-change implications of this, could also help CIE and EiE practitioners and scholars understand if and how SEL functions as a tool of Westernization, cultural imperialism, and subaltern epistemicide. Adding these areas of inquiry to the CIE and EiE research agendas will not only serve to inform other current topical EiE interventions, but also the broader uptake of SEL by education systems globally.

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"It is as if They are Taking Advantage of a Bad Situation": Female School Teachers' Narratives About Care Work and Online Teaching during Covid-19 in India

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This exploratory study analyzes six female school teachers' narratives of navigating increased care work at home with online teaching during COVID-19 in India. A theoretical framework of decolonizing feminist research, with an emphasis on moving beyond Anglo/Eurocentric forms of feminist knowledge-making, frames the study. Based on the interviews, the study reveals that the home emerged as a site for resistance to the gendered division of care work in marriages via the use of the tactical strategy of relying on family members other than the husband. Within the limited scope of the study, the schools emerged as sites of institutional betrayal manifested in administrative actions and inactions such as removing contractual teachers, scheduling meetings outside work hours, increasing surveillance, and not providing digital support. These administrative decisions were perceived by the participants as motivated by profit-making, displaying complete disregard for the teachers' well-being. The findings advance our understanding of how emergencies such as COVID-19 exacerbate the exploitation of female members of the labor force who are already marginalized through contractual undervalued work or the inordinate burden of caregiving. It also offers important suggestions for policymakers concerned with creating safe and inclusive working spaces for female teachers in the global south.

Keywords: COVID-19 pandemic, care work, teachers, India, decolonial theory

Introduction

The COVID-19 pandemic had an overwhelmingly negative impact on marginalized communities across the globe such as people of color, working mothers, people with disabilities, poor people, and informal workers. Female school teachers with children were particularly affected because they had to simultaneously cope with exacerbated gendered inequities linked to care work at home (Borah and Das, 2021; Chauhan, 2020), and challenges linked with online teaching from the home such as digital divide, limited professional training, less attendance, and salary cuts (Kumawat, 2020). Despite the fact that teacher well-being is a prerequisite for providing students with a safe and quality learning atmosphere, especially in the context of humanitarian crises and emergencies such as COVID-19 (Falk et al., 2019), limited empirical research exists on the lived experiences of female school teachers in the Global South. This qualitative exploratory study addresses the research gap by presenting a narrative inquiry of six female school teachers' experiences of negotiating care work at home with online teaching during COVID-19 in India.

India represents a critical site for investigation because of the abysmally low rates of female labor force participation even before the pandemic (Kumar, 2021), the inordinate burden of caregiving on women that includes looking after children and the extended

family (OECD, 2018), and the nationwide digital divide (Modi & Postario, 2020). The specific research questions that the study seeks to answer are:

a. How did female school teachers in Delhi (India) navigate care work at home with online teaching during the pandemic?
b. To what extent did they feel supported by family members and school personnel in seeking to address these responsibilities?

The research is guided by a decolonial feminist framework that places emphasis on moving beyond Anglocentric/Eurocentric epistemologies via collaboration between the researcher and the researched. Participant narratives, verified by them before publication, thus occupy center stage in this article. A narrative approach to inquiry was deemed suitable because it privileges the voice of the participant, recognizes the importance of personal stories as generative tools for social transformation, and involves the co-construction of knowledge between the researcher and the researched (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016; Ballantine, 2022). A specific method of narrative inquiry called episodic narrative interviews (Mueller, 2019) was employed to elicit bounded stories from six female school teachers about their experiences with care work and online teaching during COVID-19.

I begin the article by providing a brief overview of COVID-19 in India, along with a review of the empirical literature on gender disparities at home and schools during COVID-19. This is followed by an explication of the theoretical framework and the research methodology. Participant narratives, which have been verified by them before publication, are then placed at the center of the study. These narratives can be seen as possessing both *intrinsic* and *instrumental* value (Ballantine, 2022). Their intrinsic value lies in participants' opportunity to own and control their stories (Ballantine, 2022), and their instrumental value in deconstructing decontextualized and static understanding of female school teachers' experiences during the pandemic. The first-person accounts will prove valuable for scholars and policymakers interested in developing situated socio-structural theories, policies, and interventions around the issue of teacher well-being and gender equity in emergency contexts.

Two heuristic notions of 'tactical strategies' (Lugones, 2003) and 'institutional betrayal' (Freyd and Smith, 2014) have been used to frame the findings and analysis, where the former refers to seemingly small acts of micro resistance enacted by marginalized groups that can prove subversive in the long run (Moya, 2006), and the latter refers to institutional actions or inactions that bring harm to those dependent on them for safety and well-being (Freyd & Smith, 2014). I interpret teachers' reliance on family members other than their husbands to cope with increased care work as a tactical strategy of resistance (Lugones, 2003), and the school administrations' actions/inactions, such as lack of teacher professional development and removal of contractual teachers during COVID-19, as a form of institutional betrayal (Freyd & Smith, 2014). The article ends by drawing attention to the implications of these findings for scholars, policymakers, and practitioners in India and globally.

Covid-19 in India: An Overview

On March 24, 2020, at 8:00 pm, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi announced to a population of 1.2 billion people that the country would shut down in exactly four hours,

leading to one of the strictest lockdowns globally. Educational institutions swiftly closed and moved to online teaching, with approximately 320 million school students affected by school closures (Tandon, 2021). The digital divide in India, coupled with limited prior experience with technology, raised serious concerns about the feasibility of online teaching nationally (Modi & Postario, 2020). Even private school students from urban areas faced a host of technological issues, with parents reporting low speed of internet data or not having any technological device at home at all (Vyas, 2020). And while India experienced what some call a "relatively mild first wave" of COVID-19 (Chandra, 2021), the second wave of COVID-19 caught the nation completely unprepared, unleashing a tragedy of horrifying magnitude. India accounted for more than half of the global COVID-19 cases during the second wave that lasted from March 2021-June 2021, and the nation set a global record at 40,000 deaths a day (What to Know about India's Coronavirus Crisis, 2021; Zirpe et al., 2021). Emerging research demonstrates the looming impact of COVID-19 in the Indian subcontinent in the form of learning loss for children, drastic plummeting of female employment, as well as increased levels of poverty, starvation, and income divide (COVID-19's Lasting Impact on Education, 2022; Gururaja & Ranjitha, 2022).

Gender Disparities in Care Work at Home During Covid-19

Care work refers to the unpaid labor carried out by individuals inside households and includes direct care of people, as well as indirect care, such as cooking, cleaning, or fetching water (Moreira da Silva, 2019). This work, done by millions of women across the globe, helps sustain the formal economy and has an impact on women's ability to undertake paid employment (Addati et al., 2018). Scholars have referred to the additional burden of care work for professional women as the "double burden" (Hochshild, 1989, p.4) or the "motherhood employment penalty" (Addati et al., 2018, p. xxxiii).

Poverty, war, and/or emergencies like COVID-19 have the indirect effect of altering the already skewed power relations between men and women, typically leading to an increase in women's workloads and further negatively impacting their participation within the labor force (Moreira da Silva, 2019; McLaren et al., 2020). Compared to earlier epidemics and pandemics, the public health measures implemented to curb COVID-19, specifically the stay-at-home orders and closure of schools, had a more severe impact on women's care work responsibilities than men's, irrespective of their work status (Sevilla & Smith, 2020). Subsequently, many women were either pushed out of the workforce or had to reduce their work hours, thereby exacerbating the existing gender gap in the labor market (Alon et al., 2020; Sevilla & Smith, 2020; Sugawara & Nakamura, 2021).

Despite increased contributions by men globally, the gender division of household labor continued to remain unequal during the pandemic (Carlson et al., 2020; Farré et al., 2020; Fodor et al., 2021; Jessen et al., 2021). In the US, women with young children reduced their work hours four to five times more than fathers (Collins et al., 2020), and in the UK, the pandemic led to an approximate increase of forty hours of additional childcare responsibilities for families, most of which was borne by women (Sevilla & Smith, 2020). Married professional women working from home in India also experienced more stress than their male counterparts due to increased domestic responsibilities (Beri, 2021; Borah & Das', 2021; Sharma & Vaish, 2020).

Chauhan's (2022) study with thirty dual-earning couples in India revealed that while time spent on unpaid care work increased for all participants during the pandemic, for men this unpaid care work was in addition to recreational activities, whereas for women the increased care work replaced the recreational activities, leading to exhaustion and stress. While emerging research highlights the possible positive impact of flexible work arrangements for working mothers owing to increased contributions of male partners at home (Alon et al., 2020), this can only occur when organizations and societies change the work cultures and gender norms in the post-pandemic era (Chung et al., 2021).

Gender Disparities at School During Covid-19

Beames et al. (2021) refer to school teachers as "the forgotten frontline (workers) of COVID-19" (p. 1); they had to take up new roles and adapt to online teaching with little notice and limited professional training. During the pandemic, school teachers internationally reported an increased feeling of burnout, a sense of frustration and inadequacy, reduced communication and non-authentic interactions with parents, a lack of institutional support, and a lack of spontaneity when teaching online (Niemi & Kousa, 2020; Onyema et al., 2020, Pellerone, 2021; Pressley, 2021). Female school teachers with children and elderly dependents could be seen as doubly disadvantaged, since they also had increased care work responsibilities at home.

Studies have illuminated work-family conflicts faced by female school teachers internationally even before the pandemic (Erdamar & Demirel, 2014; Noor & Zainuddin, 2011). While teachers were somewhat able to separate the demands of professional paid care work and unpaid care work before the pandemic, the blurring of the personal and professional lines during COVID-19 made this separation extremely challenging. Several studies within the Global North draw attention to the differential impact of COVID-19 on male and female school teachers in terms of increased stress, anxiety, and depression in the workplace (Oducado et al., 2020; Lizana et al., 2021; Santamaría et al., 2020). Within the specific context of India, female school teachers in joint families reported facing an added layer of responsibility, since they had to look after the elders as well as children (Dogra and Kaushal, 2022).

Santamaría and colleagues' (2021) study in Spain revealed that not only did female school teachers manifest significantly more symptoms of stress and anxiety than their male counterparts, but those who had children displayed more depressive symptoms than those who did not. Similar findings come from a survey of 200 academics from universities in Europe and the US (Yildrim and Ziya, 2020). Female academics also reported experiencing additional pressures linked to providing students with emotional and psychological support (Górska et al., 2021; Winnington et al., 2021) and increased feelings of frustration at home and work (Parlak et al., 2021). Despite the significant additional burden placed on female teachers during the pandemic across the globe, the bulk of empirical literature about the gendered impact of COVID-19 on teachers focuses on schools and higher education institutions within the Global North. The study seeks to address the research gap by foregrounding the lived experiences of six female school teachers in India.

Theoretical Framework: Decolonizing Feminist Research

There exists a widespread tendency within feminist research to view the category of "women" and their experiences as homogenous across the globe. In her seminal work, Mohanty (1984) highlighted the production of the third-world woman as a "singular monolithic subject" (p. 333) within certain Western feminist scholarly articles that "discursively colonize the material and historical heterogeneities of lives of women in the third world" (p. 334). Her definition of colonization is a *discursive* one, where feminist researchers make use of specific analytic categories (third-world women as victims of male violence, universal dependents, victims of the colonial process, and victims of kinship structures) instead of careful and focused local analysis. Lugones (2010) similarly notes how categorical, hierarchical, and dichotomous logic in modern and colonial ways of thinking about gender, race, and/or sexuality tends to eschew the complexity and diversity of female voices and experiences in favor of generalizations.

Decolonizing feminist research goes beyond the analytically binary models of subordination and subversion, victimhood and rebellion, passivity and agency, and repression and freedom that predominates Western feminist thought to account for the multiple identities that women from the so-called third world, and globally negotiate with (Saini, 2022). To quote Manning (2021):

> Many Global South women live in an in between world, a world full of uncertainties, ambiguities, and contradictions…Using a decolonial feminist framework to understand the everyday ness of these in between worlds identifies the complexities of the women's lived experiences. (p. 1204)

A decolonial feminist framework enables the researcher to engage with this "everydayness" of the participants' lived experiences by moving beyond Anglocentric/Eurocentric epistemes to produce new forms of knowledge-making. It foregrounds the voices of the participants, involves collaborative and reflexive research via positioning of participants, not as subjects/objects but as equal participants, and demands from the researcher constant questioning of her/his assumptions (Agboka, 2014).

Within the specific context of COVID-19, this framework has been employed to explore a diverse range of topics such as the gendering of violence against women (Segalo & Fine, 2020), Pakistani migrant women's lived experiences in the Netherlands (Salim, 2022), and the experiences of female faculty in academia (Abhaya, 2022). However, this is one of the first studies that employs a decolonial feminist framework to analyze the interactions between gender, care work, and school teaching during the pandemic; and it is hoped that the findings will contribute to a situated and non-essentialized understanding of female professionals' experiences in schools in India.

Research Methodology

Narrative Inquiry

In narrative inquiry (NI), researchers collect stories from their participants about a significant event in their life and/or social context (Jovchelovitch et al., 2000) and use them to understand the informants' experiences. NI prioritizes the storyteller's perspective instead of imposing a more specific agenda (Anderson & Kirkpatrick, 2016,

p. 632) and involves the co-construction of knowledge between the researcher and the researched, thus serving as a useful methodology for scholars working within the decolonial feminist framework. A specific method of NI called 'episodic narrative interviews' (Mueller, 2019) was used to elicit bounded stories from six female school teachers about their experiences with care work and online teaching during COVID-19. Within episodic interviews, the researcher requests the informants to share small stories that are targeted and focused in nature, which helps mitigate the "anything goes" approach standard within narrative research (Davis & Dwyer, as cited in Mueller, 2019, p.2). The first round of semi-structured interviews, conducted via Zoom, lasted between 60-75 minutes, and the video recordings were saved with the participants' permission. A follow-up interview lasting approximately 30-35 minutes was conducted virtually again after 2-3 weeks to clarify details about specific aspects of episodes shared in the first session.

Identification and Selection of Participants

The participant selection criteria devised for this study required that prospective participants be a) female, b) school teachers at private schools, c) married with children, and d) their school transitioned to online teaching during the pandemic. I shared a recruitment call at six different private schools in Delhi, India. I had worked as a schoolteacher in Delhi for eight years before pursuing a Ph.D., and the six schools were selected because I knew at least one employee at the school who agreed to share the recruitment material (flyer, text message, email). Initially, four participants from four different schools agreed to participate, and snowball sampling was used for the recruitment of two additional participants. The reluctance of teachers to participate despite guaranteeing confidentiality was a major obstacle in recruiting participants, and contributed to my decision to frame the research as an exploratory study with a small sample set of six participants (see Table 1 for detailed backgrounds of each participant). Strict confidentiality and anonymity measures were followed to safeguard participants' well-being and minimize the possibility of harm. Pseudonyms selected by the participants have been used throughout the study and at the time of being interviewed, all the participants were working remotely at home and teaching online classes.

It is important to note that due to the small sample set, the findings cannot be generalized to India, let alone globally. The insights of the participants are linked to their specific circumstances, which may be different from those faced by teachers from different socio-economic backgrounds, castes, states, and types of schools. However, the exploratory nature of the study presents a useful foundation for developing more elaborate and extensive research on the topic of care work and online teaching during COVID-19 involving a larger and more diverse sample of participants. Additionally, a thick description of the "time, place, context, and culture" (Mertens, 2010, p. 259) has been provided to assist the readers to determine the extent of transferability – the qualitative parallel concept of generalizability – of the findings to other contexts (Guba and Lincoln, 1989).

Table 1
Overview of the six research participants in the study

Private School	Participant No.	Name (Pseudonyms)	Grades	Nature of job, Work experience	Age	Approximate Annual Income & Classification	Children	Extended Family living together	Type of School
No. 1	**1.**	Manasvi	XI & XII	Contractual, 22 years	43 years	INR 1,000,000 *Low-Income Family*	Two sons (15 &18 years)	None	Private, Recognized & Unaided
	2.	Geeta	X- XII	Permanent, 10 years	35 years	INR 2,000,000 *Middle-Income Family*	One daughter (12 years)	Mother-in-Law	
No. 2	**3.**	Akanksha	XI & XII	Permanent, 14 years	38 years	INR 3,250,000 *Middle-Income Family*	A son (14 years) and daughter (17 years)	Father & Mother-in-Law	Private, Recognized & Aided
	4.	Niyati	VI-X	Permanent 23 years	45 years	INR 2,650, 000 *Middle-Income Family*	A son (21 years)	None	
No. 3	**5.**	Disha	IX & X	Permanent, 9 years	32 years	INR 1,000,00 *Middle-Income Family*	One-year old baby boy born in June, 2020.	None	Private, Recognized & Unaided
No. 4	**6.**	Yami	I-V	Contractual, 5 years	29 years	INR 2,000,00 *Middle-Income Family*	1.3 months baby boy born in March, 2020.	Father & Mother-in-Law	Private, Recognized & Unaided

Narrative Analysis of Transcripts

Once the interviews were transcribed, I conducted a narrative analysis involving the reduction, synthesis, and reconfiguration of the interview data (Kelly & Howie, 2011) to produce six separate stories. A specific process called *emplotment*, which requires the researcher to identify key subplots (significant events) in each interview and organize them chronologically in the form of a story, was followed (Emden, 1998; Polkinghorne, 1995). The first step in the process involved the identification and isolation of all events that dealt with the participants' experiences with care work and online teaching during the pandemic. In the second step, the events were arranged chronologically to create a coherent story with a beginning, middle, and end. The final stories were returned to all the respondents via email, who were asked the following two questions: "Does it ring true?" and "Do you wish to correct/develop/delete any part?" (Emden, 1998, p. 35). While four teachers replied to the email saying they were satisfied, Manasvi requested me to remove references to the subjects taught by her for fear of being recognized, and Yami requested that I acknowledge her mother-in-law's help in the story. In the final stage, I made changes to the stories based on the feedback from the participants and analyzed them via a six-step inductive approach to thematic analysis as outlined by Braun & Clarke (2006). Post-analysis, I conducted member checks with four participants (Manasvi, Yami, Disha, and Akanksha) to ensure the credibility of my findings (Birt et al., 2016), all of whom seemed satisfied with the analysis.

Teachers' Voices from India

This section contains condensed versions of the final *emplotted* stories of four out of the six participants. While I had hoped to foreground the stories of all six participants, Niyati and Geeta were not comfortable with the verbatim publication of their narratives for fear of being identified. I honor their decision by keeping their stories private and referring to excerpts from their interviews in the discussion section. The published stories have been verified by the participants and make exclusive use of their words.

Manasvi

Manasvi is a 43-year-old mother of two school-going children. She was employed on a contract at a private school in West Delhi that charged an average monthly fee of INR 8000 (USD 100) and catered to students from high-income families.

"During the first phase of the pandemic, we were asked to start online teaching from the very next day, irrespective of whether a teacher knows how to do it or not… The day the lockdown was announced, we had a meeting at 9 at night. Sometimes, we would have meetings at 10:00 pm… So, it was very chaotic in the beginning; schools provided little support. The new study of techniques and teaching from home in a small house like ours was also a challenge. I have a one-bedroom apartment, so ultimately all we had was two rooms and a kitchen. And we had strict instructions that when you teach, there should be nobody else in the room. How is that possible?

Technology was also a big challenge for me… I was always lagging in technology even before the pandemic… The schools did not do much in helping us. But I thank my husband who taught me, and a colleague's husband...I don't think of technology as a burden now.

Then without a maid, everything was a big challenge for me. The entire family [was] at home… and when everybody is in the house, then the number of meals also increase from 3 to 4… and the tendency that since mother is at home, we can eat hot and fresh food. Every other household work was earlier done by others, I had a cook, I had a maid… Now I had to do everything… and then homeschooling the younger one. It was a mess!... But my kids really helped me… they learnt how to use the mop… they washed utensils also, they did everything, like drying clothes… Those women whose family members helped them, life must have been relatively easy for them during COVID. I received a lot of help too, as much as I could get, I received from my children.

All the contractual teachers were removed because they were not needed. Whether a teacher teaches one student, or sixty, that hardly matters, they just wiped them off and combined classes… I was always scared initially… That time when we did not have a proper connection, I felt every day that I would definitely lose my job because the principal used to enter the class anytime to check on me… and then the second wave struck, that was the worst time… the passion to cook, try new things at home, that was totally killed. It was all about survival at the time.

It is not good, the school is getting fees every month right? Still, they are saving on AC, they are saving on security, on transportation. They are saving on so many things! And they are removing teachers, so I think they are not doing good. It is almost as if they are taking advantage of a bad situation; this is what I feel."

Yami

Yami is a 29-year-old mother of a baby boy born during the pandemic who was on a contract at a school in West Delhi. The school charged average monthly fees of INR 9000 (USD 110) and catered to students from high-income families.

"When the pandemic happened, I was on [unpaid] maternity leave and when I went back in July, 2020, they did not hire me back as I was on contract. I felt bad when they asked me to leave. I was devastated. I got to know later that my principal kept two teachers in my salary, she was getting more manpower, not quality, and quality hardly makes a difference in the online classes. [So] I was out of job for a year.

Luckily, I was offered the [contractual] job again in March [2021], and I really wanted to prove myself…When I rejoined, I was very new to online teaching. The very first day of my online class, I was not given any demo about teaching online, any strategies… Just a team of students was made, I was told this is my class, and I was expected to teach them without any guidance… and the principal could enter any time to check my teaching. It was scary… School did not play any kind of role in teaching us, neither will your colleagues help you here because everybody feels that it is a competition.

But I told the school just give me half an hour, let me sit in front of the laptop, I will learn everything on my own. I wanted to prove myself. I was very nervous… I remember telling myself 'Yami, you are done with your profession. Yami, you cannot go for it.' I took each day as it came, and as more and more days passed, I learned new strategies on my own. And it was challenging to learn everything on my own with a child.

But my mother-in-law helped me a lot. She used to take care of everything… like cleaning the house, washing clothes, feeding my baby. When I teach now, I am sitting in a closed room and my mother-in-law is the one who takes care of him, so (my) child is not an issue for me presently. I go to him in between my breaks, quickly feed him and come back… If I were not staying with my in-laws, I would have had to quit my job after the baby during the pandemic."

Akanksha

Akanksha is a 38-year-old mother of two school-going children who was employed as a permanent teacher at a government-aided private school in East Delhi. Information shared in the interview revealed that the school caters to students from middle- and/or low-income families

"When I go back, at that time I was very tense because it was all new to me. I didn't think I will be able to survive actually… such a massive lockdown… Firstly, no domestic help! I couldn't imagine life without them. When I had to clean the home during the pandemic, it was like endless cleaning going on. It is like I am working throughout the day; we have two floors, not much support from the family or in-laws… It just did not end, everything… And I have a son, so obviously, the quality of online teaching was not that great at his school. So, the majority came on to me… My husband helped me and did what he could, like I asked him to clean the first floor, but you know how it is? He works at an MNC [multinational corporation] and is so busy… [So] without maids, it was actually torturous.

Also, a single teacher could now teach 100 students and schools wanted to save money… so, our school merged classes and removed all contractual teachers… So, the burden of many [permanent] teachers increased. And then we would have meetings any time; nobody is bothered in the school that these are not work time, they might be cooking [time], so do not keep a meeting now… It was confusing for me, whether I should take care of my home or my work. At times, honestly, I had to make an excuse that there was no network, because I simply couldn't manage… I would give students some work that you do this and left a message to principal that network was not coming. I mean probably it is not right, but I had no option.

It was also very difficult to teach online because I am not that technologically good… I felt so exhausted. I was going through a lot, every day was a learning experience… My daughter actually taught me to change the settings, identify the problem makers, and stuff like that. Now it is all good, now I don't need any help and support… but initially it was a challenge."

Disha

Disha is a 32-year-old mother of a baby boy during the pandemic who was employed as a permanent teacher at a private school in North Delhi. The school charged average monthly fees of INR 3500 (USD 43) and catered to students from middle-income families.

"My baby boy was born three months after the lockdown happened. And when I joined the school after my maternity leave, one could fit together 200 students in one class. So, that is the policy school followed… while I was not worried about removal because I am

permanent, I have friends in other private schools, and they tell me that they have sacked people who have worked for them for five years, which is heartbreaking.

I did not have any paid help [at home] due to lockdown and needed all that time to take care of household chores. However, as time passed, it became increasingly challenging to manage the non-teaching work online, such as making lesson plans, keeping records, etc… and classes also increased. While I learnt how to teach online on my own, correcting papers online was a very big challenge for me… it was very stressful, like there were days when I used to sleep for only 2-3 hours at the night… With a baby who just started crawling and walking, it was even more challenging… There are senior teachers, some 4 or 5 teachers, very good teachers, efficient teachers, they have resigned due to technology. It was heard that they were not able to overcome the pressure.

My husband was supportive [during online teaching]. Like he would feed the baby, get up in the middle of his work, you know. But still, when you are at home, your attention is divided, no matter how supportive your husband is… Like there was incident when we had a mock exam and I made a mistake. I never did that before because I cross-check everything. But then while I was conducting the exam, my baby was in front of me and I had to see him… So, I made a mistake. I was crying because I never expected it. So yes, because of my household responsibilities and with a small baby, who has just started crawling, it has been difficult. But what can you do?... as a mother, you do not have a substitute, but as a teacher, you do, right?"

Discussion

Analysis of the six stories generated seven codes (exacerbation of care work, varying degree of support by family, technological challenges, financial precarity/unstable jobs, the COVID second-wave as a quest for survival, increased surveillance, and blurring of the personal and professional boundaries), that were collated into two overarching themes of 'tactical strategies and limited help by husbands' and 'institutional betrayal'. I discuss these themes in detail below.

Tactical Strategies and Limited Help by Husbands

The narratives revealed that all the participants had female domestic help before the pandemic, who would come to chop vegetables, clean the house, and even run errands for them. All these responsibilities were transferred to the participants during COVID-19 due to lockdown restrictions. In India, the patriarchal logic of "care work" as a woman's domain is often passed on to the household help in economically advantaged families, who become the "labor substitutes of their female employers" (Basnet & Sandhya, 2020, p. 283). Since domestic help alleviates women's double burden of handling professional work and care work, all participants reported a substantial increase in care work responsibilities during COVID-19. Moreover, those who had school-going children also faced additional responsibilities of home-schooling.

All the participants relied on the assistance of their family members (children, mother-in-law, sister-in-law, and husband) to cope with the increased household burden. Manasvi's sons learned to use the mop and helped with the laundry, and Niyati joked that thanks to the pandemic, her 21-year-old son could now cook the choicest of Indian dishes with perfection. Both Yami and Geeta shared that if it were not for the support of

their mother/sister-in-law, they would have had to quit their job to look after their children. To quote Geeta:

> So, she (sister-in-law) was actually very supportive with my daughter… she stays in a flat close by and is a housewife, so I would leave my daughter with her… She would feed her, also help with activities in class… I would often joke and ask her to keep my daughter on weekends too.

I interpret participants' sharing of care work responsibilities mainly with children and mothers/sister-in-law instead of their husbands during COVID-19 as encompassing 'tactical strategies' of resistance (Lugones, 2003) to overcome the unequal gendered division of care work within heterosexual marriages. Lugones (2003) introduced the notion of a 'tactical strategist' to highlight how forms of resistance enacted by marginalized communities in the short run may pose a potent challenge to unequal structures in the long run. Such acts may include a person from a lower caste calling attention to themselves when they are expected to be invisible, a person labeled as mentally ill refusing to be cured (Moya, 2006, p. 199), or like in the study, a mother engaging her sons with care work responsibilities in a deeply gendered society. While such small and subversive practices of everyday micro-resistance are often not understood as 'political' within the dominant Anglocentric/Eurocentric world of sense, Lugones views them as political "insofar as they involve intentional interfering with, refusal of, or resistance to the unitary logic of the hegemonic common sense" (Moya, 2006, p. 199).

The hegemonic gendered common sense in India dictates that the mothers or daughters-in-law should shoulder all the care work responsibilities at home. Manasvi and Niyati undercut this patriarchal expectation by asking their sons to help, an act that poses resistance to the patriarchal expectation that men be socialized from a young age to perform their role as providers and not caregivers (Berrich & Romich, 2011). Yami and Geeta resist the gendered division of care work in marriage by relying on the other female members, which draws attention to the strategic coalition women create to overcome inequality. However, it also demonstrates how care-work responsibilities within families are often transferred from one woman to another, thus perpetuating the gendered division of care-work.

The remaining two participants (Akanksha and Disha) had no option but to rely on their husbands to cope with increased care work, since Disha was the only woman in her family, and Akanksha did not receive any help from her mother-in-law. Neither of them felt adequately supported, adding to existing empirical evidence about the inequitable distribution of care work between married professional couples in India despite increased contribution by the male partner (Beri, 2021; Borah & Das', 2021; Chauhan, 2022; Sharma & Vaish, 2020). Since the help from their husbands was minimal, they experienced a blurring of their personal and professional lives, which further burdened them with guilt (Power, 2020).

It could be argued that while the teachers in the study resisted the gendered inequities linked to care work via the use of tactical strategies, the scope of the enactment of the strategies was limited to family members other than their husbands, thereby

highlighting the persistence of traditional gender roles within heterosexual marriages (Power, 2020). These findings contribute to growing evidence about the tenacious nature of social norms and familial expectations from women in India concerning care work at home (Nikore, 2022), and the subsequent need to inculcate gender-equitable attitudes related to domestic responsibilities amongst Indian men from a young age.

Schools as Sites of Institutional Betrayal

Institutional betrayal occurs when institutions act or fail to act in ways that bring harm to those dependent on them for safety and well-being (Smith and Freyd, 2014). Emergencies such as COVID-19 create a situation of greater reliance on powerful organizations such as schools, churches, and the government because of their unprecedented nature. While scholars have identified several manifestations of institutional betrayal during COVID-19 by the healthcare system and government leaders (Adams & Freyd, 2021), less research exists on teachers' experiences with institutional betrayal, especially within the global south.

The narratives revealed that the schools in the study failed to perform even their most basic duties towards their female employees during the pandemic, such as safeguarding the teachers' livelihood in precarious times and providing them with the training to teach remotely. The schools fired contractual teachers, increased the class size, imposed unrealistic expectations (e.g., that no family members should be in the room when teaching), scheduled meetings at erratic work hours, and increased teacher surveillance; actions that had a particularly detrimental impact on female teachers, who were burdened with inordinate care work at home. These decisions not only fostered workplace inequities but also created panic and fear in the lives of teachers who were already grappling with the devastation of death and loss during the pandemic. For these reasons, they could be seen as sites of institutional betrayal.

The flexibility of the online platforms meant that schools could now have one teacher teaching 80-100 students at the same time. The schools in the study saw this as an opportunity in adversity, which was associated with the removal of contractual teachers even as they continued to charge fees from all students. Manasvi and Yami, who worked on a contract, shared harrowing accounts of the anxiety and stress that they endured over the constant fear of losing their jobs. Yami, who had a baby during the pandemic, did not get re-employed until a year after she was to return from maternity leave. Because she wanted to safeguard her job by 'proving' herself, she had to learn how to teach online without any support from the school, which was a constant source of stress for her.

The precarity of Yami's employment combined with the motherhood penalty (Budig & England, 2001) – where employers discriminate against mothers by removing them once a child is born– increased her exploitation by the school administration/owners. Manasvi also talked at length about the anxiety of being removed and the constant psychological toll it took on her. Due to the threat of removal and the devastating second wave of the pandemic, she no longer found enjoyment in things that previously gave her happiness, such as cooking and looking after her home, as "it was all about survival" then.

The fragile mediation between indispensability at home and expendability at the workplace experienced by contractual teachers such as Yami and Manasvi placed them at a disadvantage when compared to their male and female peers with permanent jobs. The removal of contractual teachers also increased the number of students in each class, amplifying the workload of continuing teachers and impacting the quality of learning. Niyati, a permanent teacher and the head of the Math department shared:

> "It was so sad, that they fired teachers… some had been teaching for many years you know, and those who were safe also felt guilty… and then I had to create new timetables… It was very confusing… I had to teach extra classes too [in school], but what could I do… at least we have our job right? So honestly…that is what we felt mostly."

The sole beneficiary of the decision to remove teachers seemed to be the owners of the schools, who now had to pay fewer teachers while charging the same tuition to all the students. As Manasvi said, "it was as if the schools took advantage of a bad situation" to reap financial gains. The indiscriminate firing of teachers also created a sense of fear and insecurity among permanent teachers such as Niyati, who were scared to speak up about the challenging work conditions. The absence of any teacher's union, a consciousness of their labor rights, or government intervention meant that schools could make a windfall profit at the cost of their worker's physical and mental health with impunity, raising critical questions about issues of organizational responsibility and ethics required to govern during emergencies such as COVID-19 (Özkazanc-Pan, 2020).

Conclusion and Implications

The study set out to explore six female school teachers' experiences with care work and online teaching during the COVID-19 pandemic in India. The use of a decolonizing feminist research framework helped foreground the complexities of each participant's personal and professional experiences during the pandemic. For the teachers in the study, their care work responsibilities increased at home during the pandemic, and those who relied on family members other than their husbands felt adequately supported. I interpret this reliance as a tactical strategy (Lugones, 2003) of resistance as it involves intentional interfering with the hegemonic gendered common sense. However, the limited help by the male partners demonstrates that care work continues to be viewed as a woman's domain in India, a reality that school administrators/owners in the study did not give any consideration to. This disregard manifested in several ways, such as scheduling meetings outside school hours, providing little professional development, and increasing the class sizes of all teaching staff. I interpret these institutional actions and inactions during the pandemic as manifestations of institutional betrayal (Smith & Freyd, 2014), that served to further disadvantage those female teachers who were already marginalized in the system due to the burden of inordinate care work at home or the precarious nature of employment at school.

The gendered inequities in the households of the teacher-participants, the institutional betrayal by the schools in the study, and the tactical strategies of resistance employed by the participants should not be viewed as developments peculiar to the pandemic. Even before COVID-19, Indian women were spending maximum hours globally on unpaid care work (OECD, 2018), private schools were being run with minimum checks and

balances (Ali, 2015; Carr-Hill & Sauerhaft, 2019), and women were practicing strategies of negotiation within the patriarchal settings of their families (Kohli, 2016). What the pandemic did was exacerbate and expose the fissures and inequities already present within the private school system and the heterosexual family system.

The experiences of the teachers in the study demonstrate how emergencies such as COVID-19 can provide an opportunity for the exploitation and disempowerment of those women in the system who are already marginalized. To mitigate the negative impact of such emergencies in the future, I argue that workplaces should operate from an ethic of care that involves an intentional focus on empathic concern for the physical and emotional well-being of employees (Weare, 2010, p. 13). Such an ethic should involve, inter alia, "structurally contextualized wellbeing provisions" (Culshaw & Kurian, 2021, p. 1) that recognize teachers' preexisting pressures, and encompass family-friendly policies that encourage the reduction and redistribution of care work responsibilities (Nikore, 2022). A few examples of such provisions include fostering democratic decision-making, providing stronger collective bargaining rights to teachers, organizing gender-sensitization workshops for the administration, and access to free mental health counseling for school teachers (Chudgar & Sakamoto, 2021; Weare, 2010).

Even as the pandemic draws to an end and schools reopen across the globe, those who suffered from it will continue to carry the wounds of loss and devastation with them. The narratives revealed that this loss involved not only the havoc wrought on the lives and livelihood of teachers, but also the loss of faith in powerful institutions that are expected to protect the most vulnerable. The narratives also illuminate how men's tokenistic contribution to care work at home did little to alleviate the stress of those working women who had to rely solely on them. Despite the limited scope of the study, the findings provide emerging evidence of how several schools in India may have been complicit in exacerbating the gendered impact of COVID-19 on their female employees. The voices of these teachers tend to remain peripheral in global academic discourses and policy-making due to their censorship at the local level, their hesitation to come forward for the fear of being reprised at the national level, and the focus on teachers in the global north at the international level. It is hoped that the findings will provide the foundation for more extensive and elaborate work on the topic in the future, work that will also incorporate the voices of the spouses of the female teachers, as well as, the male teachers, and the school administration.

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Telling the Story of Gender Inequality During the Early Stages of the Covid-19 Crisis in Education and Introducing Feminist Alternatives to Change the Reality

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Research from different fields demonstrate that the disruption caused by Covid-19 exacerbated social problems. In education, literature reviews focus on issues related to technology, evaluations, or racial discrimination that were worsened as a consequence of remote teaching and learning. Few scholarly works of this kind analyze the problematics in the education system in emergencies from a gendered perspective. This literature review brings to the discussion the transnational burdens, risks, and divides that increasingly affect women during crises in education. Findings revealed that female actors—teachers, students, mothers—have received fewer opportunities and have been assigned more responsibilities in comparison to their male counterparts since the beginning of the pandemic. Through a framework of feminist theories, this review analyzes studies that illustrate the disparities affecting women's opportunities in education, as well as some of their responses. It makes the case to look for solutions that create better conditions for all and strengthen the educational structure itself. Finally, this article brings forth feminist alternatives to equip the education system when facing disruptions, based on ideas from practitioners and scholars that intend to decolonize teaching and learning through survival actions that support situated knowledge, collaboration, and mind freedom.

Keywords: education in emergencies, narrative review, social reproduction, decolonial praxis, education policy

Introduction

> "…there is a macho society, where girls, no matter how young they are, have to do housework and are forced to do these things and put their education aside. They say: you already lost the school year, so it is better that you do things around the house, help out, and so they do not study anymore." Gaby, 17, Ecuador (Plan International, 2021, p. 5).

As illustrated by the quote above, girls and women have been facing difficult times during the Covid-19 pandemic to continue engaged in education. Some girls might not ever be able to return to the classrooms—not because of the virus, but because gender oppressions become a barrier between them and education. During this emergency, in many cases, women were the only ones coping with caregiving responsibilities, at the time of learning their way through technology for education and remote work. In other cases, girls could not follow lessons from home as their presence in the house meant that they had to deal with house chores, among other circumstances that made women's survival in the education system more difficult than it was for their male counterparts (Wannamakok et al., 2020; Plan International, 2020; UN Women & ECLAC, 2020).

However, gender oppression in education has not been sufficiently addressed in academic publications from the beginning of the crisis. Additionally, even if after 2022 literature started being more prolific in terms of gender inequalities in education during the pandemic, during its first months only a few organizations and researchers focused their work on the experiences of female teachers, female students and mothers of school-age children. Hence, aiming to address the gap in literature about women experiences in education in the first year and a half of the Covid-19 crisis, I conducted this study with gender focus, from an insider perspective. From this section on, I use the pronouns "I", "we," "our," and "us", as I am a female researcher, instructor and student from Latin America.

With extensive territorial coverage, this study takes the form of a narrative literature review, gathering data from publications that focused on women's experiences in education during the first year and a half of the Covid-19 crisis, when the rest of the world had its eyes on different aspects of this emergency. Even if during the first stages of the pandemic the literature did not offer much information about women's situation in education, I was able to find ten publications to answer the following question: What were the issues that female teachers, students and mothers of school-age children faced during the first year and a half of the Covid-19 education emergency?

To find out if there were or transnational trends in the issues faced by women in education during this emergency, I used two strategies to analyze the publications. First, through a chronological concatenation of events and, second, by categorizing emerging themes. At a glance, it is perceived that gender disparities affect women's opportunities transnationally, not only to continue their engagement in education, but even to survive, across cultures. It is thus paramount to start looking through the lens of gender at how education responds to emergencies, to propose alternatives that would turn the education system into a safer space for all.

Background

The world experienced its most disruptive situation in modern times due to the Covid-19 virus, which started spreading in December 2019. A pandemic was officially declared in March 2020 by the director of the World Health Organization (WHO, 2020) and from there, almost all face-to-face activities in the world had to stop, including education. Despite severe measures to prevent the disease from spreading, according to the WHO (n. d.), by mid-2023, Covid-19 had left approximately 768,237,788 confirmed cases, including 6,951,677 accumulative deaths worldwide .

Due to the unprecedented and contagious characteristics of Covid-19, health measures taken during the years 2020 and 2021 included lockdowns that lasted long periods. In such disruption, school closures affected all countries to different degrees, and in some cases, lessons from home lasted more than 2 years. The emergency in education had different stages, including remote lessons, hybrid schemes, partial return to classrooms, and full return to schools (UNESCO et al., 2021). While education systems and the whole world were trying to cope with the crisis by implementing remote work alternatives, there was another hidden emergency affecting the physical integrity of mostly female members of our society. It was the increase in domestic violence that took place especially during the lockdowns (Sediri et al,2020), mostly in areas of the world

where patriarchy is still very strong. By the end of 2021, "1 in 2 women reported that they or a woman they know experienced a form of violence since the COVID-19 pandemic" (UN Women, 2021, p. 5).

Additionally, socially assigned roles and responsibilities made coping with the worst consequences of this emergency in education rely mostly on the shoulders of female members of the family (Thorsteinsen, et al, 2022), especially during the first year and a half, when the eyes of the world were focused on the health contingency, and women's work inside their homes was taken for granted.

What Previous Literature Reviews Found

Literature reviews covering education issues that emerged during the Covid-19 crisis that preceded this study addressed topics such as racial issues or social indicators (Moore, 2021; Fallah-Aliabadi et al., 2022), technology (Salas-Pilco et al 2022;) or assessment (Chiang et al., 2022), all of which are pressing variables of education in emergencies. Following this train of thought, Moore's (2021) literature review utilized a scoping strategy to select 16 articles about racial issues related to education during the Covid-19 crisis in the United States. In the analysis, the author identified worrying realities related to health, the economy, and policies. One of the conclusions is that the Latin American community's morbidity and mortality increased during the lockdown due to loss of income, and instability in education and childcare services (Moore, 2021). In the same line, Fallah-Aliabadi and colleagues (2022) published a literature review of 31 articles identifying indicators that increased the vulnerability of people in relation to domains such as household & community composition; race, minority status & language; socioeconomic status; health; education; and information. It is interesting to notice that none of the findings of both literature reviews points to issues exclusively affecting women.

Likewise, Salas-Pilco and colleagues (2022) reviewed 23 articles related to online learning in Latin America during the Covid-19 crisis. These authors answered research questions about the characteristics of students' engagement in online learning. Findings were presented across dimensions, such as behavioral engagement, cognitive engagement, and affective engagement. Gender was not included in their dimensions. According to the results, Latin America needs to transform its higher education through professional training and access to the Internet to achieve quality as well as students' well-being.

With a different focus, Chiang and colleagues' research (2022) aims to better understand academic dishonesty (AD) in online learning environments during the Covid-19 crisis in education. The authors were determined to find "influencing factors of AD in online learning environments and to classify effective interventions" (Chiang et al., 2022, p. 911). They analyzed 59 articles, mostly published in the United States (US) and the United Kingdom (UK). Influencing factors of AD include: fear of failure, the use of new cheating tools by students, and automated feedback. Among their conclusions, the authors state that "it is important to create a positive atmosphere and learning culture" to develop a kind of honor code (Chiang et al., 2022, p. 925).

But, what about women? We are black, doctors, wives, mothers, *Latinas,* online teachers, students, and more. This review is concerned with what happened to us during the crisis when gender problems were exacerbated, and physical distancing made it harder for women to access education and other services that provide support and protection from domestic violence, child marriage, unwanted pregnancy, and other gendered abuses (Wylie, 2021). The contribution of this article is to join voices with other researchers that aim to generate better understandings of education in emergencies, by adding gender to the focus of analysis.

Analytic Framework

To analyze the information gathered through this literature review, I drew from three branches of feminist theory. The first one, proposed by Brenner (1998, 2000), helps understanding the social and economic origin of gender inequalities. The second branch is intersectionality, which helps explore the conjugation of obstacles —such as gender inequality, race discrimination, and social class— that affect women's opportunities (Carbado et al., 2013). The third branch proposes feminist strategies to decolonize education, through practices such as situated knowledge, collaboration and mind freedom that can help overcoming the consequences of gender oppressions in today's education system (Icaza & de Jong, 2018).

These branches of feminist theory meet in their analysis when it comes to exploring issues faced by women during emergencies in education. To start doing so, it is valuable to remember that women have historically been subjected to a gender ideology that assigns them household duties and excludes them from other aspects of social interaction (Brenner, 2000). This ideology is "reproduced actively and directly by various exclusionary rules and radices (governing education, political participation, and the labor market) as well as marriage and property law and legalized male violence against women" (Brenner, 2000, pp. 222–223). Complementing this observation, intersectionality postulates that oppression comes from different sources, such as gender, race or social class, that pile up on the shoulders of individuals (Carbado et al., 2013).

Understanding the nature of the oppression faced by women would not be enough to make justice if their efforts to navigate the difficult situations in education were not also recognized. To do so, I draw on Brenner's feminist and class theory (1998, 2000) which describes how women carry out projects and strategies to survive in market-oriented societies, and on feminist lessons to decolonize education found in Icaza & de Jong' volume (2018), which joins the voices of different authors to propose decolonizing educational praxis, based on situated knowledge, collaboration, and mind freedom.

More specifically, in this framework, survival projects and strategies refer to collective actions carried out to accomplish fundamental tasks, especially in contexts of adverse social and economic conditions (Brenner, 2000). Situated knowledge refers to the postmodernist interpretation of knowledge as "socially constructed and historically situated instead of a timeless representation of the world by separate individuals" (Nicholson, 1989, p. 198). Collaboration is understood as one of the 21st century skills by which "bigger and better things [can be done] when people work together instead of against one another, [with] best results . . . produced when many brains are working on a problem" (Berliner, & Glass, 2014, p. 63). Furthermore, mind freedom calls for

emancipation from mental slavery (Garvey, 1937/2017), to overcome naturalized forms of oppression.

Methodology

Following bibliography searching methods, I combined keywords in online academic engines, databases, and libraries (Boote & Beile, 2005), such as Web of Science, EBSCO or JSTOR. The terms I used in this search were "Covid-19" [OR] "Pandemic" [OR] "Crisis" [AND] "Women" [OR] "Girls" [OR] "Gender issues" [AND] "Education" [OR] "School" [OR] "Education Policy". To narrow down the initial results, I set the time frame to the first year and a half of the pandemic between March 2020 and September 2021, because this was the most difficult period of adaptation for the entire education system, when the disruption had to be overcome with remote strategies and education policies designed on the spot, without preparation, training, or resources to face all the consequences of teaching and learning from home.

Additionally, I conducted a title, abstract, and keywords screening to find all publications truly related to my interest. After filtering the results with time and conducting the screening, I finally I obtained twenty peer-reviewed articles and publications from international organizations written in English. This low number of entries revealed that most of the grey and academic literature published in English during the selected period focused on topics different from the issues faced by women and girls in education.

After reading the twenty publications, ten were retained following these criteria: a) attention to education female actors' experiences during the Covid-19 crisis; b) clear research methodology, whether quantitative or qualitative; c) the location of the participants of each study, aiming to include in my review a variety of contexts, in order to contrast or find transnational trends. The selected articles and documents were published between July 2020 and September 2021, and include reports issued by international organizations, and academic peer-reviewed articles. The former will help set the scene at a wider scale. The latter provide an analysis into particular situations, allowing a transnational comparison of gender issues in education.

For the analysis, I constructed a narrative chronology of the publications and a thematic analysis across the documents (Ridley, 2008; Rother, 2007). A limitation of this study is the reduced number of analyzed publications. This limitation derives from the limited availability of research related to the specific topic of women's experiences in education, in the chosen time frame that corresponded only to the first year and a half of the crisis. Nonetheless, this limitation does not preclude this paper to derive important insights and lessons from this crucial period, as shown in the next section. Table 1 Organizes the reviewed publications according to the date in which they were accepted or published.

Table 1.
Reviewed publications

Title	Publication type	Author	Date	Focus on Women in Education
Policy Brief: The Impact of Covid-19 on Latin America and the Caribbean.	Policy brief report	United Nations	July, 2020	Impact of the pandemic on women from LAC, including consequences on their access to education.
Education in the time of COVID-19.	Report	ECLAC & UNESCO	August, 2020	Impact of the pandemic on female teachers from LAC.
Care in Latin America and the Caribbean during the COVID-19. Towards Comprehensive systems to strengthen Response and recovery	Brief report	UN Women & ECLAC	August, 2020	Impact of school closures on female members of the society.
Human rights and education for Gambian young women during COVID-19: Recommendations for social policy and practice	Academic article	Wannamakok, W., Sissokho, O., & Gates, T. G.	September, 2020	Impact of distance education on girls from Gambia.
Halting Lives: The impact of Covid-19 on girls and young women	Research report	Plan International	September, 2020	Concerns about the widening of the gender gap in lower income countries due to the implementation of technological means for education.
Halting Lives 2 - In their own voice: girls and young women on the impact of COVID-19	Research report	Plan International	April, 2021	Impact of distance learning on young women and their experiences with education during the pandemic.
Covid-19 and female learners in South Sudan: The impact of school closures in Juba, Rumbek, Kapoeta, Torit and Pibor	Briefing paper	Oxfam	August, 2021	Obstacles experienced by female students from Sudan when trying to go back to schools.

Beyond COVID-19: A Feminist plan for Sustainability and social justice	Report	UN Women	September, 2021	Women's responses to the crisis in education.
The evolving impacts of the COVID-19 Pandemic on gender inequality in the US labor market: The COVID motherhood penalty	Academic article	Couch, K. A., Fairlie, R. W., & Xu, H.	October, 2021	Disproportionate economic consequences of Covid-19 on mothers of school-age children.
Digital divide framework: online learning in developing countries during the Covid-19 lockdown	Academic article	Mathrani, A., Sarvesh, T., & Umer, R.	September, 2021	Impact of the use of technologies for education on female learners from Asian developing countries.

Results

The low number of publications retrieved from the search indicates that gender issues in education were generally overlooked in research regarding education during the early stages of pandemic, which highlights the relevance of this study. The selected publications were made available between July 2020 and September 2021, comprising 59 countries, located in 5 continents. The results are divided in two sections: a chronological narrative and a thematic analysis. The chronological narrative follows the dates when the works were accepted or published and gives an account of how the pandemic unfolded in the chosen period. This section is divided into three moments: a) projections for women's difficulties in education; (b) negative impacts of the lockdown on females' opportunities; (c) surviving in the education system.

Chronological Narrative

This section narrates experiences and issues faced by females in education during the first year and a half of the Covid-19 crisis, based on the information found on reports by international organizations and on peer-reviewed articles. The first publications to see the lights during the global emergency were issued by organizations that had the capacity to analyze preexisting massive data and to make predictions on the base of the expected consequences of the lockdown. Drawing on social and economic indicators, they announced negative scenarios for vulnerable women and girls, who were susceptible to an increase in domestic violence and an overload of responsibilities, which would be obstacles for them to continue engaged in education. As the pandemic unfolded, early academic literature recorded experiences and testimonies of women and girls in relation to remote education, revealing similar difficulties in different areas of the world, such as lack time and space to follow lessons, or lack of support to continue their studies.

Projections for women's difficulties in education

Predictions on what could happen in education started being published by July of 2020, once it was clear that the situation was already changing peoples' opportunities. One of the first publications that appeared covering the topic of women during the Covid-19 pandemic was a policy brief issued by the United Nations (UN), contextualized in Latin America and the Caribbean (LAC) (UN, 2020). According to this document, gender equality and the empowerment of women needed to be at the core of the response to the crisis, because we had been "disproportionately impacted by the pandemic" (UN, 2020, p. 3).

The predicted risks for women and children in this area of the world were not only in economic terms, but also in terms of domestic violence. In this sense, the UN advised every effort to be made to guarantee "full-fledged rights of women, girls" and all vulnerable populations to "a life free of violence, exploitation and discrimination, the right to health and education, employment, wages and social protection, the promotion of economic autonomy and political participation" (UN, 2020, p. 3). This means that women from LAC counted as a vulnerable population who needed more protection, especially during this emergency. Given women's vulnerability, the UN recommended that policies should promote "meaningful participation by women and youth, and address gender bias barriers in the most technologically advanced and emerging sectors, including technology, medical supplies and pharmaceuticals" (UN, 2020, p. 12).

In August 2020, ECLAC and UNESCO published a report entirely focused on education. In this report, the hardship experienced by female teachers was highlighted as we "were facing double working hours, which included not only classroom work but also non-classroom teaching duties such as administrative tasks and lesson planning and preparation, as well as unpaid domestic and care work" (ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020, p. 10). In LAC, most school teachers are women, representing more than 70% of all teachers at the primary level and more than 60% in secondary education by 2020 (ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020; UNESCO et al., 2022). Hence, the adaptations needed for education to continue in the virtual world and an increase in domestic responsibilities were predictively going cause "emotional exhaustion, feelings of being overwhelmed, and stress" (ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020, p. 11) on female teachers. According to this report, female teachers had to assume "multiple responsibilities simultaneously: remote work, caring for children and other family members, supervising their children's learning, and unpaid domestic work" (ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020, p. 14).

Negative impacts of the lockdown on females' opportunities

In this challenging context, UN Women & ECLAC issued a brief on August 19, 2020, according to which women's unpaid domestic-care work had exponentially increased in LAC due to school closures, pressure on the health system, home activities diversification, and unequal distribution of responsibilities. An additional source of stress for female teachers came from working in a paid capacity, and dealing with students' needs while taking on an increasing load of demands at home, which brought consequences to their productivity (UN Women & ECLAC, 2020). However, their position could still be somewhat privileged, as "over half of the 126 million women in the female labor force in Latin America works in informal conditions, which often

involve job instability, low pay, and a lack of protection and rights" (UN Women & ECLAC, 2020, p. 11).

Not only were female teachers' situations affected by gender issues, but it was also the case of female students. In this regard, in September 2020, scholars published an article concerned with the impact of remote education on Gambian girls (Wannamakok et al., 2020). This article raises concerns about education through technological means. The authors explain that "as children stay home from school, issues of access to the newly introduced remote learning via radio and television are challenging for disadvantaged groups such as girls, whose household chores can discourage them from watching TV," and the situation was harder in rural areas where access to electricity can place an additional barrier (Wannamakok et al., 2020, p. 827). To alleviate the situation, particularly for girls, the authors propose that the education authorities invest in "education infrastructure, including learning technologies such as computers and sustainable energy that can support educational continuity", and even "working with local leaders to educate the community about the value of education continuity for young women during COVID-19" (Wannamakok et al., 2020, p. 827). The last proposal meant talking to families about women's possibilities to economically help the household income once they can educate themselves and build a career path.

By the same token, on September 5, 2020, Plan International, an organization focused on children's rights and equality, published a report focused on 14 countries on all continents, with a sample size of 7,105 girls and young women in between the ages of 15 and 24. It is important to highlight the ability of this organization to conduct a massive closed-question survey followed by interviews. According to their findings, during the lockdown, most of the surveyed girls were negatively affected by "not being able to go to school or university (62%), not being able to socialise with friends (58%), and not being able to leave the house regularly (58%)" (Plan International, 2020, p. 9). These findings position the inability to continue face-to-face education as the number one downside of Covid-19 for female students. Moreover, in the report it is explained that the use of technology has made the gender gap in education wider, particularly in low-income countries where there is a "digital divide," meaning girls "find it hard to access the information they need for their education and their health" (Plan International, 2020, p. 28). It seems as if patriarchy prioritized boys' access to the Internet and education.

During the pandemic, the use of technology has in some cases been the only thread that connects female actors to the education system. Hence, this digital divide may be the reason why 33% of the girls in International Plan's study perceived Covid-19 would affect their future employment opportunities, 25% perceived Covid-19 would affect their future income, and 19% "responded that they would have to put their education temporarily on hold" (Plan International, 2020, p. 26). From this study, it is also noteworthy that, apart from the use of the Internet to access "YouTube videos, online classes and educational websites (both paid and unpaid options)", 37% of the girls who answered the survey "practiced self-learning using books and other non-digital materials" (Plan International, 2020, p. 13). Given the digital divide previously mentioned, this could be considered a survival strategy that helped women navigate gender oppression during this crisis in education.

On April 27, 2021, Plan International published a second report on the Covid-19 impact on girls and young women. Interestingly, this report focuses on direct testimonies through short excerpts from 74 in-depth interviews with girls located in Australia, Brazil, Ecuador, Egypt, Ethiopia, Ghana, India, Mozambique, Nicaragua, Spain, the United States, France, Vietnam, and Zambia. This document has the purpose to supplement the statistical report previously issued by the same organization. It includes details about girls' and young women's experiences with education during the Covid-19 crisis. It is interesting to notice that, even coming from such a variety of countries, the number one complaint of girls kept on being education, referring to frequently discussed "issues with remote learning in terms of access to technology, lack of space to study at home and schools and colleges themselves struggling to adjust" (Plan International, 2021, p. 3). During in-depth conversations, the organization found that "overall, the girls and young women felt that face-to-face learning was the optimal way to be taught" even if they had "adapted to alternative ways of learning, but continue[d] to find them problematic" (Plan International, 2021, p. 14).

Surviving in the education system

Oxfam (2021), a confederation of charitable organizations, conducted a qualitative study with educational stakeholders and female learners from Sudan. With a similar methodology to the one used by Plan International —surveys and interviews—, its publication was made available in August 2021. By the time of the data collection, the issues related to Covid-19 in education were starting to shift, as the pandemic evolved to a different stage, one in which students were expected to go back to the classrooms in some countries. Yet, if virtual classes had posed a problem before, apparently returning to the classrooms was not going to be the solution, at least for some girls located in certain areas.

This study found that part of the difficulties that female learners had when trying to go back to school was "an increased burden of domestic chores, along with pressure to support income-generating activities for their households, to the point that they felt exhausted and isolated" (Oxfam, 2021, p. 3). In Sudan, the Pandemic followed years of other types of emergencies, such as armed conflicts, displacements and floodings (Oxfam, 2021), which is a similar scenario to the one found in LAC. Furthermore, this study allowed me to compare the reality of Sudan, in economic terms, to the situation in Latin America, where for educators it was hard to keep being engaged in the education system during this crisis, as "teachers needed to be given more financial support through increased salaries or incentives, because [our] salaries tend to be extremely low, and [our] payments sometimes delayed for months" (Oxfam, 2021, p. 14).

The fact that in some contexts not everything depended on technological devices might have helped a few female education actors, which is the case of certain schools in Sudan, where they developed "home-learning packages" with "assignments that students picked up from their school each week, and returned to their teachers for grading the following week" (Oxfam, 2021, p. 22). However, learning from home increased the risks of gender violence and teenage pregnancy, as was highlighted by Oxfam's report, as well as mentioned by the reports on LAC.

In September 2021, UN Women published a "feminist plan" highlighting initiatives around the world thanks to which some women have been empowered, raising their chances of surviving in the education system during emergencies. Namely, the *Campesino-a-Campesino* (CAC) or farmer-to-farmer methodology, developed in LAC since the 1970s, that uses "popular education to share knowledge and solutions for common problems with … peers, using their own farms as classrooms" (UN Women, 2021, p. 58). Currently, the CAC methodology allows women farmers from Nicaragua, Brazil, and Cuba to support agricultural livelihoods and provide education, among other benefits (UN Women, 2021). Another initiative was a chat group created in Argentina called *Mujeres Gobernando* (Women Governing), thanks to which it was possible to "incorporate a gender perspective into public policies, to facilitate information sharing and strategize across institutions to influence the budget," as part of the actions taken by women to "ensure that the 2021 national budget committed US$13.4 billion (3.4% of the country's GDP) to address gender gaps in education, health care and other areas affected by the pandemic" (UN Women, 2021, p. 72).

In October 2021, the Economic Inquiry Journal accepted the publication of an article about women's economic struggle in the United States (US). When analyzed through the lens of education, the article offers important facts and information about what mothers of school-age children faced during this crisis in the US. Starting with an explanation about gender disparities in the labor market —that were conducive to a greater economic impact on women than on men— the authors go on to:

> compare trends in female and male labor market outcomes across child age groups and estimate difference-in-difference, triple-difference and event-study models to isolate impacts due to increased child caregiving demands in the first three quarters after the adoption of statewide closures of non-essential businesses in March of 2020 (Couch et al., 2022, p. 486).

According to Couch et al. (2022) calculations, not only "disproportionate reductions in employment for women occurred among those with school-age children in comparison with men with school-age children" but also "women with school-age children experienced disproportionately large reductions in employment in comparison with women without children," and there was an "increased home-based caregiving demand that disproportionately reduced women's work activity" (pp. 486–487). This is to say that, in the US, and probably in other nations, women who had sons or daughters still attending school were the most financially affected workers during Covid-19, as they were more likely to lose or decrease their professional activities when compared to men or women without children. This reveals a clear disadvantage for mothers as education actors, to survive in the system. In addition to the need of helping their children with remote learning —with or without preparation for it— and protecting them from contracting the virus, mothers also faced harsher economic challenges.

Focused on technology and gender issues in education, Mathrani et al (2021) published a "digital divide framework" in September 2021, drawing on qualitative and quantitative data from some Asian contexts. The researchers employed a survey for "male and

female students from five developing countries (India, Pakistan, Bangladesh, Afghanistan and Nepal) to understand digital divide issues that had impacted online learning during the lockdown" (Mathrani et al., 2021, p. 2).

They found that smaller percentages of girls reported having good internet speed or devices to follow the virtual classes. Furthermore, the qualitative data gathered for this study revealed that "female students reported lack of confidence in being able to effectively engage in online classrooms, while male students reported that they enjoyed learning to use new digital tools" (Mathrani et al., 2021, p. 14). At the same time, this study revealed that, in the researched countries, home contexts are more favorable for boys' education, given that the ones included in the study reported "less familial opposition and . . . fewer household responsibilities" (Mathrani et al., 2021, p. 13).

Female Teachers, Students and Mothers of School-age Children Facing an Unprecedented Crisis in Education: A Thematic Analysis

A thematic analysis of the retained publications revealed that inequality, problems with remote education, and obstacles to return to school were the three broad categories of issues faced by all female actors of education during the Covid-19 crisis. These categories were found across all articles, even if each publication had a different target population, which reveals that gender inequities affect us all, regardless of our age or role. Table 2 synthetizes the themes found throughout the analyzed publications, distributed in those three categories.

Table 2.
Issues faced by women and girls during COVID-19 crisis in education in 5 continents

Inequality	Remote Education	Return to School
Economic Hardship	Domestic Violence	Lack of support
Job precarity	House chores	Pressure to generate income
Caring responsibilities	Stress	Pregnancy
Motherhood	Digital divide	Domestic responsibilities

(Source: self-elaborated)

Inequality

Reviewed publications express that gender inequality in economic opportunities affected women in education. It was mothers of school-age children the first ones to lose their paid jobs and the last ones to be reintegrated into the job market. Additionally, in some countries, women had to work much more than males performing household duties, which were incremented due to the requirements of education from home. This meant that women involved in education had to perform more hours of unpaid work, and had less opportunity to generate income, which led to more precarity (UN, 2020; ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020; Wannamakok et al., 2020; Couch et al., 2022).

The intersection of education from home and economic hardship that affected women during the early stages of the pandemic can be explained by the socially assigned caring responsibility that lies on our shoulders (Brenner, 2000). The reviewed publications revealed that women are expected to take care of children's education from home on their own, and that, despite researchers' recommendations, education policies do not offer much support in this regard. To clarify, the United Nations (2020) explained that in LAC:

> "Women spend thrice the time that men do on unpaid domestic and care work each day — between 22 and 42 hours per week before the crisis. In spite of women's wider presence on the front lines of the crisis (they account for 72.8% of persons employed in the health-care sector), their income in this sector is 25% lower than that of their male counterparts. Confinement, school closures and sick family members have placed additional pressures on women as primary caregivers. Domestic violence, femicide and other forms of sexual and gender-based violence have increased." (p. 15).

What the quote above illustrates is that the inequalities derived from gender divisions not only affect women's opportunities, but also their capacity to survive a global crisis, even if they obey the health measures that confine them to the walls of their houses, because even inside their homes they are at risk of violence. In addition, such gender inequalities and violence have negative consequences on females' possibilities to engage in education, given that they spend more time in activities that are not related to their own or their children's learning, which can limit economic opportunities in the future, and their hopes of breaking the cycle of domestic violence or scaping the consequences of patriarchy.

Remote education

Education from home was one of the measures taken to protect the health of all members of the society, however, women faced risks that were overlooked at the time of developing those measures. The reviewed publications explore the exacerbation of domestic violence as one of the problems experienced by women and girls as a side effect of the lockdown and remote education (UN, 2020; Oxfam, 2021). Additionally, the possibility of developing virtual education with some children depended solely on mothers' ability to assist them, or to provide the necessary devices, which in many cases added stress to the already difficult situation (UN Women & ECLAC, 2020).

Another consequence of the remote education was that the gendered digital divide was worsened, not only because boys tend to face easier circumstances when accessing technology in comparison to girls (Mathrani et al., 2021), but also because in some countries girls at home had to take care of house chores instead of using their time to study (Plan International, 2021). To illustrate how remote education affected the opportunities of girls, Oxfam (2021) reports that in Sudan there are "social norms that place the burden of domestic chores and childcare on female household members," which is why during school closures girls "had been given more responsibilities for household chores and childcare" (p. 14). Opposite to what boys from Sudan experienced

during school closures, when "male learners tended to not be negatively impacted by the trends in early and forced marriage, gender-based violence and teen pregnancy" (Oxfam, 2021, p. 19).

Return to school

The gender disparities that increased the vulnerability of girls inside their houses were identified before Covid-19. In fact, in LAC it was expected that risks associated to gender —rape, early pregnancy, abuse— would "prevent these girls from returning to the classroom once schools reopen" (ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020, p. 15). In other areas of the world, some girls could not return to the classrooms because there was not support for them to continue their academic journey, or because the family counted on their collaboration to generate income (Wannamakok et al., 2020; Oxfam, 2021). Furthermore, two of the consequences of the lockdown were the exacerbation of domestic violence and of obstacles to accessing information and protection services. As a result, teenage pregnancy and its effects made it impossible for female students affected by that situation to go back to school (ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020). In other words, female students faced more obstacles than their male counterparts to continue studying, even when schools reopened.

Implications and Discussion

The moments and themes disclosed in the results section illustrate the disparities, burdens, risks, and divides that affected female teachers, female students and mothers of school-age children during the first year and a half of the Covid-19 crisis. The selected publications portray a panorama with many obstacles faced solely by female actors. Such obstacles are related to the gendered social and economic disadvantages that were theorized by Brenner (2000) and Carbado et al. (2013) before the pandemic. Moreover, measures such as the lockdown and remote education left women more vulnerable inside their own homes. These measures and a lack of gender-focused policies contributed to increased housework, domestic violence, economic hardship, teenage pregnancy, pressure and other misfortunes related to education during the Covid-19 emergency.

The insights drawn from the chosen literature can be used to strengthen our response in the education system to face future emergencies, as the results here do not only reveal obstacles, but also offer a glimpse of decolonizing praxis, such as studying with non-digital materials (Plan International, 2020), group communications to achieve political goals, and contextualized education projects (UN Women, 2021). These are examples of alternatives and survival strategies that speak to the feminist framework of decolonizing education in an emergency through situated knowledge, collaboration, and mind freedom. It is valuable to pay attention to these resisting praxis in education because they differ from the values of competition and division that colonialism and patriarchy have ingrained in teaching and learning (Icaza & de Jong, 2018). We can change the reality of the oppressed with strategies that encourage us to work together to face problems, including all actors of the education system, learning from how women have maneuvered this emergency, and drawing on their experiences to design more equitable gender-focused policies that foster ways to support each other while enabling solidarity among citizens, families, neighbors, and friends to build communities and networks (Brenner, 1998).

Situated knowledge applied in the education system encourages us to learn from our everyday battles by reading each other's experiences and writing about our own, to construct a vocabulary to question the oppression, to care for the most vulnerable, to learn from the marginalized populations, and to embody education (Batallones Femeninos, 2018; Masamha, 2018; Retos, 2018). In the context of a disruption of the education system, situated knowledge should allow education policies to better address women's situations and needs. This would facilitate the continuation of everyone's learning, rather than having girls performing house chores and generating income, which during the Covid-19 crisis made it very hard for them to learn remotely or return to the classrooms, as it happened in Sudan and Gambia (Oxfam, 2021; Wannamakok et al., 2020).

During the Covid-19 emergency in education, the mental health of female teachers in LAC was put at risk because the amount of work and pressure was overwhelming (ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020). To address this problem, the strategy of collaboration, reciprocity, and horizontal distribution of responsibilities, constantly questioning our positions in relation to others (Auerbach, 2018; Fernández & Gill, 2018; Varadharajan, 2018) can play a key role in education, especially during crises that require the best of us to continue existing. To this end, one alternative supported by feminism is to include materials that raise political consciousness in the curriculum of schools, to involve parents in the education of their children, and to stop relying entirely on digital technology as the fundamental source to obtain and share knowledge. In other words, to connect "with one's world, one's senses and one's capacity to understand phenomena from one's experiences" (Vergès, 2018, p. 97). In this way, we can start putting aside the gender divisions evidenced during the pandemic through the inclusion of decolonial perspectives and practices in our teachings (Naepi, 2018).

The education system can benefit from the mind freedom feminist postulate that encourages us to use education as a space for reflection, where cultural differences are recognized and valued, and where we can leave aside harmful colonial imaginaries (Motta, 2018; Shilliam, 2018; Xaba, 2018). In this sense, learning from each other's experiences and using non-digital materials are not only strategies to survive in the education system during emergencies, but also feasible feminist alternatives in this digital era when the use of technology has created additional divisions between those who have it and those who do not. As the pandemic strengthened some dichotomies (digital-analog, men-women, rich-poor, etc.), paper books and materials were the only tools that some had to rebel (Plan International, 2020; Oxfam, 2021).

The pandemic made more visible the urgency of looking for alternatives to protect all of us from the perpetuation of inequalities, at least in the education system. As expressed in some of the selected publications, the lockdown left a lot of girls at risk of not being educated, teachers at risk of mental breakdowns and mothers at economic risk (Couch et al., 2022; ECLAC & UNESCO, 2020; Oxfam, 2021; Plan International, 2020; UN, 2020; Wannamakok, Sissokho, & Gates, 2020). This current visibility needs to be taken as an opportunity to call the attention of the whole education system to give greater importance to protection, reflection, and self-understanding, especially at moments when we all need a refuge.

In this line, it is valuable to highlight the achievements of two survival projects or collective actions for which people joined efforts in order to survive in adverse conditions (Brenner, 2000). Namely the *Campesino a Campesino* (CAC) methodology and the *Mujeres Gobernando* strategy (UN Women, 2021). The CAC strategy allows education practitioners to have access to an education relevant in their context. The *Mujeres Gobernando* group made it possible to secure resources to address gender issues during the early stage of the pandemic. These are actions that break gender divisions and the logics of social reproduction in education (Bourdieu & Passeron, 1977), by which women achieve fairer conditions in education.

Conclusion

In light of the results obtained, it seems important to recognize that one of the lessons that the Covid-19 pandemic left us in the education system is that there is a need for gender-focused research and education policies that aim at protecting women and girls, from the early stages of emergencies. This is a very valuable lesson because this pandemic was just one of many emergencies that affect education worldwide. By gathering studies from various contexts in one piece, I demonstrated that some of the gender disparities that affected female teachers, female students and mothers of school-age children during the first year and a half of the Covid-19 crisis in education are transnational, and that they create material negative consequences for us, such as lack of access to technological devices, lack of opportunities to study at home, family opposition to get an education, violence, and rejection from the job market as a consequence of motherhood.

To contribute to filling this gap, in this study I outlined the need for more related scholarly work. Subsequently, I built a framework that draws on feminist theories (Brenner, 1998; Brenner 2000; Carbado et al., 2013; Icaza & de Jong, 2018) to understand the origins of gender oppressions, as well as the actions carried out by women to survive in the education system. Likewise, this study has illustrated feminist praxis and alternatives for a more equitable teaching and learning. Centering our efforts on developing decolonial strategies such situated knowledge, collaboration, and mind freedom (Icaza & de Jong, 2018) from the beginning of emergencies in education may help us save lives and prevent the perpetuation of economic inequities and gender oppressions (Bourdieu and Passeron, 1977). Such alternatives have the potential of pivoting education in emergencies into a space that supports more humane practices, such as self and collective discovery (Vergès, 2018), which in turn should enhance our readiness to respond to emergencies.

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Coloniality, Resistance, and Reimagining the Future: Exploring the Influence of Language Policies on Learner Identities in Pakistani Schools

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This paper explores student experiences of language-in-education policies through the lens of colonial processes and traces such logic as they operate through educational institutions. Drawing on semi-structured interviews of high school seniors and recent graduates, I investigate how students in Pakistani secondary schools interact with intersecting modern/colonial structures that rationalize existing hierarchies of power along colonial, racial/ethnic, and gendered lines. The findings suggest that students have internalized dominant colonial ideologies and they also constitute key sites for decolonial resistance at the same time. Student experiences of colonial hierarchies in the school were mediated by their socioeconomic class, gender, ethnic and linguistic background. However, despite internalizing dominant hierarchies, many students understood their experiences through the framing of colonial power structures, which simultaneously positioned them as potential actors for decolonial resistance. In this paper, I analyze their experiences in detail, and in doing so, this study adds to the growing voices in the field of international and comparative education that critically examine the role of modern/colonial formations in the structuring of education globally.

Keywords: coloniality, Pakistan, decolonial resistance, language of instruction, education policy

Introduction

> Interviewer: Does your school have language rules? Shahid:[1] Yes. In our [English-medium] school, anyone caught speaking a language other than English was made to deliver a one-minute speech in front of the whole school during the next day's morning assembly. One girl used her speech to criticize the administration, [saying] that forcing students to give a speech for violating the language rules was humiliating. The admin turned her mic off, but the whole crowd was cheering. She was expelled.

Since the state apparatus in Pakistan continues to operate on colonial structures, English remains the language of official work and holds considerable currency in the labor market. Social class and upward mobility, including access to higher education and well-paying jobs, are determined through proficiency and education in English (Rahman, 2004). In the education sector, colonial-era policies have divided schooling into

[1] All names of people and places are pseudonyms.

two distinct streams. Higher education institutions and private schools provide education in the English language, whereas government schools employ Urdu, the national language, as the medium of instruction (Coleman, 2010). Such division along language lines, in addition to the unequal distribution of resources between public and private secondary schools, has formed deep tracks within the education system, making English-medium synonymous with high-quality and upper class, and Urdu-medium with low-quality education for the poor (Shamim, 2011).

While economic disparities arising from unequal access to education are compounded by two-tiered language-in-education policies (Durrani, 2012; Mahboob & Jain, 2016; Mustafa, 2015), educational institutions that are based in colonial ideologies have also been shown to influence learner identities and perceptions of self and others in complex ways (Fanon, 1967; Rahman, 2004; Said, 1994; Shamim & Rashid, 2019). Although extensively studied in other post-colonial contexts (Fanon, 1967; Kalua, 2009; Said, 1994; Shange, 2020), this influence remains understudied in Pakistan. This study aims to fill this gap and understand how student beliefs about self and others are shaped by their experiences of language-in-education policies—through semi-structured interviews of Pakistani high school seniors and recent graduates. The purpose of this inquiry is to explore how students in Pakistani secondary schools interact with intersecting modern/colonial[2] structures that rationalize existing hierarchies of power along colonial, racial, ethnic, linguistic, and gendered lines. Thus, the research questions are: How do students experience language-in-education policies in their everyday interactions in the school? How are existing neocolonial class structures perceived and reproduced through embodied practices and student presentations of self? How do students contest shared meanings and how do they modify them in their daily interactions in the school? The findings suggest that students have internalized dominant colonial ideologies and that, at the same time, they also constitute key sites for decolonial resistance. Student experiences of colonial hierarchies in the school were mediated by their socioeconomic class, gender, ethnic and linguistic background. However, despite internalizing dominant hierarchies, many students understood their experiences through the framing of colonial power structures, which simultaneously positioned them as potential actors for decolonial resistance. In this paper, I analyze their experiences in detail, and in doing so, this study adds to the growing voices in the field of international and comparative education (Rahman, 2002; Mustafa, 2015; Khoja-Moolji, 2017; Degraff, 2019; Allweiss, 2021) that critically examine the role of modern/colonial formations in the structuring of education globally.

Historical Background: The Colonial Project and English Education

An important development in establishing Western-centric education in pre-partition colonial India was Bentick's English Education Act of 1835, which established a

[2] I use the term modern/colonial in light of Walter Mignolo's (2000) analysis of modernity and coloniality as two sides of the same coin, and two aspects of one reality. Mignolo (2000) argues that modernity, ushered through the Industrial Revolution, was made possible through the exploitation of colonies in the Global South, and is thus, intimately related to coloniality, which he calls the "dark side of modernity."

hierarchy between Western and Indigenous knowledges. The British administration deemed it important to educate its Indian subjects in Western knowledges in an effort to "form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern; a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect," according to British official Thomas Macaulay (Macaulay & Young, 1935, p. 359). Carnoy (1974) has argued that the purpose of this policy was to instill a deep awe of English language and culture among the Indian elite and a deep disdain for their own background. Khoja-Moolji (2017) argues that the collective effect of this policy was the establishment of English knowledges as dominant and a displacement of the prevalent pluralistic conceptualization of knowledges. Durrani (2012) posits that this education policy divided the locals into two classes: the elite—to be trained and educated in English—and the masses, who were to be taught in the vernacular or not at all. The consequence of such a division for post-independence Pakistan, according to Khoja-Moolji (2017) was a deeply tracked education system, the valorization of English over local languages, and a heavy reliance on European and American experts for policy making.

Post-Independence Education Policies: The Colonial Model Continues

After the departure of the British and the subsequent partition of the sub-continent into India and Pakistan, political power was transferred over to the English-trained local elite. It was in the interests of this class to maintain existing structures of sociopolitical power based on colonial ideologies (Carnoy, 1974). As a result, British-era language policies in education were recycled (Durrani, 2012) and political independence changed relatively little in Pakistani educational institutions, transitioning them from colonial to neocolonial configurations (Altbach, 1971). English continues to be the working language of the most powerful institutions of the state, including the higher bureaucracy, judiciary, armed forces, and elite corporate institutions (Rahman, 2016). Thus, English is accorded high social capital and is a symbol of power that is intimately tied to the post-independence social structure. The local elite class has thus used English to consolidate power and reproduce existing social structures that benefit them (Islam, 2018; Rahman, 2002; Shamim & Rashid, 2019). English and Urdu are Pakistan's official languages, while the development of other vernacular languages has been left to the provincial governments. Of all the local languages, however, only Urdu, Sindhi, and Pashto[3] are employed as media of instruction in public schools. In describing post-colonial language policy, Durrani (2012) highlighted that there was little political interest in maintaining the elements of linguistic diversity in Pakistan's language-in-education policies. Comparing post-colonial language policies to their colonial counterparts, Durrani argued that Pakistan's education system perpetuated the colonial-era policy: English-medium education for the elite and Urdu-medium for the masses.

[3] Sindhi has an official role as medium of instruction in primary schools in the province of Sindh while Pashto is used in government schools in the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (Coleman, 2010).

This dichotomy between English and vernacular-medium education has been a recurrent theme in Pakistan over the years. After independence, the official stance of the government was to transfer all official work and education to Urdu, however, this move was perpetually forestalled by the elite because it went against their political and economic interests (Rahman, 2019). English-medium schools thus continue to be popular among Pakistani elite and middle-class parents as a ticket to their children's upward social mobility.

Educational Institutions: An Overview

While it is impossible to fully account for the diverse variability in educational institutions, schools can be divided roughly into the following categories: (1) elite private English-medium schools, (2) non-elite, low-cost private English-medium schools, (3) vernacular-medium government schools, and (4) religious schools (madrasas) (Coleman, 2010). Most university education is conducted in English, with limited majors in the arts and languages offered in Urdu or other local languages. Gross enrollment ratios across Pakistan continue to remain low, especially at the secondary and tertiary levels at 43 percent and 8.9 percent, respectively in 2019[4] (World Bank, 2020). Table 1 provides a breakdown of K-12 students by type of institution. Most students in both rural and urban areas attend public schools, and the share of students in private schools is larger in urban areas compared to rural districts. More recent data is not available.

Table 1

Percentage of children currently in school – by level and type of school

Province\Type of school	2018–19		
	Urban	Rural	Total
Pakistan:			
Government	39	69	57
Private	56	25	37
Religious institution	1	1	1
NGO/Trust	3	6	5
Others	0	0	0
Matric:			
Government	53	72	63
Private	43	24	33
Religious institution	2	1	1
NGO/Trust	2	3	3
Others	0	0	0

Note: Matric level includes 9th and 10th grade. Source: Pakistan Bureau of Statistics.

[4] More information on Pakistan's educational statistics can be found in Pakistan Bureau of Statistics PSLM survey report (Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, 2020).

Those who can afford to educate their children do so through private schools where educational quality is proportional to tuition fees, while those from low-income backgrounds educate their children in tuition-free government schools of poorer quality (Coleman, 2010). In a neoliberal global economy that increasingly attaches utilitarian terms to education, this tracking is a source of deep frustration for those impacted by poor-quality education and subsequent exclusion from the economy (Shamim & Rashid, 2019). Even though educational experiences vary greatly throughout the country, a common thread among them is the shared "colonial wound" (Mignolo, 2009, p. 161) that is a salient feature of educational institutions across the country.

Literature Review: Colonialism, Language, and Education

Colonial Formations: From Global to Local Contexts

In her study of coloniality and Chuj Maya youth in Guatemala, Allweiss (2021) argues that "education, development, and Indigenous youth are simultaneously targets of racialized colonial logics and important sites of decolonial resistance" (p. 208). Framing the positioning of these youth at the intersection of modern/colonial racialized and gendered logics, Allweiss links their struggle to that of marginalized youth around the world who are targeted by global webs of modern/colonial hierarchies. Through her work, Allweiss calls on scholars of comparative education to unpack and disrupt global geographies and logics of modern/colonial exploitation that intersect with education globally and amplify spaces of resistance and decolonial possibility. This study builds upon Allweiss' analysis of global colonial hierarchies while paying close attention to the context-specific features of how modern/colonial logics manifest themselves in the Pakistani case where, according to Khoja-Moolji (2017), the trauma of colonial annexation of lands is still part of the fabric of society and must be attended to in addition to colonialism's transmutation into global capitalist relations of exploitation. Hence, in her presentation of restorative and reparative work through a decolonial praxis, Khoja-Moolji emphasizes the need for attention to "the intersection of histories of classic colonialism with wider webs of class, capital and identity" (p. S148). Thus, in this study, I understand the experiences of Pakistani youth as mediated by their positioning along modern/colonial racialized and gendered logics.

Colonialism and Education

In describing the role of education in the colonial project, Ashcroft et al. (2003) argue that education acts a "tool of colonialist subjectification [which] established the locally British or English as normative through critical claims of 'universality' of the values embodied in English literary texts and represented the colonized to themselves as inherently inferior beings" (p. 426). Education has thus been a crucial tool in the artillery of empire to perform what Gramsci (1971) has called *domination by consent*. Post-colonial scholars across the world have described schools as central to the modern/colonial project by privileging European knowledges while seeking to erase indigenous knowledge ecologies and modes of being (Allweiss, 2021; Fanon, 1967; Khoja-Moolji, 2017; Said, 1994). In the Arab context, Said (1994) spoke about his own education and "the tremendous spiritual wound" (p. 7) caused from being taught by domineering foreigners to respect foreign norms more than his own. Said concluded that his education deemed indigenous knowledge and culture to be congenitally inferior and a source of deep embarrassment. This inferiority complex associates local norms and knowledges with

ideas of shame and embarrassment, the only remedy of which is presented through anglicization, or becoming what Rahman (2004) has called "brown Englishmen" (p. 79).

Altbach (1971) has noted that even after the end of direct colonization, advanced nations continue to influence their former colonies and other developing countries, including the educational systems and intellectual lives therein. In the case of former colonies such as Pakistan, the influence of global colonial relations is augmented by the perpetuation of colonial power structures by a strong local elite class that continue to manipulate these structures for their own benefit. This is reflected in Pakistan's education system through language-in-education policies as well as administrative structures of schools. A privileging of modern/colonial knowledges and values over indigenous ones is a common feature of students' educational experiences (Rahman, 2004), emphasizing the importance of understanding coloniality not as an event of the past, but rather a structure (Wolfe, 2006) that continues to organize the lives of youth in subaltern locations globally.

Language Ideologies and Colonial Power Structures

Language ideologies are defined by linguistic anthropologists as a set of beliefs about language that serve as rationalizations of language usage and structure (Silverstein, 1976). Language ideologies "locate the meaningfulness of linguistic signs in relation to other signs in particular historical, political-economic, and socio-cultural contexts" (Rosa & Burdick, 2017, p. 103). Ideologies around language are thus never really about language but serve to rationalize or justify societal structures on the basis of linguistic distinction. Language does not exist in a vacuum but is located in relation to a broader set of political, and socio-cultural signs and symbols.

In the context of racialized imperial logics, language ideologies serve as a tool to rationalize colonial structures of power by establishing the speakers of the colonial language as superior to those of indigenous languages. This colonial linguistic domination, termed the "coloniality of language" (Veronelli, 2015, p. 108), is a key feature of the modern/colonial apparatus that attaches notions of rationality, humanity, knowledge, intellect, and expressivity to the colonial language while deeming the colonized/colonialized as sub-human and therefore lacking in expressing rational thought, and having no language altogether (Veronelli, 2015). In the context of a Eurocentric education framework, this has manifested in explicit and implicit sanctions against local languages –and by association the knowledges intimately connected to them–, and a valorization of the English language –and the Western knowledges associated to it–. Such sanctions against local languages and valorization of English are a common characteristic of many Pakistani schools across the country (Rahman, 2002; Mustafa 2015; Shamim & Rasheed, 2019), deeply influencing the ways in which students engage with their local linguistic and cultural heritage.

Fluidity of Learner Identities and Decolonial Possibility

Language and communication are also key aspects of the production and regulation of various social identities, including national, ethnic, professional, racial, class, and gender identities (Kroskrity, 2001). The process of identity construction through linguistic distinction is neither uncontested nor static or monolithic. According to Rosa and

Burdick (2017), "language does not simply reflect preexisting identities—it actively participates in the construction, reproduction, and transformation of identity" (p. 109). Consistent with this argument, Bhabha (1994) has emphasized the notion of fluidity and negotiation entailed in the production of cultural identities. He argues that cultural differences cannot be ascribed to pre-given traits. Instead, the articulation of identities is an "on-going negotiation" (p. 2). Applying Bhabha's concepts to African cultural identities, Kalua (2009) has shown that "culture, which arises from people's actions, including their capacity to reinvent and reconstitute themselves in the narrative of their existences cannot be a totality" (p. 30). African identities are thus not fixed but keep shifting and changing over time.

Conceptualizing Learner Identities

In my analysis of student subjectivities in the Pakistani context, I borrow from the ideas of Bhabha and Kalua on the fluidity and mutability of cultural identities. I understand Pakistani students as positioned across multiple locations of stratification in the colonial matrix of power that hierarchizes their subject-positions along the lines of class, gender, race/ethnicity, religion, and ability. Student identities or subjectivities, as posited by Bhabha (1994), Kalua (2009), and Rosa and Burdick (2017), are actively constructed, reproduced, transformed, and renegotiated through interaction with their environment. These interactions, in turn, have the possibility of changing the social environment that structures the lives of its inhabitants, and thus can reveal the ways in which modern/colonial logics shift across time and space.

In this study, I explore the experiences of Pakistani students in elite and non-elite private English-medium, and public Urdu-medium secondary schools. I seek to understand how students' self-perceptions are influenced through their positioning within their educational institutions and the ways in which they engage with larger social structures and re-negotiate their identities. My research questions include: How do students experience language-in-education policies in their everyday interactions in the school? How are existing neocolonial class structures perceived and reproduced through embodied practices and student presentations of self? How do students contest shared meanings and how do they modify them in their daily interactions in the school? Through this analysis, I illuminate the complexities of students' identity formation within colonial contexts and explore how students engage in decolonial resistance. By bringing attention to these processes, I engage in the process of decolonizing Pakistani education since, as Ashcroft et al. (2007) argue, the recognition of such forces indicates the possibility of their contestation. As such, the goal of this paper is to extend the ongoing discourse on post-/anti-/de-colonial resistance, and to unpack and disrupt the geographies and logics of modern/colonial power structures in educational systems in Pakistan.

Data and Methodology

The current study lies at the intersection of post-colonial theory, language ideologies, and theories, policies, and practices of education with a central focus on Pakistani students and their educational experiences. An appropriate method to grasp students' experiences in Pakistani schools is through a qualitative study with in-depth interviews. This approach allows students to articulate their self-perceptions, understanding of

others, and delve into how school interactions influenced their beliefs. I have approached data collection using case-study logic (Small, 2009), a method aimed at eliciting an increasingly accurate understanding of the research questions, with the objective of saturation, when new cases provide little new information. 33 online semi-structured interviews were conducted with a total of 15 participants. Each subsequent interview was built upon data collected from the preceding ones, in order to identify similar mechanisms underlying different students' experiences. Furthermore, I conducted at least two interviews with each participant to build rapport, ensuring rich and accurate data collection. After 33 interviews, a point of saturation in the data was achieved. The small sample size also allowed me to investigate each student's case in-depth, because each respondent provided a considerable amount of information. The findings of this study are, therefore, not aimed at generalizability, but seek to provide deeper insights into student experiences with modern/colonial logics.

The participants were between 18 and 25 years old, with eight participants in high school and the remainder having graduated. Participants were recruited from the four major provinces of Pakistan, namely Punjab, Sindh, Baluchistan, and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), in order to include diverse perspectives and experiences. Respondents also had diverse educational backgrounds, including both English and Urdu-medium, public and private schools, and were comprised of both men and women. Table 2 provides pseudonyms and demographic details of all students who participated in the study.

Interviews were conducted in Urdu and English, with participants often code-switching. These were transcribed and translated to English, prioritizing the preservation of meaning while acknowledging potential losses in translation. Context and cultural nuances were emphasized for accuracy, and feedback was sought from respondents and local students to refine translations.

Interview analysis employed codes from theoretical frameworks and existing literature, as well as emergent themes from the data (inductive approach). I made multiple iterative coding passes, adhering to Charmaz (2012) and Saldaña's (2013) recommendations. I wrote analytic memos consistently to explore themes and connect to research questions. Coding began after the first interview to recognize and apply emergent themes to subsequent data. The small sample size, resulting from pandemic-induced recruitment challenges, limits its scope in encompassing Pakistani students' diverse experiences. Nonetheless, the study offers unique insights from participants who shared their stories, and thus I believe it contributes to comparative education research.

Table 2. Participant Demographic Information

Pseudonym	Gender	Province	Region	MOI	School Type	Education Level

Alia	Female	Punjab	Rural	Urdu/ English	Government	Graduate
Amjad	Male	Punjab	Urban	English	Non-elite Private	Undergraduate
Majid	Male	Punjab	Urban	Urdu/ English	Non-elite Private	12th
Mazhar	Male	Punjab	Urban	English	Non-elite Private	Undergraduate
Saima	Female	Punjab	Urban	Urdu	Government	Graduate
Sara	Female	Punjab	Urban	English	Elite Private	Undergraduate
Hania	Female	Sindh	Rural	English	Government	12th
Nadia	Female	Sindh	Rural	Urdu/ English	Non-elite Private	12th
Sameena	Female	Sindh	Rural	English	Non-elite Private	Graduate
Iffat	Female	Baluchistan	Rural	Urdu/ English	Government	12th
Sameer	Male	Baluchistan	Urban	English	Elite Private	12th
Shahid	Male	Baluchistan	Urban	English	Elite Private	12th
Aslam	Male	KPK	Rural	Urdu	Government	12th
Beena	Female	KPK	Rural	English	Government	12th
Nazish	Female	KPK	Rural	English	Government	12th

Researcher positionality significantly influences research design, data collection, and analysis (Peshkin, 1991). I approach this study as a Pakistani, a graduate of an elite English-medium school, with ethnic roots in Punjab. This positions me as both an insider and outsider regarding certain research aspects. My insider status might blind me to some societal assumptions, while my outsider perspective may limit my grasp on specific cultural nuances. To mitigate these limitations, I sought feedback from my Pakistani respondents through member-checking. My aim wasn't to eliminate inherent biases but to acknowledge and understand how they might influence the study's outcomes (Luttrell, 2000, p. 500).

Findings

In this section, I discuss the key themes that emerged from the data. The first section discusses students' associating English language with being educated, respected, and modern. The next section presents student's ideas about local languages as being associated with illiteracy, backwardness, and premodernity. The following section outlines school policies on language use and how they influenced students' ideas about themselves and others in the school. The last section discusses how students actively engaged in decolonial resistance by challenging existing hierarchies and (re)imagining alternative education systems.

Coloniality of Language: English Speakers are *Parha-Likhay*

Students in the sample actively engaged in meaning-making and identity construction in relation to linguistic distinction. Each language is constructed in the students' social reality as relating to a particular set of socio-cultural, political, and historical symbols that collectively seek to define what it means to be a speaker of said language in the academic environment. The English language was associated by students across all educational streams—from government schools in KPK to elite private schools in Islamabad—to being *parha-likha*, a construct associated with notions of knowledge, superiority, intelligence, respect, and professionalism. Nazish, a student at a government boarding school in KPK put it as follows: "Those who speak English are treated with a lot of respect. Everyone says that they are *parhay-likhay* (educated)." Similar ideas were also echoed by other students. Amjad, a private school graduate from Lahore stated: "[The] mindset here is that whoever knows English knows everything." This revealed a potential conflation between English and knowledge altogether. Whoever is considered a proficient speaker of English is deemed *parha-likha*, that is, educated, rational, and knowing everything.

Furthermore, students often conflated English with language altogether; that is, to know English meant to know language itself, and conversely, to not know English meant to be "lacking communication skills" (Sara, elite-private school student) altogether. Classmates who did not speak in English were described by Sara, a graduate of an elite private school in Islamabad and a second-year university student, as not knowing "how to talk properly." Ideas of appropriateness were attached to English by several other students as well. Iffat, a graduate of a government Urdu-medium school, defended monolingual school language policies by appealing to this idea of what was appropriate. She claimed that the rules were "important because [through them we] give others the impression that we are *parhay-likhay*. If we talk properly and respectfully, others get impressed." For Iffat, the notion of being *parha-likha* is comprised of multiple constructs ranging from appropriateness, education, and respect. These values become attached to speakers of English who are constructed as possessing qualities ranging from education and literacy, to being respectful and proper. These symbols collectively define the English speaker as a dominant actor in the academic space who is accorded a privileged status through their association with the English language and its connection to Western knowledges.

Local Languages and Colonial Reproduction

Local languages have been hierarchized as inferior to English in the modern/colonial

Western-centric education framework. As a result, policies pertaining to local languages reinforce the notion that local languages and knowledge ecologies have no place in the school and, by association, neither do the speakers of these languages. Students across the education system have thus come to associate local languages with particular signs and symbols that reflect their inferior status in the academic institution. They attach ideas of *paendo* (rural/rustic), and *jahil* (ignorant/illiterate) to local languages and cultures, constructs that collectively signal premodernity, rurality, illiteracy, ignorance, and unprofessionalism. However, students' conceptualizations about local languages are not straightforward, and regional languages' subordination in the colonial power matrix has not erased their intimate links to students' identities and communities. Therefore, local languages elicit ideas of identity, belonging, culture, regional and/or national pride, and unity; at the same time, they occupy a subordinated status compared to English.

Students were palpably aware of the inferior status of local languages and culture in the school. Sara mentioned that her elite private school promoted "Western culture [as being] right, and our norms and our cultural background [as] *paendo.*" The English speaker is associated with modernity, which is constructed in opposition to *paendo*, a label that is used to describe speakers of local languages as pre-modern, backward, and illiterate. It is important to note that language is one of the many signs that construct the individual or group as *paendo*, along with other elements including clothing, rituals, practices, social class, and so forth. These signs collectively serve as templates that shape interpretations of what an individual or group of people can and cannot be.

School Policies on Language Use: Colonial Logics of Silencing the Jahils

Language is a prominent symbol of identity, and by regulating language use, schools inevitably give messages to the students regarding appropriate and inappropriate language, and by association, appropriate or inappropriate students. Such practices work to hierarchize languages and their speakers in the school. Sameer, a private school student from Baluchistan described school policy on local languages as follows: "Urdu is second-tier now. There is an Urdu corner for students caught speaking it. It's a collar of shame."

Policies are often hostile to the use of local languages, and nearly all students in the sample experienced some form of explicit language policy or implicit social norm that discouraged the use of local languages within the school. While informal conversation in Urdu was deemed acceptable in some cases, in other schools there was an explicit prohibition on speaking in any language other than English. Shahid, whose experience was stated in the opening sentences, describes the school as one that was extremely rigid about language use. He stated that the policy "frustrated the students [because] teachers would teach in English, regardless of [the students] understanding it or not. Seventy-five percent of the students [could not] follow the lectures." Such experiences work to silence the students who are not proficient enough in English to understand the lecture or converse fluently with peers, resulting in deep frustrations and alienation in the school.

A similar experience was described by Nadia, a 12th grade student from a non-elite low-cost private English-medium school in Sindh: "[Students] didn't perform well [in

school] but they would talk like scientists [in Urdu]. The teacher would strictly insist on using English in class, and so they wouldn't talk at all." This silencing can leave deep impacts on students' perceptions of themselves as well as their capabilities. In the case of Nadia and her classmates, students felt alienated in the classroom because they were not allowed to express themselves in a familiar language. As a result, they disengaged from learning altogether.

Nadia further goes on to describe this alienation: "The school has become a place for us where we think it is out of reach. And we are inferior. [As if] we don't know anything…all because of language." For Nadia and her peers, the school felt "out of reach" because they could not access an education in English, which led them to feel that they were inferior and did not know anything. Thus, students associate inadequacy and inferiority with lack of English proficiency as a result of their educational experiences.

Since students' fluency in the native language has no value in the academic institution, the native language also becomes a symbol of illiteracy, which, together with lack of English proficiency, constructs the native language speaker as *jahil*, a wholly ignorant individual who does not fit in the academic space. Sara described such a student at her school in the following terms: "Here, they call them *jahil* (ignorant/illiterate), those who can't speak English. And you can tell this from the way they talk. A guy in our class can't speak English… he talks weird, in that harsh, typical Urdu/Punjabi tone, so we don't even want to talk to him."

The identity of the non-English speaking student thus gets associated with notions of *jahalat* based on the "way they talk." The *jahil* is understood, through their association with local language and culture, as a person who is illiterate and ignorant. This association shapes social interaction and works to stigmatize speakers of local languages and subsequently silence them in the academic institution. One aspect of this stigmatization is that their use of language is construed as "harsh." Alia described the students in her public Urdu-medium school as follows: "Most of the students from the rural areas speak Punjabi, the typical and crude one." Similar words were also used by Saima, a public-school graduate from Punjab when referring to Pashto as a "harsh" language. Such associations of harshness/crudeness to local languages enable the rationalization of their position as inferior to the dominant language in the modern/colonial power structure and thus, unworthy of engagement within academic spaces.

What is interesting to note, however, is that associations between languages and ideas about their speakers are not straightforward in any way. One language can at once occupy multiple locations that simultaneously position it as a "crude" language unfit for academic engagement and as a language that is intimately attached to notions of shared communal belongings. In the case of Urdu, which has symbolic significance as the language of the Muslims of the subcontinent, its linkages to Pakistan's independence movement have enabled its construction as a flagbearer of national identity and unity. Such attachments of Urdu to an imagined national community (Anderson, 2016) were prevalent in my conversations with students. Students described Urdu as related to "our roots," and expressed its importance as a "unifying force" that brought citizens together

as "a single nation." Similarly, students also associated other regional languages, such as Pashto and Sindhi, with communal ties and cultural identity.

Colonial Ideologies and Decolonial Possibilities

Students' encounters with colonial logics of exclusion and silencing in school shape their beliefs about language, education, knowledge, and culture. The consistent messaging from a Eurocentric educational framework had resulted, to a certain extent, in an internalization of colonial power structures that positioned Western knowledges as dominant and local knowledges as irrelevant within the school. In Gramsci's (1971) terms, domination by consent had been achieved in some ways. Several students saw language policies in the school as appropriate and as benefiting the students. Aslam, a government school student in KPK, described the prohibition against the use of Pashto in school as an important feature that would prepare students for "professional" life. Since Pashto was constructed as having no place in professional institutions, Aslam thought it was important to actively discourage its use in school. As mentioned above, ideas of what was "appropriate" in an academic/professional institutions offered key rationalizations for school rules against local language use. Rigorous training in using linguistic codes associated with being *parha-likha* (educated) was seen as a favorable feature of education since it would prepare the student to succeed in school, university, and the job market—arenas that are deeply stratified along colonial hierarchies.

At the same time, students understood their personal experiences through the framing of global modern/colonial discourses. For instance, Sameer had come to understand the connections between English education and superiority, compared to Urdu education and its associated inferiority through the lens of modern/colonial logics: "I think it's our colonial legacy. The English speaker is *parha-likha*. And Urdu-medium is a disgrace in our society." Here, Sameer connected the two-tiered education system to white supremacist colonial logics. While Sameer thought that it was next to impossible to escape such harmful logics, through his own resistive work of writing an online blog on social justice issues and anti-colonial possibilities, he was engaged in repurposing his own English education at an elite private school as a tool to confront the same colonial power structures that his schooling was designed to reproduce.

Similarly, Hania, a government school student from rural Sindh, described the privileging of English over local languages through the framing of colonial power structures: "We speak English over here because the British ruled us. And we are still under their rule mentally." Students were palpably aware of the continuation of colonial hierarchies and understood their educational experiences through the structure and logics of colonization. By describing contemporary colonization as one that was "mental," Hania alluded to the ways in which colonization had not only structured social, political, and educational institutions, but also the very desires and internal orientations of people. She went further to discuss how "[we] still like to dress like the people who ruled us." For Hania, the choice of clothing is an important feature of resistance against this "mental" colonization, and she openly admired women who "dress according to [their] own culture and morals." The regulation of women's clothing has long been an avenue through which ideas of modernity and backwardness are expressed, which Khoja-Moolji (2017) calls "another form of colonialism against rural

women" (p. S161). Similarly, Allweiss (2021) has described the ways in which Maya women wearing the traditional dress are met with contempt by the settler colonial powers who seek to erase their identities. Women's traditional, and religious, dressing was thus an important feature through which Pakistani students engaged with ideas of modernity, rurality, backwardness, and progress.

Sara, who was a frequent target of discrimination at her elite school because of her religious headscarf and *shalwar kameez*,[5] discussed the ways in which her choice of clothing led peers and teachers to make assumptions about her: "If you're wearing *shalwar kameez*, or if your clothing is covering your body, they're just automatically going to assume everything about you. They assume that I'm *paendo* and I'm from a very strict [religious] background." For Sara, ideas of indigenous and local knowledges/cultures were intertwined with her religious beliefs and practices. Her school attached notions of *paendo,* backwardness, and premodernity to those practices, stigmatizing students for their association with them. Through such subtractive practices, the school sought to erase this aspect of Sara's identity, but her continued expression of her religious beliefs through her clothing was what Allweiss (2021) has called an act of refusal against a gendered and anglicized image of what an educated, *parha-likhka* student in an elite private school should look like.

Pakistani youth thus experienced modern/colonial hierarchies in distinct ways because of their particular social locations. For some students, it was through education in an unfamiliar language which severely restricted their potential for intellectual growth, while for others, it manifested in policing around language use or dress code. Students responded to such structures in diverse ways which positioned them simultaneously as targets of colonial reproduction through internalization and reenactment of certain colonial logics and decolonial social change through resistance to others. One avenue where this played out was students' response to school language use policies. While students in some schools bought into the rationale behind such rules, students in other situations refused to conform and instead devised multiple strategies to resist and express themselves in local languages at the school. In Shahid's school, students devised secretive ways to evade teachers' eyes during recess so they could communicate in Urdu or other native languages. After the incident where a girl openly condemned the school administration for punishing her for speaking Urdu, Shahid explained that the entire student body supported her more than they would ever support the school administration. "She had fought well," said Shahid, framing her actions as a struggle for self-expression in the school.

Therefore, in some instances, students pushed back against the contours of modern/colonial logics around language ideologies in the school through active acts of resistance. These actions positioned the students as sites of decolonial resistance and made possible through their efforts a change in their social environment. As Shahid explained, even though they expelled the girl, ultimately his school had to abandon the

[5] Traditional dress consisting of a long and loose-fitted shirt, pants, and a stole that drapes over the chest.

rigid language policies because of students' retaliation against them, resulting in a shift towards decolonization of the school.

(Re)Imagining the Future

Students' understanding of their educational experiences through the framework of Western-centric colonial hierarchies opened the possibilities for them to act as resistive agents against such logics and (re)imagine alternative futures for themselves and their nation. When students experienced the harmful ways in which Eurocentric education models, and particularly colonial language-in-education policies, functioned to undermine local knowledges and languages in the school, they contested such hierarchies. This was especially true in instances where these hierarchies worked to exclude them from the educational institution, particularly for students who were from lower socioeconomic classes and were multiply discriminated due to lack of educational opportunities in addition to insurmountable language barriers in higher education. Such a dissatisfaction with the way things were currently structured opened up the space from which students could (re)imagine alternative futurities. "[Schools] should teach us the actual culture of Pakistan, instead of asking us to be like America, or UK, or whatever," said Sara when ruminating about an education outside colonial logics. For Sara, this would mean an education that did not borrow its knowledges and values from the West, but instead was inward-focused and centered on local knowledges and cultures.

For other students, especially those from rural backgrounds where language-in-education policies worked in conjunction with poor educational quality to undermine students' learning, the key feature of an alternative education system was a language of instruction that they could understand. Sameena, a graduate of a non-elite low-cost private English-medium school in rural Sindh, elaborated on this: "Shifting our curriculum from English to Urdu can drive significant progress and boost societal self-esteem. Many struggle, including me, with English as a barrier to understanding and university admissions."

Sameena had experienced great difficulties in her educational journey, and she attributed her challenges to the fact that she was forced to learn through an unfamiliar language because of the current colonial educational structure. This narrative is extremely common across Pakistan and came up frequently in my conversations with students from lower socioeconomic and rural backgrounds. Such students faced multiple disadvantages that not only jeopardized their educational and economic futures, but also influenced their beliefs about their own capabilities and their self-esteem, something that many students believed was negatively impacted when they struggled against the grain to learn in a foreign language. Thus, a place for local languages and knowledge ecologies in the school, as mentioned by students, would improve students' learning outcomes and by association their belief in their capabilities, which is an important aspect of decolonial resistance through reimaging education.

Discussion and Conclusion

This study sheds light on how Pakistani youth encounter modern/colonial hierarchies in the school and how such logics structure their lives, and their beliefs, including their

ideas about self, others, and society at large. The experiences of Pakistani students illuminate the very material consequences of modern/colonial logics of exclusion and silencing in the school that seek to erase their local languages and knowledge ecologies. The structuring of their educational experiences along colonial logics resulted in students internalizing existing hierarchies. However, at the same time, many students understood their experiences through the framing of colonial power structures, which simultaneously positioned them as potential actors for decolonial resistance and (re)imagining alternative futurities.

Students exhibited particular language ideologies in relation to Western and local languages, which reflected social structures they were embedded in. Accordingly, English represented particular sociopolitical and historical signs and symbols, positioning it as the dominant language in the modern/colonial hierarchy. Students associated English with ideas of superiority, knowledge, respect, intellect, modernity, rationality, and being *parha-likha*. Local languages, on the other hand, were associated with ideas of *paendo* and *jahil,* constructs that signaled illiteracy, ignorance, backwardness, rurality, and premodernity. However, at the same time, students felt deeply emotionally connected to their local languages, which occupied multiple locations that positioned them simultaneously as below English in the colonial hierarchy and as intimately tied to notions of identity and communal belonging.

Ideologies around language and language of instruction were, as Rosa and Burdick (2017) theorized, not really about language but served to rationalize societal structure based on linguistic distinction. The positioning of English as the "language of knowledge" and rationality thus served to justify its position at the top of the hierarchy and the language of instruction and academic engagement. Similarly, as theorized by Veronelli (2015), local languages and their speakers were associated with notions of illiteracy and lacking capacity for rational expressivity, which served to justify their erasure from the academic institution along with the exclusion of their speakers from educational advancement and opportunity. Such logics sought to dehumanize speakers of local languages who were construed as *jahil*, *paendo,* and lacking "personality" because of their use of "crude," "harsh," and "improper" language.

Students' encounters with colonial hierarchies were mediated by their social class, gender, race/ethnicity, and ability. Students from poor and rural backgrounds experienced coloniality through a deeply stratified education system that denied them access to high quality education and forced them to learn through a language that was unfamiliar. In doing so, the colonial structure stunted their intellectual growth and limited their possibilities for academic progress, a condition that has been termed "linguistic apartheid" (p. xi) by Haitian educator Michel DeGraff (2019).

On the other hand, students from higher socioeconomic class and elite backgrounds did not experience language barriers in education, but were socialized into colonial norms that sanctioned native languages and cultures in the school and valorized Western knowledges and cultures. An important aspect of colonial logics that was experienced by women was mediated through the policing of dress code, which constituted as a key site for the enactment of colonialism against rural and religious women. Students thus

encountered coloniality in ways that positioned them across multiple locations of stratification in the colonial matrix of power depending on their class, gender, race/ethnicity, religion, and geographic location.

Students were also active agents of decolonial possibilities and were engaged in resistive action against colonial logics of exclusion and silencing. Their understanding of their educational experiences through the framing of colonial power structures enabled them to recognize colonialism as a structure that was deeply influential in organizing their lives. This positioning opened a space for resistance against colonial hierarchies and a (re)imagining of alternative futurities. As Bhabha (1994) and Kalua (2009) posited, the articulation of student identities was an on-going negotiation with their educational environment. Students were active agents of change, rather than passive recipients of societal norms.

The experiences of Pakistani youth are an important avenue from which to investigate global hierarchies of coloniality that influence the lives of marginalized youth across the world, especially youth in post-colonial countries that continue to perpetuate colonial educational structures. DeGraff (2019) has posited that decolonization is even more urgent when the medium of instruction is a foreign language that disenfranchises most of the population. Speaking in the context of Haiti, DeGraff claims that despite more than two centuries since independence, Haiti has yet to break the intellectual, cultural, and political chains of neo-colonialism. This analysis holds true for many post-colonial contexts across the world, including Pakistan, where deeply held colonial beliefs attach notions of increased humanity to education in English, while associating local languages with being sub-human, a condition that is common in societies across the world that suffer from the colonial wound (Allweiss, 2021; Degraff, 2019; Mignolo, 2009; Said, 1994). Therefore, the insights and experiences of Pakistani youth presented in this paper offer promising comparative possibilities. The struggles of Pakistani students speak to those of colonized/colonialized youth around the world who challenge global neo-colonial, imperialist, and racialized power structures that seek to dehumanize and erase indigenous ways of being. Through resistive and reparative work, scholars combating colonialism can serve as important allies in the struggle against modern/colonial systems of racialization, oppression, and dehumanization globally. The current study has illustrated that Pakistani students have internalized colonial hierarchies and constitute key sites for decolonial resistance at the same time. Their voices offer insights into the structuring of colonial logics locally while also being in conversation with colonial frameworks globally.

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Racializing Climate Justice in/for Education

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Keywords: Climate justice, climate justice education, racial justice, sustainability

Introduction

In this essay, we argue for racializing approaches to teaching climate change to better understand and address climate injustices. The climate emergency and racial injustice have received a lot of attention in the past few years which highlights the intensification and merging of crises. Indeed, there has never been a greater concern in the twenty-first century for the state of the environment and for racial injustices. We give credit to the Black Lives Matter movement for being the megaphone for issues related to Black people. However, even the most passionate activists often view climate and racial injustices as distinct battles. This juxtaposition has left the climate justice movement disproportionately white and without a strong racial analysis that examines the ways people of color and poor people are impacted by climate change (Miles et al., 2021). Consider the historic Blizzard of 2022 in Buffalo, New York, where nearly 40 people died over a span of three days. Climate scientists have linked the intensity and frequency of storms to climate change (Pignotti et al., 2021), including extreme winter storms. In a city already fractured over racial and class segregation, over-policing of poor neighborhoods, and a city government that has a sordid history of ignoring racial injustices, Buffalo's blizzard has only added fuel to the fire (Haq & Schindel, 2018; Miles et al., 2021). Although Black people make up only 14 percent of the population of Erie County and 33 percent of Buffalo's population, they were overrepresented and accounted for 51 percent of the blizzard deaths in the county (Sacks, 2022). It should be abundantly clear that we need to improve how we educate, prepare for, and advocate for climate justice.

The disproportionate number of deaths in the Black community from Buffalo's blizzard highlights the ways in which climate catastrophes and racial injustices are inextricably linked. Why did the Buffalo blizzard claim the lives of a disproportionate number of members of our Black community? Community leaders contend that structural issues—such as food deserts, inadequate housing, poverty, limited public transit options, and government disinvestment—heightened the vulnerability of low-income Black and Brown communities during the storm (Sacks, 2022). Environmental and climate injustices have cultivated a disproportionate impact on low-income communities and communities of color, who pay the cost with their health and lives both locally and globally (Bullard, 1991; Schindel et al., 2022; Schlosberg and Collins, 2014). Responses to storms can reveal the community's resilience and preparedness, issues which are increasingly necessary due to the increase in climate-related severe weather events.

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However, resilience and preparedness are also associated with historic legacies of housing segregation and neighborhood redlining (Cusick, 2020). For example, industries that release toxic air pollution have been intentionally situated in communities of color over decades (Bullard, 1991). In addition, historically redlined neighborhoods are associated with the prevalence of cancer, asthma and other poor health indicators (Nardone et al., 2020) and are hotter than those that were not redlined in nearly every city. As a result, extreme heat (Shandas et. al., 2019) and air pollution are leading causes of death in communities of color. Thus, viewing the disproportionately high death toll of the Black community in Buffalo's blizzard through a racialized lens of community disinvestment sheds light on the need to racialize the conversations and, as we argue in our essay, curricula, about climate change.

For too long we have discussed climate justice with race-neutral dialogue and the term climate change has been used to diminish the nature-human connection and our social interactions with the environment. As educators, we focus our attention on the racialization of climate change curricula to argue for climate justice education. We draw upon the growing body of climate justice education research (e.g. Damico et al., 2020; Eaton & Day, 2020; Nxumalo & Montes, 2021) and we argue for action-oriented climate change education (Mochizuki, 2016) to explicate what transformative and racialized climate justice learning might look like. We contend that teaching about climate change without teaching climate justice is at best inaccurate and at worst irresponsible. In what follows, we outline a critique and a way forward that aims to heal communities through building relationships and climate resilience.

Defining Climate Justice

Climate justice involves recognizing that climate change has disproportionately impacted other living beings, communities of color, and those with low incomes all over the world—the people and places least responsible for the climate change crisis (Aygeman & Doran, 2021; Harlan, et. al., 2015). Climate justice is the enactment of justice-centered transitions and solutions that address the underlying causes of climate change and multi-faceted justice concerns, including racial justice (Mohai, et. al., 2009).

The climate crisis has been caused by historical and ongoing human activities that favor the development of capital and consumer-based lifestyles across the globe. The pursuit of capital and these lifestyle choices occurs only through the dual exploitation of humans and the natural world. Current teaching models on the climate crisis paint a woefully incomplete picture of the problem and ignore, hide, and whitewash the complexities that lie at the root cause of the crisis: namely, capitalism and imperialism (Eaton & Day, 2020). Notably, racial capital and capital accumulation are mutually constituted, and as Pulido (2017) articulates, the devaluation of nonwhite bodies that occurs and gets produced within capital production extends to devaluation through pollution. That is, both capital production and its byproduct pollutants are written onto the bodies and into the graves of nonwhite communities across the globe. A stark example of this is seen in the environmental racism of Cancer Alley wherein Black residents in southeastern Louisiana have been subjected to dangerous carcinogens from plastic refineries and other factories (Dykstra, 2022). Given the context of sidestepping the exploitative nature of capital production in climate education, we suggest a new approach to educating about the

climate crisis must highlight the interconnections across racism, capitalism, and our own cultures and realities and provide powerful and sustainable justice-centered solutions.

Climate Justice Education: Framing the Problem

In order to help students comprehend the scope of the crisis, the underlying causes, and the ways in which they can address both climate and racial injustices, we propose a conceptualization of climate justice education as a place-based teaching pedagogy that incorporates an interdisciplinary approach focused on collective responsibility rather than individual accountability. We also support comprehensive state legislation that robustly funds and supports the development and implementation of climate justice education in all contexts and disciplines.

The current practice in the United States has too often been approached by teaching the climate crisis in general terms, such as: 1) teaching climate science through demonstrating the abundance of evidence that confirms climate change; and 2) encouraging children to care about the environment, which often occurs at a surface level through learning about distant adorable animals being harmed by humans' actions—usually polar bears or penguins. Ultimately, such teaching methods are driven by a similar goal: to convince individuals to engage in environmentally friendly habits such as recycling, buying energy efficient products, and taking shorter showers. Notably, teaching methods which primarily locate climate solutions on individuals' actions can also contribute to young people's climate anxiety, which is a growing mental health concern (Clayton, 2020; Wu et al., 2020). Further, recommending individualistic environmental actions to youth is reprehensible as they generally do not have purchasing power for their homes, nor do youth across socioeconomic status have equitable impacts on their environments (i.e. food diets, transportation, household size, and other carbon footprint indicators often lie outside of their control). In addition, many approaches to decreasing personal consumption and reducing carbon footprints are unattainable for most children and families, such as access to locally grown organic foods, energy efficient appliances, climate-resilient housing, reusable products, etc. Climate crises, such as the Buffalo Blizzard, demonstrate the pitfalls of positioning environmental issues, including climate resilience, as individualistic problems. In the city of Buffalo, for instance, the transportation authority pre-emptively suspended public transportation (Besecker, 2022), stranding those with transportation vulnerabilities to independently navigate a way home from work in hurricane strength winds and high intensity snowfall.

We believe a shift is needed in our schools and this shift involves teaching not just climate science but climate justice. Climate justice paints a more accurate picture of the climate crisis because: 1) it focuses on how the climate crisis is set to harm the most vulnerable populations on the planet (both humans and other living beings who have contributed the least to climate change); and, 2) it advocates for just responses and just transitions in communities' and countries' green economy responses to ensure the restoration and preservation of land, people, labor, and culture. In short, climate justice highlights how racism is impacting climate change and our children.

Climate Justice Education: Moving Forward

How should we approach teaching climate justice in ways that are not harmful, yet impactful? Many educators do not incorporate climate justice issues within their classes because they are unclear about the concept and what it can look like within their geographic context. Therefore, our approach to teaching climate justice involves: 1) learning what climate justice issues can be found within one's own community, explicitly extrapolating these understandings to global contexts, and exploring the ways climate issues are interrelated; 2) integrating local climate issues into school curricula; and 3) engaging in collective, transformative climate actions through classroom, schoolwide, and community climate justice activism. As educators, we utilize our local environments as the primary texts and resources for our students' learning in various ways, including online and in-person mapping tools and experiences (see e.g. EJScreen.com; Kuonen & Miles, accepted) and within community-situated learning and action (e.g. community and land (re)storying; Schindel et al., 2023). As an example, to learn about local climate issues, we introduce learners to the U.S. Climate Resilience Toolkit (toolkit.climate.gov), a web-based user-friendly tool that provides information about local potential natural disasters—and examine how local concerns can be woven into curricula. While the toolkit was initially designed for state and local decision-makers to bolster capacity for resilience to climate-related hazards (Gardiner, et al., 2019), it is a helpful tool for educators and their students to learn about and potentially address local climate issues. As another example, we engage with young people in ecological restoration and action that acts as a crucial component in climate change restoration and response (Harris et al., 2006) and can also position students as contributors and originators in constructing local transformations. When youth utilize their scientific understandings to restore local landscapes, they learn to recognize the interdependence of humans and other living beings (Bang et al., 2014) and get firsthand experience with the environmental, relational, and economic impacts of ecological restoration within their communities (Schindel Dimick, 2016).

While it is important to understand global impacts, we suggest that climate understanding and action should begin in local communities. When children and youth engage in climate justice issues, they learn they can impact and influence their communities and they come to understand how local concerns take on a significant part of meaningful global change. This interdisciplinary, civic-minded approach outdoes the current practices illustrated above. Perhaps most importantly, the lessons young people learn when engaged in understanding and impacting the climate concerns for their own communities can cultivate relationships to place and instill hope for a brighter future. Taking the Buffalo Blizzard as an example, learning about the causes of the blizzard and its differential impact on vulnerable communities demonstrates for young people how their local extreme weather events are interconnected with extreme draughts, flooding, and wildfires globally and how these, in turn, impact global human migration, particularly for those whose occupations depend upon the weather. Ultimately, vulnerability gets disproportionately distributed to Black and Brown communities locally and globally—issues which are representative of the lingering histories of colonialism and imperialism.

Conclusion

There are significant barriers to achieving the vision of climate justice education we have outlined. Barriers can begin to be overcome through educator preparation, professional

development, and the creation of curricular resources that not only address climate change but also center climate justice. The current context of climate change education across the United States shows growing interest in climate change education but rarely addresses climate justice (for timely information on state policies and implementation, see NAAEE, n.d.h). To date, New York state does not have explicit climate change education standards, nor is climate change integrated across school curricula for science or other disciplines. However, youth activists, grassroots organizers, and other organizations are taking the lead—and often learning from youth climate activism—to advance climate education. As one example in New York, the Climate and Resilience Education Task Force (CRETF) is working to build a coalition of stakeholders to create and implement a robust climate education platform through state policy change (see CRETF, n.d.). The burden for educating and implementing climate justice must not be borne by individual educators but instead be driven by systemic change that works towards just transformations (see e.g. Movement Generation, 2020) and that centers the voices of diverse and climate-vulnerable communities.

Climate justice is racial justice. The work of ecological restoration is interdependent with building racially just and climate-resilient communities (Movement Generation, 2020). Racializing approaches to teaching climate change will support communities to better understand and address climate injustices. Just transitions and just responses to climate crises are particularly critical during this crucial time in which communities are increasingly recognizing and planning for extreme weather events. Climate justice education provides youth with the knowledge and tools to envision futures in which the catastrophes and climate casualties of the Buffalo Blizzard do not get repeated. As educators, we must hold ourselves accountable for understanding how climate change impacts us locally and join in climate justice movements. There are no sustainable goals without justice (Clark & Miles, 2021). Educators at all levels should ensure they are teaching climate and racial justice in their classes, regardless of the content area, and are working to share actionable responses to local climate issues using antiracist pedagogy.

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Creating Third Spaces of Learning for Post-Capitalism: Lessons from Educators, Artists and Activists

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> *"The crisis consists precisely in the fact that the old is dying and the new cannot be born; in this interregnum, a great variety of morbid symptoms appear", Antonio Gramsci.*

When Antonio Gramsci wrote these lines from his prison cell in 1930, he was mainly referring to morbid symptoms within the Italian left. The working class in Italy had lost faith in capitalism and the authoritarian form it had taken under Fascism. Fast forward to the third decade of the twenty-first century and the world seems to be in a similar interregnum in which political classes and parties have lost legitimacy, but where the path forward is unclear. Globally, over the last few decades, we have seen the growth of a particularly predatory form of capitalism that exhibits many "morbid symptoms". These symptoms, some relatively new and others resurgent, include, among others, authoritarian politics, ethnic and racial nationalisms, polarization and hyper-partisanship; resurgent patriarchy, religious fundamentalism, growing inequality, the financialization of capital, algorithmic control, the privatization of the public sector, climate denial, and growing social surveillance and disinformation. And all of these have been exacerbated by the spread of the Coronavirus and the economic and social disruptions it has caused and continues to cause.

But this current interregnum is not only characterized by the morbid symptoms we have elaborated here. It is also filled with the potential to usher in a new post-capitalist world (Mason, 2016; Moreno, 2021; Gibson-Graham, 2011), which does not necessarily require the projection of a utopia that has yet to be imagined. Spaces that prefigure a post-capitalist world are all around us if we know where to look. In this book, *Creating Third Spaces of Learning for Post-Capitalism: Lessons from Educators, Artists andActivists* we seek to explore counter-hegemonic social spaces, or what some call *third spaces* (Anzaldua, 1987/2021; Bhabha, 1994/2002; Soja, 1996) that have been created largely by social, community and artistic activists to prefigure a post-capitalist, multi-racial democracy. These spaces tend to be democratic, grounded in communities, and challenge the hegemony of current forms of economic, political, cultural, and educational domination. Sousa Santos (2018), referring to such spaces as *epistemologies of the South,* argues that these spaces are emerging both within formal institutions and outside of them.

Building on these theorists, we understand third space to be a contingent, in-between location (figuratively and otherwise) that challenges binary and hegemonic forms of thinking. If *first space* represents our cultural identities and everyday lives (which are not static) and *second space* represents the hegemony of the dominant (or colonial) forces that attempt to define us, then the *third space* is a hybrid space in which to explore issues of domination, power, and emancipation. Since these are processes that are never fixed, but rather always in process, fluid, and inflected by history, third space is both a concept and a methodology that is committed to social justice and coalition politics as an alternative

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space of enunciation and intervention. As a generative locus, it allows us to imagine radical new ways of working together and relating to each other and in the process, new ways of learning and being.

Our different relationships and disciplines (as scholar-activists working with participatory action research, arts-activism, human rights/the right to education, and years of community-based research) have led us to intersectional connections with various groups and organizations and new proposals for moving forward into a new political imaginary. Working in the field of education we were connected (in various ways) with a range of radical social movements, artist collectives, *autogestiones*, racial justice movements, student and youth groups, teacher organizations, and education activists. We felt that many of these spaces offered important lessons and new forms of knowledge, pedagogy, and practices that could also inform the ways we think about education - and maybe even reform our formal education system to make it more relevant to the existential crises we currently face. Within these spaces, many people are organizing against and resisting extreme market fundamentalism, authoritarianism, racism, patriarchy, and environmental devastation, among other challenges.

While some of these spaces may be in or part of "schools", many are not often thought of as "education spaces," they are nonetheless sites for a different kind of learning and reimagining. They are what some call "public pedagogies" (Sandlin, Schultz & Burdick, 2009), such as street art that takes over public spaces, a memory park dedicated to the horrors of American slavery and lynching, a torture center in Buenos Aires dedicated to 30,00 disappeared citizens under a brutal dictatorship, or a taken over or "recuperated" factory run as a worker cooperative. These third spaces are counter-hegemonic in that they exist surrounded by the constant drumbeat of second space public pedagogies, such as advertisements, corporate logos, corporate media, and social media sites. If we add to these second space public pedagogies, public and private schools that act as what Althusser called ideological state apparatuses, then we can better understand the need for counter-hegemonic spaces for learning in its broadest sense, both within and outside institutions.

In contrast to a great deal of the research and emphasis in comparative education studies, we are not referring to learning in its individualistic, neoliberal meaning, what Biesta (2021) calls *learnification*. As Biesta points out, without some idea of what learning is *about* and what it is *for*, it becomes part of the current human capital discourse that ties lifelong learning to one's utility to the economy. As learnification becomes increasingly directed by international development organizations and league indicators (aided by Silicon Valley and digital forms of learning), it also becomes part of a "chain of strategies of education reform, to edu-business profit-making and to private equity investing" (Ball & Grimaldi, 2021, p.1). In other words, it becomes commodified and depoliticized and a veil is drawn over its real purposes within neoliberal capitalism. This is why we will refer to the creation of third spaces as a political project that aims at re-politicizing education so that it meets the needs of and is directed by marginalized communities.

For instance, worker cooperatives are spaces of learning about participatory governance and social solidarity (Heras & Vieta, 2020). Street art collectives are learning new social relations as collectives and also occupying public spaces with narratives of political

memory where the public can learn about past and current struggles (Grupo de Arte Callejero, 2009). Participation in social movements is another third space of learning (Torres Carrillo, 2020), particularly for youth as they struggle with what it means to be an engaged, democratic citizen (Gluz, 2013; Kriger & Said, 2017).

Such spaces are pervasive and visible globally if we scratch the surface, though some prefer to fly under the radar so as not to be shut down or commodified. In our book we provide two distinct socio-cultural contexts, to explore what we are calling third spaces within two urban contexts: New York City, located in the global north, and Buenos Aires, located in the global south. By looking across a number of third spaces within the different historical, political and socio-cultural contexts we intend to provide a sense of the diversity of third spaces of learning that exist, the wide range of challenges that they face, and how they might inform not only social policies and practices, but also current critical theories of education and social change.

As we considered the selection of sites for our study, we initially cast a wide net, which over the course of the study, we kept refining based on our analysis of data. In the end, the following characteristics seemed to be those that most third spaces had in common:

- Third spaces are intersectional spaces in which individual and collective identities are continually negotiated.
- Third spaces are not the result of top-down reform efforts, but emerge from or are embedded within political activism, community organizing and/or social movements.
- Third Spaces seek to foster critical consciousness through a counter-hegemonic pedagogy of dialogue, co-learning and resistance.
- Third spaces seek to democratize society through democratizing social relations and institutions.
- Third Spaces move beyond critique and resistance to foster radical imagination that prefigures a new social imaginary.
- Third Spaces are both cognitive and embodied multi-sensual spaces that involve emotions, desires, memory, artistic expression, ritual, social solidarity and performativity.
- Third Spaces are also physical, geographical spaces that illuminate and expose spacial injustices.
- Third Spaces embrace the notion of praxis, and are always evolving and filled with imperfections, contradictions and tensions that are acknowledged and are the focus of ongoing collective reflection and dialogue.

While those who worked in the third spaces that we studied developed a close relationship with their communities, they also developed a community amongst themselves. In our work with various sites in Buenos Aires, it became apparent that activist professionals have formed networks that share what they have learned with each other. Education third spaces are not only grounded in local communities but also in social movements that seek greater social and racial equity and quality of life for marginalized communities. In fact, these social movements are themselves often third spaces of learning. This is why they so often find themselves under attack by those who benefit from the status quo.

Third spaces are ideally sensitive to the ways that various forms of oppression are intersectional. This means that if they prefigure a post-capitalist society, then they must also strive to be post-patriarchal, post-racist, post-homophobic and transphobic, as well as raising awareness about the global environmental crisis. While many groups foregrounded issues of race, ethnicity and class, they also integrated programs to raise awareness around gender, disability, and sexual orientation. This is in part because they have diverse interests and their willingness to take up issues as they manifest means they will respond to any form of oppression or stigmatization that they themselves raise. *Learning in Post-Capitalist Third Spaces* summarizes what can be learned with and from the groups with whom we have worked, over time. While there are some books on "third space" and others on post-capitalism, few focus on third spaces that educate and that prefigure a post-capitalist society. Our approach is a cross-disciplinary look at the links between the creation of third spaces of learning to reimagining social relations in our society that prefigure what a post-capitalist world might look like; and, as educators, we are interested in rethinking counter-hegemonic learning across various sites in civil society, such as socially engaged art practices and collectives, social movements, workers cooperatives, public schools, non-government organizations, memory museums and parks. In some cases, and for some of the groups, our collaborations started much earlier than this project and will continue well beyond this book. For these reasons, we hope to share the ideas and lessons learned as a contribution to prefiguring possibilities in education beyond our current realities, and encourage continued participation in activities, activism, and *colaboración* to build solidarity networks. Finally, we position ourselves as a team of educators and lifelong learners that keep on reflecting on these themes, and therefore, will not frame these lessons as written in stone, but rather as a fluid process, that may also start transforming itself at the very moment we put it in writing.

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Book Review: School Leadership for Refugees' Education: Social Justice Leadership for Immigrant, Migrants and Refugees

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In *School Leadership for Refugees' Education: Social Justice Leadership for Immigrant, Migrants and Refugees*, Dr. Khalid Arar imparts a human-oriented and agency-driven lens to a dialogue that often revolves only around statistics. Arar's book provides educational leaders, policymakers, NGOs, and researchers with a clear resource for understanding the cultural and socio-political context regarding the movement and resettlement of refugees. The author incorporates both theory and data from empirical research he conducted in the Middle East, Europe, and North America, to illuminate the challenges and opportunities facing migrant populations. He speaks simultaneously to the responsibilities and prospects for educators and school systems in varying school contexts that absorb migrant populations. Arar presents a Culturally Relevant Leadership (CRL) model that aims to shape a holistic approach for welcoming migrant and refugee students into schools and societies.

To write this book, Arar draws on his experiences as a high school principal, along with his insight from two decades of researching K-12 and higher education policies through the lens of equity and diversity and studying refugees in diverse settings. As an Associate Professor of Educational Leadership and Policy at Texas State University and an Associate Editor of the International Journal of Leadership in Education, Dr. Khalid Arar is well positioned to propose a model for how educational leaders can use CRL to welcome refugees into their school communities. Arar's academic research primarily examines how educational leaders consider equity and social justice while shaping policies and practices to meet newcomer students' educational needs. His research also emphasizes the essentiality of contextualizing practices through inclusive pedagogy and the involvement of school leaders in practice and policy formation. Arar incorporates this research into the book by emphasizing educators' roles in shaping the social perception about refugees, thereby speaking to the broader influence Arar believes that school leaders have in the dynamic nature of global refugee movements.

Throughout its eight chapters, the book offers a global analysis of policy guidelines, obstacles, and coping strategies concerning refugee education, comprehensively framing a synthesized model for CRL. Chapters 1-2 define key terminology related to migrant populations, before turning to an examination of the policies that host states employ in response to the waves of incoming refugees. Arar notes the tension between nationalism and globalism as competing forces in policy approaches. He expressively highlights how government policies affect the social integration of refugees as well as educational institutions' abilities to welcome newcomer students. Arar also emphasizes the challenges countries face in developing educational policies due to the global lack of reliable, consistent, and accessible data on refugee students. He proposes the creation of

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an electronic information bank to better inform policy decisions related to the resources needed to achieve educational goals.

Chapters 3-4 provide an in-depth account of political, financial, cultural, pedagogical, social, and psychological challenges that affect refugee students and school leaders, along with diverse coping strategies that educators use to address these issues. Arar draws from ten years (2009-2019) of scholastic literature to outline three themes that he argues could serve as theoretical pillars for refugee education praxis. These themes include a) The implementation of international and national policies for the absorption, resettlement and integration of children in host country schools; b) School-based psychological and social support; and c) Practices for academic leadership and instruction that directly address the needs of refugee students. In doing so, Arar highlights that even in cases where no formal barriers to educational access exist, the degree of actual inclusion varies greatly.

Chapters 5-6 critically examine how CRL and Leadership for Social Justice (SJ) approaches, which have previously been implemented in racially and culturally diverse settings, are relevant for refugee contexts. SJ seeks to change systems, structures, and processes to abolish unequal starting points for marginalized students. CRL, which derives from culturally relevant pedagogy and culturally responsive teaching, allows students to achieve academic excellence without abandoning cultural integrity. Arar advocates for a synthesized model of CRL based on SJ and three established CRL frameworks: an ethnographic account of CRL (Khalifa, 2018); and a framework of CRL by Horsford et. al (2011) consisting of political context, pedagogic approaches, personal journeys, and professional commitment. Arar's holistic CRL model highlights four dimensions that apply to refugee education across these frameworks: personal awareness, inclusive pedagogy, policy mediation, and leader professionalism. The main premise of the model centers on school leaders' self-awareness, as well as their critical reflexivity on themselves and their school contexts.

Arar aptly underscores a need for educators to adopt a CRL model even when government policies toward immigrants may be ineffective or hostile. He also stresses educators' roles in extending their pursuit of social justice into the wider community. This point feeds into the final two chapters, Chapters 7-8, which reemphasize the importance of a whole-school model when developing schools that operate as socially just environments. This holistic approach incorporates six interrelated areas that create a common vision for effective refugee education: building welcoming policies; strategies that ensure access to educational resources; hiring, development, and training of managers; collective responsibility of the school and community; teaching according to a curriculum; and teachers' professional development.

The book leaves us with a vision for what could be while also broadening our contemplation of what should be, particularly how educational leaders can positively influence the wider societies within which they operate. This speaks to a consistent strength throughout the book, which is its poignant emphasis on the importance of contextualization, achieved through the authentic engagement of refugee communities in shaping school policy. Arar draws attention to this goal by infusing authentic narratives throughout that illuminate refugees' experiences, as well as by continually

emphasizing the need for educators to better understand the context facing migrant youth. Another significant strength is the way in which the author guides readers toward understanding the necessity of a whole-school approach to creating an inclusive atmosphere, with holistic responses ranging from teacher training and the crafting of inclusive curricula to school and community partnerships. He does so while acknowledging that what is right for one situation might not be suitable for another, as the intricate dynamics of refugee movements create complex layers that make a single solution impossible.

The author's argument would have been bolstered with further discussions about the wider effects on educational leaders of undertaking an advocacy-oriented approach. While school leaders are indeed well positioned to influence societal conversations, doing so may put educators and schools at greater risk, particularly in hostile environments, as they may come to be seen as politicized. Discussions of the potential risks involved with using social justice approaches would be beneficial, including strategies of how education leaders can mitigate harm to themselves and others when using such approaches in politically charged contexts.

Adding examples of CRL implementation in a wider array of host-country contexts would also strengthen Arar's analysis. The book draws largely on the author's first-hand research in North America and Europe, with some concrete examples also drawn from his research conducted in the Middle East. Arar notes repeatedly, however, that a vast majority of refugee populations live in economically poor countries, whereas just 9% of the global refugee population live in the world's six richest countries (Arar, 2020). Though a guide for refugee education is still relevant for countries that host this 9%, additional research would be valuable to better understand how the proposed framework may apply in fragile environments. Presenting further cases of CRL implementation in conflict contexts and countries that have the largest influxes of refugees would complement the author's argument. Arar could also more concretely analyze differentiation in school leadership approaches between countries of first asylum and resettlement countries, as the goals and experiences of refugees in those varied contexts differ.

Finally, as an extension to the concepts presented in this book, educational leaders would also benefit from information about the refugee teachers entering their school communities. Refugee teachers encounter their own challenges related to political, social, economic, and psychological barriers in education systems. Although they are certified to teach in their home countries and may be well positioned to contribute to a CRL vision, refugee teachers often encounter challenges, such as recognition of teaching certifications. Though the book speaks extensively about migrant students, it does not touch on the lived experiences and barriers to entry for migrant teachers, or their potential to be drawn into a CRL model. Including approaches for understanding and engaging teachers within migrant populations would make the book an even stronger resource for equipping educational leaders to holistically engage and support migrant populations in their school communities.

In conclusion, Arar's work serves as a timely guide for understanding the dynamic challenges and opportunities connected to global migration flows in the context of

school communities and provides concrete examples of research-informed practices that school leaders can implement to create inclusive environments. As Arar notes from the beginning, there are no "lightning solutions" to the challenges facing refugees or the educational leaders who support them, but this book is certainly a start.

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