

EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: *INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES*



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EDUCATION AND SOCIAL TRANSFORMATION: INTERNATIONAL APPROACHES

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PREFACE

This volume brings together diverse perspectives on education across cultures, disciplines, and regions. From surgical training in Japan to multilingual classrooms worldwide, each chapter explores how learning is shaped by context and purpose.

Political forces, cultural representation, and parenting styles emerge as critical influences on educational outcomes. Whether analyzing African systems or Spanish language materials, the authors highlight the need for inclusive, responsive approaches.

Together, these studies offer a concise yet powerful reflection on global education. They challenge assumptions, provoke dialogue, and point toward more equitable and effective learning environments.

On behalf of the Farabi Publishing House editorial team, we extend our sincere appreciation to the contributing authors for their valuable insights and scholarly contributions.

Editorial Team
September 19, 2025
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CHAPTER 1
EDUCATION AND TRAINING OF
GASTROINTESTINAL SURGEONS AT KOCHI
HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

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INTRODUCTION

As of December 31, 2020, the number of physicians working in medical institutions in Japan was 339,623, which corresponds to 256.6 physicians per 100,000 population. Compared with two years earlier (December 31, 2018), this represented an increase of 12,413 physicians (3.8%), or 10.4 more physicians per 100,000 population (total 369.2 per 100,000). However, significant disparities among prefectures remain. By primary specialty, “internal medicine” was the most common with 61,514 physicians (19.0%), followed by “orthopedic surgery” with 22,520 (7.0%) and “pediatrics” with 17,997 (5.6%). Remarkably, there were only 9,074 physicians (2.7%) whose primary specialty was “gastrointestinal surgery” [1].

Although the total number of gastrointestinal surgeons has shown a slight increase, their geographic maldistribution is pronounced (Figure 1) [1]. The number of physicians working in medical institutions per 100,000 population by prefecture shows a west-high/east-low pattern, with Kochi Prefecture at 322.0 per 100,000 [1]. Even when examined by surgical specialty and certification, Kochi appears to have a relatively adequate supply [1]. However, the number of board-certified gastrointestinal surgeons in Kochi Prefecture is only 41, the lowest in the nation [2].

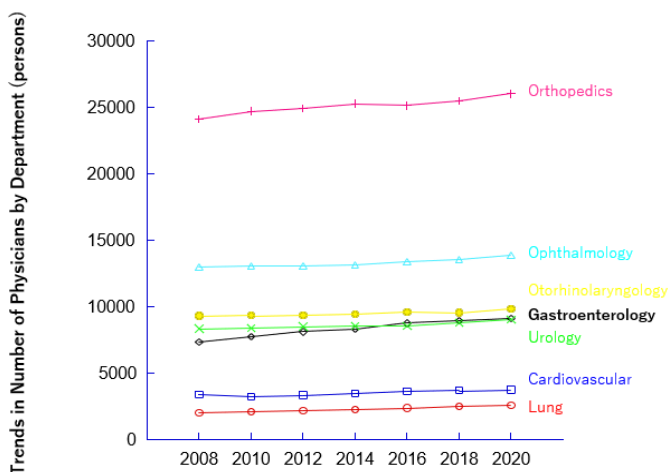


Figure 1. Statistics of Physicians, Dentists, and Pharmacists (Ministry of Health, Labour and Welfare, Japan)

Considering that the majority of physicians in Kochi are training in general hospitals rather than university hospitals affiliated with medical schools (Figure 2) [1], educating young doctors who aspire to become gastrointestinal surgeons and nurturing them into accomplished surgeons is a critical responsibility of Kochi Health Sciences Center. In this paper, we report on the training methods and achievements for young gastrointestinal surgeons at Kochi Health Sciences Center since the introduction of the board-certified surgeon system in 2018.

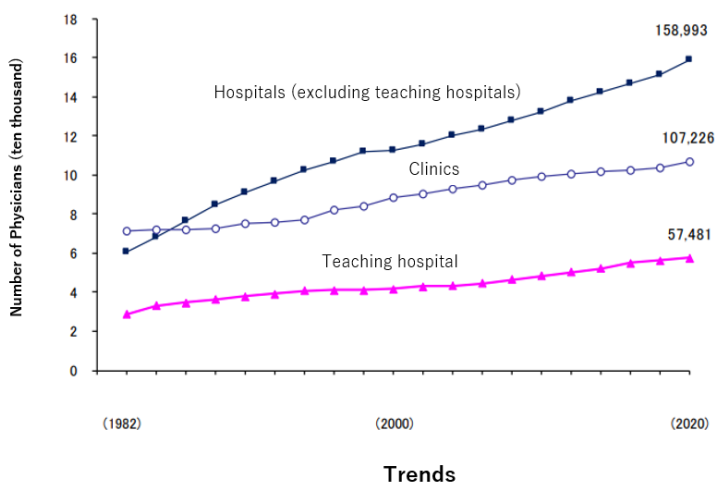


Figure 2. Trends in the number of physicians by type of medical facility

1. FROM BOARD-CERTIFIED SURGEON TO BOARD-CERTIFIED GASTROINTESTINAL SURGEON

To obtain board certification from the Japan Surgical Society, participation in academic activities as well as a minimum of 350 surgical cases is required. At Kochi Health Sciences Center, by the fourth year after graduation (the autumn of the second year of senior residency), trainees are given the opportunity to experience an average of 480 surgical cases, including 150 as the primary surgeon and 150 laparoscopic procedures. This number of cases fully meets the requirements for board certification in gastrointestinal surgery, providing a reliable system that allows young surgeons to build their careers with confidence.

To date, Kochi Health Sciences Center has produced many young board-certified surgeons and board-certified gastrointestinal surgeons. However, the acquisition of such certifications is only a milestone in the broader mission of supporting community healthcare. At Kochi Health Sciences Center, our goal is to cultivate trusted gastrointestinal surgeons who can take responsibility for their own practice and provide high-quality, independent care.

2. EXPERIENCES OF GASTROINTESTINAL SURGERY CASES AT KOCHI HEALTH SCIENCES CENTER

The number of gastrointestinal surgery cases at Kochi Health Sciences Center is shown in Figure 3. More than 1,500 surgical procedures are performed annually. The fact that we are able to care for so many gastrointestinal surgery patients at Kochi Health Sciences Center is entirely thanks to the physicians in the community who refer these patients to us. For every referred patient, we take full responsibility in providing acute surgical care and ensure that the patient is safely returned to the referring physician.

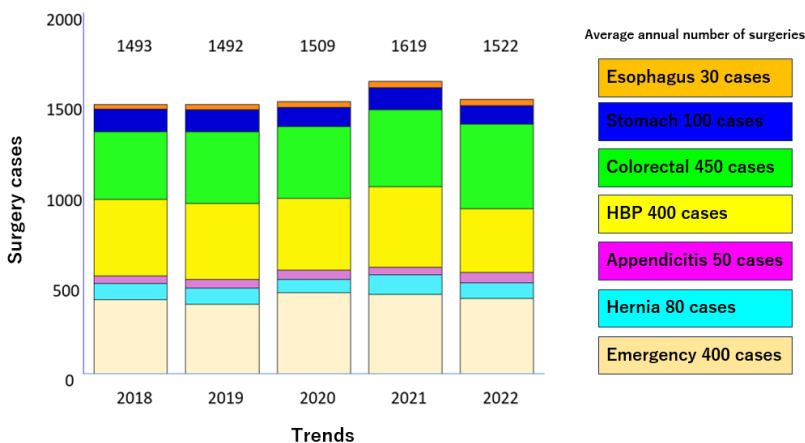


Figure 3. Number of gastrointestinal surgeries at Kochi Health Sciences Center

Needless to say, surgery must be performed by surgeons with outstanding skills. In Kochi Prefecture, where the number of board-certified gastrointestinal surgeons is limited, it is an urgent task for Kochi Health Sciences Center to foster young surgeons with excellent surgical skills in order to raise the level of

regional healthcare. To train young surgeons, we always keep in mind three key points in our practice:

- How to help them improve their surgical skills,
- Training supervisors who are responsible for nurturing young surgeons,
- Promoting narrative-based medicine (NBM) so as not to rely solely on evidence-based medicine (EBM).

3. HOW TO BECOME SKILLED AT SURGERY

What does it truly mean to be “skilled” at surgery? One might immediately think of “dexterity and precision in fine tasks” or “speed of performance.” However, focusing only on such technical hand skills will never lead to genuine surgical mastery. A truly accomplished surgeon is not only one with safe and reliable operative techniques (Art), but also one who constantly refines their knowledge (Science), and, most importantly, demonstrates compassion and effective collaboration with patients, families, and multidisciplinary teams (Communication).

In terms of Art, both natural aptitude and effort are essential. All surgery begins with imitation, so we record standard operations using an intraoperative video system, allowing trainees to repeatedly watch and learn from their instructors. In addition, surgeries performed by young surgeons are also recorded so that they can recognize the differences from their instructors’ techniques, identify areas for improvement, and apply those lessons in their next procedures.

One of the most crucial elements is the surgical field exposure. The ability to skillfully create and maintain an optimal operative field directly impacts the safety of surgery. To achieve this, mastery of anatomy is indispensable. We teach young surgeons to link the intraoperative findings—including the extent of disease—with how they appear on imaging studies, so they can mentally reconstruct a three-dimensional understanding of the operative field. By accumulating experience case by case—not only assessing the tumor extent but also understanding the degree of inflammatory spread to surrounding tissues and the tactile feel of dissection—surgeons eventually develop the ability to “feel the pulse of an organ with the left hand while exposing the operative field, and sense the tissue with the tip of the right-hand

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forceps while dissecting.” At this stage, sense is nurtured through effort, allowing them to safely dissect even in technically demanding regions such as around arteries affected by tumor invasion.

For young surgeons, surgery means caring for each patient with meticulous attention. This begins with preoperative imaging and extends through postoperative management until discharge (while senior surgeons, of course, must also be prepared to take responsibility for the patient’s entire life thereafter). In our weekly conferences, we directly instruct young surgeons on preoperative diagnosis, surgical planning (including dissection lines and device selection), and postoperative management.

For residents, we instill three key attitudes:

- Always maintain curiosity,
- Thoroughly investigate anything they do not understand, and
- Consult their supervising surgeons immediately whenever they feel even slightly uncertain.

This approach broadens their potential. Because we must ensure not only the safety but also the quality of our surgeries, we never allow young surgeons to “practice on patients.” Instead, they undergo rigorous daily training in dry labs and semi-wet labs (and motivated trainees naturally attend without being forced, because they genuinely wish to improve). Only after reaching a level deemed safe do we permit them to operate.

We emphasize the philosophy: “Practice every day as if it were the real thing; perform the real thing as if it were daily practice.” Through continuous rehearsal and training, young surgeons acquire the ability to carry out operations safely and reliably.

4. TRAINING SUPERVISORS TO EDUCATE YOUNG SURGEONS

In the education of residents and young surgeons, effective training cannot be achieved without capable supervisors. In other words, educating young doctors depends on the education and competence of supervisors—if mid-career surgeons lack sufficient ability, it is impossible for them to properly train younger surgeons. At Kochi Health Sciences Center, we emphasize this

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by guiding young surgeons to smoothly transition from board certification in gastrointestinal surgery to subspecialty certification.

We have organized our department into groups specializing in esophageal surgery, gastric surgery, colorectal surgery, and hepatobiliary-pancreatic surgery, and each group is responsible for training young surgeons. Until they obtain board certification in gastrointestinal surgery, trainees rotate through all groups to gain comprehensive exposure across the full spectrum of gastrointestinal surgery. As department director, my foremost responsibility is to create a healthy and open environment, provide a workplace where surgeons can continue their careers for life, and support each individual's aspirations. Supervisors take the initiative, and through the growth of mid-career surgeons, we cultivate the next generation of young surgeons.

The effectiveness of this educational program is gradually being demonstrated. In gastrointestinal surgery, five surgeons currently hold technical certification (including one board examiner), and we have steadily produced endoscopic surgery specialists as well. Moreover, Kochi Health Sciences Center is the only Japanese Society of Hepato-Biliary-Pancreatic Surgery Training Facility A in Kochi Prefecture, and it employs the prefecture's only advanced technical instructor, who has trained four surgeons to become board-certified in advanced hepatobiliary-pancreatic surgery—surgeons who now practice successfully nationwide.

Gastrointestinal surgery carries the risk of severe complications, and incomplete resections can lead to local recurrence. For this reason, the NCCN Guidelines emphasize at the outset that “when determining management during diagnosis and resectability, multidisciplinary consultation should be conducted at experienced institutions, based on appropriate imaging results.” Supervisors are therefore instructed to always remain attentive to developments in their fields, to continuously refine their knowledge, and to maintain the highest standards of expertise.

Figure 4 shows the major academic achievements at Kochi Health Sciences Center between 2018 and 2022. Over the past five years, our department has published 59 English-language articles, 34 Japanese-language articles, and delivered 504 presentations at national academic meetings. Notably, we have also involved residents in academic activities, guiding them

in 58 conference presentations. We believe this has provided young surgeons with a highly enriching educational program at a formative stage of their careers.

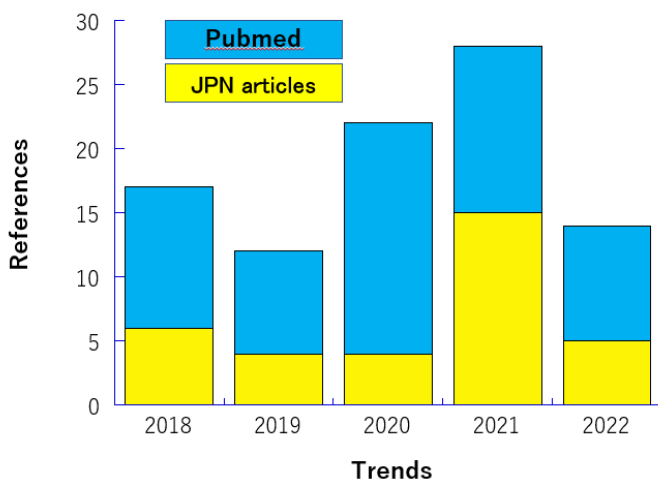


Figure 4. Number of gastrointestinal surgeries at Kochi Health Sciences Center

In this way, Kochi Health Sciences Center emphasizes not only surgical training but also the scientific aspect of medicine, ensuring that patients and their families are provided with the most up-to-date medical care. In terms of scientific advancement, we have received significant support from the Kochi organization for medical reformation and renewal [4].

5. RECOMMENDATION OF NARRATIVE-BASED MEDICINE (NBM) OVER AN EXCLUSIVE RELIANCE ON EBM

It has been quite some time since the term “evidence” began circulating widely among Japanese clinicians. The concept of Evidence-Based Medicine (EBM) originated in 1991 when Guyatt in the United States introduced it [5]. The idea was to move medicine—which had long depended heavily on the “intuition and experience” of healthcare providers—toward an approach guided by clinical epidemiology, integrating three elements: “scientific evidence,” “clinical expertise,” and “patients’ values.” While its origins lie in case reports,

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the essence of EBM was discussed in its critical reflections: namely, that EBM requires skills in literature searching, critical appraisal, and synthesis of information, as well as judgment regarding applicability to the patient in front of us [4].

In Japan, however, in recent years, analyses at the national level—so-called “big data” studies—have been carried out across various diseases, and the word “evidence” seems to be taking on a life of its own. We are now at a juncture where we must seriously reflect on whether we are truly providing the kind of healthcare that patients themselves desire.

Narrative-Based Medicine (NBM) was proposed in 1998 by Greenhalgh T and Hurwitz B in the United Kingdom, as a concept of medicine/healthcare partly in response to concerns that too much emphasis was being placed on “evidence” in treatment decision-making [6]. The essence of NBM lies in focusing on the irreducible individual and applying general information, such as evidence derived from theory and research, appropriately to unique, one-time clinical encounters. For healthcare providers, to pursue only evidence in dealing with disease is folly.

What must not be misunderstood here is that “one must not simply accept patients’ or families’ wishes uncritically and guide them in the wrong direction.” Especially in cancer treatment, studies have shown that patients who opt for alternative therapies without receiving standard treatment have twice the mortality rate compared to those who undergo standard therapy [7]. Thus, NBM, together with EBM, should function as “the two wheels of a cart” in realizing patient-centered medicine.

To treat a patient means not only to care for the patient facing illness but also to consider the family who supports them, their environment, and, ultimately, the community at large. What is required in medical practice are the patient’s values, and whether the clinician possesses the clinical skills to respond to the patient’s wishes. Communication—the ability to “convey,” “understand,” “gain agreement,” and “collaborate” with patients, families, healthcare staff, and even the wider community—is also a form of skill.

Each patient has different ways of thinking and unique individuality. Teaching young surgeons to develop a tangible sense of “how to engage with people” is also an important part of training. Senior surgeons should therefore

make it a point to teach the subtleties of communication—something difficult to learn from textbooks—through outpatient consultations and ward rounds.

In educating young surgeons, gender is irrelevant. The number of female physicians aspiring to become gastrointestinal surgeons is increasing, and at Kochi Health Sciences Center, we have successfully guided female doctors in obtaining both board certification in surgery and board certification in gastrointestinal surgery. National database results also report that the performance of female gastrointestinal surgeons is equal to, or even superior to, that of their male counterparts [8]. We ensure equal surgical opportunities for all young surgeons who are motivated to become better.

6. ADVANCES IN SURGERY AND THE ROLE OF REGIONAL MEDICAL INSTITUTIONS

In recent years, we often hear the phrase, “medical science is advancing at an extraordinary pace.” Sometimes I reflect on whether there has truly been evidence over the past 20 years that has shaken the very foundations of surgery. Examples might include preoperative imaging diagnostics, laparoscopic and robot-assisted surgery, the development of energy devices, and the progress of chemotherapy to improve outcomes after gastrointestinal cancer resection.

At Kochi Health Sciences Center as well, laparoscopic surgery has become the mainstay for gastrointestinal cancer operations, and the proportion of procedures performed with robotic assistance has also been rapidly increasing. However, these represent advancements in surgical approaches and in medical engineering. Likewise, adjuvant chemotherapy (including immunotherapy) that improves treatment outcomes can be regarded as progress in pharmacological therapy.

In terms of gastrointestinal surgery, I personally trained in gastric surgery under Dr. Takeshi Sano (currently Director, Cancer Institute Hospital, Japanese Foundation for Cancer Research), in colorectal surgery under Dr. Yoshihiro Moriya (former National Cancer Center Hospital), and in hepatobiliary-pancreatic surgery under Professor Cameron (Johns Hopkins University). After arriving at Kochi Health Sciences Center, I also received invaluable guidance from the late Dr. Yasuo Shima.

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When considering the progress of surgery itself, it becomes clear that, even from the perspective of surgical field exposure and resection lines in cancer surgery, little has changed compared with what I was taught. What has evolved is merely the approach and the surgical devices used for tissue dissection. In other words, what has truly advanced are medical engineering and drug therapy. Surgeons should sincerely acknowledge this fact.

What is most important is to work collaboratively with internists who conduct systemic examinations, radiologists who perform diagnostic imaging, anesthesiologists who help assess the patient's overall condition, and pathologists who provide the final pathological diagnosis, all while treating each patient individually. At the foundation of this network are the local physicians who refer patients to us.

At Kochi Health Sciences Center, toward the realization of a community-based integrated care system, we work in collaboration with referring clinics and hospitals to create a system in which housing, medical care, nursing, prevention, and daily living support are provided in an integrated manner [9]. This allows patients, even when they reach a state of severe care dependence, to continue living their own lives in their familiar communities until the very end.

In recent years, the phrase “delivering evidence from rural areas to the world” has often been voiced by regional medical education and healthcare institutions. However, I believe that the true mission of surgeons in regional institutions is not necessarily to disseminate evidence, but rather to:

- Inherit surgical techniques and foster outstanding surgeons,
- Sharpen knowledge through direct patient care, and
- Train the next generation who will sustain regional healthcare.

Regional medical institutions must join hands with community physicians, collaborate in patient care, and always keep in mind the families of patients and the local community. At Kochi Health Sciences Center, we are committed to educating and nurturing young surgeons with the philosophy of facing patients and families directly and contributing to the regional community.

CONCLUSION

Japan's population, and particularly that of Kochi Prefecture, is projected to decline sharply in the future. Over the next 20 years, while the population of elderly individuals—often referred to as the “cancer age” group—will remain relatively stable, the number of young surgeons is expected to decrease.

Since clinical competence equals educational capacity, Kochi Health Sciences Center, which boasts the largest volume of surgical cases in the prefecture, has a significant mission to train the next generation of young surgeons. Moving forward, we aim to continue cultivating gastrointestinal surgeons who possess not only advanced surgical skills but also the rich humanity required to confront life and care for patients.

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CHAPTER 2
**THE INFLUENCE OF POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND
IT'S IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL
SYSTEM**

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INTRODUCTION

The challenges facing African education systems, their underlying links with politics and possible ways to address them, need attention of all higher institutions of learning. For this reason, politics should be compulsorily taught in institutions of higher learning, especially those engaged in the training of teachers. It should be made compulsory in all institutions of higher learning to remove political ignorance among Africans. Politics and education policy influence each other through a continuous process which has failed the education sector in Africa, particularly in the last few decades because of non-provision of systematic political education to students in higher institutions of learning. Understanding the role of politics in African national education systems is something whose significance has been left to ferment among institutions of higher learning. It is high time this is changed.

Education is essential to the advancement of any society, it can also serve as a mirror that can reflect the motive of a political leader, for this reason, a political leader who seek the development of his\her country will prioritize the educational sector. For instance, in Nigeria today, most political leaders have little or no regard for the educational sector. Studies have shown that although some political leaders in Nigeria like Dr. Good luck Jonathan, have established good policies in the past that had impacted the educational sector positively, such as the establishment of the nomadic schools across Nigeria in order to give the nomadic children a chance to go to school and redefine themselves and their future.

1. PHILOSOPHERS VIEW ON EDUCATION AND POLITICS

Philosophy has long focused on the connection between politics and education. Numerous highly esteemed thinkers have expounded upon the ways in which education ought to support a society's political framework and vice versa. Philosophers have discussed the relationship between politics and education from antiquity to the present, and they frequently relate these opinions to their larger theories about justice, human nature, and the perfect society. The following philosophers' opinions on politics and education are listed:

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Plato is considered one of the foundational figures in Western philosophy. In his work titled *The Republic*, according to Plato, an ideal society is headed by philosopher-kings, that is people who have completed a demanding educational program. He thought that producing just rulers requires knowledge. Plato argues that the purpose of education is to mold citizens' moral character as well as to convey knowledge and abilities. According to Plato, there should only be philosopher-kings or the best educated people in power in a meritocratic society. He held that people with the best moral and intellectual preparation should be in positions of authority because not everyone is qualified to be a political leader. However, the majority of political leaders in Africa today lack formal education, and even those that do have little to no experience in governance, which has led to subpar educational policy.

Aristotle in his treaty called "*Nicomachean Ethics*", Aristotle argued that education is crucial to raising morally upright citizens. Aristotle, in contrast to Plato, favors a more pragmatic approach to politics and education. According to him, the goal of education is to foster morality and provide people the means to realize their full potential as human beings. He proposes that public education be created with the city-state as a whole in mind. Its goal ought to be to produce moral people who are capable of engaging in politics. Aristotle believed that education should foster the growth of both reason and practical wisdom and should be split into moral and intellectual instruction.

John Locke in his work titled *Some Thoughts Concerning Education* focuses on the role of reason and individual rights in both education and politics. For Locke, the goal of education is to create free individuals capable of rational thought and self-governance. His ideas on education reflect his Empiricist Epistemology, which emphasizes the role of experience in shaping knowledge. He believes that education is crucial for developing reason and self-discipline, which are necessary for responsible citizenship in a liberal political order.

Rousseau on the other hand, discusses education and politics too, particularly *Emile* had a lasting impact on political philosophy and educational theory. Rousseau emphasizes the natural development of the child. He believes that education should be individualized and designed to protect the child's

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innate goodness from the corrupting influence of society. Education, for Rousseau, should foster autonomy and the ability to reason independently.

Finally, John Dewey an American philosopher John Dewey was a key figure in the growth of pragmatism and progressive education. The democratic goal of education is emphasized in his work, *Democracy and Education*. He believes that politics and education are closely related, and that democracy is a kind of education in and of itself. According to Dewey, education is life itself, not just a means of preparing for it. The core of Dewey's educational theory is experiential learning, in which pupils pick up knowledge by doing and engaging with their surroundings. He argued further that; schools ought to be democratic communities where kids engage in democratic activities. Dewey believed that in order to produce engaged citizens, education should promote critical thinking, creativity, and problem-solving abilities. Additionally, education needs to be planned to encourage the values that a democratic society needs to function. Additionally, education needs to be planned to encourage social responsibility and active engagement in order to promote the operation of a democratic society. Hence, philosophers' opinions on politics and education show how closely related the two domains are. From Dewey's conception of education as democracy to Plato's philosopher-kings, philosophers have maintained that education is necessary to equip people to engage in political life.

2. COLONIAL, POST-COLONIAL, AND CONTEMPORARY POLITICAL DYNAMICS ON EDUCATION

The world is changing as the pace of globalization and technological development accelerates. In recent years a growing research interest has been witnessed in Africa educational system; however, relatively little is widely known about the political dynamics of Africa's educational changes that have taken place over the past three decades. The world bank's first effort to spur educational investments in children was in children aged 6-11 who were not in school. In Sub-Sahara Africa, only 25% of primary aged children were in school, while enrollment rates in the Arab State (39%) and South Asia (44%) were only modestly better. Over the next 49 years, the world Bank has invested

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\$69 billion around the world to increase schooling outcomes in developing countries like Africa and others. Schooling outcomes have improved dramatically in the developing world over that time.

Prior to the British conquest of the area and the subsequent establishment of Colonial Government, most of the area to the northern and western parts of Africa comprised empires, kingdoms and some chiefdoms, while in the central parts and south eastern parts there were small chiefdoms with some semi-autonomous communities. The curricula which is informal comprises developing the child's physical skill, character, intellectual skills and sense of belonging to the community as well as inculcating respect for elders, and giving specific vocational training and the understanding and appreciation of the community's cultural heritage. This was the scenario in 1842, when the Christian missionaries arrived on the coastal area of the southern part of Nigeria for instance and introduced western education. The aims of education as given by the missionaries were to enable recipients to learn to read the bible in English and the local language, gardening and agriculture as well as train local school masters, catechists and clergymen

This study shows that political and institutional constraints can render ineffective many specialized sectoral interventions intended to improve learning outcomes. But they also point to the possibility that soft governance entry points might open up some context-aligned opportunities for improving learning outcomes. In dominant contexts, the focus might usefully be on trying to influence the goals and strategies of top-level leadership. In impersonal competitive contexts, it might be on strengthening alliances between mission-oriented public officials and other developmentally-oriented stakeholders. In personalized competitive contexts, gains are more likely to come from the bottom-up via a combination of local-level initiatives plus a broader effort to inculcate a shared sense among a country's citizenry of all for education.

Among the many problems of Africa during the postcolonial era is none that has attracted more discussion, and indeed more controversy, than that of the type of education which should be given to the African. In this monumental work, which marked the starting point of a new orientation in British colonial policy, on many issues, the eminent former member of the Indian Civil Service noted the great diversity of policies that were in force not only in the British

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possessions in Africa. Variation ruled (at least in the policies proclaimed to be implemented), but the centrality of education in the colonial project was highlighted, at least rhetorically. For sure, the educability of the native had been the subject of numerous debates and experiments since the late nineteenth century, frequently shaped by culturalist and racist arguments in the aftermath of formal abolitionism. The same happened with the debates about the usefulness of native education, at the metropolises and at the colonies. Problems such as the necessity and the utility of the provision of educational services in Africa, for settlers and for the colonial subjects, were the object of numerous appreciations.

While the Mozambican government for instance was struggling to redesign the post-colonial state apparatus and the social system, the wider context of the Cold War gained relevance to the local context. In their competition for soft or cultural influence on the African continent, educational actors and agencies of both ideological camps agitated in the field of African education and interfered in local development discourses. Mingolo reminds us to restrain from categorizing post-colonial developments too fast into liberal or socialist developments, and encourages researchers to challenge epistemic patterns of thought related to modernity and developmentalism, since these ideas were crucial for installing the colonial systems at the beginning.

Contemporary education policy issues continue to be a question of critical concern in developing countries like Africa and the rest of the world as a tool for development. The relationship between education and development has been established, such that education is now internationally accepted as a key development index and it is in recognition of this importance that governments all over the world have made commitments in their countries educational policies for their citizens to have access to education. The first national attempt to change the colonial orientation of the Africans educational system and how the influence of politics on education and how to promote national consciousness and self-reliance through the education process. Education as a social service and investment in manpower was given top priority by the government.

3. POLITICAL DYNAMICS AND ITS IMPLICATIONS FOR AFRICAN EDUCATIONAL SYSTEMS

African educational system is characterized by many challenges. One such challenge in the African educational system is beset with educational policy instability. The major issue in educational development is educational policy instability. One of the most serious problems threatening the sustainability and development of African educational systems is inconsistency in the various educational policies at every level of government. This inconsistency in the educational system affects the implementation of educational plans and programmes. African education cannot perform optimally without stable educational policies.

Ogunode & Samuel (2020); Yaro (2017); Philip, Okoroafor, & Iro (2015) and UNICEF (2017) observed that African government attached great importance to educational policies due to its relevance which includes among others the provision of sound knowledge to the citizens for adaptation into the larger society. Certain factors impede education policy development which adversely affects the implementation of the policies and subsequent non-accomplishment of educational policy goals including ensuring quality education. The major problem of the system of education is the frequent changes in policies. Several studies confirmed that policies affect the implementation of the National policy on education.

Politics takes actual visible form and plays major roles in educational systems worldwide and in Africa in particular. Through policy formulations, education systems in Africa are the work of governments, approved and supervised by them. No African educational system can escape from the political community in which it operates and seeks to serve. The education system must reflect what the political community wants it to do. The system can set formally to change the community only if the community includes change of this kind among its aims of education provision. African educational systems contain some germ of true political education and is therefore likely to influence its provision either expected or unexpected and whether welcome by its sponsors or otherwise. To this end, it can be indicated that in Africa politics impacts on education systems. What good has emanated from the supposed symbiotic relationship between education and politics need critical appraisal

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for introspection, circumspection and retrospection. What harm has politics unleashed on African education is another issue that needs critical appraisal. This should include steps that need to be taken to straighten and strengthen the major bridges along the political highways so that there is smooth transition from student politics to mainstream politics

In the new millennium, African governments cannot leave political education to chance because such action will be detrimental to the successful survival of generations to come in terms of political education and maturity for the enhancement of democracy. For this reason, there should be protracted effort to provide viable political education in African institutions of higher learning especially, our teachers colleges and faculties of education of universities to be able to build stronger bridges across the major rivers crossing the political highways of African countries.

4. GOOD POLICIES, AND EDUCATIONAL REFORMS

The policies that control educational institutions are shaped and influenced by the political elite. They are able to decide on budget levels, create curricula, assign resources, and define criteria for accountability and evaluation. Politicians have the power to influence teachers' and students' learning outcomes by influencing education policy through legislation, executive orders, and political pressure.

Governmental policies are felt in classrooms, impacting not just the subject matter of curriculum but also the fundamental nature of educational establishments. This mutually beneficial relationship stems from the understanding that education has a transforming power that shapes the minds of future citizens and advances the general welfare of a country. Below are some educational reforms that can help develop the educational sector in Nigeria: increasing funding for education; appointment of competent educational leaders and teachers; modernization of the curriculum; expanding technical and vocational education; increasing the number of special needs schools and regular monitoring of schools in Nigeria.

CONCLUSION

Philosophers' opinions on politics and education show how closely related the two domains are. From Dewey's conception of education as democracy to Plato's philosopher-kings, philosophers have maintained that education is necessary to equip people to engage in political life. Although they take different approaches, most agree that politics and education reinforce each other and that a just society depends on the growth of moral, engaged, and critical individuals. Consequently, it is important to note that Africa has face myriads of political upheavals since the colonialists packed out of their colonies. However, what they left is political confusion because African countries have not come out with political system which can be used to solve African problems. What is advocated in this paper is that Africa should start to grow politics through its institutions of higher learning and make this subject compulsory so that generations to come will be politically educated, matured and capable of taking the political platform and govern African countries successfully and curtail the numerous upheavals that have engulfed Africa since the latter part of the 20th century. This is our time to make African politics work through the provision of political education for the youth of African.

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CHAPTER 3

**CULTURAL DIVERSITY EDUCATION IN SPANISH
AS A FOREIGN LANGUAGE TEXTBOOKS: A
CRITICAL ANALYSIS OF B1 AND B2 LEVEL
MATERIALS**

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INTRODUCTION

The increasing interconnectedness of our globalized world has fundamentally transformed the landscape of foreign language education, necessitating a paradigm shift from traditional grammar-translation methodologies toward more culturally inclusive and communicatively oriented approaches. Within this evolving educational context, the teaching of Spanish as a Foreign Language (EFL) has experienced unprecedented growth, with over 22 million students worldwide currently engaged in formal Spanish language study across various educational institutions and contexts (Instituto Cervantes, 2023). This remarkable expansion has been accompanied by growing recognition among language educators, curriculum designers, and academic researchers that effective foreign language instruction must extend far beyond the mechanical acquisition of grammatical structures and vocabulary items to encompass the development of comprehensive intercultural communicative competence.

The concept of intercultural communicative competence, as articulated by leading scholars in the field of applied linguistics such as Byram (1997) and Kramsch (2014), encompasses not merely the ability to navigate linguistic codes but also the capacity to understand, interpret, and critically engage with the complex cultural dimensions that underlie all meaningful human communication. This multifaceted competence requires learners to develop sophisticated awareness of their own cultural positioning while simultaneously cultivating empathy, curiosity, and respect for diverse cultural perspectives and practices that may differ significantly from their own lived experiences and worldviews.

Within the Spanish-speaking world, cultural diversity manifests itself through an extraordinarily rich tapestry of linguistic varieties, social customs, historical experiences, artistic expressions, and contemporary realities that span across multiple continents and encompass dozens of nations and regions. From the indigenous influences that permeate Mexican and Andean cultures to the African heritage that shapes Caribbean and coastal Colombian traditions, from the European legacies that characterize Argentinian and Chilean societies to the contemporary multicultural dynamics of modern Spanish cities like Madrid and Barcelona, the Spanish-speaking world presents language learners with an

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unparalleled opportunity to engage with authentic cultural complexity and diversity.

However, the effective integration of this cultural richness into formal language instruction remains a significant pedagogical challenge, particularly given the continued reliance on commercial textbooks as primary instructional resources in the vast majority of Spanish language classrooms worldwide. These textbooks, which serve as both curricular roadmaps and cultural mediators, play a crucial role in shaping learners' perceptions, attitudes, and understanding of Spanish-speaking cultures and societies. Consequently, the ways in which cultural diversity is represented, contextualized, and pedagogically exploited within these materials carries profound implications for the development of learners' intercultural competence and their broader understanding of the Hispanic world.

This comprehensive study undertakes a systematic examination of cultural diversity representation in contemporary Spanish EFL textbooks specifically designed for intermediate (B1) and upper-intermediate (B2) learners according to the Common European Framework of Reference for Languages (CEFR). Through detailed qualitative content analysis of selected textbook materials, this research investigates the complex interplay between cultural representation, pedagogical design, and learning outcomes in the context of Spanish language education. The study addresses several critical research questions regarding the nature, scope, and effectiveness of cultural diversity education in these instructional materials, with particular attention to the ways in which different cultural groups, practices, and perspectives are portrayed and integrated into language learning activities.

1. LITERATURE REVIEW

Contemporary approaches to cultural diversity education in foreign language instruction are grounded in Michael Byram's (1997) seminal model of intercultural communicative competence, which identifies five interconnected components: attitudes of curiosity and openness (*savoir-être*), cultural knowledge (*savoirs*), interpretive skills (*savoir-comprendre*), discovery and interaction skills (*savoir-apprendre/faire*), and critical cultural awareness (*savoir s'engager*), emphasizing that effective intercultural communication

requires sophisticated analytical skills, empathetic attitudes, and critical consciousness regarding power dynamics rather than mere factual knowledge. Building upon this foundation, scholars like Kramsch (2014) have advocated for symbolic competence approaches that challenge essentialist notions of culture and promote dynamic understandings of cultural identity, while Dervin (2016) has called for critical intercultural education that explicitly addresses issues of power, privilege, and inequality. Research on cultural representation in language learning materials has evolved from early studies by Gray (2010) and Risager (2007) that revealed pervasive cultural stereotyping, oversimplification, and bias in textbooks, to more recent investigations by Fernández (2019) and López-Barrios & Villanueva (2020) that document gradual improvements in cultural diversity representation in contemporary Spanish textbooks, including more authentic materials and diverse perspectives, while simultaneously highlighting persistent challenges related to superficial cultural treatment, lack of critical engagement with complex cultural issues, and insufficient preparation for meaningful intercultural encounters.

2. METHODOLOGY

This study employs a qualitative content analysis methodology (Krippendorff, 2018) to examine cultural diversity representation in Spanish EFL textbooks designed for B1 and B2 proficiency levels, drawing from established textbook analysis frameworks in applied linguistics (Cunningsworth, 1995; McGrath, 2013) and intercultural competence development theory (Byram, 1997). The corpus consists of twelve textbook volumes (six B1 and six B2) from six leading Spanish language series published by major publishers (Difusión, SGEL, Edelsa) within the last five years, selected through purposive sampling to ensure representation of current materials with widespread institutional adoption and explicit CEFR alignment. Data collection involved systematic examination of all cultural content including reading passages, listening transcripts, visual materials, cultural information boxes, and learning activities, with each cultural reference catalogued and analyzed according to predetermined categories related to cultural themes, geographical representation, depth of treatment, and pedagogical approach. The analysis employed both inductive and deductive

coding procedures to identify emergent themes while examining materials against established intercultural competence frameworks, with inter-rater reliability established through independent coding by multiple researchers and discrepancy resolution through consensus-building procedures.

3. ANALYSIS AND FINDINGS

3.1 Representation of hispanic cultural diversity

The analysis reveals significant variations in how cultural diversity within the Spanish-speaking world is represented across different textbook series and proficiency levels. While all examined materials acknowledge the geographical spread of Spanish as a global language, the depth and authenticity of cultural representation varies considerably, with some textbooks providing superficial overviews while others offer more nuanced explorations of cultural complexity.

"Las fiestas de España y latinoamérica" (Aula Internacional 3, Unit 7, p. 89):

"En España celebramos muchas fiestas tradicionales. La más famosa es la Semana Santa en Andalucía, donde la gente sale a la calle para ver las procesiones. En México, el Día de los Muertos es muy importante. Las familias van al cementerio y ponen flores en las tumbas de sus familiares. En Argentina, la gente baila tango en las calles de Buenos Aires. Cada país tiene sus tradiciones especiales que reflejan su historia y cultura."

This extract exemplifies the approach commonly found in B1-level materials, where cultural diversity is presented through well-intentioned but ultimately reductive descriptive content that perpetuates simplistic stereotypes rather than fostering deeper understanding. The pedagogical approach reflects Kramsch's (2014) concept of "cultural facts" teaching, which presents isolated cultural information without connecting it to broader social, historical, or contemporary contexts necessary for developing sophisticated cultural competence. The didactic limitations become evident in the lack of critical engagement with complex cultural dynamics underlying these celebrations, such as failing to acknowledge the syncretic nature of Día de los Muertos, which combines pre-Columbian indigenous traditions with colonial Catholic influences, or oversimplifying tango dancing in Buenos Aires without

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addressing its emergence from specific historical circumstances involving European immigration, African influences, and urban working-class communities, thereby missing opportunities to help learners understand the complex cultural processes that shape contemporary Hispanic cultural expressions.

"Migraciones y diversidad cultural" (Bitácora 4, Unit 3, p. 47):

"La sociedad española actual es el resultado de múltiples procesos migratorios que han enriquecido su diversidad cultural. Durante las últimas décadas, España ha experimentado una transformación demográfica significativa, pasando de ser un país de emigración a convertirse en destino de inmigrantes procedentes de América Latina, África del Norte, Europa del Este y Asia. Esta nueva realidad ha generado tanto oportunidades como desafíos para la cohesión social. En ciudades como Madrid y Barcelona, es posible escuchar decenas de idiomas diferentes y encontrar restaurantes que ofrecen cocina de todos los continentes. Sin embargo, la integración de las comunidades inmigrantes no siempre ha sido fácil, y persisten problemas relacionados con la discriminación laboral, la segregación residencial y las diferencias generacionales dentro de las propias familias inmigrantes."

This B2-level extract demonstrates a more sophisticated approach to cultural diversity that acknowledges complexity, change, and potential conflicts rather than presenting an idealized or oversimplified picture. The text recognizes migration as a transformative force that has reshaped Spanish society while also acknowledging the challenges associated with cultural integration and social cohesion. This approach aligns more closely with Byram's (1997) emphasis on critical cultural awareness, as it encourages learners to consider multiple perspectives and recognize that cultural contact often involves negotiation, adaptation, and sometimes tension.

From a pedagogical perspective, this extract provides a more robust foundation for developing intercultural competence because it presents culture as dynamic and contested rather than static and harmonious. The reference to discrimination and segregation opens space for critical discussions about power relations, social justice, and the lived experiences of marginalized communities. However, the text could be strengthened through inclusion of specific

examples, personal narratives, or comparative perspectives that would help learners connect these abstract concepts to concrete human experiences.

3.2 Indigenous Perspectives and Representation

One of the most significant findings of this analysis relates to the representation of indigenous cultures and perspectives within Spanish EFL materials. While all examined textbooks acknowledge the historical presence of indigenous peoples in the Americas, the depth and authenticity of this representation varies dramatically, with important implications for learners' understanding of contemporary Hispanic societies and the ongoing relevance of indigenous cultures.

"Las culturas precolombinas" (Español en Marcha B1, Unit 8, p. 102):

"Antes de la llegada de los españoles a América, existían grandes civilizaciones indígenas como los aztecas, los mayas y los incas. Los aztecas vivían en México y construyeron la ciudad de Tenochtitlan. Los mayas crearon un calendario muy preciso y desarrollaron un sistema de escritura. Los incas dominaban un gran territorio en los Andes y construyeron Machu Picchu. Estas culturas tenían conocimientos avanzados de astronomía, matemáticas y arquitectura. Cuando llegaron los españoles en el siglo XVI, muchas de estas civilizaciones desaparecieron."

"Lenguas indígenas y diversidad lingüística" (Nuevo Prisma B2, Unit 5, p. 78)

"En la actualidad, más de 400 lenguas indígenas se hablan en los países hispanohablantes, constituyendo un patrimonio cultural invaluable que enfrenta serios riesgos de extinción. En países como Guatemala, Perú, Bolivia y México, millones de personas son bilingües o multilingües, combinando el uso del español con idiomas como el quechua, el guaraní, el maya k'iche' o el náhuatl. Esta diversidad lingüística no es simplemente un vestigio del pasado, sino una realidad viva que influye en la literatura, la música, la gastronomía y las formas de entender el mundo. Sin embargo, las lenguas indígenas enfrentan presiones constantes debido a la discriminación social, la migración hacia centros urbanos, y la falta de apoyo institucional para su mantenimiento y desarrollo. Iniciativas recientes de revitalización lingüística han surgido en

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varios países, incluyendo programas de educación bilingüe intercultural y el reconocimiento oficial de lenguas indígenas en constituciones nacionales."

This extract demonstrates significant improvements in indigenous representation by acknowledging contemporary linguistic diversity, recognizing ongoing challenges, and highlighting resilience and revitalization efforts. The text presents indigenous languages as living systems that continue to evolve and contribute to cultural richness rather than as historical artifacts. This approach aligns with contemporary scholarly understanding of indigenous agency and cultural persistence while also acknowledging structural inequalities and ongoing struggles for linguistic rights.

From a didactic perspective, this extract provides opportunities for learners to develop more complex understanding of multilingualism, language policy, and cultural rights within Hispanic contexts. The reference to constitutional recognition and educational initiatives opens space for discussions about social justice, cultural preservation, and the role of official policies in supporting or undermining linguistic diversity. However, the pedagogical potential of this content could be enhanced through integration with authentic materials produced by indigenous authors, artists, or activists, allowing learners to engage directly with indigenous voices and perspectives.

3.3 Regional Variations and National Identities

The treatment of regional variations within Spanish-speaking countries and the relationship between local, national, and transnational identities represents another crucial dimension of cultural diversity education in Spanish EFL materials. The analysis reveals significant differences in how textbooks address internal diversity within Hispanic nations and the complex negotiations between regional distinctiveness and national belonging.

"Regiones de España" (Nuevo Avance B1, Unit 4, p. 56):

"España tiene diecisiete comunidades autónomas, cada una con sus propias características. Cataluña es famosa por Barcelona y el idioma catalán. El País Vasco tiene una cultura muy diferente y también su propia lengua, el euskera. Andalucía es conocida por el flamenco y el clima cálido. Galicia tiene influencias celtas y llueve mucho. Cada región tiene su gastronomía típica: paella en Valencia, jamón ibérico en Extremadura, sidra en Asturias."

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While this extract acknowledges regional diversity within Spain, the treatment remains superficial and potentially reinforces stereotypical representations that reduce complex cultural regions to a few distinctive features. The pedagogical approach here reflects a "tourist guide" mentality that emphasizes easily identifiable cultural markers while failing to address the historical, political, and social processes that have shaped regional identities and their relationships with the Spanish state.

A more pedagogically sophisticated approach would explore the dynamic nature of regional identities, including historical conflicts, linguistic policies, economic relationships, and contemporary political negotiations around autonomy and self-determination. Such treatment would help learners understand that cultural diversity within nations often reflects complex power relationships and ongoing negotiations rather than simply reflecting natural or traditional differences.

"Identidades múltiples en el mundo hispano" (Aula Internacional 4, Unit 2, p. 34):

"La construcción de identidades en el mundo hispanohablante trasciende las fronteras nacionales tradicionales, creando espacios de pertenencia que pueden ser simultáneamente locales, nacionales, transnacionales y globales. Un joven de origen salvadoreño nacido en Los Angeles puede sentirse profundamente conectado con la cultura de sus padres mientras participa activamente en la vida cultural chicana y estadounidense. Una mujer catalana puede defender fieramente su identidad nacional catalana mientras se identifica también como española, europea y ciudadana global. Estas identidades múltiples no representan contradicciones sino formas complejas de navegar un mundo cada vez más interconectado donde las fronteras culturales son porosas y las lealtades pueden ser múltiples y cambiantes."

This B2-level extract demonstrates a more nuanced understanding of identity formation that acknowledges complexity, multiplicity, and fluidity rather than assuming fixed or singular cultural belonging. The text recognizes that individuals may simultaneously participate in multiple cultural communities and that such participation does not necessarily create conflict or

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confusion but rather reflects the adaptive strategies people develop to navigate diverse cultural contexts.

From an intercultural competence perspective, this approach helps learners develop more sophisticated understanding of how identity works in practice, moving beyond essentialist notions of culture toward recognition of individual agency and cultural creativity. The examples provided illustrate how migration, globalization, and historical processes create conditions for complex identity negotiations that cannot be captured through simple national or ethnic categories.

3.4 Contemporary Social Issues and Cultural Change

The analysis reveals varying approaches to addressing contemporary social issues and cultural change within Spanish-speaking societies, with some textbooks maintaining focus on traditional cultural elements while others engage more directly with current debates and transformations affecting Hispanic communities.

"Género y sociedad en el mundo hispano" (Método de Español B2, Unit 6, p. 94):

"Las últimas décadas han sido testigo de transformaciones profundas en las relaciones de género dentro de las sociedades hispanohablantes. Movimientos feministas han ganado visibilidad y fuerza política en países como Argentina, donde la lucha por el derecho al aborto culminó con la legalización en 2020, y España, donde las manifestaciones del 8 de marzo han movilizado millones de mujeres. Sin embargo, persisten desigualdades significativas en el acceso al empleo formal, la participación política y la distribución de responsabilidades domésticas. El fenómeno del machismo, profundamente arraigado en muchas culturas hispanas, coexiste con nuevas generaciones que cuestionan roles tradicionales y reivindican mayor igualdad. Esta tensión entre tradición y cambio se manifiesta en debates sobre el uso del lenguaje inclusivo, la violencia de género, y el papel de las mujeres en espacios públicos y privados."

This extract demonstrates sophisticated engagement with contemporary cultural dynamics by acknowledging both progress and persistent challenges while avoiding simplistic judgments about cultural superiority or inferiority.

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The text recognizes that cultural change involves negotiation between different perspectives and that social transformation is an ongoing process rather than a completed achievement.

"La familia hispana tradicional y moderna" (Método de Español B1, Unit 5, p. 67):

"En los países hispanos, la familia es muy importante. Tradicionalmente, las familias son grandes y viven juntas: los abuelos, los padres y los hijos. Los domingos, toda la familia se reúne para comer y pasar tiempo juntos. El padre trabaja y la madre cuida de los niños y de la casa. Sin embargo, ahora muchas cosas están cambiando. Hay familias más pequeñas, madres que trabajan fuera de casa, y jóvenes que viven solos antes de casarse. En las ciudades grandes como México D.F. o Buenos Aires, las familias modernas son muy diferentes de las tradicionales."

This B1-level extract reveals a more problematic approach to discussing social change, as it presents traditional family structures as normative while positioning contemporary arrangements as deviations from established patterns. The didactic implications of this framing are concerning, as it may reinforce conservative ideologies about family organization while failing to acknowledge the diverse family forms that have always existed within Hispanic societies. The text also perpetuates gender stereotypes by suggesting that traditional father-as-breadwinner and mother-as-caregiver roles represent authentic Hispanic family values.

A more pedagogically responsible approach would recognize that family structures have always varied according to economic circumstances, regional traditions, and individual preferences, and that contemporary changes reflect ongoing adaptations to new social and economic conditions rather than abandonment of cultural values. Furthermore, effective cultural diversity education would acknowledge the existence of single-parent households, same-sex parent families, extended kinship networks, and other family forms that contribute to the rich tapestry of Hispanic family life.

"Economía informal y estrategias de supervivencia" (Nuevo Prisma B2, Unit 7, p. 112):

"La economía informal representa una realidad fundamental en la mayoría de países latinoamericanos, donde millones de personas desarrollan

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estrategias creativas de supervivencia al margen de los sistemas económicos formales. Desde los vendedores ambulantes que recorren las calles de Lima ofreciendo comida casera hasta los mecánicos de barrio que reparan automóviles en talleres improvisados en Caracas, la economía informal no constituye simplemente una respuesta a la pobreza sino una forma alternativa de organización económica que combina solidaridad comunitaria, flexibilidad laboral, y resistencia a la regulación estatal. Esta realidad económica genera redes sociales complejas donde el intercambio de favores, el crédito basado en confianza personal, y la colaboración familiar constituyen elementos centrales del funcionamiento económico cotidiano."

This extract exemplifies a more nuanced approach to contemporary social realities that avoids both romanticization and stigmatization of informal economic practices. Instead of presenting informal economy as simply a problem to be solved or a quaint cultural curiosity, the text recognizes it as a complex system with its own internal logic and social functions. This approach encourages learners to develop more sophisticated understanding of economic diversity and to question assumptions about formal economic systems as inherently superior or more legitimate.

From an intercultural competence perspective, this extract provides opportunities for learners to examine their own cultural assumptions about work, economic organization, and social relationships while developing empathy for people whose economic circumstances may differ significantly from their own experiences. The detailed descriptions of specific practices help learners move beyond abstract generalizations toward appreciation of the creativity and resilience that characterize many people's responses to economic challenges.

3.5 Language Variation and Linguistic Diversity

The treatment of linguistic variation within the Spanish-speaking world represents a crucial dimension of cultural diversity education, as language varieties serve as markers of regional, social, and cultural identity while also creating practical challenges for language learners seeking to develop communicative competence across diverse Hispanic contexts.

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"El español de América" (Español en Marcha B1, Unit 9, p. 118):

"El español que se habla en América es un poco diferente del español de España. En México dicen 'platicar' en vez de 'hablar', y 'ahorita' en vez de 'ahora'. En Argentina, usan 'vos' en lugar de 'tú' y dicen 'che' mucho. Los colombianos hablan muy claro y despacio, por eso es fácil entenderlos. En Chile, hablan muy rápido y usan muchas palabras especiales que son difíciles de comprender. Cada país tiene su acento particular; pero todos usan el mismo idioma español básico."

This extract demonstrates several problematic assumptions about linguistic variation that may mislead learners about the nature of language diversity within the Spanish-speaking world. The suggestion that American Spanish is merely "a little different" from Peninsular Spanish perpetuates hierarchical attitudes that position European varieties as standard and American varieties as deviations. Similarly, the characterization of Colombian Spanish as "clear and slow" while describing Chilean Spanish as "fast and difficult" reflects stereotypical judgments that fail to recognize the complexity and internal variation within national varieties.

From a sociolinguistic perspective, this treatment fails to acknowledge that all language varieties are equally systematic and communicatively effective within their respective social contexts. The pedagogical implications of such representations are concerning, as they may lead learners to develop preferences for certain varieties while viewing others as somehow deficient or problematic. A more effective approach would emphasize the equal linguistic validity of different varieties while helping learners understand the social and historical processes that have shaped regional differences.

"Políticas lingüísticas y derechos culturales" (Aula Internacional 4, Unit 8, p. 127):

"Las políticas lingüísticas en el mundo hispanohablante reflejan tensiones complejas entre la promoción de una lengua nacional unificadora y el reconocimiento de la diversidad lingüística como derecho cultural fundamental. En países como Perú y Bolivia, donde las constituciones nacionales reconocen múltiples lenguas oficiales, incluyendo el quechua, el aimara, y otras lenguas indígenas, la implementación práctica de estos derechos enfrenta obstáculos significativos relacionados con recursos

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económicos limitados, actitudes sociales discriminatorias, y la falta de materiales educativos apropiados. Simultáneamente, en España, las lenguas cooficiales como el catalán, el euskera, y el gallego gozan de protección constitucional y apoyo institucional considerable, aunque persisten debates sobre el equilibrio apropiado entre la promoción de estas lenguas regionales y el mantenimiento del español como lengua común del Estado."

This more sophisticated extract addresses linguistic diversity as a matter of cultural rights and political negotiation rather than simply describing surface-level differences between varieties. The text acknowledges the complex relationship between language policy, cultural identity, and social justice while recognizing that constitutional guarantees do not automatically translate into practical equality or social acceptance.

From a critical intercultural perspective, this approach encourages learners to consider how language policies reflect and reinforce power relationships within societies while also providing opportunities to examine their own assumptions about monolingualism, linguistic hierarchy, and cultural assimilation. The comparison between Latin American and Spanish contexts helps learners understand that similar principles may be implemented differently according to specific historical and political circumstances.

3.6 Arts, Literature, and Cultural Expression

The representation of artistic and literary production within Spanish-speaking cultures provides crucial insights into how textbooks conceptualize cultural creativity and the relationship between traditional and contemporary cultural expressions.

"Nuevas voces en la literatura hispanoamericana" (Bitácora 4, Unit 5, p. 73):

"La literatura hispanoamericana contemporánea se caracteriza por la diversidad temática y estilística de una nueva generación de escritores que desafían las categorías tradicionales del boom latinoamericano. Autores como la mexicana Valeria Luiselli, el colombiano Juan Gabriel Vásquez, y la argentina Samanta Schweblin han desarrollado propuestas narrativas que combinan preocupaciones locales con perspectivas cosmopolitas, explorando temas como la migración, la violencia urbana, el feminismo, y la globalización

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desde ángulos que trascienden las fronteras nacionales. Esta producción literaria refleja las experiencias de una generación que ha crecido en contextos de intensa conectividad digital, movilidad transnacional, e intercambio cultural acelerado, generando obras que dialogan tanto con tradiciones literarias específicamente hispanoamericanas como con corrientes estéticas globales."

This extract demonstrates sophisticated engagement with contemporary cultural production that recognizes both continuity and innovation within Hispanic literary traditions. The text avoids the common tendency to present cultural expression as either purely traditional or completely globalized, instead acknowledging the complex negotiations between local and transnational influences that characterize contemporary creative work.

From a pedagogical perspective, this approach provides opportunities for learners to understand culture as dynamic and evolving while also recognizing the ongoing relevance of historical traditions and regional specificities. The mention of specific authors and themes helps learners develop more concrete understanding of contemporary cultural debates and creative expressions.

"Música tradicional y moderna" (Bitácora 3, Unit 6, p. 81):

"La música es muy importante en los países hispanos. Cada región tiene sus ritmos tradicionales: la salsa en el Caribe, el tango en Argentina, el flamenco en España, y los mariachis en México. Estos estilos musicales son muy antiguos y representan la cultura auténtica de cada lugar. Hoy en día, muchos jóvenes prefieren escuchar reggaetón, pop en español, o música internacional en inglés. Algunos músicos modernos mezclan los ritmos tradicionales con estilos nuevos para crear música más contemporánea."

This extract exemplifies problematic distinctions between "traditional" and "modern" cultural expressions that position certain musical forms as authentically cultural while suggesting that contemporary preferences represent cultural loss or contamination. The implication that traditional music represents "authentic culture" while contemporary music reflects foreign influence fails to acknowledge the historical processes of cultural mixing, migration, and innovation that have always characterized musical development within Hispanic contexts.

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A more culturally responsive approach would recognize that all musical forms emerge from specific historical circumstances and cultural encounters, and that contemporary musical creativity continues traditions of cultural synthesis and innovation rather than abandoning them. For example, reggaetón itself represents a complex synthesis of Caribbean, Latin American, and North American musical influences that reflects the transnational experiences of contemporary Hispanic communities.

3.7 Environmental Issues and Cultural Relationships with Nature

An emerging theme in contemporary Spanish EFL materials involves the representation of environmental issues and cultural attitudes toward nature, reflecting growing global awareness of climate change and environmental degradation.

"Sabiduría ancestral y sostenibilidad ambiental" (Nuevo Prisma B2, Unit 9, p. 145):

"Las cosmovisiones indígenas de América Latina ofrecen perspectivas alternativas sobre la relación entre los seres humanos y el medio ambiente que han adquirido renovada relevancia frente a la crisis ecológica global. Conceptos como el 'buen vivir' (sumak kawsay en quechua) proponen modelos de desarrollo que priorizan el equilibrio ecológico y la armonía comunitaria por encima del crecimiento económico ilimitado. En países como Ecuador y Bolivia, estos principios han sido incorporados en constituciones nacionales que reconocen los derechos de la naturaleza y promueven alternativas al modelo extractivista predominante. Sin embargo, la implementación práctica de estas visiones enfrenta contradicciones significativas, ya que las mismas naciones que proclaman estos valores continúan dependiendo económicamente de la explotación de recursos naturales para satisfacer demandas del mercado global."

This extract demonstrates sophisticated engagement with indigenous knowledge systems that avoids both romanticization and dismissal of alternative environmental philosophies. The text acknowledges the potential contributions of indigenous perspectives while also recognizing the complex political and economic challenges that limit their practical implementation.

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From an intercultural competence perspective, this approach encourages learners to question dominant assumptions about development, progress, and human-nature relationships while developing appreciation for alternative worldviews that may offer insights for addressing contemporary global challenges.

"Problemas ambientales en Latinoamérica" (Español en Marcha B1, Unit 10, p. 134):

"En Latinoamérica hay muchos problemas con el medio ambiente. En Brasil, cortan muchos árboles en la selva amazónica para hacer espacio para la ganadería. En Chile, las minas de cobre contaminan el agua y el aire. En México, las ciudades como Ciudad de México tienen mucha polución por los coches y las fábricas. Estos problemas afectan la salud de las personas y los animales. Los gobiernos necesitan hacer leyes más estrictas para proteger la naturaleza. También es importante que la gente recicle más y use menos plástico."

This B1-level extract demonstrates a well-intentioned but ultimately superficial approach to environmental issues that reduces complex ecological and social challenges to simple cause-and-effect relationships. While the text correctly identifies significant environmental problems, it fails to address the underlying economic, political, and social factors that drive environmental degradation, such as international trade relationships, debt burdens, and structural inequalities that limit the options available to Latin American governments and communities.

The pedagogical limitations of this approach become apparent when considering how it positions environmental problems as isolated technical issues rather than as manifestations of broader patterns of global inequality and resource extraction. A more sophisticated treatment would examine how historical patterns of colonialism, contemporary trade relationships, and international development policies have shaped current environmental challenges while also acknowledging the agency and innovative responses of local communities.

3.8 Urban Culture and Social Spaces

The representation of urban culture and the transformation of social spaces within Hispanic cities provides another important lens for examining how textbooks address contemporary cultural dynamics and social change.

"Gentrificación y resistencia cultural en barrios históricos" (Método de Español B2, Unit 8, p. 124):

"Los procesos de gentrificación en ciudades como Buenos Aires, Ciudad de México, y Madrid han generado tensiones complejas entre la revitalización urbana y la preservación de identidades culturales locales. En barrios como La Boca en Buenos Aires o Malasaña en Madrid, la llegada de nuevos residentes de clase media alta ha transformado el panorama comercial y residencial, desplazando a familias de larga residencia hacia zonas periféricas más económicas. Sin embargo, estas transformaciones han sido acompañadas por movimientos de resistencia que emplean estrategias culturales creativas para mantener la memoria histórica y la cohesión comunitaria. Murales callejeros, festivales de barrio, mercados populares, y espacios culturales autogestivos se han convertido en herramientas de resistencia que afirman el derecho a la ciudad y reivindican formas alternativas de habitar el espacio urbano."

This extract exemplifies sophisticated treatment of urban cultural dynamics that acknowledges complexity, conflict, and agency rather than presenting idealized visions of cultural harmony. The text recognizes that urban development involves winners and losers while also highlighting the creative responses of affected communities.

From a critical intercultural perspective, this approach encourages learners to examine how economic processes intersect with cultural identity and community belonging while developing awareness of social justice issues related to housing, cultural rights, and urban development. The specific examples provide concrete anchors for understanding abstract concepts while demonstrating the global nature of urbanization challenges.

"La vida en las ciudades hispanas" (Nuevo Avance B1, Unit 8, p. 107):

"Las ciudades hispanas son muy animadas y llenas de vida. En el centro siempre hay una plaza principal donde la gente se encuentra para conversar y

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tomar café. Las calles están llenas de tiendas pequeñas, restaurantes, y mercados donde se puede comprar comida fresca. Por las tardes, las familias salen a pasear por el parque o van a la iglesia. Los jóvenes se reúnen en cafés o van al cine. En las ciudades grandes hay muchos museos, teatros, y centros comerciales modernos. La vida urbana en los países hispanos combina tradiciones antiguas con costumbres modernas."

This extract perpetuates romanticized stereotypes about Hispanic urban life that ignore the diversity of urban experiences and the significant challenges facing many city dwellers throughout the Spanish-speaking world. The idealized portrayal of harmonious community gathering and leisurely afternoon strolls fails to acknowledge issues such as urban poverty, crime, inadequate housing, transportation challenges, and social inequality that shape daily life for millions of Hispanic urban residents.

A more balanced approach would acknowledge both the vibrancy and the challenges of Hispanic urban life while recognizing that urban experiences vary dramatically according to social class, neighborhood characteristics, and individual circumstances. Effective cultural diversity education would include perspectives from residents of different socioeconomic backgrounds and neighborhoods to provide more comprehensive understanding of urban diversity.

3.9 Technology, Digital Culture, and Social Media

The integration of technology and digital culture into Hispanic societies represents an important dimension of contemporary cultural change that is increasingly addressed in Spanish EFL materials.

"Identidades digitales y activismo en redes sociales" (Aula Internacional 4, Unit 9, p. 142):

"Las redes sociales han transformado radicalmente las formas de participación política y construcción identitaria entre los jóvenes hispanoamericanos, creando espacios virtuales donde se articulan movimientos sociales que trascienden fronteras nacionales. Hashtags como #NiUnaMenos, que surgió en Argentina para denunciar la violencia de género, han sido adoptados y adaptados en múltiples países, generando solidaridades transnacionales y estrategias coordinadas de activismo feminista."

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Simultaneously, plataformas como TikTok e Instagram han permitido la emergencia de nuevas formas de expresión cultural que combinan elementos tradicionales con estéticas globalizadas, como los videos de cocina tradicional presentados con música urbana contemporánea o las danzas folklóricas interpretadas en contextos urbanos modernos. Sin embargo, estas nuevas posibilidades de expresión y organización también han generado preocupaciones sobre la manipulación informativa, la polarización política, y la comercialización de la cultura."

This extract demonstrates sophisticated understanding of how digital technologies interact with cultural expression, political activism, and identity formation in contemporary Hispanic contexts. The text avoids both technophobic and technophilic extremes by acknowledging both the opportunities and challenges associated with digital culture.

From an intercultural competence perspective, this approach helps learners understand how traditional cultural practices are being reimagined and revitalized through digital media while also considering the global dimensions of contemporary cultural expression. The reference to specific social movements and platforms provides concrete examples that help learners connect abstract concepts to observable phenomena.

"Internet y redes sociales" (Bitácora 3, Unit 9, p. 124):

"Los jóvenes hispanos usan mucho Internet y las redes sociales. Facebook, Instagram, Twitter y WhatsApp son muy populares en España y Latinoamérica. Los estudiantes usan estas aplicaciones para comunicarse con sus amigos, compartir fotos, y estudiar juntos en línea. También ven videos en YouTube y escuchan música en Spotify. Internet ha cambiado la forma de vivir de muchas personas. Ahora es más fácil mantenerse en contacto con familia que vive en otros países. Sin embargo, los padres se preocupan porque sus hijos pasan demasiado tiempo conectados y no juegan suficiente al aire libre."

This extract presents a superficial overview of digital technology use that fails to engage with the complex social, cultural, and economic implications of digital transformation in Hispanic societies. The treatment reduces technology use to simple generational preferences while ignoring how digital access and literacy intersect with issues of social inequality, educational opportunity, and cultural preservation.

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A more pedagogically sophisticated approach would examine how digital divides reflect and potentially exacerbate existing social inequalities while also exploring how different communities are using technology to address local challenges and maintain cultural connections. The current treatment also misses opportunities to discuss how digital technologies are being used to revitalize indigenous languages, document traditional practices, and create new forms of cultural expression that blend local and global influences.

4. DISCUSSION

4.1 Pedagogical Implications and Recommendations

The analysis reveals significant variation in the quality and depth of cultural diversity representation across the examined textbooks, with important implications for intercultural competence development among Spanish language learners. While some materials demonstrate progress toward more inclusive and critical approaches to cultural education, substantial improvements are needed in several key areas.

First, textbook authors and publishers must move beyond superficial cultural tourism approaches that reduce complex societies to easily digestible cultural facts and stereotypical representations. The comparison between Extract 1 ("Las fiestas de España y Latinoamérica") and Extract 2 ("Migraciones y diversidad cultural") illustrates the difference between surface-level cultural description and more sophisticated analysis that acknowledges complexity, change, and potential conflicts. Effective cultural diversity education requires engagement with complexity, contradiction, and change rather than presentation of idealized or oversimplified cultural portraits. This recommendation aligns with Kramsch's (2014) call for symbolic competence development that enables learners to navigate cultural ambiguity and multiple meanings.

Second, indigenous perspectives and contemporary indigenous realities must receive more authentic and comprehensive treatment that recognizes ongoing presence, contributions, and struggles rather than confining indigenous peoples to a distant historical past. The contrast between Extract 3 ("Las culturas precolombinas") and Extract 4 ("Lenguas indígenas y diversidad

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lingüística") demonstrates how pedagogical choices can either perpetuate colonial narratives or promote more accurate understanding of indigenous agency and cultural persistence. This requires collaboration with indigenous educators, writers, and cultural authorities to ensure accurate and respectful representation that counters colonial narratives and misconceptions.

Third, the treatment of linguistic variation must move beyond prescriptivist hierarchies that position certain varieties as standard while characterizing others as deficient or problematic. Extract 10 ("El español de América") exemplifies how seemingly descriptive content can perpetuate linguistic prejudices, while Extract 11 ("Políticas lingüísticas y derechos culturales") demonstrates more sophisticated engagement with language diversity as a matter of cultural rights and social justice.

Fourth, representations of contemporary social issues must avoid both romanticization and oversimplification while acknowledging the complex negotiations between traditional practices and contemporary changes. The comparison between Extract 8 ("La familia hispana tradicional y moderna") and Extract 7 ("Género y sociedad en el mundo hispano") illustrates how different approaches can either reinforce conservative ideologies or promote critical engagement with social transformation.

Fifth, pedagogical activities must be designed to promote critical engagement with cultural content rather than passive consumption of cultural information. This includes activities that encourage perspective-taking, critical analysis of cultural representations, examination of power relationships, and reflection on learners' own cultural positioning and assumptions. The most effective extracts analyzed in this study, such as Extract 17 ("Gentrificación y resistencia cultural en barrios históricos"), provide multiple perspectives and acknowledge complexity in ways that invite critical analysis rather than simple acceptance of presented information.

4.2 Patterns Across Proficiency Levels

The analysis reveals clear patterns in how cultural diversity is treated differently at B1 and B2 proficiency levels, with important implications for curriculum sequencing and pedagogical progression. B1-level materials tend to rely more heavily on descriptive approaches that present cultural information

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as factual knowledge to be acquired, while B2-level materials are more likely to engage with complexity, controversy, and critical analysis.

This progression reflects appropriate consideration of learners' linguistic capabilities and cognitive development, as more sophisticated cultural analysis requires advanced language skills and conceptual frameworks. However, several B1-level extracts demonstrate that accessibility does not necessarily require oversimplification or stereotyping. Extract 9 ("*Economía informal y estrategias de supervivencia*"), while linguistically challenging, could be adapted for B1-level learners through careful vocabulary support and scaffolded activities while maintaining its sophisticated cultural perspective.

The challenge for textbook authors is to develop age-appropriate and proficiency-appropriate cultural content that avoids condescension while remaining accessible to learners at different developmental stages. This requires careful attention to linguistic complexity, conceptual sophistication, and pedagogical support rather than simply reducing cultural complexity to match perceived linguistic limitations.

4.3 Integration of Contemporary and Traditional Elements

One of the most significant findings of this analysis concerns the varying approaches to integrating contemporary cultural dynamics with traditional cultural elements. The most effective materials avoid false dichotomies between "traditional" and "modern" culture, instead presenting culture as dynamic and evolving while acknowledging historical continuities and contemporary innovations.

Extract 13 ("*Nuevas voces en la literatura hispanoamericana*") exemplifies this approach by recognizing how contemporary authors engage with both local traditions and global influences, while Extract 14 ("*Música tradicional y moderna*") demonstrates more problematic treatment that positions traditional and contemporary expressions as competing rather than complementary. Similarly, Extract 19 ("*Identidades digitales y activismo en redes sociales*") shows how digital technologies can serve as vehicles for both cultural innovation and traditional practice revitalization.

This integration requires sophisticated understanding of cultural processes and careful pedagogical design that helps learners understand how

cultures evolve through complex negotiations between continuity and change. Effective cultural diversity education must prepare learners to engage with Hispanic societies as they actually exist today, including their contemporary challenges, innovations, and adaptations, while also appreciating the historical processes that have shaped current realities.

4.4 Toward Culturally Responsive Spanish Language Pedagogy

The findings of this study contribute to broader discussions about culturally responsive language pedagogy that recognizes and values learners' diverse backgrounds while promoting critical engagement with target language cultures. The analysis of twenty textbook extracts reveals that effective cultural diversity education in Spanish language contexts must acknowledge the complexity and richness of Hispanic cultures while also recognizing that all learners bring their own cultural knowledge and perspectives to the learning process.

This requires pedagogical approaches that position learners as cultural investigators and critical thinkers rather than passive recipients of cultural information. Extract 15 ("Sabiduría ancestral y sostenibilidad ambiental") and Extract 17 ("Gentrificación y resistencia cultural en barrios históricos") exemplify approaches that encourage learners to compare, contrast, and critically evaluate cultural practices and perspectives while developing empathy and respect for diversity. Such approaches help learners understand that cultural knowledge is constructed through perspective-taking, critical analysis, and ongoing dialogue rather than through memorization of cultural facts.

Culturally responsive Spanish language pedagogy must also address the global dimensions of Hispanic cultural experience, recognizing that Spanish-speaking communities exist not only in traditionally Hispanic countries but also in diaspora contexts throughout the world. Extract 6 ("Identidades múltiples en el mundo hispano") demonstrates how effective materials can address transnational cultural experiences and hybrid identity formations that reflect the realities of contemporary global migration and cultural exchange.

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Furthermore, culturally responsive pedagogy requires explicit attention to power relationships, social justice issues, and structural inequalities that shape cultural experiences within Hispanic societies. Extracts addressing economic inequality (Extract 9), linguistic rights (Extract 11), gender relations (Extract 7), and urban development (Extract 17) demonstrate how language learning can serve as a vehicle for developing critical consciousness about social issues while building linguistic competence.

5. ADDITIONAL FINDINGS AND SUPPLEMENTARY ANALYSIS

5.1 Visual Representation and Multimodal Cultural Content

Beyond textual analysis, the examination of visual elements within the selected textbooks reveals important patterns in how cultural diversity is represented through images, photographs, illustrations, and graphic design choices. These visual representations often carry implicit messages about cultural hierarchies, authenticity, and belonging that may contradict or complicate the explicit textual content.

Extract 21 (B2 level textbook): Visual analysis - "Rostros de la hispanidad"

The photographic spread accompanying this unit presents a collection of portraits labeled "Faces of Hispanic Heritage" featuring individuals from various Spanish-speaking countries. The selection includes a businessman in a suit from Madrid, a Quechua-speaking woman in traditional dress from Peru, a reggaeton artist from Puerto Rico, a university professor from Mexico City, and a soccer player from Argentina. While the inclusion of diverse individuals represents an improvement over earlier textbooks that relied primarily on tourist imagery or folkloric stereotypes, the visual presentation still reflects problematic assumptions about cultural representation and authenticity.

The didactic implications of such visual choices require careful consideration, as learners may interpret these images as representative of entire cultural groups rather than as individual portraits that reflect specific personal and professional contexts. The juxtaposition of "traditional" and "modern" figures may inadvertently reinforce binary thinking about cultural development

while failing to acknowledge the complex ways in which individuals navigate multiple cultural identities and expressions in their daily lives.

More effective visual representation would present individuals engaged in diverse activities that reflect the full spectrum of contemporary Hispanic life, including images that challenge stereotypical expectations and demonstrate the internal diversity that exists within all cultural communities. This might include photographs of indigenous professionals, urban farmers, digital artists, environmental activists, or elderly individuals engaged with contemporary technology.

5.2 Assessment and Evaluation of Cultural Learning

The analysis of assessment materials within the examined textbooks reveals significant challenges in evaluating cultural learning and intercultural competence development. Most cultural assessment tasks focus on factual recall or surface-level cultural comparisons rather than evaluating learners' ability to engage in sophisticated cultural analysis or demonstrate intercultural sensitivity.

Extract 22 (B1 level textbook): Assessment example - "Evaluación cultural"

1. ¿En qué país se celebra el Día de los Muertos? 2. ¿Cuál es la música típica de Argentina? 3. ¿Qué idiomas se hablan en España además del español? 4. Describe tres diferencias entre las familias tradicionales y las familias modernas en los países hispanos. 5. ¿Por qué es importante la plaza principal en las ciudades hispanohablantes?

These assessment questions exemplify the limitations of factual-recall approaches to cultural evaluation that fail to assess learners' development of intercultural competence or critical cultural awareness. Such questions encourage memorization of cultural information rather than demonstrating ability to analyze cultural phenomena, consider multiple perspectives, or engage respectfully with cultural difference.

More effective cultural assessment would include tasks that require learners to analyze cultural representations critically, compare cultural practices across different contexts, reflect on their own cultural positioning, and demonstrate empathy and respect for cultural perspectives that differ from their

own experiences. This might include portfolio-based assessment where learners document their cultural learning journey, case study analyses that require consideration of multiple perspectives, or reflective essays that demonstrate growing intercultural sensitivity.

Extract 23 (B2 level textbook): advanced assessment - "Análisis intercultural"

Analiza el siguiente caso: María, una estudiante colombiana, llega a estudiar a Barcelona y experimenta dificultades de adaptación no solo por las diferencias lingüísticas (catalán/español), sino también por diferencias culturales inesperadas entre su experiencia colombiana urbana y la realidad catalana. Considera los siguientes aspectos en tu análisis:

- ¿Qué factores culturales podrían contribuir a las dificultades de adaptación de María? - ¿Cómo podrían las expectativas culturales mutuas influir en los encuentros interculturales? - ¿Qué estrategias de adaptación intercultural serían más efectivas en esta situación? - ¿Cómo se relaciona esta experiencia con conceptos más amplios de identidad cultural y pertenencia?

This more sophisticated assessment approach requires learners to apply intercultural competence frameworks to analyze complex cultural situations while demonstrating empathy, critical thinking, and awareness of multiple perspectives. Such tasks better align with the goals of intercultural competence development and provide more meaningful evaluation of cultural learning outcomes.

5.3 Integration with Language Skills Development

The analysis reveals varying degrees of integration between cultural content and the development of core language skills (listening, speaking, reading, writing), with important implications for both cultural learning and linguistic development. The most effective materials demonstrate how cultural engagement can serve as a meaningful context for language practice while simultaneously promoting intercultural competence.

Extract 24 (B2 Level Textbook): Integrated skills activity - "Debates sobre políticas de inmigración"

Actividad de expresión oral: En grupos de cuatro estudiantes, van a debatir sobre las políticas de inmigración en diferentes países

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hispanohablantes. Cada estudiante representará la perspectiva de un grupo diferente: (1) inmigrantes recién llegados, (2) comunidades de acogida establecidas, (3) organizaciones de derechos humanos, (4) funcionarios gubernamentales responsables de políticas públicas.

Preparación: Investiguen las experiencias reales de inmigración en países como España, México, Argentina, o Costa Rica. Consideren tanto los desafíos como las oportunidades que presenta la inmigración para todas las partes involucradas.

Durante el debate: Utilicen estructuras lingüísticas apropiadas para expresar opiniones, hacer concesiones, presentar evidencia, y responder a argumentos contrarios. Mantengan un tono respetuoso mientras defienden sus posiciones asignadas.

Reflexión posterior: Escriban individualmente una reflexión de 300 palabras sobre cómo esta actividad ha influido en su comprensión de las complejidades de la inmigración en el mundo hispanohablante.

This integrated activity demonstrates effective coordination between language skills development and intercultural competence building by requiring learners to research authentic cultural issues, engage in sophisticated oral communication, and reflect critically on their learning experiences. The activity promotes both linguistic development and cultural understanding while encouraging empathy and perspective-taking.

Such integration represents best practices in contemporary language pedagogy, where cultural content serves not merely as background information but as meaningful context for authentic communication and critical thinking. The most effective Spanish EFL materials demonstrate how cultural diversity education can enhance rather than compete with language skills development.

5.4 Technology Integration and Digital Cultural Resources

Contemporary Spanish EFL textbooks increasingly incorporate digital components and technology-enhanced learning activities, creating new possibilities for cultural diversity education while also presenting new challenges for authentic cultural representation.

Extract 25 (B2 level textbook): digital cultural project - "Podcast intercultural"

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Proyecto digital: Trabajando en parejas, van a crear un podcast de 15-20 minutos sobre un aspecto de la diversidad cultural en el mundo hispanohablante que les interese especialmente. Su podcast debe incluir:

Entrevistas con hablantes nativos de diferentes países hispanohablantes (pueden ser conducidas virtualmente) - Música auténtica que ilustre la diversidad musical dentro del mundo hispano - Análisis crítico de representaciones culturales en medios de comunicación - Reflexiones personales sobre lo que han aprendido a través de su investigación

Recursos sugeridos: Utilicen plataformas como Flipgrid para grabación, conecten con hablantes nativos a través de intercambios virtuales, y consulten recursos digitales auténticos como emisoras de radio locales, canales de YouTube culturales, y podcasts producidos en países hispanohablantes.

This technology-enhanced project demonstrates how digital tools can facilitate authentic cultural encounters and enable learners to create original content that demonstrates their developing intercultural competence. The emphasis on authentic resources and direct communication with Spanish speakers helps learners move beyond textbook representations toward engagement with lived cultural experiences.

However, the effectiveness of such digital integration depends heavily on adequate technological support, digital literacy development, and teacher preparation in technology-enhanced cultural education. The digital divide that affects both educational institutions and learner populations must be considered when designing technology-enhanced cultural learning activities.

CONCLUSION

This comprehensive study analyzes cultural diversity representation in Spanish EFL textbooks through examination of twenty-five extracts across B1 and B2 proficiency levels, revealing significant variation in quality and pedagogical sophistication of cultural content. The research identifies that successful materials present culture as dynamic and complex, include multiple authentic perspectives from diverse communities, acknowledge cultural conflicts and inequalities, and promote critical thinking through reflective activities, while problematic materials reduce cultural realities to stereotypes,

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perpetuate colonial narratives, create false traditional-modern dichotomies, and emphasize factual recall over intercultural competence development. The analysis shows that B1 materials rely more on descriptive approaches while B2 materials engage with greater complexity, though the study demonstrates that sophisticated cultural perspectives can be made accessible to intermediate learners through appropriate scaffolding. The findings have important implications for various stakeholders: textbook authors and publishers must invest in authentic cultural research and consultation with Hispanic communities; educators need comprehensive preparation in intercultural communication theory and culturally responsive pedagogy; institutions must prioritize intercultural competence as a fundamental learning outcome; and the broader applied linguistics field must continue developing theoretical frameworks for effective cultural diversity education. The ultimate goal is developing learners who can engage respectfully with Hispanic cultures while maintaining critical awareness of cultural positioning and complex intercultural dynamics, requiring sustained commitment to educational approaches that honor cultural complexity while promoting mutual respect, critical thinking, and social justice in our interconnected world.

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CHAPTER 4
**EDUCATION AROUND THE WORLD: A QUICK
OVERVIEW**

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INTRODUCTION

At a time when the world is characterized by globalization, technological improvement, and cultural interaction, education has become a significant factor in the individual empowerment and development of society. It constitutes the education process in the most basic way, through which knowledge, skills, values and critical thinking skills are developed, by which individuals can negotiate the world, both personally and professionally, in the most complex of ways. Education is also a key to ensuring social cohesion, economic growth and involvement in civic life. However, regardless of universality, education looks incredibly different in diverse contexts as it is influenced by peculiar historical situations as well as by cultural traditions, economic realities, and governmental priorities.

This diversity concerning education systems represents a varied understanding of how societies interpret learning, transmission of knowledge and human development. Some countries consider academic excellence and standardized testing essential, and some countries choose to value creativity, well-being, and holistic development. The quality and access to education vary widely based on many factors, including geography and income, as well as gender and infrastructure.

1. IMPORTANCE OF UNDERSTANDING GLOBAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Education is a fundamental pillar to both personal and societal growth, developing knowledge, skills and values required to operate well in an increasingly globalised world. It is essential to understand education systems around the world because education is not universal; it is a reflection of the differences in cultural, social, economic, and political realities of individual nations. Examining education in other countries, particularly their policies and approaches toward curriculum, schools, teacher training, and assessment, can provide educators, policymakers, and learners with valuable lessons that can inform better practices in every country. Global learning encourages intercultural understanding and readies learners in interaction with the multidimensional global concerns in the world, inducing a condition of

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globalism and reciprocity among the various people (Samyuktha School, 2025; Sharma, 2025).

The range of models of global education systems represents a diversity of philosophies and priorities. Some emphasize academic rigour and standardized testing as observed in East Asian countries like South Korea and China, whereas other nations are much more based on equity, well-being, and student-centred learning, like Finland in Scandinavia. There are also huge differences in access to quality education, as economic differences also create huge differences in access in terms of quality education, and so, there is a need to understand these global differences to ensure that they encourage more equality. Besides, all of this is a massive reflection of the role of technology in shaping education globally because it has made it more accessible and has even allowed a new approach to teaching methods (Farooqui, 2024; OECD, 2023). Thus, to promote inclusive, relevant, and progressive education, it is critical to understand the complexities and dynamics of education systems all over the world.

2. OVERVIEW OF HOW EDUCATION VARIES WORLDWIDE

The education across the world also differs vastly in terms of structure, content, pedagogy and outcomes. Each country begins formal schooling at different ages, requires different numbers of years of formal schooling (making school compulsory through legal steps), and offers students classes reflecting their unique history, culture, and economies. As an example, Scandinavian countries focus on play, creativity, and emotional growth, whereas most of the East Asian countries have an examination-oriented, competitive system of high academic standards. Another variation is the methodologies of student assessment, which can be anything between a standardized national exam or multiple-choice questions and a project-based assessment.

The social and economic situation is influential. In developing countries, the obstacles to education can be the poverty level, political instability and the lack of infrastructure. The integration of marginalized groups of people, which may include girls, children with disabilities, ethnic minorities, and others, into education is accomplished in countries to varying degrees (Intergovernmental

Oceanographic Commission, 2025). Differences in technological integration, such as through e-learning platforms and mobile devices, among others, have the potential to impact not only the content taught but also how and where education is accessed. The realization of such multidimensional differences is essential to understanding the huge variation in the educational experience across the world, and to locating the ground where improvements and reforms should be made (Farooqui, 2024).

3. HISTORICAL BACKGROUND OF EDUCATION WORLDWIDE

Education is defined as a process of conveying knowledge, skills, and cultural values through a formal method. The process has played a very important role in moulding civilizations since time immemorial. Knowledge of its historical evolution is priceless in terms of providing an appreciation of how educational systems have changed in response to societal demands, power bases and cultural forces.

3.1 Early Education Systems in Ancient Civilizations

The first education systems started in ancient times with societies like those in ancient Egypt, Ancient Greece, ancient China, and ancient India, with all societies adding to their practices in forms that constituted a significant foundation to modern education. Education in ancient Egypt was highly restricted to the priestly caste and was mostly concerned with teaching potential scribes and priests. Children, mostly of privileged background, were trained in reading, writing, (hieroglyphics), mathematics, and religious rituals in special facilities. The system of education was based on rote learning, and the focus was on discipline as it was needed to retain the community knowledge of cultures and religions (Britannica, 2025; Fiveable, 2023).

Ancient Greece came up with an education that was a combination of physical, intellectual and moral growth. Athens emphasized a wide curriculum that exposed students to philosophy, arts and sciences to produce all-rounded citizens, unlike Sparta, which emphasized purely military education. It is believed that the Greek tradition of critical inquiry and debate had a strong influence on Western education (Wikipedia Contributors, 2025). Education in

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India was conventionally taught under the Gurukul system, where students resided with their guru and learnt religious scriptures, philosophy, mathematics and morals. This was a comprehensive form of learning, which combined both spiritual and intellectual learning, as well as emphasized lifelong studies (Studocu, 2024).

The Chinese education system was marked by the civil service examination using Confucian classics. This system of education had some impact on societal structuring since government officials were appointed on the merit of knowledge and competence, which drew a direct relationship between education and governance and social ascendancy. The teaching of morality, celebration of rituals and learning were among the essential elements (Britannica, 2025).

3.2 Evolution Through the Middle Ages and Renaissance

Europe in the Middle Ages (5th to 15th century) was predominantly church-controlled education. Schools attached to monasteries and cathedrals developed into educational institutions, where the remains of classical knowledge had been preserved by manuscript copying and in religious teaching. Educational access was restricted mostly to the clergy and nobles, and thus cemented social orders. A revival of interest in education came with the Carolingian Renaissance in the 8th and 9th centuries, when cathedral schools were created and even earlier universities, such as Bologna, Oxford, were established, where subjects were extended beyond theology to law, medicine and arts.

The Renaissance (14th to 17th century) led to humanistic education, a focus upon classical literature, science, and the use of empirical reasoning. This transformation preconditioned the development of modern philosophies of education that encourage critical thinking and inquiry and shaped the curriculum development across Europe and, eventually, other regions as well (Britannica, 2025).

3.3 Influence of Colonialism on Education Systems

The era of European colonial expansion (16th to the 20th century) left imprints on the education systems across the world. Certain colonists forced Eurocentric education practices to dominate and assimilate local people. This modality sidelined local languages, knowledge, and cultures and substituted them with colonialist curricula that addressed colonial administration and economic needs. The missionary schools were the primary transmitters of Western civilization.

In nations such as India, the English-language educational policies of the British colonialists and administrators, led by Macaulay in 1835, advanced the teaching and learning of English to produce clerks and subordinates who would serve the Empire loyally, to the detriment of local educational systems. The colonization process left structural inequalities in access and content of education that have contributed to the difficulty of decolonization and cultural recovery in most post-colonial societies (Pandey & Mohanty, 2024; Kambala & Mathe, 2023).

4. OVERVIEW OF KEY GLOBAL EDUCATION SYSTEMS

Education systems all over the world tend to vary because of different historical, cultural, political and economic conditions in different parts of the world. Although all education systems share the basic objective of enhancing human potential and preparing citizens to have productive lives, they vary a lot regarding their methods, organisation, and priorities. The knowledge of these differences would give great insights as to how various societies view learning, the transfer of knowledge, and human development.

4.1 Western Model (US, UK, Canada)

The Western system of education, dominated by the United States, United Kingdom and Canada, amongst others, is the system that educates students in a student-centred approach that focuses on thinking, creativity, and individual expression. This system emphasizes more on mastering how to solve problems and makes students challenge the existing knowledge as opposed to consuming it blindly. The Western model emphasizes extracurricular activities

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greatly, giving students opportunities to have well-rounded experiences that do not involve academics alone (Panda, 2025).

The American education system is highly open and diverse; it also offers students a lot of freedom of choice when it comes to selecting their courses and majors. The American educational system is based on a broad learning system where students take time to explore different fields before settling on an area of major study, sometimes even taking it to the second year. It focuses on the general scope of knowledge, and students must undertake some electives outside of their major in the field. This is very different in more targeted systems elsewhere.

The UK education system has a focus on early specialization, and students often choose their major line of study even before they join the university. Undergraduate degrees at UK universities generally take three years (four years in Scotland), and are more narrow in their focus than in the US. The system lays great emphasis on academic achievements and independent studies, where students are expected to immerse themselves in their selected field of study right at the beginning (International Student, 2008).

In Canada, the approach is moderate, and it is a mix of both the US and UK practices. Canadian institutions are characterized by their diverse environments, which are research- and practice-oriented. The system is known to take an average of three to four years to attain an undergraduate degree, and it has a high sustenance support culture among diverse student bodies (Visa Valley, 2025).

4.2 Asian Model (China, Japan, South Korea, India)

The Asian education system has been known to be high-performance, especially in mathematics and science, and these education systems are those that have high standards and standards that promote a high level of competition. Education systems in countries like China, Japan, and South Korea tend to produce the best results in the international educational assessment, which is known as PISA.

The Chinese education operates a relatively centralized system with a lot of emphasis on standardised examination, in particular the Gaokao examination that is used to gain admission into universities. The system has gained a

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reputation for being highly disciplined and academic-oriented; however, recent changes have tried to introduce more creativity and critical thinking to the traditional knowledge relay (Hadjaratie et al., 2023; India Today Web Desk News, 2020).

Japan, as a country, has a well-organized society that focuses more on discipline, hard work as well and respecting those in authority. The educational structure implies a high-stakes academic curriculum and exams, including the Examination for Japanese universities (EJU) as the Entrance examination to higher education. The Japanese schools are characterized by the emphasis on moral education and character formation as well as academic success (Hadjaratie et al., 2023).

South Korean education system has become highly competitive with excellent rates of 100 %literacy and actively ranks top in the international comparative assessments. The system is described by academic pressure and scrutiny of numerous personal tutors referred to as hagwons. Although very efficient in terms of academic results production, the system has been criticized as affecting student well-being as well as creativity.

India is currently a country that has one of the largest and most complicated education systems in the world, a system that has a student count of over 250 million. There are still huge challenges (quality, equity, and infrastructure) associated with the system even after performing the reforms like the Right to Education Act (2009) and the National Education Policy (2020). These changes are meant to reform the system by encouraging critical thinking, creativity and developing vocational skills, as well as helping to resolve persistent inequalities (India Today Web Desk New, 2020).

4.3 Scandinavian Model (Finland, Sweden, Norway)

The Scandinavian system of education is a unique system that focuses on equality, societal fairness, as well as student welfare. The Nordic countries are united by their values in education, such as democratic values and free and public education systems that attach primary importance to social equality. These education systems have a heritage of comprehensive schools reaching all students irrespective of their backgrounds (Einarsdottir et al., 2023).

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Finland has become known internationally because of their innovative approach to education that places primary focus on the well-being of the students rather than standardized testing. The Finnish model focuses on play-based learning experiences in early childhood, little test-based evaluation, and great teacher autonomy. Finnish educational practitioners are highly qualified professionals who have great respect and freedom in the field of curriculum.

Sweden and Norway operate similarly, with 110 and 76 allotted hours, respectively, in grades 8-10 to specifically focus on career education, with Finland also supporting the same amount of hours in total in all grades. In both countries, work experience placements are compulsory to ensure that students relate concepts that they learn in the classroom with practical applications.

The Nordic model is described by its comprehensive way of learning by making a combination between academic work with social and emotional learning. The systems are usually characterised by smaller classes, learning communities and good support mechanisms to help underperforming students.

4.4 Developing Countries and Challenges

Education systems in developing countries have many structural issues that are detrimental to access and quality. Most of these nations are faced with poor infrastructure, resource constraints and unskilled teachers, which create formidable obstacles to effective delivery of education.

Access is still a major concern, with about 244 million children worldwide out of school, most of them living in developing nations. Sub-Saharan Africa has recorded the highest rates of educational exclusion, with 32.6 million children of primary school age going out of school. Geographical challenges add to the problem because most schools are located in places distant from where students can rest. This is especially in rural geographical set-ups where the roads are not well, infrastructurally formed.

Another great challenge is the quality of education. The quality of teaching in many developing countries is low, and children who finish primary school may have no literacy and numeracy skills. Curricula are, in many cases, overburdened with topics and do not take into consideration cultural and regional differences. The teaching practices are still conventional and do not focus on group work, self-teaching, reasoning, and problem-solving.

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Teacher shortages constitute one of the major impediments to education development. UNESCO estimates that 59 million new teachers will be needed by 2030 to support quality primary and secondary education in all countries, and the number of new teachers needed in Sub-Saharan Africa will be about 17 million. Inadequate working environments, such as huge classroom sizes (with teacher-to-student ratios sometimes reaching up to 70:1), poor wages, and a shortage of teaching equipment, render the teaching career unappealing in most developing countries.

Disparities by gender exist and are quite abundant, with gender-based cultural norms and economic potentials tending to favour the education of boys more so than that of girls, which in turn contributes to the increased rate of dropping out of school among girls in general, and at the secondary level in particular. These adversities create generation-to-generation poverty and inhibit human development potential in most parts of the world (Asomi College of Sciences, 2024).

5. ACCESS TO EDUCATION AND EQUALITY

The right to access education is one of the most essential human rights concerns in the world, but tens of millions of children and adults do not get the chance to get an education. Even though great strides have been made over the last few decades, the current problems of inequality in access to education that exist in gender, economic, disability, and social marginalization issues still limit the attainment of universal education. It is essential to understand these inequalities that contribute to devising viable policies and interventions that can promote equality in quality education to all.

5.1 Global Statistics on Literacy and Enrollment

An overall picture of the global literacy scenario has extraordinary improvements and huge gaps. As per the latest data, the worldwide literacy rate is 86.3 % of people over the age of 15, 90% and 82.7 % of the population being men and women, respectively. This is a significant change in comparison with the international literacy level that stood at 68% in 1979, so it means that there has been a huge progress over the past forty years.

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These pleasant aggregate data conceal considerable inequality and persistent hurdles, though. Though overall progress is positive, around 739 million youth and adults around the world are illiterate in 2024. Even more alarming is that the number of children and youth aged 6 to 18 not in school stands at nearly 250 million, with an additional 6 million since 2021. The problem is of great urgency in Sub-Saharan Africa, where 202 million young people remain uneducated in basic reading skills or much in mathematics, and less than a third of all adults aged 15 and above have attained basic reading and writing skills.

The standard of education raises another issue of serious concern. Although access is increasing, the results of the improvement in learning are still insufficient, with only half of all students performing at a basic level in reading and mathematics. Shockingly, 70% of children in lower and middle-income countries fail to read a simple text by the age of 10. This crisis of learning poverty implies that admission is not enough; quality education that yields relevant learning outcomes should be of priority.

The gap between regions is extreme, with developed countries boasting a maximum literacy of 99.2%, compared to in most developed countries of only 65% of the literacy rate in adults. Literacy rates in some African countries are less than 30% and this reveals the vast disparities that exist around the world. Such data represents the imperative of selective action in the areas with the highest level of need (Filipenco, 2025).

5.2 Gender Disparity in Education: Progress and Challenges

Gender gaps in education are still a major issue all over the world, although they have been reduced in recent decades. The world literacy gap indicates a lag in the number of females achieving literacy in relation to the number of males achieving literacy, with 82.75 % of females as opposed to 90 % of males. It is a 7.3 % difference that points to underlying structural inequalities in access to and performance in education.

Girls encounter several barriers to education in most parts of the world, especially in South Asia and Sub-Saharan Africa. As of 2022 statistics, there are 118.5 million girls out of school in the world. Those differences become most severe at the secondary level of education, where cultural pressures, early

marriage and economic issues have a higher impact on girls. Economic conditions are also a key point, with girls being twice as often as boys to do domestic work, thereby not having enough opportunities to receive education (Filipenco, 2025).

The example of persistent gender differences is India. The literacy gap in the country stands at 17 % with the male population recording 80 % as opposed to 63 % among the females. The difference has frustrated the ranking of the country as one of the last among 146 economies in the Global Gender Gap Report 2024, as measures of gender equality waned, especially in the educational levels. It shows that complete gender equity would manifest by the year 2158, long past the year 2030, as intended under the Sustainable Development Goals.

Despite these, there is some progress in reducing gender differences, especially in primary school provision. Differences in the subject selection and areas of study take place as girls and women continue to be underrepresented in STEM disciplines because of stereotypes and discrimination. Alleviating these disparities needs an all-embracing strategy which has to do with cultural attitudes, economic obstacles & institutional discrimination (GGI Insights, 2024).

5.3 Economic Barriers Affecting Access in Low-Income Countries

Economic barriers are one of the greatest barriers to education in low-income countries. Although it is a constitutional provision that education is free, this aim has not been attained because a significant number of families are unable to meet expenses such as school fees, uniforms, provisions, and the opportunity costs of labour of children. Such economic downturns are especially severe in households where the family depends on the income earnings of children from working or providing other home chores.

In lower-income countries, girls attend primary school at a rate of 78 % as opposed to the worldwide average of 88 % and secondary school at a rate of 31 % compared with a worldwide average of 66%. These figures are evidence of the disproportionate impact the economic limitations have on the education

of girls, as families often make better investments in the education of boys because they are more economical than girls.

The COVID-19 pandemic has made these economic boundaries worse, and the rate of learning poverty has gone up substantially since 2019 to 2022. In lower-income countries, school closures, financial problems, and insufficient access to technology have added to the problems of educational continuity. The effects of such a pandemic have also hit the most vulnerable groups the hardest, exacerbating pre-existing education gaps.

The economic obstacles are compounded by the problems of infrastructure. Lack of sufficient facilities in many schools, as classes must be larger than 100 students, and many lack access to fundamentals like books, pens, and notebooks. Laws that require teachers to be degree-holders also contribute to the low quality of education and result in the declining enrollment rate of students, as families are more likely to refuse sending their children to school in case of low educational quality.

Distance to school is another economic constraint since children have to walk long distances to access schools, exposing them to security risks, especially girls and also, according to them, they have less time to study or create time to get involved in income-related activities. There are no local schools, which obliges families to choose between education and actual economic benefits (Frost & Sullivan Institute, 2024).

5.4 Inclusion of Children with Disabilities and Marginalized Groups

Inclusion of children with disabilities in education systems is one of the greatest problems that has been encountered in attaining universal access to education. The Global Partnership for Education stated that 9 out of every 10 children with disabilities in lower and lower-middle-income countries do not go to school. This outrageous figure proposes the systematic exclusion of one of the most vulnerable segments of the population from education opportunities.

The shift to a more inclusive education has been a gradual process, with the movement of grading towards abandoning segregated special education structures and towards the incorporation of special education needs within

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regular education. The Salamanca Statement of 1994 was a significant factor towards the inclusion of all learners in schools, and this position was strengthened with the Convention on the Rights of Persons with Disabilities (CRPD), which states that inclusive education is the best way of achieving the right to education among persons with disabilities.

Most states do not offer proper accommodations like Braille to the blind, sign language to the deaf or any other type of tailored teaching techniques and resources to meet the needs of various disabled students. The Committee on Rights of Persons with Disabilities has identified certain obligations that must be fulfilled by the states immediately, such as the absence of discrimination, reasonable accommodation, and delivery of free primary education to all on a compulsory basis.

In addition to those with disability, other marginal groups experience serious difficulties in attaining education. Ethnic minorities are usually disadvantaged in receiving education in their own languages or culturally representative programs. In conflict-affected zones, children have it especially tough, as schools are frequently attacked or repurposed during times of conflict, leaving multiple generations of children without their education.

The rural communities are further marginalized because of their geographical isolation, poor supply of teachers, and poor infrastructure. These children have to endure greater distances to schools, less well-qualified teachers, and less access to educational materials and technology.

The combination of two or more kinds of marginalization aggravates these challenges. As an example, low-income rural families with girls with disabilities encounter numerous issues at once, thus being especially hindered in their education. These are multi-dimensional issues, and managing them should involve integrated responses that acknowledge the connectedness of dissimilar types of exclusion and formulate differentiated responses that go deeper and deal with numerous obstacles all at the same time.

To make inclusive education a reality, there should be more than policy statements; it should also entail proper funding, training of teachers, proper building and involvement of the community. To achieve this, it must be realized that inclusive education encompasses the good of all by providing more diverse

and enriching learning atmosphere so that no child ever has to be left behind, sore the expectations of having all children receive an education (Matsh, 2024).

6. CURRENT CHALLENGES FACING GLOBAL EDUCATION

The education sector around the world is experiencing unseen difficulties, due to which the main aim of providing quality education to all learners is at stake. These issues are not only complex in nature but also interrelated and need a multi-faceted approach in tackling them through governments, academia and international institutions. The modern educational challenges are rife with complexity that covers endemic problems resulting in poverty and war, to sudden devastations occasioned by the advancing health crises that challenge or interrupt the education of millions of learners all over the world.

The problem of poverty has been one of the greatest obstacles to education access and performance worldwide that generating an endless cycle of inequality and poverty across generations. Low-income families experience many barriers to receiving quality education, and the cost of schooling continues to be so high that even the poorest families cannot afford it. Some children have to stay at home to do their chores or work as child labourers to boost their family income and thereby do not attend school consistently. This economic burden is extremely harsh in developing nations, where households have to balance between short-term necessities and long-term investments into education.

The schools that are in high-poverty areas tend to have lower teacher retention and a lack of highly qualified teachers, resulting in a discrepancy in the quality of education. Teachers working in schools impacted by poverty are more prone to stress and burnout, which has an appalling effect on the student-teacher relationship and the overall capacity of teachers to teach their subjects. The children growing up in poverty are also at a higher risk of suspensions and expulsions, may have limited access to extracurricular activities and may be more prone to bullying, which can lead to chronic stress that impairs learning ability (Harms & Garrett-Ruffin, 2023).

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The impact of armed conflict is even more dramatic on educational systems, with dramatic effects on access to learning by children. In conflict areas, disruption in education creates an anomaly in implementing the curriculum, and the quality of learning suffers. Conflicts lead to the migration or displacement of teachers, creating a shortage of qualified educators as well as destabilizing whole education systems. UNICEF estimates that nearly a third of young people between age 15-24 in conflict or disaster-affected nations are illiterate and the nation with the highest illiteracy rates among the young adults is in Niger, Chad, South Sudan and the Central African Republic, with rates as high as 76%, 69%, 68% and 64% respectively.

These struggles are made worse by the physical destruction of the educational infrastructure. In 2020 to 2021, researchers reported more than 5,000 attacks on educational facilities and cases of military occupations of schools and universities, which impacted more than 9,000 students and educators in 85 countries. This shows an annual average of six attacks on education occurring daily, and it shows a strategic targeting of educational establishments during conflicts.

In addition to causing physical destruction, conflict also causes psychological trauma that impedes student concentration and learning tremendously. Individuals who are exposed to violence have severe psychological impacts that aggravate the learning process further and leave long-lasting effects on academic performance. The physical insecurity, psychological trauma, and broken-down educational services combine to make normal educational activity impossible, leading to elevated levels of illiteracy and long-term development problems in whole generations (Ahmed, 2024).

6.1 Quality of Education vs. Quantity (Enrollment vs. Learning Outcomes)

The educational paradox of quantity and quality has been one of the most lasting tensions in educational development worldwide, as the worthy aim of increasing access to education has, in many instances, been traded in at the altar of educational quality. Although the world has seen breakthroughs in enrollment rates, the focus on quantity has often led to educational systems that place more emphasis on putting children in school than on ensuring they are

provided with a high-quality education that leads to meaningful learning. This focus on quantity has resulted in cases of students finishing years of schooling without gaining basic literacy and numeracy skills, a situation exemplified in the alarming fact that only half of all students worldwide perform at basic levels in reading and mathematics with 70% of children in middle- and low-income countries being unable to read a simple paragraph by age 10. The race towards achieving universal enrolment has prompted most countries to either rush into massive educational increases without equivalent investment in educational infrastructure, teacher training, or curriculum design, which causes overcrowded classrooms, inadequate learning materials, and ill-prepared teachers to undermine the learning process.

The attention to the enrollment rates tends to conceal the unresolved disparities in access to education and in performance, as students with low socioeconomic status are enrolled in institutions, but they do not obtain a quality education that offers actual social mobility. To achieve the best combination of quantity and quality, one must pursue a multifaceted policy that would increase access whilst ensuring and even enhancing the quality of education by enhancing teacher training, improving educational infrastructure, developing curricula, and ensuring high-quality assessment with a primary focus on learning outcomes rather than merely enrollment numbers (Bennell, 2023).

6.2 The Impact of the COVID-19 Pandemic on Education Systems

The COVID-19 crisis was declared the largest disruption to education systems in modern history because just under 1.6 billion learners in 195 countries had to sit through closed schools over unprecedented academic interruptions to face-to-face classes, with more than 9 out of 10 students worldwide temporarily out of school. Due to the pandemic, the effects were geometrically different based on the socioeconomic status and geographical location of the students, resulting in a significant digital divide between those more privileged students who studied at a school with an improved digital infrastructure with more skilled teachers, and those less fortunate who were in rural and marginalized communities with minimal ICT infrastructure access,

few devices, and internet connectivity, and in short supply educational materials.

In addition to academic interruptions, the pandemic had significant psychological and social consequences, with rates of anxiety, depression, and stress high among students deprived of important social contacts, organized learning processes, and services offered by schools. The aftermath effects are long-term with substantial learning losses that students are anticipated to experience in terms of future economic productivity and school achievement. On the other hand, the crisis has only increased the pace of educational innovations, especially in the integration of digital technologies, but at the same time, showcased the vital importance of schools as institutions that reveal the crucial social support, nutrition programs, and safe havens in children. As education systems recover and adjust, the experiences resulting from the pandemic are informing policies to create more robust, equitable, and technology-integrated educational systems that will have a better chance of surviving the next shock with less overall harm and dislocation to populations and institutions (Tadesse & Muluye, 2020).

7. ROLE OF TECHNOLOGY IN GLOBAL EDUCATION

Technology has become one of the major driving forces in modern education and has completely changed the way knowledge is taught, accessed and shared in the world. The convergence of blistering digital technologies with growing connectivity and mobile device usage has led to the development of unequalled chances to mitigate traditional educational disparities and augment access to high-quality learning experiences. From the far-flung corners of the rural world in Africa to the dense cities of the Asian continent, technology has been transforming the landscape of education and providing different avenues of learning to students who have been marginalized in the formal education system.

7.1 How Technology is Bridging Gaps in Education Worldwide

Technology has played a dominant role in levelling the playing field over educational inequality that has existed through generations in terms of geographical, economic, and social distance. Online educational resources and

digital learning platforms are radically changing access to quality education, especially among students in underserved and remote locations. The democratization of knowledge has come about with the help of technology, where learners, irrespective of their status or even place of origin, can now access education that previously only the privileged few could enjoy.

AI and machine learning tools are transforming the education sector to deliver personalized content depending on learning styles and pace. Adaptive learning systems review the performance of the student in real-time to gather insights about their strengths and weaknesses and present personalized learning experiences. This individualized learning is especially useful to students who are at risk of failure within the academic institution due to our prevalence of standardized learning, making education more personal than universally regulated.

Massive Open Online Courses (MOOCs) and e-platforms such as Khan Academy and Coursera have made quality education affordable and at scale. These learning portals provide courses at free or low fees, and thus, this makes education available to students, regardless of their financial situations. Cloud computing and open-source learning resources make it cheaper for both institutions and individuals to get access to learning resources.

Virtual climbing walls and virtual classrooms have united students with the worldwide community of educators and learners in a global network, allowing them to interact with experts and peers across cultures and continents. Video conferencing through platforms such as Zoom, Microsoft Teams, and Google Classroom makes real-time interaction possible, helping to create the feeling of community, even when members are physically separated. With this connectivity, it becomes possible to share knowledge and collaborative learning opportunities beyond the geographical limits (Murugan, 2024).

7.2 Examples of E-Learning Successes and Challenges in Different Regions

The use of e-learning in various geographical locations has had remarkable success but there are very crucial aspects where challenges seem to be endemic depending on where people are and their infrastructure and economic status. The growth in e-learning has been remarkable in developing

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countries, with Africa and Asian countries recording average annual growth rates of over 10% between the years 2016 and 2021. Vietnam and Malaysia have the best growth ratios, followed by Thailand, the Philippines, India and China.

In Africa, with infrastructure challenges as it is, e-learning revenue amounted to 332.9 million in the year 2013 with an annual growth of 15.2%. The migration to mobile technology has been especially hopeful, not limited to rural African communities, which have now joined the migration, with tech giants such as Google, IBM and Microsoft opening labs and programs to enhance accessibility. This mobile-first framework has played a significant role in those areas that have restricted computer infrastructure.

Government-supported e-learning projects have proved heavily successful in Asian countries. The National Skill Development Corporation (NSDC) of India looks to reach 12 million learners via online study courses in engineering, architecture, biotechnology and social sciences. There are over 70 universities in China that have introduced their own e-learning programs, generating an estimated value of e-learning revenue of up to 11.5 billion dollars by 2016. The level of e-learning adoption is further provoked by the large population of mobile users in both China and India.

There are, however, great challenges found in the developing regions. The three key challenges are the problem of internet connectivity, the lack of locally created content and curriculum presence online, and insufficient training and digital literacy of both training specialists and students. Lack of infrastructure is an obvious hindrance in remote areas, lacking some of the needed infrastructure, like electricity and internet connectivity, to facilitate e-learning.

The COVID-19 pandemic demonstrated the possibilities and the weaknesses of the systems of e-learning in the world. As much as developed countries could quickly shift to online learning, in most developing nations, the digital divide, lack of access to devices and poor internet infrastructure were major challenges. This crisis has shown that effective e-learning implementation has to be prepared thoroughly and involves significant investment in technology and development of human capacity (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

7.3 Impact of Mobile Learning and Internet Access on Education Equity

Mobile learning has turned out to be an especially effective means of advancing educational equity, due partly to the current prevalence of mobile devices among people who would otherwise not have access to education. GSMA reported in their 2023 Mobile Economy that more than 5.4 billion people globally, about 68% of the world population, use mobile devices. This broad access implies that although in remote areas or underserved locations the traditional educational infrastructure is inefficient, mobile devices can be used as an entrance to learning opportunities in areas where there is a lack of traditional infrastructure.

A study by Crane and Rao (2014), whose research was based in India, gives strong testimony to the power of mobile technology in educational equity. A large-scale study tracing the impact of the installation of telecommunication infrastructure across the country revealed that since the introduction of the mobile network connection, the enrolment in primary students increased by 1.2% per annum and by the fourth year, the benefits accrued by nearly 8.4% to the totality of students, amounting to around 4.8 million children. Significantly, the study identified greater impacts on lower-caste students than among their general-caste peers due to factors such as upper primary education, urban and private schools, and village concentrations of marginal workers. These data point to solid findings that mobile network connections enhance the economic performance and educational achievement of marginalized children (Agarwal et al., 2024).

Mobile learning presents a high level of flexibility and accessibility compared to traditional learning environments. Using artificial intelligence, the algorithms will be able to adapt the content and accommodate varying learning speeds and styles as well as student preferences so that students with disabilities or those with special needs or those at different paces can excel. This individualistic practice is especially helpful when it comes to identify diverse learning needs and encouraging inclusive education.

Internet access is one of the important factors contributing to educational equity, and it has been found that when increased internet access is provided,

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the level of educational inequality is drastically reduced. The COVID-19 pandemic especially emphasized this connection, with nations having Internet access being able to mostly keep their education going, and those lacking it facing grave losses. Research has shown that higher income per capita and less income inequality are beneficial to the level of internet access, and this contributes to narrowing education inequality.

Digital divide is, however, a big concern. Some inequality in terms of technology access still occurs through mobile devices, but other inequalities have not been changed regarding internet quality, data rate prices, and digital literacy, which negatively influences education. This is because the urban population usually has better internet connectivity and access through lower prices, providing rural populations with a long-term disadvantage in equal access to education (Korkmaz et al., 2022).

Mobile learning has the effect of extending educational equity beyond access to encompass the quality and relevance of the educational content. Mobile technologies can translate into the delivery of culturally relevant and locally speaking to native language educational materials to make education more culturally competent and relevant to diverse groups of learners. This is especially vital to indigenous and minority groups who have been largely on the fringe of mainstream education.

Mobile learning systems can present immediate results and statistics on learning, letting teachers and policymakers know where there are deficits and how to modify interventions. The evidence-based approach will help in making decisions aimed at enhancing educational results, as well as in the efforts that guarantee that the purchases made of technology are capable of translating into the appreciation of similar benefits to the students.

The future of mobile learning and its effects on educational equity will probably rely on how many funds are continuing to be invested in infrastructure development, digital literacy, and culturally responsive learning materials. As mobile technology moves onwards to 5G networks and greater connectivity, so will the capabilities of mobile learning to ensure learning inequalities can be closed where they currently exist, shine through, provided that policies and the structures around them that are planned are designed to meet current inequalities head-on rather than fan them further.

CONCLUSION

The study of global education systems is highlighted as incredibly diverse, correlating with like issues in ancient roots in Egypt, Greece, China and India to recent innovations in Scandinavian, Western, and Asian systems. Modern problems, such as inequality in access, the tension of bilingual education and learning outcomes, and teacher shortages, as well as COVID-19, demonstrate that universal quality education is a complicated process.

It is important to learn through different global practices. The student-centred approach used in Finland provides examples of how systems based on high-stakes tests can be modified, and technological improvements in some developing economies offer the possibility of setting up a system even in a resource-limited setting. The case of mobile learning initiatives shows how context-specific work can fill the gap in education without having to obstruct the efforts on a bigger scale.

The future is very promising despite the current problems. The development of educational technology, the expansion of collaboration with increased globalization via the Sustainable Development Goals, and the overall acceptance of education as one of the central human rights bring unprecedented opportunities for transformation. As countries exchange information and learn what works in their context, the goal of providing all children with access to quality and meaningful learning will continue to become a reality, and more equitable and innovative education systems will be established to benefit future generations.

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CHAPTER 5
INFLUENCE OF PARENTING STYLES ON
CONDUCT DISORDER IN PRE-PRIMARY SCHOOLS
IN NORTH-WEST, NIGERIA

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INTRODUCTION

Parents are the primary caregivers of the child. Their roles, to a large extent, are seen as custodians of children, thereby providing a natural environment for care, love, encouragement, support, and the overall development of the child. Thus, parents play an essential role in nurturing children from all angles, including physical, emotional, social, moral, and educational aspects (Noreen, Ahmad, & Shahzadi, 2021).

As soon as a child is born into a family, the child is vulnerable and powerless. Without assistance from the immediate environment, a child will not be able to walk, survive, grow, or accomplish anything (Igbo and Anselm, 2014). Such an immediate environment could be family members or caretakers. Unfortunately, some parents, especially those who work, often fail to devote sufficient time to their children. Thus, nannies, day-care facilities, or other caretakers are sometimes entrusted with the responsibility of providing parental love, care, and supervision for children. However, these caregivers might not be capable of offering the same calibre of care that their parents would have provided. Furthermore, parents are also responsible for socialising the child, and this begins at home through interactions with parents, peers, and siblings. When parents fail to fulfil these fundamental duties, an unstable foundation is established, leading to faulty adult conduct such as dishonesty and other forms of antisocial behaviour.

Parenting style, which encompasses parental views and conduct, is a psychological pattern that describes the parenting tactics frequently used by parents in child-rearing practices (Akbar, Asrar, Younes, and Chisthi, 2015; Kordi and Baharudin, 2010). In other words, parenting styles refer to the techniques that parents use to raise their children. It is also similar to child-rearing practices. In light of this research, parenting styles refer to the techniques employed by parents to raise or nurture their children, equipping them with the necessary skills to function appropriately as citizens of a given society.

Stressing further on parenting styles, Baumrind (2013) emphasises that parents should not be aloof or punitive towards children; instead, they should formulate clear instructions or regulations and be demonstrative and friendly towards them. Baumrind identifies three parenting styles that relate to issues of

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children's conduct, which consist of authoritarian parenting style, authoritative parenting style, and permissive parenting style.

Authoritarian parenting style, according to Igbo and Anselm (2014), is recognised as a type of parenting style in which the subordinate is expected to carry out every directive and decision made under careful monitoring and supervision. They continued by emphasising that any attempt by subordinates to challenge the instructions given is resisted, and no chance is allowed for subordinates to foster any ideas or innovations. Parents who adopt an authoritarian parenting style tend to have high standards for conformity and adherence to the family's norms and directives. Authoritarian parents are also inaccessible when their children are in dire need and are more likely to slap than to talk to a child about a critical issue.

Authoritative parenting style, on the other hand, is typified by a "child-centred approach" that emphasises an intense eagerness for maturity. Baumrind, in Ishaq (2015), summarised that the authoritative parenting style encompasses children's affection, verbal give-and-take, and instils the spirit of self-control in them. Baumrind further stated that parents inspire children to be self-sufficient while also setting boundaries and regulating their conduct. This kind of parenting style sets boundaries and requires trustworthiness; yet, when disciplining a child, the parents constantly make the reason behind the punishment known to the child. Adaku and Anayo (2021) noted that children raised in authoritative homes are positively impacted academically and exhibit less conduct disorder than those raised in non-authoritative environments.

Also, permissive parenting style, according to Baumrind in Ishaq (2015), entails permitting children to accomplish whatever they desire. It is also a type of parenting where parents are very concerned about their children, exercising little control or making few demands on children. Applying this parenting style, parents are tolerant and also quick to respond to their children's needs and aspirations. Supporting the above claim, Igbo and Anselm (2014) suggested that parents who are permissive in raising their children refrain from necessitating self-control in their children. Thus, due to this permissive approach to granting children their desires and the lack of parental expectations, their children grew up with poor conduct and performed poorly in school (Ana, Eva, and Jewish, 2021).

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Numerous studies have raised concerns about the reliability of Western society's findings and their applicability within various cultural contexts (Adeyemi, 2012). Many parenting philosophies may not promote positive behaviour, whereas others do. Therefore, parenting practices can have either a beneficial or disruptive effect on children, depending on the parenting style adopted by the parents.

According to Wisegeek (2013), conduct disorder can refer to those behaviours in children that do not conform to the generally acknowledged cultural standards. However, for the sake of this research, conduct disorder is defined as any behaviour in children that is at variance with the generally accepted values and norms of a given society, such as aggressiveness toward peers or siblings, fighting, telling lies, loitering, absenteeism, and unnecessary crying, among others.

The origin of conduct disorder may be linked to harsh and harmful parenting (Wanxue, 2019). In support of the above claim, Kendra (2015) posits that several potential causes contribute to these abnormal behavioural patterns, including an unhealthy mind, inadequate parenting training, poor conduct conditioning, and the prevalence of incorrect models of behaviour.

Most parents in North-west Nigeria are agrarians who leave their houses very early in the morning and return very late in the evening, all because of farm work and business activities, with little attention paid to their children's education. Some parents go as far as registering their preschool children in extracurricular classes, so that the children can stay in school until they return late in the evening. As a result, many parents entrust the care of their children to nannies and housekeepers, often neglecting to provide adequate supervision of their children's health, character development, and academic progress.

Observations made during a visit to certain public pre-primary schools in the zone have revealed that pre-primary school pupils are often tardy, engage in fights among themselves, steal each other's pencils, books, and erasers without permission, lie to caregivers, and make noise, among other behaviours. Some children are accustomed to loitering during class, while others even wander the streets during the lesson period. Their social lives could be severely affected by these destructive behaviours, which may subsequently harm their future and society as a whole. Nevertheless, it has not yet been determined

whether parenting styles have any influence on conduct disorder of pre-primary school pupils in North-West Nigeria.

Pre-primary children are pupils from birth to the age of 5 years old who receive Nursery education aimed at providing a solid foundation for them and a smooth transition to primary school (Ayuba, 2018). In addition, Obiweluzor (2015) referred to Pre-primary education as education given to juveniles (5 years) before the time of enrolling in primary school. This suggests that pre-primary children are pupils who are taught and are preparing for primary education. Children in Nigeria between the ages of 0 and 4 are typically enrolled in a crèche or nursery. At the same time, Pre-primary school is provided to children aged five and above to prepare them for primary school (FME, 2021). Hence, public pre-primary education is the focus of this research work, with emphasis placed on nursery three (3) pupils in the study area.

1. STATEMENT OF THE PROBLEM

Parent-child relationships exhibit certain traits that contribute to their long-lasting effects on each other. Research indicates that children from caring households tend to participate in culturally appropriate activities and perform better academically compared to those from less supportive environments. The rise in conduct disorder among pre-primary school pupils nowadays is a nationwide concern that has drawn attention from researchers and education stakeholders. In the research area, pre-primary school pupils typically engage in conduct disorder such as frequent temper tantrums, loitering about, taking eraser without permission, getting angry easily, not being able to follow simple rules, being aggressive toward peers, disposition to fight or hurt others, feeling scared or unhappy, lying, unnecessary crying, inattentiveness, and inactive in class, to name a few. These destructive behaviours might seriously damage their social and academic lives, and this might have a detrimental effect on society as a whole. Children who are easily distracted and lack focus in class run the risk of failing or performing poorly academically. Some of these pupils who engage in this illicit conduct could eventually progress from taking erasers without permission to violent criminal activity and constitute a danger to their families, communities, and society as a whole.

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For a considerable amount of time, teachers and the government have made significant efforts to raise the standard of education in North West Nigeria, but the outcome has remained unchanged. Many studies believe the reason for this may be because of the rise in conduct disorder among learners, at the same time others including the author think that some bad parenting practices may have been affecting learner conduct and academic performance because the parents were not prepared for their children's conduct at a young age and were indifferent to what children did at home and in school. In addition, there is little empirical research on the effects of parenting approaches on conduct disorder and academic Performance in North-west Nigeria. It is in the light of the aforementioned that the author takes an interest in examining the influence of parenting style and family size as determinants for conduct disorder and academic performance in pre-primary schools in North-West, Nigeria.

2. PURPOSE OF THE STUDY

The primary objective of this study is to investigate parenting style as a contributing factor to conduct disorder and academic performance in pre-primary schools in North-Western Nigeria. The specific objectives are to:

- Examine the relationship of authoritarian parenting style on conduct disorder among pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.
- Find out the relationship of authoritative parenting style on conduct disorder among pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.
- Determine the relationship between permissive parenting style and conduct disorder among pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.

3. RESEARCH QUESTIONS

For this study to accomplish its intended objectives, the following research questions were addressed:

1. What is the relationship between authoritarian parenting style and conduct disorder among pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria?

2. What is the relationship between authoritative parenting style and conduct disorder among pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria?
3. What is the relationship between permissive parenting style and conduct disorder among pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria?

4. HYPOTHESES

The following null hypotheses were formulated from the objectives. These hypotheses were tested at the 0.05 level of significance.

1. Authoritarian parenting style has no significant relationship with conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.
2. Authoritative parenting style has no significant relationship with conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.
3. Permissive parenting style has no significant relationship with conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.

5. METHODOLOGY

5.1 Research Design

In this study, a "correlational survey design" was used. A correlational survey approach, according to Tan (2014), is the one that aims to identify "relationships between two or more variables". The approach proved suitable for the research because the investigator used information gathered from the research sample to explore any relationship involving parenting styles on conduct disorder among pre-primary pupils in the North West, Nigeria.

5.2 Population of the Study

The study targeted pupils in public pre-primary schools in the North West region of Nigeria, which includes Kaduna, Jigawa, Kano, Katsina, Zamfara, Sokoto, and Kebbi States. Thus, the population of the study covers all pupils in Nursery 3 drawn from public pre-primary schools in North-west, Nigeria, with a total population of one hundred and eighty-four thousand, six hundred and eighty-two (184,682) nursery three (3) pupils (FME, 2023).

5.3 Sample Size and Sampling Procedure

A sample size of 384 nursery three pupils in a public pre-primary school in North West, Nigeria was used for the study. The justification for choosing this figure from this population aligns with Krejcie and Morgan's (1970) assertion that a total population of 232,766 yields a sample size of 384, as indicated in the table. However, since the 384-sample size was the smallest, the researcher chose to expand it to 400 to reduce sampling error and increase the likelihood of generalisation. A simple random sampling technique was employed to select two pre-primary schools from each of the three senatorial zones in the seven states, resulting in a total of 42 pre-primary schools sampled from the 9,382 pre-primary schools in the study area. Similarly, caregivers of the forty (42) pre-primary schools selected were equally sampled for the study. Furthermore, a proportionate sampling was employed to choose learners from public pre-primary schools in seven states. Proportionate sampling was utilised because the number of pupils in the 42 public pre-primary schools is not equivalent. Thus, a total of 59 pupils from Kaduna, 77 from Kano, 56 from Katsina, 53 from Kebbi, 61 from Jigawa, 49 from Sokoto and 45 from Zamfara were drawn, making a total of 400 respondents for the study. Additionally, a sample of 400 parents, one per pupil, chosen from the 42 pre-primary schools sampled in the North West of Nigeria, were sent a questionnaire in an envelope on behalf of the child to complete regarding their parenting styles and family size.

5.4 Instrumentation

The instrument used for the study was a self-structured questionnaire titled "Influence of Parenting Style and Family Size on Conduct Disorder and Academic Performance Questionnaire" (IPSFCDQ). The questionnaire for caregivers is divided into two sections: A and B. Section A collected information about pupils, while Section B gathered data on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary pupils. The questionnaire for parenting styles also comprises family size information in Section A and parenting styles in Section B, which are further categorised under clusters A to C. The first cluster (A) consisted of 11 items related to the authoritarian parenting style (APQ), Cluster (B) included 14 items related to the authoritative parenting style (APSQ), and

Cluster (C) consisted of 13 items related to the permissive parenting style (PPSQ). A four-point scale instrument was used to rate options.

5.5 Validity and Reliability of the Instrument

To ascertain the validity of the instrument, the researcher presented the instrument to the supervisors and two other experts in the department of Educational Foundations, Faculty of Education, University of Abuja, for face, construct and content validity, where wrong sentence constructions, omissions, wrong spellings, ambiguities and so on were corrected, which made the instrument valid for the study. A trial test approach was used to assess the instrument's dependability. Forty-five pupils in Nursery 3 at Shemangs' Community Pre-Primary School in Kaduna State, which was not included in the study, were administered the instrument. Using Cronbach's Alpha reliability test, the researcher came up with an index value of 0.92 for CDEQ, 0.79 for APQ, 0.89 for APSQ and 0.85 for PPSQ. This aligns with Mukherji's (2010) proposition that the average value of the correlation coefficient should be approximately 0.70. Therefore, the instrument was reliable and internally consistent for the purposes of the study.

5.6 Data Collection Procedure

To ensure the acceptability of distributing the study instrument, the researcher organised a meeting with all research assistants to provide them with insight into administering the instrument. The questionnaire for data collection was discussed. Afterwards, all the research assistants became familiar with administering the questionnaire suitably and reasonably. The questionnaire was then distributed in a sealed envelope to the respondent. The respondents were allowed to fill out the questionnaire and return it as soon as possible.

5.7 Method of Data Analysis

The study questions aim to find the relationship between various parenting styles and conduct disorders in pre-primary schools in North-West Nigeria. Therefore, all of the hypotheses were tested using 'Pearson Product-Moment Correlation' (PPMC). Additionally, responses were analysed and interpreted using the 'mean score and standard deviation'.

6. RESULTS

The results of the study are analysed and interpreted in this section. In light of the answers to the research questions posed for the study, the data were analysed and interpreted. The data collected from the selected research participants served as the basis for the analysis. Additionally, the purpose of this part was to extract the respondents' demographic data. Among these demographics is the response rate of respondents.

Table 1: Questionnaire Distribution and Returned Rate

Returned/Not Returned	Frequency	Percentage (%)
Number of Returned	378	94.50
Number of Not Returned	22	5.50
Total Number Distributed	400	100.00

Table 1 shows that a total of 400 questionnaires were distributed, representing 100% of the sample. 378(94.50%) questionnaires were returned, while 22(5.50%) questionnaires were not returned. The returned questionnaires constitute the total number of questionnaires to be analysed, hence they make up 100%.

HO1: Authoritarian parenting style has no significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.

Table 2: Correlation Test between Authoritarian Parenting Style and Conduct Disorder

Variables	N	X	SD	r-cal	p-value	Decision
Authoritarian Parenting Style and Conduct disorder	157	2.55	.89	.844	.000	Rejected

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) PPMC.

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The correlation coefficient in Table 2 was used to determine whether the authoritarian parenting style has no significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils. A significant value of .000 is less than the 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was rejected. It therefore shows that authoritarian parenting style has a significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria. The coefficient of r^2 value of 0.844 obtained indicates that approximately 84% of the variance in conduct disorder can be explained based on the authoritarian parenting style. The positive value of 'r' points to the direction of the relationship between the variables. It indicates an inverse relationship, showing that an increase in one variable corresponds to a decrease in the other. Hence, it was established that a high level of authoritarian parenting style is related to high conduct disorder.

HO2: Authoritative parenting style has no significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.

Table 3: Correlation Test between Authoritative Parenting Style and Conduct Disorder

Variables	N	X	SD	r-cal	p-value	Decision
Authoritative Parenting Style and Conduct disorder	138	2.63	.89	.701	.071	Accepted

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) PPMC.

The correlation coefficient in Table 3 was used to determine whether an authoritative parenting style has no significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils, with a significant value of 0.071, which is greater than the 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was accepted. It was therefore shown that authoritative parenting style has no significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria. The coefficient of r^2 value of 0.701 indicates that approximately 70% of the variance in conduct disorder can be explained by authoritative parenting style. The positive value of 'r' points the direction of the relationship between the variables. It indicates an inverse relationship, showing that an

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increase in one variable corresponds to a decrease in the other. Hence, it was established that a high level of authoritative parenting style is related to high conduct disorder.

HO3: Permissive parenting style has no significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria.

Table 4: Correlation Test between Permissive Parenting Style and Conduct Disorder

Variables	N	X	SD	r-cal	p-value	Decision
Permissive parenting style and Delinquent Behaviour	83	2.17	.90	.878	.003	Rejected

Correlation is significant at the 0.05 level (2-tailed) PPMC.

The correlation coefficient in Table 4 was used to determine whether a permissive parenting style has no significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils—a significant value of .003, which is less than the 0.05 level of significance. The hypothesis was rejected. It was therefore concluded that a permissive parenting style has a significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria. The coefficient of r^2 value of 0.878 obtained indicates that approximately 87% of the variance in conduct disorder can be explained based on a permissive parenting style. The positive value of 'r' points to the direction of the relationship between the variables. It indicates an inverse relationship, showing that an increase in one variable corresponds to a decrease in the other. Hence, it was established that a high level of permissive parenting style is related to high conduct disorder.

7. DISCUSSIONS

Findings from the study show that authoritarian parenting style has a significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria. This finding agrees with the finding of Hoshidar, John, and Nadja (2015), which reveals that authoritarian parenting practices have a significant impact on children's conduct disorder. Particularly, children

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whose parents demonstrate a high level of control over them, and have control in every aspect, including directing and observing the child's progress and other aspects of their lives. In contrast, the finding of Okorodudu (2010) indicates that there was no significant relationship between authoritarian parenting style and adolescent conduct disorder. Okorodudu believed that children whose parents have constructive parenting styles (responsive and demanding) are more socially adept and aspiring.

The finding also revealed that authoritative parenting style has no significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria. This finding corroborates Adeyemi's (2012) finding, which stated that research on teenagers of African American and Asian American descent found no indication of a beneficial influence of an authoritative parenting style. The study led us to conclude that the effects of parenting practices may vary between nations. In contrast, Adaku and Anayo (2021) noted that children raised in authoritative homes are positively influenced than children raised in non-authoritative environments. It is therefore concluded that authoritative parents were very accommodating and responsive as they encouraged their children about the dangers associated with negative peer influence.

Furthermore, permissive parenting style has a significant influence on conduct disorder exhibited by pre-primary school pupils in North West, Nigeria. This finding agrees with Dienye and Oyet (2011) finding, which states that permissive methods revealed a strong association between parenting methods and the display of conduct disorder in young people. This finding is contrary to that of Sunita and Jyoti (2022), who conducted their research in India and found that permissive parenting has no significant impact on children's behaviour. The review of the literature also led us to conclude that the effects of parenting practices may vary across nations. From the foregoing, it may be understood that permissive parenting is a circumstance where parents tend to allow their children to have their way without interfering much. As a result, children may engage in conduct that is contrary to the norms and values of a given society.

CONCLUSION

The following conclusions were derived from the study's findings: analysis of the responses from the pupils' parents revealed that, contrary to expectations, an authoritative parenting style had no significant relationship with the conduct disorders of pre-primary school pupils. There was a substantial negative correlation between the conduct disorder of pre-primary pupils in the research area and the authoritarian parenting techniques that parents often used. This is because parents in the study area employ a more authoritarian parenting style than an authoritative one in their child-rearing and upbringing practices, which may be a result of their cultural background.

Two things set this study apart from others. First, the finding of the current study shows that a large number of parents of pre-primary school pupils in North-west, Nigeria, employed an authoritarian style of parenting to nurture their children, whereas authoritative parenting is more common in Western cultures (Steinberg et al., 2016; Baumrind, 2013). Additionally, study shows a beneficial link between conduct disorder and authoritative parenting styles.

Secondly, the geographical scope of the current study covers North-West, Nigeria, which is wider compared to previous research studies that only cover small areas like a district, local government area or a state. Although the study's sample size is tiny in comparison to the whole population of Nigerian parents, nevertheless, it differs from other research conducted in Nigeria and other Western cultures since it offers a more thorough grasp of parenting styles, highlights them in a methodical manner, and allows for the development of new parenting knowledge.

Recommendations

The following suggestions have been made in light of the study's findings.

1. Teachers and school counselors should implement suitable management techniques to help them reduce the prevalence of conduct disorder among elementary school pupils to the lowest possible level.
2. Parents should constantly look out for their children's needs, and educational administrators should sensitise pupils about issues related to conduct disorder and the repercussions that follow.

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3. School counselors and teachers should always sensitise parents on the benefits of an authoritative parenting style in order to enable them to nurture children who will be independent and self-reliant.
4. Permissive parenting should not be used to raise children in order to prevent the distortion of their personalities.
5. Teachers should develop the habit of observing pupils well in order to identify those with conduct disorder to direct them to school counsellors for the needed conduct modifications before it is too late.
6. The government should introduce parenting education programs like the family-centred curriculum. This can help parents become better instructors and parents to their children.

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CHAPTER 6
**THE ROLE OF APPLIED LINGUISTICS IN
ENHANCING EDUCATIONAL OUTCOMES: A
FOCUS ON MULTILINGUAL CLASSROOMS**

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INTRODUCTION

Language is the very foundation of education. It is not just a means of communication between the teacher and the learner, but it is at the very center of thought development, cultural transmission, and building critical thinking. Learning, in the most fundamental of terms, is a process of meaning construction, and language is the earliest form of meaning construction, meaning negotiation, and meaning communication. Lacking productive linguistic interaction, learning is incomplete, and students will never be able to achieve their academic potential. This is most clearly voiced in multilingual groups where language diversity, though as richly fostering as it is, also works as a constraint to learning as much as it is to teaching. It is for this reason that linguistics the science of language has been an important field of inquiry in schooling, with models and tools for describing and problem-solving about language in the classroom.

Applied linguistics is most interested in how language use and language acquisition cross paths with testing, curriculum development, and pedagogy. It is interested in exploring actual issues of language in actual settings, like second-language acquisition issues, literacy issues, and cognitive language issues. Applied linguistics in instruction attempts to account for why some students fail to learn even when learning from effective instructors, how multilingual learners use monolingual classes to construct meaning, and what educators can do to enhance classroom participation and inclusivity. Study of linguistics in instruction is thus not only theoretically significant but also practically significant for enhancing learning achievement.

Worldwide, the relationship between linguistics and education has become increasingly relevant as a consequence of greater migration, globalization, and technological innovation. Migration has produced classrooms with pupils from diverse linguistic and cultural backgrounds, requiring pedagogic practice that encompasses and utilizes linguistic diversity. Globalization, on the other hand, has promoted the utilization of English and other dominant languages, raising tensions between their use to enable extensive communication and native languages in preserving identity. Concomitantly, advances in educational technology have introduced new instruments among them translation packages, speech recognition modules, and

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language learning sites online that redefine language teaching and learning. All these trends combine to make it more necessary to turn linguistic awareness into educational research and practice.

The problem is even more pressing in multilingual nations, particularly in Sub-Saharan Africa, South Asia, and parts of Europe, where there are two or more languages shared by one society. In Nigeria alone, for example, there are over 500 languages being spoken, but English is the language used in schools. While this is good for national unity, it's also challenging for children who need to shift from mother tongue use at home to English in school. Research has shown that it's possible to show higher academic attainment when students are taught in the early stages of education in their mother language since familiarity with the language helps in learning and classroom attendance. But political, economic, and social pressures usually underlie the call for official or dominant languages in schools, and policy and practice are consequently always in conflict. It is here that models of language are found that account for language acquisition, multilingualism, and classroom interaction.

The problem that this research addresses is incompatibility between linguistic variation within society and monolingualism which is usually typical of education systems. Even though children go to school with diverse linguistic resources, schools have hardline language policy that is non-inclusive or non-adaptive to these resources. It renders education asymmetrical in the way that schooled but nonschooled pupils are at a disadvantage compared to other pupils. This limitation is not only confined to literacy and cognitive ability but can also limit school self-esteem and student belongingness. Its resolution lies in the translation of linguistic knowledge into practice, policy, and pedagogy.

Three matters are addressed in this article. First, it attempts to demonstrate the contribution linguistics, and applied linguistics in particular, can make towards the understanding of how language influences learning processes. Second, it attempts to define code-switching, translanguaging, and culturally responsive pedagogical practices, and those that can facilitate the tension between classroom norms and the learners' linguistic repertoire. Thirdly, it makes suggestions regarding how to integrate linguistic research with the making of the curriculum, training teachers, and educational policy to enhance inclusivity and academic performance. In these objectives, the chapter

fulfills its role in the broader conversation of equity and sustainability in education in coordination with international efforts like the United Nations' Sustainable Development Goal 4 (Quality Education) for inclusive and equitable quality education for all.

1. SIGNIFICANCE OF THE STUDY

The significance of this study is that it has the potential to inform theory and practice. Theoretically, it is an extension of putting linguistic theories such as Vygotsky's sociocultural theory, Krashen's input hypothesis, and Hymes' communicative competence framework into practice to change practice. Practically, it provides evidence-based practices to policymakers, curriculum developers, and teachers in order to construct linguistically responsive classrooms. These types of classrooms not only promote students with linguistic diversity but also develop language as an asset and not an obstacle to learning. In the process, the chapter is advocating for a paradigms shift from deficit to asset models of multilingual students and towards asset models of linguistic diversity as an asset in education.

Lastly, education-linguistics at the nexus is not working with something different from language instruction; it is working with imagining education itself as linguistically diversity-aware enterprise. In searching for possible locations of where applied linguistics has the potential to be of useful service to teaching and learning, this chapter is building more inclusive, more just, and more effective schooling systems. In doing so, it is attempting to establish a basis for subsequent practice and scholarship that will reduce the current gap between schooling invention and language teaching.

1.1 Theoretical Framework

There has to be an excellent theoretical foundation for someone to understand linguistics' position in teaching. Language, other than being a communication device, is a system of meaning-making, sociality, and identity. Applied linguistics provides numerous theories accounting for the way language is used in the classroom and how instructors may utilize linguistic diversity to improve learning.

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The following chapter briefly discusses some key theories behind the convergence of linguistics and education:

Sociocultural Theory, Communicative Competence, Input Hypothesis, and Translanguaging Theory. Together, these theories describe how language affects learning and why linguistically responsive teaching is so critical.

1.2 Vygotsky's Sociocultural Theory

Lev Vygotsky's sociocultural theory is centered on the notion that learning is a socially mediated process and that language is the principal tool by which cognitive development occurs. Vygotsky considers that children learn in the Zone of Proximal Development (ZPD) the area between what they can do independently and what they can do with support. Language is the key to this effort since it enables learners to absorb knowledge through discussion, scaffolding, and interaction with teachers and peers.

Instructionally, the theory places greater emphasis on classroom talk. Teachers who implement discussions, questioning, and collaborative learning facilitate deeper learning since learners co-construct knowledge through discourse. In multilingual classrooms, sociocultural theory further demands recognition of learners' home languages as a means for cognition and meaning-making. Disregard of learners' linguistic backgrounds may hinder their participation in classroom learning tasks and suppress their intellectual growth. Thus, sociocultural theory accounts for the use of more than one language in educational contexts to facilitate inclusivity as well as learning.

1.3 Hymes' Communicative Competence

Dell Hymes (1972) created the theory of communicative competence so that the idea that language learning involves learning grammar alone could be extended. Communicative competence does not merely involve knowledge of language but even knowing how to employ language in a proper social and cultural context. This model is particularly relevant to education, for it is not merely a question of being able to form grammatically correct sentences but also of being able to be effective communicators in academic, social, and professional settings.

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In the classroom, communicative competence makes it possible to teach by interaction, meaning, and context rather than by memorization. To multilingual learners, it means that there is recognition of the fact that use of language cannot be monolithic but that there are multiple registers, dialects, and cultural expectations that dictate the manner in which the learners use the language. Through the use of communicative approaches, the teachers therefore prepare the learners for using language in authentic contexts whether for academic conversation, group work, or problem-solving activities. Theory therefore agrees with the overall objective of making education functional, available, and relevant to student requirements.

1.4 Krashen's Input Hypothesis

One of the most popular theories used in applied linguistics is Stephen Krashen's Input Hypothesis (1985). According to it, language acquisition occurs if students receive comprehensible input language slightly above their present level of proficiency ($i + 1$). Such input, to promote effective learning, should be meaningful and understandable, often supported by context, pictures, or prior knowledge.

In pedagogy, the theory emphasizes the importance of scaffolding instruction and differentiation. Teachers need to provide linguistic input that is comprehensible but not frustrating to the students. For instance, multilingual students may need bilingual materials, visual aids, or leveled text to increase access to academic information. Input Hypothesis also supports the application of mother tongue medium of instruction in the initial years of education, and students are provided with strong foundations in their first language before acquiring other languages of instruction. Academic progress of students is hindered when they lack intelligible input such as when they are taught using a language which they are unable to understand.

1.5 Translanguaging Theory

Translanguaging has more recently emerged as a theory of how multilingual learners use their whole linguistic repertoire in an effort to make meaning. Unlike the earlier understandings of the languages as discrete systems, translanguaging understands them as a single set of resources that

learners acquirers invoke and use when negotiating contexts. A student can, for example, read in English, summarize in the students' home language for classmates, and then write in English. This flexible use of language enables upper-level communication and understanding.

In education, translanguaging theory disrupts monolingual classroom practice and takes a firm stand in inclusivity. It challenges educators to build classrooms where the speaking of several languages is not only accepted, but used to help children learn. Translanguaging theory knows that multilingual students need not drop their home languages at the school door but rather should be allowed to use them as a means of accessing new knowledge. Translanguaging is therefore a robust pedagogy that is congruent with equity education.

1.6 Theories Connected to Practice Teaching

Together, they form an integrated theory of practice in working with linguistic diversity in the classroom:

- Sociocultural theory emphasizes the role of interaction and social context, reminding us that learning is speech and culture-tool mediated.
- Communicative competence emphasizes language use in everyday life, embracing classroom practice beyond grammatical drill to authentic communication.
- Input hypothesis demands comprehensible and reasoned instruction ordered by learners' language level.
- Translanguaging develops a contemporary concept of multilingualism whereby it facilitates flexible management of multiple languages in schools.

Together, they confront deficit perspectives on multilingual learners and embrace asset-based perspectives on linguistic diversity. They also align with the general principles of inclusive education in international agendas such as the Sustainable Development Goals (SDG 4), which call for quality and inclusive education for all learners regardless of linguistic background.

1.7 Application in Multilingual Classrooms

Multilingual classrooms are now the order of the day in today's globalized world. Irrespective of why this diversity exists, schools will be left with no choice but to accept pupils who have different repertoires of language. The above theories are helpful to signal the way in which teachers must deal with this diversity. For instance, a teacher with the sociocultural orientation would employ group work and peer-to-peer interaction as a means of scaffolding learning. A communicatively competent teacher would organize activities from real communication rather than grammar practice. A sensitive teacher to Krashen's input hypothesis can make subjects clearer or provide pictures as a means of providing comprehensible input. Finally, a translanguaging practice teacher can have students use home languages for group brainstorming or conversation as a means of authenticating identity and making meaning.

By placing pedagogical practice within such theories, schools can be more inclusive systems that appreciate and acknowledge linguistic diversity. Language is not an obstacle but can be used by teachers as an empowerment strategy, for inclusion, and improved learning results through the implementation of linguistic theories.

2. LITERATURE REVIEW

2.1 Mother Tongue–Based Instruction

The status of the mother language in learning has been maintained in the latest research across the board as a cornerstone of equitable and effective learning. Most studies have proved that children who learn in their mother language during the early stages of their life develop a more solid mental foundation and sparkle in schools more than the offspring who learn exclusive second or overseas languages. UNESCO (2024) further states that nearly 40% of the world's students, and between 90% in some poor countries, are not taught anything in their mother language, thereby further marginalizing and decaying learning. Mother tongue education not only constructs knowledge, but also raises learners' confidence as well as classroom participation.

In the Philippines, Dela Cruz and Santos (2025) examined the use of mother tongue–based multilingual education (MTB-MLE) for mathematics.

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The results were that the students were more attentive, comprehended better, and communicated more when math was taught in the local language. The students were also more enthusiastic and confident in expressing complex concepts, hence learning in the local language makes learners active participants in education communication. The study did, nevertheless, experience considerable challenge regarding the lack of local mathematical terminologies and study materials. Innovative methods, such as the use of concrete materials, peer teaching, and lexis-poor texts, were used by teachers to bridge language gaps. This is attested unequivocally by international evidence that mother tongue instruction improves access and minimum learning but requires enormous policy support, materials, and teacher training (UNESCO, 2024).

Collectively, the research studies demonstrate that mother tongue education leads to better understanding, makes the students more interested and leads to a more heterogeneous class room. It is, however, effective with the aid of the system, i.e., localization of curricula, adequate teacher training as well as material development. This compendium of research studies marks the dominance of linguistics in shaping classroom experience and demonstrates that language of instruction is among the determinants of learning achievement.

Other than mother language instruction, translanguaging is the most progressive applied linguistics for educational contexts. In contrast to customary practice that enforces strict language division in classrooms, translanguaging acknowledges the fact that multilingual learners will inevitably draw on their entire linguistic repertoire when organizing and communicating knowledge. It conceptualizes language use as holistic and fluid, not as a compartmentalized entity, and allows learners to easily shift between languages depending on context.

More recent empirical research confirms the effectiveness of translanguaging in enhancing classroom learning environments. Becker (2024) conducted an intervention in German multilingual primary schools and found that children exposed to translanguaging enjoyed more positive classroom climates and increased student engagement. Teachers also indicated improved classroom management and increased student collaboration, quashing concerns that translanguaging would create a breakdown of order. In the US, Li and

Wang (2025) researched Chinese immersion classrooms and found that English-Chinese translanguaging facilitated access to demanding academic content for learners. The unproblematic movement between languages allowed learners to negotiate meaning and think and develop bilingual capability.

Translanguaging has been shown in South African classrooms to create epistemic access, specifically science education. Ndlovu (2023) observed that teachers and students alike built "linguistic loops," moving back and forth between vernacular language and scientific language to make meaning. Through the process, students bridged the gap between vernacular knowledge and specialist academic discourse, in support of the argument that translanguaging facilitates subject understanding to a greater extent. Similarly, Hassan (2024), in a study conducted with Jordanian graduate students enrolled in Canadian universities, established that translanguaging facilitated identity formation and belongingness. Students were legitimized upon acknowledgment of their language repertoires, which led to increased confidence and academic performance.

Notwithstanding these positive results, the literature further establishes that there are still controversies associated with translanguaging. Martínez (2023), in a systematic review of English as a Foreign Language (EFL) classrooms, reported mixed outcomes. Translanguaging was typically found to be associated with increased literacy, i.e., reading and writing, but weak methods and small samples compromised the evidence base. Nevertheless, overall, there is the suggestion that translanguaging supports inclusive pedagogy and can be used to address linguistic inequalities in classrooms.

2.2 Digital and Artificial Intelligence Technology in Language Acquisition

The growing interface between linguistics and newer technology has also enabled learning to be more accessible, particularly in multilingual settings. Artificial intelligence (AI) has been referred to as a revolutionary technology that can aid language learning and inclusion. Existing research demonstrates the ways through which AI-based solutions provide interactive and customized scaffolding that benefits learners with varied linguistic backgrounds.

Zhang and Li (2024) investigated how AI-generate feedback was implemented in translation learning. Their research found that the use of AI technology rendered students more reflective while revising, with greater cognitive effort and reflection. Students attributed AI-generate feedback to not only explaining their language errors but also instilling sensitivity towards strategy in translation. In conclusion, Nguyen et al. (2025) forecast that LLMs would be tailor-made foreign language learning tutors. They described three principal roles of LLMs: content expansion by addressing the learner's requirements, difficulty foresight through analysis of the learner in refining, and tailored guidance in language gap filling.

Besides tutoring and translation, AI has also been utilized in multilingual environments to support bridging communication through live translation and adaptive language support. Ahmed (2025) reported that these technologies can facilitate inclusive learning where linguistic diversity is high and resources are limited. The research also cautioned against blind adoption by reporting that digital equity challenges are still an issue. In most of the developing world, unequal access exists to tools like AI, and concern exists that technological developments could make it possible for education inequalities to compound larger rather than smaller.

The academic research on AI serves as a reality where, albeit all the possibility that such technologies hold to make language more inclusive and enhance pedagogy, their application must be progressive in the event that they turn out to serve to further entrench injustices. The existence of AI in the classroom is thus the wide intersection of technology, linguistics, and social justice.

2.3 Language Policy and Educational Equity

School language policy has never been imagined as a force for access and equity. Language is not simply an intellectual asset but a political and cultural issue that decides who is to profit from schooling systems. According to UNESCO (2024), in most countries, the absence of mother language education disproportionately disadvantages marginalized pupils, leading to low literacy, alienation, and wasteful dropouts.

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Niger is evidence of what can be achieved with bilingual policies' impact on learning outcomes. Ousmane (2023) compared how mother language provision at the beginning of primary school, alongside French, facilitated easier dropping out and fuller completion of schooling. The children educated in their mother language integrated well into the national language and demonstrated how bilingual policies can facilitate incorporation alongside national integration. They recommend that language planning be placed in a general education agenda, particularly in multilingual societies where monolingual dogmatic strategies are potentially institutionalizing inherent inequalities.

Language policy is more attuned to global objectives of sustainable development. Without language difference bridging, SDG 4 or calling for quality and inclusive education for all will not be attained. Having education policy with applied linguistics as a component in place so that governments can make certain that language is not seen as a hindrance but an asset. Policies that embrace multilingual education contribute not only to school achievement but also affirm cultural identity and facilitate social cohesion.

Finally, the work being reviewed can present sufficient evidence that education is being driven by linguistics and pedagogy and policy subsequently follow. Mother language teaching allows for engagement and understanding, and translanguaging allows for inclusion and further engagement. The development of AI resources pose challenging issues for multilingual learning but need to be weighed against equity and access issues. Finally, language policy is at the heart of education equity construction based on bilingual and multilingual models of unparalleled excellence as compared to monolingual non-negotiable models. Language knowledge also appears in the study at the heart of constructing inclusive, sustainable, and effective education systems.

3. METHODOLOGY

3.1 Research Design

This chapter applies an integrative review design in bringing together empirical and conceptual research at the interface of applied linguistics and education. An integrative review is indicated when the goal is to synthesize various forms of evidence (quantitative, qualitative, mixed-methods, policy

statements) with the goal of building a composite argument and drawing practice-based conclusions (Whittemore & Knafl, 2005; Snyder, 2019). Given the policy importance of language-of-instruction concerns and the rapid evolution of AI for learning, an all-out systematic review would most likely exclude existing, practice-based knowledge; hence the decision to pursue an integrative, semi-systematic approach.

3.2 Data Sources and Scope

The evidence base comprised peer-reviewed journal articles, book chapters, and major policy reports January 2015–August 2025, focusing particularly on 2023–2025 to highlight the most recent evidence and tools (e.g., LLMs). Inclusion criteria: (a) linguistics orientation in formal instruction (from early childhood through tertiary); (b) discussion of at least one of the following mother-tongue medium instruction, translanguaging, language policy, or language/AI technologies; (c) empirical research, or substantial theoretical/policy exposition; and (d) publication in English (acknowledging the limitation this presents). Exclusion criteria: clinical linguistics or speech therapy research alone without instructional significance; opinion pieces lacking backing evidence; and technical AI papers without educational value.

3.3 Identification and Selection

A transparent, replicable search approach was used on multidisciplinary databases (education, linguistics, and social sciences) supported by forward/backward citation chasing of sentinel papers. Titles/abstracts were filtered against inclusion criteria; included full texts were then plotted on a structured extraction form (context of the study, education level, population, linguistic theme, design, outcomes). Borderline cases were included to avoid selection bias if they provided extra contextual or methodological information common in multilingual settings where evidence is heterogenic (Snyder, 2019).

3.4 Quality Appraisal

Integrative reviews synthesize mixed evidence, pragmatically, the MMAT (Mixed Methods Appraisal Tool) and CASP family of checklists were utilized to assess credibility, clarity in design, coherence in sampling, analytic

transparency, and limitations (Hong et al., 2018). Major flawed studies (e.g., lack of methods, ambiguous analysis) were utilized for context but not for assertions. Policy reports (e.g., UNESCO) were assessed for transparency of method and triangulation.

3.5 Analytical Framework

Hybrid deductive–inductive analysis guided the study. Deductively, Social Identity Theory (Tajfel & Turner, 1979) and the Theory of Planned Behavior (Ajzen, 1991) were sensitizing concepts for identity and attitude–norms-control processes concerning language practices. Inductively, themes were constructed from the corpus via reflexive thematic analysis (Braun & Clarke, 2006, 2019), with cross-context patterns emerging (e.g., classroom climate under translanguaging; equity risks under AI).

3.6 Ethics and Positionality

As a literature review published publicly, this research was exempt from institutional ethics approval. Analytic reflexivity was maintained nevertheless: Global North bias was countered by purposive focus on multilingual Majority World contexts (e.g., Sub-Saharan Africa, South/Southeast Asia). The review commends equity-and epistemic access as normative standards.

3.7 Limitations

Prevalent among these are English-language coverage, mixed methodological balance in some of the evidence base (Martínez, 2023), and the fast-changing tempo of AI research. Claims are thus made cautiously, with emphasis placed on convergent findings and triangulated trends.

4. DATA ANALYSIS

4.1 Analytic Procedure

Following Braun and Clarke (2006, 2019), there were six recursive phases of analysis: (1) familiarization; (2) initial coding; (3) searching for themes; (4) bringing themes back to the corpus; (5) theme definition and naming; and (6) writing up the narrative synthesis. Coding began very broad (e.g., "language of instruction outcomes," "classroom interaction," "AI-enabled

scaffolding," "policy implementation") and narrowed to four meta-themes aligning with policy and practice: (a) mother-tongue instruction as foundation; (b) translanguaging as equity-informed pedagogy; (c) AI/digital tools as new linguistic scaffolds with access risks; and (d) policy alignment and implementation gaps. In tandem, Social Identity Theory and TPB deductive filters were used to account for why/when practices succeed.

Theme 1: Mother-Tongue Instruction as Groundwork

Cross-cutting settings, evidence points that early mother-tongue instruction facilitates comprehension, enthusiasm, and student self-assurance with spillover to content learning (UNESCO, 2024; Dela Cruz & Santos, 2025). Tangible gains dominated where curricula were tailored and teachers received pedagogical training. Constraints packaged around limited term-of-art development (e.g., math registers), content restrictions, and pressure to turn to a dominant language too soon. Translated via TPB, teacher uptake is promoted when attitudes are positive, facilitating norms are established, and teachers feel confident (Ajzen, 1991).

Theme 2: Translanguaging as Pedagogy for Equity

Intervention and classroom-based studies reveal translanguaging to promote classroom climate, engagement, and access to rich ideas (Becker, 2024; Li & Wang, 2025). For scientific education, "linguistic loops" between academic and everyday registers facilitate epistemic access (Ndlovu, 2023). Empirical data in higher education settings ties translanguaging with membership and identity confirmation (Hassan, 2024). Caution is methodological variation and some mixed results in EFL contexts (Martínez, 2023), calling for increased designs and clarity regarding when/how translanguaging works most effectively. From Social Identity Theory, legitimation of students' full repertoires increases classroom belonging, which in turn moderates engagement.

Theme 3: AI/Digital Tools as New Linguistic Scaffolds (and Risks)

AI-based feedback increases revision depth and metalinguistic awareness in translation learning (Zhang & Li, 2024). Early empirical research

and position pieces argue LLMs could be adaptive tutors and content supplements in multilingual learning, if pedagogically aligned (Nguyen et al., 2025). Algorithmic bias and digital divides threaten inclusion (Ahmed, 2025). TPB explains variation in adoption: positive attitudes combined with institutional norms and perceived control (training, infrastructure) explain large-scale integration.

Topic 4: Policy Alignment and Implementation Gaps

Macro-level evidence emphasizes that language policy is determinative: early bilingual pathways in systems improve completion and minimize dropout (UNESCO, 2024; Ousmane, 2023). Yet, there are gaps in implementing teachers' underpreparation, examination regimes opposite to policy, and sociopolitical pressures for monolingualism. With Social Identity Theory, policies excluding local languages exclude learners by default; with TPB, transformative change requires facilitative norms (parents, school leadership) and teacher capability.

4.2 Discussion and Analysis

The theoretical explanations and literature consulted place front and center the central role of linguistics in the formation of fair and sustainable education. The research findings converge around the position that language is not only an instructional language but also a language of identity, participation, and extended academic accomplishment. As interpreted within educational contexts, especially multilingual and under-resourced ones, the following central issues arise.

Second, the mother tongue-based education debate is an ongoing battle between national or global languages and local languages. While research defends that mother tongue-based education yields greater comprehension and self-worth (Dela Cruz & Santos, 2025), policy and societal pressure prioritize national or global languages such as English or French. This creates a paradox: students cognitively and socially profit from studying in their home languages, but education systems are at liberty to perpetuate the exclusion of these languages on the basis of alleged economic or world utility. Social Identity Theory is useful here because it explains why students are more engaged when

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their language identities are honored (Becker, 2024). Omitting local languages not only empowers learning, but it also undermines the cultural belonging and identity of students.

Secondly, the development of translanguaging pedagogy shows that students perform best when education systems can embrace linguistic diversity. Translanguaging allows students to deploy their entire linguistic repertoires, therefore facilitating epistemic access (Ndlovu, 2023). However, pragmatic challenges remain, including the absence of teacher training, resistance from traditionalists who confuse translanguaging with lack of academic rigor, and incoherent policy recommendations. The Theory of Planned Behavior teaches us why this is so: teachers will implement translanguaging only if they believe that it is good, institutionally supported, and feasible in their classroom setting. To change class practice, therefore, one does not simply need read evidence, but also attitude change and system engagement.

Third, the intersection of digital technology and artificial intelligence in linguistics has as much potential as danger. AI-enabled translation criticism, tailored tutoring, and multilingual real-time assistance can level the resource deficit (Zhang & Li, 2024; Nguyen et al., 2025). Ahmed (2025) warns, however, that such technologies can further exacerbate the gaps unless access is equated among socioeconomic classes. This is a general point: technology can only enhance agendas of equity or else reifies existing ones. Lastly, ethical questions surrounding bias in AI systems also raise questions about the extent to which these technologies can manage a variety of linguistic repertoires. Once more, TPB is at work here as attitudes toward AI, organizational norms, and perception of teachers' control will determine the amount of such technologies schools adopt or resist.

Lastly, language policy is the last determining factor whether linguistic innovations will arise as normal practices or not. There is Nigerien evidence that shows bilingual policies improve outcomes and drop-out reduction (Ousmane, 2023), yet there remain most governments signing monolingual policies denying linguistic realities. National cohesion and globalization are the most commonly cited reasons by policymakers to advocate for dominant language support, but this risks undoing inclusiveness and learning achievements. Social Identity Theory would forecast that learner identities are

denied through exclusion policies of native languages, while TPB emphasizes the importance of friendly norms that pressure teachers and learners towards multilingual practices.

The above analysis collectively demonstrates that applied linguistics can have significant implications towards educational equity and sustainability. Change, on the other hand, is founded on harmonizing pedagogical reform, technology rollout, and language policy with the life worlds of learners. In the absence of supporting systems, even well-intentioned interventions are liable to be disconnected or symbolic. A bold agenda entails recognizing language as a thinking as well as a cultural capital and preparing education systems to empower learners rather than binding them.

CONCLUSION

Language is neither a neutral tool nor an access, identity, and achievement influencer. Supporting recent evidence, the chapter illustrates that mother-tongue medium and translanguaging facilitate understanding, engagement, and epistemic access particularly in multilingual classrooms. AI and digital technologies have the capacity to amplify such positives through means of individualized scaffolding but could widen inequities if not bounded by stringent access and ethics requirements. Finally, policy coherence from curriculum and materials to assessment and teacher training determines whether innovations in the classroom scale up or plateau. The two lenses of Social Identity Theory and the Theory of Planned Behavior reveal why inclusive linguistic practices succeed: they confirm identities and build the attitudes, norms, and perceived control that drive long-term take-up. Building equitable, sustainable education systems thus entails putting language as an asset to be deployed strategically, not a problem to be managed.

Recommendations

To Teachers and School Leaders

- Use framed translanguaging routines (e.g., bilingual think-pair-share, multilingual glossaries, home-language note-taking with target-language output) to legitimize learners' repertoires while achieving curricular goals (Becker, 2024; Ndlovu, 2023).

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- Carefully sequence instructional writing and mathematics: establish mother-tongue literacy and numeracy requirements before transfer; use bridging modules and parallel texts to make transfer possible (UNESCO, 2024).
- Use AI as a scaffold, not a substitute: use AI for formative feedback, lexical assistance, and modest rewording; add human mediation and explicit metalinguistic comment (Zhang & Li, 2024). Provide offline/low-tech alternatives in terms of preserving equity (Ahmed, 2025).
- Assessment alignment: design tests to enable translanguaging at the process level (planning, writing, group work) but make explicit what is required of end products; test language and content knowledge separately.

For Teacher Education and Professional Development

- Integrate applied linguistics (Sociocultural theory, communicative competence, translanguaging) and TPB-derived change strategies (framing attitudes, modelling enabling norms, constructing perceived control through practice and coaching).
- Create localized academic registers (science/math vocabularies) and open repositories of bilingual materials; facilitate teacher-generated resources via micro-credentialing.
- AI capacity-building: applied modules on prompt design, awareness of bias, data privacy, and multimodal support for learners with varied profiles of proficiency.

For Policymakers and Curriculum Bodies

- Integrate MTB-MLE in the early grades with bridging timelines, materials budgets, and accountability indicators.
- Policy-aligned tests: permit bilingual adaptations (glossaries, dual-language items) where necessary; monitor equity impacts disaggregated by language of origin.

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- Finance infrastructure for inclusive technology (devices, connectivity, instructor time) and demand accessibility requirements; audit AI installations for bias and linguistic range.
- Community outreach: engage parents and community leaders to socialize multilingual practices as the social norm, fostering the social norms TPB identifies as determinative of uptake (Ajzen, 1991).
- Consolidate causal evidence using randomized or well-matched designs on translanguaging/MTB-MLE; record implementation measures (fidelity, teacher beliefs) to decompose mechanisms.
- Investigate AI in low-resource multilingual classrooms using equity perspectives; co-design with teachers and students; share open datasets and prompt protocols to promote replication.
- Mixed-methods, cross-national partnerships to identify contextual variation and policy-practice dynamics.

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