

Exploring epistemic justice in educational research

Background paper

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About JustEd

JustEd is an international comparative mixed methods study that explores the lived experiences of secondary school learners of environmental, epistemic and transitional justice. We produce insight into how learner experiences translate into actions to advance Sustainable Development Goals 13 (Climate Action) and 16 (Peace, Justice and Strong Institutions).

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Abstract

The notion of epistemic justice helps interrogate existing practices of knowledge production, interpretation and use, leading to questions about “who” generates knowledge in society and how certain perspectives and forms of knowledge might be negated and marginalized as a part of a broader power structure. While knowledge is ‘the essence of education’ (Kotzee, 2017:348), debates around educational justice have tended to focus more on questions of redistribution (of access, resources, etc.) and recognition (of identities, cultures, etc.), than on the dimension of justice that is specifically related to knowledge, how it is accessed, distributed and produced within school settings. The notion of epistemic justice, which helps us consider such matters, has entered philosophical and educational debates somewhat more recently than other forms of justice. There is, therefore, a way to go in defining both what it means and how it can translate into school settings. We begin by proposing a positive definition of epistemic justice – in contrast to negative ones which define it by reference to forms of epistemic injustice; to then situate epistemic justice within broader epistemological and philosophical debates. We then develop a series of ideas in relation to how various instances of epistemic (in)justice can be found in educational settings. We explore both systemic and institutional educational dimensions, as well as the ways in which the curriculum, school materials, language use and pedagogies can be spaces in which educational (in)justice can play out.

The paper concludes with a discussion of epistemic (in)justice in the context of Peru, Uganda and Nepal, the three countries in which the JustEd project is based.



Introduction

The notion of epistemic justice emphasises how justice and injustice can be enacted through practices of knowledge production, interpretation and use which are themselves influenced by broader power relations and structures in society. Epistemic justice leads us to enquire about “who” generates knowledge and how certain perspectives and forms of knowledge can be negated or marginalized by dominant conceptions of valid knowledge. Without necessarily falling into relativism, epistemic justice leads us to consider the validity of knowledge developed from different perspectives (e.g. that of indigenous groups, women, the marginalized or subaltern), and how the lack of recognition of such knowledge may constitute a form of injustice.

Knowledge acquisition, production and use are at the heart of educational practice. This is so in a broad sense, that includes not only subject matter knowledge, but also knowledge about how to relate to each other and to the world around us. Education systems across the globe have historically incorporated and reproduced approaches to knowledge that have often meant disqualifying other forms of knowledge and knowing, and which have not recognized a basic degree of equality in the production of knowledge among teachers, students and their peers. In many contexts, education systems have not even ensured access to knowledge for all children, giving rise to what researchers now often refer to as a learning crisis in many parts of the world.

The notion of epistemic justice, though traceable to the work of Franz Fanon in the 1950s, has been recently popularized by Miranda Fricker, whose concepts of hermeneutic and testimonial injustice bring a focus to the credibility of the knower and provide a useful vantage point from which to analyse inequalities in the production, acquisition and distribution of knowledge.

Coming from a different tradition, Boaventura de Sousa Santos highlights how the goal of global justice is inevitably intertwined with 'global cognitive justice' (Santos 2016). This would entail reverting 'the cognitive injustices that plague other ways of knowing', by which he specifically refers to the knowledge of subaltern groups, located mostly in the global South.

The aim of this paper is to gain a deep understanding of what epistemic justice is and how the concept can be used to analyze educational practices and institutions. Unlike most theorists of epistemic justice, who define the concept through references to various forms of epistemic injustice, we begin by attempting to provide a positive definition of the concept. This means focusing not only on the recognition of 'other' knowledges, but, more broadly, on the importance of promoting equality in the production and acquisition of knowledge in general (Hall, Godrie and Heck 2020, 36).

We then locate epistemic justice in the context of broader philosophical debates on justice as well as epistemology. The former suggest that epistemic justice is equally relevant at the micro (individual, interpersonal) and macro (social, institutional, cultural) levels. Epistemic justice is aligned with the Rawlsian concept of 'core primary goods' that relate to human dignity and respect. Epistemological critiques, on the other hand, such as post-empiricist, feminist and postcolonial theories, have all highlighted the situated nature of knowledge and proposed various forms of epistemic pluralism based on the practice of criticality and reflexivity.

The paper then discusses how the concept of epistemic justice can be applied in educational settings, arguing that epistemic justice in education is not just limited to the recognition of multiple forms of knowledge, but that it applies to how knowledge is accessed and taught. This has clear implications for how school curricula and materials are designed, but it also implies rethinking pedagogies, so as to 'ensure that the knowledge passed on to learners attends to the need for them to awaken their own destiny in life'. (Masaka 2019, 299)

What do we mean by epistemic justice?

The literature on epistemic justice often defines the concept in negative terms, by reference to various forms of epistemic injustice. Coming from a philosophical tradition, Miranda Fricker, who is often recognized as one of the leading scholars in the field, defines the concept by reference to key forms of epistemic injustice. One of these is testimonial injustice, whereby the testimonies provided by individuals from various groups (e.g. women, marginalized communities) are deemed irrelevant, untrustworthy and tend to be dismissed;

another is hermeneutical injustice, which occurs when someone's way of uttering and explaining their experience cannot be understood, thus giving rise to an intelligibility deficit.

Epistemic justice, in this context, seeks to right the wrongs committed by such forms of injustice, where injustice is defined as 'a wrong done to someone specifically in their capacity as a knower or as an epistemic subject.' (Fricker 2007, 1). Fricker focuses on the way norms and practices can produce injustices. And she calls these injustices epistemic because they negatively affect individuals in their capacity as knowers. Epistemic (in)justice, moreover, is seen to happen not only in individual exchanges, but can be a property of social systems and social institutions, which may either intentionally or unintentionally give rise to various forms of 'epistemic marginalization' - often because they lack 'the interpretive resources to make sense' of different ways knowing (Anderson 2012, 166). Several scholars have elaborated upon Fricker's definition of epistemic injustice, producing new concepts such as contributory injustice (Dotson 2012); hermeneutical domination (Catala 2015) and conceptual competence injustice (Anderson 2017).

A different, though complementary take on epistemic justice, can be found in the political economy approach developed by Boaventura de Sousa Santos – itself part of a broader tradition of thought coming from the Global South and represented in the work of postcolonial theorists from various regions of the world. Santos' concept of 'epistemologies of the South' is a response to the epistemic injustices which have historically been committed against various groups, whose 'cognitive diversity' has often been disregarded or deliberately obliterated in what Santos' describes as acts of epistemicide.

The project of developing the 'epistemologies of the South' seeks to reverse such injustices by suggesting:

the production and validation of knowledges anchored in the experiences of resistance and struggle of the social groups that systematically suffer the injustice, the oppression, and the destruction caused by capitalism, colonialism and patriarchy.' (Santos 2020, xvii)

While Fricker's contributions are useful to interrogate individual or specific acts of epistemic

injustice, Sousa highlights the structural forces – capitalism, patriarchy, colonialism – that shape such acts, as well as more institutionalised forms of cognitive and epistemic oppression.

Seeking a positive definition of epistemic justice, one that defines what it is, rather than what it is not, we turned to Hall, Godrie and Heck, who understand it as 'equality in the production, recognition and consumption of knowledge' (2020, 35) - a definition that we find particularly relevant when applying the concept of epistemic justice to examine educational institutions and practices. The authors see epistemic justice as contributing to knowledge democracy, which 'is about intentionally linking the values of justice, fairness and action to the process of using knowledge.' (2020, 36). Epistemic justice, in their view, and very much in line with Santos' proposals, 'acknowledges the importance of the existence of multiple epistemologies and ways of knowing' and highlights 'the knowledge of the marginalized and excluded everywhere, or what is sometimes referred to as subaltern knowledge.' (2020, 36).

If epistemic justice is about 'equality in the production, recognition and consumption of knowledge', then epistemic injustice occurs when there is inequality with regards to each of the latter. Such inequality, can hinder 'the development of the full potential of human beings' worldviews and knowledge and contribute to relationships of economic and epistemic oppression' (2020, 34).

Epistemic injustice can occur both in individual exchanges and in the structural context of social institutions, including education (Anderson 2012). This means that an initial structural form of injustice (such as inequality of opportunity to access quality education), may give rise to forms of epistemic injustice whereby a speaker is not given credibility because they are not deemed to be educated.

Epistemic justice, as we shall discuss below, has been approached by a range of disciplines, which have referred to it through a variety of terms. These include cultural recognition (Fraser 2000), knowledge democracy (Hall, Godrie and Heck 2020), epistemic freedom (Ndlovu-Gatsheni 2018) and cognitive justice (Santos 2014). Underlying this terminological plurality, however, there is a common emphasis on how knowledges or epistemologies are recognized and distributed in the public realm – be it in social or commercial institutions, or in individual transactions. Such different definitions share an understanding that

inequalities exist in terms of the production, recognition and consumption of knowledge, and that certain knowledges have been and are privileged, while others are repressed, or made invisible. A number of them express a desire to promote a social world where multiple epistemologies can be appreciated and known simultaneously, alongside each other; and where knowledge can be accessed and produced in more egalitarian ways. Some also take a more instrumental view, articulating what epistemological justice may enable. For example, “knowledge is a powerful tool for taking action in social movements and elsewhere to deepen democracy and to struggle for a fairer and healthier world” (Hall, Godrie and Heck 2020, 36).

While the concept of epistemic justice can be used to examine existing practices in a number of realms – e.g. judicial, public policy – it is particularly well suited to examine educational practices and institutions, which are specifically concerned with knowledge acquisition, reproduction and use.

Epistemic justice within the philosophy of justice

Epistemic justice relates to the production, distribution or access to a social good, knowledge, that is essential to the realisation of individual as well as collective rights and self-determination. Injustice occurs when access to this good is stratified according to the qualities of specific individuals and/or the membership of certain groups, and particularly when the mechanism for this stratification is discrimination, at individual as well as structural levels. In their introduction to a special issue of *Social Epistemology* on epistemic justice and collective rights, Altanian and Kassar note that

Group knowledge and knowledge (or ignorance) about groups can be used as the driving forces of domination and oppression when they normalise unjust power relations... group knowledge can also be the driving force of resistance and restoration (2021, 100)

The violation of epistemic justice – comparable to the denial of other vital social and physical goods – has profound consequences for the ability of many individuals and groups to realise their human rights and/or to live a life that they have reason to value (Sen 1999).

Viewed through a Rawlsian lens, Caney (2014) suggests that epistemic justice may be considered a critical element of self respect, one of society’s core primary goods . Unlike tangible goods that can be ‘distributed’ (e.g. education, food, housing), core primary goods are things like liberty, opportunities, power and self respect. Core primary goods are about how we treat each other, and Caney suggests that people are likely to accept a significant degree of distributive injustice (of tangible goods) if they feel they are treated well and respected by others. Conversely, when epistemic injustice causes one to feel shame and degraded in their own background, accomplishments and/or identity, it is a serious violation of justice as proposed by Rawls (Caney 2014).

Amartya Sen’s ‘capabilities approach’ provides further insight into epistemic justice. The capabilities approach suggests that human development, including education, should seek to advance individuals’ capabilities. The latter refer to substantive freedoms to choose ways of being and doing (i.e. ‘functionings’) that they have reason to value for their own lives (Sen 1999). Walker offers a succinct and powerful explanation about how capabilities around knowledge use and production are a matter of justice:

Ideas and knowledge matter for participation in inclusive meaning-making (and hence to politics, education, the professions, and so on) so that who has access to these epistemic goods at various layers of society is then a matter of justice. (2019, 162)

Thus, when people can influence knowledge production, access and use in diverse public and private spheres, they have greater capacities to help themselves and influence the world around them.

Analyses of epistemic justice in relation to more historical concepts and examinations of justice have suggested that while the specific terminology and applications are novel, it is not entirely distinct from dominant philosophical debates around justice.

Transdisciplinary roots of epistemic injustice

The concept of epistemic justice (although named otherwise) originated as early as the 1950s, with psychiatrist Frantz Fanon’s

theorization around the colonization of the mind (e.g. 1952, 1961). Santos' work around the epistemologies of the South brought new rigour to injustice and Eurocentrism in knowledge production and recognition (2014). Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, disciplines such as sociology, political science, social anthropology and feminism also contributed to the theorisation of knowledge inequalities (Hall, Godrie and Heck 2020; Medina 2013). However, Fricker is credited with popularising the term 'epistemic justice' within academic debates during the last two decades and one of her significant contributions has been in analysing how the credibility of the knower is valued, or discounted, in relation to their identity.

The following paragraphs will explore how epistemic justice has been considered in feminist and post-colonial literature, political science and policy studies, as well as studies of childhood and youth. These literatures are all relevant because education is a social phenomenon, enacted through schools, where diverse communities come together and where people learn what knowledge has value, given the dominant discourses. They learn, therefore, what knowledge people need to be valued themselves and to contribute to society. In subscribing to the view that epistemic justice contributes to knowledge democracy (Hall, Godrie and Heck 2020), we therefore believe that research about epistemic justice in education and schools will benefit from an intersectional and interdisciplinary perspective. The results may help to challenge dominant discourses and strengthen the representation of marginalized knowledges and marginalized peoples in education. In doing so, we may also help empower diverse groups to have more power to shape the world they live in.

Philosophical critiques of dominant epistemologies

The concept of epistemic justice is based on the recognition of diverse individuals as producers of knowledge, and of the existence of different forms of knowledge and of knowing the world. Epistemic justice seeks to right the wrongs inflicted on different people in their capacity as knowers (e.g.

ethnic minorities, women, indigenous peoples, children) whose voices and worldviews have been silenced or ignored by the dominant, usually Eurocentric, canon.

The notion of epistemic justice can be linked to epistemological debates throughout the XXth and XXIst centuries. From postmodernism to Critical Realism, critiques of empiricist and positivist epistemology have argued against the correspondence theory of truth and knowledge, whereby knowledge is deemed to be true if it corresponds to the world as we observe it (Rorty 1979, Davidson 1986, Sayer 1999). These critiques have given rise to interpretivist and constructivist theories, among others, that recognize the situated nature of knowledge production, whereby the perspective of different knowers influence what is and can be known, and that this knowledge informs what is 'real'. These perspectives also propose that systems of knowledge production and use are profoundly influenced by power relations. A key difference within such perspectives is that postmodernists are seen to embrace a form of relativism that critical realists argue against. While both recognise 'epistemic pluralism' (Cartes 2017), critical theory maintains that judgments can be made as to the strength and value of different epistemic perspectives.

The latter point is of particular importance when enquiring about the possible limits of epistemic justice claims. It is one thing to advocate in favour of greater diversity and equality in the production, recognition and consumption of knowledge, and another one to suggest that all knowledges have an equal standing in the way they approximate truth. Epistemic justice claims question the fact that certain knowers' perspectives are discounted because they are *a priori* considered inferior, thus hindering various marginalised groups from entering conversations on the same footing as more 'powerful' ones. This does not necessarily mean that once such knowledges are duly recognized they should not be debated on the grounds of their coherence and explanatory power or on the basis of their social, ethical and political contributions.

Feminist debates about epistemic justice

Feminist arguments about epistemology, in the context of the philosophy of science suggest that 'dominant conceptions and practices of knowledge

attribution, acquisition, and justification systematically disadvantage women and other subordinated groups' (Anderson 2020 – no p. numbers). Like postmodernism and critical realism, feminist theorists contend that the failures of dominant forms of knowledge stem from 'flawed conceptions of knowledge, knowers, objectivity, and scientific methodology' (Anderson 2020 – no p. numbers). In contrast they highlight the idea that knowledge always 'reflects the particular perspectives' of the knower, and that knowers are 'situated in particular relations to what is known to others.'

Grasswick suggests that feminist epistemologists are "motivated by the political project of eliminating the oppression of women... interested in how the norms and practices of knowledge production affect the lives of women and are implicated in systems of oppression (2013, 1). Out of second-wave feminism, for example, emerged the concept of Standpoint Theory. Championed originally by Nancy Hartsock (1983) but taken up and elaborated by several feminist scholars, Standpoint Theory placed women's experiences and consciousness as the starting place for analysis: it challenged the concept of a universal 'natural' and 'objective' reality and theorized reality as socially constructed, legitimizing women's perspectives. Another example is Helene Cixous' 'l'écriture féminine', which proposed stream-of-consciousness writing as an embodied method for expressing women's knowledge and reality, and as an escape from the tyranny of patriarchal languages and writing conventions (1991).

Intersectional feminist approaches have argued that most feminism – 'white feminism' - perpetuates white privilege by centering women's experiences around white bodies and knowledge, inflicting epistemic injustices upon marginalized and unrepresented women such as women of colour, ethnic minorities, trans, gay, lesbian and differently abled women (e.g. Ahmed 2007, hooks 2014, Lord 1989). Feminist epistemologies have established a rich tradition for recognizing diverse knowledges and offer lessons for transforming institutions and practices to be more equitable in this regard.

Epistemic justice in postcolonial and Indigenous literature

Postcolonial theories highlight the persistence of coloniality beyond formal political domination, and

as a form of epistemic domination, whereby certain peoples are persistently oppressed by virtue of their race, gender, status and political location – their knowledge is suppressed or denied. In his work on epistemologies of the South, Santos is credited with developing the term 'epistemicide' to underscore how:

in the name of modern science, many alternative knowledges and sciences have been destroyed, and the social groups that used these systems to support their autonomous paths to development have been humiliated. In short, in the name of science, epistemicide has been committed, and the imperial powers have resorted to it to disarm any resistance of the conquered peoples and social groups" (2005, xviii)

Scholars such as Bhargava (2013) and Ndlovu-Gatsheni (2021) have elaborated upon this work and demonstrated how epistemic injustice in post-colonial settings is a form of cultural injustice that functions to strip peoples of their civilisation, history and development, replacing them with the values, concepts and categories of the colonizers. This form of epistemicide results in a distorted consciousness – a 'colonial mentality' - that manifests in people living in conditions of fear, falsification of reality and the degradation of Indigenous knowledges (e.g. Wiredu 1995).

However, as Santos argues, coloniality occurs not only in postcolonial settings, and the idea of 'the colonizers' is somewhat narrow in comparison with that of Eurocentrism. In this sense,

'In order to uncover the *perverse logic* –that Fanon pointed out – underlying the philosophical conundrum of modernity/coloniality and the political and economic structure of imperialism/colonialism, we must consider how to decolonize the "mind" (Thing'o) and the "imaginary" (Gruzinski) - that is, knowledge and being.' (Mignolo 2008, 3)

While coloniality and colonial oppression operate in a myriad of ways, language and education have played a key role in the project of colonial domination. This has led scholars like wa Thiong'o to advocate for the 'decolonisation of the cognitive process' (2016, 42) through the examination/reformulation of curricula and language use.

Epistemic justice in political science and policy studies

Some of the key questions about epistemic justice in the fields of political science and policy studies are how epistemic (in)justices play out in democratic institutions and procedures, and what is the role or responsibility of the state in promoting cultural recognition and voice, compared to other entitlements such as health, employment and education. While many states have passed legislation prohibiting discrimination in relation to a wide range of protected characteristics, there remain systemic violations of epistemic justice within the architecture of democratic societies.

Fricke (2007) suggests that testimonial and hermeneutical justice underlie the democratic process: they are pre-requisites to political legitimacy and freedom of speech, for instance. Susan Dieleman (2015) suggests there is an assumption in many deliberative processes that all participants in the public sphere are largely homogenous and enter processes of deliberation essentially as equals. As such, it is assumed that there is a shared understanding of the 'common good' (and therefore of what issues should be debated) and also of processes of rational argumentation, that make certain modes of communication and styles of speech inappropriate for public, deliberative spaces. Amandine Catala offers the term 'hermeneutical domination' to refer to situations in which knowers are unable, due to testimonial epistemic injustices, to contribute to what she calls the 'hermeneutical resource' - society's collective "pool of understandings or available labels that individuals draw from and use to describe social practices or experiences" (2015, 425). Knowers (usually minorities), therefore continue to be subjected to public discourses that are imposed by the majority and do not reflect their experience. In addition, scholars such as El Kassar have pointed to how persistent epistemic injustices undermine individual and collective trust in their own beliefs and practices, as well as their confidence to contribute to epistemic practices as epistemic agents (El Kassar 2021). The consequences are that certain individuals and groups are excluded because they do not conform or subscribe to the values or communicative behaviours that are anticipated and/or demanded in democratic deliberation. Their epistemic values, in other words, are different from dominant ideas of epistemic value. Thus, Dieleman (2015) suggests, legitimacy in democratic deliberation can only

achieved if processes of collective deliberation become truly inclusive.

Applied to educational research, there exist particular epistemic norms within educational policy-making bodies, such as ministries of education and government bodies responsible for curriculum and assessment, as well as in regional bodies responsible for overseeing schools, and even among teachers who make decisions as they plan and deliver lessons. Individual agents in these institutions have certain expectations and assumptions about the type of knowledge that is appropriate and the mode through which decisions should be made and education should be delivered, and these norms serve to exclude from education individuals and groups who do not or cannot conform. While these institutions may not be considered comparable to the democratic processes and institutions that Fricker and Dieleman discussed (above), if we consider education itself to be a public good, to which everyone is entitled, then we should equally commit to epistemic justice in educational institutions. Furthermore, schools are key public institutions in which deliberative competencies are fostered, thus the rationale extends beyond considerations of schools as public institutions, but to consider what kinds of education we need to support democracy from a long-term perspective.

Nancy Fraser (2000) makes a powerful argument for advancing cultural recognition – or group differentiation – alongside representation and redistribution of vital goods and resources. In education, cultural recognition could be considered achieved if policies, practices, educational materials and curricula provided adequate recognition of multiple perspectives and knowledges (whereas representation would suggest that individuals who hold and represent these diverse views would themselves contribute meaningful in decision making). Fraser (2000) has suggested that arguments around cultural recognition have replaced arguments and accountability around redistribution, with a detrimental effect. She argues that there is an assumption that economic redistribution will naturally follow on from adequate cultural recognition, but this assumption is problematic because economic mechanisms of distribution (including 'the market') are in fact autonomous from cultural patterns of value and prestige. If this assumption continues to be upheld, the risk is that as cultural recognition is advanced economic

inequalities and other violations of human rights will be sanctioned.

To advance social justice in education, therefore, the argument is that a balance is needed between efforts to promote equality in access to education, particularly for the most vulnerable and under served, with efforts to make education more culturally diverse and representative of entire communities and populations. Similarly, we should work to include more representatives of marginalised groups in educational decision making fora.

Debates about epistemic justice in childhood and youth studies

A significant question for studying epistemic justice in education is to what extent children and young people experience epistemic injustices as a result of ageism. Adults systematically discount the credibility of children's claims and knowledge on the basis of their immaturity, and discrimination against children's views and desires are legitimated in legislation and policies on the basis (sometimes stated but often not) that they do not possess the cognitive skills to make appropriate judgements. How and when should this be considered a form of testimonial injustice? Can we consider it hermeneutical injustice when a child is unable to interpret and make meaning of a lesson, or of employing the communicative practices (reasoning, language) expected in adult discourse? How, or is it possible, to recognize children's knowledges, and children as knowers?

Murris proposes that children experience substantial structural epistemic injustice because conventional theories of teaching and learning assume that pupils are isolated and that learning is one-directional, and therefore educators and schools are not receptive to hearing children and young people's voices, as knowers (2013). Drawing on Heidegger's concept of self as always *with* others ('Mitsein'), Murris favours a model that sees education as interaction *between* subjects. Biesta has theorized extensively on this approach to education and proposes education 'as a co-constructive process, a process in which both participating organisms play an active role and in which meaning is not transferred but produced' (Biesta 1994, 311-12, qtd in Murris 2013). Drawing on Burman, Murris suggests that children's agency is routinely denied in order to prevent social unrest and maintain existing hierarchies of power. She

writes, 'the implications of having to relinquish adult power is one reason why adults neutralise the epistemic value of what they hear when a child speaks.' (2013, 253). Thus, in some cases there is a political intention that manifests in a deliberate distortion of children's knowledge in order to maintain a particular distribution of power. This is particularly the case, Murris suggests, when other aspects of children's identities, such as their skin colour, serve to enhance prejudice against them (2013). Epistemic injustices inflicted upon children arguably limit their capacities to recognize themselves as knowers and to exercise epistemic agency, which Walker suggests are critical to enable individuals to make and exercise choices to live a life that one has reason to value, and to influence their environments (2019).

Scholars in childhood studies suggest that one approach to recognizing and attributing greater value to children's knowledge is not to argue that they think like adults and can contribute in similar ways, but to increase the value of children's unique embodied experiences, including their playfulness, use of fantasy and imagination (e.g. Kennedy 2000; Kohan 1998). To honour children's epistemic contributions, adults arguably should learn to attach value to the characteristics of children's knowledge that are traditionally viewed as deficiencies (e.g. impulsiveness, emotional vicariousness, simplicity) and to explore the possibilities for co-produced exploration and learning. However, this also requires relinquishing some epistemic control.

The significance of epistemic justice, or injustice, across different disciplines, and with relevance to discrimination on the basis of diverse characteristics, suggests that epistemic justice should be understood as a mode through which social justice is secured, or denied. The diverse disciplinary approaches to epistemic justice discussed above are inextricably linked, and intersectional approaches to social justice apply equally to epistemic justice as they do in other fields. The JustEd study should embrace an intersectional perspective that seeks to provide understanding of how epistemic injustices are related to different aspects of individuals' identities and social associations.

Applying epistemic justice in education

Education systems are often considered as key spaces for fostering justice, but they are also

implicated in the reproduction of various forms of injustice. Authors like Kotzee argue that the role of education in promoting social justice should be considered not only in relation to the distribution of educational goods and the positional value they confer, but also, and more importantly on 'the distribution of what arises directly and essentially from education: knowledge.' (2013, 348) If, as argued earlier, epistemic justice is about 'equality in the production, recognition and consumption of knowledge' (Hall, Godrie and Heck 2020, 35), educational settings are one of the key spaces in we not only acquire knowledge, but also learn how to produce it and consume it, and how to recognize different perspectives and modes of knowledge production.

Discussing epistemic justice in education therefore requires us to examine a range of educational dimensions, from policy definitions to the design and content of curricula and school materials; from questions of language, to classroom practice and pedagogies, as well as to school organization. All of these are spaces in which crucial definitions about what is considered valid knowledge and how knowledge should be accessed, produced and exchanged take place.

The role of epistemic justice in relation to defined aims of education

In recent years, a number of scholars have written about epistemic justice in the context of what education should achieve, not merely within school and in children's lives but with relevance to the wider public realm. Robertson wrote:

educators do have a responsibility to help individuals think for themselves. On the other hand, given that knowledge creation and dissemination is a social enterprise, individuals should understand their role as citizens, as well as knowledge producers, in supporting effective and just social pathways to knowledge.' (2009, 3)

Robertson suggests that education, and specifically educators should understand that their role includes contributing to social justice in society by fostering equity in how knowledge is consumed, created and distributed.

Kotzee elaborates on Robertson's argument with a critique of Rawlsian approaches to educational justice that focus on the importance of 'the distribution of education's positional benefits and

how that affects young people's chances in the labor market' (2013, 348). Kotzee proposes that educational justice analyses should focus directly on knowledge. He suggests that there is a distributional aspect to epistemic justice in 'that those who know too little come to know more and gain a voice' (2013, 349), and also that an emphasis on epistemic justice would bring awareness and reflexivity about structures of oppression in society.

A number of post-colonialist scholars have also explored the potential of fostering epistemic justice within the institution of education as a route to accelerate what Thiong'o calls the 'decolonisation of the cognitive process' (e.g. Thiong'o 2016). Ndlovu-Gatsheni has argued that it is imperative that Africa move beyond the African 'political kingdom' - that is, its quest for the independent state - to its own 'cognitive empire' (2021). A series of proposals have emerged for decolonising education in Africa, in particular, with the aim of equipping Africans to self-invent and act with authority for their advancement as individuals and a group (Ugwuanyi 2021).

Emerging from the field of autonomous black world studies, Chinweizu's proposal is based on contempt for Eurocentric knowledge and an argument that the African mind must be re-positioned to overcome epistemic conquest. He argues that black people must learn to defend themselves in a world designed to defeat them, to have pride in the black race, and to reject wealth accumulation as the supreme good (2004). Wiredu's 'Conceptual decolonisation' (1995) proposes that educators must bring African philosophy and principles to the fore, while forcing Eurocentric philosophy to recede. He suggests a two-element practical pedagogy: 1) critical reflection and increased self awareness of foreign (and unexamined) philosophical traditions that have had an impact on African life, and 2) drawing on African Indigenous conceptual schemes to replace Eurocentric thought in technologies, policies and practices in daily life as well as in the most technical and complex problems (1995). Nabudere's 'Afrikology' is based on a belief that Eurocentric thought can be traced back to Ethiopian modes of knowledge and learning, which were poorly interpreted and applied by Greco-Roman scholars, thus creating a dichotomous ethics and dividing the human community. Nabudere proposed that education should be re-invigorated with an anthropological,

transdisciplinary perspective, refocusing the curriculum around the original epistemological values of Ethiopian knowledge that include a cosmological wholeness that enable a multiplicity of knowledges.

While these proposals differ in many ways, they are based upon similar assumptions and premises, namely: the current 'cognitive empire' makes it difficult to impact genuine African knowledge that will be useful and relevant for African people; coordination is essential to locate the causes of Eurocentric knowledge domination, address the problem and reverse the culture of knowledge; and that this transformation will drive authentic, productive knowledge in Africa. One area where there remains some disagreement is whether Africa needs a unified knowledge paradigm (e.g. Chinweizu 2004) or whether multiple knowledge paradigms will co-exist (Masaka 2018). While the expansive diversity of indigenous and tribal groups, in all continents of the world including Africa, is well-known – as are, accordingly, their knowledges – this question of unity versus plurality is associated with the paramount challenge of countering Eurocentrism which, while itself diverse, presents an enormous, seemingly unified body of knowledge and power. Thus, while this question seems easily resolved, it may be viewed as more of a political question, a question of feasibility and solidarity, rather than an authentic query about the nature of African knowledge.

Likewise, rooted in a geographically specific Latin American standpoint, some scholars from the Global South have also theorized about education from a decolonial perspective. From this view, epistemic injustices are expressed in the coloniality of knowledge, which is understood as a systematic construction of modern knowledge as universal and representing other knowledges as inferior or "outside" of modernity. This practice is epistemically unjust as it creates a hierarchy in which a particular epistemology is imposed over others while other knowledges are discredited (Mignolo 2011). In this line, Walsh (2013, 2017) elaborates on how to think about decolonial pedagogies based on her work with Indigenous and Afrodescendent movements from Bolivia, Ecuador, Mexico, and Peru. She argues that decolonial pedagogies must seek to unlearn the imposed

and assumed knowledges and reconstruct our colonized beings. Education is therefore an epistemic political practice with a decolonial intention founded on people's realities, stories, and struggles; it is a site of rupture and struggle.

Walsh's decolonial pedagogies recognize four interrelated elements. First, education will only have significance and impact if it starts by critiquing the historical colonial structures that have made a horizontal knowledge interaction impossible among different groups. Second, decolonial pedagogies are built within the same communities that struggle against coloniality. Hence, the pedagogies of "resistance, insurgence, rebellion, disruption" (Walsh 2015, 16), which have been operating within and in the margins of the colonial order must be convened. A third and related issue is that pedagogies must bring to the fore the voices that have been historically judged as absolutely dispensable within the pattern of colonial power (Walsh 2015). For example, non-scholarly voices, community elders and leaders, and youth. As suggested above, in the discussion about epistemic justice in relation to children and youth's voices, children should be present and heard in dialogues about, and within, their own education. Lastly, pedagogies should be an act of restoring the collective memory of colonized communities. This act has been central to comprehending "the long colonial history of resistance-existence" (Walsh, 2013, 64) and its relationship with the current reality of different groups.

Pedagogical and curricular approaches

Some scholarship addresses how in/justices are directly implicated by teachers' abilities to effectively engage pupils in the classroom and to employ pedagogies that support pupils' learning. For example in the process model of curriculum (Smith 2020) the focus is on interactions, and learners would have a clear voice so that 'attention shifts from teaching to learning' (no p. numbers). Another implication, for example, is in the acquisition of learning skills and the ability to apply learning in one's everyday life. Nutbrown argues that

curricula and pedagogic styles should aim at developing the cognitive and linguistic capacities, and the intellectual virtues – the sensitivity to language, integrity in communication, responsibility and consistency in epistemic judgement – that allow students to talk and learn successfully in dialogue with others' (Nutbrown 2019, 4)

The way that pupils learn to engage with the curriculum in the classroom, and their experiences of assessment process, can be significant formative events in their lives that contribute to their educational aspirations. When these experiences are fulfilling and commensurate with their efforts, learners' educational aspirations may be reinforced, but if learners conclude that their efforts are futile, they may lower their hopes and expectations for educational achievement. One example of this can be found in literature about English as a medium of instruction in non-English speaking countries.

Milligan found that when English is used as the medium of instruction in classrooms where children do not fully comprehend English, children experience a linguistic barrier and this can hinder their access to knowledge. She highlights the benefits of drawing on children's own language in the context of multilingual classrooms as a way to promote more egalitarian access to school knowledge. She writes,

an important contribution to analysis of the EMI as an injustice comes here through the interrogation of classroom interactions and the ways that learners are able to engage in sustained dialogue and meaning-making in the classroom (Milligan 2020, 10).

Anderson (2012) proposes that we focus on schools as institutions which foster certain kinds of relations not only to knowledge, but also between students, their peers and their teachers as inquirers. She proposes that epistemic democracy and justice in the classroom could be achieved by establishing practices of co-construction of knowledge, participatory teaching methods, interaction between diverse peers, and discussions about inequality, including racism and other forms of discrimination. Anderson highlights the crucial role of education in developing citizens with the 'critical reflexive virtue' discussed by Fricker (2003), who are sensitive to other forms of knowledge and knowing, and who can later act

with epistemic justice. This echoes Nutbrown's arguments, including his suggestion (above) that curricula and pedagogies must be strategically designed and implemented to achieve outcomes around epistemic justice.

Educators perform a critical role in enabling this learning and development, and it is apparent that a new focus on teacher training (pre-service and in service) as well as practical resources will be necessary in many contexts to move towards the type of education Anderson envisages. This may include developing new courses, training packages and modules, and the adoption of assessment modalities that relate to pedagogy as well as learning outcomes. There have already been substantial efforts in many contexts to train teachers in modern, more productive pedagogies, and numerous studies have concluded that following the training teachers have reverted back to traditional styles of teaching, including didactic teaching methods that emphasize rote learning and the uncritical absorption of facts (e.g. Lall 2020). Thus, there is a clear need for greater investment in education, which may include ongoing teacher coaching and support, and/or incentives for educational institutions or actors, and which should be informed by evidence of educational reform, to ensure that appropriate teaching techniques are fully embraced as well as in pre-service teacher training.

How do epistemic (in)justices play out in the education systems of each of the JustEd countries?

As we have seen, education systems can play a key role in the production and reproduction of epistemic (in)justice. The histories and current social, cultural and political dynamics of Uganda, Nepal and Peru, the three countries that take part in the JustEd study, pose a number of epistemic justice challenges that their education systems are addressing to a greater or lesser extent. Colonial histories, culturally and ethnically diverse populations, the presence of multiple languages, as well as school systems that may or may not be focusing on promoting greater equality in the production, recognition and consumption of knowledge are all key dimensions to consider when analysing the current challenges that achieving greater epistemic justice may face in each of these country contexts.

In what follows we attempt to provide a broad overview of some of the key epistemic challenges that each of these countries faces, and the policy actions that may be in place to address them.

Epistemic justice challenges in Peru

Current epistemic challenges in Peruvian education need to be understood in the context of the broader history of education in the country, which, as discussed in the Country Profile, has had paradoxical developments in terms of access and openness to diverse forms of knowledge and knowing. The Peruvian education system has experienced a massive expansion, especially since the 1950s, which has allowed the country to reach near universality in both primary and secondary education – something that can be seen as an important step for epistemic justice. This, however, has happened at the cost of great epistemic injustice, as the education system became the main instrument for the hegemonic expansion of the dominant Eurocentric model of knowledge, at the expense of other (usually indigenous) forms of knowledge.

Today, epistemic justice challenges in Peruvian education can be found in key dimensions such as cultural and linguistic diversity and pedagogy, which we examine in what follows.

As discussed elsewhere (see ‘Peru: Country Profile’), Peru is the Latin American country with the largest indigenous population, which accounts for 26% of the country’s population. While 70% of Peruvians speak Spanish, 4.2 million Peruvians speak one or both of the Andean languages (Quechua and Aymara), and some 230,000 Peruvians speak one of about 40 different Indigenous Amazon languages.

Including these populations in the education system and providing them with an appropriate model of education, that recognises their cultural diversity, has been one of the key epistemic justice challenges in the country.

While the country has advanced greatly in the formal inclusion of these populations in the education system, it has not, until fairly recently, recognized the cultural and linguistic diversity of the population, and it has generally viewed indigenous students only as recipients but not as producers of knowledge.

Although with some important antecedents, it was during the left-leaning military regime of the 1970s that education policy makers and practitioners began to recognise the importance of developing bilingual intercultural education (EIB). While some inroads were made during that time, most reforms were abandoned as the country’s democracy was regained. It would take several decades, until 2016, for the MoE to finally introduce an EIB policy, which included the definition of an EIB model (in its three variants); and the development of strategies to support and train existing and new EIB teachers .

While these efforts are an expression of real progress in this area, the reality of EIB schools is still far from ideal. Many teachers lack proper training, and the prevailing understanding of interculturality is still largely one-directional and focused on the exaltation of diversity and cultural folkloric manifestations, rather than on a more critical engagement with cultural diversity.

The National Curriculum also includes interculturality as one of its transversal approaches, but here again it reproduces a model of interculturality very much focused on the appreciation of the culture and folklore of those others, generally indigenous populations, rather than on developing more critical forms of intercultural citizenship. This conception of interculturality leaves out other groups that compound Peruvian society (e.g. Afroperuvians, Chinese and Japanese descendents and more recent immigrants and refugee populations, such as Venezuelans).

Beyond cultural diversity and languages, one of the key epistemic justice challenges that Peru faces has to do with access to knowledge in general, and with existing modes for doing so. Peruvian education has been traditionally characterized by a very hierarchical model of teaching and learning, in which teachers were centre-stage and students passively received the knowledge that teachers imparted, usually in rote and memoristic ways.

While the past decades have seen important changes in pedagogical and curricular proposals, the reality is that educational practice is still deficient in many ways: ‘teachers structure their lessons around thematic content that is dealt with in a very superficial way, following a pattern on questions that point to a predetermined answer, without providing feedback to their students, nor providing them with opportunities for analysis,

creation or critique (Gonzales, Eguren and Belaúnde 2017, 33)

Such school practices are far from promoting the virtues of critical reflexive thinking discussed by Fricker (2003), and far also from providing appropriate opportunities for students to engage meaningfully and deeply with the knowledge they are presented with. Opportunities for the co-production of knowledge are also generally absent.

Epistemic justice challenges in Nepal

Nepal's national curriculum framework (CDC (Curriculum Development Centre), 2015 and 2000) and curriculum for school education (CDC 2013, 2021) state national level of objectives specify overarching objectives such as national development and social transformation, including the development of comprehensive skill sets in individuals that will prepare them to participate in society as adults. These include skills such as creativity, critical thinking and marketable skills. These objectives typically become aspirational for students and parents, who strive to provide the best possible education for their children. However, pupils' experiences of the education system is often not able to fulfil their hope and their educational aspirations. This is a form of epistemic injustice.

Nepal's 2011 census recorded a population of 26.5 million with 125 ethnic groups and 123 languages (CBS 2011). School Sector Development Plan (SSDP) emphasized to cater for a very diverse group of stakeholders in terms of culture, context and needs as well as language as there would be many different first languages of students (MoE 2016). SSDP further points out that the country's children have diverse learning needs due to language and cultural diversity which poses a challenge in terms of access as well as in terms of the appropriateness of content and the languages of education. In the case of gender equity in Nepal, SSDP found significant progress though there is much ground left to be covered,

National averages show strong progress in educational access and gender parity at the basic and secondary education level, a second look reveals that large differences remain - between children of different gender, social economic status, children with different abilities, castes and ethnicities. Certain groups remain highly marginalized in term of their access and

participation in education and their learning and life outcomes as a result of this. (MOE 2016, 168).

In the country, there are three types of education-formal (school education), non-formal education and religious education provided by institutions like Gurukul, Madrasa and Gumbas (Monasteries). National Curriculum Framework has provisioned separate traditional education: Sanskrit/Veda Vidyashram/Gurukul education, Gonpa and Madarsa, in school curriculum from grade six to ten as an alternative to general education. But students' enrolment in these areas are negligible as compared to general education. This showed school curriculum has given epistemic recognition to the traditional knowledge system but there are limited efforts for its implementation and development.

Existing school curriculum is criticized for its centralized nature, domination of western knowledge in curriculum though socio-cultural and traditional practices of diverse communities are rooted on oriental philosophy, giving little space for local and indigenous knowledge system- now small initiative has been done by including local subject in basic education etc.

While the content of a curriculum is important, how students acquire learning skills and learn to apply that learning to their lives is equally so. Many pupils' experiences in the classroom and in assessment make them feel that their objectives are futile. This experience of hopelessness is an injustice to them. Teachers should be trained to deliver the curriculum so that pupils experience the objectives that have been set out in documents such as the curriculum framework (CDC 2015).

Nepal's education system includes infrastructure for in-service teacher training and pre-service teacher education, however evaluations suggest that the training regime has failed to equip teachers to the extent that they are able to translate skills and knowledge they engaged with in training to their practice in classrooms (CERID 2003). The CERID 2003 study suggests that the in-service teacher training modality itself – a cascade model – was flawed. The CERID 2003 study found that the training skills incorporated in the four layers of the cascade model (from 'Master Trainers Training' to 'Training of Trainers' to 'Training to the Teachers' and then use of the training skills by the trained teachers at the classroom) became diluted at each level of dissemination. Some of the skills, and associated learning outcomes, were not

achieved in the 'Master Trainers Training', and many others were lost throughout the process and, therefore, never used in the classroom. A small-scale validation study of classroom teaching practice found that 'reading aloud, paraphrasing, lecturing and rote learning prevail in today's classrooms, much as in the past' (UNESCO, 2015: 57).

The response to these findings has been the development of new courses, training packages and training modules with the expectations that these new efforts will bring about desired improvements in classroom teaching and learning, together with enhanced learning outcomes among pupils. However, mid-term reviews of SSDP (MOEST, 2019) narrates stakeholders concerns that the new modalities used in training packages, while comprehensive, do not enable follow-up at the school level to support the teachers in transferring the newly acquired skills into their teaching practices. It is pupils who ultimately suffer epistemic injustices as a result of the low skill of their teachers, which result in lowered aspirations for their education and their future.

The state's vision of education, including teacher training and curricular intentions, should come to life in the classroom. Nepal's SSDP (MoE, 2016) states that the pedagogical approaches employed by teachers in classrooms is one of the major factors affecting the quality of education. It states: 'Despite many efforts to change approaches to teaching and learning, many classrooms remain textbook and teacher-focused with didactic teaching methods that emphasize rote learning and the uncritical absorption of facts' (p. 24). It recognizes that although teachers have been trained, new learning methods have not been transferred to classrooms. This is a major reason for the failure of the educational establishment to deliver the higher level curriculum objectives (as set out in national curriculum documents) and for low learning outcomes. The government has not proven itself accountable for its educational promises.

Compounding the weak classroom pedagogical practices is the issue of medium of instruction. Up to grade three, education is to be conducted in the mother tongue as provisioned in the constitution of Nepal. The conceptual issues behind language learning and language for learning are still major issues (CERID 2005, MOEST 2019). The mid-term review of SSDP recommends "further clarify to

distinguish the difference between language as a subject and as a medium of instruction (i.e. English can be a subject in an early grade, not a language of instruction), develop their understanding of the use of languages in the classroom and provide technical guidance for teaching Nepali as a second language" (MOE 2016, 63). Teaching in a dominant language (e.g. English over Nepali and Nepali over Indigenous language) could undermine subject learning (Sah and Karki, 2020). The language of instruction may hinder learning and manifest in epistemic injustice.

Furthermore, poor learning in classrooms is further compounded by the low quality of assessment practices. The SSDP points out,

The assessment and examination system is yet to strengthen its focus on application and synthesis skills. This starts from the early grades all the way through to the secondary level. The result is an emphasis on rote memorization and a lack of time spent on developing students' analytical skills. (MOE, 2016, p. 26)

The school curriculum (CDC 2013, 2021) emphasizes formative assessment, Continuous Assessment System and School Based Assessment. Implementation in these areas is also found to be weak. 'Continuous assessment' has often been interpreted simply as administering tests more frequently. Department of Education study summarized its finding on continuous assessment system as follows:

Most of the teachers and Head teachers recognized formative assessment as mere formality. They failed to accept CAS as means for child friendly learning and evaluation. Subject teachers identified CAS as mere additional load to them. For parents, CAS was 'taking test time and again' and for students CAS was 'passing exam without taking test'. (DoE 2018, iv).

Educational practices such as teaching that focuses predominantly on content rather than pedagogy; a compartmentalized curriculum; techniques such as rote memorization; and assessment approaches that value memorized facts and figures play an injustice role to the students. In addition, it is at odds with the nicely worded objectives of the curriculum which students and parents aspire to achieve. Educational setbacks may include high repetition and drop-out

rates (MOEST 2019), as well as low skilled, poorly educated graduates. This is a missed opportunity and a systemic violation of epistemic justice that must be addressed as a matter of urgency in order to promote the best possible life to all.

Epistemic justice in education in Uganda

While the Ugandan constitution (1995) sets out an aspiration to make free, good quality basic education available for every citizen, the challenges in implementing state education have resulted in epistemic injustices. In this section, we examine two aspects of Ugandan state education and their implications for epistemic justice: 1) policy initiatives that were designed to recognize cultural diversity and legitimise the knowledges of minority groups, 2) the use of English as a Medium of Instruction in secondary schools.

In Uganda, epistemic justice is rooted in the 1995 constitution which establishes that the state shall promote free and compulsory basic education; and that it shall take appropriate measures to afford every citizen equal opportunity to achieve the highest education standard possible (Constitution of Uganda 1995). To operationalize this, the government enacted the Education Act (2008), which recognized alternative education systems as having the same status as the formal education system. The Basic Education for Urban Poverty Areas (BEUPA) and the Alternative Basic Education for Karamoja (ABEK) are legally recognized non-formal education systems in the country. These non-formal education systems are designed, respectively, to ensure inclusiveness of the education system to accommodate the urban poor as well as one of the indigenous nomadic pastoral communities. Despite these attempts, operational challenges are associated with epistemic injustices. Teacher training, for example does not cater for the formalized training of teachers for the BEUPA and ABEK programmes. These non-formal education programmes depend on community volunteers to provide a pool of teachers. The Ministry of Education and Sports (2010), for example, caters for the training of pre-primary, primary, secondary, health tutor, instructor, and Diploma Grade V-special needs education categories of teachers with no mention of teacher training for the non-formal education.

The second example is drawn from the design and implementation of the recently launched new lower secondary school curriculum. The new curriculum

emphasizes competence-based learning outcomes fused with teaching methodologies that promote experiential learning. This is supported by the use of local languages as a medium of instruction in the lower primary schools using a thematic curriculum (NCDC 2013). These design features recognize the importance of indigenous languages, as well as the use of local, relevant examples in curriculum materials, for learning outcomes. This has succeeded in avoiding what Hoppers (2017) refers to as epistemological disenfranchisement. However, distributive injustice has been entrenched in this arrangement since the use of local/indigenous languages for instruction is only employed in lower primary schools. Ideally, it should have continued in other levels of education. At higher levels, indigenous languages are taught as independent subjects, but not used as a medium of instruction. Distributive epistemic injustice is also exhibited in the exclusion of indigenous knowledge in the formal school system.

Conclusions

Throughout this paper we have examined the concept of epistemic justice, tracing its origins to conceptual debates that have contributed in different ways to the recognition and valuing of epistemic pluralism. We begin by reviewing how debates within the philosophy of justice and the literature on the epistemologies of the South have conceptualized epistemic justice by delineating various forms of epistemic injustice which are widespread in society, but especially so in culturally diverse contexts with entrenched histories of oppression. We then incorporate a positive definition of epistemic justice – one that defines what it is, rather than its absence (injustice) - as ‘equality in the production, recognition and consumption of knowledge’ (Hall, Godrie and Heck 2020).

We then show how the concept of epistemic justice has been influenced by a series of critiques and theoretical developments in the late XXth and early XXst centuries. Postcolonial and feminist theories have illuminated how the knowledge and perspectives of specific groups (women, the oppressed, indigenous groups) are often excluded from social processes of knowledge development which tend to reproduce dominant (patriarchal, white, Eurocentric) narratives that, in turn, reinforce hegemonic hierarchies. In recent decades, epistemological debates have

questioned the extent to which competing forms of knowledge can make truth claims.

These critiques and theoretical developments highlight the always provisional and incomplete nature of knowledge claims, as well as the role of different perspectives in the development of knowledge.

A question that emerges from this discussion is that of relativism. If epistemic justice is about recognizing the existence of multiple forms of knowledge and knowing, does that mean that judgements cannot be made about the truthfulness, coherence or value of different knowledge claims? We argue this is not necessarily the case, but it is, however, a matter that has not been entirely settled within the epistemic justice literature.

The paper then moves on to consider debates on epistemic justice in political science and policy studies, as well as in childhood and youth studies. The former highlight the ways in which epistemic injustices create a cycle of exclusion, whereby marginalized groups are unable to contribute to the knowledge that is produced and used in the public realm, and thus their influence on how society is made and functions is limited, which – dominated by powerful groups – continues to discount the knowledge forms and content that marginalized groups have to offer (Catala 2015). This cycle diminishes democracies as it excludes parts of the population and reinforces the insularity of policies and public systems. Beyond public policy, this cycle is experienced within education. We argue that as sites where children learn public deliberation and negotiation, schools must broaden their epistemic foundations, including pedagogies, curricula and school organisation, to equip all children to participate and contribute to society's knowledge resources. These claims for social justice must be elevated and match efforts to promote equal access to education (Fraser 2000).

Further to this, childhood and youth studies bring insight to the potential – and commonly disregarded – value that children and young people themselves have to contribute to knowledge production, not only in the future but in the present, as children. This is particularly relevant for educational practices, where children are often viewed as passive recipients of knowledge, rather than as active contributors to its creation. Following educational philosophers such

as Biesta (2010), we argue in favour of educational practice as a 'co-constructive process', in which children as well as adults are actively involved in the production of meaning and knowledge.

We also recognize that within different groups, and even within a single individual, there is a diversity of identities and experience, such that a child is not only a child, but perhaps also a girl child, a migrant, and/or a person of colour. Individuals often face diverse barriers and discrimination and efforts to promote epistemic pluralism must recognize and respond to these.

The final sections of the work are dedicated to examine how education can be involved in both the reproduction of epistemic injustices and in the development of epistemic justice. While epistemic injustice occurs when education system negate the existence of epistemic pluralism and the value of different approaches to knowledge and knowing, epistemic justice can be enacted when education systems recognise diverse forms of knowledge, languages and cultures, as well as the key role played by all actors – children as well as adults – as producers and not passive recipients of knowledge. This has implications for all dimensions of schooling, from the development of curricula and school materials, to pedagogies and relations between all actors in the school community.

We conclude with a discussion of some of the key epistemic justice challenges that educational systems in Peru, Nepal and Uganda – the three countries that are part of the JustEd study – are currently facing. The three countries share similar characteristics, not only in terms of their cultural and linguistic diversity – and in the case of Uganda and Peru, also a colonial past -, but also in the ways in which their education systems have tended to exclude the epistemic plurality of their population. At the same time, all three countries have moved toward greater inclusion of their diverse populations in recent policies. This notwithstanding, all three countries face clear challenges in realizing these policies in schools and classrooms.

As seen throughout the paper, epistemic justice, though a more recent concept to have entered the justices literature, is key when interrogating educational practices, whose essence is precisely the development of knowledge. Education systems have historically been implicated in the reproduction of dominant forms of knowledge,

especially so in contexts with a colonial past, thus contributing to the marginalization of various forms of knowledge associated with oppressed groups. Education, however, can also play a key role in redressing such injustices by establishing new, more plural, approaches to policy making, curriculum, school materials, pedagogies and ways of relating and recognizing the value of different perspectives in the process of developing knowledge.

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