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**ANTHROPOLOGY OF EDUCATION:DISCOURSES AND
DILEMMAS IN ANALYSIS OF EDUCATIONAL PATTERNS
AND CULTURAL CONFIGURATIONS TOWARDS PURSUIT
OF QUALITY EDUCATION**

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Abstract

Anthropology of education is regarded as a relatively new sub discipline combining theory and methods of anthropological and ethnographic studies with those of pedagogy and educational studies. This article deals with the problem of application of *anthropology of education* towards the issue of cultural diversity and the category of cultural difference. The debate surrounding the idea and praxis of multiculturalism raises further questions on how we are able to create patterns of integration applied to minorities, migrants, refugees etc. In the

light of the recent processes and events across the globe, this question seems to be significant more than ever and the *anthropology of education* could serve here as a partial answer to the raised issues. This article engages with critiques about anthropology's position on the periphery of critical race studies, the discipline's lack of attention to racism and critical race scholarship. Educational anthropologists are more explicit about promoting research that details the workings of racism and fosters racial literacy. Researchers have addressed these issues with profound reasoning and concluded with thoughts about educational anthropologists' contribution to critical race studies. Although social movements are frequently background and occasionally foreground in the studies of anthropologists of education, the noesises produced by movements have seldom been a focus area. In this reflection on the field, researchers argue that investigating the production and circulation of social movement knowledges, as contextualized by educational processes and spaces, can enrich our understanding of the roles of education and movements in struggles for justice and social change. Discussing certain methodological considerations, researchers have argued for a type of engaged educational anthropology that goes beyond mere "study" of education policy to its democratization and transformation. Researchers align with a specifically critical take on policy as a practice of power and a tool of governing that entails both domination and resistance.

Keywords: Anthropology of Education, Cultural Diversity, Education Policy, Multicultural Education, Multiculturalism, Social Movement Knowledge.

Anthropology of Education

The chronicles of intellectual history clearly mark the intersection of the fields of Anthropology and Education as the point where socialization studies of early anthropologist and the primary studies of cultural transmission and race ceased to remain markedly different areas of research (G. Spindler, 2000). The idea of Anthropology and Education is intertwined together to create an individual field of study (G. D. Spindler, 1973). The desideratum for sociocultural contextualization of the educative affair and its analysis is paramount (Act & Boas, 2017; Aikman, 1999; Ashraf Alam, 2020b). The characteristics of intercultural comprehension and acquisition, is very important (Abelmann, 1996; A. Alam, Kumari, & Alam, 2018; Alvarez, 2018). In the 1960s and the 1970s,

the immediate insistence to incorporate anthropological theories into educational scholarships was inflamed due to various social justice and anticolonial movements, especially the civil rights movements across the United States and Western Europe, notwithstanding other frontiers (Ashraf Alam, 2020a; Ashraf Alam, 2020c; Kathryn M Anderson-Levitt, 2011; Kathryn Mary Anderson-Levitt, 2017). The pre-existing theories of race which were used as a basis to explain human behaviour were repudiated and were reframed as theories to explain social structures (S. Alam & Raj, 2017; Arnove, Altbach, & Kelly, 1992; Baldock, 2010).

In this article, the researcher has not only provided detailed accounts of the workings of cross-cultural dynamics in Education but has also assessed the institutionally constructed, deficit oriented models of people from marginalised communities (S. Alam & Raj, 2018; Ashraf, 2020; Baldock, 2010). The Council of Anthropology and Education, established in 1968, under the aegis of the American Anthropological Association, was the first instance of an institutional establishment for the subfield of *Anthropology of Education* (A Alam, 2020; Banks, 2009; Baumgarten, Daphi, & Ullrich, 2014). The potential revolutionary contribution of Anthropology and Education in reforming educational structure, classrooms and teaching methods to make them amenable across cultures and countries stems from an extensive and detailed review of anthologies and scholarships for great amount of time (Beach, Bagley, & da Silva, 2018; Bekerman & Geisen, 2011). Keeping aside this, questions continue to be raised about the apparent infirmity of anthropological insights in school (Bekerman & McGlynn, 2007; Benjamin, 1996).

Anthropology of Education is associated with the development of theory in Anthropology while *Anthropology in Education* concerns itself with the advancement of theory in education. Just like any other research, these examples are not isolated cases rather they are empiricist in nature. *Anthropology of Education* uses a framework that has its origins in social, cultural and linguistic anthropology while harbouring a tendency to further contribute to the foundation of this knowledge. For example, "How and

why do human beings behave the way they do?" is coalesced around the question, "How and why do human beings are educated in this way and why not in some other way?". Socialization is now a well-accepted method of imparting education to young people as it requires active involvement not only of the teacher and student but also of the parent and child. Alongside these aforementioned perspectives, recent studies have also explored the effect, educational spaces have on the socialisation processes of a child from the points of view of immigrant communities to mainstream ones, of a capitalist community to a socialist one, of individualist societies and gender identities among others (Bera, 2008; Boon, 1982).

These processes are tempered by autonomous actions people take as individuals and communities to enable their culture's adaptation to the changing times by hybridizing cultural practises and ideologies which form the basis of culture (Bruner, 1996; Castagno & McCarty, 2017). The term 'language' engenders separate meanings in Anthropology. With regards to it, academic research focuses on the education and the supplanting of languages of non-dominant communities with the languages of colonising groups. Through minute examination, the details of the struggle for voice, autonomy, self-determination and linguistic rights of these communities against the dominant social and cultural institutions, becomes very evident. This dynamic relationship of language and social procedures, documented through a host of case studies of languages used in classrooms, has been well theorized (Cherneck&Hochwald, 2006; Chiavacci&Obinger, 2018). Recent researches proclaim the criticality of language in the development of theories associated with cultural processes, learning, socialisation, classroom instruction and educational inequality, as it has been entrenched in the ethnography of education, language variation as well as its related social theories (Clark-Decès, 2011; Croteau, Hoynes, & Ryan, 2005).

Keeping the children belonging to middle class families aside, almost all the impediments in the correct usage of language could be

attributed to the discordance in the ways of utilisation of language in their community as well as in their classroom (Davis, McAdam, Scott, & Zald, 2005; Delamont, 2013). Various alterations manifest themselves not only in the areal confines but also in the lives of its habitants. Studies like these also throw light on its significance in social institutions which house these concepts. Writing and its centrality to communication is being investigated with regards to its influence on the burgeoning of human culture and mind as well as on social institutions. Though a refreshing perspective, numerous ethnographies of literacy recruited in diverse communities, with an undeniable inheritance of deficiencies of the binary, unleash the contingency of literacy on a host of social practices instead of a singular one, providing a prismic view of cultural ideologies (Della Porta, 2014; Alam et al., 2021; Diggs & Socha, 2003). Through the observance of historical and technological determinism, such studies manifest the importance grasping the local cultural practices and the multi layered contexts within which these texts are set. They are also publicised in the construction of social, cultural and economic inequalities.

Anthropology possesses a veneer which gains mass from concepts belonging to other disciplines such as cultural psychology, literary studies, critical social theories, sociolinguistics and learning sciences while its spirit is essenced with experiences of students, educators and others directly or indirectly involved in the educational settings (Edgar, 2004; Engel & Engel, 2001). Traditionally, ethnography classified is an inked expression of the anthropological field of study. Despite several field of study appropriating the usage of the terms “ethnography” and “ethnographic”, it has an obtuse relationship to anthropology with regards to framing (Flam & King, 2007; Fleming, Bresler, & O’Toole, 2014). The inconsistencies in how these terms are perceived are a reflection of more than just debates and scholarly rigour. *Anthropology in education* is responsible for introducing the concept of alternative definitions to education and now alternative definitions of key terms like learning, curriculum, success and education have found acceptance in the field. The departure from the norm, i.e. the switch from the individual being the

focus of the process of education to the society and its social and cultural practices as the primary focus, from autonomous to carefully constructed contextual and ideological structures and from discrete skills to repertoires of practice is what is required to redefine core educational terms and reform the existing educational structure.

Reconceptualising Classrooms as “cultures”

Definition of “classroom culture” and concepts of both classroom teaching and classroom learning are now being revised. Classrooms also serve as spaces where cultures collide highlighting the invisibility of some students within classroom cultures while also underlining the agency students may adopt to combat such culture (Florio-Ruane & DeTar, 2001). Observing the use of language occupies a central position in the purview of classrooms as cultures since it forms the basis of interaction between students and teachers as they navigate the concepts of denotations, informations, examinations, identities as well as social relationships while also aiming to discover their histories as much as their futures, their present actions and the dispensation of cultural, social and linguistic capital (D. Foley, 2011).

The use of language in a classroom is restrictive in nature, with the teacher limiting discourse merely to official or inferred linguistic ideologies encompassing formal prescriptive grammar restrictions, procurement of formal registers and usage of the jargon of academic subject areas (Genealogy, 2017). Research which specifically looks at the interplay of culture and power relations and their manifestations in social and educational institutions are the progeny of the above-mentioned approach. Drawing some inspiration from social and race theories, studies in *anthropology in education* critique structures which facilitate the (re)production of means of educational marginalisation as well as recording educational practices that serve to combat deficit theories (Greenman, 2005).

Multicultural Education

One of the dominant perspectives in the field of *anthropology of education* has been the assimilation of anthropological aspects in their methods of teaching. Once termed “cultural therapy”, teacher training modules had been developed which sought to execute the same, equipping teachers with necessary skills to recognize their own and others’ ethnocentrism by highlighting the forced obscurity marginalized students and students from non-dominant communities went through (Jones, 2013). Conducting in-service teacher education programs with the objective of empowerment of the mentors so that they develop ethnographic skills to deploy in their own classrooms and student communities. Such endeavour furnishes the teachers with opportunities to expand their cognizance about their students’ cultural life beyond the school while facilitating the redefinition of learning as a cultural process and remoulding the classroom to incorporate anthropological perspectives (B. A. Levinson & Pollock, 2016).

Multicultural education consists of the following elements: (a) The reorientation of school structure and social structure as tools of empowerment, (b) promotion of egalitarian values in the academia and the pedagogy, (c) elimination of prejudice, (d) endeavours to devise multiple alternative methods of knowledge construction, and (e) representation of multiple cultural ideologies and communities through diversification of curriculum. Culturally grounded pedagogy, which strives to build on, be compatible with and respect cultural practises prevalent in their students’ community, is indispensable to multicultural education. A certain view of culturally grounded instruction which has garnered a massively positive response from schools across the US involves teacher training programs that aim to sensitise teachers to cultural differences and instructing them on methods of teaching which appeal to diverse cultures (Guidry, Kennedy, & Zald, 2000). The aforementioned method of teaching must not be boiled down to a formula as doing so will only dilute its effectiveness. The process of forming a culturally grounded pedagogy is often accomplished with the module of cultural modelling (Hardtmann, 2009). The benefits that stem from educational programs designed keeping

marginalized students in mind, concocted from a combination of anthropological perspectives, cultural critiques and political action have been huge, and has, consequently, bred inclusivity in educational policy and practise (Ho & Edmonds, 2007).

Initially, *anthropology of education* was conceived to be an applied field of study in which anthropology was applied to education. While some continue to view it as an applied field, for others, the heuristic of *anthropology of education*, for education and in education is an indicator of the evolution of the field. Research in this field continues to consolidate and amalgamate theoretical principles, epistemologies and methodologies from anthropology, recasting radically the very basis of education, aimed at framing a theoretical structure that is a confluence of anthropological theories, intellectual theories of educational research, other experiences related to education and the undergone experiences of educational researchers and teachers in the line of duty (Hopson, 2016). These accomplishments are realised notwithstanding the abundant obstacles in the field of education and anthropology. One of these hindrances is offered by the continued ascendancy of the United States in published scholarship (Hutter, 1997). The discipline of anthropology benefits hugely from research based outside the territory of USA as it brings with a whole host of diversity in terms of perspective, history and alternative definitions of the same concepts (Hyttén, 2011).

Pre-eminence of the English language in the academia greatly disadvantages the non-English speaking scholars greatly by limiting the distribution of their work around the world and limiting their participation in the global discourse on anthropology and education (Johnston, 2014). Talking about indigenous communities, anthropology and anthropologists have historically been complicit in colonizing projects that have undermined indigenous epistemologies and human rights (Jones, 2013). The homogeneity prevalent in the academia is now being looked upon as a problem, depriving the academia of the very unique nature of questions posed by indigenous scholars and scholars from marginalized communities

(Kapoor, 2009). The rectification of this problem is underway as more and more indigenous scholars reclaim their voice in representation and policy. Employing street's words to sum up the current challenge faced by anthropology: In a world which continues to form branches and continues to propagate diversity and where the local increasingly interacts with the global and where those with 'economic and cultural capital' are more likely to monopolise owing to the parochial ethnocentric assumptions, it is more important than ever that fields like anthropology offer broader and more reflexive definitions of critical aspects of life (Kent, 1996).

One of the primary concerns of the field of anthropology remains the discipline's lack of critical engagement with racism and instead an engagement that constantly borders on the fringes. Since time immemorial, anthropology has been complicit in abetting settler colonialism and empiricism by validating segregation through racialization and later endorsing the supremacy of a singular race, the fairer one (Khasnabish & Haiven, 2014). A fair consideration of the discipline's history put some context to the reasons advanced by researchers to account for the field's reluctance to engage with critical race studies, which starkly contrast its subfield of educational anthropology (Kottak, White, Furlow, & Rice, 1997). With discipline drawing distinctions between race and ethnicity, it unwittingly provides race with biological connotations unlike ethnic studies developed by scholars whose perspective of race is based on ethnicity (Kringelbach & Skinner, 2012). US Anthropology's unwillingness to incorporate racial justice movements in its research can be attributed in part to the discipline's historic focus outside the US and its nucleus being cultural diversity.

Anthropologists are menaced by scepticism of their credibility with regard to their relationship in non-white contexts of fieldwork. This exposes them to explicitly condemn racist narratives and white supremacy, and to align with communities to challenge unjust, oppressive and racist practices, may be viewed as "too political" for a social science discipline that is supposed to have the concept of race and solutions to

institutionalised racism sorted out (Kuklick, 1991; Kumar, Kumari, & Alam, 2018). The *Anthropology of Education*, on the other hand, positions itself completely at odds with its parent-field, Anthropology, on account of its open antiracist mission and political and pragmatic goals for research that seeks to uproot unjust and oppressive conditions and facilitate praxis of liberation (Kumari & Alam, 2017; Kuper, 1996). Research that is responsive to oppressed groups and that promotes practices that bring anthropologists, scholars from other disciplines, and educators together to promote racial and social justice in all settings where learning takes place shall be encouraged. Recent researchers also seek to establish how communities create educational motifs to instil cultural identity in youths and affirm as well as protect their language from extinction (Langfield, Logan, & Craith, 2009).

The *Anthropology of Education* is squarely located in the field of education while encompassing enough anthropological strains to keep benefiting from critical anthropological methods and sensibilities. I will aim to address each one of them in turn and arrive at a conclusion with thoughts about this field's contribution to critical race studies. In most cases, scholars who are gravitated towards the anthropology which pervades academic systems and either have doctoral degrees in anthropology or in education with a sociocultural or anthropological focus are deemed anthropologists of education. The example of Douglas (D. E. Foley, 1990) would be apt in this case. His focus of study included race relations and the cultural reproduction of inequality in a majority Mexican American South Texas school district. He received his Ph.D. in anthropology from Stanford University and then the entirety of his career was spent at a College of Education at the University of Texas at Austin, nurturing a generation of exceptional critical race anthropologists and ethnographers of education. Because anthropologists of education have discovered academic homes in education, they are often involved in teacher preparation. Their predominant engagement is with local teachers, students and families in communities.

This also holds true for educational anthropologists who conduct research abroad but are involved in teacher training and preparing graduate students to enter the field of education, thus increasing their interaction with the local community manifold. To illustrate, we have (Deyhle, 1995, 2009), who, throughout her career life, almost exclusively studied and documented white racism and the consequences of racial stereotyping and deficit-oriented perspectives of youth in the schools of a Navajo border reservation. Her data also contributed to Navajos' legal challenges for educational self-determination. The commitment to facilitate the transformation of both teachers' and learners' intellect in interacting with a workforce of teachers and prospective teachers that were predominantly white while also increasing the numbers of teachers and graduate students of colour has resulted in American educational anthropologists being forced to contemplate the development of their own, their students' and stakeholders' racial literacy and critical "racial/cultural competency" (A. Levinson, Winstead, & Sutton, 2017). They also focus on the propagation of race and its targets, refracted through various aspects of identity like class, gender, nationality, sexuality, language, citizenship, ethnicity and religion among other factors while also viewing in close proximity how the same entity changes when these factors intersect.

This has to be considered because the immediate fortunes of students and families are dependent upon it, as is the flow of Indigenous and scholars of colour into academia. The above factors espoused US educational anthropologists to produce ethnographies that expose the workings of white privilege, race talk, colour-blind cultural/race narratives and their realities in the lives of youths, college students, teachers, and families, after juxtaposing American Indian/Indigenous studies and critical race studies with ethnic studies (B. A. Levinson & Pollock, 2016). Along with scholarship based on ethnographic research which is exclusively aimed at educators and practitioners, these studies and critical theories seek to elevate racial literacy and upgrade pedagogy in academic spheres. The *Anthropology of Education*, with its aforementioned ways of fostering knowledge, is strikingly dissimilar from the larger field of education and it

is crucial in order to understand the concepts of race. In order to get to the bottom of xenophobia and classed and gendered racism in the context of migration and racialization, the ethnographies and analysis must be comparative in nature and multi-sited so that one can better discern their functioning in sites of education all over the globe.

Basic and engaged research along with collaborative participatory action with the aim to influence policy, are important elements of the same multifaceted ethnography. In the pursuit of scrutiny of race, it is imperative for anthropologists and critical qualitative researchers, in general, to appreciate the fact that due to the diversity in the world, most human beings are not only differently positioned, but are they are also uniquely raced, gendered and cultured creatures with highly differing levels of privilege and individual experiences of marginalization (Lynch, Modgil, & Modgil, 2013). The term “native ethnographer” usually engenders much debate and the need for recognition of the political nature of research conducted by racialized and minority anthropologists in racialized communities as well as the realisation of complications of an approach that essentially seeks to view belonging as racial, ethnic or diasporic has been impressed upon by anthropologists quite frequently (Manning, 2000).

The influence of educational anthropologists of Latinx communities began to seep into my research subsequently. Preserving the vulnerability of the ethnographies while continuing to analyse them through a critical lens in their experiences as both insiders and outsiders along with engaging global racial and social justice movement is what made their work phenomenal. Educational anthropologists, ethnographers and educators find their areas of research to be magnified on communities or workspaces where people are not only distinctively racialized but are also gendered into categories which manage to incorporate the varying degrees of privilege people have into it (McCammon & Moon, 2015). We tend to seek remedies of racial injustices and inequalities through research that is not only ethical but also heuristically sound. Unfortunately, such

research tends to be very perilous as well as difficult and painful to generate but contributes to our understanding of race and its insidious mechanisms in a better way, hence contributing towards solving the challenges by racial injustice. The ramifications are that they are not successful in absolute sense in enacting the goals of social justice and antiracism to which they commit themselves.

The diversity in their ranks is commendable but considerable effort still needs to be made to recruit greater numbers of Black Latina/o/x and indigenous scholars as well as other scholars of colour (McCammon, Taylor, Reger, & Einwohner, 2017). There is need for more critical approaches to the theory of race and decolonization as well as to an alternative future which is not only divergent in opinion but also has varied central focus to provide us with a complete view of race and its workings (McCarthy & Teasley, 2008). Better methods of learning as well as different forums for engagement with community pedagogues, instructors, educators, teachers and youth are also very crucial and must be established to not only enable exchange but also be able to conduct research in such environments (Mehan, 1991). Appearances are deceptive. Therefore, the work of educational anthropologists may appear to be inconsequential in the larger scheme of things but on reading closely, their collective effort is unveiled which continues to chip away at narratives giving too much consequence to deficit-oriented perspectives and racial and nativist ideologies.

It is almost inconceivable to conduct research on these issues without being enlightened about the theories of race and critical language studies that are often chronicled meticulously. Besides this, a deficit view of native students masks and reinforces the failure of school practices. Many of the ideas informing these researches have found a prominent place in critical race theory. This will be beneficial for the field of Anthropology as well as the subfield of *Anthropology of Education*. Further, the diaspora of critical race (gendered, queer) ethnographies and methodological discussions that pervade academic scholarship in

anthropology has already made significant contributions to the global study of race and racism (Milana, 2016). One of the key things to notice is that the explicit attention *anthropology of education* pays to racial justice is fundamental, if not flawless example of a critical race community of practice. However, there is still a humongous chunk of work that needs to be done in order to advance the study of race and racism, develop racial literacy and account for racial injustice.

Education Policy as Path to Power

Education policies are subjected to interpretation, and its implementation is most often carried out in unintended ways by the institutions along with the actors. Here I attempt to concentrate on three vital elements, which shall be given due importance: (1) The contribution of anthropology towards the holistic understanding of historical insights spread across cultures invigorating our perception of policy as a practice of power; (2) The core significance of a non-dualist and agentic postulation of expropriation in social practice and (3), the prioritization knowledge about social sciences that was democratically conceived which is similar across the civilian population, the academia as well as the so called 'authorized' policy makers (Miller, 2005).

Revaluations and decentralization of pre-existing notions of the definition of "policy" must happen regularly. Usage of the term 'policy' has become so ubiquitous that the numerous variants and cognates in other languages across the world have become engendered. The early origins of the word 'policy' can be traced back to the Enlightenment, where the emphasis of rational social engineering first felt the need for a word to describe its ideals and actions. Its more recent popularity can be attributed to the usage of the ethno-national as well as the popular kinds of languages and societies, where this word is seen to have adapted itself to new usages and definitions. The standard cultural discourse develops as a result and brings forth positive sanctions as much as the negative ones. This implies that a set of organising principles governing the order of things are in fact being reinforced either by corresponding incentives or reasonable

punishments. Such rules may not be formally put in the black and white i.e., they may be stated or unstated, explicit or implicit, de jure or de facto. In all possibilities and modes of occurrence, it most importantly provides presumptions of the existing order of things - an image of the world as how it should be as a norm. Thus to provide solutions to problems, policy seeks to codify reality, organize behaviour and allocate resources according to the nature of the problem (Milton, 2002).

Policy perhaps has a more concrete framework than norms but has less enforcement power than laws. Most importantly, policy coordinates social settings where the actors in the particular setting might not be in agreement or completely aware with the way they are being organized. There is enough amplification provided by now to prove the incessant need of anthropology to decentre the assumed naturalness and normalcy of policy in the current historical context. We find it imperative to point out that the best method to analytically unravel policy is by deeming it to be a form of social practice or more specifically, a manifestation of power for the governance of today. No matter how the situation is, it is most beneficial to conceive policy formulation as a way of exercising power. This exercise of power might lean towards democratic or undemocratic depending on the way the political system and power hierarchy is constituted and legitimised and the amount of participation the public has in policy formation (Peoples & Bailey, 2011).

Notwithstanding the upsurge in the influence and number of supranational organizations with the increase in globalization, the state and its machinery of governance still remains the supreme authorizer of policy. Up to this point, education, health, economy, environment and many others remain the domains of policy to which the application of our arguments is restricted to. Among these, it is education that is most prone to the practice of power in policy making due to it being a universal and deeply intimate field of human endeavour. The state education policy officially attempts at remoulding the family and community into an image of itself, doing so in its quest to achieve national unity, security or

development, all the while preserving the interests of the dominant groups and maintaining the status quo. Thus, the democratization of education policy becomes all the more important, granting greater autonomy to the people to decide on their child's education, therefore nullifying the assimilation and social reproduction along with their impending threats (Pilgrim & Pretty, 2010).

It is unfortunate to note that parents and communities do not always keep the best interests of their children at heart while engaging in action. It is important to note that democratization of education policy can go both ways. The empowerment towards greater participation of parents and other local actors - including teachers who are rarely consulted during the formulation of education policy is served by it. It also implies public good as the dependence of education on the commitment of parents and children and measures their own interests against the same yardstick. Anthropology must command social evaluation as well as stimulation but should not be limited to that role. It is impossible to paint all normativists in such fair hues solely by employing a diabolical vocabulary in municipal governments, progressive school reformers, school superintendents and even teacher educators, simply under the pretext of democratic socialists. Some of them might even be among people like us, our own ordinary kind.

Anthropology of education, if given the permit, has the ability to offer both politically and administratively feasible and actionable kind of knowledge. If not, one can retreat to the all too comfortable position of critique that the academia always seems to endorse; which is either an over exaggeration of the potential power and influence that the academia believes it wields or wallow in the self-satisfied attitude that we develop by claiming to be able to comprehend that the wool is being pulled over the common people's eyes (Polletta & Amenta, 2001). It would be very unwise of us to not remember the wide array of educational anthropologists serving outside the conventional academia who are unable to produce knowledge solely for the sake of critique. But those of us who are privileged enough to be functioning under the umbrella of the

academia: how do we cope when we step into the tumultuous areas of policy, practice and governance, where the function is not restricted to just critiquing, where we must not only propose but also prescribe? Will it enable us to democratize policy formation to a point where policy elites finally start taking interest in local knowledge and consider it an inevitable source to be understood and engage with stakeholders at the local level, in turn acting as a catalyst for local policy production? The way to find answers to these questions must be paved very carefully with a vision that is eclectic besides being pragmatic and then made concrete by incorporating values of inclusivity and dignity.

Such plans of action broadens the stage in liberal representative democracies for participation as well as provision of justice, causing a greater number of voices to be heard, represented and take part in the deliberation of the formulation of an authorized policy (Rabaka, 2009). Participatory democracy is enabled to employ popular agency and knowledge as a catalyst for creative policy appropriation and production with the aim of widening its reach. In an era where the biggest threat to democracy is the neoliberal agenda of corporate power and expansion of markets for public resources, critical policy appropriation can be of supreme importance in our quest to strengthen local agencies and institutions which struggle to restore or magnify public power (Ramsey, Williams, & Vold, 2003). Educational anthropology is not at the dearth of promising examples to cite. Texas legislature has greatly benefitted from the work of (Valenzuela, 2005) that serves as an example of how important policy debates can be. It altered the calculus of educational resource allocation that can be restructured by ethnographic knowledge. Digressing from the main point, it is concluded in the impact of the participation of youth that a policy can be questioned, destabilized or even reach to the extent of being changed democratically through a sustained and passionate inquiry.

Educational Anthropology and Social Movement Knowledge

One of the least explored areas of research in the field of *anthropology of education* is social movement knowledge. This dearth of research coincides with a period (1990s to present day) in which the inquiry into the processes of cultural production and the circulation of social movement knowledge was gaining momentum owing to the conducive conditions of crafting theory, methodologies and a stable political environment. Throughout the twentieth century, social movement studies derived from anthropology as a fringe player since the academia found sociologists and political scientists more suitable for charting the course as well as the timeline of all the social movements so as to be studied, preferring a socio-structural approach over the one driven by individual motives, adopting an empirical or heavily quantitative approach over a theoretical one and practising the rationalist approach of the American anthropologists over the more philosophical variant pervasive in their European counterparts and so forth (Verkuyten, 2013).

Despite the infringement of the internet and social media and the rapidly expanding transnational reach of activists and organisations which has led to the radical transformation of social movement and its studies, the aforementioned outlook still holds a significant amount of prevalence. However, the fields of the history of education as well as adult education remain completely uninfluenced by these trends. The study of social movement has been left for dereliction in multiple fields of educational research. The ahistorical embrace of social order in the instrumental, organisational and functional theories endemic to educational research was one of the major factors responsible for such negligence throughout the twentieth century. The society has slackened its stranglehold of the ahistorical and deterministic theories of education mainly because of the rise of postmodern influences. The current form of educational research explicitly focuses on social movement and has successfully managed to widen its reach, but unfortunately, this reach continues to be compartmentalised.

Educational research directed at social movement suffers from inconsistencies and inattention that is characteristic of the research processes focussing on this topic. The contribution of social movements in providing the contexts of the phenomena investigated have also comprehensively argued in various reputed journals. As has been visible in many cases, connections to social movements are more likely to be ambiguous instead of being distinctly defined in research. In the vast sea of research that connects to social movement in different ways, there is very little research or fragments of literature that exists and qualifies for the criteria of direct engagement with social movement. In the 1990s, a couple of scholars inquired into the connections that existed among the trinity of social movements, schooling and the state in multiple divergent circumstances. The arguments presented by some had the popular literacy focused education movement associated with school reform activity in Sao Paulo, Paulo Freire and MOVA, as their premise while others sought to focus on the school related responses to the Exclusionist movements of the early 90s, fuelled by a wave of nationalism in the US, targeting undocumented migrants just like in Germany, where the foreign guest workers and refugees were being targeted on a large scale.

It is imperative to address that the ethnographic work was amalgamated with historical narratives of the movements in question by numerous scholars, including Murillo (2009), who mentioned in her latest works of the fight that the Ahurco of Columbia staged, as a part of an all-encompassing social movement, with the objective of stimulating the decolonisation of the schools (Gadotti, 2008). Well outlined social movements serve as progenitors of knowledge and exploring popular educational practices in their milieu has made it imperative for us to argue the perspective that looks upon social movement organisations as a mere alternative to the main space. However, this alternative space was once the not only most festive, educative and political space but it also simultaneously encouraged the critique as well as the contestation of the hegemony of neoliberal globalisation and its promotion of instrumentalist forms of literacy and knowledge. The foundation for the creation and

furtherance of knowledge about social movements along with the promotion of learning and literacy of multiple natures, ranging from informal and non-formal to formal, is provided by education. This process is a prerequisite at every stage of its cycle, initiating from the conception and articulation of the vision and guiding the movement, to its organisation and gathering of (popular support). It is absolutely necessary even in the very last stages of its cycle: creating a lasting imprint on policy, law, institutions and social life.

The works of (Eyerman & Jamison, 1991), Paulo Freire, Antonio Gramsci, and other critical theorists and pedagogues have been a constant source of reference for the adult education researchers in their scholarship on the theme of social movement knowledge. Though the above works offers compelling insights, it cannot be denied that the formulation of practical knowledge in social movements is most often underestimated to ever be deemed the starting point for scholarly inquiry. The dynamics of power and privilege in the inception and circulation of social movement across communities, networks and scales can be better comprehended with the addition of innovative ethnographic research to anthropological and critical theory. The popular notion was that culture continuously evolved to ceaselessly create meaning in social and material context. We discovered that there lay hope in such creations which occupy the central positions in the notions concerned with cultural production while also appreciating the manner in which powerful structural constraints on this creation were well emphasized (Vertovec, 2013). The conditions, secured by deliberate devotion to critiquing social and cultural status quo, challenging the established sources of power and hegemony and promoting, rather fighting for a vision of an alternative future, were unequivocally the most optimal for the exploration of the creativity inherent in cultural production.

One of the most striking examples of social movements and its correlation to creation of knowledge is the case of Nepali teachers whose promotion of far more progressive social insights on caste and gender

inequalities stems from their active involvement in pro-democratic movements in college and this has been well documented by (Skinner & Holland, 1996). The Chicano Civil Rights Movement, which sought to introduce specific reforms in schooling practices could not be as successful in lending sustainability to those reforms which declined after only a decade in the same small town of South Texas mentioned in a study provided by (Trujillo, 1994). It can be concluded from the above that such cases bring forth research that pushes the boundaries of social movement knowledge beyond their conception, into the contested territory surveying the multiple aspects of society they influence over time.

In spite of the potential of this particular field of study, the challenges that face the researchers in their quest for the same are daunting. The only shortcoming in the utilization of ethnographic research for propagation of movement knowledge is that sole Ethnography in its current form is an inadequate tool to explore the depths of historical significance or the expanse of geographic connections of the majority of present day civilisations. Some inquiries might require delving into the digital world of cyberspace because the internet especially the social media platforms stimulate the crucial task of organising and promoting activism, not to mention knowledge production and circulation, in the contemporary world of social movements. Even here change in methodology to facilitate online research will go a long way to complement traditional methods. It would be unwise to claim to do justice to all of these dimensions in a single study and hence more feasible would be to issue a call for collaboration among scholars to lay the groundwork for the better understandings of these issues across multiple studies.

Communities and social networks, the products of time and place, are believed to serve as contexts for the cultural motifs of identities, meanings and perspectives among anthropologists for some time now. Social movement impacts the society, whether positive or negative is better left to judgement, and acts as a catalyst for social, cultural and political change by captivating the hearts and minds of a host of people

through ideas. In times more conducive, it would be worth inquiring into the circle of birth and crusade of social movement knowledge which is in close relation to educational spaces and institutions as well as educational activities and pedagogical narratives. This would serve to further our comprehension of the interconnectedness of movements and education in social change. Wave upon wave of fresh social movement activists ranging across the young and the old as well as the right and the left, crash on the shore of established hegemony, creating change in ways never witnessed before. The social movement knowledge that manages to create ripples much further from its source, one that captivates a whole generation will leave the longest lasting mark on the society.

Understanding Cultural Diversity

This section addresses the concern of the application of *anthropology of education* to cultural diversity particularly inclusive of the category of cultural difference. The idea along with the praxis of multiculturalism is constantly debated upon, rendering it to be further encompassed by questions pertaining to the development of models of integration to be adopted to unify minorities, migrants, refugees, etc. The bond between cultural anthropology and education is composed not only of an elaborate tale of mutual fascination but also of some significant turns. Notwithstanding this variance, all these perspectives unite together in sharing a deep interest to deliver answers to inquiries on the formation, transmission and the transformation of culture in diverse conditions of human living (Verkuyten, 2013).

These investigations might not only bring to light solutions to the above questions but also highlight the more important issue of cultural diversity as well as cultural difference. The structural relations emerging through this process serve as a base which is used by humans to not merely reproduce similar structures but to improvise or even customise them tailored to our needs or according to some other external factors. A vast majority of anthropologists as well as other social scientists acknowledge the absence of an exclusive definition of culture which could serve as an

explanation to the above phenomenon and also provide a reason which justifies the differentiation in their practices across the different cultural landscapes. A truly postmodern feature is reflected by the Weberian approach which tends the anthropological toolset to shift and lend further complexity to concepts such as the interpretation of the cultural praxis. Cultural difference in particular is nonetheless anthropology's *raison d'être* right from its historical roots.

Anthropology of Education and Issues of Multiculturalism

More than any other discipline within the arena of social sciences, it is anthropology that has engaged with cultural diversity throughout the timeline, particularly in theory. When confronting *anthropology of education* as a sub-discipline, dovetailing the theory and methods of anthropology and ethnography with those of educational studies and pedagogy, it must be noted that the pre-existing accounts of anthropology by Franz Boas or Melville Herskovitz or other representants of the "Culture and Personality" school of thought could be set easily in this intriguing current (Yates, 1987). Nevertheless, the *anthropology of education* and its theory as well as methods share a remarkable common foundation of that single question which seeks to identify the way in which culture shapes our experience and the most viable reason for this experience to be so different across societies. This very question, besides piercing through a simple ethnography of differences, furthers into the basic processes which bring about diversity (Vertovec, 2013).

These trajectories have been reorganized, transformed as well as made to adapt the historical, political or economic environment over time. The cultural therapy postulated by George Spindler is based on the same idea and is followed within his own project comprising two major ways to understand the *anthropology of education*. One of the ways is concerned with emphasising on the bond which connects the field of anthropological research and the domain of education while the other focuses on the use of this anthropological research to analyse the data obtained from educational processes (Vertovec & Wessendorf, 2010). By channelizing his focus on

schooling and its related policies, he found out that this cultural therapy is more of an expectation from teachers to consciously have a constant impression of their own culture on the environment amidst all the other diverse cultural shades. Enormous amounts of ethnographic data and ample anthropological workshops as a result of the extensive field work in educational institutions has demystified that all observations are inherently contextualised and that the degree of responsiveness of social behaviour and communication to the individuals or groups involved depends upon the socio-cultural information. This must be considered as a viable answer to Touraine's question on whether we are equipped to thrive with the other beings (Wiktorowicz, 2004).

The emphasis on combining the general study of man with empirical application against the backdrop of a dynamic culture expresses the subjective turn in social philosophy which took place in the 20th century. Apart from this, it is a response demand of constructing a new form of multicultural society in the United States or Canada of the modern times via scientific means. The process which had led to the transformation of historicity into plurality through the orientation of cultural studies on pedagogy is the main motive behind the extremely close encounter of the present and the past (Woodrow, Verma, Rocha-Trindade, Campani, & Bagley, 2019). The ability to learn the skills of habituation of oneself to this transformation qualifies itself as necessary for the dominant culture as much as the minority. When cultural differences in anthropology undergo scientific investigation, one question arises - How do ethnographic methods aid the collection of empirical data in selected groups and situations? This reveals a broader outlook on the mechanisms of culture in all conditions encountered by the common man. The constant interaction between the universal and local factors of culture is showcased by the history of anthropology. The clear participation of the *anthropology of education* in this complicated history as well as its focus on the aspect of procession of culture aids in the formulation of a suggestion to overcome the dichotomy via a dynamic and adaptive approach (Wortham, Kim, & May, 2017).

Conclusion

Anthropology in education is responsible for introducing the concept of alternative definitions to education and now alternative definitions of key terms like learning, curriculum, success and education have found acceptance in the field. The departure from the norm, i.e. the switch from the individual being the focus of the process of education to the society and its social and cultural practices as the primary focus, from autonomous to carefully constructed contextual and ideological structures and from discrete skills to repertoires of practise is what is required to redefine core educational terms and reform the existing educational structure.

Drawing some inspiration from social and race theories, studies in *anthropology of education* critiques the structures that facilitate the (re)production of means of educational marginalisation as well as records educational practises that serve to combat deficit theories. The diaspora of critical race (gendered, queer) ethnographies and methodological discussions that pervade academic scholarship in anthropology has already made significant contributions to the global study of race and racism. One of the key things to notice is that the explicit attention *anthropology of education* pays to racial justice is fundamental, if not flawless example of a critical race community of practice. However, there is still a humongous chunk of work that needs to be done in order to advance the study of race and racism, to develop racial literacy and to account for racial injustice.

Anthropology of education, if given the permit, has the ability to offer both politically and administratively feasible and actionable kind of knowledge. If not, one can retreat to the all too comfortable position of critique that the academia always seems to endorse; which is either an over exaggeration of the potential power and influence that the academia believes it wields or wallow in the self-satisfied attitude that we develop by claiming to be able to comprehend that the wool is being pulled over the common people's eyes. Participatory democracy is enabled to employ popular agency and knowledge as a catalyst for creative policy

appropriation and production with the aim of widening its reach. In an era where the biggest threat to democracy is the neoliberal agenda of corporate power and expansion of markets for public resources, critical policy appropriation can be of supreme importance in our quest to strengthen local agencies and institutions which struggle to restore or magnify public power.

In spite of the potential of this particular field of study, the challenges that the researchers face in their quest for the same are daunting. The only shortcoming in the utilization of ethnographic research for propagation of movement knowledge is that sole Ethnography in its current form is an inadequate tool to explore the depths of historical significance or the expanse of geographic connections of the majority of present-day civilisations. Some inquiries might require delving into the digital world of cyberspace because the internet especially the social media platforms stimulate the crucial task of organising and promoting activism, not to mention knowledge production and circulation, in the contemporary world of social movements. Even here change in methodology to facilitate online research will go a long way to complement traditional methods.

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