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# COVID-19 AND MULTICULTURAL EDUCATION IN BRAZIL

## ABSTRACT

*The paper aims to discuss the effects of COVID-19 on the Brazilian educational scenario. It analyses educational directives in the pandemic times, gleaning possibilities and challenges for the curriculum in the different levels of schooling. The focus of the study is two-fold: it theoretically discusses the need for multicultural intersectional educational perspectives in culturally diverse countries and it analyses educational policies issued by the Brazilian National Council for Education at the time of the COVID-19 pandemic, suggesting ways by which they could enhance a multicultural, intersectional perspective in their recommendations. Based on a multicultural perspective, the paper argues that the technical dimension that permeates educational directives, relevant though it may be, should arguably be accompanied by ideas that could enhance the students' emotional, affectionate and cultural dimensions, in complex times as those lived by them and by all in the middle of a pandemic.*

Keywords: *Educational policies; multicultural perspectives; COVID-19; Brazil; curriculum; cultural diversity.*

## 1. INTRODUCTION

The present article aims to glean the challenges and potentials unravelled by the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic in Brazil. It discusses multicultural and intersectional educational perspectives and it analyses educational policies issued as a response to it in Brazil. The article presents possible recommendations so that a more multiculturally oriented approach could embed educational policies in culturally diverse countries.

The main argument is based on the need to understand the effects and the possibilities brought about by COVID-19 in education in an intersectional and multicultural perspective. An intersectional analysis of the COVID-19 pandemic means to perceive the interrelatedness of economic, social, cultural, political and even ideological factors that have impacted the way in which the pandemic has been dealt with and affected educational institutions. Multiculturalism refers to the valuing of cultural diversity and the recognition of the specificities of cultural identities, including individual, collective and institutional ones



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(Ivenicki, 2018; 2019; 2020). Such a perspective should help uncover the contradictions and challenges of educational contexts that deal with cultural plurality and that have been uncovered by the onset of the pandemic.

It should be noted that even though the onset of COVID-19 in 2020 has made an astounding mark worldwide, similarities and differences among the countries showed that a pandemic not only means the onslaught of an epidemic, but also it uncovers challenges that were already present either in similar or in peculiar ways in different societies. By showing the Brazilian case, the article may be relevant comparatively. It could hopefully promote reflections on how multicultural perspectives should be useful to think of education in a more equitable way than the one prior to the onset of the 2020 pandemic.

Based on that, the paper firstly addresses the meanings of multicultural and intersectional perspectives in education and curriculum, pointing to their possibilities in unequal and multicultural contexts. It then gives an in-depth overview of contemporary Brazilian educational policies directed at mitigating the impact of the COVID-19 pandemic on the Brazilian education system. It includes a narrative of the multicultural Brazilian society and digital learning in the country's education system. It concludes by making recommendations based on the multicultural and intersectional framework adopted in the study.

## 2. A MULTICULTURAL AND INTERSECTIONAL LOOK AT EDUCATION AND CURRICULUM

Thinking multiculturally about curriculum in the context of schooling and of higher education, including teacher training, implies acknowledging its potential to promote the valuing of cultural diversity and to challenge racism, inequalities, prejudices and silencing of voices of subordinated groups in the face of race, ethnicity, gender and other identity markers (Banks, 2004; Ivenicki, 2018; 2019; 2020; Warren & Canen, 2012). In this perspective, possibilities of transformative, curriculum dialogues are sought in a curriculum horizon conceived multiculturally as a space for differentiation and the valuing of otherness.

The concept of intersectionality has been used in multicultural perspectives and is considered relevant in the context of this project. According to Coleman (2019), intersectionality was first popularised by Kimberlé Crenshaw who, in an article written in 1991 called "Mapping the Margins", explained how subjects present themselves as women and also people of colour, marginalised by discourses that, although well-intentioned multiculturally, are structured to respond to one or other identity marker, without the necessary articulated vision of gender and ethnic-racial identity. Such considerations start from the idea that we live complex lives intersected by systems of privilege and oppression.

At the same time, curricular experiences that develop from multiculturally oriented themes, focused on life stories and perspectives of marginalised cultural identities, such as ethnic-racial identities, can be interwoven with what we have called more conventional themes linked to school and pedagogical curricular areas, in teacher training. This is because, in addition to the focus on identities, illustrated above, the question of knowledge is another relevant aspect in the curricular area. In this case, narrated curricular experiences, with multicultural sensibilities, turn to ways in which knowledge is "multiculturalised".

In this horizon, which emphasises multiculturalised knowledge, Boaler and Sengupta-Irving (2012) bring such a dimension of multicultural curricular experiences to the context

of mathematics teaching, a discipline normally associated with “universalist” perspectives and devoid of gender. These authors show that the traditional way of teaching mathematics, through demonstrations and then through practise and memorisation, ends up perpetuating the failure of plural gender identities, which are not represented in such a method. Furthermore, the research evidence cited by Boaler and Sengupta-Irving (2012) demonstrates that such a way of presenting mathematics in an abstract and decontextualised way turns out to be more “alienating” for female rather than male identities, for example, and for group minority cultures, perpetuating gender inequality, particularly in the most advanced grades. These authors therefore propose that mathematical knowledge be used as a discursive, contextualised discipline.

Stein (2017) points to the need to incorporate critical post-colonial and decolonial views, which allow problematising access to historical and differential processes of power accumulated in the ways in which hegemonic institutional knowledge is perpetuated in educational contexts within the scope of higher education. Such a more critical view can be encouraged in what Stein (2017) calls the multicultural curriculum perspective of “thick inclusion” (Stein, 2017). In this perspective, the curriculum in teacher education and in the context of higher education would be aimed at encouraging students to constantly problematise the “good intentions” of the curriculum and to incorporate non-Western and non-hegemonic traditions in the curriculum approach. Such a critical perspective, however, according to Stein (2017), still develops curricular multiculturalism within the scope of the dominant curriculum itself, even though it advances in relation to the previous perspective.

In the scope of the international curriculum, Stein (2017) points out that these multiculturalist views of weak or strong curricular inclusion have predominated, together with others that advocate interdisciplinarity and alternative institutions, which the author points out as not favouring emancipatory ways of promoting alternative epistemes hegemonic views of the curriculum. It suggests, in this line of argument, post-colonial and decolonial views in an approach she calls “ecology of knowledges approach”. Such a view would be constituted by the challenge to the universality advocated by western thought, articulating, to the criticism of this pseudo-universalism, the study of knowledge delegitimised by colonialist perspectives. In this perspective, Stein (2017) argues that a range of knowledge can coexist in specific curricular contexts, without an intention to show the ability that this knowledge has to “objectively” represent reality in all contexts. In this ecology of knowledge in post and decolonial views, multiple knowledge and knowledge do not fight for curricular hegemony, since each one is partial, provisional and linked to specific contexts, always promoting problematic and “incomplete” answers.

At the same time, authors such as Vargas and Sanhueza (2018) point out that it is important to develop research that seeks to deepen curricular strategies for management and attention to diversity that can go beyond their recognition practices, but that involve a critical problematisation of the inequalities that are legitimated and reproduced in educational spaces, through multiculturalist models of teacher education that surpass the exclusive preparation in technical skills relevant to areas of study. In this sense, the category of identity is “de-essentialised”, which, according to this perspective, could help teachers, future teachers and students to understand the relevance of challenging dichotomous approaches that end up freezing “me” and the “other”. On the contrary, these approaches advocate that the difference should be understood as linked to colonisation processes that underestimate the knowledge of the “colonised”. Such processes, in this view, would still be inherent in our

curriculum and in the training of teachers and, therefore, could be challenged in pedagogical perspectives of multiculturally oriented curricular experiences with critical, post-colonial and decolonial sensibilities.

Linking such ideas to the Brazilian context, it is important to note that Brazil is a huge country, the biggest in South America, with a population of 211 755 692 people, according to the Brazilian Institute of Geography and Statistics (IBGE, 2020). Racial and ethnic composition of the population as self-declared by the subjects in the survey is as follows: 42,7% self-declared as white, 9,4% as black, 46,8% as brown and 1,1% as indigenous, according to the same institution (IBGE, 2020). Social and economic inequality is high. According to Neves and Costa (2020), 1% of the Brazilian population belongs to upper social and economic classes, their income being 85% higher than that of the 50% poorer segments of the population.

In that sense, research developed by Almeida *et al.* (2018) in Brazil confirms the relevance of multicultural, intersectional approaches to education, by signalling ways in which the categories race and ethnicity are often intertwined with other social configurations, such as class, gender and sexuality. The referred authors emphasise the importance of recognising such overlapping for the formulation of teaching strategies and learning aimed at understanding and respecting cultural diversity and combatting inequality in Brazil.

Considering those views in the context of the onset of COVID-19, Tate IV (2020) argued that a most infectious pandemic has been on for a very long time among us, the “segregation pandemic”, namely an ideology of racial biology that has been “infecting” the world, causing a disease – racism – that spread globally, including Brazil, which reinforces the need for multicultural and intersectional perspectives in education.

### 3. EDUCATIONAL POLICIES IN PANDEMIC TIMES: THE BRAZILIAN CASE

The process that preceded adoption of education policies geared towards mitigating the COVID-19 effects on education in Brazil was based on the need for the Ministry of Education to provide instructions for schools and higher education to consider alternatives to keep curriculum on board. The public educational system in Brazil comprises primary, secondary and higher education. Primary schools are the responsibility of municipal authorities, secondary ones by state authorities and public higher education institutions can be municipal, state and federal ones. The *Conselho Nacional de Educação* (Brazilian National Council of Education [CNE], 2020) is a counselling federal institution that advises the Ministry of Education about educational affairs concerning all those levels of schooling, including higher education.

At the onset of COVID-19 in Brazil, the CNE issued directives to be taken in the pandemic times by all public educational institutions (CNE, 2020). Again, the process that preceded the issuing of those directives had to do with the fact that the COVID-19 crisis resulted in the end of classes in schools and universities, affecting more than 90% of the students in the world. In fact, in Brazil, children have been kept out of schools since March 2020 and even in October 2020, municipal, state and federal government declared there was little condition for schools to start on-site classes again before a vaccination to combat COVID-19 is in place. Also, on 20 May 2020, after strong pressure from academics and students, the Ministry of Education decided to postpone the National Exam for the Secondary System (ENEM). It should be noted that this exam is applied to students at the end of secondary school who intend to pursue higher education studies. According to the grade obtained, they can be apt to attend higher education institutions that accept those grades for their specific career choices. Such an exam

was due to take place in November 2020, however due to the inequality of access to online classes from most of the population, it was postponed to January 2021. It ended up happening in January 2021, even though most students' associations still pointed out to the persisting inequality issues that could jeopardise minorities' success in the exam.

By the time the pandemic appeared, the Ministry of Education decided to issue educational policies that should guide the public educational system to deal with the extraordinary situation.

Looking at those directives, it is noteworthy that the referred document starts by acknowledging that the census carried out by the National Institute for Studies and Educational Researcher, Anísio Teixeira (Inep), confirms that Brazil has 8740338 students in all areas and courses, and distant online courses cover 40% of the total of 3445935 of the students that entered higher education in 2018, The public sector of higher education is responsible for 60000 registrations of students. The CNE document also states that registration of students in online distant higher education courses doubled since 2008, particularly emphasising teacher education courses (CNE, 2020). On the other hand, it states that even though 7170567 places were opened for higher education online distant courses, only 19% of them were filled. The possibility of all higher education courses providing 40% of their curricula online was suggested in another Ministry of Education document (Brazil, Ministry of Education, 2019). However, the extent to which institutions have (or have not) adhered to that model has not been assessed so far.

That way, even though distant online courses in Brazil apparently increased, the CNE document (CNE, 2020) states that it still lacks a more widespread coverage. It then goes on to stress the importance of widening the offer of distant online higher education courses and to offer conditions so that the access to technological computer platforms may be successful, even though it is not stated how that could be done. The document specifically refers to the importance of hybrid mechanisms and goes on to refer to the COVID-19 pandemic and to the Portaria (Law) nº 345/2020 (CNE, 2020) that authorises higher education institutions to change on-site classes by others that use digital technologies, including theoretical disciplines of Medicine, with the exception of laboratories and teaching practice disciplines.

Also, it suggests that extension higher education projects – which are those geared towards society at large, including lifelong learning projects – should also be benefited by digital technologies in areas such as teacher continuing education; environmental education and sustainability; human development and social responsibility; supporting teachers and future teachers in creating digital curricular materials as well as educational actions geared towards preventing the contamination by COVID-19.

Additionally, the referred document recommends that higher education institutions should replace on-site classes by remote, distant learning classes through digital technologies, including assessment practices as well as organise teacher training in a way that could prepare teacher educators to deal with those. Among those measures, there is also the recommendation that the entry selection of students should be done in a digital way and that higher education institutions should use social media such as WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram etc. in order to foster and supervise studies and the projects.

Concerning primary and secondary schooling, the document (CNE, 2020) was issued as a guideline for schools to respond to COVID-19 and the need for social isolation. Again, its emphasis is on online learning. In fact, it begins by suggesting that the realisation of

non-classroom pedagogical activities must enable the realisation of the learning rights expressed in the development of competences and skills, provided for in the National Curriculum References (Base Nacional Comum Curricular [BNCC]), in the curricula and in the pedagogical proposals, which can be achieved through these practices, considering the curricular replanning adopted by schools due to the onset of COVID-19. It then suggests that teaching and learning should happen through media such as digital means (video classes, content organised on virtual teaching and learning platforms, social networks, electronic mail and blogs among others); through television or radio programmes; by the adoption of printed teaching material with pedagogical guidelines distributed to students and their parents or guardians and for the guidance of readings, projects, research, activities and exercises indicated in the didactic materials. It recommends that the school institutions must prepare guidelines for the routines of non-classroom educational activities to guide students and families, under the supervision of teachers and school managers, as a record of the activities carried out during the isolation period. It states that the management of the education department or school institution, during the period of isolation, must monitor and verify whether the non-classroom activities were received by the students, in addition to identifying the difficulties encountered.

Also, article 15 of the policy document states that, for the purpose of fulfilling the workload, at the discretion of the education systems, non-classroom teaching activities can be computed, considering mandatorily the indication of the learning objectives related to the respective curriculum or pedagogical proposal to be reached; the forms of interaction (mediated by digital information and communication technologies) with the student, to achieve these objectives; the estimate of equivalent workload to achieve this learning objective, considering the forms of interaction expected; the form of registration of student participation, inferred from the performance of the activities delivered (digitally during the period of suspension of classes or at the end, with digital or physical presentation), related to the study plans; the forms of non-face-to-face assessment during the emergency situation or face-to-face, after the end of class suspension; the provision of alternatives to guarantee the fulfilment of the learning objectives for students and/or school institutions that have difficulties in carrying out non-classroom teaching activities; ways of carrying out a process for the pedagogical training of teachers to use the methodologies, with technological mediation or not, to be used in non-classroom activities and conducting an orientation process for students and their families on the use of methodologies. They should develop guidelines and suggestions to parents or guardians about activities that can be carried out with children in their homes, during the period of social isolation. In addition, the referred policy document states that school units, public and private, are exempt from frequency control of pupils.

Concerning the first years of primary schooling, the referred document gives the following instructions: non-classroom, synchronous or asynchronous classes should be organised by the institution or school network, according to the National Curriculum References (Base Nacional Comum Curricular [BNCC]), the previous national curricular guidelines, the principles of the National Policy for Literacy (PNA), and the curriculum proposal and knowledge objects related to the previous national curricular guidelines ; a system for monitoring non-classroom activities under the guidance of the institution and faculty should be developed and, where possible, with the accompaniment of parents or children guardians; the schools should provide a list of activities and exercises, didactic sequences, learning paths by complexity flow related to the learning objectives and the respective skills; orientations to parents or guardians

for carrying out students about the organisation's daily routines; suggestions for parents or guardians, with the pedagogical support of schools, to perform readings for students or family literacy practices; the use of open TV schedules for educational programmes appropriate to the children's age and guidance to parents or guardians for what they can watch; elaboration of printed materials compatible with the child's age, for reading, drawing, painting, cutting, folding, gluing, among other activities; provision of regular asynchronous online activities, in relation to the objects of knowledge, according to the technological availability and familiarity of the user. It ends up advising that education systems, education departments and education institutions may propose their own formative or diagnostic assessment instruments.

Concerning final years of primary and secondary education, as well as Youth and Adults Education (EJA), the referred document at article 22 (CNE, 2020) suggests the following possibilities: elaboration of didactic sequences built in accordance with the competencies and their skills advocated in each area of knowledge by National Curriculum References (Base Nacional Comum Curricular [BNCC]) – previous national curricular guidelines; the use, when possible, of open TV schedules for educational programmes compatible with children and adolescents; distribution of educational videos (of short duration) through online platforms, but without the need for simultaneous connection, followed by activities to be carried out supervised by parents or guardians; performing synchronous online activities, according to availability of technological means; the offer of asynchronous online activities, according to technological availability; directed studies, research, projects, interviews, experiences, simulations and other activities should be fostered; conducting online assessments or through printed material to be delivered at the end of the suspension period for classroom classes and the use of long-range social media (WhatsApp, Facebook, Instagram etc.) to stimulate and guide studies, according to the age classification for the use of each of these social networks.

#### 4. A MULTICULTURAL INTERSECTIONAL CRITIQUE OF EDUCATIONAL POLICIES DURING COVID-19

The present section will provide critical engagement with the substance of the mentioned policies. As can be noted, the CNE document (CNE, 2020) issued by the National Council of Education intended to offer possibilities for the concrete organisation of schools and to mitigate the effects of the pandemic in the school academic year. The proposed document was partly suitable for achieving that purpose. However, on the one hand, it seemed to put a lot of strain on schools and on the teaching staff, who also have been called to develop online classes from their own homes with little preparation to do that.

Additionally, the technical dimension within the emphasis on online learning that permeates those regulations, relevant though it may be, should arguably be accompanied by multicultural perspectives that could take on board students' emotional, affectionate and cultural dimensions. That is arguably crucial considering the highly multicultural context of Brazil as well as the peculiar and complex onset of the COVID-19 pandemic. In a critical, multicultural and intersectional perspective, we claim those directives have been too oriented towards online learning to the detriment of articulating it to curricular perspectives that take inequality and cultural diversity on board. The extracts of that document in the last section seemed to support that argument.

In fact, the COVID-19 pandemic evidenced hindrances that have affected the Brazilian public educational system, the children as well as young and adult students that attend it. In

reality, in multicultural and unequal countries such as Brazil, there were mixed effects related to multicultural and equity sensitive concerns. Those concerns related to both aspects referred to: (i) the challenges of access to digital artefacts; (ii) the need for multicultural curriculum practices. Therefore, a critical, multicultural and intersectional analysis of the issued Brazilian educational policies at the onset of COVID-19 is important at this point.

In terms of the first aspect, namely, the challenges of access to digital artefacts, it is important to note that online learning was the main focus of the educational policies issued as a response to the onset of COVID-19 in Brazil. However, a multicultural, intersectional analysis points that inequality should hinder the success of that digital learning focus. In fact, Brazil has faced challenges similar to those of other BRICS countries (Steyn *et al.*, 2018). For instance, in big cities such as Rio de Janeiro and São Paulo, a high percentage of the population lives in shanty towns (the “favelas”), many of which have limited access to basic needs such as adequate sewage systems, water supplies or to digital technologies. In addition to that, many of those people live in areas that have been struck with violence due to a constant war between drug dealers and militia for the domination of territories for their illegal activities, affecting the attendance to local schools. Many of these schools constantly close their doors in days of intense exchange of gun shots. Therefore, it is understood that the onset of COVID-19 and the measures to ensure social distancing and hand washing had problems in many of those places.

However, on the other hand, those were places where initiatives of help and communities’ feelings also blossomed, as a series of initiatives by the communities themselves and by other agencies that helped people, with handing out of alcohol in gel, food and other supplies. Federal government made monthly cash deposits of half a salary, called emergency help, for families that filled in the forms and were recognised as in financial need. Again, queues in front of the banks where the payment is due have been huge, and it has been a challenge to keep social distance there. That way, prior to the pandemic, those factors were already present. In Rio de Janeiro, for instance, agglomeration in the favelas is big, and a high percentage of students attending public schools come from those.

That way, by focusing almost exclusively on online learning, the CNE above analysed document seemed to silence cultural, social and economic diversity, as well as inequality issues. In fact, whilst private schools could develop online classes, public ones have struggled to do that, particularly considering inequality of digital access by pupils. In fact, Brazilian news have consistently pointed out that most students in Brazil, including adult students, have not had access to digital learning. Some schools have developed ways of distributing printed materials for pupils, but teacher education and continuing teacher education should also be arguably part of the intersectional thinking concerning multicultural and digital curriculum development. Whilst many of the teaching staff of schools tried hard to understand how to use digital means, the majority did not have adequate training and compatible salaries in order to have digital means to operate online classes.

Such an unequal access to online and digital artefacts has also been felt at the higher education level itself. The panacea by which digital learning has been perceived in educational policies suffered a reality check. The lack of access to digital technologies in order to be able to attend online higher education classes also impinged on the decision of the majority of Brazil’s public universities to suspend the academic calendar of 2020 rather than go on with it through online and digital learning strategies.



However, from August 2020 onwards, multicultural, intersectional solutions seem to have been presented by public universities in that questionnaires were distributed to faculty, staff and students in order to gauge the kind of digital access they all had. After that measure, public universities provided the distribution of internet modems and financial support for those in need, and virtual, remote, online classes started in September for undergraduate and graduate students. An experimental period was set online between September and November 2020. Then the first semester of 2020 is to take place totally online from November 2020 until March 2021, the second one happening from then until June 2021. That means that the academic calendar corresponding to the year of 2021 was decided in such a way as to minimise the disruption of the academic activities and the academic calendar. Most importantly, multicultural teacher training would arguably be needed so that teachers' practices could have a positive effect on plural pupils' learning.

On the other hand, the second aforementioned aspect to consider is the need for multicultural curricular practices. That means to include cultural diversity and its potential for transformative curriculum development in the text of educational policies geared towards mitigating the effects of COVID-19. In fact, multicultural perspectives should arguably be geared towards focusing on the potentials of students through dialogues with their cultural plural backgrounds to provide meaningful learning for all. Additionally, such a multicultural educational perspective (Ivenicki, 2018; 2019; 2020) should be relevant in that it could combat racism, sexism and other prejudices, raising students from marginalised and from privileged backgrounds to respect and value cultural diversity.

Recommendations for improvement or consideration by drafters of similar policies in multicultural countries should arguably include suggestions of ways that could deepen curricular strategies for management and attention to diversity through multiculturalist models of teacher education that surpass the exclusive preparation in technical skills relevant to areas of study; incorporate critical post-colonial and decolonial views, which allow problematising access to historical and differential processes of power accumulated in the ways in which hegemonic institutional knowledge is perpetuated as well as illustrate ways in which more traditional curriculum syllabi could be linked to multicultural concerns by discussing their impact on the valuing of decolonial knowledges (Ivenicki, 2018; 2019; 2020; Warren & Canen, 2012; Boaler & Sengupta-Irving, 2012; Stein, 2018) and work out how COVID-19 had impacted students' lives by including their life histories in the curriculum development activities and help them to positively deal with those challenges.

Even though the onset of COVID-19 in 2020 has made an astounding mark worldwide, similarities and differences among the countries showed that a pandemic not only means the onslaught of an epidemic, but also it uncovers challenges that were already present either in similar or in peculiar ways in different societies.

In a constructive and positive way, we claim those challenges brought about by COVID-19 could serve as an incentive to improve those areas in which educational inequality and curriculum development deficiencies have been pervasive.

## 5. CONCLUSIONS

The present paper discussed the impact of the pandemic of COVID-19 in the text of educational policies issued as a way to combat the effects of the pandemic in schools and higher education in Brazil. It argued that the onset of the pandemic and its impacts on education tend to uncover

challenges that had already been present in educational realities. The paper addressed the concepts of multicultural, intersectional curriculum approaches and provided suggestions for the improvement or consideration by drafters of similar policies in multicultural countries. Future research could delve into evaluation of the impacts of those policies on the everyday lives of educational actors and schools.

The analysis showed that the mentioned educational policies seemed to highlight the need for digital learning. However, in a multicultural, intersectional approach, it seemed to be clear that concepts of learning and digital learning should be developed hand in hand. Within a multicultural framework, it seemed central to problematise the extent to which educational policies enhance teachers' role in valuing cultural diversity and inclusionary perspectives in the teaching and learning process. Therefore, digital learning should not be limited to technology issues. Apart from providing the means for socially and culturally diverse groups to have access to digital learning, other measures should be seriously considered in future educational policies in multicultural countries. That way, in order for effective learning to take place, there seems to be a need for supporting teachers and university professors for a cultural change in the learning strategies. In a multicultural perspective, this means to value cultural diversity and promote ways of using digital learning to support it. Digital learning is, after all, about learning itself.

Multiculturalism and intersectionality uncover inequalities, racisms and prejudices that prevent students and staff from making the most of their potentials, resulting in segregation and marginalisation of cultural identities in the lines of race, ethnicity, gender and the intersection of other identity markers. In terms of curriculum, decolonial and postcolonial multicultural perspectives uncover hegemonic knowledges selected and the need to put marginalised cultures to the forefront to empower them.

Based on those ideas, recommendations for the drafting of educational policies in a multicultural perspective were presented in the paper. It is hoped the present paper could contribute to discussions that could challenge educational inequality in the present and in the post-pandemic time towards a more promising and multicultural educational future for all.

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